One Eye Between Them

by MisatosPenPen

Summary

Itachi’s blind and Kakashi’s in love. But Itachi’s hesitant to tell Kakashi everything about the trauma of his past.

Notes

God, I really had no idea what to title this. Titles, as you’ve probably noticed, are not my strong point. The file on my computer is “AU blind Itachi.” By the way, the club I’m thinking of is The Viper Room in LA, it’s really the only club I’ve been to. Sad or snobbish? ^_^
Itachi really didn’t like going out to clubs, but his little brother did. So he was dragged here feeling more like a sixth or seventh wheel. He was pressed into the furthest curve of the U-shaped booth, his brother sitting on one side of him and Neji—his soon to be brother-in-law if Sasuke ever grew a pair to ask Hinata to marry him—on his other side. Hinata was sitting next to Sasuke.

Neji was just as uncomfortable as Itachi. He excused himself to find a bathroom. Sasuke took this opportunity to ask Hinata to dance now that the chaperone was gone. Itachi took a sip of his whisky, his own quiet way of telling his brother he would be fine by himself. Sasuke and Hinata left him alone. Itachi took a gulp of his whiskey once they were gone. Itachi wanted to go home.

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Kakashi wanted to go home. He hated clubs, but Gai, Genma, Tenzou, and Hayate had dragged him out. Something about how he hadn’t dated or even gone out in six months or something. He was depressed; this was the last place he wanted to be.

Kakashi leaned against the wall while Gai danced alone and tried to pick up any women also dancing alone. Kakashi swore that if Gai got lucky tonight, he would hang himself. Genma was chatting up a blonde at the bar while Tenzou and Hayate were dancing together. He sighed. His friends had tried to pry off his mask and eye patch, but there was no way in hell. Kakashi didn’t care if he scared people away, he didn’t mind being alone, not anymore. He thought about bailing and catching a cab or bus home. He ran his gaze over the club as he considered if buses ran this late. But his eye stopped on the most gorgeous creature he’d ever seen.

Sitting alone was a young man with long, sable hair, pale skin, and—oddly enough—wearing a pair of sunglasses. Kakashi was drawn across the club to him, seeming to glide to him without any conscious thought to do so. He suddenly found himself in front of the booth where the young man was sitting alone sipping at a glass with his head down, not seeing him.

“Mind if I join you?” Kakashi asked.

Itachi’s head came up. “Sure. My brother and his friends have temporarily abandoned me.” Kakashi slid in beside him.

“I’m sort of glad.”

“Hmmm, so am I,” Itachi said with a small smile.

“Can I get buy you a refill?”

“How about an amaretto?”

Kakashi signaled for the waitress. “An amaretto and a scotch, neat.”

The woman walked off and they were alone. Neither spoke, nervous. Their drinks were brought and Kakashi handed her twenty dollars. Another reason he hated clubs. Kakashi put Itachi’s glass in front of him. He found the way Itachi slowly reached for the glass strange, but it made him more
intrigued. So much grace. He watched him take a sip. Itachi wasn’t looking at him and didn’t seem to notice that Kakashi was staring.

“My name’s Kakashi,” he said.

“Itachi.”

“You don’t seem like you like this kind of place.”

“My brother drags me out with him all the time. He worries about me too much.”

“That’s like my friends; they brought me here because I don’t get out much.”

“Ditto.”

“Do you, ahh, want to bail and go somewhere else?”

“Before this goes any further, there are two things you should know. First off, I’m really not interested in a one night stand.”

“Actually, I’m not keen on a one night stand either. But I would consider it with someone as beautiful as you, but I might want something more. I was thinking a quieter coffee shop.”

Itachi gave him a charming, apologetic smile. “Second, if you haven’t guessed, I’m blind. Some people consider me a liability. I won’t think bad of you if you walk away; it’s a little more of a commitment than most relationships.”

Kakashi was shocked silent for a few seconds. “Actually, I find that interesting. Let me take you out for dinner tomorrow.”

“Alright.”

Kakashi looked up to see a very angry little brother; there was no mistaking the relationship.

“Who are you?” Sasuke demanded.

“Heel, Otouto,” Itachi said.

“My name is Kakashi.”

“What’s with the mask?”

“Sasuke,” Itachi admonished.

“It’s fine,” Kakashi said.

“You didn’t even know he was wearing a mask, did you?” Sasuke accused.

“It’s just to hide a few scars,” Kakashi explained.

“Otouto, shoo, have fun with Hinata. I won’t leave the table.”
“You touch my brother and I’ll kill you.” But Sasuke did leave.

“I’d say ignore him, but he’s serious.”

“He’s very protective of you.”

“Very. Ever since I lost my sight. The only reason he brings me along is to get me outside and keep an eye on me. Are you more attracted to me because I’m blind? If you wear a mask . . .”

“It crossed my mind after you told me, but no. I’ve never seen anything as gorgeous as you; I want to get know you.”

“I wish I hadn’t promised him I’d stay here. I wish it was quieter; I’d ask you about those scars.”

Kakashi slid in closer, but not close enough that their bodies touched, trying to keep out of Itachi’s personal space, but getting closer to him. “Well, I was in Afghanistan. Body armor doesn’t cover the face. I was close enough to a IED to get some shrapnel in the face. I was still good to fight, so I stayed in. Then I ended up in a knife fight with one of the Afghanis we were training after he killed two other of our guys. He sliced through my eye, but I killed him. I was given a few metals and discharged.”

“Wow. War hero, eh?”

“I don’t know about hero. I didn’t save those two soldier’s lives.”

“Nevertheless. I lost my vision while I was in Africa.”

Kakashi figured by some tropical disease or parasite or something, so didn’t ask. “I can’t image how hard it’s been. You must be a very strong person.”

“You don’t really have any choice. You lost an eye too, didn’t you say?”

“Yeah. It’s hard, took a lot of adapting, but nothing like what you’ve gone through.” Kakashi glanced up. “Shit,” he said. “My friends are looking for me. I’ll save you the torture of meeting them. Where can I pick you up from tomorrow?”

Itachi smoothly presented a pen and gave Kakashi the address which Kakashi wrote on a napkin. He also gave him his phone number. “Call me before you leave so I can be ready and try to buck off a chaperone.”

“I will. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight.”

Kakashi got up and intercepted Gai. Itachi could hear him. “Kakashi! I thought you ran out on us!” He couldn’t hear Kakashi’s quieter reply, just the sound of his voice.

Itachi was uncomfortable. What was he doing? He’d just be thrown out again. He didn’t want a relationship, but he also desired it more than anything. Being blind had left him feeling defenseless and scared. He really did love the fact his brother was so protective, but he feared he was tying his brother down. One day, Sasuke would grow tired of taking care of him. He downed the rest of the whiskey in one gulp, then sipped at the amaretto and savored it. What was he getting himself into?
But what did it matter? He just wanted to curl up and cry. He wasn’t as strong as so many took him for. He wanted to go home. To just curl up and stay in his room.

Sasuke rejoined him. “Where’d ‘Phantom of the Opera’ go?”

“It wasn’t that kind of mask, was it?”

“No, one of those that go over the mouth and nose like a motocycle or snowboard mask. And he had an eye patch. He abandon you?”

“His friends were looking for him.”

“So he said.”

“I could hear someone say he was looking for him.”

“Oh.”

“Where’s Hinata?”

“She went to the bathroom.”

“So, have you proposed yet, Otouto?” Itachi asked.

Sasuke looked at the sunglasses which reflected the lights of the club beautifully. “No.”

“You’re not going to do it here, are you?”

“Of course not. I haven’t come up with a good place or time yet.”

“I’m seeing Kakashi again tomorrow.”

“No,” Sasuke said strongly.

“Why not? You can’t be with me all the time. And why do you even bring me out. I don’t want to be here. I love being with you, but I’d rather stay home.”

“Fine, but I’m going with you.”

Itachi sighed. But maybe it was for the best; he didn’t know this guy and couldn’t see to defend himself. “Alright. Get me another whiskey. Please.”

The Hyuuga siblings returned and Itachi and Neji suffered through another hour of this stupid club.
Courtship

Itachi didn’t trust Sasuke enough to help him dress—he’d probably end up in mismatched clothes looking like clown—so he had to confess to his mother that he was going out on a date. She was ecstatic. She wanted him to find a companion, but she and Fugaku insisted that Sasuke go with him. He accented and she helped him dress.

Kakashi called while Itachi was nervously sitting in the living room. “Hai.”

*It’s Kakashi, I’m getting in my car; I’ll be there in five to ten minutes.*

“’K. My brother’s coming.”

*That’s fine. If this goes, then I’ll have to endear myself to him anyway.*

Itachi fidgeted as he waited.

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Kakashi saw the address and could tell the brothers weren’t poor, but he nearly slammed on the breaks when he realized he was in the wealthiest part of, not only the town, but the country. He assumed that their house was at the middle class end of the street, but this was many blocks into the wealthy end. What the fuck did he get himself into?

The gate to the estate was open. He pulled up and Sasuke was opening the door before Kakashi could shut off the engine of his used Kia—the only thing he could afford right out of the service. Itachi was wearing his sunglasses and carrying an ‘identification cane,’ but not using it when on familiar turf with his brother guiding him. A section of the steps leading up to the house had a newer looking concrete ramp which Itachi found easily.

Kakashi came around to open the passenger door—Sasuke could open his own door.

Sasuke examined Kakashi’s uncovered face. Itachi had told him what Kakashi had told him about the scars. His left eye was closed, but looked natural. Sasuke knew it was probably a glass eye. It kind of irritated him that Kakashi was good looking.

“Good evening,” Kakashi said.

Itachi looked toward the sound of Kakashi’s voice. “Hi.”

“You look beautiful.”

“Thank you.”

Sasuke rolled his eyes. “I’m Sasuke.”

“Kakashi Hatake.”

“Pleasure,” Sasuke said without any sincerity. Sasuke grabbed his brother’s arm and led him to the open door. Kakashi wanted to do that, but he let Sasuke do it since he knew what he was doing.
“You ditched the mask and eye patch,” Sasuke said.

“Attracts too much attention. I used makeup to cover the scars.”

“It’s okay,” Kakashi said. “I can appreciate his protectiveness.”

Kakashi got in the car and wondered what the ramifications would be of driving off before Sasuke could get in. He waited. That was a good idea since Fugaku and Mikoto were watching from an upstairs window. Kidnapping Itachi—even just ditching an annoying little brother—was a very bad idea.

“What do you want to eat?” Kakashi asked.

“Pretty much anything. Italian, Mexican, Japanese . . .”

“I like Italian,” Sasuke chimed in, sounding anything but enthusiastic.

“So do I,” Kakashi said.

It was an all round awkward evening, alleviated whenever Itachi and Kakashi found something in common. Sasuke hardly spoke at all, just sitting there with a perpetual glare on his face. Neji was a good example of a chaperone, but Sasuke bettered the instruction: he was downright threatening. But Kakashi enjoyed the evening just because he was able to watch Itachi move. Slow and tentative. Sasuke noticed and had to admit Kakashi did look like he loved Itachi. He was definitely smitten.

When Kakashi dropped them off, Sasuke let him help Itachi out of the car.

“When can I see you again?” Kakashi asked.

Itachi didn’t want to seem desperate by saying ‘tomorrow.’ “When are you free?”

“Tomorrow,” Kakashi said, unashamedly showing how much he was enamored with the elder Uchiha.

“The day after,” Sasuke said. “My girlfriend is coming over for dinner tomorrow and I want my brother there.”

“The day after tomorrow then,” Kakashi said. He carefully took Itachi’s hand and kissed it as if he were a woman. He felt the scars on Itachi’s hands. He was hit by a wave of pity; going blind must have been so difficult and scary for him. “Goodnight.”

“Goodnight.”

Sasuke mimed to Kakashi to stay right where he was. Kakashi was surprised, but he obeyed as Sasuke took Itachi inside. Mikoto took charge of Itachi to ask all about it and Sasuke snuck back outside.

“You love him?” Sasuke asked.
“Yes.”

Sasuke growled. “Listen. His last boyfriend dumped him because he went blind; think about that.”

“I have. But I have a doting nature and will actually relish having to do things for him.”

“He has the cane, but you should watch where he’s walking anyway. Hold his arm from the bottom. When getting in and out of the car, use your hand to cushion either his head or the door frame or guide his head with your hand. And above all, be patient.”

“I will.”

“I’ll come with you next time too if you want me to so you can see how I handle him, but I’ll stay home if you want.”

“Trusting me?”

“Don’t prove my original opinion correct. Harm my brother and I will display your head on the gate.”

“I understand.”

“Don’t mumble around him; it’s the only sense he really has left as a connection to the outside world and it pisses him off when he can’t really hear what’s going on. I’ll give you a list of things as I think of them.”

Kakashi couldn’t help a small laugh at Sasuke’s recitation. He was explaining things like he was accepting Kakashi, but he still looked like he was planning out grisly ways to murder him.

“Can he read braille?” Kakashi asked.

“That pisses him off. No, not really. It’s difficult, but hopefully he’ll get used to it.”

“I don’t mind reading to him.”

“Save it for my brother. Get out of here.”

“Goodnight.”

“Hn.”

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Hinata did come over for dinner the next day, but the real reason Sasuke didn’t want Kakashi to take his brother out the very next day was that he was looking up Kakashi’s background using the family business to run a background check as if he were a potential new employee. There was nothing against the vet. He shared this information with his father.

Fugaku sat behind his desk in his home office as Sasuke reported to him, much more like one of his top employees than a son. The man was dedicated to his business, but he’d tried to spend more time with his family especially with his eldest son blind and his youngest son likely to be married.
by the end of the year. He still went into the office five days a week, but rather than stay late, he brought work home. He wished he’d done it when his boys were younger.

He was never thrilled that his oldest son was gay, but he accepted it. With him now being blind, he kind of liked the idea of Itachi’s boyfriend being a Special Forces veteran; at least his eldest son would be well protected. His younger son could take care of himself and his fiancé.

Sasuke finished his report and stood there like solider at ease with his hands behind his back. Fugaku repressed a sigh. What had he’d done to make Sasuke so serious all the time? Itachi’s condition only made matters worse. Itachi was the gay one, but it was Sasuke who perpetually had a stick up his ass. At least the boy was efficient.

“What’s your impression of him?” Fugaku asked.

“Most of what they talked about was first date nonsense. He seems rather laid back to me; relaxed, not lazy. Despite being a soldier, he’s seems . . . gentle. I really don’t see him being abusive at all. He does adore Itachi. Itachi said Kakashi didn’t realize he was blind at first, but I think Kakashi found the fact he was blind even more attractive. I don’t think he knows what he’s getting into, but he does seem to be in love.”

“What about family?”

“He has none. I couldn’t find any details in the background checks and I can’t justify running checks on dead people. I’ll have to use other means to find out anything else. It should take me a day, maybe two.”

Fugaku shook his head and waved the boy off. Sasuke would go shift through the man’s trash if he thought of it. “I want to meet him. I want Itachi to invite him over for dinner.”

“Isn’t the meeting the parents a fifth date sort of thing?” Fugaku revealed who had originated the trademark Uchiha glare. “I’ll tell Itachi.”

“You said Kakashi looks like he loves Itachi. What about Itachi?”

“I really don’t know.” Sasuke’s shoulders fell. “He’s so different now, I can’t read him like I used to. I really hate seeing him so timid. The fact that he accepted a date at all, and a second one at that, makes me think that he does feel something for Kakashi. Itachi didn’t say anything. Maybe he will after their date tomorrow.”

They had never been exceptionally close—one of Fugaku’s great regrets in life—but for a moment they shared the pain of what happened to Itachi. He had changed after going blind. The confident, happy, studious young man had become a timid creature. They all prayed it was just a matter of time before they had the old Itachi back.

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Sasuke didn’t come with them this time, but he did give Kakashi his phone number and waited until Kakashi not only put him into cell’s phonebook, but on speed dial. Sasuke kissed his brother on the cheek before he relinquished custody of his precious older brother. Kakashi saw the deep worry in Sasuke’s eyes when he looked at Itachi. This was his elder brother, he probably looked up to him and was protected by him and now it was reversed.
Kakashi helped his date into his car with a hand on the top edge of the door to cushion it if Itachi hit it as Sasuke instructed him. Sasuke was glaring at Kakashi even after the man could no longer see him, threatening him to be good to his brother.

Kakashi took Itachi for Japanese this time, a really nice, intimate restaurant. He loved watching Itachi’s hands move so carefully, but he also watched so he could help him. He never moved anything, never tried to make things easier for him, knowing Itachi would resent it and it would mess up his mental map of the table, but he was ready to pull a glass out of the way or offer him something from out of Itachi’s reach.

“Being our second date,” Kakashi said, “maybe we should get to know each other better, our pasts and whatnot. I never even asked you your age, but I’m assuming you’re over twenty-one judging by where I met you.”


“I’m twenty-nine. I’ve been out of the service for over a year. College?”

“My father made me get my MBA, but I wanted to study the humanities. So I have a MBA and my Masters in Literature with minors in Philosophy and History.”

“Holy shit.”

“I graduated high school at fourteen.”

“Genius?”

“Bookworm. And we could afford it. Brains has little to do with higher education, it’s really just money. But yeah, I am considered quite smart.”

“I’m going to college part time right now, making use of the military scholarship. I took some classes while in the service too.” Kakashi was hesitant to ask his next question. “Why were you in Africa?”

Itachi didn’t seem disturbed by the question, but Kakashi felt a wall had come up. “My father’s company has a lot of interests in Africa: mines, factories, a game preserve . . . He wanted me to have familiarity with our holdings and sent me over there. He still hasn’t forgiven himself for what happened. I don’t blame him though.”

“Rough. Guilt is hard thing to get over whether it’s justified or not. Over my time in the military I lost two close friends and my commander. I still blame myself sometimes.”

Itachi nodded. His nod seemed too knowing to Kakashi. He felt guilty for something. But Kakashi wouldn’t ask on a second date.

Having nodded, Itachi realized how low his head was. “Since I can’t see, I don’t notice how far my head sinks sometimes. Let me know so I can raise my head. I don’t want my spine curving too much.”

“I’ll tell you. By the way, I want to assure you I had no idea how wealthy you were when I approached you, asked you out, or anything until I drove up to your . . . home.”
“That was my father’s concern, but I assured him that you couldn’t know. I realized that neither of us had even told the other their last name at that club, so he calmed down.”

Slowly, their conversation eased and they felt very comfortable with each other. Kakashi took him home after dinner. And there was Sasuke opening the door as soon as Kakashi’s engine stopped. Kakashi helped Itachi out of the car as Sasuke walked up to take charge of his brother.

Kakashi wanted to kiss Itachi on the lips, but not in Sasuke’s presence. He kissed his hand again. “I’ll call you for our next date.”

“Alright. Thank you.”

Sasuke led Itachi back inside.

“Well?” Sasuke prodded.

“Well what?”

“Do you like him? Is this going anywhere? Do you want to keep seeing him?”

“Otouto,” Itachi whined. Once in the house, Itachi no longer needed his cane and he felt much more comfortable.

“Mom and dad want to meet him. But if you’re not into him, then it’s not worth it. Is it worth it?”

Itachi sighed. Sasuke pulled his brother upstairs into Itachi’s room and shut the door. Itachi felt even better being inside his sanctum. He sat down on his bed. Sasuke stood in front of him.

“Listen, Aniki. I know you haven’t slept with him—unless you weren’t eating—and I can understand if you’re craving sex.” Itachi rolled his head rather than his eyes. “There’s that, then there’s being in love with him. I hope you love each other, I really do. I want you to be taken care of. So do mom and dad. Do you love him?”

Itachi pulled his legs up to sit cross-legged and crossed his arms. Sasuke recognized the defensive gesture. “I don’t know. I like him. I don’t feel scared around him.” Sasuke knew Itachi never felt safe and as much as Itachi tried to hide it, he felt scared quite often. To say he didn’t feel scared with Kakashi was a good sign. “I do like him. I at least want to be friends with him.”

“When he calls, invite him over for dinner.”

“Alright.”

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Kakashi called the next afternoon.

“My parents want to meet you over dinner, tomorrow if convenient. If inconvenient, make it convenient.”

Kakashi found that amusing. Tomorrow night will be fine. Does that mean seeing you tonight would be too much?
Itachi smiled. “No. But you’re not paying anymore; I’m—obviously—rich.”

No. Until your parents approve, I want to prove that my intentions are pure.

“Then you’re taking me for fast food. Honestly, I haven’t had a burger in a long time.”

If it pleases you. I’ll pick you up in an hour.

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It was sunset when they left the burger joint. Itachi could feel the warmth of the sunlight and Kakashi loved seeing the warm glow on Itachi’s skin.

Kakashi grabbed Itachi’s wrist and looked around. “We’re alone. For once. I haven’t been able to really kiss you yet.”

Itachi blushed a little. “I guess this is a good time.”

“When I want to touch you, should I warn you? I don’t want to startle you.”

“I’ll try not to let it startle me. If you’re around, I won’t panic.”

“Should I tell you what I’m about to do?”

“No.”

Kakashi gently put the back of his fingers against Itachi’s cheek and caressed it back into his hair, then threaded his fingers into his sable locks. He came closer so that Itachi could feel his breath against his lips. Itachi opened his lips slightly and Kakashi pressed his lips against Itachi’s. The gentle kiss quickly turned heated. Itachi couldn’t hide his desperation. Kakashi wrapped his arms tightly around Itachi’s waist and Itachi put his arms around his shoulders. They only parted when oxygen ran out, but they kept their arm around each other.

“I won’t lie, I want to sleep with you so bad,” Kakashi admitted.

“So do I.”

“Why don’t I take you home and I can stay the night?”

“Because of my brother and parents.”

“You really that loud?” Itachi blushed scarlet. “I just want you to be comfortable and thought you’d be the most comfortable at home.”

“Maybe, but I’d rather go home with you.”

“Alright. Should probably let your brother know so he can go to bed and not come hunting me down.”

“Help me into the car and I’ll call him.”

Kakashi kissed him briefly and opened the door. Itachi slid into the car with a little help from
Kakashi and called Sasuke.

*What’s wrong?* Sasuke answered.

“Hello to you too. I’m spending the night at Kakashi’s.” Sasuke growled. “Heel, Otouto.”

*You call me when you wake up.*

“Hai, hai. Goodnight.”

*Goodnight, Aniki. Itachi! I’m worried. Just . . . I don’t want to be there, but I’d rather be around, you know. Be careful. I know Kakashi seems like a great guy, it’s just . . .*

“I understand, Otouto. I don’t think you have anything to worry about. Kakashi knows he’d have to deal with you and all the wealth and power of our family if anything happened to me. Relax. I’ll call you in the morning.”

*Alright. Hold the phone out toward Kakashi.* Itachi did so. *“Hurt my brother and I’ll rip your dick off!* Itachi brought it back to his ear. *Bye.*

“Bye.”

“I’m starting to wonder about your little brother,” Kakashi said. “And what your last boyfriend was like.”

“Has nothing to do with him, just that I’m blind and defenseless. Don’t worry about it.”

“Oh, I am. I’m afraid to tangle your hair. I may be a vet, but he stands like he could kick my ass.”

“Three black belts.”

“I only have two.”

“Then worry.”

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They were both nervous on the way to Kakashi’s apartment and were far more nervous when Kakashi turned off the engine. Kakashi came around to help Itachi out of the car and held him close to his side as he guided him to the elevator in the parking garage. They went up to seventh floor and down the hall.

Nervous and uncomfortable in the silence, Itachi asked, “What does the corridor look like?”

“The walls and ceilings are white, the doors look like real medium dark wood with gold numbers. The carpet’s dark grey. My number’s seventy seven.”

They stopped and Kakashi was slow to take his arm away from Itachi, but did so to unlock the door. He guided Itachi inside and shut the door.

“White walls and grey carpet again. Used brown sofa, a used, but very comfy beige arm chair. Black IKEA coffee table. Small flat screen TV.” Kakashi continued to describe his apartment, but
he was staring at Itachi the entire time. He was staring at his face at first, but then his gaze traveled down the lithe body encased in black. Itachi always wore dark colors; all black tonight.

Finished with his ‘tour,’ Kakashi got behind Itachi, trying to make as much noise as possible so as not to startle him when he put his arms around him. He inhaled the scent of Itachi’s hair. Itachi shook slightly.

“I’ll take you home anytime you want,” Kakashi whispered, trying to reassure the younger man. “We won’t do anything you don’t want to. I love you and I won’t do anything to hurt you or make you feel uncomfortable.”

“I’m always uncomfortable.”

“You shouldn’t be. Especially with me. I won’t anything happen to you.”

“Do you have any alcohol?”

Kakashi nuzzled Itachi’s neck. “I’ve got good Irish whiskey, some Guinness, vodka—I can make a screwdriver—and since you ordered it before I bought some amaretto.”

Itachi smiled. “As much as I appreciate the gesture, I think I need something stronger. I’ll try your ‘good Irish whiskey.’”

Kakashi guided him to the sofa and went to pour the drinks. He sat down next to Itachi and Itachi reached out for the glass. Kakashi gave it to him, but held his hand in place to clink his glass against Itachi’s.

“To protective little brothers,” Kakashi said.

Itachi laughed and took a drink. “That is good. Very smooth.”

“It better be for the price.”

Itachi snuggled back into the couch. The best thing about used furniture—the only good thing beside the price—was that it was broken in and comfy. “Do you have a brother?”

“No, only child. Both my parents are dead. No other family. My unit became my family. Many of us have left for injuries or just were over being in the military. Some are annoying, but we’re like brothers. After a few more dates I’ll subject you to them.”

Itachi smiled. “You never did say what you do for a living now.”

“Pension doesn’t cover much. I repair cars and motorcycles. Even with one eye, they still let me be a mechanic. I learned how when I was in the military; it was side skill. Knowing how to repair a hummer in the middle of the desert was a useful skill to have. I don’t have to face any customers either.”

Itachi sat forward again. “Let me touch your face. I’m not so good at visualizing from touching things, but I’d like to feel you. I really don’t care about the scars, I’m just curious.”

Kakashi took the glass from Itachi and put it on the coffee table then guided both of his hands to his face. Itachi carefully explored Kakashi’s face. He could feel several lines on his cheeks and
chin, some were merely smooth, others were raised.

“I can imagine what the scars look like, but I’m no good in telling what you look like.”

“My eyes are hooded, my remaining eye is grey. I’ve got a matching glass eye, but I rarely open it. My hair is naturally white, but I’m not albino. I’d say my face is angular, slim. I don’t really know what else to say.”

“I’ll just ask my brother if you’re attractive.”

“Oh, please don’t. I still don’t think he likes me much.”

“You’re stealing his older brother away.”

Kakashi brushed a lock of hair back from Itachi’s face. He wished he could look at Itachi’s eyes. He didn’t even know if Itachi had eyes anymore or if they had been removed like his was. But he also just wanted to see Itachi without the sunglasses.

“I have an overwhelming desire to protect you, Itachi. I love you.”

Itachi seemed to recoil even if he didn’t pull back. “The last man to say he loved me left me.”

Kakashi took Itachi’s hand and kissed the palm. “I will never leave you. As much as your blindness decreased his love for you, it’s increased it for me. Call it my manly instinct. I love you the more. You’re so beautiful and so . . . graceful. So strong.”

“No, I’m not.”

Kakashi caressed Itachi’s hair. “Yes, you are. I intend to keep you, my beautiful, beautiful Itachi.” He leaned in and kissed the younger man. Itachi kissed back with even more desperation than before. He surprised Kakashi by fighting for dominance. Kakashi fought him for a while, but Itachi pressed his whole body against him to push him back and gained dominance of the kiss.

Kakashi gave in and took advantage of the situation to feel Itachi’s body. He was more muscular that Kakashi thought he’d be. And erect. Kakashi undid Itachi’s belt and sought that hard piece of flesh. Itachi pressed even closer and moaned while still kissing him. Itachi took one hand away from Kakashi’s shoulders and started undoing Kakashi’s belt to feel Kakashi’s organ. Itachi stroked him as he kissed him.

Itachi suddenly stopped both and moved back a little. “I believe you brought me here for a reason.”

“Want to go to bed?”

“And I want to do more than sleep.”

Kakashi sat up which made Itachi back off. Kakashi downed the rest of his drink. “You want to finish your drink?”

“Sure.”

Kakashi took Itachi’s hand and put the glass in it. Itachi drank the rest and gave it back. Kakashi put the glass on the table and pulled Itachi up and guided him to the bedroom.
Itachi put out a hand at thigh level, looking for the bed. Kakashi guided him and Itachi sat down. The bed was springy, but not uncomfortable. Itachi thought about his oh so comfortable memory foam at home.

Kakashi silently turned on the light; he was going to take that small advantage of his blind lover and look at his shy lover in the light. “Are you sure, Itachi?” Kakashi asked. “I don’t want to rush you into this.”

“No, I really want to.” Itachi put a hand over his sunglasses. “I don’t want you to see my eyes though. Or . . . you know. I’d like some kind of blindfold.”

Kakashi wanted to argue that he didn’t care what Itachi’s eyes looked like, but decided this was a battle not worth fighting. Let Itachi do whatever he needed to be comfortable. “I have a necktie you can use.”

“Thank you.” Itachi sounded immensely relieved that Kakashi hadn’t argued. Kakashi placed the tie in his hands. “Is it expensive?”

“No.”

“I’ll buy you a new one.”

“It’s fine.”

Itachi turned around, took off his sunglasses, and tied the tie around his head with the knot on the side of his head. When he turned aback around, Kakashi struggled not to laugh. It reminded him of when he was kid he and his friends would steal their father’s ties to tie around their heads like Indians or marital artists or Rambo. Itachi carefully sought out the nightstand and put his sunglasses on it. Now he felt comfortable undressing.

Kakashi watched. It wasn’t like some seedy striptease for either of them. Itachi just went about the routine business of disrobing while Kakashi was entranced with the way Itachi moved, not even really taking note of the creamy skin being revealed. Itachi stayed sitting, just rocking his body to remove his pants and boxers at once. Kakashi was shaken from his trace when Itachi stopped moving.

He leaned in and kissed him briefly on the lips. “Let me get the lube and I’ll be right back.”

Kakashi tore off his clothes as he went into the bathroom and grabbed the lube from a drawer.

Kakashi returned to crouch in front of his little raven. “God, you’re beautiful.” He touched Itachi’s hips and slid his hands down to the outside of his knees. He looked down Itachi’s chest. That’s when he started to notice the scars. He saw one across the width of his chest and another diagonal over his heart and the pads of his fingers ran over a few cuts on his thighs. He was curious, but now was not the time to ask; Itachi was rather reticent about his past.

Kakashi took Itachi’s knees in his hands and spread his thighs open. He leaned in and took Itachi half hard cock into his mouth; Itachi was nervous, making him soften from earlier. Kakashi went slow and loving, not rushing to make Itachi hard so they could get on with it, but just whetting Itachi’s desire and relaxing him.
At first he mostly used just his lips from root to tip. He added a little tongue now and then. Then he took just the head and sucked and swirled his tongue around it before he really got into sucking the growing shaft.

Itachi leaned back to brace himself with his hands. It had been months since he felt anything like this. He’d jacked off quite a bit, but he missed the touch of another person and certainly the mouth of another person. He relaxed and let his body sink completely into the mattress. Despite being in a completely alien environment and not being able to see his surroundings at all, Itachi felt safe; he felt safe in Kakashi’s presence.

As soon as Itachi was hard again, Kakashi disengaged and picked up Itachi’s legs to help him shift so his head was on the pillow. Kakashi found it odd that despite Itachi’s dominance of the kiss, they had this unspoken understanding that Kakashi would top. Itachi’s vulnerability played a part in that, but Kakashi was already understanding that Itachi wasn’t a complete uke; he was shy and meek because of his blindness, but there was a strength and commanding side to him that Kakashi sensed would come out when he was more comfortable around him. And he liked it. But for now he would pleasure and fuck the Uchiha.

A little lube on his fingers and he moved over the younger man to kiss him while his slick hand slipped between Itachi’s legs. As meek and shy as Itachi always seemed, he was shameless right now, spreading his thighs and not balking at all when Kakashi’s touched his puckered entrance.

“Has it been long since the last time?” Kakashi asked.

“A few months. Don’t be rough.”

“Of course. I’ll take my time.”

Kakashi pressed in a finger. He massaged the ring of muscle and felt those hot smooth walls. Itachi slowly raised a hand to find Kakashi’s hair and then he pulled him down for another kiss as Kakashi slowly stretched him.

Kakashi was on autopilot stretching as he kissed and Itachi hardly noticed either as Kakashi added a second and third finger. Itachi made a half ass attempt to stop the kiss and said muffled against Kakashi’s mouth, “Fuck me.”

“Yes, sir.”

Kakashi moved between Itachi’s thighs and Itachi pulled his knees up to give Kakashi access to his body. Kakashi pressed against Itachi’s tight hole and pressed in slowly, caressing the backs of Itachi’s thighs as he breached his body. Itachi’s body yielded to him and his cock slid into the divine tight heat more wonderful than any other he’d experienced before—granted there had only been one other.

Itachi’s body accepted him, but he was tight. “Fuck, Itachi.”

Itachi smiled. “That’s the idea.”

Kakashi hummed. “Indeed.” He stayed still so that Itachi could adjust.

“Do me one favor,” Itachi said panting ever so slightly, “nothing dirtier than that, please. Had some unpleasant experiences with dirty talk I don’t wish to relive at the moment.”
“I can understand that,” Kakashi said, similarly panting. “Can I tell you how hot and wonderful you feel?”

“You just did. Just as long as you kiss me or so something to remind me who you are. It’s hard when you’re blind. Or I imagine it will be.”

“Am I your first since . . .”

“Yes.”

“I won’t let you forget who’s making love to you.” Kakashi kissed him. He started moving slowly as he tried to find out if Itachi still had his tonsils.

He sped up the motion of his hips and Itachi tried to raise his hips to meet him. Itachi was also trying to tease Kakashi even deeper into his mouth, teasing his tongue like he might his cock.

Kakashi had wanted the kiss to be a little gentler—Itachi alluding to a bad experience and all—but Itachi had a hand on his shoulder and the other in his hair, forcing him down and kissing with a wild abandon. He didn’t give Kakashi an opportunity to talk. Maybe that was the point.

Itachi’s thighs closed around Kakashi’s body and Kakashi’s forced a hand under Itachi’s back to hold him close and the other was on his ribs, feeling the rapid breath and racing heart. They were a solid mass of passion.

Itachi yanked a little on Kakashi’s hair to stop the kiss so he could breath. “Fuck,” he breathed.

Kakashi sat up, stretched his back and continued to thrust into his body. Itachi ran his hands up and down Kakashi’s chest and abdomen, feeling the hard military muscle. Some of it felt like caressing and some felt like he was trying to envision what Kakashi looked like. No matter what, Itachi wasn’t deterred.

Kakashi braced himself on outstretched arms, now closer to his lover. He shifted onto one hand and started pulling at Itachi’s erection. Itachi groaned as he got closer.

Finally, Kakashi was running out of steam. “Itachi,” he sighed, trying to hold back his orgasm. But Kakashi’s voice, so distorted with passion, brought Itachi to the breaking point. Itachi cam with his lover’s name on his lips. Kakashi was powerless before it. If Itachi could see his face, he would have seen the face of a man who had just touched the face of God. It was the best orgasm he’d had to date. He lowered himself to kiss Itachi’s lips and the younger man weakly kissed back.

“I love you, Itachi,” he whispered. He didn’t give Itachi a chance to respond, just kissed him again. When he pulled away, Itachi caressed his face as if he could see it and was admiring it. It was as good as words.

Kakashi could see that Itachi was near sleep. He lay down beside him and pulled him into a spooning position, sitting up for a moment to pull the sheets over them. Itachi was relaxed and seemed like he really wanted to be there in his arms; no tension, nothing like he wanted to leave or was uncomfortable, embarrassed, or regretful. He’d felt the tension of a body that wanted to get a way once before with his last boyfriend. There was none of that here now. He snuggled in and nuzzled his nose in Itachi’s long hair.
His nose encountered the silken texture of his only tie. He smiled. “For next time, I’ll buy you a beautiful eye mask and blackout the eyes for you. I think black with black feathers like a raven. My sweet raven.” He kissed his hair.

“That’s a good idea.”

Kakashi smiled; Itachi wouldn’t say, ‘I love you,’ but he did want a ‘next time.’
Kakashi woke up with a warm body in his arms and a muffled rendition of ‘Inside Out’ by Eve 6. It was a cell phone going off. Itachi sat up. He checked that the necktie was still in place; it was. He turned helplessly to Kakashi who was already getting up to fish through the clothes sprawled on the floor, looking for the phone. He found it and placed it in Itachi’s hand.

“Otouto,” Itachi greeted.

*What’s going on?*

“We *were* sleeping. What time is it?”

*Six.*

“Fuck, Sasuke, you could wait until a descent hour.”

*Are you okay?*

“Yes. I said I’d call you when I woke up.”

*Were you actually going to call?*

“I’ll be home eventually.” Itachi ended the call and growled in frustration.

Itachi had felt Kakashi get back into bed and lay down. He did the same. “Do you have somewhere to be?”

“Not for a few hours; I start at ten. Can you go back to sleep or do you want to go out for breakfast before I take you home?”

“Breakfast sounds wonderful.”

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They both ordered the same big breakfast at the diner. Kakashi had his coffee black; Itachi asked Kakashi to pour the sugar and cream in his.

Unlike before when Itachi used his fork or chopsticks to figure out what was where on his plate, he moved his fork over the plate and asked Kakashi to identify it; he was started to lean on Kakashi a little.

“Can I ask about your previous boyfriend?” Itachi asked once he was settled and started eating.

“How did you know I had one?”

Itachi smiled. “You seemed to know what you were doing.”
“Iruka. He was Hawaiian, olive skinned, long hair like yours, about your height. We dated in high school. I always intended to join the military; got myself into the best shape I could to join the Green Berets. He was fine with it and we both promised to be true to each other while I was gone. I didn’t have any family so I visited him on leave. When we triggered that IED I hesitated to tell him about it; I wanted to wait until the scares healed more so I could send him a picture so he’d know I was okay. Before that could happen, we were deployed on a mission to the middle of nowhere. No mail. It was during that mission that I lost my eye.

“I let him know that lost my left eye and I was being discharged and that I was coming home to him. One of my friends from the military lived closer to the airport and he picked me up and dropped me off at Iruka’s house. I was so happy to be home and see him that I hugged him. I never felt him so tense; he really didn’t want to be there. I let him go and he hit me with a break up speech. He hadn’t even seen me before he decided he wanted to break up with me. It had to be the eye since I didn’t mention the scars before and he was ready with a speech before I came through the door.

“He told me I could stay with him for a month or two until I got a new place and a job. He left, telling me to rest. I think I feared that would happen, that’s why I didn’t tell him about the cuts to my face when it happened. And maybe I was shocked or jaded, but I didn’t say anything, just let him leave, I didn’t even watch him leave.

“I called my buddy on his cell and asked him to go rent a moving truck. Most of my stuff was boxed up anyway. We got everything on the truck—including a few pieces of furniture I considered mine—and I drove it to a motel. I never saw Iruka again. I spent the next few days looking for an apartment and a job. My buddy knew a mechanic and he hired me. He actually likes my eye patch, he feels it gives his garage some street-cred; a few more motorcycles come our way now.”

“I want to punch Iruka.” His voice was even, but Kakashi could tell his eyes were set in a glare behind his glasses.

Kakashi laughed. “Yeah. I really didn’t want another relationship and resisted going out with my friends because of it. I think I resented the fact I missed out on other relationships because of Iruka. I could have had a chance with a few guys in my unit—there are more gay guys in there than you’d think. But in the end, I’m happy. I rather have you than any of them. I’m thinking of sending Iruka a thank you card.”

Itachi laughed. It was the first time Kakashi had heard him laugh. Itachi was finally relaxed enough to laugh. It warmed his heart. He was glad Itachi couldn’t see him since he was grinning like an idiot while he stared at the oblivious young man; not even his mask could hide his pleasure.

“We should both sign it,” Kakashi said. “I kind of want to rub it in his face.”

“That you have a wealthy, attractive new boyfriend?” Itachi joked.

“That I’m happier now than I ever was with him.”

Itachi stopped smiling. “Really?”

“I thought I loved Iruka, but I never felt like this for him or anyone else before.”
Itachi blushed. “Kakashi, think about how much of a liability I am.”

“So the movies might be out, but I don’t see any other inconvenience.”

Itachi sighed. “I warned you.”

“Are you going to give a break up speech too? If so, do it now before I become addicted to you.”

“I don’t want that. I mean, the break up. My last boyfriend really burned me. Sasuke almost killed him. Sasuke’s friends pulled him away. Even his father decided Sasuke was justified and no charges were brought. Our father would have stopped charges anyway.”

“I’ll give you Iruka’s address if you give me his.”

“As tempting as the offer is: no. I don’t want you or my brother going to jail; my brother would have to do the asskicking on my behalf. Anyway, knowing his first name, my father can find him.”

Kakashi chuckled. “Tell me one thing before tonight; is there anything your mother is particularly fond of?”

“Huh?”

“As a gift. A type of wine she likes, flowers, something like that. I think I should bring a gift of some kind for your parents. Maybe your father likes a type of brandy or something?”

“A good bottle of Glenmorangie scotch for my father would be good. My mother, like me, loves tea. I doubt you’d be able to find it in one day, but she’s fond of Earl Grey with lavender. If you can find that you’d defiantly ingratiate yourself with her.”

“The scavenger hunt begins,” Kakashi said lightly. He smiled thinking about how he was going to convince his military buddies to help him scoured the city for tea without telling them why.

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Kakashi brought Itachi home and walked him to the door.

“This is the first time Sasuke hasn’t been waiting at the door to glare at me,” Kakashi observed, glancing around in search for said overprotective brother.

“He should be at work.”

“So soon should I,” Kakashi murmured. “I can finally kiss you goodnight. Or, goodbye.”

Kakashi pressed forward to kiss Itachi against the door, but as Itachi’s back was about to touch the door and his lips, Kakashi’s, the door opened. Kakashi grabbed Itachi to keep him from falling backward. Itachi pressed himself into Kakashi’s chest and turned around to face the door.

There stood Sasuke, scowling.

“Cyclops,” Sasuke greeted Kakashi.

“Otouto,” Itachi reproved.
“Brat,” Kakashi retorted.

Itachi pressed his lips together tightly to keep from laughing out loud.

“You’re turning red, brother.”

Itachi let out his laugh. “He’s got your number, Sasuke.”

“You look happy this morning.”

“You sound grumpy this morning.”

“Father wanted me to wait for you.”

“So you got to sleep in; thank us,” Itachi said.

“Thank the Cyclops,” Kakashi said.

“How was I to sleep in when my brother’s being—”

“Sasuke!” Itachi yelled.

“—by a pirate.”

“Are you wearing the eye patch?” Itachi asked.

“I am. They’re used to seeing me like this at that diner.”

“Don’t tempt my brother tonight.”

“Maskless and my glass eye,” Kakashi assured him.

“Thank you,” Itachi said. “A moment alone, Otouto.”

Sasuke looked at Kakashi expectantly.

“I think he meant a moment alone with me,” Kakashi said.

Sasuke shrank away and shut the door.

“You owe me a kiss,” Itachi said.

“I pay my debts,” Kakashi said and kissed him. “I’ll . . . be back here soon.” He wanted to say that he’d ‘see’ him soon, but was wary of the word. He knocked on the door and Sasuke opened it.

“Goodbye, brat.”

“Hn.” Sasuke gently grabbed Itachi’s arm and led him in.

“Bye,” Itachi said before the door was shut.
Kakashi laughed and departed.

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Sasuke escorted Itachi to his room.

“I’m going to work. Call me if you need anything. Everything is alright, right?”

“Yeah, I’m fine.”

“’K.” Sasuke leaned in to kiss his brother on the forehead before he headed for the door. He stopped half way out. “You know, the Cyclops was a cannibal.” Sasuke closed the door behind him.

Itachi smirked. “That was just one in The Odyssey,” Itachi mumbled to himself.

Itachi threw himself onto his bed. The foam gave just enough without bouncing back, just hugging his body slightly. He reached up to one side and felt the bookshelf. His books were still there. He liked playing his fingers over the smooth, unmarred spines of some of his paperbacks, the creased and bowed spines of others, the cloth hardcover spines and the embossed dust jackets. He loved his books, but they were mostly mute to him now. At least he had audio books now, though Sasuke couldn’t find every book he wanted. Sasuke had offered to read to him, but Itachi couldn’t ask him to spend that much time.

His artwork had been left intact as well. He had his own Giger poster, Brain Salad Surgery. He also had two Amano prints. Thinking about them made Itachi depressed; he’d never see them again. However, Kakashi might appreciate them.

“Play: Instrumental One,” Itachi said. His voice activated computer started playing Apcolyptica’s instrumental version of Metallica’s Nothing Else Matters. His great joy now was music. This piece took him to a forest just after sunrise. It made his soul swell. He would love to dance with someone to this piece.

He smiled as he thought of Kakashi. He’d painted a picture of him in his mind that he altered a little last night. He hoped Kakashi really looked like that. He imagined dancing with him to this music. He wondered if the man danced.

He had enjoyed last night; the sex was great, but he couldn’t say that he loved Kakashi. He really wasn’t sure yet. Being blind and having thought he was in love before, made him consider how much of love was visual. He knew Kakashi, but he couldn’t see him. Itachi was certain if he could see Kakashi he would have been able to say he loved him back. But Kakashi had not pressed him or seemed disappointed that he hadn’t returned the sentiment.

Sometimes Kakashi seemed too perfect. Itachi turned over onto his stomach and hugged his pillow. He didn’t know what to do. Should he allow Kakashi to ruin his own life by attaching himself to a cripple? If that was Kakashi’s choice, who was Itachi to stop him? Kakashi had been so good to him. Yeah, he probably did love him.

Everloving by Moby was playing as he drifted to sleep.

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Itachi opened the door that evening.

“I’m really nervous,” he told Kakashi before letting him in.

“Shouldn’t I be the nervous one?” Kakashi retorted.

“Are you?”

“A little. But I love you so much, I’m confidant. After Afghanistan, this doesn’t rattle me.”

“You’ve never met my father. Most men would rather face down a hundred members of Hezbollah than my father.”

Itachi pulled him inside, but Sasuke was the one who led them into the living room where Fugaku and Mikoto waited. Mikoto was beautiful, looking much like her sons. Fugaku was a severe looking man with the same tear troughs in his cheeks as his eldest son. They were standing to meet Kakashi. Fugaku put out a hand.

“Fugaku Uchiha.”

“Kakashi Hatake.”

“My wife, Mikoto.”

Kakashi took Mikoto’s offered hand and bent as if he would kiss her hand, but he merely made the gesture, careful not to overstep. She smiled at him.

Kakashi opened his messenger bag and pulled out a box of tea and gave it to Mikoto. “Itachi said you were fond of tea. I hope you like it.”

“It’s actually my favorite,” Mikoto said with a wide smile.

“And I thought you’d appreciate this, sir.” Kakashi handed Fugaku a sixteen year old bottle of Glenmorangie.

“I see you have good taste in spirits,” Fugaku said appreciatively.

“Dinner is nearly ready,” Mikoto said. “We can go into the dining room.”

Sasuke led the way, allowing Kakashi to guide his brother.

Fugaku and Mikoto sat on one side of the table while Kakashi and Sasuke sat on either side of Itachi opposite them.

“What do you do for a living, Kakashi?” Fugaku asked, already knowing the answer.

“Mechanic. But I’m going to school part time.”

“What are you studying?”

“Literature.”
Itachi looked at him—or rather, turned his head toward him. He didn’t know that. He’d not asked what Kakashi was studying when Kakashi mentioned being in college before.

“I would like to teach it eventually; reading’s always been my favorite pastime.”

“We have a large library you might enjoy,” Mikoto said. She was about to say Itachi loved to read, but stopped herself. She looked at Itachi sympathetically so Kakashi knew that was what she was going to say.

Dinner was served. Sasuke whispered to Itachi what was where on his plate. Fugaku and Mikoto watched as Kakashi looked to make sure Itachi was doing alright just as Sasuke was.

“What about your family?” Mikoto asked.

“My parents both died when I was young. My adopted mother died while I was in basic training. No siblings or other family.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Thank you. I have many friends from the military though.”

Fugaku gave an approving nod. “Itachi told us. Special Forces, correct?”

“Yes.” Kakashi rubbed his lower face where the unhidden scars marred his face. He’d decided not to cover the scars; he didn’t want to always hide them from Itachi’s family if they stayed together, so he might as well be honest about them from the start. “I have more souvenirs from the Afghanistan than just friends I’m afraid. At least I didn’t come home with PTSD. They hold Green Berets and Navy SEALs to a higher psychological standard.”

“That’s good to hear,” Fugaku said. “How long have you been back?”

“Over half a year. Came back in . . . September. I was able to get settled and registered for college just in time for the spring semester.”

“September? That’s good. July and August was a bad time around here.” Fugaku was grave.

“Really? Out in the desert, we got absolutely no news from home.” All the Uchiha except Itachi were a little shocked that Kakashi wasn’t familiar with the ‘bad times’ in Konoha the year before.

“So you’re from Konoha?” Mikoto changed the subject.

Kakashi realized that Itachi must have lost his sight in July by the sudden shift. “Yes. I went to the Konoha Academy.”

“Did you have classes with Hiruzen Sarutobi?”

“I also did detention with him.”

Fugaku chuckled. “We named Sasuke after Hiruzen’s father. Sasuke Sarutobi was the best head master and the best teacher the Academy ever had. And he kicked my ass in tenth grade for blowing up half the faculty bathroom with M-80s.”
“He was a good friend to us,” Mikoto said. “He even presided over our wedding. His son, Hiruzen taught both our sons.”

Itachi relaxed after that exchange. Not only did his parents seem to approve by talking about their wedding and seemed to like the fact Kakashi went to the same school as the entire Uchiha clan, but they had also deftly side stepped the ‘unpleasantness.’

After dinner, when they had all moved to the living room, Sasuke dragged Itachi into the kitchen ostensibly to help with the coffee, but Itachi being blind made it clear that was bullshit.

“I think I’ll help,” Kakashi said after they left. Fugaku and Mikoto nodded approvingly.

Kakashi entered the dining room and was about to enter the kitchen when he heard Sasuke say, “You haven’t told him?” Kakashi leaned in to listen.

“I’m scared to.”

“But you’ve slept together; he must have seen it.”

“I asked to be blindfolded and he agreed. I really appreciated that he didn’t try to convince me I didn’t need it.”

Sasuke cursed. “He has to know sooner or later. How doesn’t he know? It was in the news.”

“You heard, he was in the military at the time. And not all of it was in the news.”

“It was national—international—news. Fuck. He has to know,” Sasuke said gently. “It’ll only be worse if someone else mentions it. I’ll tell him.”

“If he wants to break up with me, I’d rather he just tell you and not tell me in person. It would hurt less.”

“Tachi,” Sasuke sighed sympathetically. “I don’t think he’ll leave.”

“Yeah, he will. That’s why I’ve hidden it.”

The conversation was about over and Kakashi was certain he wouldn’t hear what they were talking about by listening at the door. Kakashi pushed the door open in such a way it didn’t look like he had heard anything.

“I thought you could use another pair of hands.”

Kakashi left that night with a just a hug and a kiss on Itachi’s cheek. Itachi turned to face his parents after the door shut, his face twisted with anxiety.

“I like him,” Fugaku pronounced.

“I’m so happy for you,” Mikoto said, giving her eldest son a hug. “We both approve. I hope he makes you happy.”

“Thank you.” Itachi was relieved. He still wasn’t sure he loved Kakashi, but he did want his family to accept him. Sasuke might take more time to convince. But that might be a moot point once
Kakashi learned the truth.

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Kakashi had just left the estate when his cell phone rang. He checked the number, Sasuke. He pulled over and answered it.

“Yeah?”

*Kill two hours then park on the street. I’ll come get you. There’s something we need to talk about, but I’d prefer my parents didn’t know about this little meeting.*

“Alright.”

Kakashi hung up and just sat there. What wasn’t Itachi telling him?

-----

Sasuke met Kakashi at the gates exactly two hours later. Sasuke led him into the library. He gestured for Kakashi to sit, Sasuke remained standing. He was nervous and when he turned to face his brother’s boyfriend, he found it impossible to tell him what really happened to his brother. He motioned for Kakashi to wait and Sasuke gather up a few files and put them on the table in front of Kakashi.

“This is what really happened to Itachi in Africa,” Sasuke said. “There’s the newspaper reports, read those first, that’s what the public was told. These other files elaborate.”

Sasuke went to sit out of Kakashi’s field of vision. Kakashi started on the newspaper accounts.

Itachi was in Africa to view his family’s holding like he told Kakashi, but from there the story differed completely from what Kakashi had assumed.

A terrorist group, Akatsuki, kidnapped him. He was held for nearly a month for a large ransom. Fugaku agreed to pay it immediately, but there were problems with the dead drops. Finally, the authorities ascertained Itachi’s location and raided the place. They found Itachi alive, but the terrorists had gouged out Itachi’s eyes. The terrorists were all killed.

It had been like a serial novel in the press. They followed every detail of this real life drama concerning one of the wealthiest and most powerful families in the world.

Shocked, Kakashi turned to the official report.

The reports themselves made Kakashi raise his eyes brows. “CONFIDENTIAL,” “SEALED,” and “TREAT AS ORIGINAL” were stamped on them. This was serious shit. But then again, it was a terrorist incident.

The facts were the same for a while: Itachi was in Africa to inspect his family’s holdings and he was kidnapped by Akatsuki. The official report was more detailed about what happened to Itachi during that month; it even included Itachi’s official statements which Kakashi had a hard time reading, imagining those terrible words in Itachi’s voice, probably broken and uncomfortable.

He didn’t just lose his eyes. Before the problems with the dead drops, Itachi had been raped. Then
first dead drop had been staked out and Akatsuki knew it. They took one eye. The second dead drop was also compromised. They took the other eye.

It was at this point Fugaku took matters into his own hands. He hired mercenaries to find and kill the terrorists and bring his son home alive. They slaughtered the group and did find Itachi. Kakashi could barely read the details. When Itachi came home he was institutionalized for several weeks for depression. He, of course, had been traumatized by the whole episode.

Kakashi sat back and rubbed his face. Wow, was all he could think for a minute while he digested it all. Then he was impressed at how normal Itachi seemed now.

No wonder he didn’t want Kakashi to be rough with him or engage in dirty talk, they probably said some disgusting things as they raped him. Kakashi wanted to run upstairs and take Itachi into his arms.

Sasuke came over to sit across from him after Kakashi put the files down and sat back. “Itachi’s previous boyfriend stuck around a little, knowing that just dumping him as soon as he came home would be too devastating. But he did leave him. I’m really not sure if it was because he was blind, damaged, or the rape; maybe it was the combination. I can understand it, but it was still a shit thing to do. If he really loved Itachi, it wouldn’t have mattered.”

“I’m in awe of him,” Kakashi said. “To come through so much . . .”

“He has recovered well,” Sasuke agreed. “We’ve all been there for him. To the point he feels smothered. I refused to leave him alone in that hospital; I stayed with him 24/7 in that room. I love my brother more than anything. If those guys hadn’t all been killed, I would have personally seen to it they were.”

“I thought I understood your protectiveness before, but . . . thank you for not killing me.”

“Just treat him well. Our parents liked you. So, you’re not breaking up with him?”

“Never. Can I see him right now?”

“I told him that I was going to tell you about this and it made him anxious; he’s probably still awake. Come with me and wait in the hall.”

Sasuke escorted Kakashi upstairs. Kakashi waited as Sasuke went into Itachi room.

“‘Tachi,” Sasuke whispered.

“Yeah,” Itachi whispered back.

Sasuke eased the door shut. “I talked to Kakashi, I showed him everything. He doesn’t want to leave you. He’s going to stay. He really does love you. He’s waiting in the hall; he wants to see you.”

“Alright. Leave the light off.”

“I’ll get him.” Sasuke went out and motioned for Kakashi to enter Itachi’s sanctum. Kakashi approached the bed slowly and sat down next to Itachi and took him in his arms.
“None of that makes me love you any less. Now I pathetically love you more. I will never let anyone touch you again.”

Itachi broke down and cried into Kakashi’s chest.

“Let me stay the night. No sex.” Kakashi was asking Sasuke as much as Itachi.

“Please.”

“I’d advise leaving before six,” Sasuke said. “Don’t want our parents to know you stayed the night.”

“I have to get home and get changed before work anyway. I’ll stay until then.”

Sasuke backed out of the room and silently shut the door.

Itachi continued to cry. Kakashi held him tighter and put a hand in his hair to pet and comfort him. He put his lips to Itachi’s forehead, but didn’t try to stop him from crying; it was better to let it out.

Finally, Itachi quieted and pulled away. “I’m so tired.”

Kakashi moved to let Itachi lie down. He lay next to him and put on arm over his side. “I’ll wake you before I go home. I love you, Itachi.”

“I love you too.” And Itachi meant it.

Sasuke leaned against the wall. He was relieved and tired. He pushed off the wall and headed to his own door. He stopped seeing a pair of figures in the corridor. Fugaku and Mikoto stood there.

“It went well?” Fugaku asked.

“Itachi didn’t want to tell him, afraid he’d run off to. Kakashi’s not going anywhere.”

“Good. Get some sleep, Sasuke. Good work.”

They all slept peacefully that night, especially Itachi who was wrapped in Kakashi’s arms all night.

Chapter End Notes

Itachi (or I, depending on how meta you want to be) chose “Inside Out” by Eve 6 for his brother’s ringtone because of the lyrics “I would swallow my pride, I would choke on the rinds, but the lack of thereof would leave me empty inside” because Sasuke’s so prideful, but can also be so sweet.

If you’re interested, the playlist Itachi is listening to is real, here’s one of my personal playlists (he had it on random):

Master of Puppets (my own edit of the just the slow bridge) – Apocalyptica
Until It Sleeps – Apocalyptica
Nothing Else Matters – Apocalyptica
Estasi Dell Anima – David Sardy (Zombieland film score)
Animus Vox – The Glitch Mob
Let the Dead Get In - Fiachra Trench, Hans Zimmer, Henning Lohner & Martin Tillman (The Ring/The Ring 2 Soundtrack)
Secret Karma Serenade – Yasushi Ishii (Hellsing soundtrack)
Act of Demon or Work of God – Yasushi Ishii (Hellsing soundtrack)
Fabricated Background – Yasushi Ishii (Hellsing soundtrack)
Victor’s Piano Solo – Danny Elfman (Corpse Bride Soundtrack)
The Piano Duet – Danny Elfman (Corpse Bride Soundtrack)
The Promise – Michael Nyman
Everloving – Moby
Guitar Flute And String – Moby
Ruska – Apocalyptica
Farewell – Apocalyptica
End Title – The Album Leaf (Nightmare Revisited)
My person edit of Eric Draven’s guitar solo in the movie The Crow – Graeme Revell
Nabbed – Yoshida Brothers
Winter: Ghosts of a Future Lost – Clint Mansell (Requiem For a Dream Soundtrack)
Luc Aeterna – Clint Mansell (Requiem For a Dream Soundtrack)
Luc Aeterna – Requiem For a Dream – Remix 2 – Clint Mansell (Requiem For a Dream Soundtrack)
The Power Within – Paul Reeves
Kakashi had his set his phone to a vibrate alarm at 5am. He tried not to growl as he spooned Itachi and phone against his ass in his back pocket went off. He turned it off and stroked Itachi’s forehead to ease him awake.

“Hmmm?” Itachi whined.

“I’m going to sneak out before your parents realize I spent the night.”

“Hmmm.”

“I’ll call you later.” Kakashi got up and started putting on the few clothes he took off for comfort’s sake.

“Mmmm, Kakashi?”

“Yeah?”

“I don’t really remember what was real and what was a dream.”

“Sasuke gave me the file. I know everything.”

“And you stayed?”

“Always.”

“Thank you. For staying.”

“I wouldn’t leave for anything like that. I want to protect you more.”

Itachi was silent a few seconds. “That file . . . didn’t have everything.”

Kakashi’s face dropped. What the fuck could not be in that file? He was raped, beaten, gang-raped, had his eyes gouged out . . . raped. “Nothing could throw me off. If you want to talk, call me any time.” He crawled back on the bed and kissed Itachi’s lips. “I mean it. I can take calls at work and I’m on vibrate in class. If I don’t answer otherwise, I’m on the road. I’m here for you if want to talk or whatever. Even if you just want company. Got it? Call me, please.”

“Got it.”

“Go back to sleep.” Kakashi kissed him briefly again. “I’ll make my escape before your parents
find me. Oh, what about the gate? I’m parked on the street.”

“Security will let you out.”

“Goodnight.”

“Thank you, Kakashi.”

Kakashi slipped out the door and tried not to look like a criminal as he crept down the stairs and out the front door. He couldn’t help looking back at the house and saw all the lights still off except the ones they kept on all the time in the hall.

So he got away.

He knew who Fugaku Uchiha really was after all: the most fearsome business man in the world. Fucking his oldest son—or seeming to—was a death sentence, especially after what happened in Africa. He thanked all the gods that they had a paved driveway and not a gravel one.

He made it to the gate which buzzed and opened suddenly. Security. Kakashi smiled. Hopefully, they loved and pitied Itachi enough to protect his boyfriend. He waved to whatever camera had picked him up and walked to his car. There was a note on the windshield.

Thank you.
- Uchiha Fugaku

Kakashi’s stomach dropped. He checked the tires. Intact. All the windows intact. He sighed in relief. Uchiha-chichi approved.

Kakashi sat in the car for a minute. What in the hell else happened to Itachi? Then again, how could Itachi be repeatedly raped and blinded and still stand to have Kakashi touch him? Itachi was hiding something when he gave those interviews. Was he not raped after all? But then why say he was? And the medical exam proved he was repeatedly and sometimes violently raped.

But Kakashi smiled a little. Whatever Itachi hid from the investigators and—most likely—his family, he at least hinted at to him. Itachi would tell him in time or he wouldn’t have hinted at the information at all.

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Itachi insisted paying for dinner that night and then they just walked through downtown Konoha, somewhere Itachi was familiar with and remembered. They didn’t mention last night/the morning at all.

Part of Kakashi wanted to sleep with Itachi again, but another was afraid to after what he read. He still held him close as they walked and petted him, but he was a little fearful of having sex with him again. Then again, he didn’t want Itachi to think that he was disgusted or put off by what he read. He decided to be honest with Itachi about that.

Itachi asked to sit down before they went back to the car. Kakashi led him to a bench and Itachi snuggled up next to him. Summer was swiftly approaching, but the nights were cold.

“Where are we exactly, what’s around us?”
“The Yakama Flower shop is right behind us and the Ichiraku Ramen place is opposite us.”

“Ichiraku Ramen. I like their food, but my ex loved the place. He’d eat nothing but ramen if it was possible. I wouldn’t be surprised if he’s there right now. You see a blond?”

“No.”

“Good. I don’t want to encounter him now.”

“I do. I want to rub his nose in how worthless he is.”

Itachi hummed with amusement.

“Um, Itachi, I love you and desire you, but it’s a little awkward knowing what happened . . . I do want to sleep with you, but I don’t want . . . you know. I could sleep with you every night, but I don’t want to make you uncomfortable or bring up bad memories so I feel . . . I’d rather you tell me when you want to have sex and believe me I’m all for it whenever you want to. But I don’t consider you damaged or anything like that, I just . . . If you’re okay with it, I’d ask you for sex nearly every night, I just want to be considerate to you.”

Itachi smiled. “Well, that was difficult to say. I understand. It was traumatic, but I wasn’t a virgin, that helped. Three of them weren’t as . . . brutal as the others, so that helped too. As for the ones who were brutal, you’d have to try very hard to remind me of them. Hidan was a true sadist.”

Kakashi remembered that it was Hidan who had gouged out his eyes. “Kisame was just so large. He wasn’t brutal, just too big. I didn’t think my body would ever go back to normal. I don’t really feel ashamed about it—the psychologist told me I shouldn’t anyway—but I did climax several times. Sasori, for one, loved to make me cum; he had some odd kinks; his pleasure was almost all vicarious. He was a strange one. He never . . . you know. He just used his fingers. He was quiet and very strange. Things weren’t hellish every day.”

“That makes sense. So . . .”

“I’m up for it anytime. Just don’t belittle me or talk too graphically; some of them would.”

“How about tonight? Go back to my place?”

“Yes.”

Itachi called his brother while Kakashi drove them towards his apartment and the little brat didn’t make a big deal of it this time; Kakashi accepting Itachi despite what he went through had warmed Sasuke up to him significantly.

Itachi huffed when he got off the phone. “Seems my parents have the house to themselves tonight; Sasuke’s going to stay as late as possible at Hinata’s before Neji throws him out. You didn’t meet either of them did you?”

“No, I didn’t.”

“They were with Sasuke and I at the club when we met. Sasuke wants to marry Hinata, but he’s too nervous to ask. He’s had that ring for a month. Mother stopped him from planning the wedding because that’s apparently the bride’s favorite thing.”
“From the sounds of it, I’d say Neji is like Sasuke is to me?”

Itachi laughed. “I hadn’t realized it, but yeah, sort of. Neji always chaperones Hinata. I’m sure Sasuke would have had sex with her at least once by now if not for him. Their family is strictly after marriage.”

“Maybe that’s what wrong with him, he needs to get laid.”

“He’s no different. He went through a rebellious stage—which nearly killed me. I think he slept with a quarter of the women in Konoha. He was feeling pressured to live up to my example and the stress got to him. He still graduated second in his class. That’s no reflection on him, he was up against an absolute genius. We Uchiha are called geniuses, but that guy . . . You might now his father, General Shikaku Nara.”

Kakashi scoffed. “Of course; met him once. I didn’t realize he had a son.”

“Shikamaru is the only person who could rival Sasuke academically. Perfect grades. Sasuke fouled up a chemistry formula and I didn’t hear the end of it until he started college.

“Sasuke was in the same class as Hinata, but didn’t take any notice of her; she was shy and quiet. She was in love with his best friend, but he never paid her any mind either. Then when they were in college, he partnered up with her for an assignment and told her his friend was dating someone else and it was pretty serious. Sasuke really took a liking to her after talking with her. They were friends for a while—that’s what made him calm down from his sex addict stage—then he asked her to go out with him. I hope they get married soon and have a ton of kids. We’ll have to have dinner together sometime; either the two couples or with our parents too. Well, two couples and Neji.”

“Sure. I think I might like Neji—just to annoy Sasuke.”

Finally, they arrived and Kakashi guided him up to his apartment. One thing about having a blind boyfriend, he didn’t have to worry about the place being messy since Itachi couldn’t see it. As long as the walkways were clear. His motorcycle gear was tossed on a chair, his clothes from work were strewn on the bedroom floor, and he’d been cleaning his gun this afternoon and left half the supplies on the table; all he had to do was kick his clothes to the wall and Itachi would never know the difference. It felt a little deceitful, but what was he supposed to do, tell Itachi that the place was a mess? Why?

Before Kakashi could play the good host and ask if Itachi wanted anything, Itachi pulled him closer. He couldn’t see to kiss him so Kakashi was the one to initiate it.

After making out for a minute or so, Kakashi started moving his hands under Itachi’s clothing. Itachi didn’t balk at all. Kakashi’s warm, slightly calloused hands were so reassuring rubbing his waist and around to his back. His hands dipped lower over Itachi’s ass to push Itachi’s pants and boxers down so that they barely clung to the swell of his ass and his growing erection. Itachi’s skin was so smooth, Kakashi felt a little guilty for touching him with rough hands.

Kakashi’s hands traveled upward. His progress was arrested by a scar. It was large and even smoother than the rest of his skin. Itachi shrank away from the touch deeper into Kakashi’s arms.

“Sorry,” Kakashi whispered and moved his hands back down. “Does it hurt?”
Itachi shook his head. “Scar from a piece of metal welded to the floor,” Itachi explained. He didn’t need to say more; from the size it was probably from more than falling on it.

“Anything else I should know; I don’t want to screw up with you. I want you to feel safe.”

“I do feel safe with you. Just keep the dirty talk to a minimum for now and don’t ‘strongly encourage’ me to do anything.”

Kakashi stripped the rest of Itachi’s clothes and then discarded his own. He kissed Itachi again, pulling at Itachi’s erection. Itachi slid a hand down Kakashi’s toned body to his hard cock. They were content to slowly jack each other until the sweat from their palms and the just not quite enough precum started to chafe.

Kakashi guided Itachi to the bedroom. He laid Itachi down and took him into his mouth. He played his tongue over the head while he fisted the base with one hand and rubbed his balls with the other.

Itachi moaned. “Fuck, Kakashi, that feels so fucking good. I wish I could see my cock sliding in and out of your lips.”

Kakashi chuckled, sending vibrations through the organ in his mouth. *I thought we didn’t like dirty talk.*

When his jaw started getting sore, Kakashi took his mouth away, but continued to jerk Itachi’s wet cock. He moved up to lick at Itachi’s skin. He didn’t see Itachi wince at remembering that being done to him before and the tensing of muscles was normal in his experience. The last time wasn’t so bad for Itachi because they just fucked and Kakashi talked more.

“Say something, please.” Itachi’s voice sounded lust filled; Kakashi didn’t detect the fear.

“I love you. Your skin tastes wonderful.”

That calmed him. If he could see, he’d be assured by the room and seeing Kakashi that he wasn’t back in Africa, but all he had was Kakashi’s voice and the comfortable bed beneath him, not hard concrete and a shard of metal sticking into his back. He did have another sense available to him.

“Would you find it too perverted to give me one of your shirts with your scent on it?”

“Not at all.” Kakashi gave a parting lap to his nipple. He grabbed the shirt he’d just been wearing. Still warm. He laid it on Itachi’s arm. Itachi clutched it and put it against his face.

When Kakashi didn’t return to his previous occupation, Itachi asked, “Getting off on just looking at me sniffing your shirt?”

“A little actually.” Kakashi got back on the bed and continued, teasing the younger male’s nipples and pulling on his cock.

The newer familiar scent calmed him even more. He felt safe again. As long as he could smell Kakashi he felt safe. He hoped that would always hold true. He did like it too. Not oniony or foul. Kakashi smelled like . . . he couldn’t describe it, but it was mixed with the faint scent of Irish Spring and just a touch of cologne. He did love it.
Itachi getting closer to the edge, Kakashi removed his hand and lapped at Itachi’s exposed neck.

“Ready, love?”

Itachi turned his head away from the shirt. “I’ve been ready. You just like to tease.”

“True.”

Kakashi reached for the lube on his nightstand and began to prep the Uchiha. He suppressed a growl as he pressed his face into Itachi’s neck. He was careful not to scare his traumatized young lover. His body was so warm and smooth, so perfect. He tried to think about Iruka and compare them, but he couldn’t. There was no comparison. Iruka was almost erased from his mind.

“Itachi,” Kakashi sighed.

“You’re enjoying this far too much when you haven’t even started yet.”

“You have no idea how good you feel.” It slipped his mind to be careful about what he said, that that might be something one of the rapists said. Fortunately, it wasn’t, but Itachi could imagine one of them saying it; two had said something similar.

“How long are you going to finger me? I’d rather feel something more substantial.”

“I’ll ravish you as long as you want.”

“Fuck me unconscious.”

Kakashi could not repress a growl this time. “I love you.”

With all the fingering, Kakashi slipped into Itachi’s body easily, his silken insides slipping over his throbbing cock. Once he was all in, he pressed his lower body against Itachi’s, feeling his balls and cock against his stomach. He moved Itachi’s legs so they were pressed against his sides. He caressed Itachi’s hip and up his thigh, teasing the side of his knee.

“You’re so beautiful, Itachi; I just want to stare.”

“Want me to do the work then?”

“Hmmm, I’d love for you to ride me, but right now, I want to make love to you.”

“Then do it already.”

“You are impatient.”

“‘There was never yet philosopher that could endure the toothache patiently.’”

“Fuck. You can quote Shakespeare during sex?”

“Get used to it.”

“I love it.”
“I can’t believe you recognized it.”

“I’m studying lit.”

“‘Sex is but a momentary itch,’ now scratch it or I will kick you in the chest.” He hit his knee against Kakashi’s ribs to enforce the point.

Kakashi laughed. He started to move and Itachi started making delicious sounds he didn’t last time. Itachi was more relaxed and he grunted every so often when Kakashi hit his prostate. Kakashi shifted all his weight on his legs and put his hands on Itachi’s ribs. Warm and alive; just that made him happy. He could feel every breath and even his heartbeat. He pulled his hands down the sides of his lithe body to hold onto his trim waste. His eyes devoured the body before him as he thrust leisurely in and out of it.

“Itachi,” Kakashi sighed as his orgasm approached.

“I’m so close, Kakashi.”

“Cum and I’ll lick you clean.” Once again, Kakashi forgot the dirty talk rule, but Itachi didn’t mind. He was reconsidering that little rule. ‘Take it like a bitch’ and ‘I can’t wait to whore you out’ were still out of the question though.

Kakashi grabbed Itachi’s cock and loosely fist ed it. Itachi didn’t last much longer and Kakashi stopped trying to hold back.

True to his word, Kakashi moved down to lick up the cum sprayed on Itachi’s stomach and the remnant on the head of his cock. He gave it a kiss.

Kakashi climbed back up to lay next to Itachi. He grabbed Itachi’s hand and rubbed circles on the top of it with his thumb.

Itachi was still wearing his sunglasses. He touched them, wanting to take them off, but still a little hesitant. “Do you want to see?”

Kakashi’s attention had been caught by Itachi’s movement. “I do, but I respect your wanting to hide it.” Kakashi huffed. “I do the same.”

“You didn’t know before. Now that you know how, I don’t mind you seeing as much. I’ve always been terribly vain. I’m glad you didn’t know me before; I was a vain, arrogant, bastard. They didn’t destroy my pride, but vanity seems silly now, don’t you think? I feel I have nothing to hide from you anymore and I want to fully relax without the glasses.”

“Tell me one thing. Do you take the glasses off at home?”

Itachi smirked briefly at Kakashi’s insight. “Never around my parents. Sasuke . . . I don’t like to let him see, but I feel most comfortable with him. He doesn’t go silent when he sees them. He was with me all that time in the hospital. If my being repeatedly raped doesn’t put you off, scars won’t.”

Kakashi hated hearing Itachi say that, reaffirming with his own voice what Kakashi had read. “No, they won’t.”
Itachi took off his sunglasses. The lids were there and they bludged as if he still had his eyes. Kakashi knew they were glasses eyes like his own. Itachi’s lids had been stitched shut. His eyelashes had been left so that it just looked like Itachi had his eyes closed. The scars weren’t too bad. From what Kakashi read, several people held Itachi still, one holding his eye open. Hidan used a knife to stab the eye and pull it out. It didn’t quite work on the left one and cut through it. He stuck the blade in the side and was then able to scoop it out, cutting the flesh and muscle inside the socket. He then sliced the nerve. Kakashi knew how it felt to have his eye sliced; he tried not to shutter thinking about it.

The lids were cut as well. Itachi had managed to squeeze his eyes shut attempting to protect them, slicing the lids on the knife and Hidan had taken a few extra swipes, not quite making ‘x’ marks on them. Kakashi didn’t want to imagine it, but he knew Itachi must have been screaming. Kakashi had been too hyped up on adrenalin and rage and duty to give his eye much thought when he lost his; he had to save the lives of his comrades, fuck his eye. But Itachi was being held down and saw it coming. And it hadn’t been quick.

“They’re not that bad,” Kakashi said. “It’s knowing how they were made that gets to me. The scars are nothing; I’ve got my share. You had me thinking they looked like some gruesome Halloween decoration. You just have your eyes closed with scarred lids, that’s all.” Kakashi threaded his fingers in Itachi’s hair and moved over him to kiss both eyes, right then left, the opposite order they were taken. Itachi didn’t pull away, but his muscles tightened.

“I’d rather cover them and let you forget how I got them,” Itachi said. “I wish I could forget.”

“I don’t care about them. They don’t really mar your beauty.” Kakashi didn’t say that he wanted to see what Itachi’s eyes had looked like. He could look at Sasuke’s black eyes and imagine it, but he did wish he could look into Itachi’s ebony eyes. “I’m so happy you trust me.”

“Thank you for still wanting me despite I was raped. My previous boyfriend couldn’t deal with a blind boyfriend, but he also didn’t want me anymore because I was violated and dirtied. That’s why I didn’t want you to know. I was obviously damaged goods being blind, but the additional physical and mental trauma . . . I wanted it to last as long as possible before I told you. The longer I waited, the harder it was getting. My parents liked you and then they and Sasuke realized you didn’t know . . . I couldn’t prevent it any longer and I was convinced you would leave or at least cool off.”

“Never. I’m sorry that idiot painted all men in such a light. But I’m glad that left you free so I could have you. Tell me his name and I’ll rub his nose in everything.”

“No. I don’t love him anymore—he broke my heart—but he’s suffered enough. He knows what he did and he has to live with that.”

“Alright.”

“It’s been an emotional day.”

“Get some sleep. You’re safe.”

“I know. I feel very safe with you. Helps you’re a trained killer.”

Kakashi snickered. “Yes, that would tend to make people feel safe. Or terrified, depending on how much to trust said trained killer.”
“I trust you. On your back.”

“You only trust me when I’m on my back.”

Itachi lightly slapped him with the hand already pressed to Kakashi’s cheek. “I want to snuggle up to you while you’re on your back.”

Kakashi obeyed. Itachi put his arm over Kakashi’s stomach and snuggled his head into the crook of Kakashi’s shoulder. Kakashi bent his elbow to play his fingertips in his hair. Itachi fell asleep just as Kakashi’s arm fell asleep too. Kakashi pouted; he’d be spending the next hour or so freeing his arm before Itachi’s head cut off all blood to his arm and it had to be amputated.

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Kakashi got off work at five and had classes three times a week at six for an hour and one class for three hours on Thursday, so there were a few days they couldn’t spend very much time together, but they tired, often nothing but dinner. On Saturday, Kakashi took Itachi to the mall, just to walk and maybe see if there was anything he could give him as a gift.

Itachi had his arms wrapped around Kakashi’s left arm. He wore his glasses and carried his cane against his chest as a signal that he was blind. It was no secret what had happened to the Uchiha and people could recognize him regardless; everyone made a path for the pair in deference of Itachi.

They were walking leisurely through the crowd when they heard someone call Kakashi’s name. Kakashi turned slowly so as not to unbalance his lover. Behind his mask—which Itachi told him he didn’t mind if he wore with his eye patch—Kakashi’s jaw dropped.

“Iruka?” Kakashi couldn’t believe he’d run into his former lover like this, especially with his new lover on his arm.

Itachi scowled, but he wasn’t scowling in Iruka’s direction until Iruka spoke again.

Iruka came over, but didn’t come too close because of the person tucked against Kakashi’s body. “It’s so nice to see you. I, ah, see you have a girlfriend now.”

Itachi straightened. “I am not a girl,” he growled, his deep, resonating, but beautiful voice left no doubt of Itachi’s gender.

“Oh, sorry.”

“What do you want, Iruka?” Kakashi asked with a bored voice.

“It’s been several months; I was just kinda glad to see you. I didn’t know what happened to you. How are you?”

“Excellent. Working on my degree, got a decent job, and I’ve got a perfect boyfriend. How ‘bout you?”

Iruka knew he was getting his nose pushed in his own mess and lowered his eyes. “The same as before.”
Itachi growled. “Please point me at him, Kakashi.”

“No, he’d just sidestep you.” Kakashi put an arm around Itachi’s shoulders as much to restrain him as comfort him. “Excuse us, Iruka, this is the first day we’ve had together for nearly a week.”

“Sorry,” Iruka said, but he mouthed to Kakashi, ‘call me.’ Kakashi nodded and turned to continue escorting Itachi around.

Kakashi smiled because Itachi was fuming, brisling. He cooed the younger man.

“You should have let me deck him.”

“Forgive me, but you couldn’t see to aim.”

“I don’t care if I looked like a girl, but I could have just flailed around until I hit him and pummeled him.”

Kakashi hugged him tighter against his side, smiling. “Come on, I’ll buy you a frappe or something for that sweet tooth of yours.”

“Sugar is not an accepted method to calm someone down.”

“No, but it’s something I know you’ll enjoy. Is there anything else you want? I’ll get you anything.”

“You don’t have the money to get me anything.”

“No, but your brother wants me to dote on you so he’d probably reimburse me.”

“So I’m getting love tokens from my brother.”

Kakashi kissed his temple. “If I could afford it, I would dote on you like that.” Kakashi suddenly pulled Itachi to a stop. “Let’s go in here.”

Itachi had no idea where they were, there wasn’t even music to judge by.

“Can I see that one?” Kakashi asked.

“What are you browsing?” Itachi asked.

“How would you feel if I said knives?”

“Like you’re an ex-soldier,” Itachi shrugged.

“Ooo, serrated.”

Itachi laughed. He rubbed the smooth, cool glass of the case in front of him to get some kind of tactile data since he couldn’t see. Kakashi asked to see several items and finally chose something.

Kakashi took his hand and rubbed his fingers. “Are you cold?”
“Just my hands.”

“You know what they say, ‘cold hands, warm heart.’”

“That’s just stupid.”

Kakashi laughed and brought Itachi’s hand to his lips to kiss it. “Is there anything you want to do or should we go home after I buy this?”

“Buy me that frappe and a box of chocolate, then we can go home.”

“Alright.”

“What did you choose?”

“Double bladed Irish military knife. I’m thinking about the kukri knife too, though that’s more for display.”

“Ask my brother for some money; I’d like to give you something.”

“Not this, this is my own stupid purchase. You tell me something I can buy you and I’ll let you pay for something I want.”

“I’ll think about it.”

Kakashi took his change and his bag and escorted Itachi to the nearest chocolatier.

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Kakashi called Iruka when he got home. “What do you want?”

“Can we meet? I want to really apologize and just talk.”

Kakashi sighed. “Fine. There’s a Starbuck’s on Sixth with tables outside. I’ll meet you there.”

Ten minutes later, Kakashi had ordered his overpriced black coffee and waited for his former lover. Iruka arrived about five minutes later.

“Want to get something first?” Kakashi asked.

Iruka nodded and went into the building, back quickly with a weird ass concoction if all the crap written down the side was any indication. He sat awkwardly across from Kakashi.

“So, you wanted to apologize?”

Sasuke nearly slammed on his breaks in traffic when he recognized the white hair and mask and that he was with someone other than Itachi. He made an illegal turn and parked nearby. He got out so fast he was nearly strangled by his seatbelt.

“It was a shit thing to do, I know it,” Iruka said. “But then you were gone when I got back. You changed your number and everything; I couldn’t get in touch with you.”
“I was pissed and disappointed. I didn’t think I could trust you after that.”

Sasuke hurried over, slickly picking up a discarded Starbucks cup from the garbage and sat down behind Kakashi.

“You rejected me even before you saw my scars. You were ready with the speech when I walked in.”

Sasuke remembered to lock his car and used the remote, hearing the reassuring beep from here. He tried to calm his breathing and listen.

“I was scared, you were always so handsome and . . .”

“And that’s all you cared about.” Kakashi would have been more angry if he didn’t have Itachi who couldn’t even judge by looks if he wanted to.

Sasuke was very intrigued by the conversation.

“I’m sorry, alright? I’m really sorry. I know I broke your heart. If I could have gotten a hold of you afterward I would have apologized and begged for your forgiveness.”

“You wouldn’t have gotten it.”

Iruka looked at the table and took a moment to gather his thoughts. “The mask and the blind boyfriend, that’s all my fault, isn’t it?”

“No.”

“You didn’t wear it when you came home.”

“I didn’t think I needed—or should—hide them from you. I get too many questioning looks from the scars; the mask actually prevents people from looking. I like the reaction to the mask. It take it off before I go to the bank.”

“And the blind boyfriend . . .”

“Has nothing to do with my looks. I didn’t even know he was blind when I approached him. In fact, he’s more insecure about his looks than I am of mine.” Kakashi smiled thinking about how Itachi wanted to hide his eyes more than Kakashi wanted to hide his entire face.

“He’s gorgeous; what does he have to be insecure about?”

“I’m not going to detail it for you. It’s not your fault, but I thank you. I love Itachi so much. Don’t think he’s easier to live with than you; he does need help, but I don’t mind, and you didn’t have a psycho, over-protective, pain in the ass, brat of a brother as ready to murder me as look at me. But I adore, Itachi. I’m willing to put up with that cold, stick up his ass, evil brother. His parents are nice enough though.”

“My parents were pissed you left.”

“I hope not at me,” Kakashi said a little angrily.
“No, at me. They really liked you.”

“I know. Did you tell them why?”

“I kind of had to. That was when I truly realized how stupid I was, I couldn’t even think an excuse besides you got a few cuts on your face. You have the right to be angry.” Iruka sat back and rubbed his hair. “But an Uchiha!” Iruka had either recognized the raven or he recognized the rare first name. “They’re all cold, evil bastards.”

Sasuke’s back straightened. We are not!

“Fugaku’s his father, right?” Iruka asked.

“Yeah.”

“God, that man is the coldest bastard in the world. I don’t think he’s ever smiled. He takes over companies like a . . . a . . . vulture doesn’t even cover it. And that little brother of his . . . he’s a spoiled, arrogant playboy!”

Am not! He stopped. Okay, he was when he was in high school. But I grew out of it!

“They say he almost murdered his best friend,” Iruka continued.

“Hey, that was justified,” Kakashi interjected. Sasuke nodded despite himself.

“How can you even stand being around a family like that?”

“The brother is difficult, but how can you know what Fugaku is like. I’ve met him and his wife; they’re very nice and love their sons. Well, at least Itachi; I’m not sure about Sasuke; he is an evil little brat.”

Sasuke was close to audibly grumbling.

“Anyway, Itachi’s the one who . . .” Iruka vaguely waved at his eyes. “All that happened to him . . . You know what happened to him?”

“Obviously.”

Sasuke silently huffed. Only because I told you. He brought his hand up and nearly took a sip from the discarded cup, but then he remembered and set it down with a grimace.

“Had you chosen anyone other than an Uchiha . . . Can you really stand being tied to a blind man?”

“Yes. If it wasn’t for work and school—I’m in college now, I think I mentioned that—I would never leave his side. I’ve actually been thinking that his family probably won’t let him move out of the house.”

You’re damned right!

“So I’ll probably have to move into their mansion. I’ll have to get rid of my Kia.”

“Please don’t tell me their money has something to do with it.” Iruka actually looked disgusted.
“Absolutely not. I adore him. He’s more precious to me than anything in my life.”

“Even me?”

“I thought I loved you, Iruka, but I’m far more in love with Itachi than I ever was with you. Honestly, Iruka, I don’t even want to be friends.”

“I’m so sorry, Kakashi. Give me another chance.”

Kakashi fished something from his pocket and placed it on the table. Sasuke couldn’t see it, but Iruka paled.

“No,” Kakashi said. “I bought this today; I’m considering when to give to him.”

“Sorry to have bothered you then.” Iruka got up and walked away. Again. Kakashi didn’t feel a thing for Iruka anymore.

Sasuke got up, intending to get away before Kakashi could see him, but he leaned to the side to see what it was that made Iruka turn from mocha-skinned to latte.

“It’s a ring, Sasuke.”

Sasuke tripped backward and landed on his ass. “Son of a . . .”

Kakashi turned around. “We can’t marry, but I wanted to give your brother a ring.”

“How did you know I was here?” Sasuke asked from the ground, still on his ass.

“A car that flashy squealing around gets attention. I could also see your duck-butt hair in the window reflection when I turned my head for a second. You suck at trailing someone.”

“I normally don’t have to.”

“In case you needed clarification: that was my ex-boyfriend. He’s out of my life and has been since I came home. He happened to see Itachi and I at the mall.”

“I didn’t think you were two timing my brother.” Kakashi looked at him skeptically. “Well, not until I saw you here with someone else.”

“I do have friends too, brat.” Kakashi grabbed the ring in its case and put it back in his pocket. He stood and offered Sasuke a hand and pulled the younger man up.

“So you knew I was listening when you insulted me,” Sasuke said.

“Of course. There’s no fun in insulting someone when they can’t hear you.”

“You’re not moving in just yet.”

“I know. Drive more carefully, nii-chan.”

Sasuke grumbled and walked back around the corner to his car. Kakashi tossed the rest of his
horrible coffee and went home.

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Sasuke went right home as well. He went straight up to his brother’s room.

He knocked, “Itachi?” No answer, so he eased the door open. “‘tachi.” He turned on the light. No Itachi.

“‘tachi!” Sasuke panicked. He checked his own room, their parent’s room, then down to the dining room, then finally found his brother asleep on the living room sofa. He sighed. He loved his brother, but he hated worrying about him all the time. Every time he couldn’t find his brother he was afraid he was hurt, got lost, or was abducted again. Sasuke didn’t know if he could handle it much longer, if his heart could handle the stress. If Kakashi could keep an eye on him and keep him safe . . . He wanted his brother back, the one he didn’t have to worry about or help or protect, the one who teased him with a poke to the forehead. Now Itachi couldn’t even see his forehead to poke it.

Sasuke climbed up over him, waking Itachi. “It’s just me, ‘tachi.” He settled in behind him and held on to him. He cried into his loose, long hair. Itachi put his hands on the arm Sasuke put over him.

“You alright, Otouto?” Sasuke didn’t answer. “Hinata didn’t dump you, did she?”

Sasuke shook his head against Itachi’s back. Itachi pulled away and shifted precariously on the edge of the sofa for a moment to get on his back to pull Sasuke against his chest. Itachi finger combed Sasuke’s hair back. He’d soothed his little brother a lot over the years and enjoyed the fact he’d rather come to him than their parents, but Sasuke hadn’t come to him like this since he left for Africa; Itachi had been on the receiving end of sympathy since then.

Itachi was certain Sasuke fell asleep until Sasuke’s phone went off.

Sasuke sat up carefully and pulled his phone from his pocket. “Hai.”

Itachi could barely hear the voice on the other end but was sure it was Hinata.

“I did forget; I’m sorry.” Sasuke shifted the phone so the receiver was away from his face and he sniffed then returned it. “I’ll come over right now. See you soon.” He ended the call. “I was supposed to pick up Hinata ten minutes ago. Thanks, Aniki.”

“You never told me what was wrong.”

“Later.”

Itachi really felt useless. He couldn’t work anymore, he couldn’t help anyone anymore, and he himself needed help doing most things. He couldn’t really even fish through the fridge anymore, hence his own fridge in his room where he knew what was in it. He wasn’t able to work out by himself either and he feared that he was starting to gain weight since he got his appetite back. He’d have to ask Kakashi if he would mind helping him.

No, no, not another thing he needed Kakashi to do for him. He was growing to rely on the man too much. Soon Kakashi would feel burdened and decide Itachi wasn’t worth the effort.
Sasuke’s mysterious depression fed his own. Itachi put out his hand to find the chocolate Kakashi bought him and he completely turned into a woman: binging on chocolate while depressed.

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Itachi moved only for dinner with his parents then he was back on the sofa now listening to the TV. He couldn’t see the pretty CGI, but he was learning about ‘The Wonders of the Universe.’ It was something, but it wasn’t elevating his depression. At least he liked Brian Cox’s quietly enthusiastic voice.

He lay on his back popping a chocolate in his mouth every few minutes. He’ll just get fat and live alone in his room for the rest of his life and never leave.

His mother joined him for a while, snagging a few truffles for herself—literally stealing from a blind man.

Finally, he went up stairs, using his cane to make sure everything was where it should be. He turned on his The Cure playlist.

Sasuke came home around eleven and checked the living room before Itachi’s room this time. His mother was still there watching the news.

“Itachi go to bed?” he asked.

“He went to his room, but every once in a while I hear music, so I don’t think he’s asleep. How was your date with Hinata?”

“Good. Neji came along again.” Sasuke sat down where his brother had been a fixture most of the evening. “Do I really have the reputation of a playboy?”

“What? Did Neji say that?”

“No, I overheard someone else and they called me a ‘spoiled, arrogant playboy.’”

“Well, you were a handful when you were in your teens.”

“I’m wondering if Neji’s being so protective of his cousin because of that.”

“The Hyuuga are just more old fashion than we are.”

“How’s dad?”

“Tired. Itachi was a little down and that brings your father down. It’s not anything to do with Kakashi-kun, is it?”

“I don’t think so. Actually, I happened to see Kakashi this afternoon talking to his ex and he basically told the guy to go to hell and that he was happier with Itachi than he was with him. The ex is the one who called me a ‘spoiled, arrogant playboy.’ The ex doesn’t think very much of our family. Anyway, Kakashi got the guy to shut up and leave when he showed him what he bought for Itachi. It was a ring. Kakashi wants to make it more official.”
“That’s wonderful!”

“Don’t tell Itachi. Kakashi’s trying to think of a time and place to give it to him. I know how he feels.”

Mikoto knew about the ring Sasuke had bought for Hinata. “Honestly, I don’t really remember the where and when, just the shock of your father, of all men, getting on one knee in tux and proposing. I was so happy and shocked that he proposed, I don’t remember anything else.”

“I’m thinking it should be some place soft; I’m sure she’ll faint.”

Mikoto chuckled.

“I’m going to check on Itachi before I turn in.”

Mikoto waved him over and pulled him down into a hung. “Goodnight, Sasuke.”

“Goodnight, kasan.”

Sasuke was assaulted with Robert Smith’s voice as he approached Itachi’s room. That rarely boded well.

He knocked and opened the door when he was sure Itachi couldn’t hear him.

“‘tachi!” Sasuke had to raise his voice to be heard over the music.

Itachi had the speaker remote in his hand as he lay in bed and used it to lower the volume. “Have a nice dinner?”

“Yes. You’re depressed. Is it my fault? It was nothing really, just stress.”

“Did you ask her yet?”

“No. Mother asked me about that too. I will ask her. It’s awkward with Neji there. What’s wrong? It’s not Kakashi, is it?”

“I . . . I regret letting him get close. I don’t want anyone else hurt by me or to be disappointed in me.”

“No one’s disappointed in you,” Sasuke admonished. “Considering what happened we’re all thrilled you’ve recovered so well. Kakashi adores you; he’d be really crushed if you tried to end it. Do you love him? Do you?” Sasuke insisted when Itachi didn’t answer his first appeal.

“Yes,” Itachi said weakly. “I shouldn’t have led him on, it will just be painful for both of us. I should break it off now.”

“Oh, no you don’t, Aniki. You made your bed, now lie in it. You love each other and I can see while you can’t and I see a man hopelessly in love. You will not give into this nihilism.”

“You’ve gotten tired of helping me; he will too.”

“Don’t you dare say that! I’m not tired of helping you; I am tired of worrying about you. Kakashi
can take some of that off me. I love you, he loves you, our parents love you. Between the four of us, we can handle you, trust me.

“I’m going out. Don’t do anything stupid like calling him and telling him to stay away. You do and I swear, Aniki . . .” Sasuke tried to think up a threat. “I’ll . . . I’ll stop talking to you completely.”

Itachi was a little shocked that Sasuke—of all people—would be trying to preserve his relationship with Kakashi.

Sasuke left his brother’s room, shutting the door gently even though he felt like slamming it. He checked that he still had his wallet and keys then headed down stairs, pulling out his cell as he descended the staircase.

His call was answered on the fourth ring. Hello.

“Sasuke. Where can I meet you? We need to talk.”

I’m at the Denny’s on Sixth.

“I’ll be there soon.”

Okay. Can I— Sasuke ended the call.

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“—order you something?” Kakashi trailed off after the call ended.

It was after eleven at night, so that worried Kakashi a little. Sasuke’s tone was harsh, but that seemed to be default for Sasuke so that didn’t concern him.

Kakashi was doing the reading for one of his literature classes, but he also had his math textbook for a change of pace. He liked coming here to do his homework. He had a large salad to pick at, a mug of coffee, and a glass of chocolate milk. It was odd, but . . .

Kakashi only had to wait about ten minutes. Sasuke walked right by the hostess without a glance and went straight for Kakashi’s table. He sat down across from him in the booth.

“Is Itachi alright?” Kakashi asked.

“He’s being difficult. He wants to end it just because he believes it will eventually. He’s being a coward. He’s so afraid of being abandoned again, he wants to stop this before that happens. You will not end it. I don’t care if you have to bloody act like a stalker, you are not going to let him break up with you.”

“Understood.”

“I don’t want to worry about him anymore. I couldn’t find him this evening and it scared me to death. So much so I even thought it might be a good idea for you to move in so you could help watch him.”

“I don’t think my Kia would be a welcome addition to the Uchiha garage,” Kakashi joked.
“I drive an Aston Martin. Itachi has a Bentley. He loved that car. Supped it up. He put nitrous in it. What kind of sick fuck puts a nitrous in a mother fucking Bentley? It’s a bloody V12. He only got to use it once on a straight away outside of town. He even added chrome to it like he was from the ghetto or something. He had the leather from the seats removed so he could get them custom stitched. Custom sound system. He loved that fucking car.”

Tears were bleeding from Sasuke’s eyes.

“And he has Star Stryker and a Yamaha FZ8. He’ll never be able to ride any of them again. I want my brother back.

“He was almost as aggressive as father and he loved to poke me in the forehead and mock me, but it was always good natured. He was so confident. He knew what he wanted and he took it. Now he’s a meek kitten and just as helpless. That’s not the brother I knew.”

“Every once in a while I see a bit of aggressiveness and a mocking side to him,” Kakashi said. “You’re brother’s not dead; it’s only been a few months since he went through all that. I think he’s easing back into himself. Trauma like that could shake the hardest of us.

“Iruka, that guy you found me with, he ran into Itachi and I at the mall. Itachi seriously wanted to attack him; I don’t think it was just bluster.”

“If he could see, he would have knocked the guy unconscious at the very least.”

“Tell me something, Sasuke: did you read that file? Do you know everything your brother said?”

“No. I couldn’t handle it. I know enough. Listen, he’s depressed, he feels like a burden and like a disappointment. He doesn’t want to weigh us down. I don’t know what we can do, but we need to help him.”

“I will think of something.”

“Thank you. I’m going to sleep.”

“Goodnight, brat.”

“’Night, Cyclops.”

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When Kakashi came to pick up Itachi two nights later, Itachi heard something he didn’t expect: a motorcycle. He was about to rush to the door to look out and see if it was indeed Kakashi and what kind of bike it was, but that was foolish since he couldn’t see. He was standing so went to the door and waited for the knock.

Unsure and defenseless being alone for the moment, Itachi asked, “Who is it?”

“Your boyfriend.”

Itachi opened the door. “Did you come on a bike?”

“I did.”
“What kind?”

“It’s a Kawasaki Ninja 250. Black.”

“Those are awesome.”

“Want to go for a ride?”

“Of course. I’ve got my own helmet. Where’s that brother of mine? Sasuke!”

Sasuke came running down the stairs. He stopped suddenly when he saw Kakashi. “Cyclops.”

“Brat.”

“Sasuke, go get my motorcycle helmet from the garage.”

“Yeah, yeah.” Sasuke headed off to do his older brother’s bidding.

“I didn’t know you had a motorcycle,” Itachi said.

“Yeah. This is a bit old though, it’s the one I had in high school. I worked multiple jobs to pay for it. My baby.”

“I know how you feel. I have two bikes and my father made me work for them. You do appreciate them more when you have to pay for them.”

Sasuke returned with a black helmet with a murder of ravens painted on it. He gave it to Itachi. Itachi took off his sunglasses and put the helmet on. Sasuke cocked an eyebrow in surprise; he didn’t know he was comfortable showing Kakashi his scarred eyes yet.

“I don’t have to tell you to be careful,” Sasuke said to Kakashi.

“No. I’ll be exceptionally careful. I won’t even show off.”

Kakashi took Itachi’s hand and led him outside. He put Itachi’s hand on his shoulder and mounted the bike. Itachi carefully mounted behind him and they were off. Itachi hugged him as they rode through the city in twilight.

Kakashi stopped after about half an hour.

“We’re on a straightaway near the ocean,” Kakashi said. “We can take our helmets off and I’ll drive slow. Er.”

Itachi took off his helmet and Kakashi tied it and his own to the back, covering the license plate temporarily. Kakashi remounted the bike and Itachi hugged him again. Kakashi drove at only twenty miles an hour, it was enough for Itachi to feel his hair fly back and feel the wind on his face and smell the sea. He straightened to let the raw wind hit his face over Kakashi’s shoulder before pressing his head against his back again.

Kakashi felt Itachi’s arms tighten around him and Itachi shook a little.
Kakashi rode the length of the straightaway and turned around and rode back. When they returned to the starting point, Kakashi shut off the engine and sat back gently and was about to get off so he could get their helmets, but Itachi clutched him tighter. He leaned forward a little and let Itachi cry against his back. He watched the waves roll in on the shore as Itachi rubbed his face into his back. The sound of the wind covered the sound of Itachi’s sobbing. Kakashi hoped he’d done the right thing and Itachi wasn’t crying out of pure depression and loss.

Finally, Itachi pulled back and Kakashi stood and tuned to Itachi. “You alright?”

Itachi nodded. Kakashi pulled the bandana from his hair and put it in Itachi’s hand. Itachi used it to clean his face as Kakashi got their helmets. He could smell Kakashi’s hair, the shampoo and his own scent.

“Ready to go home?” Kakashi asked.

“Yeah.” He held out his hand for the helmet. Kakashi gave it to him and they both put on their helmets. Kakashi got back on the bike. Itachi raised the visor. “Wait. Can I come home with you?”

“Of course.”

Kakashi took him to his apartment. Itachi was silent until they were inside. He reached out for Kakashi, not entirely sure where he was. Kakashi took his hand and Itachi threw himself on him and hugged him. “I love you.”

“I love you too. I’ll do anything for you.”

“Thank you so much. I never thought I’d ride again. I’m sorry for crying; I really enjoyed it.”

“Anything that makes you happy, my lovely raven.”

“I’m the rich one, but you’re the one spoiling me.”

“You’re the one who deserves it.”

“Kakashi . . .” He was close to sobbing again.

“You spoil me enough just by being here.”

“You’re going to make me cry again.”

“As much as I hate the idea of making you cry, as long as they’re happy tears . . . I still prefer not to make you cry.”

“Then shut up and fuck me already.”

Kakashi laughed. “Yes, sir.”

Kakashi put his hand in Itachi’s hair and eased his head up to kiss him. He slipped off the sunglasses. Itachi grabbed onto one of the earpieces.

“I really don’t care about the scars,” Kakashi said. “Don’t be insecure about them. They’re light colored so they’re not that noticeable. I’ve seen them and still love you, so why do you still care? If
“You could see my scars, would they still bother you?”

“I’ve always been vain. Maybe I’m shallow too. I may not have given you chance if I could see. I wasn’t sure I loved you for a while, but I knew I’d be more sure if I could see you. Maybe that’s why I chose poorly before.”

“You’ve learned your lesson then.” Kakashi took the glasses away and Itachi let him. Kakashi slowly bent forward to kiss the scarred right eye. “I love every inch of you.”

“Why are you so perfect?”

“I’m not. I just love you. You’ll discover my flaws eventually.”

“You’re overly tenacious.”

“See, I’m not perfect. Now, I believe you gave me an order and as a former soldier, I must follow your orders.”

“You seem to choose what’s an order though.”

“Maybe.”

Kakashi kissed him and grabbed his sculpted ass. His hand traveled higher, avoiding the large scar on Itachi’s back, until the shirt was bunched up under Itachi’s arms. Itachi broke the kiss to take it off. Kakashi helped peel it from his body and Itachi’s hands found the hem of Kakashi’s shirt and tugged on it. Kakashi stripped it and pushed his own pants off, Itachi did the same. They were both naked.

Kakashi gently guided Itachi to the bedroom. The foot of the bed nearly made Itachi trip backward, but he clung to Kakashi. More controlled, Itachi sat back and Kakashi leaned forward so they could crawl onto the mattress together. Itachi was careful when he brought up his knees to sort of crab walk back to the pillows.

When Kakashi licked down Itachi’s body, his tongue unavoidably traced one of the cuts on his chest. Itachi flinched and his stomach muscles twitched.

“Sorry; it’s kind of hard not to trace them,” Kakashi breathed.

“Go ahead; I want to get used to them being touched. The more I baby them, the longer I’ll remember. Don’t worry about them.”

“The moment I make you uncomfortable, tell me.”

“Alright. Are the lights on?”

“I hate how much I want to lie to you right now.”

“I take that as a ‘yes.’”

“Yes.”

“Are they always on?”
“Yeah. You’re so gorgeous. Do you want them off?”

“No.” He carefully found Kakashi’s hair with his right hand and pulled him down to his chest to continue.

Kakashi obeyed. How many times in a man’s life would he have such a beauty pulling him down to take pleasure from their body. Kakashi sucked on a dusty nub for a minute before he pulled away to reach for the lube on his nightstand.

He attacked the other nipple as he lubed up two fingers and pressed them inside Itachi’s tight body. He didn’t try to loosen him, just moved his fingers inside that slick heat. Kakashi inched up to Itachi’s neck, lapping briefly at the scar that stretched across his chest. Itachi didn’t react.

Itachi did start rocking his body down to get Kakashi’s fingers in deeper. He moaned Kakashi’s name.

Kakashi separated his fingers and twisted his wrist to open Itachi up a bit.

“Where’s the lube?” Itachi asked.

Kakashi put the tube in his hand. Itachi squirited some onto his palm and sought Kakashi’s cock. He stroked him, pulling at him expertly. Kakashi was distracted by one up stroke where Itachi tightened his grip just under the head, adding pressure to the delicious spot on the underside. Then Itachi made his fist a tunnel and Kakashi was fucking his hand.

“God, that feels good, Itachi. But your ass feels so much better, more like silk.”

“Well then, hurry up. I’d rather you were fucking my ass than my hand. I was just saving time, just lubing you up.”

“I’ll get to it then.”

“Please.”

Kakashi peeled his body away and grabbed the back of Itachi’s left knee. He pushed it up and Itachi pulled his other leg further away to give Kakashi more room to ease into him.

But Kakashi couldn’t help himself: he pushed Itachi’s other thigh even further away and dove in to lick at Itachi’s scrotum and the base of his cock. He moved even lower to kiss and tongue Itachi’s perineum.

“If I hadn’t already lubed you up, I’d tongue fuck you.”

“Right now, I want something larger.”

Kakashi open mouthed his perineum before he pulled away to penetrate him. Itachi relaxed and allowed Kakashi to slide into him. The slight sting was nothing compared to what he’d suffered less than a year ago. He didn’t mind a little pain.

But it was over quickly. The pain that is. Kakashi just felt right inside him. Kakashi released Itachi’s leg, but Itachi kept it in position and brought his other knee up. Kakashi held onto the
outside of his thighs as he started thrusting quickly into his younger lover.

Kakashi leaned forward and thrust his hips slower, but harder. He forced his eyes open and looked down at Itachi’s agonized face. His eyes were tight and his mouth open, panting; he knew Itachi was in far more pleasure than pain. Kakashi bent down even further, slowing his thrusts even more. He mouthed Itachi’s throat.

“Can I mark you?” Kakashi panted in Itachi’s ear.

“Yes, please,” Itachi gasped.

Kakashi bit into his neck. Itachi pressed his hips into Kakashi’s and grabbed at his neck. He pulled lightly at his white hair when he missed.

Itachi groaned in frustration. “Take me from behind,” he gasped. “I want to feel you deep.”

Kakashi pulled away and Itachi got on his hands and knees. Kakashi was back inside him in seconds.

“Oh, god, yes,” Itachi sighed as Kakashi was now hitting his prostate perfectly.

Hearing Itachi sent a wave of pleasure through Kakashi’s body. Kakashi hammered into the warm body beneath him. Itachi’s back undulated as he moved his hips up and down to vary the sensations.

Kakashi didn’t know how much more he could take. He leaned over him and grabbed Itachi’s cock without slowing down his thrusts.

“Cum for me, Itachi.”

“Bite me again,” Itachi panted.

Kakashi dug his teeth into a new patch of skin on the opposite side of Itachi’s neck. Itachi started cumming as Kakashi fucked, stroked, and bit him. He let out a long groan and pressed his back up against Kakashi’s chest.

Kakashi took his hand from Itachi’s draining cock and pressed it to his stomach and fucked his spasming body hard and faster for half a minute before he unleash several ropes of cum into Itachi’s tired body.

They collapsed together with Itachi wrapped in Kakashi’s arms. Once they regained their breath, Itachi twisted around onto his back. Kakashi lay on his side and caressed Itachi’s lovely skin. Itachi fell asleep.

The lights were still on and Kakashi could see those scarred eyes. He was getting used to them and as much as he hated what they represented, he was kind of starting to like them.

Chapter End Notes
The bike Kakashi drives is a Kawasaki Ninja 250. My sister has the same bike which is why I put it in. ^_^ The fact Naruto’s all about ninja really had nothing to do with it.
Kakashi never expected to see Sasuke on his campus. The young Uchiha walked up to him where Kakashi sat on a bench under a tree in the middle of the quad, reading. Kakashi’s training alerted him to someone staring at him and he noted the black haired, black clothed finger coming toward him.

“To what do I owe the honor of your visit?” Kakashi asked as he put a bookmark between the pages.

“I tried texting you, but I got no answer. I checked at your apartment then I . . . I called Shikamaru and he told me where you worked and they said you’d already left and I remembered you were attending here . . .”

“The question remains, why? Itachi’s obvious fine or you’d be more than embarrassed and stalking me.”

Sasuke bristled. “I wanted to thank you, asshole. Itachi told me what you did and he was . . . he was practically crying, but it was because . . . Itachi’s even more in love with you now. Thank you. I’m glad I opened up to you. And I’m sorry for being so hostile. But that’s not going to change, but I’m not planning your death every time I see you.”

“Thank you.”

“Am I keeping you from class?”

“No, I’m finished.” Kakashi stood and pulled out his phone and found three messages from Sasuke aka ‘Brat.’ “I was going to spend the evening with homework, but . . .”

“Honestly, I don’t plan to have a lot of drinks with my brother-in-law.”

“I’m sure Neji will be thrilled to hear it,” Kakashi quipped.

Sasuke looked annoyed, but before he could retort, someone ran over to them. Kakashi stepped aside at the unexpected arrival of the blond.

“Naruto?” Sasuke was so surprised that his eyes went wide; Kakashi had never seen so much emotion before. It shifted to anger. “What do you want?” he snarled.

“I haven’t seen you in months,” Naruto said, seemingly oblivious to Sasuke’s growing fury. “I’m afraid to go to your house or the company, so I couldn’t get in touch. You blocked my phone too. I was shocked to see you here. Please, let’s talk. I’m really sorry, but I miss you, you were my best friend. I know I was a douche, but I want my best friend back.”
Sasuke was glaring into Naruto’s eyes, but when the blond finished speaking, Sasuke looked at Kakashi. “This is Itachi’s ex-boyfriend,” Sasuke said. “Sic him.”

Naruto whirled with a look of fear.

“Number one: I’m not a dog,” Kakashi said calmly. “Number two: I’ve never been arrested and I don’t want to start now. Number three: Not on campus. Don’t shit where you eat or sleep or spend six hours a week.” Kakashi’s one visible eye narrowed as he looked down at the shorter blond. “However, I am sorely tempted,” he said with some menace.

Naruto stuttered. “Uhh, ahh, who are you?”

“I’m Itachi’s current boyfriend.”

“Oh, shit.”

“Ex-military,” Sasuke supplied.

Naruto shrank a little.

“And by the way,” Sasuke said, dragging Naruto’s attention back to him. “I’m asking Hinata to marry me. Don’t come near me, my fiancé, or my brother.” Sasuke tone’s was icier than any he ever used with Kakashi. Kakashi could almost see dark clouds gathering around the youngest Uchiha and expected lightening to congregate and smite Naruto.

Naruto seemed to see the same illusion as he backed away. Once he ran off, Sasuke turned to Kakashi. “Follow me in your car.”

Kakashi did as he was told. He got in his Kia while Sasuke slid into his Aston Martin. At a stop light, Sasuke sent Kakashi a text that he would pay for the valet. Kakashi immediately pulled off his mask and eye patch. Sasuke led him to a very up class establishment and he handed over his car the same as Sasuke. Sasuke stalked to the back of the predominantly red room. Few people were about. A moment after they sat down, a waiter arrived.

“Mr. Uchiha?”

“Vodka; I’m not driving home.”

Kakashi let an eyebrow rise.


The waiter turned to Kakashi. “For you, sir?”

“Porterhouse, medium . . . gratin as well. I’ll take a salad and whatever vegetables. Just a coke to drink.”

The man bowed and went to fill their orders.

Sasuke snarled. “Naruto. I need to vent and you’ve not heard any of this, so I’m going to vent to
someone who has nearly as much reason to hate him as I do.”

Kakashi nodded. Sasuke’s vodka and wine arrived with Kakashi’s salad and coke.

Sasuke began as the man left and Kakashi started on his salad. Sasuke sipped at his vodka every once in a while. “We were best friends—that little shit. We were rivals. I was a genius and he... wasn’t. But of course, everyone loved me, everyone looked up to me, including him. He wanted to be the golden boy so he worked his ass off to compete with me in everything: academics, sports, love. He would have done the same in martial arts, but his father only let him take one class instead of my three. So this dead-last moron got through school with a GPA higher than three all because of me. I have to admit, he earned my respect. That started when we were in the second grade.”

Sasuke backtracked a little. “When I said love, by the way, I mean, the girls idolized me to the point I was sick of it. It pissed him off especially since the girl he liked was in love with me, but I never reciprocated. Anyway, he was always trying to get her attention and the attention of anything else female.

“So, I respected him and decided to even help him out. Our personalities were totally different, but it seemed a good fit. We argued and a lot and as we got older it become more of debates and discussion rather than arguing. There were a few things we both liked and often went to movies and concerts together.

“So anyway, this whole time, my fiancé, Hinata, had a crush on Naruto, but she was too shy to confess to him. She could barely say a word to him. I noticed how she blushed and stammered around him, but I really thought that was the worst match ever, especially after we became friends—Naruto and I, that is. I noticed her crush in sixth grade.

“Naruto, Hinata, and I all went on to the same university. Hinata came up to me soon after classes started and asked how she could make her feelings known to Naruto. I offered to tell him about it. She thanked me and I did. Naruto was incredulous. He thought she was too meek, cute and all, but too much a non-person. I actually agreed with him. I told her he wasn’t interested and tried to comfort her. She took it rather well, just sort of blank, like she knew it never would have worked.

“I looked out for her the next day and saw that she had changed. She wore her hair back off her shoulders and stopped wearing that coat she seemed to always have. Naruto still didn’t pay her any mind, but I felt a little responsible for her. I mean, she trusted me enough to confess to me her feelings for Naruto and ask my advice and I felt bad for delivering the bad news. But that was all. I didn’t see her really after that because we didn’t share any classes.

“About that same time, Naruto asked Itachi if he wanted to start hanging out. It quickly turned to dating. I didn’t like it, but I knew Naruto—I thought—and Itachi was stronger then, really a presence, someone to be reckoned with. I didn’t worry about it.”

The waiter brought their meals and two glasses of vodka for Sasuke, taking the empty one away. Sasuke downed half of one like a shot before he set about cutting his steak apart.

“Sophomore year I end up having a class with Hinata. She was so different. It was like her crush on Naruto had held her down. Maybe she realized that the way she behaved and held herself and dressed put people off and she finally broke out of her shell. First day of class I greeted her and asked how she was and she was happy I’d reached out to her. I always greeted her or at least sent her a smile, but that was it. I did notice that without that coat she was buxom and with her hair back she was more than pretty, but I thought no more of it.
“Two weeks into the year and we had to partner up. She looked right at me and I nodded. I got to
know her and we became friends. But I was falling for her and before I knew it, I was totally
smitten. She’s still very soft spoken and sort of meek, but I found out why and discovered we
shared some interests and that when it came to it, she could hold her own. Part of her weak
demeanor was that she thought that was attractive to men. She’s working to shed that persona.

“Over a year later, during winter break of our junior year, I had to admit to her that I was falling for
her. We started to date.

“Enter: Naruto. He and Itachi seemed to really have a thing going; they were sleeping together and
Itachi seemed happy. I had asked Naruto about his longtime obsession with Sakura and he told me
he figured out in high school that he was bi; he even admitted one reason he discovered that was
because he couldn’t help checking me out as much as Sakura. I was like ‘whatever;’ I didn’t care
about that. And Sakura got knocked up by this weirdo Lee. I don’t even want to know what
happened there.

“So Naruto and Itachi seem happy, I’m happy with Hinata and then things start to go to shit. Now
that Hinata’s dating me, Naruto grows suddenly interested and asks her out. He knew we were
dating!” Sasuke didn’t raise his voice very high, but he conveyed his betrayal well enough to
Kakashi.

“Hinata’s torn. Here’s her childhood crush finally acknowledging her while she’s in a pretty
serious relationship with me, his best friend. She shows how confused she is and delays him. She
comes to me and tells me what happened. Of course my male instinct rears its head. Then I realize,
not only is he trying to get my girlfriend to cheat on me, but he’s trying to cheat on my brother!

“I tried to cool down; I didn’t want to frighten Hinata. The fact she came to me and told me and
asked what she should do . . . I mean she asked me if she should cheat on me. That’s a lot of trust. I
could have flipped out, struck her, dumped her . . . But she was right about me, that I would be
completely honest with her and think of her own best interest. I told her the truth, that if I thought
Naruto’s interest was valid, I would have told her to go for it, go out with him a few times and see
which of us she truly preferred. But, I said, Naruto’s currently dating my older brother. I explained
that Naruto was bi and that he’d been dating my brother for about the same amount of time as we
have.

“She was shocked. I told her that I wouldn’t begrudge her having dinner with him, but I admitted I
really didn’t like the situation and the truth was, I loved her. She said she would speak with Naruto.
She did and she stayed with me without a single date with Naruto. But Naruto kept trying. It almost
got to the point of stalking. He tried to convince her that he loved her and she just needed to give
him a chance.

“I had had enough. I went to him and told him to stop it. He had a chance with Hinata before and
let it pass. He chose my brother, but now he was actively trying to cheat on him. I told him to back
off of Hinata before she put out a restraining order, or worse, her family started gunning for him. I
also told him to never lie to my brother again and if he wasn’t serious about Itachi to break it off. I
never told Itachi because I thought he really loved Naruto. However, it was nothing compared to
what he seems to feel for you.”

The fact that last part came out so naturally and with a slight sneer of disapproval, Kakashi figured
the vodka had loosened Sasuke up and it was the god’s honest truth.
“Naruto backed off. Then just a few weeks later, Itachi goes to Africa.” Sasuke downed the rest of his third glass of vodka and raised his hand for another. “Itachi needed him. He did stay for about a month, then . . . poof.”

The glass was brought and Kakashi was certain that the bartender had switched to a lower proof brand of vodka by the fact he’d poured this one from a different bottle than the first. Still, Sasuke was going to feel it.

“I hunted his ass down and let loose on him. I was arrested after Shikamaru and Kiba pulled me off of him. But they were on my side. I said enough that they understood what happened. And they all knew about Itachi.”

Kakashi could see Sasuke’s blood boil for a moment, but it was just a flare of anger and died quickly.

“Naruto’s father is Minato Namikaze, the mayor. Naruto had to tell him why he was in the hospital and then he came to me. He started off saying that he knew the stress I was under because of my brother, but to take it out on Naruto . . . I shut him up real quick. I was released an hour later and driven home by an irate Minato. I’m sure he let his son have it. I might have mentioned the whole thing with Hinata as well.”

“Might?”

“Yeah, ‘might.’ My mind was spinning with rage. I’m surprised I didn’t attack Minato.” Sasuke suddenly threw himself back against the backrest and covered his face with his hands. “Oh god, if it had been Hinata . . . If Hinata had gone through what Itachi did . . . I wouldn’t leave her side for a second. Fuck. How can you abandon someone you’re supposed to love? He felt nothing for Itachi!” Sasuke dropped his hands. “Look at you! God, you love him more than I can understand. I don’t get you. How can you love my brother so much? I love him, I really do, he’s my world, always has been, but goddamn it, I can’t take much more. I worry and worry and I miss him and I’m so sad for him. Why do you love him so much? It’s all wearing me down, but you, you . . . I’ve never seen so much affection. Something tells me you would love him if he was normal, but you dote on him. You are too goddamn perfect. If it’s a dominance thing, I’ll rip your spleen out.”

“I think you’re right about loving him if he weren’t blind. But here’s someone who needs my help, my protection. How could I not love him more? It’s not a dominance thing. Honestly, it’s a little bit of a sub thing. I want to be his slave; I want to do everything for him. He’s my prince.”

“No, you’re the prince.” He emptied his wine glass, all of it making it into his mouth. “Finished? What some more?”

“No. However, I think Itachi would appreciate a dessert.”

Sasuke summoned the waiter. “A tiramisu to go.” He pulled at his wallet and struggled to find and pull out his credit card. The waiter left and Sasuke had a similar struggle with his phone. He held it out to Kakashi. “Call Shika and tell him I need a ride home.”

“You trust me going through your contacts?”

Sasuke snatched back his phone. “Fuck it. You’re here and you want to give Itachi that thing. Drive me home. My car, your car, I don’t give a fuck. Either one will be safe here. Shika can retrieve it later.”
“You’ll let me drive your Aston Martin?”

“Take advantage of my bad judgment while you have the chance.”

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Sasuke started crying before they even got three blocks away. He was lost in his own little world of despair. From his mumblings, Sasuke was still caught in the nightmare that Hinata could have gone through what Itachi did and was also mourning the old Itachi that seemed dead. Kakashi made a mental note that Sasuke was a terrible drunk. He'd try to warn Hinata about that. At least he was merely an emotional drunk.

When they got to the security gate around the estate, Kakashi wasn’t sure which button on the console to push and Sasuke was seeing double.

“They should open it for me,” Sasuke grumbled as he tried to unbuckle his seatbelt. He opened the door and used it to haul himself out of the car and stand. “Open the fucking gate!”

The gate rolled open and Sasuke fell back into the seat and barely managed to shut his door.

Kakashi eased into the driveway. “Should I pull into the garage?”

“I don’t trust you to park my baby in a confined area,” Sasuke slurred. “Just park in front of the door.”

Kakashi pulled into the circular drive and parked. He looked for the key, but it was a key fob, not a standard key. He rolled his eyes and pulled out the fob and quickly got out to help the inebriated Uchiha out of the car.

If Kakashi needed evidence Sasuke was drunk, he got it. Sasuke couldn’t stand up straight and opted to lean into Kakashi and hugged him. Kakashi put an arm around him and guided Sasuke to the front door and tried to open it. It was locked. Sasuke banged on the door while Kakashi tried to find keys in Sasuke’s pocket.

One of the usually invisible servants opened the door. Kakashi struggled to guide Sasuke through the door. Mikoto and Itachi came to the top of the stairs at the racket.

“It’s Sasuke,” Mikoto told Itachi as she ran down the stairs to check on her youngest son.

Itachi came down a few steps, holding tight to the railing, but stopped, not wanting to get in the way.

“What’s wrong?” Itachi asked.

“He’s just drunk,” Kakashi said.

“Kakashi?”

“Yeah. Sasuke invited me out for a drink and he over did it. He’ll be alright.”

“Inoichi,” Mikoto spoke to the butler, “bring him upstairs.”
Inoichi and Kakashi pulled Sasuke upstairs behind Mikoto. Itachi backed up to clear the stairs. He followed after them, running his hand along the wall to guide him.

Sasuke was deposited on his bed and he fell right to sleep.

“Bring up a large pitcher of water and a bottle of aspirin, please,” Mikoto said to Inoichi. He nodded and eased passed Itachi who was holding onto the door frame.

“What happened?” Mikoto asked Kakashi.

“He came to see me on campus and . . .” he looked at Itachi, “Naruto came up to us.”

Itachi’s face clouded and Mikoto’s eyes narrowed.

“Naruto wanted to renew their friendship and Sasuke wasn’t having any of that and asked me to kill Naruto.”

“Did you?” both Uchiha asked.

“No. I would never do that. In a public place. Sasuke was . . . distressed and asked me to have a drink with him. He told me the whole story and got very, very drunk. He had some depressing thoughts and that’s why he’s a mess.”

“What thoughts?” Itachi asked. When Kakashi didn’t answer immediately, he said, “Sasuke was really depressed the other day too; I want to know what’s wrong with my brother.”

“He couldn’t understand Naruto leaving you because he wouldn’t have left Hinata if what happened to you happened to her. He thought about that a little too hard.”

Itachi rubbed the heel of his hand into his forehead, then combed his loose hair back. He felt like it was his fault his brother was sinking into depression.

Mikoto sat on her youngest son’s bed and petted his hair. “Thank you for taking care of him, Kakashi.”

“No problem.” Kakashi went to Itachi and rubbed Itachi’s upper arm through his long sleeve shirt. “You want me to stay a little longer?”

“Yeah. My brother’s probably going to sleep for a while. Did you or Sasuke leave a car somewhere?”

“My car.”

“You drove the Aston Martin?”

“Sweet ride.”

“He’s drunker than I thought.”

Kakashi gently pulled Itachi away from the door to let Inoichi into Sasuke’s room with the water and aspirin.
“Can you stay the night?” Itachi asked.

“Sure. As long as your father doesn’t try to kill me for it.”

Itachi could hear Inoichi coming out of his brother’s room. “Inoichi, could you send someone to pick up Kakashi’s car?”

“Yes, sir.”

Kakashi fished the valet ticket from his pocket and gave it to Inoichi. He held out a hand to stop Inoichi and handed him the fob to the Aston Martin as well.

“I’ll just leave this in Sasuke-sama’s room,” Inoichi said as he stepped in to leave the key fob on Sasuke’s dresser.

“Everyone’s afraid of touching Sasuke’s baby, huh?”

“You have no idea, sir,” Inoichi said.

Itachi hugged Kakashi’s arm and Kakashi went to Itachi’s room. “Mind if I turn on the light?”

“Sure.”

This was Kakashi’s second time in Itachi’s sanctum, but the first time he really got to look around. A full bookshelf was in the corner of the room with the bed against it so any book was within reach from the bed. There was a window just to the side of the bed and a desk under it. The closet was to the right of the door as was the personal bathroom. To the left of the door was a dresser. The room was smaller than Kakashi would have thought for a rich kid. And it was dark with black carpet and dark green walls and ceiling. There was an overhead light, but the lamp from the desk was gone—it was useless now. Though the room was dark, and cave-like, it was comfortable and safe. Kakashi liked it.

The computer was on, but the monitor off. Music was coming out of the speakers, but it had been turned way down when Itachi heard Sasuke banging on the door.

Once back in his room, Itachi detached from Kakashi’s arm and went to sit on his bed. Kakashi sat next to him.

“Is there really nothing else wrong with Sasuke?” Itachi asked.

“Well, a few days ago, he told me he was concerned about you. He told me not to let you end the relationship.”

“That was the day he was depressed, the day I was thinking I was being a burden on him and would be one on you.”

Kakashi pulled Itachi’s head closer and kissed his temple. “You’re not. Sasuke’s stressing himself out.”

“If he would just marry Hinata . . .”
“I agree. He really loves her; he got drunk and sad enough.”

“He does. He gave up being a playboy for her.”

Kakashi laughed because Iruka had described Sasuke as a playboy as well. “Your brother must have been a handful.”

“I was scared to death he’d get a disease with how many different women he was sleeping with. He was even sleeping with older women while he was still a teenager. He was going to give me an ulcer. Maybe him stressing out over me now is a sort of revenge for the stress I was under.”

Itachi leaned on Kakashi and Kakashi put an arm around him.

“Sasuke’s fine.”

“I wish he would get married and move out so I’ll stop stressing him out.”

“Don’t blame yourself. Sasuke is just high strung with sensitive honor and highly developed sense of family protectiveness. He just needs to calm down.”

“He’s taking after our father. Too uptight.”

“No offence, but he’s not the only one. Stop worrying about being a burden. We all love you.”

Itachi didn’t respond and Kakashi just rubbed Itachi’s back.

After a few minutes, there was a knock on the door. “Dinner’s ready,” Mikoto said through the door.

“Coming, mother,” Itachi called back.

“I ate with your brother,” Kakashi told him. “But I’ll stay with you. That reminds me; I left something in the brat’s car.”

Kakashi ducked into Sasuke’s room to get the key fob—smiled at Sasuke’s soft snores—and escorted Itachi downstairs. He ran out to get the tiramisu from the backseat, then ran the fob back to Sasuke’s room and then escorted Itachi into the dining room.

“I had dinner with Sasuke, so I’ll just have tea,” Kakashi told Inoichi.

Kakashi sat next to Itachi and helped him eat.

Fugaku arrived. “Sorry, I’m late.” He kissed his wife. On seeing Kakashi sitting in Sasuke’s seat, he said, “Kakashi, good to see you.”

“And you, sir.”

Fugaku sat down. “Why is Sasuke’s car parked out front and where is he?”

“Sasuke got drunk and Kakashi-kun brought him home,” Mikoto explained.

“Sasuke getting drunk?”
“Naruto approached him,” Mikoto said.

“Should I send my condolences to Minato?”

Everyone chuckled. “No,” Kakashi said. “I was asked to kill him, but I didn’t think everyone would find it justified.”

“Most would.”

Kakashi was surprised how easily he was able to chat with his lover’s family—minus the brat—after that. When Itachi finished his meal, Kakashi asked, “Want desert?”

“Love some.”

“How about some tiramisu?”

“I love tiramisu.”

Inoichi came over to take the take-out bag and went to put it on a plate and soon returned with the dessert. Itachi moved his fork over the plate until he hit the layered treat and up to find the top and broke off a bite. Kakashi watched him, forgetting they weren’t alone and watched the bliss cross Itachi’s face at the flavor.

“Fantastic. Thank you. You want some?”

“I don’t have much of a sweet tooth,” Kakashi said.

“Mom? Dad?”

“Full from dinner,” Fugaku said.

“All for you, dear,” Mikoto said.

They were also staring at Itachi. Their eyes were full of love for their eldest son. Fugaku stood and came around next to Itachi. He put a hand on Itachi’s head and bent down to kiss his forehead.

“I’m going to work in my office. I love you, Itachi.”

“Love you too, tousan.”

Fugaku put a hand on Kakashi’s shoulder and left.

Inoichi returned. “Sir, your car has been parked outside,” he said to Kakashi.

“Thanks.” To Itachi he said, “I’ll bring my stuff in and do my homework in your room.”

“Okay. I like just having you around.”

“Me too.”

Back in Itachi’s room, Kakashi turned up the music on Itachi’s computer and did his work while Itachi lay on his bed. Kakashi was finished in an hour.
“You awake?” Kakashi asked quietly.

“Yeah.” Itachi sat up and swung his legs over the side of the bed.

“If I was closer to the beginning, I would have read to you.”

“Yeah, I miss being able to read.”

Kakashi sat next to him and stroked Itachi’s hair.

“Kakashi, I sort of want to tell you what really happened. I’ve been thinking about it while you were working. You already know so much, including about Naruto, and I know you won’t leave and I think I’ll get over it faster if I tell someone the whole truth about what happened.”

“Water?”

“Definitely.”

There was a pitcher on the bedside table and a glass. Kakashi sat down next to Itachi with the water. Itachi was silent for a minute, trying to figure out how and what to say.

“I told you that not everything was in that file. You know in general what happened, but I actually hid a lot. Mostly about Yahiko, the leader of the group.”

“You mean the one they called ‘Pain?’”

“Yeah. Yahiko was his real name. Or so he told me.” Itachi hesitated again. He grew more agitated.

Kakashi used the back of his fingers to caress Itachi’s arm and he was glad he didn’t even twitch at the touch. “If it’s too uncomfortable, you don’t have to tell me.”

“I think I’ll feel better if I tell someone.” He took a deep breath. “I knew what Yahiko was doing to me, but . . . Was there anything in the files you read about Kakuzu?”

Kakashi thought. “The finance guy of the group. He wasn’t there during the raid and they were going to try to track him, but they found his body on the grounds. They think he was killed for embezzling.”

“He wasn’t. Yahiko did kill him . . . but it was to protect me.”

Kakashi was flabbergasted. “Because you were a hostage and he wanted to kill you?”

“No. None of them wanted to kill me. The bastard, Yahiko, didn’t have any problem taking my eyes. He said . . . after he took my left eye . . . he told my father if the dead drop was compromised again, he’d take my other eye. He wouldn’t want to know what he’d take if the third drop was compromised. He took my other eye.” Itachi shook his head. “It wasn’t Yahiko who did it. It was . . .”

“Hidan,” Kakashi supplied more to keep Itachi from sinking too far into his memories.
“Yeah. Yahiko ordered him to do it, but he couldn’t watch. Hidan did it with glee both times.

“Yahiko killed Kakuzu himself. All Kakuzu could talk about was whoring me out. He couldn’t wait for the third dead drop to fail. They were going to give up and keep me. Yahiko may have let the others rape me, but he was still possessive of me.

“I told the truth to a point. I didn’t mention how Yahiko killed Kakuzu sort of while Kakuzu was raping me. Kakuzu couldn’t keep his mouth shut about how much money they could make whoring me out; it was mostly a sort of dirty talk to him. I still had my right eye at the time. Yahiko lost patience with Kakuzu; couldn’t stand that thought maybe. He grabbed him by the back of the neck and away from me . . . out of me. We all watched in shock as he turned him around and grabbed him by the throat. I could hear the man’s neck snap before he finished strangulating . . . Yahiko protected me.”

Itachi took a deep breath, knowing his story was jumping around and was probably confusing Kakashi as to what he was truly hiding. He decided to start again at the beginning. “I told the FBI that they kept me in that cell. It was only for the first three days. I was isolated. I had nothing but a bucket and a bare mattress. The windows were high so I couldn’t look out and they were barred, but they let the light in. I spent hours jumping up trying to grab the bars and yank them free, but I only managed to reach them a few times and they didn’t budge.

“They slid my food through a hole in the bottom of the door; again, it was impossible to get through, but I did try. They never spoke to me during those three days. They didn’t break my spirit, I was just angry at being captured.

“On the fourth day, Kisame pulled me out and let me shower. He didn’t give me any clothes. Then he forced me into Yahiko’s room. Yahiko was the first to rape me. He threatened me quite a bit, that if I didn’t struggle—I would still be raped by the others, but he wouldn’t let the others cause me too much harm. He also told me to beg him to . . . I did. After he was done with me the first time, he took me to the same room where my father’s men found me. Even after I was blind, I knew it was the same room because the piece of metal on the floor that I kept cutting myself on causing that scar on my back. Yahiko let them all rape me.

“But he never took me back to the cell. He took me to his own room. I was his pet. At first he chained me to the wall, but after a few days during which I didn’t resist him, he let me sleep in his bed. It was a reward. I was his to use whenever he wanted, but he treated me very well aside from letting the others rape me every other day. He was doing it on purpose, we both knew that. Kisame knew it too since he was his bodyguard and always nearby; he was the reason I never tried to get away, he was always outside Yahiko’s door.

“But when he killed Kakuzu . . . we all realized he really . . . cared for me. At least was far more possessive than he should have been. Some of the others never touched me again; afraid he’d turn on them too. I really felt safe with Yahiko.

“I didn’t tell anyone that. I know it was Stockholm Syndrome and Yahiko was doing it on purpose, but it worked. Yeah, I was depressed about my eyes and the rapes after I was rescued, but that I could start to love Yahiko . . . That I was so weak as to fall into Stockholm Syndrome really made me feel pathetic.”

Kakashi wanted to break in and tell him it wasn’t pathetic, but Itachi push on.

“Kisame believed Yahiko loved me. Kisame still raped me though, but he was a lot gentler after
Kakuzu died. He was the one raping me when the raid took place. He left me to fight and I curled in the corner. Yahiko was the one who gave me . . . whatever I was covered with when they found me. He knelt down and stroked my hair. I felt guilty for Yahiko’s death on top of all the rest.

“I was a total mess when I was brought back home. I never even told the doctors. I had enough problems to treat anyway. Knowing what it was, I tried to deal with Yahiko alone. I think I’m over it, but knowing he was dead was hard for me.

“One thing that helped was that I was sure Naruto would be there for me and still have sex with me and treat me well and that might help me deal with my memories of Yahiko; maybe he would even turn into Yahiko in a way. His eyes were the same beautiful blue as Naruto and he wore his hair similarly too. He had the most remarkable red hair and he had a lot of piercings. I think I was more in love with Yahiko than Naruto. Yahiko was dead, but I still had Naruto.

“But then Naruto dumped me. I had a mini-breakdown and told Sasuke about Naruto, that he was the cause, and that’s when Sasuke hunted Naruto down and nearly killed him. If their mutual friends hadn’t been there to stop him, he would have murdered Naruto, his best friend. Because of me they haven’t spoken in months.”

Kakashi was thankful for the slight change in topic and huffed. “That wasn’t the only reason. Don’t feel guilty about Sasuke and Naruto. I overheard their confrontation they had today and you were just the last nail in the coffin. If you feel guilty about that, don’t.”

“What? What was it? What else came between them?”

“I’m not sure I should tell you.”

“You will tell me,” Itachi ordered. Kakashi was a little surprised at the tone, but he smiled because that seemed like the old Itachi Sasuke had talked about and was in line with slight aggression he had observed gleaming through Itachi’s more reticent exterior. Though he thought telling Itachi the truth would be harmful, he did sort of have his back to the wall.

“Seems Hinata used to have a crush on Naruto and after Sasuke and Hinata got together, Naruto started reciprocating. Sasuke knew that even when Naruto was with you, he was hitting on Hinata. He saw how much you loved him and didn’t want to hurt you. He warned Naruto to give up on Hinata and never lie to you again. At least Naruto finally broke up with you and probably therefore kept the promise to stop lying to you. But when he left you, it was the final straw.”

“That son of a bitch!”

Kakashi smiled. “At least you’re angry. I thought you’d be . . . devastated or something.”

“Him and Iruka, point me to them,” Itachi growled.

“Let that go. I’m not going to let you commit murder or even assault, so just let it go. You were saying about Yahiko?”

Itachi sighed and refocused. “Yeah. After I went blind—even before that. You know what it’s like losing one eye and your depth perception changes.”

Kakashi nodded, but then remembered and said, “Yes.”
“I couldn’t grab a glass. He helped me. I would reach for something and he would guide my hand. I didn’t fully get used to it when Hidan took my right eye too. Then Yahiko did everything for me. He loved that; it was what he wanted: I was totally dependent on him. I couldn’t eat, drink, go to the bathroom, anything without his help. I knew it, I knew he wanted to dominate me and make me dependent on him. And I really started to love him. I think.” He shook his head. “I don’t know. He was kind to me and affectionate and made sure I got pleasure out of it. He really did mess me up.” Itachi was disgusted with himself and becoming distressed.

Kakashi put his hands on either side of Itachi’s head and forced him to focus on him even if he was blind. “Itachi, I understand Stockholm Syndrome and I totally understand about feeling for Yahiko. The fact you haven’t once called him Pain, says that you cared for him. I understand. I understand. I’d even understand if I was competing with a dead man, but I’m not, am I?”

Itachi was bordering on tears. “No, you’re not,” he said with a shaky voice.

“But you still felt bad for falling for Yahiko.”

“Of course.”

“Of course. You saw the true man behind the leader of a terrorist organization. He was still a harsh man and a sadist, but he cared for you. He may have let you go blind because he wanted you dependent on him, but he protected you. He didn’t really watch when you were raped, did he?”

“No, but he was there.”

“To make sure you weren’t too badly harmed.”

“Yes.”

“He had to share you with his comrades because that’s the kind of group they were. Maybe he didn’t want you blinded, but that was business. Stockholm or not, he cared for you. Yes, even if you were properly brainwashed after a year or more you would have acclimated, but you would have always been somewhat miserable and miss your freedom and your family, especially your pain in the ass brother. Never regret you came home and never regret that he died. Knowing your brother, he wouldn’t have survived your death or your disappearance. Nor would your father.

“Naruto was never good enough for you. Yahiko was not good enough for you because he put his organization before you. I’m not good enough for you because I’m not perfect or a prince or a Calvin Klein model and your brother hates me. But I love you enough to tell the man I thought I loved to go fuck himself when he tried to make me take him back and I would give up anything for you.

“However, if the impossible happens and I mistreat you in any way, you’re so perfect, you will find someone better who loves you as much as I do, don’t doubt it. But I love you and I would never harm you. I don’t want you dependent on me like Yahiko probably did, but I don’t mind it, I even relish it because I can show you how much I love you. And if I ever look at anyone else, I’ll let your brother take out my other eye.”

“Thank you. Thank you for understanding. I miss him, just a little. I think he really loved me.”

“I’m sure he did; you’re just so easy to love, so perfect.” Kakashi kissed his forehead.
“He told me how he and his two friends grew up during a civil war in their home country—he never named it. He started Akatsuki as a rebel group to end the civil war and agreed to join the government forces, but then they were betrayed. Disillusioned, they stepped up their attacks until they helped overthrow the government. But the other rebels wouldn’t accept them, feared them and called them terrorists. They were driven from their own country. They then truly became a terrorist organization; they needed money and only had one set of skills.

“I did sympathize with him. I also resigned myself to staying with him after they took my other eye. I wondered if they even had asked for ransom. I really did feel like I was Yahiko’s objective. He was with me almost constantly. I really felt like he loved me.

“Please, one thing I don’t want you to do, don’t call me a weasel.”

“Weasel? Because of your name?”

“Yeah. Yahiko looked it up because it was an unusual name and took to calling me his weasel.”

“I will avoid it.”

“Or kitten. Kisame called me ‘kitten.’”

Itachi’s mood had quickly lightened and even though he was referring back to things having to do with his repeated gang rapes, Itachi was relaxed.

“No weasel or kitten, got it.”

“What else was absolutely horrible?” Itachi wondered aloud to himself.

“I’d rather you not try to remember.”

“Better than you accidently doing it and freaking me out.”

That came out so naturally like he was talking about what he didn’t like to have for dinner. Maybe talking about it really did do him good.

“I just hope you don’t think I’m a slut for taking any pleasure in it then or desiring it now. I couldn’t help it, they made sure I’d . . .”

“Not at all. I’m glad they allowed you something to make that experience not as bad as it should have been. And trust me, I understand desire. I want to abstain from you just out of respect, but I love your body almost as much as I love you.”

“How about not abstaining now?”

“Now?”

“Lock the door. And shove something in the way; my father and Inoichi have keys and Sasuke could ask Shika to pick the lock.”

Kakashi locked the door and pulled a dresser half way across the door, enough to prevent the door from being opened. He turned around to see Itachi already shirtless and now slipping off his pants.
“Fuck, you’re gorgeous,” Kakashi said.

“Thank you.”

Itachi pushed the bedding aside and lay completely naked in front of Kakashi. Kakashi let his eyes roam over Itachi’s lovely physique for a moment. Itachi pulled his loose hair over his shoulder to lie on his pale skin. Kakashi stripped, which was hard to do in a rush with a boner.

Kakashi straddled Itachi’s thighs. “Since we’re making requests, I have one.”

“Yeah?”

“Take off the glasses when we have sex.”

“Alright.”

Kakashi pinched the nosepiece of the sunglasses and pulled them off. “I’ve gotten used to them.” He put his hand to the side of Itachi’s head and gently moved his thumb over one scarred eyelid. “Don’t hide them from me anymore.”

“Says the man who wears a mask and an eye patch.”

“Touché.”

Kakashi kissed him.

“I just remembered,” Itachi interrupted the kiss. “I don’t have any lube. Haven’t had anyone over since Naruto left me. Someone took my supply.”

Kakashi chuckled. “I bet it was the watchdog little brother of yours. Perhaps even for this very moment. I’ll see what’s in your bathroom.”

Kakashi didn’t find much. “You’ve got some lotion.”

“Good enough.”

“Your ass will smell wonderful at least. Sandalwood, I believe.”

Kakashi got back on the bed and slipped two lubed fingers inside Itachi’s lithe body.

“Kakashi,” Itachi sighed.

Fuck. Kakashi really wanted to call him a cock hungry little whore and say ‘you love that don’t you.’ He bit his lips together. He massaged Itachi muscles, encouraging them to relax and loosen.

“Say something,” Itachi begged.

“My first instincts are to say some things you might not like.”

“Fuck it, say it.”

“You love being entered, don’t you, baby?”
“I do. I want you to fuck me so bad.”

“Damn, your voice is so fucking sexy.”

“I’m ready, just fuck me.”

Kakashi took his fingers away, but then lightly trailed his finger up Itachi’s erection, teasing him.

“Kakashi,” he whined.

Kakashi started stroking him, concentrating on the up strokes.

“Ever topped before?” Kakashi asked.

“Yes. Quite a bit with Naruto. But not tonight. Damn, I want you in me right now. I feel so empty without you.”

Kakashi didn’t stop teasing his cock. Itachi put out a hand, knowing where Kakashi’s body should be. He found the arm Kakashi was using to brace himself. He pulled him toward him.

“Give me your cock.”

“Huh?”

“Come up here.”

Kakashi let go of Itachi’s cock and move to straddle his head. Itachi’s hand moved over his body to find Kakashi’s cock as it settled over his head. He guided it into his mouth, pulling gently for Kakashi to ease downward.

Itachi’s lips were so soft and wet as they touched the head of his cock. Then his tongue flicked the tip. Kakashi was hard pressed not to fall or thrust his cock into his mouth. This was the first oral Itachi had ever given him. Itachi’s lips moved to encapsulate just the head of his cock and he sucked gently. Everything was slow and gentle, tantalizing, languid, and oh so fucking good. His tongue swirled around the slit then pushed into it.

Kakashi was careful as he repositioned, not sure how long he could stay in this position.

Itachi’s hand was still on the shaft and now it started to move. He stroked Kakashi’s cock, but also pulled it lower.

“ITachi, you’re going to make me cum,” Kakashi breathed.

Itachi pulled his head back as much as the pillow allowed and let go of the cock in his hand. Kakashi pulled his hips up.

“I’d rather you fuck me.”

“That was fucking amazing.”

“I’ve had some good ones to teach me. And fantastic inspiration.”
Kakashi moved back to face Itachi. “I knew that mouth was wonderful, but fuck. Next time, before you fuck me, give me a proper blow job like that until I cum.”

“All right. If you fuck me now. The idea is making me hotter.”

“You might want to be quieter tonight.”

“I’ll try.” Itachi rested the back of his wrist on his chin, ready to cover his mouth if he got too loud.

Kakashi helped Itachi position his legs and pressed into his tight heat. The light was still on and Kakashi stared at the beautiful body before him.

“My beautiful raven.”

“Fuck me, Kakashi.”

Kakashi pulled almost all the way out and slid back in, shifting his initial angle, hitting just the right spot inside him.

Itachi was just able to cover his mouth before he cried out. Kakashi continued to slowly fuck him for a minute, then sped up. Itachi reached for his own cock and stroked himself as Kakashi pounded him into the mattress. Itachi’s muffled cried ran down Kakashi’s spine. He was having to hold back his orgasm after that little bit of head Itachi gave him. Luckily, Itachi was not of a mind to hurry and he was beating his own cock as fast as he could. Itachi came and Kakashi let himself go. He forced his jaw shut so that he wouldn’t alert the whole house to what a fabulous fuck Itachi was.

Itachi’s wrist slipped off his mouth. “Thank you,” he whispered.

“Thank you? So very sincerely, my pleasure.”

“For everything. You still want me after everything I told you.”

“I wish they were all still alive so that I could slaughter them myself. Naruto has been warned.”

“I’m too content right now to ask you to rough him up. I’m happy.”

“That makes me happy.” Kakashi kissed him briefly on the lips. “I’ll be right back.”

Kakashi got up and cleaned up and brought a warm washcloth to clean Itachi’s stomach, hand, and ass, doing it all himself. He then rinsed out the washcloth. He shut off the light and lay down next to Itachi.

“You have a maid right?”

“Yeah.”

“Good. Hate for your mother to see these sheets.”

“Humph.” Itachi snuggled back against Kakashi in the small bed. “Go to sleep, Kashi.”
Kakashi hummed.
Kakashi never wanted to stay asleep and in bed more than this morning, but his cell phone alarm was pinging annoyingly. He was warm and comfortable and he had to crawl over a thin body. That was the best part.

Itachi whined a little at being woken up and a little more at being crawled over. Kakashi fished through his clothes, guided by the glow of the phone through his pants pocket. He turned it off.

“I got to go to work,” Kakashi whispered. He was about to ask if Itachi minded if he turned on the lights, but stopped just in time. He turned on the light and dressed and moved the dresser from the door.

Itachi muttered something that sounded like, ‘Okay, bye.’

Kakashi slipped out of the room and hurried down the stairs.

“Kakashi-kun,” Mikoto said when she heard him come down stairs. “Do you want breakfast?”

Kakashi was blushing; Mikoto had to know what he was doing with her son during the night. “Sorry, no. I’ve got work this morning and I have to get home to change.”

“You’re always welcome.”

“Thank you.”

He ran out as fast he could, not wanting to face any male Uchiha this morning.

Itachi couldn’t go back to sleep, so he dragged himself out of bed. He groaned and felt his way to the bathroom. He took as quick a shower as possible. He trailed his hand against the wall to find his dresser.

Once dressed, he followed the wall to the stairs and gripped the banister down to the ground floor. He staggered into the dining room. His mother grabbed him.

“Son of a—”

“It’s me, Itachi.”

“Mother!”

“Sorry, dear.”
“I’m awake now.”

Mikoto guided Itachi to a chair. “I saw Kakashi leaving this morning.”

Itachi groaned. “I’m not going to get a speech, am I?”

“You’re in a foul temper this morning.”

“I wanted to sleep longer, but I couldn’t get back to sleep. Kakashi’s phone alarm woke us.”

“I’m not going to give you a speech; I like him and I want you to keep him.”

“I intend to. Father’s not pissed about him staying the night, is he?”

“No, he’s more upset about Sasuke’s impending hangover.”

Itachi sighed. “That’s my fault too.”

“‘Tachi!”

Itachi lowered his head at the rebuke.

Mikoto’s tone was firm. “Nothing, absolutely nothing, is your fault. Taking any fault on yourself is to alleviate it from those who did this to you. To say that is to blame your father for sending you there.”

“I’ve never blamed father.”

“Then don’t blame yourself.”

“Yes, mother.”

“Itachi-kun,” Inoichi said as he approached with a plate.

“Thank you, Inoichi-san.”

“Itachi,” Fugaku said as he came into the dining room. “Where’s your boyfriend?”

Itachi hunched his shoulders and blushed. “No speech, please.”

“I was more concerned when it was Naruto. Kakashi is a better man. He’s wiser than Naruto and a fine man over all. He’s more handsome than Naruto as well.”

“Please, father, the last thing I need is to hear is that my father thinks my boyfriend is attractive.”

“He left for work,” Mikoto informed her husband. To Itachi, she said, “At least you’ve chosen someone you don’t have to worry about being ashamed of being seen with. He’s so handsome and such a gentleman.”

“Even Sasuke admitted the handsome part and Sasuke doesn’t like him,” Itachi said.
Inoichi delivered Fugaku’s meal.

“I think Sasuke likes him,” Fugaku said, “he’s just protective of his big brother. He wouldn’t have gone drinking with him if he didn’t.”

Mikoto asked about Fugaku’s work and Itachi listened, a little dejected. He was going to succeed his father eventually—that’s why he went to Africa—but now he was housebound. He felt useless because he couldn’t help his father anymore, couldn’t make his own living anymore.

Sasuke finally wondered in. “So loud,” he muttered as his parents talked.

“Hangover, Otouto?” Itachi nearly whispered.

“Hai.”

“You’re staying home,” Fugaku pronounced.

“Hai.” Sasuke winced at his father’s louder voice.

“Didn’t anyone ever warn you about our low tolerance to alcohol?” Itachi asked, still keeping his voice down.

“Hai, hai.”

“Is that all you can say this morning?”

“Hai.”

“Have you taken any pain killers this morning, Sasuke-kun?” Inoichi whispered when he brought Sasuke’s breakfast with a large mug of coffee.

“No.”

“I’ll get you some.”

“Thank you.”

“He can speak other words,” Itachi teased.

Sasuke growled at him.

“Be nice you two,” Mikoto said, smiling. “No sniping for one day.” Really, her two boys loved each other and all their sniping was good natured and amusing to her. She was so proud of her youngest: Sasuke had stayed right by Itachi’s side through everything. He dropped everything in his life and slept in Itachi’s hospital room every night.

When they first learned that Itachi had been kidnapped, Mikoto was a mess and even Fugaku was showing cracks in his stoic façade. When Mikoto was able to turn her attention to her youngest son, he was frozen with shock and worry. He was pale and his eyes looked like those of a frightened eight year old. Not having her eldest son within grasp, Mikoto latched onto Sasuke, hugging him and hardly letting him out of her sight. Sasuke let her, sticking close to his parents through the entire ordeal.
Sasuke was the first one to rush to Itachi’s side when his gurney was taken out of the plane. Sasuke called his name as he ran up and Itachi held out a hand for him and pulled him closer until Sasuke climbed up onto the gurney and clung to Itachi. The men wheeling the gurney across the tarmac were forced to push both brothers as Sasuke wept against Itachi’s chest. Mikoto and Fugaku let Sasuke cling and stood by, just relieved to have Itachi back and that he was alive.

It warmed Mikoto’s heart to see the devotion Sasuke had for his brother. Itachi was the older brother and was expected to nurture Sasuke—he was babysitting Sasuke for years—but Sasuke could not be pried from Itachi’s side. Mikoto and Fugaku had to wait for Sasuke to sleep to lavish Itachi with relieved affection. Mikoto was proud of her sons. Even her grumpy youngest.

Fugaku finished his meal. “Sasuke, learn from this and don’t drink like that again. I don’t want you to end up like your great uncle Madara and your cousin Obito. They were such miserable drunks they lost all sense of right and wrong and who their friends were.”

“I’ll remember. I don’t really want another of these headaches again.”

“I may be late tonight.” Fugaku kissed his wife and turned to leave.

“Father,” Sasuke said and then winced at the volume of his own voice. “You’re friends with Haishi; would he approve of my marrying Hinata?”

“We’ve already talked about it. He’s looking forward to it, but we’ve agreed to split the wedding bill; he’ll pay for the wedding, I’m paying for the reception. Have you asked her yet?”

“Not yet. Still unsure how.”

“Nya, nya,” Itachi said, mimicking the scaredy-cat he was implying his brother was.

Sasuke pouted and glared at his brother even though he couldn’t see it.

“Ask her this week,” Fugaku said. “Half the wedding’s already been planned.”

Sasuke paled. “Yes, sir.”

“I also want talk to you about your future. Propose first.”

“Yes, sir,” Sasuke repeated. Fugaku smiled reassuringly and left.

“Sasuke,” Itachi said, “we can both try to go back to sleep or suffer together.”

“Hai.”

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Kakashi felt he was being stalked again. He had his three hour class in an hour and he sat under the same tree as yesterday getting ahead on the reading before class. Frankly, he found Aristotle boring as hell, but he plowed through it. He swore not to take another ethics class.

His stalker was seriously disturbing him. It was dense reading—and sooo boring—so his mind was easily pulled away by whoever was staring at him.
“Just come over here and speak to me,” Kakashi finally said without looking up from the book.
“Stalking me is far more distracting.”

He did look up when someone approached him. It was Naruto.

“Uh, hey,” Naruto greeted nervously.

“Naruto. What do you want?”

“You’re Itachi’s boyfriend now?”

“Yeah.”

“How is he?”

“Often depressed, but he’s getting better. He’s sometimes happy. He’s even started getting back to his old self from what I gather from him and his brother.”

“That’s good. I may have left him, but I still worry about him. We were real close, you know.”

“You tried to cheat on him with Hinata.”

“You know about that?”

“Sasuke got drunk last night and told me the whole story.”

“I’m really not that bad a guy. I started having doubts about having a ‘boyfriend.’ No girl was ever interested in me except Hinata so I really wanted to try with her, you know? Especially after she changed. She was so quiet and then she turned into a stunner. I didn’t want to hurt Itachi. But then after he went blind, I got scared.”

“He’d be a burden.”

“Sort of, yeah.”

“I probably can’t take him to the movies, but otherwise, I see no problem.”

“Taking care of someone like that just really wasn’t something I wanted to do for the rest of my life. But I miss him, you know? I’d say give him my best, but he probably doesn’t want to hear it. But I’d really like to see him again. Can you ask him? Just a few minutes. I want to apologize. I wanted to ask Sasuke, but he still hates me—and he’s justified. I really miss him. Both of them.”

“I’ll ask Itachi. I’m confident that after even the most sincere and heartfelt apology, Itachi wouldn’t take you back and his brother will never forgive you or let you near the house. I think Itachi would appreciate an apology though.”

“Yeah, a relationship is impossible now, but I want to see him again. Thank you. Here’s my number.”

Kakashi stuck the slip of paper in his book like a bookmark.
“Are Sasuke and Hinata really getting married?” Naruto asked.

“I don’t think he’s actually proposed, but it’s pretty much a foregone conclusion.”

Naruto nodded again in thanks and walked away. Kakashi sucked his cheek and went back to ancient Greek ethics.

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Kakashi stayed home that night, but called Itachi and they talked for a while about Aristotle and then about the literary culture of the US during the nineteenth century. He didn’t mention Naruto.

“Can I take you out to dinner tomorrow?”

“Of course. But I’m starting to feel a little spoiled.”

“What’s wrong with that? I’ll come get you at six-thirty. Tell your overbearing little brother I’m kidnapping you for the night and all Saturday. I’ll have you back home Sunday morning. Bring a change of clothes.”

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Kakashi was a little ashamed to be picking up the heir of the Uchiha family in a used Kia, but he drove up to the door anyway. Itachi couldn’t see it of course, but Kakashi was certain that demonic little brother of his described every unflattering detail. Nevertheless, Itachi slid into the passenger seat without reservations.

“What would make the perfect evening for you?” Kakashi asked once Itachi was buckled in.

“Honestly? A really good burger, dessert, and sex. I hope to god we’re alone in here.”

“Actually, your father’s in the backseat.”

“Ha, ha.”

“I wish I did voices. I kind of want to take you somewhere nicer than Red Robin, but if that’s what you want.”

“I’m so used to fancy food that Red Robin—hell, McDonald’s—is a treat.”

“As you wish.”

They opted for one of the smaller booths in the bar. They ordered and chatted as they waited for their food.

“Oh, god,” Kakashi suddenly muttered.

Itachi tilted his head, not able to see why Kakashi swore. At least he’s stopped turning around at such things.

“My friends are here. They’re all ex-comrades. Bear with them.”
“Kakashi!” Gai cried out and led the pack of ex-soldiers into the bar area. They came to the table and Gai pulled Kakashi out of his seat and hugged him. “We haven’t seen you in weeks.”

“Busy.”

Gai turned to see Kakashi’s companion. “I see you got yourself a girlfriend.” Gai gave Itachi a leer that he couldn’t see, but he could feel.

Itachi growled.

“Itachi is my boyfriend,” Kakashi said.

“Oh, sorry.” Gai slipped out of flirting mode and into fraternal mode. “I’m Mai Gai. Pleasure to meet you.” He stuck out his hand, but Itachi made no move to take it.

“He’s blind you idiot,” Genma muttered.

“Pleasure,” Itachi said with an amused smile. “Rather than Kakashi introducing you, I’d rather you do it yourselves since I’ll know you by your voice.”

“I’m Genma Shiranui.”

“Hayate Gekko.”

“Yamato Tenzou.”

“Itachi Uchiha,” Itachi said once he was sure the pack was finished.

The ensuing silence was something Itachi was used to.

“You guys going out without inviting me?” Kakashi pouted, not wearing his mask since they were about to have dinner.

“You always resist,” Yamato said.

“To clubs and parties, not to dinner.”

“We’ll hit you up next week. We didn’t mean to intrude. Nice to meet you,” Yamato said to Itachi.

Once Itachi was sure they had moved away, he leaned forward. “If you want to join them, I’m fine with that.”

“Not tonight. You’re free to tag along with us in the future though. Don’t worry about Gai; he annoys all.”

Itachi smiled. His chocolate malt was brought with their salads. He sipped at it like a little kid; Kakashi expected Itachi to start kicking his feet. Seeing Itachi so happy made Kakashi smile like a fool. He thought Itachi seemed looser since he talked to Kakashi about Yahiko, more confident as well.

Itachi asked about Kakashi’s friends and they chatted about whatever. Itachi ordered the hot apple crisp and a Bailey’s shake for dessert while Kakashi snacked on his fries.
“Is there anywhere you want to go or do tonight?” Kakashi asked. “It’s still early.”

Itachi shied a little. Kakashi was overcome by the cuteness. “I would kind of like to go for a ride on your bike. Just a little bit.”

“That’s not a problem. I don’t get on it as much as I’d like. Want to go to the beach like last time where we can take our helmets off?”

“Yeah. I miss riding so much. And my car. It’s a gorgeous Bentley. There’s so much you take for granted about being able to see. I never realized how much I relied on my eyes. Even when they took the first one and threatened the second, I did think I wouldn’t be able to do this or that, but I didn’t realize just how much it would affect my life.”

“Yeah. Even just losing one eye was a problem.”

“Come to think of it, we’ve only got one eye between us.” Itachi smiled. “You know, I did have doubts last week, but now I can say easily, I love you. I really do.”

“I love you deeply. You are quickly becoming my world.”

“I still feel bad about how much you have to do for me.”

“Don’t. I get recompensed. Just looking at you is payment enough.”

Itachi finished up and they left.

In the main dining room, there were two men watching their smitten friend with his lover. The other two were forced to just hear commentary.

“He’s sooooo whipped,” Genma said.

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They went to Kakashi’s apartment to pick up his bike and gear. Kakashi wrapped Itachi in an oversized jacket and gave him his spare helmet. Then they were back out heading toward the beach.

Kakashi loved the feeling of Itachi holding onto him even if it was through a few layers of clothing.

The moon was out on the clear night. Itachi could hear the waves and smell the sea. There were few people out on this stretch of beach and Kakashi took their helmets so they could enjoy the wind on their faces. After a few rounds down the side street and the large parking lot, Kakashi parked.

“Anything you want to do while we’re at the beach?”

“I’ve never been a fan, but I love the breeze. I get bored. I’m sort of unsure on sand now too.”

“Let’s take a walk right here to stretch your legs.”

Itachi obediently dismounted. Kakashi guided him through the mostly empty parking lot.
“Is it nice tonight?” Itachi asked.

“Nearly a full moon; I think it’s waning. It’s perfectly clear, but only the brightest stars are visible because of the city lights and street lights. The moonlight is lovely on the waves though. We’re almost completely alone out here.”

With one hand in Itachi’s Kakashi put his other hand in his pocket and fingered the felt covered ring box there. Kakashi stopped and faced Itachi. He was about to get down on a knee when Itachi’s cell phone rang.

Itachi fished his phone from his pocket. “Otouto . . . I don’t know . . . . You have a week, right? . . . . I’ve never really given it much thought . . . . I’m on a date if you remember . . . . Sasuke! . . . . I actually have every intention to . . . . Otouto, we’ll talk about this on Sunday. Goodnight.” Itachi ended the call and shut off his phone.

“Gaaa! That little brother of mine can be a pain. He’s freaking out over how to propose to Hinata. Like I would know. Being gay, I never gave it thought since I can’t really get married.”

“We’ll you can always have the ceremony if you wanted, just not the tax benefits.”

“Yeah, but I never wanted a wedding. You’re up there in front of so many people and it deals with very personal emotions and stuff . . . I’d just feel so exposed.” Itachi shuddered. “I’d rather elope. Anyway, let’s go back to your apartment and do the one thing Sasuke can’t right now.”

“Propose?”

“Shag.”

The ride home seemed long, but once he parked it seemed like only moments before Itachi was laid out on Kakashi’s bed. Kakashi kissed him and palmed his cock.

Kakashi’s lips moved to his neck and his hand further down between his legs to tease his entrance. He’d grabbed the lube before laying over his precious raven and now he slicked his fingers before penetrating the younger man. Kakashi didn’t rush this, gnawing on his neck and thrusting his fingers inside him at a leisurely pace. He stroked that wonderful bundle of nerves making Itachi moan.

Kakashi’s mouth moved next to a nipple and he started rubbing his erection against a nearly smooth leg. His fingers continued to explore the hot tunnel and his palm moved over his balls.

He couldn’t help wondering what Naruto and that bastard Yahiko would do to him. He didn’t want to touch him and kiss him the way his past . . . lovers had. He wanted to be unique to him, especially since he couldn’t see him.

He moved back up to whisper against Itachi’s neck, “I want to take you from behind.”

Kakashi took his fingers away as Itachi moved onto his knees, keeping his body upright. Kakashi wrapped his arms around him and nuzzled his neck as he pushed up into Itachi’s body. Kakashi thrust up into him slowly, savoring every inch of Itachi’s silky insides.

“Itachi, no one could feel better than you.”
“Best lover I’ve had,” Itachi sighed back.

“You have no idea how good it feels to hear that.”

“Jealous?”

“Very. But maybe not so much anymore. But I won’t let you go. I won’t let anyone else touch you.”

“Good.” Itachi pressed down onto Kakashi’s cock and groaned. “Harder.”

Kakashi tweaked a nipple even as he started fucking Itachi harder and faster. His free hand moved to just above Itachi’s groin, sliding between his stomach and his bouncing cock. He pulled Itachi to him as he thrust up.

“Fuck, yeah,” Itachi sighed.

Kakashi took his hand from Itachi’s nipple and pulled Itachi’s hair to the side to expose his neck. His hand returned to its previous occupation and he started to suck on his neck, scraping it gently with his teeth and licking at it.

“Bite me, mark me,” Itachi panted.

Kakashi obliged, biting hard where his shoulder met his neck then he tongued the wound gently, teasing the reddened flesh. He bit him under the ear and gave it the same treatment while continually thrusting upward.

“I can’t last long inside you,” Kakashi confessed. He gripped Itachi’s cock and stoked him.

Itachi twisted his hips a little and let out a cry when his prostate was hit dead center.

Kakashi cam first as he feared, but Itachi wasn’t far behind him, feeling Kakashi swell within him and filling his body with cum. Kakashi’s groans were right next to his ear and that sent him over the edge with a tingling running down his spine.

Itachi leaned back and Kakashi leaned forward, holding each other up.

“Who’s sleeping on the cum?” Itachi asked.

Kakashi huffed and leaned his head on Itachi’s shoulder to see. “It’s just the pillow case. I’ll take that off and we’ll make do with one pillow.”

Itachi hummed in agreement. “Lay me down away from it. I’ve slept with cum in my hair before and didn’t like it.”

Kakashi growled.

“Heel, love.”

“Just tell me it was your own.”
“I don’t like to lie.”

Kakashi growled again.

Itachi laughed and turned, carefully feeling for Kakashi’s face and kissed him. “I’ll let you if you really need to mark me like a dog, but you’re dealing with the crusty tangles in the morning.”

“I’ll take you up on that some other night. Tired?”

“Yeah.”

Kakashi laid him down as requested and stripped the pillow and tossed the pillow on the floor, out of Itachi’s paths to the bathroom and the door. He used the case to clean himself and tossed that away too.

“I’ve got plans for tomorrow,” Kakashi said as he snuggled up next to his lover. “Sleep well.”

“Goodnight.”

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It was a chilly morning and Kakashi had no intention of leaving the warmth of Itachi’s body under the blanket. Kakashi was on his back and Itachi was on his side. Kakashi turned onto his side and nosed Itachi’s long hair. He didn’t want to wake him, so Kakashi just ran his hand down the side of Itachi’s stomach and molested his morning wood.

At some point, Itachi woke up to feel his orgasm building up. Kakashi stroked him to completion while rubbing himself on Itachi’s ass. Itachi turned and returned the favor and they kissed. Once both had cum, they showered together, playfully pawing each other. Kakashi helped his lover dress and then sat him down on the bed and combed out his hair.

“That feels good,” Itachi said.

“So beautiful. I never thought a man could have such lovely hair; so soft and glossy. You are simply gorgeous.”

“Simply?” Itachi asked with a pout.

“To put it simply.”

Itachi hummed.

After Kakashi took Itachi to breakfast, he took him to an outdoor concert. He’d had a chance to peruse Itachi’s iTunes which he or his brother had rated, and therefore Kakashi knew Itachi was a fan of Bach. They sat on the grass in the park and listened to the beautiful cello, harpsichord, and organ music. Itachi pulled Kakashi down to lay his head in his lap.

Once again, Kakashi fingered the felt box in his pocket. A concert in the park: a wonderful place to propose. But as he was getting up the nerve—he wondered just why he was this nervous; it wasn’t like they would actually be married—there was another interruption.

People applauded and Kakashi opened his eye and clapped and then he heard a deep voice nearby.
“You always did love Bach.”

Itachi whipped his head around toward that voice and Kakashi sat up.

“Minato?” Itachi asked.

“Hey, ‘Tachi.”

Itachi grabbed Kakashi’s shoulder and used it to stand. He held out a hand and a very handsome blond with a red headed woman approached and took it, pulling him into an easy hug. Kakashi stood as well.

“Itachi,” the woman said as warning that she was there before she hugged him tightly.

“Kakashi, this is Minato and Kushina Namikaze, they’re Naruto’s parents. Minato, Kushina, this is my boyfriend, Kakashi.”

Kakashi had thought the blond man looked familiar. Both Namikazes’ faces darkened a little at the mention of their son’s name. Kakashi shook their hands nevertheless.

“Don’t hold what Naruto did against us,” Kushina said to Kakashi.

“I don’t,” Itachi said to Kakashi. “Minato and Kushina treated me like family and were harsh on Naruto too.”

“What he did was inexcusable,” Minato said. “And you should know, we’ve been friends with the Uchiha for years and we’re nearly as protective of Itachi as his own family.” There was a playful hostility in Minato’s eyes.

“Thank you,” Itachi said. “I doubt you have to worry about this one.”

“You’re on a date,” Kushina said, “we’re interrupting. We just had to stop by and say hello. Our families need to get together for dinner soon, without Naruto around of course.”

“As much as we disapprove of what Naruto did, we don’t particularly want Fugaku and Sasuke killing him,” Minato said.

“Or Mikoto,” Kushina added. “Never underestimate we women when it comes to our precious cubs.”

“I’ll pass along the proposal,” Itachi said. The use of that word made Kakashi nervous. This chance was ruined. He still had half a day.

“Goodbye, Itachi,” they said and left.


“It’s okay.” Kakashi put his arms around Itachi from behind. “I was wondering: do you like dogs?”

“I do. I never had a pet. At least not of my own. We had a cat when I was younger. Sasuke’s a cat person, but I like the affection of dogs.”
“I love dogs. There’s an adoption drive on the other side of the park. I thought we’d go over and just ‘test drive’ a few.”

“I’d like that.”

They walked to the adoption fair and the staff were very accommodating, letting Itachi sit on the grass while they brought over a few dogs to play with him. He could roll a ball and the dog would bring it back, pushing it into his hand as if knowing he couldn’t see it. He even let the puppies gnaw lightly on his fingers.

Kakashi stood aside with a worker and asked quietly what dog would be best for someone who was blind. The answer was obvious: a service dog.

“The dog needs to be well trained and service dogs are trained practically from birth to behave around the blind or whatever disability they’ll be helping with. A dog too energetic would be likely to trip him. You’d best get a service dog. Give the shelter a call and we can give you the number of a service.”

Kakashi thanked her and then went over to play tug of war with a Rottweiler while Itachi pet a sleepy puppy. He always regretted not being able to have a pet in the military and now he realized there would be no going to shelters and just adopting strays. But Itachi liked dogs and looked like he was having fun so a dog was not out of the question.

Kakashi escorted a happy Itachi to the car. “We have quite a bit of time before dinner, is there something you want to do?”

“No really. I don’t get out much anymore. You and Sasuke are the only reasons I leave the house. So much is geared toward seeing that there doesn’t seem to be anything to do when you’re blind.”

“What did you used to do?”

“Actually I worked a lot at my father’s company; I was going to succeed him after all. Now it’s all on Sasuke’s shoulders. I went to the gym quite a bit, running, the theater, though the theater’s not so bad; so much of it is dialog. I love Shakespeare and that’s something I can still enjoy.”

“You know I love Shakespeare. I’ll keep that in mind. We should go to the gym together; I can watch you, spot you, and I can work out between your sets.”

“I’d thought about that.”

“Then we’ll start this week.” He was holding Itachi’s arm, but he pulled him closer and kissed his hair. “Let’s walk around downtown to prime our appetites before we go to dinner.”

“Okay.”

They went to dinner at an upscale Japanese restaurant. This was it, he had a few hours to sort of propose. He wanted to show up the abominable little brother tomorrow. He’d checked the internet for ideas of how to do it and almost all of them involved the proposee to be able to see. It wasn’t a real proposal, just a . . . commitment ring sort of thing, so asking the conductor of the concert to announce it earlier wouldn’t have really worked. And then there was what Itachi had said last night about not wanting to do this sort of thing in front of a lot of people.
They had to walk down the quaint downtown main street again to get back to their car. It was about the time most shops closed, but there was a bakery still open.

“Want dessert?” Kakashi asked.

“I’ll always say ‘yes’ to dessert.”

Kakashi ushered him inside and read out the menu. They ordered two coffees and a baklava. They sat at an outdoor table and Kakashi tried the pastry, but left it to Itachi to consume.

*Now or never, Kakashi thought.*

Kakashi stood and knelt next to Itachi’s chair and turned him a little so he faced him. He carefully touched Itachi’s glasses before he pushed them back over his head. He took one hand in his and took out the ring box, opened it, and guided Itachi’s hand to it.

“Unfortunately it can’t be marriage, but I wanted to make this official.”

Tears escaped the corners of Itachi’s eyes. “I love you, Kakashi,” Itachi said in a fragile voice.

Kakashi took Itachi’s left hand and slipped the ring on his finger. Itachi touched it, trying to ‘see’ it.

“Silver band with embedded diamonds and onyx. Three each.”

Tears still streaming down his cheeks, Itachi looked at Kakashi reproachfully. “Diamonds? I don’t want you spending that kind of money. Not on something I can’t even see.”

“They’re small diamonds. It’s not like I’ll be doing it often. Though I’d like to buy you some studs for your ears. I got a matching ring for myself. And don’t offer to pay for it. Let me spoil the rich kid a bit. And hell, I could be lying and the diamonds could be glass.”

“I love you. If it was a proposal, my answer would be ‘yes.’” He cleared his throat. “Now take me home and ravish me.”

“Yes, sir.”

They were once again on Kakashi’s twin bed, kissing even more passionately than before.

“Let me ride you,” Itachi said when he couldn’t breathe anymore.

“Please.”

They traded placed and Itachi held out his hand, Kakashi gave him the lube. Though he couldn’t see Itachi’s fingers enter his ass, Kakashi loved the view of this beautiful raven over him, fingering himself, his hips thrust forward and the look of pleasure on his face. Itachi moved back and up to position himself over Kakashi’s hard cock. He lowered himself down.

Having had sex the night before and his several years of experience, Kakashi’s sizable cock slipped in without much resistance. Itachi sank down until he was all but sitting on Kakashi’s balls, his folded legs on either side of his hips kept his weight off the sensitive organ.
He barely hesitated before lifting himself up and started fucking himself on his lover’s cock. His erection bounced as his body moved, his own balls pressing against Kakashi’s groin.

Itachi was a sight to behold. Despite his neglect of exercise since he came home and his love of sweets, Itachi was still thin. He’d been half starved and malnourished when he came home a few months ago. As he stretched, Kakashi could see the muscle there and even the ridges of his ribs.

“Take out your hair tie,” Kakashi requested. Itachi obeyed, throwing the red band to the side and shaking out his hair to flow over his shoulders.

Being blind made it difficult to keep his balance. He leaned back to target his own prostate and nearly fell to the side. Kakashi sat up a bit to grab Itachi’s wrist. He took his other wrist and held him up as Itachi leaned back again to change the angle of penetration.

Itachi started groaning even before he found that bundle of nerves. With Kakashi keeping him upright, Itachi was able to lean far back, his bobbing cock pointing at the ceiling.

“God, that feels so good,” Itachi crowed. Kakashi bucked his hips every once in a while to change it up as Itachi kept thrusting his body downward.

Tired of the difficult position, Itachi leaned forward and Kakashi moved his hands to Itachi’s chest and felt down his ribs and lean muscle. His hands finally came to rest on Itachi’s still moving hips. Itachi leaned further forward to place his hands of Kakashi’s chest for added leverage. With his hands on Itachi’s hips, Kakashi could better thrust upward.

“Give me your cum,” Itachi sighed. “Fill me up.”

“I’m getting close. You’re so fucking gorgeous.” He bit his lips to keep from telling him how much he wanted to see Itachi bathed in cum. See it in his hair, on his face . . . That, however, might spark unpleasant memories. He could think it though.

As they both got closer, Kakashi slid a hand to Itachi’s bobbing cock and started to stroke it.

“I want your cum,” Kakashi said. “Cum for me, baby. Splash it all over me.”

“Fuck, fuck . . .” Itachi was close; he started moving faster. He arched his body back and his prostate was struck again and he cam hard, letting himself cry out in ecstasy, unashamed to writhe like a porn star and cry out like a slut.

Kakashi could stand it no longer looking at that gorgeous sight and the tight heat clutching him. He cam inside Itachi.

Itachi leaned down and panted over Kakashi’s cum strewn chest. Once he got his breath, he trailed his fingers over Kakashi’s chest to find the drops of semen. He scooped it up and brought it to his mouth.

“Fuck, now I have to fuck you again,” Kakashi said.

“I have no objections.”

“First, why don’t you finish cleaning my chest?”
Itachi smiled and trailed his fingers down Kakashi’s chest again to find the drops again. He scooped up every drop and deposited it in his mouth.

“Did I get it all?”

“You did, but there’s still residue.”

Itachi gave him a feigned look of annoyance and bent down to lick his chest. Kakashi’s breathing increased as Itachi stuck his tongue out as far as possible and tilted his head up; if Itachi had eyes, he’d be looking up at him seductively. As much as he didn’t want to think about Sasuke—being a bit of a boner-killer—Kakashi thought about Sasuke’s eyes to imagine what Itachi’s had looked like. The boner-killer little brother couldn’t stop his excitement at the mental image.

Finished, they trade places and Kakashi went for Itachi’s puffy nipples while they continued to recover. He ran his teeth over the swollen nub. He slid a hand under Itachi’s back to hold him against him as he suckled on his chest. Itachi threaded his fingers in Kakashi’s hair and massaged his scalp.

Kakashi slid his free hand down Itachi’s hip to his lower thigh and hitched it up. He was recovered and he moved to reenter Itachi’s already lubed and well-used hole. Itachi kept his hands in Kakashi’s hair. Kakashi rocked into him before going all out and fucking his raven hard. If he’d had a headboard, it would be knocking on the wall. As it was, the bed wasn’t silent and neither was Itachi, moaning and groaning with every thrust.

Realizing he was going to cum before Itachi, Kakashi grabbed Itachi’s cock and quickly stroked him to bring him closer to orgasm.

Itachi whined as he got close and was too tired to cry out. Kakashi held back until Itachi was well over the cliff. With that last spurt of cum, all the energy abandoned Kakashi and he was barely able to land next to Itachi rather than crush him.

“Fuck, baby,” he sighed. “I think I shot my soul into your body.”

Itachi chuckled. “I’ll take good care of it.”

“Good. I’m going to pass out now.”

“Okay. Thank you.”

“I love you.”

“I love you.”

-----

Itachi woke to his face and hair being caressed. He opened his eyes to see large vibrant blue eyes and thought first of Naruto, but the metal bars in his eyebrows and nose reminded him that he was not home in his boyfriend’s bed, but in Africa. But those blue eyes were kind and sad.

Yahiko didn’t stop caressing him even after he saw Itachi’s black eyes open. Something about that frightened Itachi. That hand fell to Itachi’s chest to glide over a nipple then down his abdomen. Part of Itachi’s mind shrunk back, the part of him that was a rape victim, fearful and ashamed to be
of no other use than a concubine. The other part of him was excited and even eagerly anticipating that hand reaching his cock.

But when Yahiko’s hand reached his cock, Yahiko didn’t smile at his little slave’s reaction. Like he normally did.

“I want you to ride me, weasel.”

The pet name sent a tingling down Itachi’s spine. A little embarrassed, Itachi got up on his knees and straddled Yahiko’s nude, powerfully muscled body. He grabbed the lube and lubed his fingers and reached behind him. He was embarrassed even though he’d done this in front of Naruto and others before him, but because he felt like a slave it was humiliating.

He put a hand on Yahiko’s chest to steady himself as he guided Yahiko’s cock into him. But he found that Yahiko wasn’t as hard as thought he’d be, but he was hard enough to penetrate him.

Itachi fucked himself on Yahiko’s cock as it grew harder. He put both hands on Yahiko’s chest to help him steady and rock himself. He found that thinking of himself as nothing but a sex object was arousing even as it shamed him. He opened his eyes, wanting to see that lustful look of ownership in Yahiko’s eyes, but Yahiko’s eyes were soft.

Yahiko reached out and put a hand to Itachi’s face and guided it down. Itachi stopped moving his hips as he was drawn down. They locked eyes. Yahiko’s eyes darted between focusing on Itachi’s right eye then his left. It was like he was trying to look inside or to memorize every detail of the stark white sclera, black irises, and completely black pupils. Itachi was malnourished only a little more than Yahiko, but he was slightly anemic without any clear veins in his eyes. But Yahiko sought out every single one to map. Itachi expected to hear the words ‘I love you’ come from Yahiko’s lips with the way he was looking at him.

Yahiko’s left hand remained on Itachi’s cheek while the right went to his ribs. More and more Itachi expected to hear those words. He was certain about it.

“Do you trust me, my dear weasel?” Yahiko asked instead of saying what Itachi wanted him to. Maybe this would all be better if Yahiko did love him.

“Yes.”

“You shouldn’t. I wish I could be worthy of your trust, Itachi.”

The use of his given name made Itachi swallow. “I trust you.”

“It’s just business, Itachi. I would never hurt you otherwise. I wish I could have had you under different circumstances. You’re so beautiful. Please, continue.”

Itachi was unsure what to make of what Yahiko said, but he started moving again. He shut his eyes as he sought out his own prostate and saw to both their pleasures. But Yahiko couldn’t maintain his erection this morning and he slid out of Itachi’s body.

“I’m sorry, my dear weasel. I’m too distracted. Let me take care of you.” Yahiko took Itachi’s erection in his hand and stroked it until Itachi cam on Yahiko’s stomach.

“What’s wrong?” Itachi asked once he caught his breath.
“Forgive me. I never want to hurt you again.”

Yahiko looked at Itachi’s lip like he wanted to kiss him, but didn’t. And he couldn’t look Itachi in the eyes anymore.

He took Itachi to the small bathroom attached to his room and cleaned them both up and gave Itachi black clothes. He pulled Itachi’s head closer and he kissed his forehead. “I’m sorry.”

Fear welled up in Itachi as Yahiko escorted him to the large room where he was normally raped. Deidara was standing near the wall nipping at his thumb nervously. Kakuzu stood near him looking even more unhappy than normal. Kisame stood alone looking angry. Sasori and Zetsu were expressionless. Hidan was practically vibrating with excitement. There was only one person absent.

Yahiko guided Itachi into the center of the room where Kisame stood. Kisame gripped Itachi’s arm and Yahiko let go.

“The dead drop for your ransom was compromised,” Yahiko said in a hard voice. “You—and by extension your father—must pay a price.”

Kisame wrapped a powerful arm around him and put his hand to Itachi’s throat to keep him still. He dropped to his knees with Itachi pinned against him and Hidan came closer. Itachi knew Hidan was a sadist and he was deeply afraid. His body struggled on its own against Kisame’s grip, but it was to no avail. He sought Yahiko’s gaze and saw sadness there, but he knew no help was coming from him.

Hidan crouched down and pulled Itachi’s pants off.

“Kakuzu, Sasori, hold his legs,” Hidan ordered. The two most emotionless men of the group obeyed and grabbed Itachi’s ankles and knees to keep his legs still and open.

Itachi still had lube inside him from this morning thankfully as Hidan thrust into him without hesitation.

“Now, now. If you struggle too much you’ll only make it worse.”

The hand around his throat pressed his head against Kisame’s chest. Kisame’s chin came down to steady his head. Hidan pulled out a scalpel.

With Kisame pressing his hand against his throat, Itachi’s couldn’t really scream as Hidan pulled his eyelid up and attacked his eye. Hidan gave him a few thrusts as he cut out his eye.

When Hidan had his eye, Kisame kept hold of him, but not as tightly. Itachi shut his eyelids tightly, even over the eye he no longer possessed. Now Kisame was just trying to control the crying, wildly struggling mess in his arms. But Hidan wasn’t done; he got off on Itachi’s pain and struggling. He cam quickly, then Kisame held Itachi more comfortably, Kakuzu and Hidan letting go of his legs. Itachi wore himself out from crying and finally went limp.

Deidara brought Yahiko a damp washcloth. Yahiko knelt down and cleaned Itachi’s face of the blood and tears and eye humours. Yahiko straightened Itachi’s hair and a picture was taken. That picture and the mutilated eye were immediately sent to Fugaku.
Yahiko picked Itachi up and carried him back to his room. Itachi fell asleep at some point.

Itachi awoke to someone caressing his face. Just his cheek. He opened his eyes, but there was something over his right eye. He reached up and felt a bandage there. He panicked and grew nauseous, realizing the nightmare had been real. He ripped at the bandage, not wanting to accept the truth, wanting to find his eye still there. Yahiko grabbed his wrists and restrained him.

“I’m sorry, Itachi, I’m sorry.”

Itachi collapsed against him, weeping. He was alright being held for a few moments, but then he struggled out of Yahiko’s arms, not wanting to be touched. He ended up in the corner. He’d torn the bandage off and Yahiko saw the wound.

Itachi wore himself out again and Yahiko crouched next to him. “I’m truly sorry, Itachi. I never wanted to harm you like that. I never wanted to damage your beauty.”

“Please, just send me home,” Itachi sobbed.

“I can’t do that. But your father will work harder to retrieve you. I’m sure you’ll be going home soon.”

Once he fully calmed down, Itachi went to the bathroom to wash his face. That’s when he saw the damage. He screamed.

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Kakashi awoke to screaming. He turned in his small bed to see Itachi was missing. Itachi was on the floor, pulling himself against the wall, terrified. Kakashi dropped from the bed to pull Itachi against him and soothe him.


It took a few minutes for Itachi to calm down. “Kakashi?”

“Yeah. You’re safe.”

Itachi snuggled further into his chest. “Hidan,” he sobbed. “Hidan cut out my right eye.”

Kakashi didn’t say anything, just rocked him gently and continued to stroke his hair.

“I’m sorry. You did so much to make yesterday perfect and I had to have a nightmare.”

“It’s okay. As long as I wasn’t the cause,” Kakashi said lightly.

“No, not you. I’m sorry.”

“Don’t apologize. Who knows, I might develop PTSD later on; some say they get it a few years after the trauma. Just comfort me like this when it happens.”

Itachi gave a little huff.
“It’s early. I’ll take a shower and change, then I’ll take you home and you can shower and change and we can have breakfast with your family. ‘K? Lie down for a while.” Maybe Sasuke’s presence would help Itachi right now. He was planning to take Itachi home today anyway.

Itachi nodded and Kakashi helped him off the floor and back into bed. Kakashi crouched at the bedside and caressed Itachi’s hair. His heart swelled. He didn’t like the fact Itachi was tormented by what happened, but he also wanted more than ever to protect his little raven. Itachi slipped into a doze and Kakashi hurried to shower, not wanting to leave Itachi alone too long.

He gently woke Itachi and helped him dress and took him home. Kakashi used Itachi’s key to open the door and helped him upstairs and into his room. Itachi showered and dressed and Kakashi escorted him downstairs, catching Inoichi to let him know they would be joining the rest of the family for breakfast.

When Sasuke came down, he spotted the pair in the living room. He narrowed his eyes at his brother. “Your phone was off.”

“You called at an inopportune moment.” Something occurred to him and turned to Kakashi. “The night on the beach, were you going to give me the ring then?”

“Ring?” Sasuke was startled. “You gave him the ring?”

“You knew about it?” Itachi asked.

“I showed him to get him off my back,” Kakashi said. “And yes, I was going to give it to you when your brother called.”

He couldn’t see, but he could still glare. “Sasuke,” Itachi growled. “If you interrupted us on purpose . . .”

Sasuke put his hands up even though Itachi couldn’t see it. “I didn’t, I swear.”

“Hn. I turned off my phone to keep you from interrupting again.”

“What if something happened?”

“You had Kakashi’s number.”

Sasuke surrendered. “So, you got the ring.”

Itachi held up his hand with the ring.

Sasuke turned to Kakashi. “You did that on purpose to show me up.”

“Yes!” Kakashi’s eyes made happy little rainbows.

Sasuke grumbled and headed for the dining room; Kakashi and Itachi followed him, Fugaku and Mikoto soon joined them. It took Mikoto five minutes to notice the ring on her eldest son’s hand.

“Oh, Itachi!”

Sasuke scowled.
Itachi couldn’t stop a smile and he couldn’t kill it either. “He gave it to me last night.”

Mikoto stood and came around to hug her son. “I’m so happy for you.”

“It’s not marriage,” Itachi protested.

“As good as,” Kakashi said.

Mikoto shifted her affection to her new son-in-law, hugging him and kissing his forehead.

“I take it you approve?” Kakashi asked.

“Of course I do. If Fugaku or I didn’t, you wouldn’t be here right now.”

Something told Kakashi that she didn’t just mean in the house having breakfast, but here in the land of the living.

“Those better not be cubic zirconia,” Fugaku said.

“Diamonds and onyx.”

Fugaku nodded in approval. He even let a smile slip. “So Sasuke, the ball is in your court.”

“Next week, okay? I’ll ask her at the next opportune moment. Um, how did you . . .”

Itachi described the last two days—minus the sex and nightmare—and conveyed the Namikazes’ wish to meet up. Fugaku agreed to call Minato to schedule lunch or dinner.

Itachi seemed to have recovered well from his nightmare. Kakashi had expected them, expected depression and so forth and was a little glad Itachi finally had a nightmare in his presence, just to relieve—or meet—Kakashi’s expectation. Now Itachi was happy and comfortable.

They adjourned to the living room to talk. They were then startled by pounding on the door. Inoichi hurried to the door. He may be a butler, but he was also a member of the family’s security; he was cautious as he peeked outside. Seeing the person outside, he glanced at Fugaku who stopped at the door between the hall and living room. Before Inoichi could speak, the man outside used his own key to force the door open, pushing Inoichi away.

“Uncle! Where’s Itachi?”

Itachi was already poised to stand and did so now, taking a few steps toward the hall and that voice.

“Shisui?” Itachi asked.

Shisui moved past his uncle and grabbed Itachi in a tight embrace. “I just found out. I’m so sorry, Itachi. God, I’m so sorry I wasn’t here.”

“Where have you been?” Fugaku asked him.

Without letting go of his cousin, Shisui answered, “I’ve been working for the government overseas
and they decided not to tell me because they knew I’d come straight home. They only told me because my job was done. I’ve been on planes since to get here as soon as possible.”

He pulled away to touch the dark sunglasses Itachi wore and slowly pulled them up. He looked like he was about to cry, collapse, or scream. He pulled Itachi to him again. Kakashi was certain Shisui was crying into Itachi’s long hair.

Fugaku motioned to the rest of them to leave the two cousins alone. Kakashi followed the family to the lounge.

“That bastard,” Sasuke grumbled.

“I think he’s telling the truth,” Fugaku said. “I tried to get word to him, but his superiors said he was unreachable.”

“It’s not just the fact he wasn’t around,” Sasuke said.

“You never liked him,” Mikoto said.

Fugaku turned to Kakashi. “Shisui is my older brother’s son. My brother and his wife died when Shisui was about nine. I took him in, but he was pretty independent, resentful I think that his family was dead and didn’t want us to replace them, but he and Itachi were close.

“He’s a naturally skilled negotiator and interrogator. He uses both skills as an independent contractor for the government and large corporations. So be careful when talking to him; he’s probably analyzing you.”

“I’ll keep it in mind. He won’t be the first interrogator I’ve been around; quite a few wondering around Afghanistan.”

“He’s a manipulative bastard,” Sasuke grumbled.

“Sasuke!” Mikoto scolded.

“He’s bad for Itachi,” Sasuke said.

That seemed to spur something in Fugaku. He went back and they all followed. Sasuke had been right.

Shisui was crying and mumbling.

“God, how can you stand it?” Shisui sobbed. “So terrible. How could someone do this to you? How could they do it? Poor thing. How can you stand it?”

The rest of them knew that that kind of talk was only going to damage Itachi; they all worked so hard for him to move past what happened and here was someone trying to pull him back down.


Shisui reluctantly let his cousin go. That’s when Kakashi finally got a good look at him. He definitely looked like an Uchiha, but not as beautiful as Itachi or Sasuke, something Kakashi now was certain was something they inherited from their mother. His hair was wilder and curlier, his
eyes also naturally wider than Itachi’s almond shape.

Fugaku gestured for Inoichi to bring him his wallet and stopped Kakashi as he escorted Itachi toward the stairs, pressing a few bills into his hand. “Just bring his spirits up.”

“Understood.”

Once Kakashi got Itachi to his room, he looked at Itachi’s uncovered eyes. He looked fine. “Are you okay? We were worried Shisui would depress you with that talk.”

“Plunge me into self-pity? If it wasn’t for the ring on my finger, he might have succeeded. I’m fine, let’s get out of here.”

Itachi hurried Kakashi down to the door. Once they were in the car and heading down the driveway, Itachi apologized.

“I’m sorry. My cousin and I were really close. I expected that, but didn’t think he’d show up any time soon. One thing, be careful when you talk to him, he’s a professional interrogator. He’s naturally manipulative. Used to work for the CIA. So, don’t get in a conversation with him.”

“Your father already warned me.”

“That talent of his is one of the reasons we’re not close anymore.”

“I can understand that.”

“I’ll stop him if he tries anything with you. I wish he hadn’t showed up.”

“Sasuke doesn’t like him. I feel better knowing there are at least two people he hates more than me.”

Itachi snuggled back comfortably and leaned toward Kakashi, smiling. “He doesn’t hate you. He and I have always loved each other dearly, but we also love to snipe at each other. He’ll ease up a little, but he won’t change that much. He’s finally taking an attitude with me again. I’m glad. But then Shisui shows up. Sasuke really loathes him.”

“Why?”

“One reason is I think Sasuke resents the time I spent with Shisui when we were younger. That and Shisui and Sasuke just don’t get along.”

There was a lot unspoken, but Itachi had shown he’d tell Kakashi things when he was ready.

“I heard my father,” Itachi said. “Just drive for a while. You don’t mind, do you?”

“Not at all.”

“I feel like I’ve monopolized your time recently.” That was better than before when he felt he was being a burden.

“Honestly, there’s nothing else I’d rather be doing.” He grabbed Itachi’s hand.
Like a baby, Itachi fell asleep as Kakashi drove. He hadn’t slept well with that nightmare and woke up early because of it.

They stayed out for nearly two hours, grabbing lunch after Itachi woke up. Shisui had ridden a taxi to the house, so they couldn’t be sure if he was still in the house. They entered the house quietly, but Sasuke was waiting for them in the living room.

“Father’s talking with Shisui,” Sasuke told Itachi. “Are you alright?”

“I’m fine. I’m not so fragile anymore.”

“Tachi.” Shisui found him after all. “You’re all right?”

“I keep telling people, I’m fine. I wasn’t at first, but I’m adapting.”

“And you’re his new boyfriend.” Shisui turned his attention to Kakashi.

“Don’t even,” Itachi warned. “You try any psychological crap with him and I will never forgive you. Father and even stick-up-his-ass Sasuke approve of him.”

Sasuke pouted and narrowed his eyes at being talked about like that while he was standing right there.

“In fairness, Itachi, they approved of Naruto. And look what he did. I never approved of him.”

“You wouldn’t approve of anyone. If what happened to me was the result of a fault in my judgment in men, then I would defer to your abilities, but it wasn’t. I don’t want him subjected to your mind games. Got it?” They were all surprised at Itachi’s sudden venom.

Shisui recoiled. “Understood.” Shisui actually looked deflated. Kakashi believed it was because Itachi didn’t trust him. Shisui stood straighter and faced Kakashi. “We weren’t properly introduced before.” He held out his hand. “Shisui Uchiha.”

Kakashi took his hand. “Kakashi Hatake.” He didn’t try to exert too much force in the handshake, but he was firm. Shisui didn’t try to dominate him either.

“Shouldn’t you be leaving?” Sasuke was clearly trying to get his cousin to leave.

“Indeed. Some private soiree I’m not invited to. I still have my townhouse. Please call me, Itachi, for anything.” He put a hand to Itachi’s cheek, making Itachi flinch. “My dear cousin.”

He was about to leave when he glanced down Itachi’s body and saw the ring on his finger. His eyes darted to Kakashi and then to Kakashi’s hand. He swallowed seeing that they had matching rings. He left without mentioning it. Kakashi thought that was odd; Shisui had seemed almost resigned, like a man who realized the person he loved was committed to another. Kakashi was beginning to have his suspicions about why Sasuke hated Shisui.
Shisui was there when Kakashi came over after work a few days later. He’d picked up Itachi for dinner and a shag at his place in the meantime, but tonight he was having dinner with the family.

Inoichi opened the door for him. “Itachi-san is in his room.”

“Thanks, Inoichi.”

Shisui intercepted Kakashi before he put a foot on the stairs. “Can I have a few minutes?”

“Sure.”

Kakashi let Shisui lead him to the lounge. Kakashi took a seat.

“So, you’re a Snake Eater?” Shisui asked as he settled in across from Kakashi.

“Yeah.” Kakashi never particularly liked that nickname for the Special Forces.

“Uncle said you were in Afghanistan.”

“I was.”

“I was in Iraq. Lot of you guys running around that desert too.”

“Getting at something, ‘Spook?’”

Shisui chuckled. “You’re serious about my cousin?”

Kakashi held up his hand with the ring. “I’m a poor man and those are real diamonds.”

“You know what they did to him?”

“Of course.”

“Uncle seems to like you. Tell me why you want my cousin.”

“Honestly, his looks drew me first. He was so graceful and I loved his voice. Then when he told me he was blind, I wanted to protect him. I love him entirely. Don’t worry about your cousin. He’s adapting well and I won’t let anything happen to him.”

Shisui’s eyes were intense. He was trying to detect something in him.
“Tell me something,” Kakashi said, “why does Sasuke hate you so much?”

That threw him. His face went slack and he hesitated. “That’s between us.”

“Fair enough. Excuse me, Itachi’s expecting me.”

“Harm him and I will destroy you.”

“Harm him again and I’ll destroy you.”

“I didn’t.”

“Of course you didn’t.” Kakashi stood and left Shisui to wonder what he knew. He went up to Itachi’s room and knocked.

“Come in!” Itachi yelled over his music.

Kakashi smiled and entered the room, shutting the door behind him. Itachi was lying on the bed. Kakashi crawled over him. “I love Meat Loaf,” Kakashi said near Itachi’s ear. “Unfortunately my car is too small for ‘Paradise by the Dashboard Light.’”

“You need to check out my Bentley. We’d have more than enough room. The stick shift will be a challenge, but it’s removable.”

Kakashi felt a jab of jealousy, imagining Itachi and Naruto leaning over that stick shift to make out.

“Speaking of which, the Konoha Theater puts on a Shakespeare play every April; know which one it is this year? I’d love for you to take me and I’ll let you drive my car.”

“I don’t, but that sounds like a wonderful idea.” Kakashi got up and turned on the monitor of Itachi’s computer and turned down the music. He checked the local theater’s website. “There’s nothing.” He searched for other productions in the area to take Itachi to.

“That’s impossible, they always do Shakespeare in April.”

“You don’t want to go to that one,” Kakashi said.

“What is it?”

“It’s King Lear, Itachi,” Kakashi finally admitted softly.

It took Itachi a few seconds to remember why Kakashi didn’t think he should see it. “’Out vile jelly,’” Itachi said with a fragile voice. “Yeah, you’re right, I shouldn’t go to that.”

“I’m sorry, Itachi.”

“It’s not your fault.”

Kakashi found something else. “How about ‘Out, out damned spot?’”

“It’s ‘Out, out brief candle.’ ‘Damned spot’ only had one ‘out.’”
“Ahh, yes. *Hamlet* had ‘Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune.’ He really loved that phrase.”

“I’m happy that my mechanic, army grunt boyfriend is so literate. So someone is playing *Macbeth*?”

“In Suna. We can make a day of it Saturday. It’s opening night, so there’s a party afterward.”

“Allright.” Itachi reached up to pull a black braided rope. “Don’t pay for these; I’ll pay. I never liked *King Lear* anyway, not just because how it ends. Edmund was the only character that really interested me and only in the first act.”

“A bell rope? Really? I didn’t notice it before.”

“It’s an old house and really handy. It’s actually hooked up to a more sophisticated system than a bell. Goes to Inoichi’s mobile and tells him which room. Awesome, huh?” Itachi was actually enthused over the system; he was adorable.

“Clever.”

“I came up with it when I was ten.”

Okay, Kakashi was now duly impressed.

There was a knock and then Inoichi opened the door without waiting for a summons. “Sir?”

“Could you get father’s credit card number? We want to buy theater tickets.”

“I’ll return in a few minutes.”

“Thank you.”

“Daddy’s credit card?” Kakashi asked teasingly.

“I don’t have my own account. Not anymore. He or Sasuke pays for everything.” Itachi was suddenly depressed.

“What did you do before all this? I gather you worked for your father.”

“VP in charge of Research and Development. Sounds more impressive than it was; I just shepherded great minds.”

“You basically designed a modern cell phone app fifteen years ago, before there were smartphones, before you entered puberty, and you’re saying you had no active part in Research and Development?”

“Okay, I came up with a few things. It wasn’t that innovated. It was based on text messages; not that advanced. I haven’t been back at all. I just couldn’t face everyone there when they all know what happened to me. It’s so humiliating. Even when I came home, I was so humiliated that my family knew. You know I thought you’d leave me if you knew, but I was also embarrassed. Why did the press have to include the rape? Beaten and blinded is bad enough, isn’t it?”

“The media didn’t report on the rape.”
“Huh?”

“I read the newspaper reports and they never mentioned rape. They said ‘tortured’ though.”

“But then . . . So no one knows I was raped outside the family and the Feds?”

“As far as I know. But people can draw their own conclusions with a word like ‘tortured’.”

“That makes me feel better.” Itachi relaxed. “I assumed everyone knew everything. I’m still so ashamed of what happened. I thought everyone knew and thought of that when they saw me.”

Kakashi sat on the bed and pulled Itachi up to hold him. “God, I love you so much. I wish just one of them was still alive so I could avenge you. You have nothing in the world to be ashamed of.”

Itachi turned his head to tuck under Kakashi’s chin. “Kakashi, I—” He broke down.

Kakashi slipped a hooked finger under Itachi’s chin to raise it. Itachi let him at first, but then lowered his head again, not wanting Kakashi to see his squinched up, sobbing face. And he wasn’t wearing his glasses.

“You remember that film Bram Stoker’s Dracula, the Coppola one?” Kakashi asked.

“Yeah.”

“I’m reminded of when Dracula turned Mina’s tears into diamonds. When Inoichi gets back, I should ask him for a bottle of absinthe.”

Itachi chuckled and put a hand on his shoulder, but he kept his head down. He sniffed. “Please tell me you killed a series of hookers a few years back. Perfection is too eerie.”

Kakashi used a little more pressure this time and Itachi gave in and tilted his head up. Kakashi kissed the tear tracks.

“Tell me, beside your family, the Hyuuga, Naruto, and your servants, have you seen anyone from your past? Friends, co-workers?”

“No.”

“Did you not have any close friends?”

“None. I was too arrogant. Too good looking, too intelligent, too wealthy, too good for everyone else in the world, too busy with school or working. I almost deserved it.”

“Deserved it?”

“I told you, I was a shallow, arrogant ass. You love me because I’m timid. You would have hated me. Everyone hated me. I liked being hated. I liked being envied. I liked being superior.”

Kakashi tried to suppress his sigh, but it was difficult to hide when Itachi was pressed against his chest. He quickly explained. “You’re so hard on yourself. If you were such an asshole, your brother wouldn’t be so devoted. No one would be. They’d just stand aside and let you take your desserts.”
Like Feste letting Malvolio sit in that dark room for an act.”

Itachi was silent for a minute then his ears perked up. “Inoichi’s coming back.” He wiped his cheeks and lay back down. Kakashi moved to the chair.

Inoichi knocked briefly before opening the door. “Your father said you can return it at dinner.”

“Thank you,” Kakashi said taking the card.

Inoichi left.

“Choose whatever seats you like,” Itachi said. “I won’t know any different and money is no object.”

Kakashi typed in the credit card number and printed the tickets.

“Look up the number of the Suna Grand Hotel and dial it for me.”

Kakashi obeyed, taking Itachi’s phone from his outstretched hand and then handed it back.

“Thank you,” Itachi said and put the phone to his ear, taking a final sniff to clear his sinus. “Can I reserve a suite for this Saturday evening? . . . Itachi Uchiha . . . the name on the credit card is Fugaku Uchiha.” He turned on the speaker and held the phone out towards Kakashi. “Read out the credit card number for me, love.”

“We’ll see you on Saturday,” the woman said after Kakashi read her the number and the CVV on the back and then Itachi ended the call.

“Why didn’t you just have me do it?” Kakashi asked.

“You’d balk at the price. Get used to this: money is not an issue with this family. My ransom was a measly twenty million. My father had it all in cash within a few hours. Yahiko could have easily asked for fifty. Hundred and my father would hesitate, but he’d still be willing and able to pay it. It wasn’t the money, it was the damned government that was the cause of all this.” Itachi gestured to his face. “I never bought you that tie I promised.”

“If it’s diamond studded, I’m just going to pawn it.”

Itachi laughed.

“Since we’re having such a bipolar conversation, can I ask: was Shisui your first?”

Itachi gave a rye chuckle. “You’re better than Shisui. How’d you know?”

“Sasuke’s attitude and the way he paled when he saw our matching rings. So Sasuke knows.”

“He’s kept our secret; I expect you to do the same. Statute of limitation might not be up yet.”

“Just how young were you?”

“Twelve?”
“Twelve?!"

“Maybe Thirteen.”

“I’m totally on Sasuke’s side.”

“He thinks Shisui turned me gay and he really didn’t like the time we spent together and how close we were. It’s not true. Yeah, I was young, but I think I was tending toward gay anyway.”

“Let me throttle him.”

“No. Statutory, but not really rape.”

Kakashi shook his head. Kakashi had suspected Shisui, but he hadn’t realized Itachi had been so young. If Shisui was the master manipulator everyone said he was, he probably had been pressing Itachi in that direction and made sure Itachi was willing. The predation on his own first cousin was certainly one thing, but a child made Kakashi ready to rip Shisui’s cock off. He couldn’t even be grateful that it was because of him that Itachi was gay and now his boyfriend.

“Well, forgive me if I side with Sasuke on this one, but I’ll keep your secret.”

“Thank you.”

“But you did have a falling out with him.”

“I wasn’t the only one he was screwing. He tried to convince me that it was okay, that he loved me, but he had needs he didn’t want to subject me to. Blah, blah, blah. I only had casual sex after that. Until Naruto asked me out. Starting something with my little brother’s best friend gave me pause, but he was cute and persistent. The little pissant,” Itachi spit the word out.

Kakashi dropped down on the bed next to him. “No matter your history, I love you.” But a thought occurred. “How casual?”


“I’m going to have to commandeer space in your wardrobe.”

“Do. I think I have space in here for an additional dresser.” His hand slid a little lower. “I’m hungry.”

“Dinner will be ready any minute now.”

“Not hungry for food.”

“I know.”

“Unfortunately, I’ll not be in the mood for sex right after dinner. We’ll have to wait even longer. But I’ll give you that blowjob you wanted.”

“Don’t give me a boner in front of your parents.”
“I won’t. On purpose.”

They stopped flirting at a knock on the door, Itachi’s hand darting up to lay chastely on Kakashi’s stomach again. Mikoto poked her head in. “Dinner’s ready.”

Kakashi helped Itachi up and they followed Mikoto downstairs.

“Sasuke’s gone out with Hinata and Shisui already left, so it’ll just be the four of us.”

“Good,” Itachi said. “Maybe he’ll ask her tonight.”

“Ha!” Kakashi let out. “I don’t think he’ll be able to ask Hinata anything with Neji around. I haven’t met the kid yet, but he sounds more intimidating than Sasuke himself.”

“Oh, he is,” Itachi said.

“Neji’s a good cousin,” Mikoto said. “Loves Hinata like a sister.”

“I have to meet him. Preferably before the wedding,” Kakashi said. “We shouldn’t tease the kid too much at his own wedding.”

“When Sasuke asks Hinata, we’ll all have to have dinner. Meet your other in-laws.”

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Kakashi snuggled with Itachi after dinner in the living room. They were just ‘watching’ the Science Channel; something Itachi could listen to and appreciate.

They heard the front door open. Kakashi looked over the sofa back and saw Sasuke moving slowly.

“Sasuke?”

Sasuke looked toward him and headed in his direction, a creepy smile on his face.

“Sasuke?” Kakashi repeated.

“What’s wrong?” Itachi asked, turning around even though he couldn’t see anything.

“I asked her,” Sasuke said.

“And?” Itachi pressed. Kakashi knew from the stupid smile what happened.

“She said ‘yes’.”

Itachi reached out to him. “Sasuke, I’m so happy for you.”

Sasuke staggered forward and put his hands in his brother’s. Itachi pulled him down to hug him.

“Mother!” Itachi yelled.

Inoichi rushed in. “Itachi-san?”
“Sasuke finally asked her.”

“I’ll inform your parents.” He rushed up the stairs.

“He has a stupid grin on his face,” Kakashi told his lover. “I hope you didn’t look at her like that; it’s creepy.”

“Shut up.” Sasuke was still smiling.

“You look drunk too. How’d you get home?”

“I’ve been lightheaded since I decided to ask her. I sort of drove on autopilot. I don’t remember the drive here.”

A wildebeest stampede was slower and quieter than Mikoto rushing down the stairs to her baby. Fugaku was much more sedate.

“Sasuke, you finally asked her!” Mikoto was more excited about Sasuke than she was about Itachi and Kakashi. She expected Kakashi to do something; she feared Sasuke would do nothing and force the poor girl to propose. She grabbed Sasuke and kissed her youngest son on the lips then nearly crushed him in a hug.

“Finally,” Fugaku said. “Hiashi can rest easy. His daughters, wife, and sister-in-law have nearly the entire wedding planned. Set a date?”

“Father, I just asked her.”

“And we’ve all been waiting. Call her tomorrow and get a date set.”

“Chichi,” Sasuke whined.

“I’m glad I’m gay,” Itachi sighed, “none of this wedding nonsense.”

“It amazes me how wonderfully un-romantic you are, aniki,” Sasuke said.

“That’s my job,” Kakashi said.

“So, did she faint?” Itachi asked.

“No, but I thought she might hyperventilate. I didn’t know if she was hugging me or if she collapsed in my arms.”

“I’m proud of you, Sasuke,” Fugaku said. “Be sure to talk to her about where you want to live: here, at the Hyuuga estate, or on your own. If you decide to establish your own home, I’ll pay for it. Though I’m sure Hiashi will give his little girl plenty of money.”

Sasuke looked a little overwhelmed by just how much everyone else had already taken care of things and thought them through. “At least I don’t have to worry about anything.”

Fugaku watched Itachi. He worried that Itachi might be depressed, losing his precious baby brother, but he looked happy for him. He worried about his own reaction if Sasuke moved out. He
hoped Kakashi would consent to live here on the estate so he and Mikoto would never lose both sons and be left with the proverbial empty nest. Especially after Itachi’s kidnapping, they both feared losing their sons even if it’s just to their own homes.

“I’m buzzed,” Sasuke said. “I’m going to try to sleep.”

Mikoto smoothed his hair. “Goodnight, dear.”

“Goodnight.”

Sasuke went to his room. Mikoto pulled out her phone and hurried to the lounge to gossip. Fugaku sat down in his chair.

“Well, both my boys are all grown up, both as good as married. You two should consider the same issue: live here or allow me to set you up in a new home. And I don’t want to hear the wounded masculine argument that you want to pay your own way, Kakashi; I will ensure my son’s comfort.”

“I couldn’t afford what he deserves anyway,” Kakashi conceded.

“Wait until Sasuke’s settled here or elsewhere before you give me an answer. I can’t stand the idea of losing both of you at the same time.” Fugaku stood. “Goodnight.”

“Goodnight,” Kakashi and Itachi echoed.

Alone, Itachi snuggled closer into Kakashi’s side. “I’m so glad he finally asked her. I can stop worrying about him.”

“I still need to warn Hinata about him being an emotional drunk.”

Itachi hummed then sighed. “I’m probably best man. Guess I have to plan the stag party. You get to help.”

“If you want strippers, I have a friend who can probably recommend some good ones.”

“No, I don’t want to tempt my brother to do anything stupid. He’s been celibate for a year or so. No drinking either; Uchiha are not good drinkers.”

“I can confirm that.”

“We’ll scare him and tell him it’s an afternoon of Shakespeare in the park and then a wine tasting.”

Kakashi laughed.

“It’s not something I want to attend anyway,” Itachi said. “We don’t have friends in common.”

“I’m not close to him,” Kakashi understated.

“I’ll give the honor to Suigetsu then. With the warning about the strippers and alcohol. Naruto would have been best man a year ago.” He yawned. “Guess it’s time to head up. Do you want to live here with my parents and potentially my brother and sister-in-law?”

“I do. I feel you’re safe here even when I’m gone. But if you want to strike out and get something
of our own, I’ll gladly follow you anywhere.”

“I’d like to stay here too; it’s always been my home.”

“We’ll wait until the newlyweds are settled and then I’ll move in.”

“We’ll need a larger room. There are several here. Sasuke will be doing the same thing. We still live in the smaller ‘kid’s rooms’.”

Not being able to see if they were truly alone, Itachi didn’t flirt. Once in the safety of his sanctuary, Itachi pulled off his shirt. “Strip and sit on the bed.”

Kakashi obedied. He was used to following orders, but this was the first time he was turned on by it. He liked the assertive side of Itachi.

Itachi stripped then held out a hand toward the bed for Kakashi to take and guide him. Instead of getting on the bed, Itachi found and lowered himself between Kakashi’s legs. Kakashi let go of Itachi’s hand. Itachi ran his hands up Kakashi’s thighs and carefully found his erection.

Itachi wet his lips before touching them to the head of Kakashi’s cock, a gentle kiss to the tip. Kakashi could feel the younger man’s breath puff against him. Like the last time, Itachi slid his lips over the head a little and flicked the slit with his tongue, tasting a bead of precum that had already leaked out. His lips retreated and advanced a few times, teasing Kakashi mercilessly while his tongue flicked and swirled around. Itachi pulled away to rewet his lips, then he took more of Kakashi’s cock. He sucked at the head as his lips slipped over the taut flesh.

Kakashi’s breathing accelerated; he had to take a deep breath to hold off panting. The teasing was maddening, making him harder, but not getting him near orgasm. He looked down at Itachi and where his lips encapsulated his cock. Itachi was still wearing his sunglasses and had his hair up. Kakashi carefully removed his glasses and the red hair tie then leaned back, bracing himself with his arms.

Itachi, meanwhile, moved further down. His lips were strong, gripping him tightly. His tongue moved sinuously against the underside of his cock, caressing all the right spots, especially that wonderful spot just below the head. Itachi was skilled.

Itachi pulled away to wet his lips again and was obviously summoning up as much saliva as possible then went in for the kill, taking Kakashi all the way in his mouth, quickly fucking his extra wet mouth on his cock. The head battered the back of his throat. He kept his mouth open just enough to make the dirtiest and sexiest slurping noises. He slowed down and made more languid motions and sounds.

He switched to Kakashi’s balls. Itachi’s hand replaced his mouth as he started licking Kakashi’s scrotum. He took one in his mouth and sucked and licked as he pumped Kakashi’s cock with his hand.

Itachi didn’t focus on Kakashi’s balls for long, going back to sucking him, but he continued to use his hand on the lower part of his shaft.

Kakashi couldn’t take it anymore and put his hand on Itachi’s head. He didn’t push, though he wanted to, he petted him, letting him know how much he was enjoying it along with his moans. Slowly, tentatively, Kakashi lifted his hips. Itachi didn’t protest. They found a good rhythm.
After a few minutes, he let Itachi move off his cock. “Go ahead and fuck my throat. But just for a few seconds.”

“Sure?” Kakashi’s voice was dark with lust.

“For a few seconds.”

Kakashi threaded his fingers in Itachi’s hair and gripped his head. Itachi opened his mouth and lowered it nearly all the way down Kakashi’s cock. Kakashi lifted his hips and pulled Itachi’s head down to meet his thrusts about a dozen times before he let Itachi go.

“All right?” Kakashi asked, panting.

“Not the most brutal I’ve had,” Itachi said, but it did sound like it was pretty brutal.

“I’m so close, love,” Kakashi panted. “Finish me off, please.”

Itachi went back to quickly thrusting his tight lips up and down his cock and used his hand as well. As Kakashi was about to cum, Itachi just sucked on the head, letting his hand continue to stroke him. He stopped neither as Kakashi came, sucking out his cum and milking it out.

Itachi ran his hand down Kakashi’s length lovingly and gave the deflating organ a kiss as he pulled away.

“Fuck,” Kakashi said. “That was amazing.”

“Can’t go another round, can you?”

“I think you milked my balls dry,” Kakashi said slowly. “I wouldn’t be surprised if you still had my last load still inside you.”

Itachi smiled, then pouted. “What about me?”

“Get up here.”

Itachi lay down on the bed with Kakashi’s hands to guide him. Kakashi lubed up his hand and stroked Itachi’s cock.

“Fuck, that feels good,” Itachi said.

“Not as good as that blowjob,” Kakashi countered.

He eagerly stroked his lover’s cock and watched him writhe and pant.

“God, you’re beautiful,” Kakashi said.

He moved down to Itachi’s scrotum, taking it in his hand and applying gentle pressure and stroking them.

“Faster,” Itachi pleaded. “Make me cum. I’ve been hard this whole time, taking your cock in my mouth.”
Kakashi did speed up. He didn’t really want to get hard again. They’d be having sex this weekend and he wanted to pace himself and sleep tonight.

Itachi was close to cumming. The lube was eatable so Kakashi took the head of Itachi cock in his mouth and sucked on it. Itachi came with a whine, trying to keep his voice down with his brother and parents in the house.

Itachi hummed when his orgasm subsided. “Sleepy.”

Kakashi kissed him and lay down beside him.

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Saturday morning, Kakashi came over with a small suitcase. Inoichi led Itachi and Kakashi to the family garage.

“I had it serviced,” Inoichi said. “Just the basics.”

A red Bentley Continental. A two door, four passenger, two hundred mile per hour piece of awesome. Fake side vents and chrome piping down the sides were things only foolish young men added to a two hundred thousand dollar car. Itachi was officially a foolish young man with too much money.

“Twelve cylinder, W configuration,” Itachi said. “All wheel drive, forty/sixty split power ratio, 567 horsepower with a top speed of 198 out of the box. I’ve got a NOS installed on her with aftermarket tires so she can reach about 210. Zero to sixty?” Itachi dismissively waved that off. “Zero to one hundred miles an hour in 4.5 seconds. To sixty in 4.4. It comes with a steering column shift paddle, but I also have a old school stick shift. Eight gears, moon roof, Electric Satiability Control, ceramic brakes . . . I even upgraded the sound system and had the cream leather interior all dyed black and had our company logo stitched into the headrests. With the right tires,” Itachi gestured to the side, but there was nothing there, though there was a stack of tires against another wall, “she drifts like a Nissan 200SX. I could make love to this car,” Itachi sighed.

“That speech could get any gear head hard,” Kakashi muttered.

Inoichi handed Kakashi the retractable key.

“There’s a bloody TV in the back, but I’ve never even turned it on.” The whimsical tone had vanished when it came to the crap Itachi didn’t care about. “The mechanic who supped her up might have disconnected it, but I think it’s still there. There’s a navigational system of course. Overall, a beauty, don’t you think?”

“She is.”

“I decided not to get the special edition Le Mons model. Considering what I planned to do with her, it seemed like sacrilege. I think every Bentley fan would have hunted me down.”

“She’s stunning.”

“I want to give her to you; I have no need of her anymore. I’d like to know she has a good home and being put to use. She’s been sitting here for several months.”
“I don’t want to take your car. You and brother seem very attached to them.”

“But she’s not really going anywhere if she’s with you. Take her. She’s just rotting in my possession. You can appreciate her.”

“Okay.”

Kakashi unlocked the car and helped Itachi in.

“There’s a full tank,” Inoichi said. “Have fun.”

“Thank you.”

Kakashi slid into the driver’s seat and just took it all in. He was too manly to giggle so he chuckled. Itachi smiled. Kakashi reached for Itachi’s thigh and gave him a squeeze. Then he turned it on. Red mood lighting added to the ‘little boy with a new toy’ feeling. He played with the navigation system, punching in the hotel they’d be checking into, setting it to silent, and played with the other options. He approved of the modern alternative station on the radio, so he left the stereo until later. Itachi just snuggled in the soft leather and smiled at how happy Kakashi seemed to be.

Finally, Kakashi eased this powerhouse out of the garage. The security gates opened for him and he eased onto the public street. He was nervous, but he handled it with skill which kept Itachi at ease.

Still too scared to go over the speed limit, they were nevertheless pulled over by a cop.

Kakashi rolled down the window, prepared to give the cop his license and Itachi’s registration. The cop had his hand on his gun as he approached. He looked first at Kakashi, then at his passenger. The cop was startled.

“Mr. Uchiha! I’m very sorry, sir. We recognized your car and thought it was stolen.”

“Understandable.”

“You are alright, right?”

Itachi laughed a little. “I’m fine. This is my boyfriend. You can call my brother and confirm that.”

“I think Sasuke would tell them I was a kidnapper just to see me spend a night in jail for dating you.”

The cop smiled. “That sounds like Sasuke. Have a good day, sirs.”

“Is that the downside or upside to having such a unique car?” Kakashi asked as he put his ID back in his wallet. He then turned the Bentley back on and pulled back out onto the street.

“Upside. It gets stolen and it’ll be found in moments. And I got away with murder. I’m the son of Fugaku Uchiha after all. I never sped too much on city streets, but the freeways . . .” Itachi gave a little maniacal laugh. “I am notorious among the highway patrol. You shouldn’t get any trouble. As long as I wasn’t being too reckless, they let me go. How do you like driving it?”
“Sweet is the only word.”

“Good. I’ll have Sasuke handle the transfer.” Itachi snuggled deeper in the seat on their way to Suna.

Itachi fell asleep to the hum of the W12 engine while Kakashi put it through its paces on the freeway. It purred like a happy lion with a belly full of zebra. He almost drove through Suna, wanting to drive this amazing car further. A trip to Vegas might be in order.

The Suna Grand was swanky. Itachi was right, Kakashi would have balked at spending even Fugaku’s money on a place like this. Itachi had melted into the seat and Kakashi didn’t want to wake him, but he rubbed his thigh and Itachi woke up.

“We’re at the hotel.”

“Hmmm.”

Kakashi got out and took the valet ticket. Another valet opened Itachi’s door and helped him seeing the identification cane. A bell boy helped with the two bags they brought and Kakashi gave both valets tips that Itachi had handed to him that morning.

They were taken up to a suite with a sitting room and bedroom with a king size bed. It even had a small kitchen. Kakashi gave the bell boy a tip and then guided Itachi to the bedroom.

Finding the bed, Itachi threw himself on it.

“What are you, a cat?” Kakashi teased. “You slept most of the way in the car.”

Itachi reached a hand toward Kakashi’s voice. Kakashi took his hand and allowed himself to be pulled onto the bed.

“We’re going to have a late night.”

“Are we?”

“Dinner, a play, an after party, a night of sex.”

“Night of sex?”

“You owe me for the gift of a two hundred thousand plus car.”

“Yes, sir.”

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Kakashi set his alarm to wake them in time to get ready for dinner.

Itachi told Kakashi the name of a restaurant and Kakashi punched it into the navigation and drove them there. They had a pleasant meal, then went to the theater. It was early so they had a drink at the bar next door.

They had just started their drinks when a very peculiar trio approached. The shortest, a redhead,
spoke.

“Itachi?”

Itachi instinctively looked toward the voice. “Gaara?”

“It’s been a year. We haven’t seen—I mean . . .”

“Don’t worry about words like that. This is Kakashi Hatake, my boyfriend. Kakashi this is Gaara Sabaku.”

“Pleasure to meet you. This is my brother Kankuro and my sister Tamari.”

“Pleasure’s mine.”

“All three of you are here?” Itachi asked. “What about your father?”

“He’s chatting with a friend in the back. Are you here for the play?”

“We are.”

“No one’s seen or heard from you since . . . How are you?”

“I’m okay. Adapting. I don’t like being the subject of pity and it’s embarrassing that people know what happened. I’m sure Shikamaru’s been in contact with you.”

“He doesn’t talk about you and your family, you know that,” Tamari said. “He may be Sasuke’s friend, but he also works for you; he has tact.”

“I meant nothing against him. I don’t think he’s forbidden from talking about us. How are all of you doing? Still in contact with Naruto?”

“We’re all doing fine,” Kankuro said.

“Naruto’s still a friend,” Gaara said. “What he did was reprehensible, but he’s still my friend.”

“I don’t hold it against you.”

Itachi was about to say something else when another voice broke in. “Itachi?”

A man, definitely the trio’s father, approached them. He wasn’t hesitant or embarrassed to pull a startled Itachi into a hug. “I’m so glad to see you. I wasn’t sure if it would be appropriate to visit you.”

Kakashi looked at the siblings: Tamari was frowning and Gaara’s eyes narrowed, but Kankuro’s expression didn’t change. Kakashi thought it was weird and two of the siblings apparently did too.

The older man still hadn’t let Itachi go, but Itachi didn’t struggle, but he also didn’t try to hug him back.

“Our father, Masahiko,” Gaara said to Kakashi. [AN: Gaara’s father is never given a name, so I gave him the name of the seiyu, Tanaka Masahiko]
Even that didn’t prompt the man to release Itachi. Kakashi could see Masahiko’s face, he looked very concerned for Itachi and very relieved that he was here and alive. Kakashi wondered if this was the concern of a father figure—considering the age difference—or that of a lover.


Masahiko finally released him. “I’m so happy to see you.” He was still ignoring everyone else in the room. He brushed fingers along the earpiece of Itachi’s sunglasses. “Can I take these off?”

“No, I don’t like anyone seeing them.”

“Are they bad?”

“I really don’t know. I sort of can’t see in a mirror.”

That made Masahiko look grieved. He started to stroke Itachi’s cheek, but Itachi stepped back towards Kakashi. There was a blush on Itachi’s cheeks; Masahiko’s attentions were embarrassing him. On instinct, Kakashi caught the hand Itachi reached back slightly and threaded his fingers in his.

“I’d like you to meet my boyfriend, Kakashi Hatake,” Itachi said.

“Boyfriend?”

“Yes.”

Kakashi had to release Itachi’s hand to put it out for the man to shake. Masahiko took the offered hand. His eyes were hard toward Kakashi.

“Masahiko Sabaku,” Masahiko introduced himself.

“Nice to meet you,” Kakashi said.

“Here for the play tonight?” Masahiko asked them.

“Yes,” Itachi said. “They’re playing King Lear in Konoha so if I wanted to attend a play this spring, I had to come here.”

“You don’t like that play?”

It was obvious Masahiko was not a fan of Shakespeare.

“It’s not appropriate. Actually I wonder what possessed them to put that on this year. Anyway, I assume you’re just here as mayor or something?”

“Yes; I was invited.”

“Mm-hmm,” Itachi hummed. “My drink?” he asked Kakashi. Kakashi retrieved the glass from the bar and placed it in Itachi’s hand. He took a gulp. “Are you all going to the reception afterward?”

“I’m stopping in, but not staying.”
“It’s an election year, isn’t it?”

“It is.”

“Uh-huh.” Itachi looked disgruntled. “We’ll see you at the reception then.”

Masahiko and his children left. Kakashi could tell the two siblings were as confused by their father’s behavior as he was. Kankuro pulled out his smartphone and was lost to it as they walked away.

Itachi searched for the bar stool with a hand. He sat down and leaned forward on the bar and said. “Don’t ask.”

“Alright.”

Itachi drained his glass. “Another, please.”

Kakashi signaled to the bartender and his glass was refilled.

“So, have you been to this theater before? Do they have a good troupe?” Kakashi asked.

“Some tend to be a little stilted, others overdo it, doing Shakespeare like they’re Dr. Frankenstein when the monster raises his hand for the first time. I’m waiting for them to do Hamlet and take his speech about over acting to heart.”

Kakashi put a hand on Itachi’s upper back and rubbed it comfortingly.

“Yes, I slept with Masahiko,” Itachi spat out. “It was before Naruto. His kids didn’t know. Now they do. He’s never lost his cool like that before.”

“He’d never had a lover kidnapped before.”

“He kept our relationship secret because of his position.”

“Hence your annoyance with him just now.”

“Being mayor meant more to him than me. I wasn’t that serious about him—he’s my father’s age—but I felt like a married man’s mistress whom he was ashamed of. His wife’s dead by the way. That was embarrassing. I really didn’t think we’d run into any of them here.”

“It’s okay.” Kakashi continued to rub his back. “Neither of us are virgins, it’s okay.”

“I didn’t want his kids to know. I’m the same age as Tamari, his eldest. Sasuke and Gaara are nearly the same age.”

Kakashi pressed against him, leaned his head against his, and put his arm around him.

So Itachi admitted he slept around, admitted his cousin Shisui had had underage sex with him, had a relationship with Naruto, and now he had an older lover. It didn’t bother Kakashi. Maybe it was because Itachi was blind; he wouldn’t have a wandering eye and didn’t go out unless it was with his family or him. Or maybe he was just so sure how much Itachi loved him.
“Well, you don’t have to worry about me. I trust you too much to be jealous. At first I thought he was just concerned about you. Even knowing you were lovers, it doesn’t bother me. Tonight, if I start thinking about how he touched you, I might get jealous then. I know who you love now. And considering what I used to do for a living, I assume all who know, including you, would fear a jealous rage,” he said playfully.

“True,” Itachi agreed with a smile. “I don’t think Gaara and the others will like me anymore, having had a relationship with their father. Not that we were ever close. Our fathers know each other, as does Naruto’s father. Naruto and Gaara are good friends and Shikamaru is dating Tamari. You haven’t met Shika yet, have you? He’s a genius. Used to play shogi with him.”

Itachi’s smile fell away.

“Miss playing shogi? You can always learn to memorize the board and play in your head.”

“That’s not it, but that’s a great idea. Masa didn’t come to see me. No one did. Just Naruto. Shisui wasn’t told—I can understand that—but no one came to see me. Maybe my family told them not to, I don’t know. I told you I was an asshole. No one visited me. Masa says he wanted to, but he didn’t. Only Naruto. And his parents.”

“What about the Hyuuga?”

“Well, yeah, but they weren’t friends of mine. They are friends of my parents and Sasuke was already dating Hinata, but they weren’t so much there for me as for my parents and Sasuke.” He sighed. “Poor Hinata, now that I think about it. Seeing her boyfriend so distraught.”

“Stop worrying about everyone else. Time to be selfish.”

“I was selfish most of my life. I don’t want to be a burden.”

Kakashi stroked Itachi’s hair. “Drink up. Doors have already opened.”

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It was a very good production that focused a lot on Lady Macbeth and a non-canon stillborn son. Towards the end, Itachi leaned his head on Kakashi’s shoulder and slipped his hand his Kakashi’s. With his eyes perpetually closed and the dark glasses ever on, it was hard to tell if Itachi ever fell asleep. He got up easily enough when the play ended though and Kakashi never stopped his whispered commentary when important information was only provided visually. Kakashi guided him out, Itachi never letting go of Kakashi’s hand. The after party was right next door in the bar they were in earlier.

Several patrons and members of the cast came over and expressed their relief that Itachi was alright and out and about. Itachi introduced Kakashi with pride. They ended up getting into a lively discussion with Macbeth, Duncan, and McDuff about who was the most evil villain in Shakespeare and whether it was fate, the frailties of man, Lady Macbeth, or the witches who were the greater evil in *Macbeth*.

Itachi was really enjoying himself. Since he couldn’t drive, he was drinking quite a bit, but he was still able to have an intelligent conversation. Kakashi was thinking that with Itachi’s good looks and love for Shakespeare, he would have made a good actor.
“Once we finish these drinks, you want to go to the hotel?” Itachi asked.

“Yeah.” Kakashi was nearly done with his drink and Itachi was half through his.

Masahiko came over to them. “Itachi, you enjoy the play?”

“I did. Kakashi described some of the scenery and costumes to me. With good plays, the artistry is in the words and the way they’re spoken. Shakespeare had little more than a balcony and costumes.”

“Bloodier than I expected.”

“With Macbeth and Titus Andronicus, you have to expect a lot of bloodshed. Did you manage to stay awake?”

“Yes.” He turned to Kakashi. “So, you’re former Special Forces?”

“I am.” The way Kankuro was constantly on his phone, Kakashi assumed he’d done some research for his father.

“Were you one of those who rescued Itachi?”

“No. I wish I was. I regret I’ll never get a shot at those bastards.”

“Decorated?”

“Purple Heart and Silver Star.”

“Silver Star, that’s for valor, isn’t it?”

“Yes.”

“Impressive. Itachi, can I have a few minutes alone?”

Itachi sighed. “If there’s a table and we stay in Kakashi’s sight—he’s responsible for me after all.”

“Okay.”

Masahiko took his hand and led him to a table. Kakashi looked in their direction about every ten seconds.

“I love you, Itachi, I really do. Please reconsider.”

“No. I’m deeply in love with Kakashi. And would you really risk your career for me?”

Masahiko took his hand rubbed the back of it. “I would. I always cherished you, Itachi.”

“Honestly, Masa, I never really loved you. I enjoyed our time together, but it was just sex for me. Anyway, I’m a liability now. I’m blind. Are you really prepared to take care of me and make allowances for me for the rest of your life?”
“Yes. As much as that soldier of yours.”

“But there’s one big difference between you.”

“Our age. Since when does that matter to you?”

“Not your age. I love Kakashi, that’s the difference. You were always good to me and I like you, but I don’t love you. And I think my father would have you killed if he knew about us. He’d probably ask Kakashi to do it. I told Kakashi—I had to, you made it pretty obvious. What about your kids? Did they say anything? I can’t believe you did something so blatant in front of them.”

“Kankuro knew. Tamari’s been glaring at me. Gaara always glares at me.”

“I was embarrassed, but I’m glad you care.”

“I love you. When I heard you were kidnapped, I was frantic. I was afraid to show it to your father, but I called him to offer my support and offered to help pay the ransom. If I wasn’t afraid of your father, I would have been at your side the moment you came home.”

“You would have had to fight my brother.”

Masahiko added his other hand, holding Itachi’s between both of his. “Come spend a few days with me. Let me show you how much I love you. If you want me to hold you at my side and declare my undying love for you in front of every news camera in the country, I’ll do it. I’ll even stare down your father. I love you.”

“Father’s already given his consent to Kakashi and we’re as good as married.” Itachi lifted his free hand with the ring. “I’m Kakashi’s.”

“If I had come, if I had faced your father when you came home, if I had told you how much I loved you, would you have become mine?”

“It would have meant more, but no. I would have given you the chance to make me love you—I gave Kakashi that chance—but no, I would not have loved you out of hand just because you visited me. No, I’m happy. If you loved me that should be all you need.”

“Damn that selfless love crap,” he said harshly, but didn’t raise his voice. “I love you and I want you.”

“It’s been months. You didn’t even call.”

“You didn’t call me.”

“I don’t love you.”

“Right then.” Masahiko hesitated, but then he left him.

Kakashi was at Itachi’s side within seconds.

“He doesn’t take rejection well,” Itachi said when Kakashi put a hand on his shoulder.

“As long as our tires aren’t slashed.”
“I’d be more worried about parking tickets or being pulled over for no reason.”

“Happens anyway. Ready to head back to the hotel?”

“Yeah.”

As they were leaving, the blonde and redhead siblings stopped them. “No hard feelings, Itachi,” Gaara said. “We know our father.”

“Just don’t tell Shikamaru. I think we all don’t want my father to know.”

“Agreed,” Tamari said. “He may be a jerk, but we don’t want our father killed.”

“We’ll stop him from doing anything rash to take you back,” Gaara said.

“I’d appreciate it. For Kakashi and my father’s sakes, I’ll deny everything. He never wanted to be seen with me in public so there’s no evidence.”

“Son of a bitch,” Tamari whispered in disgust with his father. “Did you have feelings for him?”

“No, not really. I like him, but it was just a bit of fun. Naruto and Kakashi are the only ones I’ve ever been serious about. And Naruto’s been asking to be assassinated.”

That made Gaara smile. “My friend is a fool. Please don’t hold it against him forever.”

“I won’t. Probably.”

“Take care, Itachi. But if you weren’t blind, I’d be angry with you.”

Itachi smiled. “Goodnight. Don’t let your father drive tonight.”

Kakashi gave the valet the ticket and they waited.

“Speaking of forgiving Naruto in this lifetime,” Kakashi said. “I forgot to tell you, he approached me on campus. He wanted to apologize to you in person.”

Itachi scoffed. “I don’t know if I can stand to see him again so soon. He really hurt me. That’s why I didn’t want a relationship.”

“That’s why you kept trying to get out of this one.”

“Exactly. Fear of being hurt. Can you blame me? The first man I gave the chance to and he dumps me when I needed him most.”

“I can’t blame you. I hope I’ve reinstated your faith in humanity.”

“Yes, you have.”

The car arrived and the valet opened the door for Itachi and Kakashi helped him in.

As they walked through the hotel lobby, Kakashi asked for a bottle of champagne and extra
pillows. Once they were in the room—Itachi couldn’t be sure when they were alone before that—Itachi asked what the extra pillows were for.

“Shock absorbers.”

The pillows and chilled champagne were brought and then Kakashi pulled the bed away from the wall and dropped the pillows in the gap.

“Now we shouldn’t keep the neighbors up. Now convince me I please you more than Masahiko ever did.”

Itachi gave him a devilish smile. “If I do that, I’ll still keep the neighbors up.”

“True. But this way it won’t be from the bed knocking against the wall.”

Kakashi guided Itachi to the side of the bed and started stripping him, running his fingers along the skin he exposed.

Knowing now about how Itachi was raped and mistreated explained the scars on Itachi’s body. Kakashi followed a few of the scars, hating the men who gave them to him. It didn’t kill his libido in the slightest. He would fuck those memories from Itachi’s mind, replace all the memories of abuse with his adoration.

Kakashi kissed him, easing him down to sit on the bed. As he drew back, he took off the glasses. “So beautiful. You’ll get a tan line if you don’t take them off more.” He kissed him between his elegant eyebrows. “Give me a second.”

Kakashi stripped and sought out the lube.

Itachi pushed the covers back further to the bare sheets and laid himself out on the cool surface and hugged the pillow to his warm cheek. The coolness even felt good on his half hard erection. He snuggled in to the bed. Foreign beds felt good from time to time.

His body was suddenly covered by another. “It’s not fair to make me jealous of an inanimate object,” Kakashi whispered. He took an audible sniff of his hair and then ran his lips down the silky strands. He snaked an arm around Itachi’s waist and Itachi lifted his hips up, keeping his head down on the pillow.

Kakashi slid his lips down Itachi’s back until the hand under him could reach Itachi’s entrance. He licked at the smooth back as he lubed and stretched him. Itachi groaned.

“Fuck, I love you,” Kakashi said against Itachi’s skin. His body slid back up Itachi’s so their hips touched. “You have no idea how much restraint I’ve shown in not molesting you or taking you all evening. You looked so sexy in that coat and suit. Let’s go to a horrible, poorly attended play so I can molest you during the performance.”

“I agree. Fuck me already. I want that hot cock inside me.”

Kakashi straightened and pushed into him. Itachi’s body easily accepted him.

Itachi loved being penetrated. He loved the feeling of someone else’s heat forcing its way into his body. It was like being completed, like he was supposed to have something inside him. He wished
he could say Kakashi’s cock fit better than anyone else’s, but it did feel so fucking good. He let that slip through his lips.

“I agree,” Kakashi said. “You are heaven incarnate.”

Kakashi’s hands stroked Itachi’s back, up and down, stopping at his hips. He gripped him and started to move within him.

Itachi groaned with pleasure and moved his hips to find the perfect angle. He pulled the pillow away to free up his breathing from the plush.

“Hmmm, yes.”

To see his lover writhing under him like that and meeting his thrusts enflamed Kakashi more. He grew rougher, thrusting harder into Itachi’s heat. Itachi didn’t mind at all, just fisted the sheets to keep his body from being moved too much as Kakashi hammered his body.

Kakashi slowed down as he got closer and leaned over Itachi’s body and laced his fingers with Itachi’s. His head was closer to Itachi’s now and his panting filled his ears, making Itachi’s skin crawl pleasantly.

Itachi sighed Kakashi’s name as his stomach tightened and he released onto the sheets. He whined as he let it out. Above him, Kakashi reached climax as well, but he grunted, it was deep and Itachi could feel it in his lungs. Itachi would have cum again if it were possible.

Kakashi put his arms around him and fell sideways so he could curl up with him on their sides.  

“Second round?” Kakashi asked.

“Give me a minute.”

Kakashi rubbed Itachi’s stomach. Still bony. More chocolate for this one, Kakashi thought. He started kissing Itachi’s long neck, finding every sensitive spot and licking at the near perfect hairline behind his ear.

After a few minutes of completely mapping the right side of Itachi’s neck with his lips and tongue, Kakashi pulled Itachi onto his back and took his limp cock into his mouth. He was in no hurry to get Itachi hard; he took his time and enjoyed playing with the growing cock in his mouth. Not being fully engorged, he was able to run his teeth against it, avoiding the points and edges.

“Hmmm, Kakashi.”

He liked the teeth. Kakashi took a chance and opened his jaw to gently run the sharp ends of his teeth against the firming flesh. Itachi cooed. That surprised Kakashi. After all the pain and being violently raped, Itachi liked a little bit of pain. He was actually proud of the little prince; he didn’t let his bad experiences ruin everything for him. He did let him throat fuck him. Itachi did have a bit of a kinky side.

To further explore this, he moved down to Itachi’s balls and nipped at the loose skin there. Itachi hissed, but he didn’t protest, he actually pressed his hips further up to Kakashi’s mouth. Kakashi racked his teeth against the skin and Itachi pressed impossibly closer.
“You like a bit of pain?”

“Just a little. I’m just afraid to remember.”

“They’re all dead, they can never harm you again. Just enjoy.”

“Use your hand.”

Kakashi crawled back up to be face to face with Itachi and grabbed his cock. Kakashi stared at Itachi’s scarred eyelids and long, thick eyelashes while their breaths mixed. If his cock wasn’t already soiled, Kakashi could have rubbed their cocks together. He stroked Itachi’s hard cock, slicked by his saliva. Itachi’s breath came faster and deeper. Kakashi then stroked his balls and then gripped them with a little force, enough for Itachi to feel, but not enough to really cause pain.

“Harder.”

Kakashi complied. He watched Itachi’s face to gauge when it was too much. He let go when Itachi started to wince.

“I love you, Kakashi, you don’t think I’m too fragile and delicate. Everyone thinks I’m about to shatter.”

“I know you aren’t fragile, but we’ll all treat you like that. You’re too beautiful. You’re too precious to all of us.”

Kakashi sucked and bit at a nipple and fisted his balls again, varying the pressure.

Kakashi stopped and licked and kissed his way down Itachi’s ribs and thin side. He kissed his navel and dipped his tongue into it, giving it a wet, intimate kiss. Itachi threaded his fingers in Kakashi’s hair. Kakashi moved to lick at his hipbone and rub his inner thigh.

“Please put your cock inside me, I need it.”

“You want my cock?”

“Yes, please. Fuck me good.”

“You are the sexist thing I’ve ever seen or heard.” He lined up to penetrate his lithe lover again and pressed in, slick muscle sliding over his hard cock. “Fuck, baby.”

Itachi drew his leg back to give Kakashi more room to pound the shit out of him. Kakashi caressed the back of his thigh. Surprisingly, it was perfect and unmarred. But the thought still occurred: how many men’s fingers had caressed this same expanse of skin? He swore he would be the last.

“Tell me you love me more than the others,” Kakashi asked.

“I didn’t love any of them except Naruto. I love you far more.”

“I love you so much.”

Kakashi hadn’t stopped his thrusts. Itachi was already close because of all of Kakashi’s foreplay, so he tightened up and moved to increase Kakashi’s pleasure, wanting them to cum together.
“Oh, god, fuck me. I love you. Cum inside me, fill me. I want to be filled with your seed.”

“Fuck, baby, I’d be a madman to ever leave you.”

“I’m so close; cum with me, please.”

Itachi could feel Kakashi’s cock throb as he came inside him. Itachi let himself go between them. Kakashi lay on his back next to him to catch his breath.

“Thirsty?” Kakashi asked after a minute of cuddling. “Your father has paid for this fine bottle of chilled Champagne, we should drink it.”

“My mouth is a bit gummy.”

Itachi sat up while Kakashi hopped out of bed to uncork the bottle and fill a pair of glasses. It occurred to him how freeing it was to have a blind boyfriend; there was no reason to be embarrassed or ashamed to walk around nude, the twig and berries swinging in the breeze.

Itachi pulled the shoved aside bedding around him and made a nice little nest. Kakashi settled in next to him and gave him one of the glasses. They snuggled in close together even though it wasn’t all that cold in the climate controlled room.

“You like the cold?” Kakashi asked. “I’m having visions of a ski lodge wrapped in blankets, hot coco, and depending on each other’s body heat for warmth. With your pale skin, I don’t think you’re a fan of the tropics. A sea breeze might be nice though.”

“Why the sudden interest in a vacation?” Itachi took a sip. Something cold and sparkling was refreshing after sex.

“Just the situation. We’ll not have a honeymoon since there’ll be no wedding; we have to take a trip. After the brat’s. Can’t leave your parents all alone. They’d worry.”

“How about a small cruise ship and all six of us? Plus a few family friends and security. Alaska to Panama or something, get a little arctic and tropic?”

“Brilliant.”

They drank and Kakashi trailed his fingers through Itachi’s long hair and rubbed his scalp gently with his fingertips. He stiffened when he found a scar. He tried not to pay it too much attention. He kissed Itachi’s temple. Masahiko didn’t bother him, it was those bastards who took him that bothered Kakashi. They left physical scars along with the psychological ones.

Then again, Kakashi didn’t know much else about Itachi’s life; he could have acquired any number of scars in his life. A cut like that to the back of the head though.

“This might not be the greatest topic, but I’m curious—you don’t have to answer—with the others, were you the bottom?”

“With Naruto I was mainly the top, but I did bottom for him. I was totally the bottom for Masahiko. With the others, I went either way depending on how I felt or whether the guy was a top or bottom. I’m flexible, in both meanings of the word. You don’t think me a slut, do you? I know you said
you only had one lover before me.”

“I don’t think you were a slut. You just hadn’t found someone you loved. I thought I had. I can’t begrudge you having fun. One of the reasons I was so angry with Iruka was that if it hadn’t been for him, I could have been having fun like you did. I don’t hold it against you.”

“I was such a brash, arrogant—oh, let’s face it—slut. But you’re right, I just hadn’t found someone I loved. I loved Naruto though. I really wanted to settle down with him. But I didn’t feel this way for him. I love you. It hurt when he abandoned me; it would kill me if you left.”

“Me too. I love you dearly.” Kakashi snuggled in closer and nuzzled his nose in Itachi’s hair. “If someone tried to take you from me . . . I might actually relish a return to my military days. It’s been months since I killed someone.”

“Don’t go getting creepy on me.”

“You said you wanted me to admit to some horrible murders, didn’t you? Something about me being too perfect? Well, I did kill over a dozen Taliban fighters. If anyone hurts you, they’ll see firsthand how we deal with trash in the Berets.”

“Not some *House of 1000 Corpses* shit, right?”

“Naw. More like *Rambo*. *House of 1000 Corpses* kinda sucked anyway. I was expecting more from Rob Zombie. Haven’t seen *Devil’s Rejects; Halloween* was good.”

“I don’t like spatter films. Even if I could see, I don’t think those films could even creep me out now. Unless they were going for the eyes; I sympathize too much. Now I can’t appreciate anything without good dialog.”

Kakashi chuckled. “Sucks to be you now a days. It’s all about special effects. All glitz and no substance. I’ll read to you when you want. More substance.” He brushed Itachi’s hair back with his hand. “Forget about horror films. No nightmares tonight. You should feel completely safe in my arms. I’ll take it as an insult otherwise.”

“Demanding, aren’t we?”

Kakashi kissed his cheek. “Yes.”

Itachi had a peaceful night.

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They drank quite a bit last night. They woke up late and Kakashi babied Itachi, practically pouring water into his mouth to make sure he drank to keep the hangover at bay. Kakashi called the front desk to add a night even though they’d be leaving that evening and ordered a hearty room service lunch. They didn’t get out of bed except Kakashi to open the door for the food.

A shower ended their lazy day. They checked out and waited for the valet to bring the car. Itachi leaned against Kakashi.

Itachi stiffened but he didn’t move when he heard a commotion; there was nothing he could do so he just trusted Kakashi to protect him. Then, he recognized the voice.
“Father, you’re being ridiculous! Leave them alone.” Gaara.

Kakashi saw them coming and moved Itachi to his other side to be between Masahiko and Itachi.

“Itachi!”

“We’re going home, Masahiko,” Itachi said around Kakashi’s body. “Now is not the time.”

Itachi could tell from the stiffness of Kakashi’s body that Masahiko had come closer.

“Get out of the way,” Masahiko growled.

“Father, let’s go home before you cause a scene,” Gaara said trying to pull his father away.

“I don’t give a fuck about a scene!”

“The rest of us do.”

“I love you, Itachi!”

“You made that clear already and I said ‘no’.”

The car arrived. The distraction gave Masahiko an opening and he grabbed Itachi and kissed his lips hard. Kakashi wedged himself between them, pushing them apart. Itachi was off balance and thought he’d fall, but Kakashi grabbed his arm firmly, keeping him on his feet.

“Open the door,” Kakashi told the valet and handed Itachi off to him to sit him in the car. The car was still running and Itachi lowered the window so he could hear what was going on.

“If you touch Itachi again, without his consent, I will relish the jail time,” Kakashi growled.

Itachi liked the shiver Kakashi’s growling threat sent up his spine. He liked older men before—Masahiko, for example—even gave in to Yahiko; he liked this harder, domineering side of Kakashi. Especially the protective part. He was happy. And slightly turned on.

“He was mine first,” Masahiko insisted.

“Itachi’s body is not first come, first serve. Nor are his affections. Take no for an answer. And sober up.”

“Fuck you, bastard!”

“I beg you to hit me,” Kakashi said. “No jail time that way.”

“Kakashi, even if he swings first, I really want to sleep in my own bed tonight,” Itachi said.

Kakashi looked over at him, amused. Masahiko took that opportunity to sucker punch him. Kakashi was ready for it though and let his body twist with the impact.

Masahiko wasn’t as adept at dodging and took a hit to the jaw, but Kakashi didn’t put much strength into it.

Kakashi handed the valet an extra tip as he got in the car.

“You okay?” Itachi asked.

“I’ll ice it, but I’m fine. Hiko’s going to have a rough night and morning.”

Itachi chuckled. “If we weren’t spent, I’d be really aroused. I love you.”

Kakashi grabbed his hand and kissed his fingers. “I love you.”

“Just don’t tell my family about any of this.”

“I won’t.”

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It was just after sunset when they arrived at the Uchiha estate. Kakashi shouldered Itachi’s small luggage and Itachi occupied his other arm, coiled around it tightly.

“Let Inoichi look at your cheek,” Itachi insisted.

“If I do, I have to come up with an excuse for how it happened. I put my mask on so no one can see the redness.”

“It’s that bad?”

“Probably not; he’s not a fighter.”

“Ha. I’m blind; I either accidentally hit you or mistook you for someone else when you touched me.”

“That would make your brother happy.”

Itachi laughed.

The door was opened by Inoichi before they got to it. “Itachi-san, your father would like a word with you. He’s very . . . disturbed.”

“Stay,” Itachi asked Kakashi.

“Until you tell me otherwise.”

Makoto was standing anxiously by the stairs and Sasuke was fidgeting on the other side.

“How’s your hand?” Fugaku asked from the door to the lounge.

“Fine,” Kakashi answered.

“Your cheek?”
“Didn’t hit me that hard.” There was no use denying it.

“Masahiko’s scrappy, but he’s too light to do any real damage I expect.”

“Who called you?” Itachi asked.

“Kankuro.”

“Not who I expected.”

“I want to talk to you alone.”

Fugaku didn’t step up to lead his blind son and though Itachi knew his way around his own home pretty well, he unfolded his identification cane and headed toward his father’s voice, using the cane to keep him from taking a wrong turn into a wall. Fugaku shut the door behind him. Itachi sat in the center of the sofa, Fugaku stood in front of him, a few paces away.

“Masahiko Sabuku.” Fugaku’s voice had a tremor of anger to it. “How old were you?”

“Eighteen,” Itachi answered without a moment’s hesitation.

“Eighteen? Tell me the truth, Itachi.”

“Eighteen.”

“You answered too swiftly; I know you’re lying.”

“If I had hemmed and hawed you would have said I was lying.”

“That any person I ever let into this house would have assaulted a son of mine . . .”

“I wasn’t assaulted.”

“Was he the first?”

“That’s not really your business.”

“If it was before you were an adult, it is very much my business.”

“It wasn’t assault, it wasn’t rape, it wasn’t even statutory rape, he was also underage. We were ‘experimenting.’”

“Who was it?”

“No. Even if there was no crime committed, you’d hunt him down.”

“Itachi.” Fugaku stepped closer and kneeled in front of him. “I love Sasuke; he’s my baby. But you, Itachi, are my first born; you’re my little boy. I was concerned when you were kidnapped, but you were smart and capable of taking care of yourself. I underestimated your captors; I nearly died when that second ransom demand came with the photograph and . . . I had your mother and your brother, but it was only that I had to see you come home alive that kept me alive. I love you dearly. I adore Sasuke even though he has a stick so far up his ass I can see it when he opens his mouth.”
But you are my pride and joy. The thought of anyone harming you . . . If it had been Sasuke I would have been equally devastated, but I think it pains me more that it was you. Then to find out a friend dared touch my son . . .”

“He didn’t assault me. I noticed his attention and I encouraged it. I was just as guilty as he was.”

“But he was an adult!”

“I encouraged him. I slutted it up for him; I drew him in because I wanted to sleep with him. Masahiko probably should have exercised more self-control, but you can only expect so much from a man. He made the mistake of falling in love with me; I told him I didn’t love him and it was purely fun on my end. I think I’m probably the more reprehensible of the two. He actually cared for me. Cares for me. It was disrespectful of me to seduce one of your friends, but I was an arrogant fool. For that, I apologize.”

Fugaku reached out to touch his son, but he couldn’t. He knew Itachi wasn’t so fragile to shatter at being touched, but maybe it was a dream that he had his son back. Or maybe touching him would trigger something. He was afraid to get close to him or touch him.

“Don’t blame yourself,” Itachi said. “It wasn’t need for affection or attention or anything like that. I had gotten a taste of sex and Masahiko was attractive and showed interest and the idea of an ille—affair like that was exciting. I also wasn’t trying to get revenge on you. I was arrogant, stupid, and full of hormones. I’m sorry. I should apologize to Masa too, but he knew better.”

“Even now you’re perceptive. I did wonder if it was because I didn’t spend enough time with you.”

“It wasn’t a cry for attention. I’m sorry I embarrassed you and . . . I didn’t foresee the problems. I am sorry. I liked Masa; I just didn’t love him. I left him when Naruto approached me. I might have remained his . . . whatever if I didn’t see the possibility for a love relationship with someone close my own age.

“Anyway, I told Kakashi about him. Had to since Masa came up to us like that. There are others, but there should be no issues there. My first I don’t think he should be named because there might be complications to his life.”

“People don’t know he’s gay.”

“I don’t think so. It’s his prerogative to tell those around him, not my father looking to stick his head on our front gate.”

“Understood. I won’t go to the police about Masahiko or take any other recourse, just tell me the truth: how old were you? Please, be honest with me.”


“You didn’t love him?”

“No.”

“You love Kakashi.”

“I do. He’s been so wonderful. I told him about Masahiko and told him there were others and he
just said he could begrudge me having fun.” Itachi smiled. “I can’t see, but I hear and feel. He loves me too much to hold it against me. And he knows I love him absolutely. It’d be really hard for me to carry on an affair now anyway.”

“At least I won’t have to worry about you further. I wasn’t happy you told me you were gay and hearing about the things you’ve done does anger me. But your brother slept around too, but it was with women; I know he was underage with older women too. It bothers me that I didn’t care what Sasuke did because it was with women, but it really bothers me because you’re . . .” He sighed. “Yet, all things being equal, I’m glad you have Kakashi.”

“I understand. And I feel safer with Kakashi than I have with anyone else. I’m very glad he found me.”

“Indeed. You know, those glasses do allow me to forget what happened to you at times, other times they remind me. I sometimes want to see your eyes just so I can see that you’re healing. I love you so very much, Itachi.”

“I love you too, chichi. If I had foreseen my actions would hurt you, I wouldn’t have done them.”

Itachi’s posture screamed that he wanted to be hugged. Fugaku leaned forward and took his son into his arms. It felt wonderful to hold his son.

“I’ll leave Masahiko alone.”

“Thank you.”

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Sasuke had his ear against the door. Mikoto and Kakashi were leaning their heads against it.

“I do not have a stick up my ass,” Sasuke hissed.

“Shut up,” Kakashi whispered. “And yes you do.”

“I do not!” he hissed again.

“You do,” Mikoto whispered.

“Mother,” he hissed.

“Shhh,” Mikoto and Kakashi hissed back.

They couldn’t hear everything, but all three were near tears by the end. They scurried away when they heard Fugaku’s solid footsteps approach. Fugaku opened the door. Itachi had his arm looped around Fugaku’s.

“Will you be staying for dinner, Kakashi?” Fugaku asked.

“Since I don’t have to hide the fact I was in a fistfight earlier, then yes.”
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

If you think it’s all butterflies and rainbows, let me warn you that Itachi’s still not 100%; there are still some dark times in store. And Akatsuki . . . well . . .

Beta'ed by PhoenixInnocence

Itachi was looking up at brown eyes and red hair. He was fearful, but he didn’t try to move away. He could feel the heat of the larger, more muscular body above him. Itachi flinched when Yahiko’s hot hand touched the side of his chest. He was frightened of this man, but his body responded to his touch.

Yahiko eased down onto his elbow so he could smooth Itachi’s hair with his other hand.

“I love your hair,” Yahiko breathed. He licked Itachi’s lips.

Fear fed his arousal. He knew he should hate and fear Yahiko, but he trusted him and desired him, desired his touch. He hated himself. But if he wasn’t ever going home, maybe he should try to be happy with his captor. His body did feel good and he normally treated him well. The sex and affection Yahiko showed him was better than Naruto, but he wanted to go home to his parents and little brother.

“I never want to let you go.”

Itachi was in such pain. He felt this man really loved him, but he wanted to go home. If only he could have met Yahiko elsewhere under different circumstances. He could love him. Could.

Itachi raised a hand and put it on Yahiko’s chest. He gasped when Yahiko reached between them and thrust two fingers inside him. Yahiko held Itachi’s gaze as he fingered him. It felt good, but it also felt violating. It felt good, but he didn’t want it.

Itachi tensed and made a halfhearted attempt to push Yahiko off. Yahiko pinned Itachi’s shoulders down and forced his hips between Itachi’s tense thighs. Itachi seized up when he was penetrated. But then he relaxed; he gave into him.

Seeing Itachi give up, Yahiko took his hands from Itachi’s shoulders and slid them down Itachi’s body to pull Itachi’s thighs up to give him better access. Yahiko’s cock thrust leisurely into his body. Itachi lay there, taking it. And hating himself for enjoying it.

Yahiko slid his hands up again to Itachi’s nipples to pinch them and give them a little pull. Itachi whined, losing himself to pleasure.

Hot hands on his ribs and in his hair made him open his eyes and see Yahiko coming closer for a kiss. His lips felt good as did his tongue forcing its way into his mouth. Itachi moaned and squirmed. He loved it, but he wanted Yahiko to stop.
“Cum, Itachi,” Yahiko growled. “Cum like the slut you are.”

Itachi shook his head, but he was close.

“What a sick little whore you are. Whore since twelve. Admit it and cum.”

“No.”

But there was nothing that could stop his orgasm.

-----

Itachi woke up in total darkness. He sat up in bed.

“Yahiko?”

He put a hand out and touched his books and remembered. “Kakashi?”

No one answered. He pulled himself back into the corner. He never used to be afraid of being alone. He started to cry out of frustration. He groped for his phone rather than for the bell rope. He felt for the mark for Kakashi’s number without really thinking.

‘Itachi? What’s wrong?’ There was a trace of sleepiness in his voice that made Itachi feel guilty.

“I . . . ah . . . um . . . just needed to hear your voice. I’m sorry. What time is it?”

‘Almost 2:30.’

“Oh, god, I’m sorry.”

‘Don’t worry about it. Want me to come over?’

“Um . . . yes.”

‘I’ll be there soon.’

“Thanks.”

Itachi ended the call and sat there, uncomfortable. That nightmare was a disturbing combination of memory and his own guilt and insecurities. Yahiko never called him a slut; he didn’t know about Shisui or any of his lovers. That was his own mind chiding him. He wasn’t entirely sure if Naruto had tossed him aside because he was blind or because he’d been gang raped. He wanted to be pure for Kakashi. He’d only had one lover before and Itachi had . . . around a dozen? Not including rapists. He felt dirty and like a slut. He’d lied to Kakashi about only having half a dozen lovers and that ate at him too. This kind of thing hadn’t mattered to him before he was raped or before he met Kakashi.

After a few minutes, he got up and put on the robe he kept at the foot of his bed. He felt his way uncertainly down the stairs, still rattled by his nightmare. He made it to the front door where he unlocked and opened it and waited for Kakashi to arrive. He should have felt exposed and vulnerable standing in the open doorway, but he felt oddly safe even though he hadn’t felt safe in his bed. Itachi crouched after a while. He was pretty sure his father’s security was watching him.
That was probably why he felt safe while no one could see in his room—he assumed.

Finally, he heard the underwhelming sound of an old Kia engine. The Bentley hadn’t been transferred to Kakashi’s name yet so he was afraid to drive it without Itachi with him.

Kakashi crouched in front of him. “Itachi, you okay?”

“I’m so sorry I called you. I should have yelled for Sasuke or rung the bell. I’m sorry to call you across town. You work. I’m sorry.”

“You don’t think other lovers call in the middle of the night? I don’t mind at all. Come on inside.”

Itachi shook his head. “Can we sit out here for a few minutes?”

“Sure. Warm enough?”

“Yeah.”

Kakashi sat down next to him and put an arm over his shoulders.

“I used to love looking up at the stars,” Itachi said. “Loved looking up at the moon. Just simple things you miss.”

Kakashi moved his hand from his shoulder to Itachi’s hair and leaned his head against his. “We all take such things for granted.”

“You spoke to Naruto, didn’t you?”

“I did, briefly.”

“Did he say why he left me?”

“He didn’t want the burden of a blind boyfriend.”

Oddly, that seemed to calm him. “It wasn’t because I was raped?”

“I don’t think so. Your blindness was the only thing we talked about.Regarding you, that is. He asked about Sasuke and Hinata. Is Naruto why you called?”

Itachi shook his head. “I had another dream about Yahiko and I woke up alone. I called out and there was no one in the room. I didn’t think, I just called you.”

“I’m glad. I’m glad your first instinct is to call me. I should move in. My lease is up soon.”

“Break the lease. Father will pay any penalty.”

“I thought I’d wait until after Hinata settled in. Too much upheaval for everyone if you have two new residents moving in at once. I’ve already put in for change of address at work and the pension office. I’ll be moving in by the end of the summer. You’ll be getting my mail soon.”

“Good. I don’t want to sleep alone anymore. And I promise not to read your mail.”
“At least I don’t have to worry about you spying on me.”

“I can’t make any guarantee about anyone else in this house though.”

Kakashi chuckled; Sasuke already had tried to spy on him, though not very well. “You can come sleep at my place sometimes if you’re comfortable with that.”

“Yeah. I have to feel my way around more, but I’m comfortable anywhere with you.”

“That’s good to hear.”

“But then you have bring me home. It’s out of your way, isn’t it?”

“You worry too much.” He turned toward Itachi more and rested his head more comfortably against Itachi’s. He was tired what with the early morning phone call. Though the chill night air was bracing, being next to the warm body of his boyfriend was making him drowsy.

Itachi took his free hand and pulled Kakashi closer into a more comfortable position and let Kakashi doze against him. He thought he heard a creak behind him through the open door, but there was a wind and Kakashi was breathing near his ear. Probably the wind moving a door.

A few minutes of enjoying the wind, Itachi shrugged. “Let’s get you to bed.”

“Yes, sir,” Kakashi mumbled. Kakashi stood and Itachi offered his arm for Kakashi to help him up and Kakashi helped him up the stairs. Itachi let the robe fall from his shoulders when they were safe in his room, stripped down to just his black boxers. Kakashi stripped down as well and joined Itachi in bed.

“Is there anything else wrong?” Kakashi asked again once Itachi was securely in his arms.

“No, nothing.”

Kakashi knew he was lying, but let it go for now. If Itachi didn’t want to talk, he wouldn’t force him. “Go back to sleep.” Kakashi smoothed Itachi’s hair.

Itachi moaned, almost purred. “I like that.”

Kakashi continued to pet him until Itachi snored softly. He dropped off soon after with his face in the long, silky, black hair.

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Kakashi woke Itachi as he left so he wouldn’t wake up alone and panic again. Itachi mumbled at him and nuzzled back into the warm sheets.

Itachi woke up again at a knock at the door about three hours later. Mikoto peeked in cautiously to make sure her son was alone.

“Breakfast,” she announced.

“Diet,” Itachi said and dove back into the sheets.
Mikoto ignored him and started picking out his clothes.

She’d left the door slightly ajar so Sasuke just knocked lightly before barging in. He sat on his brother’s bed.

“You shouldn’t be able to sleep in everyday while I have to go to work.”

Itachi growled.

“Come on, you’re getting laid, I’m not. Get up.”

Itachi turned and sat up. His hair hung all around his head in a savage way. His eyes were shut as always, but still hostile. He was beautiful. Even his straight brother had to take a moment to admire Itachi’s bare chest. He hadn’t worked out much since he came home, so his muscular body was losing its definition, but he was still sexy.

Sasuke moved closer to hug his brother. “I love you, ‘Tachi. Get up.”

“Why? To do what?” he whined.

Itachi couldn’t see the pained looked on Sasuke’s face. Mikoto was getting used to the refrain; she woke and dressed her son most mornings. Sasuke moved to sit closer to Itachi and put his arm around him. “If I could give you one of my eyes, I would in a heartbeat. Tell me anything you want me to do for you, and I’ll do it.”

Itachi sighed. “I don’t know. I just don’t know what I’m supposed to do.”

Sasuke rubbed his arm and kissed his forehead. “Maybe I’ll get you those seminars on tape or something. Work out; I’m sure Inoichi will keep an eye on you and help you. Got to stay hot for that soldier of yours.”

“Come on,” Mikoto said, “get dressed. Sasuke, shoo.”

Sasuke went down stairs and Itachi got out of bed and let his mother help him dress—mainly just making sure nothing was back to front—then he followed her down, running his hand along walls and keeping his hold firm on the banister.

“I think he’s right, baby, you can get on the treadmill and listen to audio books or music. It’ll wear you out. Just don’t do it alone.”

“Hai.”

When they both reached the bottom of the stairs, she stopped him and kissed him chastely on the lips. “We’ll think of something. Anything you want to try to do, tell us.”

“I will.” This was the thousandth time they had this little conversation; always the same.

She walked ahead of him, letting Itachi find his own way, knowing he was quite capable of it and it boosted his confidence to be able to do even small things like this on his own. As much as she wanted to hold him and do everything for him, she knew she had to let her little boy do things on his own.
Of course, Sasuke was standing off to the side watching his brother, making sure he didn’t bump into anything. Mikoto wondered which of her sons needed more comfort: her blind elder son, or the younger son who was an emotional mess seeing his strong, perfect older brother struggling?

She was glad Fugaku had given Sasuke such a high position in the company and Sasu was a girl; it kept his mind off Itachi somewhat.

Sasuke snuck in around Itachi and headed for the kitchen. Itachi sat in his seat and carefully put out a hand to find his glass of juice.

“Who the fuck took my Monster?!” Sasuke roared from the kitchen.

Itachi smiled behind the glass, knowing it was likely Kakashi.

-----

Kakashi was elbows deep in a Jeep engine when a feeling of unease came over him. He straightened and turned, ready to defend himself. But it was Gai.

“Fuck,” Kakashi whispered as Gai approached him.

“Kakashi, no more avoiding us!”

“Oh, god,” he muttered.

“You are coming out with us tonight!”

“Can’t. Having dinner with the family.”

“You don’t have any family.”

“My boyfriend’s family. And that was a little insulting. Anyway, I’m at work, Gai.”

“Friday then! Bring your girl with you!”

“He’s a guy. Maybe.”

“No! You will be there! We must enjoy our Springtime of Youth!”

“Fine.”

“Bring him with you. We barely talked to him last time.”

“If he’s up to it.”

“He’s not going to stop you from coming with us in May, right? We set the date and made all the arrangements.”

“No, I’m definitely coming.”

“Good! It’s hard as fuck to get a tank to the desert. See you Friday. No excuses! And bring food of some sort.”
“I’ll bring pizza. Now, let me get back to work.”

“Friday!”

“Yeah, yeah.”

-----

Kakashi was back that evening for dinner. Itachi was still upstairs when he arrived.

“Kakashi,” Fugaku called from the living room. “Join us. Itachi will be down shortly.”

Kakashi took a seat on the sofa, anticipating Itachi joining him while they wait for dinner to be served. Fugaku was in his armchair and Sasuke was pouting in the loveseat.

“Okay at work today?” Fugaku asked. “Not too tired?”

Kakashi chuckled. “I was fine.”

“Have a little ‘pick me up?’” Sasuke asked, sorely.

“Energy drink.”

“That was mine,” Sasuke growled.

“Who only keeps one can at the ready?”

“It was my last one.”

Fugaku cleared his throat. “Why don’t you move in now? Then you wouldn’t have to drive here every time Itachi has a nightmare.”

“Just assure me you don’t have a camera in his room.”

“We don’t, but I heard him cry out. I saw you two on the front step.”

“My lease is up in the summer, I’ll move in then. Let the newlyweds get first dibs—if you are staying here—and then Itachi and I will settle into a larger room.” And a larger bed, Kakashi thought, but wasn’t stupid enough to say it out loud. Everyone knew he was fucking Itachi, but one still didn’t say it in front of his family.

Sasuke sucked his teeth. “Well, the Bentley’s registration is at his old place, so let him stay there a while. I’m still not happy about all this. I made out a bill of sale for the car to make it all easier.”

“What did I pay for it?”

“Your soul.”

“I’m sort of starting to like you, brat.”

“If you run off with that car, I will hunt you down and repaint it with your blood.”
Fugaku smiled. He liked to see the two of them getting along. Sniping, but getting along. It reminded him of Sasuke and Itachi a few months ago.

“Understood. But trust me, there’s nothing I would rather steal than your brother. But it is a sweet ride.”

Sasuke growled.

“Most adults drink coffee; not enough for you?” Kakashi asked, changing the subject back to what was apparently angering the youngest Uchiha.

“I was down the hall,” Sasuke got to the real issue that was bothering him.

Kakashi took a deep breath and sat back. “Listen, he feels like he’s burdened you enough. He felt bad about calling me, but he’s been especially worried about how much he’s burdened you, Sasuke.”

“Coffee gives me the runs.”

Kakashi laughed.

A slight creak of the banister alerted Kakashi to Itachi coming down the stairs behind him. He half turned to watch him. He wondered if Itachi could feel three sets of eyes watching him, ready to jump up and help him if he should need it.

“Join me on the sofa?” Kakashi asked to let Itachi know he was there and where.

Itachi walked with confidence into the living room. Itachi held out a hand and Kakashi grabbed it to guide him to where he sat. Itachi sat right next to him and nuzzled in.

“Your father and brother are right there,” Kakashi whispered.

“I’m not doing anything untoward.”

Fugaku chuckled.

Mikoto came in looking for everyone. “I thought you’d be in the study.” She sat next to her youngest on the loveseat and rubbed his back in a motherly affectionate gesture.

“More comfortable out here,” Fugaku said. Despite his son being mangled, this felt like the most comfortable family tableau he could recall after Itachi’s sixth birthday. He even had a third son. He felt relaxed and at ease. Itachi was healing and Sasuke was also relaxing. He could forgive the fact Kakashi was . . . with his eldest son just for the fact his family seemed to be more whole than before he entered into it.

“Since we’ll all together,” Kakashi said, “I want to let you all know that I’m going on a trip right after the semester’s over. I would invite you,” he said to Itachi, “but it’s with my army buddies and, trust me, you don’t want to come with us. Two dozen ex-soldiers in the desert with Jeeps, guns, and booze. Not your crowd.”

“Is that legal?” Sasuke asked.
“Probably not. Depending on the armaments the guys get their hands on, I might not get bail. I’ll let you know. There was mention of a tank. I’ll be gone for about two weeks.”

“Oh, five to ten,” Sasuke said.

“More fun than Vegas. It’s just a bunch of friends shooting targets and reliving the best parts of our time overseas.”

“Yeah, I’ll stay home,” Itachi said. He laughed.

“Those same friends are insisting I join them for poker Friday night. Would you like to join me?” he asked Itachi. “They want to get to know you and it might be nice just to get out. Maybe you could even play; I’ll whisper your cards to you.”

“Yeah, I might like to try that. They won’t mind will they?”

“Actually, Gai insisted I bring you.”

“Well, I actually meant if they mind that I’m a guy. They’re all military, right? Isn’t there an anti-gay feeling in the military?”

“Not a problem with this bunch. Two of them are a couple and they all know I was dating a guy before. Those that met you briefly that one evening had no problem with you. They want to get to know you. They’re an eccentric bunch, but good guys.”

“How eccentric?” Sasuke asked.

Both Kakashi and Itachi sighed at the same time.

“Fine, I’ll shut up.”

“There’s only one of them I couldn’t kill at a whim and that one is straight and a very good friend. Anyway, we’re pack animals. That is, pack hunters. Like wolves. We protect each other. Once you’re accepted into the pack, you are protected by the whole pack. They already approve of Itachi.”

“When is your semester over?” Fugaku asked.

“Mid-May. We’re leaving on May 20th and we’ll be back on June 4th.”

“Good, you won’t miss Itachi’s birthday.”

Sasuke looked smug. “Didn’t know when it was, did you?”

“June 9th, brat. I told the guys I had to be back before the 9th.”

Sasuke sulked and Mikoto comforted her baby in his defeat.

“When’s the wedding?” Kakashi asked.

Sasuke blushed. “End of June.”
“We’ll have four birthdays and his anniversary all within three months,” Mikoto said. It appeared she’d had a hand in arranging the date with that in mind.

“So all your birthdays are in the summer?” Kakashi asked.

“Mine is on June 1st and Fugaku’s is August 16th,” Mikoto said. “Sasuke’s is on July 23rd. When is yours?”

“September 15th.” One didn’t have to look at Mikoto to know she was already planning something for his birthday.

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Aoba always hosted poker at his house. Kakashi drove the Bentley, having finally received the registration in his name. The red luxury car looked out of place among the Jeeps and more affordable cars on the street.

The door was unlocked and Kakashi just walked in; Itachi holding one arm, four pizzas balanced on his other upturned hand. The nine men already there had started playing, but stopped to yell their welcome to their truant friend, but none left their cards. Kakashi escorted Itachi into the large dining room. Aoba jumped up to relieve Kakashi of the food, but was right back down to his cards once he set them down. Kakashi and Itachi stood by until the hand ended then Raido moved his chips over one to make room for the couple.

“This is my boyfriend, Itachi Uchiha,” Kakashi introduced. “Introduce yourselves since he’ll know you by your voices.”

“Aoba Yamashiro,” their host introduced. He wore his large sunglasses even in doors and at night. He was susceptible to migraines caused by light which was why, while in the service, he was always on night patrols.

“Hayate Gekko,” the sickly looking man said with a cough.

“Tenzou Yamato,” said his doe eyed boyfriend.

“Genma Shiranui,” he said around his ever-present toothpick.

“Mai Gai!” the exuberant beast of the group announced.

“Kotetsu Hagane,” said the man with a breathe strip over his nose to help him breath.

“Izumo Kamizuki,” said a tired looking man with his hair hanging over his right eye.

“Raido Namiashi,” said the man with a large scar over his cheek and nose.

“Ibiki Morino.” This heavily scared man had the deepest voice of the group, the most commanding too.

Kakashi helped Itachi into a seat.

“Something to drink?” Kakashi asked him.
Kakashi squeezed his shoulder. “Be nice,” he warned his friends.

“I’ll try,” Itachi said in jest.

“You know how to play Texas Hold ‘em?” Aoba asked.

“Kakashi instructed me.”

“You get two cards and we have a round of betting. We have a ‘blind’, the person to the left of the dealer has to bet ten cents, one chip (we only have one value chips). To raise at anytime in the hand, you have to at least double the original bet. After the first round of betting, the dealer sets a card aside face down, that’s the ‘burn’, and then he deals three cards face up, that’s the ‘flop’. We have a round of betting, you don’t have to bet, everyone can ‘check’ and there’s no bet, but if someone bets, you have to ‘call’ and meet the bet, raise, or fold. Then there’s another burn and we have the ‘turn’, one card up. A round of betting, then one more burn, and then one more face up card called the ‘river’. A round of betting and then we show cards. The best hand of five cards in the five cards on the table and the two cards in your hand.”

“Got it.”

“High card is the lowest winning hand. Then one pair, two pair, three of a kind, a straight, flush, full house, four of a kind, and a straight flush. The best straight flush is the royal flush.”

“That’s going to be the hard part to remember,” Itachi said with a smirk.

“We didn’t just let a shark into our midst, did we?” Ibiki asked the table with humor.

“I really haven’t played before. I just have Kakashi’s coaching and . . . Aoba?”

“Yep,” Aoba assured Itachi he identified him correctly.

“And Aoba’s explanation.”

Kakashi sat down next to Itachi with a plate full of sweets for Itachi and a plate of pizza for himself. There were smaller tables behind them for their plates, cups inlaid in the table for their drinks.

They all agreed that when it was time for Itachi to deal, Kakashi would play instead of Itachi and deal. Otherwise, they played every other hand.

The first hand was typical of the night. Kakashi whispered Itachi’s cards into his ear. “Jack of diamonds and ace of hearts.”

They all called the blind, all throwing in only one chip. The flop was jack of spades, two of hearts, and five of clubs. Hayate bet five chips, equal to fifty cents. Tenzou considered and folded. Itachi called, Genma called, Raido called, Gai called, Izumo folded, Kotetsu called, and Ibiki called.

Ibiki was dealer and announced the turn. “Three of spades.”
Hayate bet another five. Itachi doubled it. Genma took longer to think and folded. Raido folded, Gai called, Kotetsu and Ibiki folded, and Hayate called.

Ibiki announced the last card, the river. “Ten of diamonds.”

Hayate bet ten. Itachi called. Gai folded.

“Hayate was the aggressor, you show first.”

Hayate turned over his cards.

“Jack of hearts and a king of spades,” Ibiki announced. “That’s a pair of jacks with a king kicker.”

Itachi nodded to Kakashi to turn over his cards.

“Jack of diamonds and ace of hearts. That’s a pair of jacks with an ace kicker.”

“Ahhhh! So close!” Hayate cried.

Two dollars and ten cents to the victory. Twenty-one chips. It was a good haul for a five dollar buy in.

They chatted and Itachi mostly listened, but they did make an effort to involve Itachi. Being blind, they all forgave the fact Kakashi practically fed Itachi sweet after sweet as their one eyed friend fed on pizza.

Kakashi was paying when three aces were dealt on the flop.

“Interesting,” Genma said. “Almost as interesting as the photographs I saw today.”

“I was young! I needed the work!” Hayate yelled, the two quoting from Naked Gun.

“God, I love that movie!” Kotetsu proclaimed.

Then they all realized they were talking about a movie around a blind man. But Itachi also laughed and also quoted the movie.

“Jane, since I’ve met you, I’ve noticed things that I never knew were there before... birds singing, dew glistening on a newly formed leaf, stoplights.”

They all laughed, more comfortable talking about films with Itachi there. Itachi turned out to be quite well versed in movies; they’d forgotten he was only blinded a few months ago.

Itachi was drinking hard cider and coke and eventually had to visit the restroom. Kakashi went with him to escort him and help out.

“God, he’s whipped,” Genma laughed.

“I’m so happy for him,” Hayate said. “Itachi seems sweet.”

“I was worried he wouldn’t have a sense of humor,” Genma said.
“He deserves someone like him,” Izumo said.

“We all approve of him then?” Ibiki asked the table.

“Yep.”

“Good. He’s under our protection.”

“It’s so good to see the spirit of chivalry alive and well,” Gai said solemnly, almost in tears.

“I really feel for him,” Aoba said. “He’s cute and blind. He’s got his own protection detail now.”

The pair returned and they continued the game.

Finally, the apex of the night.

Kakashi whispered to Itachi. “Pair of Queens, hearts and spades.”

“Five,” Genma said.

“Fold,” Raido said.

“Fold,” Gai said.

“Call,” Izumo said.

“Fold,” Kotetsu said.

“Fold,” Ibiki said.

“Call,” Hayate said.

“Fold,” Tenzou said.

Itachi hesitated. “All in.”

“That’s . . . forty-three,” Kakashi said.

“Call,” Genma said.

“Call,” Izumo said.

“Fold,” Hayate said.

Raido stood and counted Genma and Izumo’s stacks. “Okay, Genma has forty-one and Izumo has thirty-eight. That puts the two of you all in. Just hold on to your chips and we’ll figure it out afterward.”

Kakashi took two chips from Itachi’s stack and put it aside.

“Want to show?” Raido asked.
Itachi nodded and Kakashi flipped his cards to show the pair of queens.

“Shit,” Genma hissed. He turned over a pair of sevens.

Izumo silently flipped over a pair of nines.

“Fuck,” Genma cursed.

Itachi had the winning hand so far, but anyone who has ever played Texas Hold ’em knows that a pocket pair means nothing pre-flop.

Tenzou put the burn card face down then dealt the flop. “Queen—”

“Son of a bitch!” Genma said.

“—of diamonds, three of clubs, ace of hearts,” Tenzou finished. He burned a card, then showed the turn. “Jack of hearts.” Another burn and everyone held their breath even though there was no way anyone but Itachi could win. “Queen of clubs.”

“Fuck!”

They all started laughing, except for Genma. Gai clapped his hands.

“Holy shit,” Raido said.

Kakashi hugged his boyfriend.

“Four of a fucking kind,” Hayate sighed.

“Fuckin’ A,” Kotetsu sighed as well.

Raido and Kakashi started counting Itachi’s new chips and Gai brought over the bank to start cashing everyone out.

“That was fucking amazing,” Tenzou said.

“That was probably the best ending to a night I’ve ever seen,” Izumo said. “We’ve had excellent hands before, but never one that ended the night so spectacularly.”

“I’m sorry it ended it,” Itachi said.

“It’s after two; a good time to end.”

“True.”

“If you think two a.m. is late, Izumo, then Kotetsu must be disappointing you,” Genma said.

“I know that I’ve had quite a few late nights recently,” Itachi said.

Kakashi choked back a laugh. It was partially because he liked the bold innuendo, but a small part of it was that sex wasn’t the only thing keeping Itachi awake at night; that provided the grimace part of his smile. He placed the twelve dollars of Itachi’s winnings in front of him; the extra twenty
cents went to the house.

Kakashi collected his own three dollars. Itachi was ahead seven dollars and Kakashi was down seven.

“Let’s move to the living room,” Raido said.

Kakashi helped Itachi up, pocketing both winnings. He sat with Itachi on one end of the sofa and Tenzou and Hayate took the other end. They talked for another hour then they all decided it was late enough. Itachi almost slipped off, but only Kakashi could really tell.

As they were getting ready to leave, Kakashi was waylaid by Gai, leaving Itachi against the wall for a moment. Hayate came over and leaned in to say to Itachi. “I want to let you know since you can’t see our expressions or body language; we all like you.”

“Thank you.”

“Kakashi’s lucky. You are too. You couldn’t ask for a more loyal man. And, we all will be there for you if you need us. Goodnight.”

“Thank you. Goodnight.”

Kakashi returned. “Sorry about that; Gai is constantly pulling me aside.”

“It’s alright.”

“You have good friends,” Itachi said once they were in the car.

“Crazy, but yes.”

“I bet my brother is waiting up.”

“Want to leave him hanging?”

“No, I should go home and sleep. I had fun. Thank you.”

“I’m glad.”

They pulled up to the Uchiha estate. Kakashi walked Itachi inside and was surprised not to see Sasuke. There was a light on in the living room and there Kakashi found Sasuke asleep on the sofa with his mouth open.

“Sasuke’s asleep on the sofa,” Kakashi whispered to Itachi. “Should I wake him?”

“Naw, let him sleep. I can manage now. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight.” Kakashi gave him a kiss. “Oh, your winnings.”

“Keep it.”

“Alright. I’ll keep it for your buy in next month.”
“Yeah.”

Kakashi was hesitant to leave Itachi in the middle of the hall, but he left. Itachi put out a hand to find the staircase and went up, hearing the engine of his Bentley start up. He shut and locked his door. He didn’t undress, just curled up and cried.

Being around Kakashi’s friends put his own life in stark contrast. He didn’t have any friends. He never had any friends. Just his little brother and Shisui. It suddenly made sense to him: he had tried to buy love and friendship with sex, that’s why he slept around. He was too young to understand that back then. He was too stupid and arrogant to foster any real friendships. Which was why he only has his family around him now. And Kakashi.

Hayate was right, he was lucky. If not for that fateful meeting, he’d be alone. Sasuke had his own life to live and his parents couldn’t stay with him all the time. He really was lucky to have Kakashi. He was tempted to just shut himself away just to prevent any more uncertainty or heartbreak. He knew Kakashi and his brother wouldn’t allow that, but he let himself indulge in self-pity for a little while.

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Itachi woke up to knocking on his door.

“Itachi?” It was his mother.

“I’m coming.” He carefully got out of bed and felt for the door and unlocked it. Inoichi had a key, but he didn’t want his mother to have to call for him.

“Kakashi’s not here, is he?” Mikoto asked when he opened the door.

“No. I just wanted to be alone.”

“Are you okay?”

“I just felt depressed. I never had friends like Kakashi has and it just made me depressed.”

She rolled her eyes and scoffed. “You just look for reasons to be depressed. Be happy you have a family that loves you and a fantastic boyfriend.”

“I think I have a right to be depressed, mother.”

“No, you really don’t. You’re from a family of wealth and you’re loved. Did you have fun last night?”

Itachi huffed. “Yeah.”

“You slept in your clothes?”

“Yeah.”

She scoffed again. “How old are you?”

“That’s a good question.”
“Just come down like that for breakfast. You can change afterward.”

“Why?”

She’d had it. She slapped him. “Uchiha Itachi!” she scolded, reverting to the Japanese fashion. “You are worried about being a burden, but what’s really hurting us all is your depression. If you were happy we’d all be happier; we wouldn’t worry about you if you were happy. Even if you have to fake it, stop sulking!”

Itachi recoiled. “Moushiwake gozaimasen, haha.”

She hugged him. “When you’re depressed, we’re all depressed. When you’re happy, we’re all happy. Don’t forget that.”

“Hai.”

She stroked his face. “You’re still my baby. All I want is to see my sons happy.”

“I know, I just . . .”

“I know.” She tucked his hair behind his ear.

Itachi realized she was crying. He carefully put his arms around her and he cried too.

“I know how much you care and how grieved you all are and it kills me,” Itachi said. “I wish it didn’t happen more for your sakes than mine.”

For the first time, Mikoto let out her grief in front of her son. She’d hid her sobs from her sons, only once did she cry like this in front of Fugaku, trying to be strong for him. Everyone was trying to be strong for the others, but it was quietly killing them all. She was finally draining the toxins in her soul. She needed to cry and be held and not be strong for a few minutes. It did them both good.

Mikoto pulled away and sniffed. “You look terrible,” she said as she wiped at his face. “Let’s go down to breakfast.”

“Hai.”

-----

Sasuke ratted on his brother again. He reported to Kakashi that Itachi had been crying and that Mikoto had been too. Concerned, Kakashi called to check in. Not satisfied, he came over the next afternoon.

He laid on Itachi’s bed while Itachi practiced reading brail. He rubbed his back and played with his hair. After a while, Itachi threw the sample page down in frustration and laid down next to Kakashi.

“I hate this.”

“I know.”
“It’s like learning a new language. And I just can’t feel that much detail.”

“You’ll get used to it.”

“Yeah, yeah.”

“You know, I’d hate to tattle on your brother—”

“Yeah, right. What he do?”

“He called me yesterday, you and your mother were crying.”

“That little . . .”

“It wasn’t something that happened at poker, was it?”

“I was just reminded how I didn’t have friends. I got depressed and it pissed off mom. She laid out her feelings and we both got a little emotion out. We’re fine.”

“Well, count them as friends now.”

“Maybe after one or two more poker nights.”

“First Friday every month for now on.”

“I have no excuse not to go. They are good friends. I want them to approve of me and accept me because I love you and I don’t want your friends to resent me.”

“Don’t worry about that. You worry too much. I promise I will tell you when you’re being a burden or a hindrance. If I want to go hang out with my friends rather than hang out with you for a night, I’ll tell you. I won’t let you feel like a burden. If I’m spending night after night with you, it’s because I want to. You need to be selfish now. We’ll check you when you take it too far. Be selfish, but not a brat. Let me spoil you.”

Itachi sighed. “I may have been spoiled, but I was active and independent. I’m trapped in this room.” Restless, Itachi sat up and turned to dangle his legs off the side.

Kakashi stroked Itachi’s hair down his scalp and down his back. “Tell me where you want to go and I’ll take you. I know that’s not the point, but I don’t want to close you up and keep you all to myself. I don’t mind showing you off.”

Itachi laughed. He laid back over Kakashi’s stomach. “I just want to get out. We can go anywhere. Take me somewhere you’d go regardless of me being blind.”

“I’ll think about it.”
Chapter 9

This was supposed to be longer, but I’m having trouble with the next part, so I cut it in half. Updates have really slowed down because I’m working overtime at work and it’s leaving me too drained to even write, but I am always thinking. ^_^

Bet’ed by PhoenixInnocence

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Kakashi was staying over more often. He commandeered a chest of drawers from another room with Inoichi’s help. Seeing the butler with no jacket on as he helped, Kakashi appreciated the fact that this was no mere butler. He was far more muscular than Kakashi had given him credit for and he was pretty sure the blond man was normally armed as well.

Itachi sat on his bed with his earphones on while the two men worked, blissfully unaware how heavy mahogany was. His room was being rearranged, but not significantly to interfere with him. As long as his path to the bathroom and the door were clear, he didn’t care. His mother, brother, or Kakashi usually chose clothes for him since he could barely tell if something was inside out or back to front. That was something he was coming to accept and not feel bad about. He really didn’t care anymore and even found his own inability to choose his own clothes amusing.

As it was, Itachi was in la la land without any visual stimulation to distract him.

Inoichi checked the drawers once more to make sure they were empty and even checked the underside of drawers.

“Inoichi,” Kakashi said, “you’ve been with them for about fifteen years, right?”

“I have.”

“Itachi told me he invented that little bell rope system when he was ten and mentioned you.”

“He was always brilliant. The Uchiha moved into the house just about two years before that and I was hired at that time.”

“What were you before? Army? Police?”

“Takes one to know one, eh?” Inoichi smiled. “Army. I never made it into any action; got seriously injured during a training exercise. I had my training and a small pension, that’s it. I signed up for a private security firm once I recovered and it just so happened Fugaku was looking for a live-in security slash butler. I gave it a shot and never left. I might have quit if not for the boys—being a butler is more involved than I thought. Itachi was really cute, but Sasuke was . . . you wouldn’t believe how adorable he used to be. My wife and daughter live here too. I will tell you this: as much as I love these two boys, I never wanted my daughter to marry either of them. I’m glad they’re both off the market. Ino had a crush on Sasuke for years; almost gave me an ulcer.”

Kakashi nodded. “I can understand that. Itachi seems to be really hard on himself, keeps saying he was a horrible person before. Was he like his brother?”

“Sasuke’s just been overly stressed this last year. He’s also been working so hard to catch Itachi’s coattails. Itachi was beautiful and brilliant and he knew it. He was rather proud and arrogant, but he
was justified. He wasn’t well liked, but it didn’t bother him. He was happy.”

“I guess I really shouldn’t care, I love the man he is now. I kind of wish I knew what he was like back then.”

“You’re right: it doesn’t matter. Just know, he used to be a bit more spirited and aggressive. That will come out again. Hopefully, he won’t be so timid forever. He has opened up again since he met you. You’ve given him his confidence back.”

“I want to give him more of it. Good to know there’s more men with guns around. I want him kept safe when I’m not here.”

“Fugaku makes sure of that.”

“I just realized something: when I move in permanently, we’ll have to do this again. Never thought I’d be treasuring the idea of IKEA.”

“I’m hiring movers then.”

“I’ll put money in for that.”

They inched the heavy monstrosity into its final place and Inoichi left them alone.

“<Itachi!”

Itachi was bouncing his head with the music. Kakashi didn’t want to startle him so he grabbed the iPod and turned down the volume.

Itachi pulled off his headphones. “Huh?”

“We finished.” He pulled Itachi’s glasses off as a prelude to a kiss, but he stopped. “Hey, you’ve got some discharge coming from your eye. I can’t believe they stitched your eyes shut.”

“I argued for it. I was a bit of a brat. I think they only agreed to keep me calm. I was traumatized,” he said blithely.

“You should see a doctor.”

“I suppose it is that time.”

“I’ll be right back.” Kakashi wet a washcloth in Itachi’s personal bathroom and came back to clean the surface of Itachi’s eyes. Itachi winced; he did have an infection.

“Does Inoichi handle that sort of thing?” Kakashi asked.

“Father does. He’s more concerned about me now; he’s taken charge.”

“What about your nightmares? You seeing someone for those too?”

“Not a fan. I’d rather talk to you about it. If you don’t mind.”

“I don’t mind. I’ll talk to your father when he gets home about an appointment.”
“Will you go with me this time? I don’t want to put Sasuke or mother through it again. Not that I want you to go through it, but I’d like to have you there. I’m more intimate with you so I’d be more comfortable being naked and such in front of you.”

“I’ll go with you.”

“It’s sort of an all-day thing. Eyes, beating, being raped . . . They check everything. You think the IRS crawls up people’s asses with a microscope, I have had that literally done to me.”

Kakashi sat next to him and pulled him into a hug. “You poor thing,” Kakashi said with amusement. “Would you enjoy it more if I were a doctor?”

“Probably. I’d get checkups far more often.”

“Do I have to make an appointment to see your father? I don’t see him very often, just at the occasional dinner.”

“You can talk to him during dinner about it.”

“Bring up you have puss oozing from your eyes during dinner?”

Itachi pushed him lightly. “I don’t know why I want you to tell him. I’ll tell him I need an appointment. I’ll leave out why. I guess I still see my father as . . . foreboding. My childhood memories are filled with looking up at him and mother telling him how I excelled and him putting his hand on my head and saying, ‘You are my son indeed,’ or some variation. He’s only been warm to me since my return. I don’t think it’s just guilt for the whole Africa thing, I think he believed one didn’t soften a son by showing affection. Now that I’m . . . incapacitated . . . I’m weakened and I think he really wants to show us love, but now he’s afraid to touch me and Sasuke’s being an ass.”

Kakashi stroked Itachi’s hair for a while before someone knocked at the door. Kakashi didn’t move away from Itachi—everyone knew and was comfortable with their relationship.

“Come in,” Itachi called.

Itachi looked up—as useless as it was—when he felt Kakashi stiffen.

“I wasn’t aware you were here, Hatake. I didn’t see your car.”

“Shisui,” Itachi sighed.

“You saw Itachi’s, no?” Kakashi said. “Sasuke had it transferred to me.”

“You gave him your Bentley??!”

“What the fuck am I going to do with it?” Itachi whined. “It had a layer of dust on it.”

Shisui’s expression was hard, but hurt. “That Bentley was your dream car.”

“It still is, but I can’t drive it and it’s not going anywhere.”

“I’m still scared to drive it,” Kakashi confessed. “But I left my Kia with my boss to be used for
“parts or to be thrown out.”

“Didn’t even sell it? Getting too used to having access to someone with money?”

“Shisui!”

Kakashi rubbed Itachi’s back to calm him.

“God, I’m so sick of you and Sasuke insulting and assuming the worst of him! Beside the car, the only thing he’s gotten for free is food. Can’t you two just back off? Sometimes with Sasuke it’s funny and enduring, but with you it’s just jeal—” Itachi stopped, not knowing who might be within earshot.

Shisui looked at Kakashi and saw that he knew. It wasn’t just that jab the last time they spoke; Kakashi knew.

“Why are you here?” Itachi asked.

“I thought you’d be alone and I wanted to stay with you, keep you from feeling lonely and bored.”

“Thanks, but Kakashi’s got that covered.”

“So I see.”

“And my right hand is uninjured.”

That shocked Shisui and Kakashi, but Kakashi snorted while Shisui couldn’t believe Itachi had said it.

“Why don’t you go back to Iraq?” Itachi asked. “Aren’t there new troubles over there? I’m sure you’re needed.”

Itachi knew he was hurting his cousin and meant it. There was no former lover he wanted to be around. Especially his first.

“I was looking for a civilian contract actually.”

“Then go mind fuck a jaywalker.”

Kakashi had some sympathy for Shisui until that. Their eyes met and Shisui was mortified; Kakashi was hostile. Kakashi agreed with Sasuke that Shisui had manipulated Itachi as a child.

“I’ll leave you alone then.”

“Shut the door on your way out.”

The door shut and Itachi was glad he had someone with an eye to make sure he wasn’t being tricked. But just to be sure, he asked, “We’re alone?”

“Yes.” Kakashi took his hand.

“What time is it?”
“Two.”

“It’s always after dark to me; is it too early for you?”

“Having a rival around sparks my jealousy. We have about two hours before we have to worry about interruption.” He ran his hand down Itachi’s clothed chest and down his thigh.

“You have no rivals. But I want you jealous.”

“I’ll lock the door.”

Kakashi turned the latch and sat back down next to Itachi. He caressed Itachi’s cheek and kissed him. Itachi’s hand slipped under Kakashi’s shirt to the well-muscled abdomen. Kakashi tensed his stomach and Itachi could map his muscles. But he wanted something else. His hand wandered lower. The bulge he found there made him gasp with lust.

Kakashi responded in kind, feeling Itachi harden and lengthen under his hand. Suddenly impatient, Kakashi attacked the button of Itachi’s pants. Itachi leaned back and lifted his hips for Kakashi to pull his pants from under his ass. His hand was back to Itachi’s groin, fingering his hot member through his black boxers.

Itachi grew impatient this time and shoved off his own underwear and unbuttoned Kakashi’s pants. Kakashi was better prepared, going commando.

Kakashi licked at Itachi’s shoulder and chest, tasting his skin. Then down to his cock, kneeling on the floor. Smooth hot flesh warmed his lips. He flicked his tongue over the weeping head and then sucked his nectar. He pulled Itachi’s thighs further open, held up his cock and took his balls in his mouth.

Itachi smoothed Kakashi’s hair and petted him. He couldn’t see, but he could better feel the mouth devouring him.

Kakashi slid his teeth over the sensitive flesh and licked the offended skin. Then back to his iron hard cock with teeth and tongue until they were both mad with lust. Kakashi looked up at Itachi’s lustful face. He spit on Itachi cock and fisted it as he crawled up to straddle his young lover and pressed his cock against his. He held Itachi up as he tilted him back to kiss him soundly.

Kakashi helped him lie back and moved between Itachi’s legs and watched Itachi’s pale body as he breathed and tensed.

Kakashi wished he could see those lust filled eyes open. He wanted to see him appreciate his body. But he did appreciate it. He drew up his legs and silently begged for Kakashi to penetrate him.

Then, not so silently.

“Fuck me, Kakashi. Please.”

A smear of lubricant and Kakashi pressed in. That jealousy he shrugged away before overcame him. That Shisui had desecrated this body killed him. He hooked an arm under Itachi’s thigh and leaned down to kiss him while thrusting hard into him.
“Itachi,” Kakashi sighed covetously.

“Ahh, Kakashi, fuck me. Ummm, cum inside me. Rut me and mark me.”

Kakashi growled.

“Let Shisui and Masa know I belong to you.”

Kakashi kissed and sucked at his neck and bit down hard as he came. Itachi bucked his body up against him, forcing his sweet spot against Kakashi’s spurring cock until he came as well. Their panting breath, heaving chest, and sweating bodies were ignored as they made love. Now, their panting thundered in the room and it seemed too close and hot. They didn’t move though. Itachi turned his head to breathe in Kakashi’s scent while Kakashi continued to breathe into his neck.

“Sixty-nine,” Itachi said.

“Let me clean up first.” But Kakashi didn’t move. “I love you. Your scent is truly intoxicating.”

“I’ve noticed I’ve started to smell like you. I smell you randomly on me. You’ve properly marked me.”

Kakashi chuckled. “When I catch your scent, I smile. Let me clean up and I’ll follow all your orders.”

“All of them?”

“I am a soldier. General.”

Itachi titled Kakashi’s head so he could see his smile. “My lieutenant.”

“Give me leave.”

“Hurry.”

Kakashi practically jumped from the bed and to the bathroom to clean the soiled lube from his cock and returned to see Itachi sitting up in the middle of the bed, leaning back against the shelf of books and stroking his cock. He stood there and watched. His own cock growing at the sight. Cum was still smeared on Itachi’s creamy stomach. His hair was mussed and his lips red, his neck reddened, and his skin patchy with blushes. He looked like a wanton.

“I can hear you breathing,” Itachi said. “Enjoying the show?”

“Immensely.”

“Lay down.”

Kakashi knelt on the bed and Itachi reached out to find Kakashi’s muscled chest and pushed him down so that his head was on the pillow. He carefully crawled over him presenting his cock to Kakashi’s mouth and he guided Kakashi’s cock to his own mouth.

Itachi slowly lowered his hips, wanting to fuck his lover’s mouth, but afraid to choke him. Kakashi pulled him down into leisurely thrusts. Itachi, for his own part, bobbed his head on his cock and
held the head tightly with his throat and tilted his head around to polish his soldier’s helmet with his soft throat.

Itachi salivated with the precum smearing his palate. Kakashi used his tongue to tease out the same from Itachi.

Kakashi groaned with the feeling of saliva dripping down his length and wetting his balls. He groped Itachi’s ass and kneaded his flesh.

Itachi groaned in kind and took all of Kakashi’s length into his throat and swallowed and moaned. Kakashi pulled him down until Itachi was buried in his throat. He rubbed Itachi’s lower back and hips and swallowed around the silken flesh.

Kakashi couldn’t take much more and gently bucked his hips. Itachi took the hint and quickened his pace and tightened his lips. Before Kakashi could cum, Itachi pulled his head away and let his saliva flood down his cock.

“Cum in my mouth.”

And Itachi took the head back in his mouth and swirled his tongue around and sucked and hummed and lightly scraped him with his teeth. Kakashi pushed Itachi’s hips up so he could pant.

Kakashi was helpless against Itachi’s skill and came in Itachi’s mouth. Itachi added his hand to milk Kakashi well.

Itachi let Kakashi’s cock slip from his lips and turned around and straddled Kakashi’s bare chest. Kakashi grabbed the hardness before him and guided him closer to lap at the wet head. He sealed his lips around the flare and sucked and rubbed the smooth front of his teeth against him.

He let Itachi go. “Tell me how to make you cum. Order me. I’m your slave. Tell me how to please you, love.”

“Stroke me.”

Kakashi obeyed, slipping his hand up and down Itachi’s damp cock, his grip tight when it slid over the flare of his cock. At the end of every up stroke, Kakashi circled his thumb over the weeping slit.

“Kiss it,” Itachi sighed. Kakashi did so, a slow, smacking kiss. He gave him a second kiss and then a third with parted lips and tongue.

Itachi moved forward and raised himself up a little. “Lick my balls.”

Kakashi stuck out his tongue and Itachi lowered to a good height and Kakashi lapped.

“Kiss and suck.” Kakashi obeyed nosily.

“Further back.” Kakashi held his balls aside and teased his perineum with the tip of his tongue.

Itachi moved back again. “Suck me and finger fuck me.”

Kakashi manipulated Itachi to a proper position and slipped his lips and tongue over Itachi’s hard
organ and penetrated Itachi’s relaxed entrance. He explored him and reached for his prostate to rub and pleasure it while he sucked and rubbed a prominent vein of his cock.

“Just suck me, suck hard.” Kakashi kept his finger deep inside him and wrapped his fingers around Itachi’s cock and sucked hard on the head of his cock. Itachi panted and sighed and finally wailed as he came.

“I love you,” he sighed. He leaned forward to hold himself up with the wall. He straightened and lay down comfortably on Kakashi’s body.

“I adore you.”

“I wish Shisui came here now.”

Kakashi chuckled. “Let him see what he let slip away,” Kakashi agreed. “If he comes near you again, I hope he smells me on you. What all should I do to convince him? A ring, my scent, my love, my cum, this bruise on your neck, my soul. I love you and will not give you up. Unless you say you despise me and want me to leave forever.”

“That will never happen, unless you cheat on me.”

“That will never happen.”

“Let’s sleep until dinner.”

“We should shower before dinner. You look like you’ve been well fucked and I’m sure I do too. I wouldn’t want your parents and brother to see you like this.”

Itachi hummed. “At least let me nap a while.”

“I’ll wake you and help you bathe.”

“Ahh, fuck dinner. I haven’t been working out and I’m afraid I’ll get fat.”

“You have a gym here. Let’s work out together. I’ll help you and make sure you can have all the chocolate and desserts you want.”

“You’re a good boyfriend.”

“Except, I’m going to wake you for dinner.”

Itachi just hummed and snuggled in.

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Kakashi went home after dinner.

Itachi was drowsy with the sex earlier and the heavy meal and the shot of Kahlua in his after dinner coffee. He needed to trail a hand along the wall to guide him to the living room and the sofa. He reached out a hand to check there was no one sitting there and then lay down. He curled up and sighed contentedly, then stretched and lay still.
Fugaku sat silently and watched his son. The fact his son and Kakashi came down to dinner with damp hair should have angered him, but he approved of Kakashi. He actually smiled as he might if it were Sasuke with a woman. Itachi could do far, far worse. And after finding out his son was far more active, far earlier, than he thought, he was just happy he was in a steady relationship.

Sasuke sighed as he came into the room and dropped into a chair.

“I envy you, Itachi,” Sasuke said. “I have to wait for my wedding night.”

“It’s that obvious?”

“Oh, yes,” Fugaku said.

Itachi sat up in surprise. “That’s not fair. It’s too easy to sneak up on me.”

“I was here first.”

Sasuke laughed. “Maybe we should wear cowbells.” He wouldn’t have made such a joke if Itachi wasn’t in such good spirits.

“It would help,” Itachi sighed. “Father, I need to go to the doctors. Kakashi says my eyes are . . . infected. He said he’d go with me. My eyes don’t hurt, but . . .”

“You’re volunteering to go?” Fugaku was surprised. “That’s a change.”

“If Kakashi’s concerned, I will go. I have to take his word for it.”

“Not that I don’t trust him.” Sasuke came over and sat next to his brother and pulled his glasses up. His eyelids were red and he pulled the lid a little and there was some dried puss there.

“Yep. Sure it doesn’t hurt?”

“They don’t.”

“I’ll make the appointments and let Kakashi know,” Fugaku said. “He’ll have to take a day off.”

“I warned him. He’s so smotheringly supportive. He’ll do anything for me.” His choice of the word ‘smotheringly’ may have made him sound annoyed, his voice was full of affection.

“I’m so very happy for you, Itachi. I don’t want you to leave the house, but if you truly want your own home with Kakashi, I’ll provide it.”

“I don’t want to leave and Kakashi said he feels better leaving me here where I’m safe.”

“Good.” Fugaku stood and came around the back of the sofa and mussed Itachi’s hair. “Goodnight, Itachi.”

“Goodnight, chichi.”

Itachi heard Fugaku’s steps on the stairs.

“Will you stay here, Sasuke?” Itachi asked.
―I think so. I’ll ask Hinata the next time I see her.‖

―It will be nice to have a full house. I wish I could see your children, but I’ll enjoy hearing them be around. Just teach them not to trip me.‖

Sasuke blushed. ―That’s getting ahead of things. We’re not married yet. We haven’t had sex once.‖

Itachi smiled, hearing the embarrassment in his voice. ―I’m blind, but I see a dozen children coming.‖

―Shut up!‖

―A bunch of little Sasukes running around, the gods help us.‖ Itachi smiled warmly. ―I see little versions of you with violet eyes. Be good to her; she’ll be a loving mother and wife.‖

―What’s with you tonight?‖

―You said you envied me, but I envy you. You have a fuller life ahead of you. I love Kakashi, but can’t bare him children or he me. Have enough for all of us.‖

―I will. But don’t expect them right away.‖

―Enjoy time with Hinata before the children come,‖ Itachi agreed. ―My mood’s fallen and Kakashi’s gone home. You mind if I sleep next to you tonight?‖

―Of course not. I’ve missed that since I was twelve.‖

―You’re never too old to crawl into your big brother’s bed.‖

―True, but Kakashi and Hinata may not like it.‖

―True. I just don’t want to sleep alone.‖

―Make Kakashi move in now.‖

―Keen on that now?‖

―You’re my brother; I don’t like the idea of anyone touching you. But Kakashi is a good man. He makes you happier than I have ever seen you. I’ll tolerate him. And kill him if he hurts you.‖

―Deal.‖

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It did indeed take all day. Itachi was passed from doctor to doctor to doctor to doctor. Other than the infections in his eye sockets, he was perfectly healthy and all the doctors expressed their relief that he’d healed so well.

The ocularist unstitched his eyes, took out the glass prosthetic and cleaned out the empty sockets. Kakashi was morbidly curious and looked over the man’s shoulder. The infection was nasty, but otherwise they were much like his own empty eye.
“This is why I told you not to stitch your eyes closed,” the ocularist gently scolded.

“I know. I learned my lesson.”

The doctor turned to Kakashi. “That looks like nice work.”

Kakashi popped the acrylic eye out. The ocularist took it with a tissue. “Oh, very nice. You can help him clean them and everything.”

“Of course.”

“You have to keep the eyes out for now until the infection clears up,” he told Itachi. He cleaned the prostheses and set them aside.

Kakashi got his first look at the recreations of Itachi’s eyes. Almost pure black, but when you looked closer, you could see the change to grey and there were delicate lines and coloring in the false irises.

“We based them on photographs and his brother’s eyes,” the ocularist explained as he cleaned Itachi’s eye sockets. “I painted them myself. I took great pride in this pair; I’m glad you’ll finally let them be seen.”

“They are lovely,” Kakashi said. He took his own eye, cleaned it, and put it back in.

The ocularist gave instruction to care for the infection and Kakashi took the prostheses. Itachi’s eyes were covered with gauze for now. Itachi felt naked being outside without his glasses.

“Hungry?” Kakashi asked as he escorted Itachi to the Bentley.

“Not really. The antibiotics they injected me with are making me sick to my stomach.”

“I’ll get you home. You should eat.”

“Eat, puke, and sleep. Sounds good.”

Itachi let Kakashi help him into the car. Once the car started, he said, “It feels so weird to have nothing in there. Stay close for a while; this is reminding me of how it felt right after they took my eyes. Feels too weird.”

Kakashi rubbed his hand. “I took a week off so I could stay with you. I thought you might be reminded of bad things. I’ll stay with you, except when I have to go to class. If I have to be away from you for more than an hour, Sasuke or your mother will be with you.”

“Thank you. Turn up the music. You don’t mind the wind, do you?”

“Not at all.”

“Open the windows and the moon roof. I want to feel the wind and the sun.”

Itachi sat back and let the afternoon sun beat on his face.
Itachi kept his promise: he ate some and then puked it up. Kakashi stood by and held his hair back for him then helped him to bed. Kakashi stayed by him all evening.

Mikoto brought Kakashi a tray for dinner.

“You didn’t have to do that,” Kakashi whispered and took the tray from her. She cleared Itachi’s desk for him to sit it down.

“How is he?”

“He hasn’t woken up once. I have plenty to read, so I don’t mind. I catch myself staring sometimes. His system should adapt by tomorrow. It was a heavy dose of antibiotics.”

Itachi was on his stomach, curled around a bunched up blanket. Mikoto leaned over him and rubbed his back and brushed a lock of hair from his face.

“Thank you for looking after him. And for noticing the infection. He never lets any of us look.”

“He may be more self-conscious now. Even I don’t like people to see my false eye.”

“I wish he didn’t care.”

“Then again, you don’t want him to lose his pride.”

“True enough. Get some sleep tonight. Call Sasuke or me if you want to step out for a while.”

“Thank you. Goodnight. Thank you for the meal.”

“Thank you.” She kissed his forehead and left.

Kakashi carefully joined him in bed later that evening and Itachi slept through the night.

Fugaku remained home the next day, concerned for his son since visits to the doctors before had triggered some anxiety and depression. Itachi seemed well, but he was quieter than usual. But that could be because he was afraid of puking if he opened his mouth. Fugaku decided to show Kakashi around the house; his first tour of the large mansion. It also got Itachi out of his room.

Itachi kept on Kakashi’s arm as they walked from room to room. Itachi believed his father was showing Kakashi prospective rooms in the mansion, hoping Kakashi would move in soon. Itachi was sure the reason Kakashi wasn’t moving in immediately was because it was just too soon since they met. Everything was rushed and Kakashi wanted a little more time. Itachi was more than happy to give him that time because he felt things were moving fast as well. Sasuke was spinning at the speed of his own wedding and he didn’t like the idea of his blind older brother getting so deep into a relationship fast. His parents seemed desperate to get them safely in permanent relationships.

Among the things Fugaku showed Kakashi was an old katana in a black and white sheath with the family crest on it which was also the logo of their company, Sharingan, on the hilt or tsuba. Along
with it were a wakizashi, a tanto, and several other weapons: kunai, shuriken, and shuko.

“The Uchiha were samurai,” Fugaku said. “During the Warring States period, we were feared warriors. Mikoto’s family were shinobi and served the Tokugawa for generations. We have a long warrior history, peasant and noble.”

“Wow. That’s quite the family history. Intimidating.”

“Your name, Hatake, it’s a shinobi name.”

“Could be. My great-great-great-grandfather was Japanese.”

“I like you, but the fact you’re a warrior, I think that’s why I accepted you so quickly. That and accepting Itachi’s blindness.”

“Well, I knew that pretty much right off the bat, so I have no excuse for balking it.”

“You didn’t know just what you were getting into. I’m glad you’ve stayed.”

“Itachi’s worth it.”

They were sort of talking as if Itachi wasn’t there, but he didn’t mind. He just hugged Kakashi’s arm. The medication made him a little dizzy. He’d mostly adapted to the normal dizziness of being blind, having no visual reference for balance, but the drugs in his system made him feel like he was on a boat and blindfolded.

“I’m going to puke,” Itachi suddenly said.

Kakashi rushed him to a bathroom and held his hair back as Itachi vomited. He rubbed Itachi’s back soothingly.

“The antibiotics?” Fugaku asked from the doorway.

“Yeah,” Itachi said. “My stomach is happiest empty.”

“It’ll pass,” Kakashi said. “At least you don’t have to worry about gaining weight right now.”

Itachi huffed, amused. Then he hurled again. Kakashi continued to hold his hair back while Itachi cupped water from the sink to wash the remnants from his mouth and lips.

“If you’re so dizzy and nauseous, maybe you shouldn’t be up walking,” Fugaku suggested.

“I’m sick of lying down too. Sitting is the same. Probably wouldn’t be so bad if I could see.”

Kakashi could see how pained Fugaku was. “I hate to say it, but it’s about time for your next dose,” Kakashi said.

Itachi groaned.

“I’ll go get it.” Kakashi guided Itachi to Fugaku and left them alone.

Both were startled to be suddenly left alone together. Fugaku had taken hold of Itachi’s arm
instinctively when Kakashi left Itachi in front of him.

Itachi swayed and Fugaku pulled him closer to keep him from falling over or getting sick again. Itachi leaned into him against his chest and Fugaku hugged him.

“I really am so sorry, Itachi,” Fugaku whispered. “It’s all my fault.”

“No, it’s not. You couldn’t have known and I know it was the Feds who fucked up. They really didn’t want to release me anyway. I really don’t know if they would have if they had gotten the ransom. I never blamed you, chichi.”

“I do love you, Itachi. And Sasuke. I regret not showing it more.”

“We’ve always known.”

“But you have doubted it.”

“Once or twice. I love you, chichi.”

“That bastard boyfriend of yours did this on purpose.”

“Quite probably,” Itachi said.

“Once you recover enough to keep a meal down, we’ll all have to have dinner together with the Hyuuga.”

“Yeah. In-laws. I like them. Neji needs to get laid though. Ease off my brother.”

“Honestly, Hiashi and Hizashi need to get laid too; their wives are rather frigid. Hiashi is far too stressed.”

“You’re one to talk; you’re one of the most stressed people on the planet.”

“True. I have a prettier wife though.”

“Chichi, I really don’t want to hear about that.”

Kakashi returned. “I was wrong, you have another hour.”

“Good. My stomach’s finally settled a bit.”

“Can you eat then?”

“Mention it again and I’ll puke on you.”
The next night, Itachi joined them all for dinner. Kakashi helped Itachi clean his glass eyes and put them in before dinner. He decided not to wear his glasses. His mother was so glad he’d relaxed enough to leave his glasses that she came over and kissed his forehead. She gave Kakashi’s forehead a kiss too since it was his influence that led to it.

Fugaku also seemed more at ease after his short conversation with his son. Mikoto was brighter because of it, even dour little Sasuke wasn’t glaring at Kakashi.

But Fugaku knew how to annoy his youngest son.

“I have scheduled a dinner at the Hyuuga’s so they can meet Kakashi before the wedding.”

Sasuke groaned.

“And so your enemies gather,” Fugaku intoned.

“Chichi,” Sasuke whined.

“I expect you’ll be well enough in a week, Itachi.”

“I think so. I’m not nauseous anymore.”

“I’ll be nauseous that night,” Sasuke mumbled.

“Why are you so nervous about it?” Kakashi asked. “Don’t like your in-laws?”

“I’m afraid you and Neji will get along.”

“He’s intimidated by the Hyuuga,” Itachi said. “They’re just as wealthy, but they’re far more formal and stiff. When father asked if they might want to live on the Hyuuga estate, I was shocked I didn’t hear Sasuke tremble.”

“Aniki,” Sasuke whined.

“Hiashi is also partially to blame for Hinata’s lack of self-confidence,” Fugaku explained. “He thought he was pushing her to excel, but he pushed too hard and she was incapable of measuring up to the high standards Hiashi put before her and it destroyed her confidence and self-worth. Sasuke resents him for it. I’m guilty of using a similar technique. Though neither of you suffered the same
way, I think it did more harm than good. Nevertheless, I am proud of both you. Both of you could relax a bit more before you get ulcers like your father.”

“I’m unlikely to encounter that much sustained stress,” Itachi said lightly. “Sasuke, on the other hand, is closer to the grave than you.”

“And whose fault is tha—” Sasuke was horrified he said that. “I mean, I . . . It’s not your fault, I just can’t help worrying over you. You’re my older brother and I will always worry about you.”

Luckily, Itachi didn’t take Sasuke words as an accusation. He’d calmed from the belief that he was a burden. Speaking, even ever so briefly, with his father had been a breath of fresh air for both men. Sasuke was the one who still hadn’t reconciled his feelings of guilt. Kakashi didn’t wonder at what Sasuke felt guilty about since such feelings were often vague and weren’t always logical.

“It’s okay, Sasuke,” Itachi assured him. “Consider it revenge for all you put me through when you were a hormonal teenager. If I had grey hairs six months ago, they were all your fault.”

“I think I have a special ulcer for that period of time,” Fugaku agreed.

“I wasn’t that bad,” Sasuke defended.

“Oh, yes you were,” Mikoto said. “Don’t think we didn’t know what you were ‘studying.’”

Sasuke blushed and turned his full attention to his food.

Kakashi smiled. He was amused at this pair of Lotharios who between them had probably bedded half the city. They were both good looking enough and certainly rich enough. He had to wonder what Fugaku was like when he was a teenager.

Itachi took after his father with the tear toughts in his cheeks. He had the same shade of black hair and the shape of his eyes were narrower than Mikoto and Sasuke’s. Itachi’s face was shaped more like his mother’s. Fugaku was stolid and grim mouthed while Itachi was softer though all the males in the family were outwardly emotionless. Mikoto was certainly a beautiful woman was probably downright gorgeous before she bore two boys and Kakashi wondered how they got together. Despite her being much more attractive than her husband, it was clear she adored him. And as stern and imposing as Fugaku tried to appear, he was smitten and whipped by his smaller wife.

It was a reason he felt comfortable in this household. His former boyfriend’s family were very warm and affectionate and literally welcomed with open arms, but he wasn’t raised in that kind of environment; they took him out of his comfort zone. The Uchiha were more reserved, but just as loving of each other. Kakashi felt more comfortable with these people than with the Uminos. He even had a soft spot for the pain in the ass baby brother. He was at home here. Once his lease was up in September and then this would be his home.

Sasuke had turned his scowling on Kakashi as he mused. The man was too happy for his mood. He already felt watched. The Hyuuga were known for having eyes in the backs of their heads. He couldn’t touch Hinata’s hand without Neji’s stare to stop him. And here was his own precious brother—right in front of their parents—sitting next to the man who was fucking his brains out. At least Itachi had the good grace to blush once in a while. He resented Kakashi because he was as free to touch his fiancée.
Fugaku drove them to the Hyuuga home. Mikoto sat in the front laughing about the situation in the backseat. Sasuke, Itachi, and Kakashi, all her sons, biological and otherwise, were stuffed back there with Itachi in the middle. Sasuke was pouting like a child while Kakashi was enjoying being forced into close proximity to Itachi. Itachi looked a little uncomfortable. He wore his glasses believing his eyes were too unsightly to reveal during a meal with anyone but his close family.

The Hyuuga lived in a newer home, but felt much more Asian than the English inspired house the Uchiha owned. It felt brighter, but the Uchiha home felt warmer even from the outside.

They parked right in front of the porch of the circular driveway. Sasuke and Kakashi got out and Sasuke held out a hand for his brother to take to help him out, but Itachi turned toward Kakashi, not seeing his brother’s hand and had Kakashi help him out. Kakashi was careful not to look triumphant at the irritated young man who was already on edge. Kakashi escorted Itachi behind his parents. Itachi had his identification cane to find the steps up to the door.

Neji opened the door and greeted his guests. He escorted his future in-laws into the drawing room where introductions were made, purely for Kakashi’s benefit since the two families knew each other well.

Every single Hyuuga had long dark brown hair, even the two patriarchs, Hiashi and Hizashi, and Hizashi’s son Neji. Hinata was a lovely young woman with enormous breasts; her sister, Hanabi wasn’t so well endowed, but she had more of an innate fire to her that made Kakashi like her better right off the bat. Hiashi’s wife was Hitomi and Hizashi’s wife was Hikaru. [AN: wives names not cannon, I just made them up]

All the couples sat together. Neji sat between Hanabi and Kakashi; Sasuke sat between Itachi and Hinata. The three adult couples faced them. It worried Sasuke how well Kakashi and Neji seemed to get on.

When the first course was served by the household staff, every Hyuuga hesitated and stared at Itachi, wondering how he was going to function. Kakashi and Sasuke were watching him for another reason, waiting to help. Fugaku and Mikoto also watched him, hoping he wouldn’t have any trouble.

Itachi displayed his innate grace in the way he slowly and gently reached out his hand to find his fork and then used the fork to find the bowl and the salad inside. Thus, Itachi demonstrated to the entire table that he could eat on his own. Conversation could start now.

“Fugaku’s told us you were in the military,” Hiashi said to Kakashi.

“Green Berets. Lost my eye in Afghanistan. The scars are from a roadside bomb; lost my eye in a knife fight with an Afghani soldier we were training when he and his buddies turned on us.” Being in-laws, he decided not to hide his scars. The Uchiha never made him uncomfortable with them, probably because Itachi’s injuries were much worse, and that made him more comfortable in general about them.

“I can imagine it’s been difficult adjusting to a normal life after so much excitement.”

“Not really. There’s a saying that being a soldier is long stretches of boredom punctuated with moments of sheer terror. I trained as my unit’s mechanic, so when I came back, I got a job as a mechanic. Living off that while the military pays my college bills.”
“What’s your goal?”

“Become a professor of English literature. I’ve always been a bit of a bookworm, but I also always wanted to be a Green Beret. I achieved one goal, now I’ll pursue the other passion.”

Hiashi nodded approvingly, as if he were vetting the man about to marry his daughter. Kakashi was getting the feeling that he and Hinata would both be moving in by year’s end, so maybe Hiashi was vetting a man who would be living under the same roof as his daughter.

The patriarchs talked business, the matriarchs talked about the wedding, the Hyuuga daughters joining in on that at times, Hinata and Sasuke talked lowly to each other, and Kakashi, Itachi, and Neji found things to chat about.

“Where will the honeymoon be?” Hikaru asked the table in general.

“It’s a summer wedding so almost anywhere will be lovely,” Mikoto said.

“I would suggest Japan, but it’d be even lovelier in April when the cherry trees are in bloom,” Fugaku said.

“Beaches are a little trite,” Hitomi said.

“Cruises to Alaska are very popular in the summer,” Hizashi added.

“I’m afraid I can only suggest where to avoid,” Kakashi said.

“If I’m going, I hate sand,” Itachi said.

“Even at a resort?” Hanabi asked. “Maybe one of those less than natural resorts in the Caribbean.”


“Paris is as bad as a beach,” Hitomi said.

“Prague is beautiful!” Hanabi said.

“Theater is better in London,” Itachi said.

“Who said you were coming?” Sasuke finally got a word in.

“You leaving me at home? Thank god. Kakashi and I can have more fun with you gone.”

“You’re coming.”

Both Itachi and Kakashi bit their lips from saying something they shouldn’t in this company.

“I’ve always wanted to go to Ireland or Scotland,” Hinata said. “All that green and history.”

Well that decided it.

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The night was a success and even Sasuke didn’t look like a condemned man by the end. He was still a man off balance and felt like he had no control over his own life; his wedding was already planned before he proposed, he worked for his father, his career path decided, and even his honeymoon was planned in front of him rather than with him.

And there was a man stealing his crippled older brother from him.

Fugaku drove them all back to the mansion. Sasuke stared out the window. He finally sat back in the seat. Itachi was leaning away from him into Kakashi’s shoulder.

Itachi turned his head, but couldn’t see him. He pulled away from Kakashi and pressed his back into the seat, mimicking his brother. He sought out his brother’s hand.

Itachi had a preternatural sense when it came to his brother, but Sasuke hadn’t noticed how strange it was until he knew Itachi wasn’t just picking up on visual clues. Itachi lowered his lips to Sasuke’s ear and whispered, “I know.”

Of course, Itachi knew how he felt; Itachi was in his shoes six months ago, his career planned out and little control over his life—he had even less now. Maybe that was one of the reasons Itachi slept around. It was certainly a factor in his own behavior in his teens.

Sasuke squeezed his hand and leaned his head against his brother’s. He accepted it. He should be relieved: there was nothing to plan, nothing to worry about. And his brother was well cared for. What did he really want anyway? Nothing, but his brother close and Hinata as his wife. He was content. He nudged his brother’s shoulder to send him back to his boyfriend.

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Kakashi went up with Itachi to spend the night. They hadn’t had sex for over a week, waiting for Itachi to feel better and for his system to be free of the powerful antibiotics. Itachi’s skin had smelled like medicine and Kakashi wondered if it was wise for them to have sex with such powerful meds in his blood.

Now that medicinal smell was gone and Itachi hadn’t thrown up in the last week, Kakashi was more than ready to ravish his little raven as soon as he closed the bedroom door. He pulled Itachi into a kiss.

Itachi slid his hands under Kakashi’s shirt, up his sides. Kakashi broke the kiss to strip Itachi’s shirt. He kissed down Itachi’s throat and down his chest and stomach. On his knees, he opened Itachi’s pants and pulled them down. He kissed the bulge in Itachi’s boxers before pulling them down as well.

He kissed the tip of his lover’s growing erection and used the tip of his tongue to tease his slit, teasing out a drop of precum. His tongue explored his head and ran his rough tongue down the frenulum causing Itachi to shudder. He shut his lips and forced the head of Itachi’s cock into his mouth through his tight lips. Itachi groaned and lifted a hand to Kakashi’s hair. Kakashi pulled back so his lips caught on the ridge of his cock. Kakashi repeated that several times, mimicking the feeling of shallowly fucking someone. He started to swirl his tongue around the head every time the whole head was in his mouth.

Kakashi moved back to moisten his lips and then moved further down Itachi’s now completely
hard shaft. Itachi mindlessly played with his hair and moaned softly. He couldn’t help rocking forward, but he tried to keep it shallow. Kakashi didn’t seem to mind.

Kakashi took Itachi as deep as he could, the head of his cock pressing against the back of his throat, threatening to make him gag, but Kakashi adjusted and Itachi’s cock slipped into his throat, his lips tight around the base of his cock. His hands migrated to Itachi’s firm ass and gripped it to keep them both immobile. Having gotten his throat used to Itachi’s length, he moved back and forth, fucking his throat on his cock. It was an oddly satisfying sensation, having something press against the back of his throat.

Itachi started to fist Kakashi’s hair. He was struggling not to cum so soon, but Kakashi was sucking him so expertly.

After a while, Kakashi pulled away to lap at Itachi’s balls. Itachi folded a leg up to put a knee just behind him on the bed, giving Kakashi more room. Kakashi wondered just how flexible Itachi was. Kakashi hummed, which vibrated inside Itachi’s body.

“Lay down,” Kakashi nearly growled.

Once Itachi was down, Kakashi climbed over him and attacked his nipple. Itachi gasped. Supporting himself on his left elbow, Kakashi moved his hand up and down Itachi’s thin side, feeling ribs and smooth skin. Those terrorists left one part of him completely unmarred.

Only now did Kakashi start stripping.

Kakashi grabbed the lube he kept on the bookshelf where it might not be noticed by anyone else. He leaned back in to lick at Itachi’s hipbone and pushed his other thigh further out of the way to make little wet circles around his entrance with his fingers.

Itachi growled, impatient. It took everything in the world to keep Kakashi from saying something he probably shouldn’t. He wanted to verbally tease him. Not yet. A year hadn’t even passed since Itachi was raped. Another year or two and maybe he could stop censoring himself.

He added a little lube to his cock and pushed back Itachi’s right leg and pressed into him. Itachi groaned with pleasure. He was extra tight from so long since the last time they had sex. Itachi pressed his leg against Kakashi’s side as Kakashi started to move within him.

Kakashi crawled over him and thrust harder into him.

This was the first time they had sex with Itachi’s eyes open. It was eerie, but not a turn off. His eyes stared blankly up toward him; unfocused and empty. It was like a parody of what Itachi used to look like. It made Itachi prettier though.

“God, you’re gorgeous,” Kakashi whispered.

His eyes moved like he was trying to see Kakashi. That was a little off-putting, so he shut his own eyes as he sped up.

Kakashi couldn’t hold back his orgasm any longer. He hadn’t cum in a week and Itachi was just so tight and hot.

Kakashi reached for Itachi’s cock and was pleased to find it still hard and wet with his own
precum. He growled and sank his lips in Itachi’s ear to whisper, “I’m so close. Cum with me, Itachi.”

Itachi moaned the sexist sound Kakashi had ever heard and he felt Itachi’s body tighten as he came, drawing out his semen. They both sank into the bed once their orgasms passed.

“I think I cummed a liter inside you,” Kakashi breathed. He moved his body a bit and Itachi’s cum eased the way. “Seems like you shot the same.”

Itachi groaned. “Hard to jack off when you’re afraid of puking.”

Kakashi moved to his side and stroked Itachi’s chest while they caught their breaths and their bodies recovered.

“Think you can go a second round?” Kakashi asked.

“I think so. In a minute.” He sighed and cracked his back. “The Hyuuga seem to like you.”

“I’m glad. Hinata seems like a nice girl.”

“She’s far less timid than she used to be. Why she thought that shy attitude would work with Naruto, I have no idea. He likes boldness. It really is sad; he and Sasuke were very close friends. I suspected Sasuke was gay for a while since he was so close to Naruto. Sasuke brought out the best in Hinata. Hinata stopped his womanizing. She calms him. I’m so very happy for both of them.”

“I am too. I do like the brat. He should be more relaxed after his wedding night.”

“I think so too. I know he feels like his life isn’t his own. I know the feeling all too well.”

Kakashi kissed his shoulder as he touched his body. “Do you want me again?” Kakashi asked.

“Mmmm, yes.”

Itachi felt for Kakashi’s hand and guided it down to his groin. Kakashi caressed his plump, soft balls with his fingertips. He then took the base of his limp cock between his finger and thumb and gave it several small strokes.

Kakashi turned more toward him and rubbed his cock against his hip and ran his hand up and down Itachi’s side. Smooth and soft. He loved Itachi so much. His hand moved to his nipple to tease it harder and make Itachi hornier.

Itachi spread his legs and whined.

“What do you want?” Kakashi asked playfully.

“Gods, I want your cock so bad.”

“You can have it as much as you want.”

Kakashi moved between Itachi’s legs and picked up both his legs and laid them over his shoulders. Itachi was already lubed and stretched, so he entered him easily. He thrust into him with long solid strokes.
Itachi grunted with every thrust. He wanted to push his hips up into Kakashi’s cock, but the way his legs were braced on Kakashi’s shoulders made that impossible.

Kakashi let Itachi’s legs down, pushing his limber legs down on Itachi’s side, pushing his knees into the bed. Itachi couldn’t quite put his knees behind his head, but he was very flexible. Kakashi lowered his body, wrapping his arms around Itachi’s thighs and his lips to Itachi’s collarbone. Itachi’s bent knees captured Kakashi’s arms between them and his thighs. Kakashi stopped while deep inside Itachi, their bodies tightly entangled.

Kakashi knew, even limber as he was, this was a stressful position for Itachi, so he pulled away, letting Itachi’s body unfold. Itachi immediately turned onto his knees and Kakashi didn’t hesitate to remount him. Kakashi wrapped an arm around Itachi’s chest and snapped his hips repeatedly into him; short, fast, deep thrusts.

Itachi moaned and sighed. Kakashi was hitting that spot perfectly. “Kakashi,” he whispered. “Fuck, just like that. I can’t last long.”

Kakashi growled a little and fought not to change a thing. Finally, Itachi let out a strangled cry and came. Kakashi leaned back and grabbed Itachi’s hips to thrust hard into him to bring him to the brink, cumming in him a second time.

They both laid down on their sides.

“I feel too fucking good to care about the cum on my skin,” Itachi muttered.

Kakashi hummed in agreement. He put his arm over him and pulled him in close. They fell asleep like that, not even bothering to pull the blanket over them.

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Something had been bothering Kakashi for a few days now. Something about Yahiko. There was something wrong. Finally, he got on his computer and searched for ‘Pain of Akatsuki killed.’ He got a number of hits about the raid, but none had photos of the dead man. Kakashi had seen quite a few photographs in that file and couldn’t remember someone who fit Itachi’s description of Yahiko. He really didn’t want to ask Sasuke if he could see that file again.

Kakashi needed to ask about Yahiko, but couldn’t think of how to broach the subject without sounding jealous or like he was digging for information for a purpose. Then, as he was studying Itachi’s profile, he noticed something between locks of his hair.

“Your ears are pierced, but you don’t wear any studs.”

“It’s hard to find something so small and they tend to roll around, so I don’t bother anymore.”

Itachi grew very quiet and his expression changed.

“Thinking about Yahiko?” Kakashi asked.

“How could you tell?”

“I can tell your mind’s far away and I assume the slightly pained look on your face is because of
him.”

“Yeah.”

“You did mention he had piercings.”

“Yeah, a lot. I counted them more than once because I had little else to do and I was around him most of the time. I also valued my remaining eye and used to stare at things a lot and count things just to use it.”

“I totally understand that.”

“I forgot about your eye. Out of sight out of mind I guess.”

“How many did he have?”

“Oddly enough, he had five studs in one ear, six in the other. He had three bars going completely through his nose, a bar in his tongue, and two studs below his lower lip so they almost looked like fangs hanging out. He had three in his left eyebrow, his nipples were pierced, and he had a Prince Albert.”

“Why so many?”

“He said he was addicted to them, though he regretted the nose bars.”

“I should think so.”

“I have to admit, the tongue bar and the Prince Albert did feel good.”

“I love you, but I’m not getting those for you.”

Itachi chuckled. “Please don’t. He told me when it was over that he was going to get me a few pricings too. I really didn’t want them.”

“Do wearing studs remind you of him or anything?”

“No, not really.”

“I’d like to see you wear them. I’ll help you with them.”

“Alright. I would wear them, but they just get away from me. I gave mine to my mother; she might still have them.”

“You said he had red hair, right?”

“Huh?” Itachi was confused for a moment by the sudden reversion back to Yahiko. “Yeah.”

“A dark red?”

“No, it was bright red, almost orangish. Why?”

“Just curious since you were painting such a vivid picture with all the piercings.”
“Don’t be jealous.”

“I’m not, just wondering about him.”

And wondering who it was the mercenaries killed with maroon colored hair and no facial piercings at all.
Happy birthday, Itachi!!!!

I wish I could have timed this better since Itachi’s birthday is coming up in the story, but here’s a chapter on his birthday, but it’s not a happy chapter.

beta: PhoenixInnocence

The semester ended. Kakashi came over with his bags packed the night before his trip. Ibiki would pick him up in the morning from the Uchiha estate so he could leave the Bentley in the Uchiha garage. After breakfast, Kakashi gathered his bags and met Ibiki outside the gates.

Itachi felt lonely within an hour of Kakashi’s departure. He would be gone for two weeks. Sasuke and Fugaku worked; Mikoto had flexible hours, but she was still the chairwoman of the Japanese Heritage Center and they were preparing a Noh exhibition for August. That depressed Itachi since he loved his heritage and enjoyed watching Noh Theater.

Itachi was home alone during the day with Inoichi and a few members of the household staff, but they all had jobs to do. He just laid about in his room all day until his family dragged him out for meals. He was alone.

So, even though Itachi resented him a bit at the moment, Itachi was glad when Inoichi told him Shisui was here to see him four days after Kakashi left.

Inoichi was hesitant to let the young man back into the house after Fugaku voiced concern about him, but he didn’t have orders to keep him away and Inoichi knew how close Itachi once was to him. Itachi was lonely and if Itachi wanted his company, Inoichi wouldn’t keep them apart. However, he never liked Fugaku’s nephew.

Itachi sat cross-legged on his bed when Shisui came in. He had his glasses on and dressed all in black. Shisui sat next to him and put his arm around his shoulders.

“How are you doing, itoko?”

Itachi smiled at the familiar, affectionate use of the word for ‘cousin’. “I’m fine. It’s a weekday, still no job?”

“You make it sound like I’m indigent. I’m looking for a job; looking into another government contract. You seem bored. Where’s your boyfriend?”

“I think he said he and his friends were going to Nevada or Utah or something. Bunch of soldiers drinking and target shooting in the desert. I did suggest he take you too. A moving target would be more challenging.”

Shisui sighed and took his arm from Itachi’s shoulders. “God, it’s been years. You still hold it against me? I did cheat on you, but it’s been so long. I haven’t had a serious relationship since you.”
Itachi scoffed. “Neither did I for years. Guess whose fault that was?”

“I loved you. It’s true what I said: there were things I wanted to do that I didn’t want to do to you, my precious little cousin.”

“Well, not a good excuse now since I think everything’s been done. Even some you never wanted to do.”

“Oh, like what?” Shisui asked, playfully seductive.

“Oh, you know, gang rape, skull fucking my eye socket, and that one liked to use his hands more than anything. Amazing how that made me feel dirty more than anything else.”

“Itachi, if I knew . . . I would have ran in there and murdered every one of them. I would have punished them. I would have saved you.”

“Shut it. I don’t doubt that you would have. This isn’t about Africa. You know how long it took me to try to have a real relationship? Naruto was the first I thought might become something permanent. Sasuke was infamous, but I was just as whorish as him. I just kept things quieter. If my own cousin who loved me could cheat on me, why should anyone else be truer? I never two timed anyone, but I didn’t let myself care about what others did. I wonder if you affected Sasuke too. Did my behavior rub off on him?”

“You are not to blame for Sasuke. That kid’s always had jealousy and superiority issues. His being messed up has nothing to do with you or I.”

“‘That kid’? That kid is my baby brother. That kid is still the most important person in the world to me.”

“I know, I know. He’s just always glared at me. You got your father’s glare too, but Sasuke . . . He’s going to set someone on fire one of these days.”

Itachi had to laugh at that. It was true; Sasuke had turned their father’s habit into an art form. Itachi didn’t glare nearly as much as his father and brother. What he wouldn’t give to see Sasuke’s death glare again. Especially when he glared at Itachi and he pouted at the same time. Itachi would never have annoyed him as much as he had during their lives together if Sasuke wasn’t so damn cute when he did that. Poking him in the forehead was always a good way to cause that glaring pout.

“Yeah, he was jealous of the time I spent with you. He tried to be better than me at everything to get attention from father. I think he wanted to be better than me to teach me a lesson.”

“Yeah, he’s the last person I’d want to really piss off; he has a vengeful side. I heard about what he did to Naruto for dumping you.”

“I can’t entirely blame Naruto; he didn’t sign up for a blind boyfriend. But he should have stayed just a little bit longer. I just needed him to stay by my side a little longer. Luckily, Sasuke wouldn’t leave my room. He was my support, my anchor. He slept in my hospital bed most nights. He was like a puppy curled up on my side. They finally moved me to a bigger room with a second bed just so Sasuke didn’t crowd me.”

“You enjoyed it.”

“Of course I did. I still called him over to join me in my bed.”

“I wondered about the two of you.”
“What do you mean?”

“Well, you two were constantly sleeping in the same bed. I’d sneak into your room and either he’d be there with you or you’d be in his bed. Annoying when I was trying to get some time with you.”

“You thought Sasuke and I were . . . having sex?”

“Yeah. That’s when I got jealous. I thought I might be losing you to that kid brother of yours.”

Itachi scoffed. “That’s disgusting.”

“More so than you and I?”

“He’s my baby brother. I couldn’t think of him like that and he’s straight. I worried that Sasuke and my parents would treat me different when they found out I was gay, that they would worry about me being around Sasuke and being close to him like that. But they didn’t. They were fine with it.”

“I’m glad. I’d feel guilty if they disowned you or anything. But I’d always have a place for you.”

“I’m never getting back together with you. Even if Kakashi were to leave, I wouldn’t go back to you.” Actually, he’d probably hit up Masahiko.

“Itachi,” Shisui cooed and caressed his arm.

Itachi shook him off and stood. “I’m hungry,” he said in excuse. He went out the door and to the stairs.

“What are you doing?! You can’t go down the stairs!”

“I’ve been doing it for months, jackass.” Itachi started going down as always.

Shisui ran down and grabbed Itachi’s arm to stop him. “You shouldn’t do stuff like that.”

“Get off.” Itachi shook off his hand and continued down. He thought he was all the way down and stepped out on the last step and fell.

“See? I told you,” Shisui said and came down to help him up.

Itachi shook him off again. “You distracted me. I lost count.”

“Itachi, you really need help; you’re going to hurt yourself.”

Itachi had turned to throw him off. He was sure of his direction. He meant to storm off toward the living room and the dining room beyond, but he hit the front door.

Shisui wrapped his arms around him and held him close. “You need help; you can’t do things by yourself anymore. Let me help you.”

Itachi was angry and frustrated. He didn’t like being restrained at the moment, but he also really liked being hugged. He let him hold him for half a minute, but then struggled away.

“Please, leave me alone,” Itachi said in a calm voice.

Having the front door as a touchstone, Itachi walked into the living room and sat on the sofa. Shisui sat next to him. Very close next to him. Itachi leaned away, but Shisui leaned in and pulled him close. He pulled Itachi’s hair from his shoulders and smoothed it down his back. He pulled
Itachi’s mouth to his and kissed and licked at his sealed lips.

He stopped trying to kiss him to pull his glasses off and saw his scarred eyes for the first time. He hesitated. It was hideous; white and red lines crisscrossing his once flawless eyelids at different angles and jagged cuts where Itachi struggled the most. The cuts had not been carefully made and had been infected causing them to be thick and still discolored even now that they had healed. It wasn’t just the lids, but the skin around his eyes were cut too. They marred the beautiful face of his cousin. He was horrified.

Itachi’s first rape had been just Yahiko convincing him he had no choice; his rape by most of the others had been far more violent. Rather than reminding Itachi of his previous rapes, Shisui forcing himself on him just made Itachi uncomfortable and angry. He couldn’t see, but he wasn’t going to lay down for Shisui. He didn’t fear Shisui; he may be more skittish now, fully aware of how vulnerable he was, but he knew Shisui and he was at home with Inoichi and others within call. He also faced worse men, worse rapists, than Shisui. He put his left hand gently on Shisui’s face and pulled back to punch him with his right hand.

“Stay away from me,” Itachi growled. His eyes opened on their own as if he could see and the sight of unfocused, empty doll eyes under those scarred eyelids disturbed Shisui. Any boner he had, shriveled up.

“Fine, I’ll leave you alone.” He did as he said and stood. Itachi could hear him grab his jacket and open and shut the door.

Something in Shisui’s voice told Itachi that it wasn’t the punch that drove him off; he had hesitated before that, giving Itachi the opening to punch him. Itachi was fully aware of his glasses being gone and connected the two. Shisui was disgusted by the scars.

Fuck, he missed Kakashi. Kakashi fucked him in the light with his glasses off. Kakashi didn’t care about the scars. Kakashi didn’t treat him like a fragile piece of glass or someone who couldn’t help himself. He loved Kakashi so much right now; Kakashi really loved him. It wasn’t his looks so much, but he loved him, unlike Shisui who was obviously put off by his looks now. It was why he hid them. That and he didn’t think his family wanted to see evidence of what happened to him. He didn’t want anyone to be reminded of what happened to him. It was still humiliating to think that people thought about it; imagined what he went through. He wished no one knew at all. No one could know what he really went through, though he shared more with Kakashi than he had anyone else. But Kakashi wasn’t even here.

He felt so lonely. He was cut off. He couldn’t see anyone else and that made him feel lonely. He was in a different world now than everyone else. A world of never ending darkness. He wanted to shrink back into a shell and just be alone.

The attempted rape didn’t bother him—nothing Shisui could do to him could approach what he’d already experienced. But Shisui’s disgust . . .

Itachi felt for his glasses on the sofa and then he got on the floor and felt for them. He couldn’t find them.

He sat on the sofa again and folded his legs against his chest and hugged his knees. Now he could feel the bruises on his hands, arms, and knees from where he fell. He fell. It was the first time in months that he’d fallen. He touched his face and it hurt.

Itachi curled up tighter and cried into his knees.
Itachi fell asleep on the sofa, so Inoichi didn’t notice anything wrong when he spotted him there. He let him lie rather than wake him for lunch.

Mikoto looked for him when she came home. She knelt to check on him and saw the bruises on his face and his glasses missing.

“Itachi,” she shook his shoulder gently. “Itachi, baby, what’s wrong?”

Itachi moaned. “Haha?”

“Your face is bruised, what happened?”

Itachi recoiled, pressing himself back into the sofa. “I fell.”


“I miscounted the steps.”

Mikoto was suspicious; Itachi had never had trouble with stairs; he always held the railing and knew when he reached the ground by the carving at the end of the banister. He’d been going up and down those same stairs for two decades before he was blinded.

“Why were you rushing?”

“What do you mean?”

“Shisui kept smothering me and telling me I couldn’t do things and he tried to stop me on the stairs and it distracted me.”

“I know Sasuke always disliked him and even you don’t want him around anymore. I’m banning him from this house. His concern is not good for you.”

“I don’t think he’ll come back. I think he was disgusted when he saw my eyes. Kakashi wasn’t disgusted.”

“Of course he wasn’t. Those of us who love you aren’t disgusted.”

“I don’t want father or Sasuke to see the bruises.”

“I don’t want you closing yourself up.”

“Father already thinks I’m fragile and Sasuke will smother me.”

Mikoto stroked his hair. “They’ll know something is wrong. Come on upstairs and I’ll cover them up with makeup.”

The fact Itachi was extra careful as they went up the stairs angered Mikoto. Shisui would never be welcome in this house again.

Sasuke ran up the stairs when he got home; he had to change. He half took over Itachi’s job and
kept his own department. Itachi’s department was slowly going to shit. Itachi had been excellent at his job, the real spirit of R&D; so many of their innovative products were Itachi’s idea or he at least made them work. Itachi should have earned an engineering degree, but he was more of a conceptual mind than an engineering mind.

He changed out of his suit and ran down the stairs and straight to the lounge to pour himself a whiskey. Fuck, he just wanted to get drunk. The fact he was working closely with people Itachi had worked with just as closely and were almost friends with him was stressful. He was aware how much he could look like his brother and he could feel the questions in their eyes when they looked at him. They all wanted to know how his brother was, but were afraid to ask.

He took another mouthful of whiskey and refilled his glass. He threw that back and gripped the side table. He was stressed out and still constantly surrounded by thoughts of what happened to his brother, even at work. His brother was raped! It infuriated him, grieved him, left him feeling useless and impotent. He loved his brother so much and there was nothing he could do then and little he could do now. His brother was a shadow of his former self and at times it felt as if his dear brother had died. He wasn’t allowed to forget. Why his brother? He’d rather be the blinded one. He was sure he could cope better being the victim than having to watch his brother be a victim.

Sasuke downed another glass, set the empty crystal on the side board and used both hands to grip it hard, enough that his upper back muscles hurt.

“Sasuke.”

Sasuke bolted upright and turned to face his father, still dressed in his suit. They didn’t usually keep the same hours and never commuted together.

“You look stressed.”

Sasuke laughed feebly. “Yeah, you could say that. I really need someone else to take over R&D. It’s not my forte and they aren’t able to do anything worthwhile with me in charge.”

“I still haven’t found a candidate. Just hold the department together a little longer.”

Sasuke nodded. “Just don’t expect great things from them in the meantime. I think paid leave for the entire department is in order.”

Fugaku didn’t take that seriously. “Don’t stress out too much, Sasuke. You have a long vacation coming up, but I don’t want you to burn out before then.”

“Hai.”

“Kakashi told us how you were when you and he went drinking, so no more tonight.”

Sasuke scowled. “Bastard.”

“You should keep your brother company since his boyfriend isn’t around.”

“Hai.”

“Is something else troubling you, Sasuke?”

“No, just stressed out.”

“Relax. If you need a day off, let me know.”
“No, I’ve got a month off coming up so I don’t want to take any more time.”

Fugaku let him go, but he didn’t believe his son.

Sasuke checked the living room first, then headed up to Itachi’s room. He knocked before peeking in. Itachi had his music on and was running his fingers over a Braille practice sheet. Sasuke knew he had to be so bored and he knew how much Itachi hated trying to learn Braille.

“Hey, Itachi, getting any better at that?”

“Sort of. I can’t imagine reading a whole book like this. I could get used to a keyboard though. I’m used to the layout of the keys so as long as I can check that my fingers are on the right keys once in a while, I should be able to type.”

“Well, that’s something.” He sat down next to his brother and leaned his shoulder into Itachi’s.

“I’m bored too. Want to do something?”

“Not really.”

“You’re not trying to become a hermit again. I may not approve of anyone touching you, but I’ll tie Kakashi to you if it means you’ll not try to shut yourself up again.”

“Hai.”

The lack of a comeback or even any humor made Sasuke look at him closely. “You depressed?”

“Yeah.”

“So am I. I should just quit. We’re all rich enough; I could retire. But then I’d be bored all the time, but the stress is killing me.”

“I thought you liked your job.”

“It’s getting more stressful.” He would never tell Itachi it was because he had to cover for him and deal with his former subordinates.

“You’re getting a month off for the wedding and honeymoon, right?”

“Yeah. I’ll stick it out until then.”

“I know we were talking like we’d go with you on your honeymoon, but I don’t really want to. It should be time alone with Hinata. I thought maybe Kakashi and I could follow you part way and go to London for a few days.”

“Okay. As long as you feel safe enough. I know Kakashi’s a badass and all, but you will take some security with you.”

“Hai. I would feel safer. After what happened . . . they weren’t enough.”

“It won’t happen again. Kakashi will protect you and our people will be more alert this time.”

Itachi slouched and Sasuke examined his brother’s face. That’s when he noticed something was wrong with his skin. They had been close all their lives and especially since he came home blind. He could tell the texture of Itachi’s face was off. He touched his brother’s nose, startling Itachi. Sasuke looked at his finger. Makeup.
“Itachi, why are you wearing makeup?”

“I told mom it wouldn’t work. Shisui was here and he pissed me off, I stormed off, but while I was on the stairs, he distracted me and I lost count of the steps. I fell off the last step. And then I ran into the door. Mom said I had bruises. I just wanted to stay in my room and avoid you and father, but she said that would just make you suspicious so she put makeup over the bruises.”

“I’m killing Shisui.”

“Shisui won’t be coming back.”

“Why not? Mom lay into him?”

“He saw my eyes.”

“And?”

“What do you mean ‘and’? He was disgusted and left.”

“Asshole.”

“Yeah. He tried to get me to forgive him then tried to have sex with me, but he took my glasses off and he relented, said he’d leave. And he did.”

Itachi could feel Sasuke fuming so close next to him.

“Honestly, I want to lock you away too. Make sure you’re safe and no one, not even Kakashi could touch you.” He put his arm around him. “I love you more than anything, but I know it’s not good for you to stay in this room all the time. Ever since I heard you were kidnapped, all I wanted is for you to be safe and to be the one who kept you safe. But Kakashi can do that better than I can. I may know martial arts, but he can shoot people, and will, to save you. Forget Shisui.”

“Yeah.”

“We’ll keep all that secret from father.”

“Yeah. He already thinks I’m delicate.”

“You’re just so pretty, you look delicate.”

“I am not pretty. You are.”

“Hey, we look alike. I remember when Naruto first met you; the idiot thought you were me for a moment.”

“He called me ‘Sasuke’,” Itachi agreed.

“He thought someone put a spell on me to make me taller or something. You freaked him out.”

“He was only eight.”

“You played along and acted like you really were me.”

“He only caught on because I called him by his name instead of ‘dobe’.”

“It took him another year to learn that I was calling him an idiot.”
“You ever going to forgive him?”

“Are you?” Sasuke asked incredulously.

“I understand why he left, but I just wish he could have waited until I was better. I’ll forgive him one day.”

“I have more reason to hate him. It’ll take me longer.”

“He talked to Kakashi again. Naruto wants to meet with me and apologize. I don’t want to yet.”

“When Hinata and I first started dating, I thought about us getting married and how Naruto would be my best man. I guess it was kind of childish to believe your childhood friends would always be your friends.”

“It’s not childish. He’s not really to blame. He was just confused. Confused by his feelings for me and Hinata. I don’t think he really knows what he wants. He just isn’t maturing as fast as the rest of us. Once he figures out who he is, we can forgive him.”

“Right. Let me smooth your makeup so father doesn’t notice.” Sasuke carefully smoothed the smear on Itachi’s nose. “Father never gets really close to us anyway.”

“Only you get in my face.”

“Yep!”

Itachi hugged him close. “I’ve always loved you most of all too, otouto. I bet you’re glad I can’t poke you in the forehead anymore.”

“It was playful.”

“It was affectionate. My dear baby brother.”

“Nii-san,” Sasuke whined.

Itachi could tell where Sasuke’s forehead was with them so close and he slowly moved to kiss Sasuke’s forehead where he used to poke him. Sasuke helped, making sure Itachi hit the mark.

“Even when you’re married with thirty kids, you’ll still be my baby brother.”

“Hai. But I was thinking only like three.”

“Let me sleep in your room tonight. I’m feeling lonely with Kakashi gone and Shisui gone for good.”

“Of course. With our significant others not around, we don’t have to worry about making anyone jealous.”

That reminded Itachi of what Shisui said about thinking he and Sasuke were lovers. “I never made you uncomfortable, did I? You know, being around you and sleeping in the same bed as you? You know, with me being gay and all?”

“No. You’re my brother, gay or not.”

“Good. I didn’t think about it until recently.”
“It creeps me out to think you’re someone’s lover. Or that you ever were. It’s one reason I hated Shisui. He was stealing you and time we could have hung out together, but also I didn’t like thinking of you like that. With Kakashi, I don’t like being reminded that you’re an adult who has sex.”

“I wish I could say the same. You were always surrounded by girls so the idea of you bedding every girl in the city didn’t weird me out; I saw that coming. But, if it were guys getting near my precious baby brother, there would be quite few mass graves on the estate.”

“Nii-san,” Sasuke whined again. “At least you do know how I feel.”

“I always knew that was your problem.”

“Hey, let’s go down stairs and have a drink together. We rarely drink together. Let’s get shitfaced and relax.”

“Sure. Father will be annoyed, but mom will take care of us.”

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Fugaku thought he should be pissed that Sasuke ignored him and went ahead and got drunk, but he was drinking with his brother and they were laughing. As long as they were happy. Their giggles during dinner were very nearly infectious. Fugaku had absolutely no idea what was so funny, but he knew there were private jokes that could only exist between brothers.

Shisui’s father was Fugaku’s younger brother, Kagami. His sister-in-law died of pneumonia when Shisui was four and Kagami died in a car accident three years later. That’s when he took Shisui in. Though Kagami was his brother and only a year younger than him, Fugaku was never close with him and only took in his son because they were blood relatives. He was relieved that his own sons were close, the opposite of his own relationship with his brother.

He went to his home office for a while before he went to the bedroom. Mikoto was reading in bed.

“So, why were you in a mood earlier?” he asked as he removed his shirt.

“Huh?”

“You’re an open book to me, Mikoto. You were upset. It had to do with Itachi. You were very relieved to see how happy Itachi was with Sasuke. You weren’t upset after that.”

“I really am an open book to you.”

Fugaku started unfastening his pants. “It’s about that bruise on Itachi’s arm?”

Mikoto sighed. “You are incredible. I’ve banned Shisui from the house. He distracted Itachi while was on the stairs. He missed the last step. That’s it. He fell and got bruised up. It upset me. Shisui is not helping and just causing problems and Sasuke hates him.”

“I agree; he’s not good for Itachi. He wants to coddle him.”

“We all want to coddle him; even you.”

“But we know how to stop ourselves. Have you talked to Sasuke? I caught him drinking as soon as he got home and then he gets drunk with his brother. That’s not normal for him.”

“No, I haven’t spoken with him.”
“Keep an eye on him. The stress at work and the wedding and Itachi might be getting to him.”

“Hai.”

Fugaku had stripped down to his boxers, revealing how well built he still was. He took time during the day to use the company gym; one of his ways of dealing with stress. Mikoto couldn’t help stealing a few glances of her husband. He came over and kissed her forehead before going into the bathroom to finish his nightly routine.

She was quick to put her book away.

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Mikoto took a half day and was home just after noon. She made the rounds through the house looking for her son. She grew worried when she didn’t find him in the living room or his own room. She was going to just change from her heels and shirt into something more comfortable to search the house in, but there she found him, lounging on her bed.

“Itachi?”

“Mom? It’s still early, isn’t it?”

“I only stayed for a half day.” She removed her shoes and changed with more freedom than she normally would with one of her sons in her room since he couldn’t see her. It was gay son anyway.

“There’s little for me to do for the next few days, just make phone calls at this point. What are you doing in here?”

“Nothing else to do so I thought I would lounge in here rather than my room. Change of scenery. I remember when I played with Sasuke here on your bed when he was a toddler and you would watch us.” He remembered how cute Sasuke was holding up that green stuffed dinosaur in his face and growling ‘wrawww’.

Itachi wasn’t wearing his glasses. She was glad he was feeling more comfortable without them, but it was hard for her to see those scars. At least he was wearing his glass eyes; she’d seen his empty eyes several times before.

Mikoto sat on the bed and scooted behind Itachi. She pulled his head down to her lap. She and Fugaku had just agreed that coddling Itachi was bad, but this was still her baby. They’d been all but alone together for weeks after he was released from the hospital, but as time went on, especially after Kakashi came into their lives, they had less and less time together. She relished being able to treat her son like a child again.

For Itachi’s part, it was nice to lay about in another room. His parents’ room was larger, even felt larger to him, less claustrophobic. It might have been the different air or just the feeling of his own room being like a prison—a comfortable prison he didn’t want to leave, but a prison nevertheless—but he could feel the difference. Or maybe his hearing was adapting and that was why the room seemed so different from his.

This room was rich with the smells of his father’s cologne and his mother’s subtle perfume. Itachi believed neither of them changed their fragrance in his lifetime, they were scents of comfort all his life.

Lying his head in his mother’s lap was completely different than lying it in his lover’s. He was reminded of an outing they took once. A picnic near the river in the large forested public park. Fugaku had to take a call and left nine year old Itachi and five year old Sasuke with Mikoto. Sasuke
wore himself out chasing ducks, and being chased by ducks. Sasuke started to doze against her shoulder and she guided his head down to her lap and he was out as she played with his hair.

Itachi had been jealous. It had been a very long time since his mother did that with him. She gestured for him to come over and guided him to lay his head on her other thigh. They slept like that until it got too late and Itachi woke up to his mother shifting. Fugaku picked up Sasuke so that he didn’t wake up and carried him to the car. Mikoto couldn’t carry Itachi anymore, but she took his hand and guided him in beside his sleeping brother.

There were several times during his childhood he grew jealous of his baby brother, thought that maybe his parents loved Sasuke more, but then there were moments when he felt guilty for receiving his parents’ love instead of Sasuke. Even now he felt guilty that he wasn’t expected to work and was free to while away the day being the center of his mother’s affections.

Sasuke was stressed; even Itachi could see that without Sasuke admitting it. He wished he could do something, anything, to help Sasuke. When Sasuke was stressed before, Itachi would take on any slack and help him. He’d poke Sasuke in the forehead when their subordinates weren’t looking and tell him he’d take care of his foolish little brother. He could solve any problem for his otouto, was always there to support him. He’d even taken the fall once when Sasuke screwed up; Itachi was better positioned and harder emotionally at that point that he could weather any reprimand from their father. He’d hated seeing Sasuke cowering in fear, freaking out over a mistake that could be smoothed over, but Sasuke was obsessing over having done the wrong thing, so Itachi swept in, poked him in the head, and accepted responsibility. That drove Sasuke harder since he never wanted to make his brother lose face over him again.

He’d always been the older brother. He’d always been able to make things right. Now he was one of the problems.

“Sasuke should move out when he marries Hinata, start a new life with her. He needs to not concentrate on me once he’s married. I’m adding to his stress.”

Mikoto stroked his forehead. “If he were to leave the house, he’d worry about you constantly. He’d be over and call all the time. Anyway, Hinata’s resolved to only live with us or with her family and Sasuke would be smothered in the Hyuuga mansion. Hinata wants to come here. She likes you too and is worried about you. Don’t worry about Sasuke.”

Itachi sat up. “But it’s my job to worry about Sasuke. It’s my job as his older brother. It’s not his job to worry about me. It tears me apart knowing how much he worries.”

“Itachi, there is no way he’s ever going to stop worrying. He’s always worried about you. When you were out late, he wouldn’t sleep. When you were slightest bit stressed over school, he’d be so quiet to stay out of your way. He wanted to help you, but knew if it was giving you trouble, he wouldn’t be able to help. He’s always worried.”

She scooted closer to hug him. “Did Sasuke know about Masahiko? Your other lovers?”

“I don’t think he knew about Masahiko. That I had boyfriends, yeah, he knew.”

“You think he wasn’t worried then?”

Itachi scoffed, but she was right.

“Sasuke also just doesn’t want to leave. Do you?”

“No. I like living here. I don’t feel hindered by living with my parents. We’re moving to a room
further down the hall though. A little more privacy.”

“Even that will feel like you’ve moved. You’ll always be my baby. I really do feel like I’ve gained another son with Kakashi; I’m so glad he’s the one I have to share you with. I love you and Sasuke so much.” She kissed his temple and lured him back down to rest in her lap.

Itachi let himself be lulled back to his mother’s lap. They both dosed as Mikoto leaned back against the headboard.

Sasuke came home several hours later and, curious, eased the half closed door open. Itachi was still in the habit of looking toward sounds and when his head angled toward Sasuke; it disturbed Sasuke; it felt like he could be seen by a blind man.

Mikoto smiled at her youngest. “You’re home early,” she said.

“Father told me to leave as soon as I finished what I was working on,” Sasuke said. “I think he was worried about my stress level.”

Sasuke had already stripped his jacket and shoes so he laid next to Itachi and his mother. Mikoto reached over to smooth Sasuke’s hair back. His face was far easier to look at, lacking the tear tough’s Itachi inherited from his father which looked like they were carved by cares and his eyes natural and unscarred.

“Do you remember that day at the park when you were chasing the ducks?” Itachi asked.

“Yeah, I do. I wanted to play with the ducks and pet them. They didn’t like that; one female nipped me several times. I eat almond duck with some relish now.”

Itachi smiled broadly. “You wore yourself out and we fell asleep in mom’s lap. You were so cute,” Itachi said. “I never wanted to let you out of my sight; worried someone would steal you away.”

Sasuke got closer and snuggled his way between Itachi’s arm and body and put his head on his brother’s shoulder and arm over his chest.

Mikoto forced back a sob. Her two boys together, all grown up, but clinging together like they were when they young. Both of them were wounded and suffering, one physically and the other mentally.

Sasuke would never admit to his brother or father just how much Itachi’s condition was hurting him. It was one of the reasons he resisted accepting Kakashi; he couldn’t let go of his brother. It was also why he waited so long to propose to Hinata. Mikoto knew that all Sasuke wanted was to fuss over his brother, to protect him and help him with everything. Just like her. She knew Sasuke loved his brother more than anyone, even Hinata. Itachi was nearly as attached to Sasuke. She was just glad it didn’t step over the line. They just chaste love each other so entirely.

She remembered when Sasuke was born and Itachi first met his new little brother. The four year old was fascinated by the baby and his tiny hands and poked his forehead gently; just curiously poking him. Sasuke didn’t cry, just tried to brush the touch away which made Itachi smile. Sasuke was just as imprinted on Itachi as he was his mother. Every morning and every day after preschool and kindergarten, Itachi would check on his brother. Itachi never tired of him and Sasuke didn’t start pulling away until he was being pressured to be like his older brother. But after Sasuke started dating Hinata, it seemed he’d grown up and grown past that rebellious stage and the brothers once again became very close. Then weeks later . . . Sasuke was a toddler clinging to his older brother again in a hospital bed.
Mikoto realized both her boys had fallen asleep. She was glad they were both content to stay in their house and bring their significant others with them. But husbands shouldn’t be laying their heads in their mother’s lap, so this might be one of the last times she could have both her boys together like this.

They must have been like that for a few hours because Fugaku came in without knocking. His entrance didn’t disturb them. He smiled at his wife. Like Sasuke, he removed his jacket, tie, and belt and he laid down on the ample space on the king size bed next to Itachi.

For the first time since Sasuke was four, Mikoto had all her boys together. She caressed her husband’s forehead as she had Sasuke and he drifted off as well.

Inoichi knocked gently on the partially open door and peeked in. “Dinner’s ready,” he whispered. He retreated after Mikoto nodded to him.

She was grateful since she could finally move her legs which had fallen asleep from the weight of Itachi’s head. She shifted, waking Itachi and Sasuke. Sasuke whined which woke Fugaku. His groan as he sat up scared Itachi; he knew that wasn’t Sasuke.

“When did you get here, chichi?” Sasuke asked.

“After work.”

“Dinner’s ready,” Mikoto told them.

“We were asleep that long?” Sasuke asked.

“Yes, and my legs are numb because of it.”

“Mikoto will probably be the only one who will sleep tonight,” Fugaku said as he stood up.

Sasuke was the one who noticed that Itachi was awfully quiet. “Come, ‘tachi, let’s wash up.” He helped Itachi up and took him to Itachi’s room.

“You okay?” Sasuke asked.

“Not really, no.”

“What’s wrong?”

“We just had a really nice family moment and I couldn’t see it. Father was even relaxing with us. I mean, that never happens and I couldn’t see it.”

Sasuke sighed. “Where is that bastard boyfriend of yours when I need him?”

“The desert.”

“Yeah.” He hugged his brother tightly.

“Hey, do you still have that stuffed dinosaur?” Itachi asked as they held onto each other.

“It’s in a box under my bed.”

“You know, I picked that out for you when you were still a baby. Mom let me carry you in a sling against my chest. The three of us went to a store to buy stuff for you and I saw that dinosaur and showed it to you. You reached out for it so I thought you wanted it. You never let the thing go.”
“I didn’t know you gave it to me.”

“I love you so much, Sasuke. From the moment I saw you, I loved you dearly.”

“I love you too, aniki. I never intended to get rid of it and I certainly won’t now. Let me know if you want to . . . want me to bring it to you.”

“I was just thinking about it earlier. You were adorable. Still are.” Itachi slid his head back so their temples were pressed together and Itachi used the reference to poke Sasuke in the forehead gently.

“Try not to let mom and dad see how depressed you are,” Sasuke whispered.

“Yeah.”

“Wash your face and straighten up. I’ll do the same.”

Itachi nodded and they met in the hall a minute later. “Take my hand, Sasuke?” Itachi asked.

Sasuke did and Itachi went down the stairs far slower than normal, his other hand on the banister. Itachi was regressing and Sasuke struggled to hide his fury at Shisui and his depression during dinner.

He pulled his brother into his room that night so Itachi wouldn’t feel alone.

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