**Christmas Presents...**

by Sevenwildwaysup

Summary

Brian and Justin have been struggling emotionally while being apart for most of the last year. Finally our boys agree on what they want for their future together, much to everyone’s surprise…

Notes

*I write almost exclusively in an Alternate Universe…*

*No Apologies, No Excuses, No Regrets…*

See the end of the work for more notes
Honey I'm Home…

Chapter Summary

Justin surprises Brian for Christmas, or does Brian Surprise Justin…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 749
Rating: G…
Warnings: Passion, Lust…
Beta Queen: a_life_defiant

Story Summary: Brian and Justin have been struggling emotionally while being apart for most of the last year. Finally our boys agree on what they want for their future together, much to everyone’s surprise…

Summary: Justin surprises Brian for Christmas, or does Brian Surprise Justin…

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Honey I'm Home…

Justin had been nervous in the cab on the way to the loft. It was Christmas Eve and the last conversation he had with Brian had been strained. Brian had asked him to please come home for Christmas. He had also asked him to please come home for Thanksgiving but Justin refused; thinking that making a movie in Hollywood was more important than spending time in a dirty old steel town with his, now estranged, family.

It didn’t start out this way, and he really thought that he’d only be in California for six months or so. Now it was ten months later, and the movie still wasn’t complete. It was running out of funding and Conner James had been outed by some trashy movie magazine; so he denied it and quite the movie. Justin decided to surprise Brian, and didn’t call before he left California. He remembered the sound of sadness in Brian’s voice when he said he couldn’t come back. It was filled with so much unspoken pain and disappointment, just like when Brian finally asked him to move back into the loft and he told him he was moving out west.

He often questioned his decision, and sometimes regretted it when he felt so lonely. Though he’s not Brian and he doesn’t need to club every night and hookup with strangers. But then Brian didn’t return his calls and didn’t pickup when he called; he never once visited. Although the gang said that Brian had made some real changes in his life. That he was finally starting to grow up; accepting responsibility for his actions. Justin wasn’t so sure. He had been burnt so many times in the past, maybe he should have called before he headed to the loft.

Being Christmas Eve, traffic was so slow and congested as they entered the downtown area of Pittsburgh. Justin leaned his head against the glass window and reflected on the last time he saw
Brian. It was the night he left for California. He could see it in Brian’s eyes how much he didn’t want him to go, but he never would have asked him to stay. He was still a little angry that he had only spoken with Brian twice in ten months. It seemed that Brian could care less if he came back or not… Well, that’s not true because he did ask him to come home for the holidays.

But then his mind drifted back to the last time they made love - and yes that’s actually what they did. Brian even let him top as a going away present. Or was that his way of finally saying good bye? Justin was lost in his thoughts when he realizes that the taxi has stopped in front of the loft. Now he’s sure he should have called first. He pays the driver and carries his bags into the building. It feels so good to be home – and, yes, the loft will always be home for him.

He hesitates before the cold steel door, wondering what he’ll find on the other side. Part of him is almost giddy to finally be home again, and the other part is terrified that he’ll be thrown out for good. He takes a deep breath and pulls the door open; standing inside he sees Brian’s housekeeper. He can’t help wondering what she’s doing here on Christmas Eve… She smiles and comes over to him embracing him in a strong hug; talking in very broken English saying, “Now everything will be alright now that Daddy’s home.”

I can’t help thinking Maria must have lost her mind, or she’s been drinking Brian’s whisky… I start to say something and she hushes me to be quiet while pushing me towards the bedroom. I set my bags down and walk over to the steps leading up to his thrown. I stop dead in my tracks. Brian’s sleeping in the middle of the bed with a newborn baby asleep on his chest. My breathing hitches as I’m torn between wanting to sketch this scene and joining him, so I opt for climbing up onto the bed and lying next to them.

I reach over and run my hand across the infant’s cheek; babies really do have the softest skin. He opens his big blue eyes and looks directly into my soul, other than my eyes he looks just like Brian and I can’t believe he never told me…

TBC...
Chapter Summary

Justin is shocked after talking with Maria, but soon his heart is soaring…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 2219
Rating: Love, Passion, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, Male Pregnancy…
Beta Queen: bigj

Summary: Justin is shocked after talking with Maria, but soon his heart is soaring…

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Chapter Two ~ Baby J

Justin lay there, looking at his ready-made family and couldn’t have asked for a better Christmas present. His heart was already doing back flips and he hoped that this meant that he and Brian could finally be a real family. Surely Brian wouldn’t bring tricks home with a newborn there. Why hadn’t anyone told him? Do they really think he wouldn’t want to have been there for Brian, for his child whose sex he still wasn’t sure of because they were both asleep. They looked so peaceful lying there, lost to the world.

Maria poked her head in at the bottom of the stairs and motioned for Justin to join her. She showed him all the meals she had prepared, where the baby’s bottles were stored and how to heat them. She gave Justin a list of Brian’s and the baby’s doctors then she looked at him and said; “Now you must convince him to get out of bed; it’s not healthy to stay in bed all day so sad. Besides, it only gives those evil girls more reason to take that sweet baby away.”

Justin’s not sure he heard her right. “What do you mean take that sweet baby away?”

“Yes, those girls want the baby, have since the very beginning, they say he’s unfit. How could that be? He has good job, good home, good husband, big bank account. What’s not good?”

Justin loves Maria; she’s always been so supportive of Brian even though she has to know of his wild ways. After all, she cleans up after him. Maria’s been with Brian for the last three years; she’s semi-retired only cleaning Brian’s, and Jackie’s loft, just below them.

She starts to leave and I stop her. I have so many questions and I’m not sure how much Brian will actually tell me. So we step out into the entryway and talk so we don’t wake them. Firstly I ask when the baby was born, what their name is, are they healthy, and of course, if it’s a boy or a girl.

Maria smiles and says; “He’s a sweet little boy, he was born on December 1st, weighting 6lbs 6oz.
but very long. He will be tall like his daddy. He’s very healthy, much more so than his daddy. Signor Brian has been sad for a very long time. His pregnancy was very hard on him; his doctor insisted he spend the last two months of it in bed. Now it’s been three months but he has agreed to see Dr. Wilder.” “You mean Alex Wilder, the therapist?” “Yes, that’s him. Very nice man, he even comes here to talk to Brian.” She starts to leave again but Justin stops her, “Maria, you forgot to tell me his name. She just looks at Justin for a minute then smiles and says; “Now that you’re here, maybe he’ll be able to name him. He just calls him ‘Baby J’.”

Justin’s heart sinks as he worries about Brian’s health and wonders how much of this he is responsible for, and what it’s going to take to earn Brian’s trust. Just then they hear someone entering the building saying ‘here let me get the door for you’. The next thing they see is Lindsay coming up the stairs to Brian’s loft. She’s shocked to see Justin standing there as she says; “Justin, what in the world are you doing here?”

Justin smiles at her and says; “I live here, Lindz. Where’s Gus?”

“What do you mean?” Justin is taken back as he looks at her, finally saying, “As I remember we had a huge fight last year, after you spent all summer and fall complaining that Brian didn’t spend enough time with his son. So we agreed that he would have Gus on Christmas Eve and drop him off at your house by 11 am on Christmas morning.”

She shakes her head and stares at me, saying; “Justin, you can’t expect me to let Gus stay here with Brian - he has an infant son to care for.” “You mean Brian and I have an infant son to care for and how is this any different than you and Mel having JR to care for?”

“Justin, we need to talk. Mel and I have been thinking that what’s best would be for us to raise him with Gus and JR as one big family, don’t you agree?”

“NO! No definitely not! He’s my son and I have no intention of ever giving him up to you or anyone else.”

Lindsay snaps; “I can’t believe that you’re being so unreasonable about this.”

I’m growing more and more angry with her as we speak. Lindsay says, “Well, maybe it was a bad idea to come over here.” I ask, “Why did you come over here this afternoon?”

“I just wanted to talk some sense into Brian; he’s been so unreasonable about everything.”

“Oh, you mean like if someone wanted to take Gus away from you?”

“No, we love Gus. We would never let anything bad happen to him.” God, I swear I’m going to hit her. I take a deep breath, count to ten… Maria breaks the silence, saying she’s going to give the baby a bath and leaves us standing out in the hall.

“Lindsay, I think it would be best if we stayed with the original agreement. Why don’t I meet you at your house in an hour to pick up Gus for the evening?” She looks defeated and frustrated but who cares? Did she really think that we would just hand him over to them?

“Fine, I’ll go home and pack his overnight bag, but this isn’t over. We need to have a serious talk about everything.”

“Do you think I wasn’t serious this whole conversation, Lindsay? But let’s not fight, it’s Christmas Eve and I don’t want Gus to know there’s a problem. So I’ll see you at your house in an hour or so.”
Brian’s just starting to wake up. He’s in that place somewhere between sound asleep and twilight, his mind is starting to awake his senses. He thinks he’s fantasizing about Justin making him jambalaya; it seems so real he thinks he can smell it. He also thinks that he must have been asleep for the past few months as the baby seems to have gained several pounds, judging by the weight on his stomach. It’s just about then he realizes that his hands are playing with a head of soft silky hair that’s lying across his chest. He looks down and sees the top of Justin’s head. His hair is golden-white blond, having been bleached out by the California sun. Their son is sleeping on his chest peacefully, and then he notices that Gus is curled up next to him on the other side. Both are drooling on him and he just smiles and finally feels like he can breathe for the first time in months.

He’s home, he’s really home… Brian’s heart soars, hoping that they’ll be able to put the pieces of their relationship back together. He knows that it’s his fault that things have gotten so off track, that he should have told Justin about his pregnancy, but he was scared and to be honest, he still is. What if Justin didn’t want him anymore or met someone new? What if he decided to take his son away from him? He would fight the girls tooth and nail to keep his son, but Justin, no, he wouldn’t fight him - he knows that the baby would be better off with him. This is why he didn’t do relationships; all these emotions are tearing him apart.

He reaches over and runs his hand through Gus’ hair. Just then Gus opens his eyes and smiles up at his father. He climbs up and puts his head on his shoulder, whispering in Brian’s ear; “Santa came early ‘cos the only thing I asked for was that Justy come home to us.” I kiss his cheek and thank him for his Christmas wish telling him that it was my only Christmas wish as well. I wiggle out from under Justin, leaving him and the baby sound asleep on the bed as we make our way towards the kitchen where I see the big stock pot on a low simmer, cooking all the flavorful ingredients of jambalaya.

Brian also sees a small soup pan on the stove, simmering. Gus announces that that’s his, that Justin made him a small batch of home-made chicken soup with some of the chicken from the jambalaya. Brian can’t help smiling. Justin has always been so attentive to Gus, making sure he feels included and special. Brian tastes the jambalaya and gives Gus a taste of the chicken soup, once the spoonful has cooled. They both moan with pleasure as their taste buds rejoice at the wonderful flavors. Gus asks if they can make the cookies for Santa Claus saying that Justin said they could. Brian hesitates a moment, but Gus pulls him towards the refrigerator and shows him the roll of pre-made cookie dough. He’s never looked so relieved in his life because he knew he didn’t have all the ingredients to make them from scratch the way Justin usually does.

Brian starts to heat up a bottle for Baby J knowing that he’ll be up soon for his dinner, the cookies are baking and he and Gus are setting the table for their Christmas Eve feast. Brian’s actually hungry for the first time in months as he sets the big salad down on the table and starts to slice the French sourdough bread. Gus begs him to let him have chocolate milk, but Brian says he thinks it’s better if he leaves that for his bed-time snack. It’s just about that time that they notice a sleepy Justin coming down the stairs from the bedroom with Baby J.

Gus runs over to him, asking if he can sit next to him while he has his bottle and of course, Brian agrees. Justin and Brian just look into one another’s eyes saying so many unspoken words. Brian comes towards him to check his diaper. As he takes the baby he leans in and kisses Justin nervously. He lays him down on the changing table as all three of them look down at the child. Gus is fascinated with how tiny his penis is and asks if his was that small when he was a newborn. Brian chuckles and assures him that it’s completely normal and natural. Gus isn’t sure if he believes him or not saying; “But Daddy your penis is so big now. Was it that small when you were born?”
Justin is fascinated by all this as well. Brian seems to be handling being a father just fine; he isn’t complaining about stinky diapers, warming bottles or being woken up at all hours for feeding schedules. He seems very comfortable and at ease with his new role as full-time parent and he just hopes he handles it as well as Brian. Brian finishes up with the new diaper and turns to look at Sunshine, again running his hand through his hair, saying, “I’m so glad you’re here, I’ve missed you so much. I was sure you weren’t coming back.” Justin puts his hand behind Brian’s neck, pulling him down into a passionate kiss, whispering; “I would have come back sooner if you had only told me what was going on. I love you, Brian and that will never change.”

Brian smiles a little shakily as he pulls his lips into his mouth nervously, saying that he didn’t want to disturb him while he was off becoming rich and famous. Justin rolls his eyes and says; “Nothing’s more important to me than my family, and from now on we do what’s best for everyone.” Justin carries the baby over to the sofa while Brian gets the bottle; they all get comfy with Justin leaning against Brian and Gus on Brian’s lap. Justin holds the baby while Gus holds the bottle, almost hypnotized watching the baby sucking on the bottle.

After dinner Justin puts in the DVD of Charlie Brown’s Christmas Special. As he and Brian watch Gus dance and sing to all the songs by the time it’s almost over he’s all tired out and curled up on the floor with a big pillow and blanket, not wanting to go to bed because he’s sure he’s going to miss something. Brian and Justin are curled up on the sofa lost in each other, wondering how they could have lived apart for ten months and promising to never let that happen again.

Justin makes up the blow-up bed they have for Gus when he sleeps over and Brian carries his sleeping son over and tucks him in, wondering if he ever looked so happy and relaxed as a child. Baby J’s tucked away in his crib near the bed and now it’s just the two of them in Brian’s big bed. They hold each other tight as sleep takes both of them as well, ending a very emotional day of surprises.

Who knew how much everything could change in just twenty-four hours?

TBC…
The Things We Do For Love…

Chapter Summary

Brian and Justin try and do the right thing for all their family members.

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 3571
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, Male Pregnancy…
Beta Queen: bigj52

Summary: Brian and Justin try and do the right thing for all their family members.

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Chapter Three ~ The Things We Do For Love…

Brian awoke to Gus, bouncing on the bed, so excited that Santa had found his way to the loft. Usually he left everything at the house for him. “Daddy, daddy, come see all the presents that Santa brought!” As he’s being pulled into the living room he’s actually surprised at how many presents there are under a Christmas wreath lit with blue lights, hanging in the front windows of the loft. Justin’s sitting in the rocking chair, feeding Baby J and it’s the first time that Brian realizes that he really does need a name.

Brian turns and looks at Justin with a look of complete and utter amazement. How in the world did he get this all together? Justin smiles his big sunshine smile and says, “Why don’t you two open your stockings while we wait for the coffee to finish brewing.” Gus runs and gets them from hooks on the windowsill. As they begin to open them Gus can’t help but notice that they got all the same sort of things - Calvin Klein socks and underwear, spin toothbrushes, Belgian chocolates, matchbox cars - a Jeep for Gus and a Vette for Brian, although Gus will commandeer it in no time. Gus received some fun children’s soaps, while Brian received a tube of his hundred-dollar anti-aging cream and copies of GQ and Echelon while Gus got Highlights and Cobblestone & Crickets. Gus is already lost in trying to find all the hidden pictures on the page, squealing with delight every time he finds one; he usually needs his mom’s help to see them. Brian smiles over at Justin and says; “This is by far the best Christmas ever. How in the world did you get this all done?” He just chuckles and says; “I had a little help from Santa’s Elf.” Brian smirks and says; “That wouldn’t be a short, slightly round Hispanic woman with a heart of gold?” Justin hands him the baby as he goes to get him a cup of very strong French-roast coffee, with extra sugar. Gus gets his chocolate milk from last night because he fell asleep before getting his bed-time treat.

Justin can’t help thinking for the first time in his life he feels whole; like the moon and the stars are aligned just right and if he’s careful he just might get what he really wants for Christmas - a lifetime with Brian. The Christmas presents stacked under the windowsill come in all shapes and
sizes and Gus’s eyes have now grown to the size of saucers when he hears Justin say most of them are for him. He jumps up and down, saying; “Which one do I open first?” Brian tells him to choose whichever one he wants.

Gus plows his way through dump trucks, a cowboy hat, boots with a holster and guns, a doctor’s bag full of toy instruments and candy medicine with a white lab coat, GI Joes and a painters’ easel and paints as well as many designer clothes that Brian had actually purchased even if he will outgrow them in six months. But the best was the remote-control Jeep that both Brian and Gus were enthralled with as they raced it around the loft while Justin made chocolate chip waffles for breakfast.

Now that Gus was sufficiently over-dosed with sugar he was ready to return to his mother’s for the rest of Christmas Day. Mel was surprised when she opened the door to both Brian and Justin, as Brian hadn’t gotten out of bed in months and was (or so everyone thought) suffering from post-natal depression. She seems relieved yet slightly pissed at the same time, although the truth is that she didn’t want to take the baby away if they really wanted to raise him. She just wanted to make sure that Brian wasn’t in over his head and, of course, she wanted to please her wife.

She asks them to come in but Brian refuses, not wanting to get into a slinging match with them on Christmas day. They made arrangements for Gus to come for a visit in a couple of days, giving them Gus’s Christmas presents of the clothes and a couple of toys. They’d kept some at the loft for him to play with, including the cowboy outfit, knowing how well that one would go over with the girls. They kissed him good-bye, telling him that they would see him in a few days.

On the way back to the loft Brian stops at a florist and comes back with several bouquets of mixed flowers. Justin didn’t say anything as Brian drove to the cemetery. They walked in silence as they made their way to Vic’s grave, surprised to see Debbie standing there. She turns and sees them, surprised to see Justin’s home from California and Brian’s out of bed. She takes the baby out of the stroller and starts making all those goo-goo noises and faces that drive Brian crazy, but Justin just squeezes his hand to stop him from saying anything.

Brian kneels down and puts the bouquet on Vic’s grave, whispering his thanks for all the guidance and support that Vic gave him all those years. He’s sure he wouldn’t have made it if it hadn’t been for him. After a few minutes he crosses himself, stands and takes his son back, worried that it’s too cold outside for the infant. Most people think he isn’t religious, but there must be a god if he answered his prayers and brought his sweet Sunshine back to him. They each give Debbie a big hug and kiss, saying they’ll try and make it to Christmas dinner tonight, but they can’t promise anything. Having a newborn comes in handy as an excuse for avoiding the family when they’re feeling overwhelmed.

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The next stop was even more insightful as Brian drove to an older subdivision in Pittsburgh of cookie-cutter houses with that sixties feel. He says that I can wait in the car if I want to, but there’s no way I would ever turn down a chance to see where Brian grew up. We knock on the door and a very thin, gray-haired woman answers the door, surprised to see Brian and even more surprised to see me and the baby. Of course, she insists that we come in; she’s actually very nice to us and remembers me from the time she showed up at the loft. Just like Debbie she can’t help fussing over the baby, saying it’s time that Brian settled down. With a slight dig she says; “I may not understand this queer lifestyle you choose to live, but I love you, Brian and I won’t continue to push my religion on you anymore, you’re a grown man with a family now.”

Brian and I just look at each other questioningly, wondering if she’s already drunk. She continues
with; “You know, those Jehovah’s Witnesses came to my door last fall and I just can’t believe the nerve of some people being so pushy with their religion. It took me a little while to realize that maybe I might come off that way and I was horrified. I know I’ve said some dreadful things in the past and I’m so sorry. Please forgive me.” Now Brian and I are sure that the pod people have invaded Pittsburgh and Joan Kinney.

Brian smiles and says; “Well, if I can change, then there’s no reason to believe that you can’t change as well.” Brian actually hugs his mother for the first time in twenty years then he gives her a large bouquet of flowers and a box of fine chocolates. He asks if Claire is coming this afternoon to celebrate Christmas as he sets down a bag with flowers and chocolates for her and some video games for the boys. She thanks him for coming by and for remembering her on the holiday. As we make our way back out to the Jeep were both surprised at how easy that whole conversation went.

Once we’re back at the loft there’s so much we need to talk about, but Brian’s never been big on communication. I say; “So Baby J? Does that stand for Jason, Jeremy, Jordan, Jackson, Jonah, Jerome, Jonathan, Julian, James, Joshua, Jeffrey, Jake, Joel, Jamie or just plain Jay?” Brian stares at him, not sure what to say and Justin smirk’s and says; “Or did you mean Junior…?

Brian hits his arm and pulls him into a big hug. It feels so good holding him close, finally being alone with him. Well, almost alone, as alone as they’re going to be for the next twenty years. Finally Brian whispers; “I kind of like James; we could call him Jamie. What do you think?” Justin smiles and says; “I like Jamie too.” Their lips find each others as they start passionately kissing, running their hands all over each other, touching as much flesh as possible as they make their way to the bed.

Justin whispers; “Oh God, I’ve missed this so much.”

“Me too, sunshine, me too…” Just as soon as they have stripped each other of their clothing and start to get lost in their passion someone is standing at the bottom of the stairs, yelling. “Brian, what do you think you’re doing?” Justin rolls his eyes as he hears Michael’s whining voice, trying to keep his frustration in check. After all, he’s already waited a day to seduce his man so what’s another ten minutes? Because that’s all Michael’s getting before they kick him out of the loft and take his key away…

At first, Michael thought that Brian was with a trick and was pissed. Then he realizes that it’s Justin but that didn’t really seem to calm him down at all. He spits out; “What the fuck are you doing here?”

“Merry Christmas to you too, Michael…” Brian looks at him, irritated. He hates the conflict that exists between the two of them and wishes he had stopped this rivalry along time ago. “Children, children, there’s no reason to fight.”

“But you said you weren’t coming home for the holidays.”

“Things change, Michael. How could you not tell me what’s been going on? I expect this kind of behavior from Brian, but you, you should know better. You know that I would have come home as soon as you told me.”

“Exactly, and you need to be in California making the movie so we get all those royalties. I need the money, Justin. Besides, Brian had me here to take care of him - he didn’t need you.”

“It’s not your place to take care of Brian and my baby, Michael. You already have a family, this
one’s mine… I really can’t believe you’re so selfish and self-centered.”

“I was just doing what I thought was best for everyone. Besides, no one really believed that you were coming back. I mean, why would you? We had everything worked out, especially once Brian started suffering from depression. Mel and Lindsay were going to adopt the baby then Brian would return to being the stud he’s always been. So when do you go back, anyway?”

“Well, I hate to tell you this but the movie is on hiatus…”

“What does that mean?”

Justin looks at him like he’s crazy and says; “Connor James quit, just in case you didn’t see the cover of the National Inquirer.”

“So they’ll get someone else”

“It’s not like that, Michael. The project was running out of funding already and they kept pushing, pushing, pushing the gay aspect out of the storyline. So no, I don’t think there will be anyone recast as Rage. Besides, it’s not like the storyline isn’t my personal story and they sure as hell didn’t use your comic book dialogue in the movie. So if they do decide to start again I really don’t think you would be involved in it or any of the profits.”

Michael’s face starts turning bright red. You could almost see steam coming from his ears and he looks like he belongs in a comic.

“You fucking traitor! I hate you! I always have!”

Brian barks “Michael, enough already!”

Justin says, “Brett and I talked a little before I left and if we were to give it a second go, it would probably focus more on Brian’s and my relationship leading up the prom and what I went through afterwards to bring the homophobia more into the mainstream. Let’s face it; it’s not a kid’s movie so we’d have to decide exactly how we’re going to categorize it. But this is a conversation that Brett, Brian and I will have to have if he can even find funding for it.”

“But you don’t understand! I really need the money! I expected the income - I maxed out my credit cards, expecting regular checks. What am I supposed to do?” Brian says; “Well, I guess you’ll have to sell some of those stupid action toys you love so much.”

“No fucking way, I want my money.”

“There is no money, Michael. I’ve already stated that the movie is out of funding, so there will be no profits.”

“Well then, I expect you to pay me. You have money and I want it.”

Now both Brian and Justin are getting pissed and Brian can’t help saying, “Well, I guess you shouldn’t have bought that house in Stepford Haven, especially now that the economy and housing market has taken a dive. Maybe it’s best that you sell your house and get out while you’re ahead. You might get most of your money back.”

Brian can’t help wanting to ask what it is that he spent all his money on. It’s not like he dresses in fancy clothes, travels or has a drug problem that he knows about. But he decided to let it slide, knowing that Michael will come to him for money when Justin’s not here.
“Michael, please keep your voice down. You’re going to wake Jamie.”

“Who the fuck is Jamie?”

“He’s my son and we would really like some time to ourselves to be together. Although I’m pretty happy to learn that he can sleep through all this racket and whining going on. Now run along home and tell the professor that you’ve spent all your life savings, so you can return all those fancy Christmas presents before you hand them out.”

Michael looks crushed as he turns to leave. I stop him and ask for his key back. Now he looks like he’s going to cry and he says; “Brian, can’t you just give me all the money I need?”

Brian asks, “How much do you need?” Michael looks at him and asks Justin if he can have some privacy with Brian. Justin shakes his head and climbs out of bed, goes into the bathroom and starts the shower. Brian can’t help watching Justin’s naked body disappearing behind the door, wishing he was following behind; it’s been so long since they’ve been together.

Brian says; “Okay, what’s this all about?”

Michael hesitates, looking at the floor, not sure where to start. “I kind of got in over my head. I didn’t think it was really anything at first; I would win some and lose some, but mostly I would break even at the end of each week. Then I somehow got on a losing streak and I was extended credit but I couldn’t seem to cover my bets. So I started betting bigger amounts, thinking I would win a big hand the next time.”

Brian just looks at him finally saying; “You’re gambling? I don’t even know you anymore.”

“Brian, it’s not that bad. It only sounds bad when you say it out loud. I tried to stay ahead of it all by using Justin’s part of the profits from the comic book, but that was gone in just a few weeks.”

“A few weeks? How long has this been going on? Okay, fine, just tell me how much you owe - the total amount and to whom. Don’t lie to me.”

Michael hesitates and then just says; “It’s just shy of forty thousand dollars and they’re going to kill me if I don’t pay it.”

Brian’s so shocked and stunned at this news he actually just sits there in silence, thinking. Michael’s nervous but doesn’t say anything. He’s actually surprised when he hears Brian say; “I’m going to give to the most important present that anyone will ever give you, Michael - responsibility for your own actions. Your biggest problem is that you’ve never had to solve your own problems and you won’t learn until you do. This is what we’re going to do. Tomorrow we’re going to call Mel and she’s going to draw up legal documents, putting the house and the store in my name.”

Michael jumps up and hugs Brian saying; “I knew I could count on you.”

“Hold on there, Michael. I am so not done yet. I will pay off your debt which I’m sure is compounding interest daily by about 20% or more, loan sharks always smell blood in the water. You will never gamble again. If you do I will not bail you out, ever again… You’re truly pathetic and I mean it this time. Maybe you should join Gamblers Anonymous. I think that will be my Christmas present for you.”

Michael is happy and smiling, going in for a kiss when Brian steps back and away from him. “I’m still not through with you yet. I plan on selling the house and the store although I’m sure it won’t cover your debt. I want you to look for a new place to live, starting tomorrow. You will not return to the store. All merchandise will be sold to the new owner and you will have to confess your sins
to the whole family, but not today. I don’t want to ruin everyone’s Christmas. You will also set up a payment plan to pay Justin back his part of the profits that you have stolen from him.”

“Brian, if you sell the house and the store where will I live and work?”

“I guess you’ll have to live with your mom and I don’t care if you’re a cashier at K-Mart or a go-go dancer, but I’ll hire someone else to run the store until it’s sold because, quite frankly, I don’t trust you right now.”

“But some of my action figures are at the store, I want them back.”

“Grow up, Michael and consider them gone… and stop whining. Just remember loan sharks want to kill you, and so do I. Now run along home and ruin someone else’s Christmas.”

Justin had finished up showering a while ago but stayed in the bathroom, wanting to give them their privacy. He couldn’t help over-hearing the last part of the conversation - something about Brian selling the house and the store but he wasn’t sure what was going on and wasn’t sure he wanted to. Once he heard the loft door close he came out into the living room and saw that Brian was drinking. He was a little nervous and hoped that things weren’t as bad as they seemed.

Brian said he needed a shower and that he’d explain everything when he came out. Justin’s a little nervous so he busies himself with making a lunch of turkey sandwiches and finishing up the rest of Gus’s chicken soup. The table is all set when Brian comes out with just his towel around his waist; the shower really helped relax his stressed muscles and the whisky helped take the edge off Michael’s confession. Justin comes over to him, after turning the soup down to low. He takes Brian’s hand, leads him up to the bed and pushes him down onto it.

He climbs up Brian’s lean body. He may have given birth a month ago but he looks like he belongs in GQ - still as gorgeous as the night they met. He starts with butterfly kisses all over Brian’s face, neck, shoulder and chest, working his way down to his ever-hardening member. He smirks and says, “Looks like I found my Christmas present,” as he opens the towel and starts running his tongue around the ridge that crowns his penis. Brian’s breath hitches at the sensations that flood his body. It’s been over six months since he’s been with another man and ten since he’s been with Justin.

He feels intoxicated as if Justin’s saliva is laced with some exotic drug that he’s now addicted to and can’t live without. He moans and pants, pulling on Justin’s hair a little too hard. It’s been so long, he knows he won’t last. He feels like a teenager as he shoots out of control. His body shakes and trembles as he screams Justin’s name, telling him he loves him, waking Jamie in the process. Brian apologizes, saying he couldn’t help himself as he feels the aftershocks still rippling through his body. Brian pulls the damp towel up and cleans his chest off while Justin retrieves their son. He joins Brian on the bed, laying Jamie on Brian’s now clean chest. All Jamie really needed was to feel the warmth and security of his father’s skin.

TBC…
Chapter Summary

More unexpected surprises for the boys…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 3657
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, Male Pregnancy…
Beta Queen: bigj52

Summary: More unexpected surprises for the boys…

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Chapter Four ~ There’s No Place Like Home…

Justin is literally shocked by Michael’s gambling problem and how much debt he has incurred. He’s just grateful that Brian can raise that much cash on Christmas day. Babylon makes good money these days and being a holiday weekend the cash in the vault is substantial. Besides, after the economy started its downturn and the housing market plunged Brian had safes put in at the loft and his office at Kinnetik where he keeps large amounts of cash on hand in case there’s a run on the banks. Unfortunately, he has to disturb Ted’s holiday as well as Jacob and Ira Steinmann’s - a couple of brothers/bouncers from Babylon. He sends Jacob and Ira to the store to change the locks and take an inventory. Jacob and Ira don’t mind at all as they’re Jewish and the double pay is sweet. They also put in a new security system in case of a break-in. At this point he just can’t trust Michael, who is always telling him how valuable all those comics and toys are.

Justin’s not happy that Brian’s going out on Christmas afternoon but he understands that Brian and Ted have to meet up with the loan sharks and pay Michael’s debt before something serious happens to him. No matter how angry he is with him right now he still loves him like a brother; a stupid, idiotic, selfish, lame-ass brother. But their relationship is strained, too many secrets and deceptions on Michael’s part for Brian to trust him totally.

Brian can’t help wondering how much of this is his fault. He’s always too protective of him, stepped in if he was in a fight. Maybe if he had just let him get his ass kicked good and hard in high school once he would have appreciated everything Brian has done for him, but as it is he just expects it. Brian tells Justin that he should take Jamie and go to Deb’s house with Blake for dinner and that he and Ted will meet them there when everything is resolved. Justin’s worried about their safety but agrees to go, but he’s not happy about it. He wanted to have a romantic dinner at home, just the two of them, well, three of them.

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Emmett answers the door, so surprised to see Justin, squealing; “Oh Baby, you’re home. We all missed you so much!” Blake and Justin enter the house, noticing that hardly anyone is there yet. It’s just Hunter, Mel and the kids which is funny because Lindsay stated firmly that she and Mel were having their own Christmas dinner. Mel says, “Don’t ask. Apparently she’s too depressed about not adopting Baby J to get out of bed. She insisted I come and bring the kids over for Christmas dinner.” Justin looks at her and asks; “So you’re not going through with this idea of taking Jamie away from us?”

“Justin, it was never about taking the baby away. It was about doing what was best for him. But I can see that now that you’re back that everything is going to be fine. Lindsay may not agree with me right now but she’ll get over it. You have to understand she’s been planning on being his mother for the last seven months, so the idea of not raising him is very hard for her.”

“So I guess my feelings never entered into this. The fact that he’s also my child and you didn’t think I would want a say?”

“Well, Michael told us that you weren’t coming back, that you were living with Brett and you seemed really happy in your new life.”

“What! Why would he say those things? I lived in Brett’s guest house, not the main house and I’ve never slept with him, he’s bi at best. So this is why Brian never told me about Jamie? Wouldn’t answer my calls, or come visit. God, I’m going to kill him!”

“Oh Baby, you know Michael’s always been jealous of you and Brian. But I can’t believe that he would lie about everything to everyone. There must have been some misunderstanding.”

Justin just looks at Emmett like he’s crazy then Carl says; “So it’s Jamie, is it? I was wondering when your daddies were going to get around to naming you. That’s a fine name for a good Irish lad.”

Hunter rolls his eyes and says, “I suppose it’s James. You know I always hated that name and being called Jimmy.”

Justin looks at him and says; “Then it’s a good thing it’s Jamie not Jimmy.”

It’s just about that time they see a very sleepy Gus coming down the stairs from his nap. He sees Justin and starts running towards him, calling his name. He’s so happy to see him and his new baby brother again. He announces to everyone that he’s a big brother now as if they didn’t know. Mel tries to explain to him that he was already a big brother but Gus isn’t buying it. He says; “No Mama, JR is just a girl but Baby J and me are brothers. I’m going to play cowboys and baseball. I’m even going to let him play with my Joes; we’re going to be best friends.”

Debbie comes into the living room and sees Blake and Justin. She asks where Brian, Ted, Ben and Michael are. Hunter had said that Ben and Michael had to get something from the store. Justin says; “Brian and Ted are at a business meeting that couldn’t wait and they will be here as soon as possible.” He doesn’t go into any details so Deb continues with, “I don’t understand. I talked to Michael almost two hours ago and he said he was on his way and what kind of business meeting do you have on Christmas day?”

Justin just looks at her and rolls his lips into his mouth, not saying anything. Once you’ve been with someone for a while you start taking on some of their characteristics. Justin doesn’t know what else to say. It sure as hell isn’t his place to tell the family what’s going on. Blake just puts his hand on his shoulder for comfort and understanding as he also knows what’s going on, having been there when Brian told Ted. He finally says; “Why don’t Blake and I set the table while we
wait for everyone?” as they try to take the focus from the missing family members.

Ben and Michael finally make it to Deb’s house. Michael’s in a bad mood so Deb can’t help asking what’s wrong with him. Ben answers that Brian hired a couple of guys to do a complete inventory of the store for Michael as a Christmas present. Ben thinks it’s a great gift as it usually takes Michael several days to do it all by himself. Debbie smiles and says; “So now you can go with me to visit Aunt Rita while Ben is at that conference this week.” Now Michael’s even more pissed; he just glares at Justin somehow thinking this is all his fault.

Deb’s still bitching that it’s not right that Brian and Ted had to have a business meeting on Christmas day as she serves hors d'oeuvres of spinach pies and stuffed mushrooms. Both Justin and Michael feel a little sick to their stomachs as time keeps ticking away with out any word from Brian and Ted and it’s starting to get dark out. Deb asks why they don’t just call them but Michael, Justin and Blake all say “NO” in unison then just look at each other, worried. Deb asks again what’s going on; she knows something is wrong and doesn’t like being kept in the dark.

Justin can’t take it so he makes his way out back for a cigarette to calm his nerves. Brian’s actually quit smoking and he knows he has to as well, but not today. Michael comes out back and stands next to Justin; he wants to be angry with him but he knows it’s not Justin’s fault. He says; “So he told you everything?”

Justin looks at him and says; “I don’t know but he told me enough. Why Michael, why did you say those things about me and Brett? You know it wasn’t true. I was always asking how Brian was, telling you how miserable I was being away from him. I would have come home as soon as you told me about the baby; I missed so much, things that I’ll never be able to make up for now.”

Michael just looks at him, truly sorry, realizing for the first time that this wasn’t about him; that he really interfered in their relationship and that they love each other very much and his petty jealousy was just that. “Things just got out of control and a few little white lies turned into this huge mess and I guess I started believing some of it was true. I didn’t think Brian would want the baby and Lindsay, once she found out, wanted the baby so much. You know she wanted Brian to be JR’s father, not me. I guess I was just jealous of everything - Brian, the baby, you being in Hollywood; I just felt left behind.”

“No, I don’t hate you. I even understand you a little. What I don’t understand is why you would do this when you have your own family with Ben. You know what a wonderful high it is to be in love with someone and be loved in return. Why would you try and take that away from Brian?”

“I always wanted it to be me. I really thought that it would be once you were gone and... Well, Ben’s sick, he’s been sick for a while now and I don’t think he has much time.”

“I’m so sorry, Michael. I didn’t know.”

“No one does. He wants it that way. You know, to go out with dignity and pride.”
Brian, Ted and Ben are standing, looking out the back windows, watching Justin and Michael. They’re shocked when the two of them turn and hug each other, holding each other for what seemed like an extreme amount of time so that Brian’s jealous streak is pushing its way to the forefront as he opens the door and goes to join them. He takes Michael’s hands off Justin and pulls him into himself, giving Michael a glare that says “Mine, all mine…” But the truth is he’s happy they seem to have found some kind of truce. He just wishes they could but that might take some time.

Debbie comes into the kitchen as the boys make their way back into the house; she hits Michael on the head and yells at Brian for conducting business on Christmas Day. Everything smells great as they sit down to dinner. The tension in the air seems to have disappeared. Everyone’s laughing and making jokes about the huge 14 lb turkey Debbie cooked just so she could send half of it home with Brian who is amazed at the size of it. Justin is also in heaven as his taste buds dance to the flavors of fancy pickles and olives, Caesar salad, fruit salad, green bean casserole, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, cranberries and dessert of pumpkin, pecan and apple pies.

He’s laid out on the living room floor, undoing the first button on his pants as Brian reaches down and runs his hand over his now plump belly, smirking as he says, “I’d say you feel like you’re just about at the end of your first trimester.” Their eyes meet and hold each other’s gaze as they read one another, hoping that’s exactly what each of them wants but are too afraid to ask. Brian can’t help himself as he leans down and starts to kiss his boyfriend; the passion soon starts to take over as they hear Carl clear his throat and Debbie yells; “Get a room, there’s small children here.” Gus pipes in with, “It’s okay, Grandma. I know all about the birds and the bees.” Mel just looks at all of them as Gus continues with; “Justin is the beautiful bird that sometimes flies away and Daddy’s the bee that sometimes stings you when he’s mad.”

Jamie had just finished up his bottle and was almost asleep as Brian laid him down in his crib. They both stared down at their son, amazed at how perfect he was in every way. He rarely cries and is a very easy baby to care for; both his daddies are so proud of him and could hardly believe he was made from the love they share. Justin couldn’t help letting it slip that he wished Brian had told him; that he feels so left out and wonders if Brian really wants him there or if he wishes he still didn’t know. Brian looks into Justin’s eyes, realizing how much it must have hurt him to feel so excluded from his pregnancy.

He whispers; “Justin I, I didn’t want to make you feel trapped and I thought that you found someone new, someone better than me. I know that’s no excuse. I know it was wrong but I was scared. I guess I thought you might not want me anymore. Michael told me that you were involved with Brett and that you two were living together.”

“You know that’s not true, right?”

Brian just shrugs his shoulders, saying; “I don’t know. I mean, I’d still understand if you want to go back to him.”

“Brian… Brian there never was a ‘him’. We were never a couple, he has a girlfriend. He’s been with her for years and he sees a couple of guys on the side. I told you already. I love you. I love you, always have and always will.”

“Hey, that’s my line.”

“Yeah, well, it’s true. I’ve loved you since the first night. I told Daphne that next day at school that I loved you and that I was going to live with you; spend my life with you. You’re the one that took
their time coming around, finally realizing that you loved me too. I think you do, don’t you?”

“Yes, yes, yes, you silly twat. I’ve loved you right from the start too. You know I’d do anything for you.”

“Really? You’d do anything?”

“Well, I already had your baby. What more could I do to prove that I love you?”

“I know you’re not going to understand my request but I really want you not to sell Michael and Ben’s house or the store. I understand having them put in your name and I understand having them pay rent to you and just letting Michael work at the store and not own it, but please don’t take everything way from them. It’s everything Michael’s ever accomplished. Please don’t take it all away. I don’t know the whole story or why he did what he did but I know he’s hurting and he needs help. If he doesn’t stay on track you can always sell them later on if necessary.”

“Brian just looks at Justin and says, “You know I never thought that you’d be the one sticking up for Michael, you know he wouldn’t do it for you.”

“Well, that’s all I want for Christmas.” Well, that’s not all he wants, but he’s not going to tell Brian what he wants, so it’s better left unsaid.

Brian smirks and says; “I hope that’s not all you want,” as he takes out a silver jewelry box and hands it to Justin. He looks a little nervous as he says, “I bought one for me too and had them inscribed with our names; I was hoping that maybe you’d want to go steady or something.”

“Justin smirks and says; “Or something?”

Brian’s lip quivers a little and he says; “Will you spend your life with me, sunshine?”

He pushes Brian down on the bed and attacks his man, kissing him everywhere. He can’t believe that Brian just asked him to…to…to what? He sits up and asks for clarification as he takes the bracelet out of the box, inspecting it.

Brian says,"It’s made from platinum and black leather,” as he puts it on Justin. Justin raises his eyebrows and Brian says; “Will you marry me, Justin? I’ll buy you a wedding ring as well but maybe we can have engagement bracelets until then.”

Now Justin’s back to seducing Brian again as they pull off each other’s clothing; he sees a matching box inside the drawer of the nightstand. He takes out the matching bracelet and puts it on Brian, saying; “Yes, yes I will marry you Brian Aidan Kinney.” The touch of their hands running over their skin is sending electrical charges through each other, making their need for one another burn like wildfire.

Brian’s had enough as he flips Justin on his back and pulls his pants off by the hem. Then he sheds his as well, kicking them to the side. Just looking down at his now fiancé he’s completely overcome with passion as he starts at his feet, nibbling and licking his way up the insides of Justin’s ankles, legs and thighs finally taking his legs and pushing them over his head. He kisses his perineum, eliciting moans of pleasure from his blond then he licks his way to his scrotum taking one ball into his mouth, sucking gently and then the other. Justin is wiggling and panting as he hears Brian say; “Don’t touch yourself. I want to be the only one to give you pleasure.”

Brian takes sympathy on his young lover as he run his tongue up his vein and around his ridge, finally taking all his penis into his mouth. He starts to work him with his strong jaw muscles as Justin’s moans and groans become louder, echoing through the loft. Brian shushes him to be quiet.
so they don’t wake Jamie. Justin promises to try but he’s so excited he’s not sure he can. He pulls on Brian’s hair, crying out as he starts to come, covering his mouth with his other hand. Brian crawls up his chest and gives him a taste of his own spunk.

They look into one another’s eyes, no words are necessary to express their love. Justin’s legs are still high above his head when he hears Brian open the tube of lube as he heats it up a little on his fingers. He pushes one then two fingers into Justin and is shocked at how tight he is. He feels just like he did that first night, like he’s still a virgin. Justin’s eyes glaze over at the pleasure of being stretched by Brian. He’s always been so gentle with him as he opens him up for his cock.

Finally Justin whispers; “Brian, please, I need you now…”

Brian grins as he looks up at Justin silently asking what he wants. Justin’s begged him so many times before for them to do it raw, but he wants them to be safe. He reaches in the drawer for a condom but Justin takes his hand and whispers; “I was tested last week and I’m clean.” Brian smiles and coats his shaft; Justin kisses him then he directs both their hands down to Brian’s cock to align him with his hole, never breaking eye contact. He just whispers; “I love you, Brian. I want this more than anything.”

This is so much more than either one expected as they feel each other for the first time, raw - the beautiful pleasure that ripples through them as Brian breaches that first ring of muscle. It burns and stings for just a moment until a slow steady pace is set as he slides into his channel, each thrust creating more friction and gratification as they go. It isn’t long before Brian’s driving at full force, hammering down hard, hitting Justin’s prostate like the head of a nail. Justin is getting so close as he crosses his legs around Brian’s waist. His head flails back and forth on the pillow, ready to scream out Brian’s name.

Brian leans in and nibbles at his neck, whispering in his ear; “Try not to scream and maybe we can make it to round two before Jamie’s next feeding.” Justin’s body shivers and quakes, panting, as tears run down his face, but he didn’t scream at the top of his lungs. Brian, on the other hand couldn’t stop himself from crying out even when he tried not to; he’d just missed this so much and the fact that he was claiming Justin in a way he never had before was more than he could take. Justin just laid there in bed, grinning like a fool. Finally Brian asks him about it and he just smirks and says; “It was the most beautiful feeling I’ve ever felt as you came - feeling your warmth coating my walls with your seed. I know that sounds so corny, but to me it was love. I love you so much, Brian. I’m never going to let you go.”

TBC…
Chapter Five ~ Delusions

Brian sits, stirring sugar into his coffee while he waits for Michael. They agreed to meet up the day after Christmas to sign over the house deeds, and the ownership papers for Red Cape. While waiting for him to show, Brian’s mind wanders to when Justin was in California and how much he needed and missed him. A half an hour later he’s now reading the Wall Street journal wondering what’s taking Michael so long. Finally Michael slides into the seat across from Brian, signaling Kiki for coffee. Michael’s acting slightly nervous, not really looking at Brian, like he has something to hide.

“Tell me, Michael, why did you tell me that Justin and Brett were a couple?”

He looks even more uncomfortable as he plays with his cup and saucer, trying to think of how to answer Brian’s question.

“Brian, I knew they were living together and I just figured they were a couple.”
“That’s not true. Justin was living in the pool house, not the main house and they were never a couple.”

“I guess I didn’t want you to be disappointed when Justin stayed in L.A.”
“But Justin didn’t stay in L.A. He never planned on staying in LA after the movie was made.”

“He seemed so happy there. I just assumed he’d stay.”

“You lied to me… I missed him and I needed him. You had to know that.”
“You had me, you didn’t need him.”

“I loved him, Michael. Of course I missed him. But you led me to believe that he was in a relationship with Brett. You had no right, Michael.”

“I never believed you loved him. Remember, you don’t do love. Besides, he was just going to hurt you anyways.”

“Michael, I was having his child. I needed him in my life. We missed so much time together. Time that can never be made up. He had a right to be there for me as my pregnancy developed.”

“No, Brian, don’t you see? You didn’t need him, you had me. I was the one took care of you. Besides, I didn’t even know it was his kid.”

“Who the fuck’s kid did you think it was?”

“I didn’t think you’d ever let him top. I just figured it was some trick’s kid that you didn’t even know whose it was.”

“What? You think I’d bottom for some stranger, but not my partner?”

“He’s hardly your partner.”

“Of course he’s my partner.”

Michael ignores that statement. “Well, Lindsay had already decided to raise the baby. So there wasn’t any reason to tell Justin about everything.”

“LINDSAY IS NOT RAISING MY SON!!!”

“Calm down, Brian. Now we both know the right thing to do is to let the girls have the baby. So please stop acting like you’re going to be there for the kid. It’s just a matter of time before you’ll be back to your wicked ways, nailing everything that moves.”

“Michael! Listen. Are you listening? Justin and I are a couple, and we’re going to raise our son together. So please stop acting like you know better than we do.”

“This is the first time I’ve ever been away from him since he’s been born, and I want to get back to him and Justin. So let’s make arrangements to get these papers signed.”

“I’m having second thoughts about that.”

“Hold on there, Michael.”

“What?”

“Nothing’s changed…”

“What do you mean? I figured you came to your senses and all was forgiven.”

“Why the hell would you think that?”

“Because it’s Christmas, and you can never stay mad at me for very long. At least that’s what Justin said.”

“I think you must have misunderstood. Justin begged me not to throw you out on your ass. But I
still insist you sign over the property deeds to the house and comic book store.”

“You’re kidding, right?”

“I told you yesterday I expected you to give a full confession about your gambling problem to the whole family.”

“I can’t…I won’t!”

“You can and you will… Or I will, and I’ll also evict you from your house and sell the store.”

“But you just said you told Justin I can stay.”

“You can, if you do what we discussed yesterday. I paid off your gambling debt, and saved your ass from those loan sharks. Yet you don’t seem the least bit grateful. What’s wrong with you?”

“Wrong with me?”

“Michael, I told you, you have to take responsibility for your actions. That includes acknowledging your mistakes in front of your mother and the gang. Justin asked me to let you rent back your house. But if you miss one payment you’re out. End of discussion.”

“But Ben doesn’t know…”

“He will soon enough.”

“I’m going to look like a failure.”

“Grow some balls, Michael. Just grow up.”

“What about the store?”

“I should just sell it.”

“No. No, you can’t. It’s all I have.”

“You don’t have it, Michael. Remember, I changed the locks. But Justin asked that I let you continue to work there.”

“So now I’m indebted to him? He’s going to hold this over me from now on, isn’t he?”

“No, Michael. He’s not a vindictive little asshole. That’s you.”

“If you let me sell my action figures, I bet I could pay you back a lot of the money.”

“Weren’t you listening yesterday? I told you the store and all its contents have been forfeited when I took possession of the store.”

“But I’ve had some of them since I was a little kid.”

“A grown man doesn’t need dolls.”

“Fuck you!”

“Michael, I’ll let you continue to work at the store but I’ll be hiring a new manager. Also the daily sales records will be sent to Ted at the end of each business day.”
“Why can’t I be the manager? It’s my store.”

Brian just glares at Michael to get his point across.

“Because I plan on expanding the business to sell electronics, video games and computers. There’s no way that store can turn a profit just from comics.”

“But I don’t know anything about electronics or computers.”

“Well, I guess you’ll have to learn, or you can put your application in at the Pac ‘N Save.”

“Brian…”

“I don’t care, Michael. I’m not going to own a business that doesn’t turn a profit. It just isn’t smart business practice.”

“You know, sometimes I really hate you!”

“And here I thought I just did you a favor. I should have let those thugs just murder you.”

Michael’s in shock as he just stares into space.

“Now I’m going to visit the girls. I’ll have Mel draw up all the papers transferring the title of the business and the house into my name. You can come along and get some practice confessing your sins. I don’t really care but by midnight tonight it will be common knowledge to our little gang what’s happened. So you have just about the next twelve hours to fess up.”

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“Brian, what a surprise! Where’s Baby J?”

“He’s home with his father. Now we need to talk, Lindsay.”

“You’re so right, Brian. I knew you’d come to your senses. I knew you’d never be able to handle raising a baby.”

“It’s not that kind of a talk, Linds… Justin and I are planning on raising him together, as a family.”

“Brian! That’s never going to work! I doubt that you and Justin can even stay a couple for very long. Soon you’ll be bringing home tricks and he’ll just leave you again.”

“It’s so nice to know you have so much faith in me. Christ, Lindsay, can’t you see I’ve grown up?”

“That will be the day!”

“Forget it, Lindsay. I’m not budging on this.”

“Oh, I think you will. Now I want custody of him right away, or I’ll have no choice but to take you to court.”

“You’ve got to be kidding me, Linds. You have no legal authority to take my son away from his fathers.”

“We’ll see what the court has to say once I tell them all about your hedonistic lifestyle. What with all the drinking and drugs, not to mention your wild sex parties, and multiple sex partners. Do you even know for sure that Justin’s the father?”
“Yes, Linds! I think I remember whose cock has been up my ass!”

“Ssssh! You two are going to wake the kids. It’s nap time!”

“Mel! He won’t even discuss the possibility of giving us custody of Baby J.”

“His name is Jamie. I told you that last night when I got home, Lindsay. I also told you I wouldn’t help you with this lame-brained idea of taking Brian and Justin to court. Do you really want to air our dirty laundry for all to see?”

“I can’t believe you’re taking their side!”

“Lindsay, I’m not taking anybody’s side.”

“But I want the baby! And I won’t stop until I have legal custody.”

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Justin’s still in awe as he looks down at his son cooing, kicking his feet as Justin blows raspberries on his belly. He has Justin’s creamy porcelain skin and deep blue eyes, but he’s long. He’ll be tall like Brian and he seems to have Brian’s chin; he truly is a beautiful child.

Jennifer and Molly are due any minute; they haven’t seen him yet. Yesterday was the first day they’d taken him out in public. The only reason that Debbie, Michael and the girls have seen him is because they’ve pushed their way into the loft when Brian was recuperating and Maria wasn’t able to stop them.

Brian comes in from his morning meetings with Lindsay and Michael. He’s exhausted and frustrated. It seems like neither Michael nor Lindsay would listen to reason. He’s had it with their attitudes. Michael is a totally ungrateful shit who acts like Brian owes it to him to pay his debts. And Lindsay is totally delusional if she thinks that Brian and Justin would ever consider giving up custody of their son.

He’s barely in the door when Deb comes barging through. She throws her arms around Brian, telling him what a saint he is for partnering with Michael in his comic book store.

“Partnering? What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Michael said that he and you are now partners. That you’ve decided to invest in the comic book store, basically as a silent partner.”

“Trust me, I’m not going to be very silent.”

“What’s wrong? Michael seemed so happy.”

“I can’t believe the little asshole lied to you about what’s happened.”

“What’s happened?”

“I wanted him to tell you. I think the truth would be best if it came from him.”

“Would someone please tell me what’s going on?”

“Michael has started gambling, he has a problem. He’s overextending himself financially. He’s behind on his rent payments for the shop and the house payment.”

“No. That can’t be right. Michael would never do something like that.”
“Why do you think Ted and I were late to Christmas dinner yesterday? We had to pay off a loan shark, or they were going to harm Michael.”

“I’m sorry, I just don’t believe it. Michael’s never been in trouble before.”

“You’ve always been blind when it comes to Michael’s faults. Trust me, he’s no angel.”

“He’s a good boy. He would never do something stupid like that.”

“Don’t blame me for this, Debbie! It’s not my fault that he’s never grown up, never taken responsibility for his actions!”

“What’s that supposed to mean? You think I’m to blame?”

“You raised him…”

“Meaning what?”

“I mean he’s learned from your example. Deceiving people when it suited your needs.”

“I have no idea what that means. I’ve never deceived anyone.”

“Making up some story about his father being a war hero. Really! You should have just owned up to being single and getting knocked up at seventeen.”

“How dare you!”

“Please, Deb. Everyone knows the truth. You didn’t even tell him the truth when he met his father. So what if he is a drag queen? You should have told him instead of teaching him to lie when it’s something you don’t what to admit to.”

“I can’t believe you just said that… You have no right to question me about that!”

“I’m not questioning you. I’m stating the truth. No wonder he lies to cover his ass. The only punishment he’s ever gotten is a slap across the back of his head. You didn’t do him any favors.”

“I don’t know what to say?”

“Just stop letting him slide. Make him take some responsibility.”

“I just can’t believe he did all those things you said he did.”

“Open your eyes, for Christ sake.”

“I refuse to believe you! You should be ashamed of yourself, saying such horrible things!”

With that, Debbie slaps Brian hard, across his face then storms out of the loft.

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Brian runs his hand through his hair, and contemplates making a drink. But he doesn’t. He no longer drinks when he’s stressed. He has Jamie to think about, and he refuses to become a drunk like his father.

Justin comes and stands behind him, rubbing his shoulders to help him relax, telling him to just let it go. Only Michael can change his own behavior. It’s not Brian’s fault that Michael has never learned to manage money, or face reality. He asks if he’s had lunch yet. Then he mentions that his
mom and sister will be there soon. He suggests that they order something in, or even go out to lunch.

Molly’s still infatuated with Brian as she sits and flirts with him across the table. Jennifer’s playing with Jamie, beaming. She’s so proud of her grandson. Justin is setting the table and transferring the Chinese food into serving bowls, knowing how much Brian hates to eat directly from the cartons. He’s ordered enough food to feed an army, but he loves having leftovers so he has something for his midnight snack.

Surprisingly, Brian enjoys spending the afternoon with Jennifer and Molly. Justin seems happy having everyone he loves nearby. It was really hard for him when he was in LA, with his family so far away. Especially Brian. He never dreamed that things could have changed so fast for them. It’s obvious how much they love one another. It’s just too bad that neither one of them was able to verbalize it sooner.

Everything for Brian just seems easier when Justin’s around. Even with everything that’s been happening, Brian feels grounded with Justin there with him. He feels like he can take on anything, and he’s not going to let Lindsay or Michael spoil it for him. He never was able to spend much time with Gus when he was Jamie’s age, and he feels like he missed out on so much. Just holding him close, staring into his deep blue eyes makes his heart swell and his love for him just keeps growing.

Later that afternoon the three of them are lying on the bed, napping, when Michael starts pounding on the loft door. At least he can’t just let himself in now that Brian’s taken his key back. Justin slowly gets up, making his way to the door.

“What the fuck do you want, Michael? Haven’t you caused enough problems for one day?”

“What is he?”

“He’s sleeping, Michael. Please don’t wake him or Jamie up.”

“The hell I won’t! Brian! Brian. Get up, you bastard!”

A sleepy Brian comes down the stairs from the bedroom.

“What now, Michael?”

“What did you tell my mother?”

“I believe the question should be, why didn’t you tell your mother?”

“I can’t believe you told her I have a gambling problem!”

“You do, don’t you?”

“No! No, I don’t. That was just a run of bad luck.”

“A run of bad luck that I paid off, if I remember correctly.”

“You had no right telling her that.”

“We had an agreement, remember? We discussed this earlier, and you still have to sign over the store and the house to me.”

“I don’t think so…”
“What?”

“I never agreed to that. I’ve decided I’m not going to do that.”

“You owe me, Michael!”

“I’ve decided that we’ll call it even. All you have to do is give Lindsay custody of Jamie.”

“Have you lost your mind?”

“This is how I see it. You gift me the debt you paid, and give Lindsay custody or I’ll testify against you in court for her.”

“Are you actually threatening me?”

“I’m simply negotiating with you.”

“There’s a name for what you’re doing, Michael, and it’s called extortion.”

“Call it what you will, you know the terms of the agreement. Take it or leave it.”

“I’m not afraid of you or Lindsay.”

“What? You’re making a mistake, Brian. You’re going to lose both your sons.”

“I doubt that. I doubt that you two can actually afford to hire a lawyer. So take me to court. But you won’t win.”

“You wouldn’t chance losing your sons.”

“Try me… Now I hope you know what a big mistake you’re making.”

“That’s it? You’re not even going to consider it?”

“Get out… I don’t even know you anymore.”

With that Justin opens the loft door and ushers Michael out, shaking his head.

“Unbelievable… How can he think he’ll ever win?”

“He’s an even bigger fool than I thought. Let him and Linds take me to court. No judge will ever take Jamie away from you. Even if they have a case against me, you’re the perfect father. So let them try.”

Again Brian considers pouring himself a drink but stops… He checks Jamie and he’s fast asleep in his crib, sucking his thumb.

“Come here.”

Brian looks up at Justin and sees that lustful look in his eyes. It going straight to his cock and soon he’s sporting a woody. He makes sure Jamie’s all tucked in and comfortable. Then he makes his way up the stairs to the bed, pushing Justin down on his back.

“God, I missed you so much.”

Justin’s eyes sparkle as a grin spreads across his face. Soon Brian is running kisses around his neck, making him wiggle and squirm from Brian’s breath on his skin. He grinds himself against
Brian’s cock, loving the feelings surging through his groin. Justin’s in heaven knowing that he and Brian are now committed to one another and have decided to give up condoms and finally be together raw.

Justin’s eyes have glassed over and he’s drooling as he chants Brian’s name, anticipating all the beautiful sensations as their flesh glides against each other in the most intimate way.

“Brian, Brian, Brian…”

Brian stares deep into his eyes as he aligns himself with his rosebud, gently nudging him with his plump head, teasing him as he starts to penetrate him. Justin’s now panting as he feels Brian fill his channel, caressing his tight walls, sending ripples of pleasure right to his fingertips and toes. Brian increases his thrusts, loving the silky sensations as they send wave after wave spiraling through them both.

They’re both on sensory overload, no longer able to hold back their orgasms. Justin clamps down hard on Brian’s dick as he shakes uncontrollably, feeling the vibrations pulsate through him. Brian holds off as long as he can as Justin’s walls contract and release him, pumping him until his cum coats Justin’s warm walls.

“Oh God, Brian… I love being able to feel your warm spunk deep inside of me. I love the sensation of it running down my ass onto my thighs.”

Brian quickly rolls him over spreading his cheeks, lapping at his sweet juices. His tongue is so warm and slick that it brings Justin to climax again, shooting across the sheets below.

TBC…
~ Payback’s A Bitch!

Chapter Summary

The tables turn after Michael rejects Brian’s offer.

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 4062
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: bigj52

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Summary: The tables turn after Michael rejects Brian’s offer.

Chapter Six ~ Payback’s A Bitch!

“I’m sorry Mr. Montgomery, there must be some mistake. I personally wrote out the mortgage payment checks, and my partner mailed them.”

“Mr. Bruckner, do you have any idea how often I hear someone who’s behind in their payments claim they mailed them, and they’re just lost in the mail?”

“No, I’m sure that must be the case. How about I just write you another check and have the first one canceled.”

“That would be great, but I don’t make personal visits to our customers when they’re only thirty days late. The next payment is due in two weeks, and at that point you will be ninety days past due. Are you able to write me a check for the last two months, as well as your next payment?”

“What? No, no, that can’t be right.”

“Mr. Bruckner, at this point I can’t accept partial payment. You will need to bring your account up to date within the next two weeks or I’ll have no choice but to start foreclosure proceedings.”

Ben’s literally dumbfounded. He just stares at Mr. Montgomery in shock. He’s wondering what the hell is going on, and why Michael never made the payments. After the mortgage representative leaves Ben calls the bank to see if the checks have been cashed, and check the bank balance.

Ben hopes he’s overacting, but he’s so mad at Michael right now he could kill him. But by the time Michael finally gets home at eight thirty, Ben’s pacing the living room, worried that something has happened.

“I’ve left a dozen messages for you to call, and the shop closed at six. Michael, where have you been?”
“Oh, I had to work late. I got a new shipment in, and I turned off my phone so I wouldn’t be disturbed.”

“But I called the store phone and it just rang and rang.”

“Really? I didn’t hear it. The ringer must have been turned down low.”

Ben just stares at his partner, he knows that look. It’s the look Michael gets when he’s lying. He doesn’t know what’s going on, but he plans on getting to the bottom of this.

“Dinner’s getting cold. Let’s eat and then we need to talk.”

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Brian and Justin have turned off their cell phones and unplugged the house phone. They’re ready to just relax and enjoy each other, leaving the outside world behind. It has been a stressful couple of days with all the unreasonable demands being placed on them from their supposed friends.

But would friends really treat you so horribly? Taking advantage of you when you go out of the way to help them, literally saving their life. Or placing conditions on their love and friendship? Wanting to take your child away, saying you’re an unfit parent?

Do they even know you anymore? Can’t they see all the changes you’ve gone through? How your life has improved? How you’re making a commitment to your partner? But, most of all since your son’s been born you’re putting his needs first? Finally growing into the man that Justin’s always believed you could be.

Maybe it’s time that they stood on their own two feet? Finally stop expecting you to come to their rescue. Always bailing them out when they’re in over their heads or can’t make ends meet. It hurts never being appreciated, and always being expected to save the day. Sometimes the best thing you can do for someone is to let them pull their own weight.

So with the world safely locked outside the loft door the two of them can finally spend quality time together. It’s been so long since they’ve been together. Okay, maybe not totally alone together. After all they still have Jamie, and there’s no way they’ll ever let anyone take him away. They’re a family now, united as one.

The three of them are all curled up on the sofa, snuggled down under a blanket, watching an old James Dean movie. Justin’s stomach growls, making Brian laugh; he always seems to be hungry. As Justin looks through the cupboards for a snack, he’s surprised to find a new package of Oreos. He pours himself a glass of milk, while waiting for Jamie’s bottle to warm.

Brian’s looks a little guilty, as Justin brings their evening snacks over and places them on the coffee table.

“I see you found my guilty pleasure.”

“Oh? I thought these were for Gus.”

Brian laughs. “When I was pregnant I always seemed to have a craving for Oreos, and of course they reminded me of you. How much I missed you.”

“God, Brian. Why didn’t you just call me? Tell me what you were going through?”

“I couldn’t… I didn’t want you to only want me because of the baby. Besides, you had your new
career to think about, and then there was Brett. I thought you were in love with him.”

“I just want to kill Michael for lying to you about that. He had no right. He knew the truth, about me and about you and the baby. But he just lied to both of us out of petty jealousy. God, I wish I had been here with you, taking care of you. I love you so much.”

“I know, Sunshine. You know I feel the same way.”

Justin lets it slide that Brian still has a hard time saying ‘I love you.’ He hopes that it will come with time, once Brian is more secure in their relationship.

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There’s pounding on the front door to Ben and Michael’s house. They’re still finishing dinner so Ben hasn’t had time to question Michael about the house payments.

“Ma. What are you doing here?”

“I came by to see what was going on with the store?”

“I thought that you said you and Brian were partners?”

“I did… Why?”

“Because there’s a big ‘closed’ sign on the door, and an ‘out of business’ sign in the window.”

“Michael? I thought you said you worked late tonight? What’s going on?”

“Okay. I wasn’t at work today. I had a few things I needed to do.”

“You closed the store?”

“No, no, never. I don’t know what that’s about.”

“I looked in the window and all the racks and shelves were empty. The only thing there was your computer sitting on top of an empty display case.”

Both Ben and Michael shout, “What?”

Now Ben’s getting angry. “What’s going on, Michael?”

“I’m not sure, but I think I know who to ask.”

With that he grabs his cell phone and calls Brian. The phone just rings, and rings. Then he tries the landline, more ringing. Angry, he calls Justin’s cell, more of the same… Fuming he decides to call Ted.

“Ted. Teddy, it’s me, Michael. What’s going on at my store?”

“Well, it’s not really your store anymore.”

“Yes, it is. Brian agreed to pay the back rent on the store and the house payments. Just ask him, it was part of our agreement.”

“You mean part of the agreement that you refused to sign?”

“No, ah… I mean, I still wanted him to bring those accounts up to date. I just didn’t want to sign
over the house deed, or the store lease, and business papers.”

“Well, Michael. I’m pretty sure Brian assumed the agreement was off when you refused to sign the paperwork.”

“Oh my God… But you have all the merchandise, right? Thank God. When can I come by and get it?”

“All the merchandise has been removed as collateral for your unpaid loan to the loan sharks from Brian. And your landlord stopped by just after everything was packed up and taken away. He changed the locks, saying that you were in breach of your lease. You owe him for the last four months’ worth of rent. He evicted you from the premises.”

“Oh my God… All my merchandise. I can sell it to help get caught up on my payments.”

“It isn’t yours, Michael. You forfeited it when you decided not to sign the store over to Brian.”

“That fucker stole my stuff! I’m calling the cops if he doesn’t return it, all of it.”

“You want to explain to the police how you borrowed money from a loan shark to gamble illegally?”

“This isn’t fair! Goddamn it! I’m talking to Brian! He would never do this to me. I’m his best friend!”

Ted says sarcastically, “By all means. I’m sure he’s wanting to hear from you.”

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It’s New Year’s Eve, and Gus is running around excited, waiting to go and spend the evening with Brian and Justin. He’s hoping that his dad will let him stay up for the big countdown at midnight. Mel and Lindsay never let him stay up that late.

“Gus! Stop running in the house! And calm down, for goodness sakes!”

Now he’s skipping in the hallway singing, “I’m off to spend New Year’s Eve with Justy and Daddy, Justy and Daddy, Justy and Daddy!”

“Gus! You’re not going to see your father. That’s cancelled!”

Now Gus is screaming and crying and running away from Lindsay, shouting, “Why? Why? Why?”

“Because I said so…”


“I don’t want you seeing him right now!”

“No! No! No! Daddy said I could spend New Year’s Eve at his house! I want Daddy! I want Daddy!”

“Gus! Just stop. You’re giving me a headache!”

“I HATE YOU!”

With that he runs into his bedroom and slams the door. He can be heard crying through the door,
sniffling and calling out to his father.

Melanie is standing in the entryway of the house with the mail, reading the legal papers sent from Charles Murphy and Associates. He’s a very well-known attorney that specializes in custody battles concerning gay and lesbian couples. He’s the best in his field, and he’s never lost a case. He’s outrageously expensive. Mel can’t believe what she’s reading. It seems that Brian has beaten them to the punch, charging Lindsay with slander, and for threatening to take Jamie away from him and Justin.

Not only that, but he’s also suing for shared custody of Gus. It seems that Charles has done his research. He knows that Mel never filed the legal papers relinquishing Brian’s rights to Gus. Basically, she is not recognized as Gus’s legal parent, Brian is. And he now wants shared custody, and considering all the financial support Brian has given them over the years he will probably win in court. Mel feels sick to her stomach, but she also thinks Brian has become a good parent and there really isn’t any reason he shouldn’t have shared custody.

“Oh! My! God! Oh my God, Lindsay!”

“Mel, you’re home.”

“Listen, you’re not going to like this but…”

“What? What is it?”

“Brian’s hired the best gay custody attorney in the state, and he’s suing for shared custody of Gus.”

“Well he can’t. We have legal papers.”

“No, actually we don’t”

Mel sits Lindsay down and explains to her that she never got around to filing the paperwork. She never thought that it would be a problem. Because in the early years of Gus’s life, Brian only made random appearances. He only showed up for holidays, birthdays and special occasions. But in the last couple of years Brian has visited frequently, often takes Gus on outings, even letting him spend the night and he has taken him for weekends as well. Lindsay was the one pushing for Brian to play a more active role in his son’s life, and he has.

It wasn’t until Brian became pregnant that Lindsay got the idea that she wanted another child with him. And in her mind it made perfect sense, that she and Mel would raise the new baby. Even though Brian always said right from the start that he wasn’t interested in giving up the baby, Lindsay was sure that once the baby was born he wouldn’t have the patience or desire to be a fulltime father.

She really believed that it was in Baby J’s best interest to be raised by Mel and her. She’s now starting to understand that she’s been pushing too hard, and discounting Brian and Justin’s feelings. She’d be outraged if someone tried to take Gus or JR away from her and Mel, and now Brian wants shared custody. In her heart she knows that it isn’t right to let Michael have his parental rights, yet deny Brian his. She never thought how this might affect Brian or Gus’s feelings, and she realizes that what she and Mel have done isn’t right.

She can’t help wondering what it would mean if Brian and Justin shared custody of Gus. Would it change Brian’s financial responsibility for Gus? Michael doesn’t help support Jenny Rebecca, he’s never contributed to her welfare and he takes her several nights a week. It’s actually come in handy when Gus would spend the weekend with Brian, and JR with Michael. It’s given them some much-
needed time together to work on their relationship.

Oh God. What if Brian brings up the on-again, off-again relationship between her and Mel. This could look bad in court, and the truth is things have been shaky between the two of them this last year. She had hoped that having Baby J would bring them closer, they seem to be drifting apart lately. As much as she wants to blame Brian, accusing him of being unfit, having multiple sex partners, doing drugs and drinking, wasn’t fair.

She knows in her heart that all changed the day he found out he was pregnant. Actually if she was honest, she noticed a change after his cancer scare. And then when Justin was in California, he didn’t really go back to his wild ways. He focused on his work, growing Kinnetik’s clientele and landing some major accounts. He hasn’t really been the sexy playboy for a couple years now.

She sinks down on the bed feeling slightly sick to her stomach, she’s treated Brian poorly as of late. Accusing him of all kinds of behaviors that no longer apply, because in her mind she never thought that he would grow up, but that’s exactly what he did. Now she has to face the truth, she owes him an apology. She’s not only been mean, and rude, she’s actually threatened him when she called him unfit.

“Mel, you know Brian really has changed a lot recently. He’s a good father to Gus, and he’s probably a good father to Jamie as well.”

“I know, Linds. That’s why I didn’t want to go along with your ridiculous idea of taking him to court.”

“So these papers we received in the mail, do we have to go to court or can we handle this in a hearing or something?”

“We’ll still need to hire an attorney to represent us, I can’t represent myself. But hopefully Brian will be reasonable and be willing to settle this out of court.”

“He must really hate me right now.”

“Well, I’m sure you’re not his favorite person right now. But I think he’s more upset with Michael. I heard from Ted, that Brian and he had to meet with some loan shark and pay off Michael’s debt. Then Michael backed out of the agreement him and Brian had. It’s a real mess.”

“I knew they were angry with each other but I didn’t know why.”

“Michael’s really screwed up this time, he’s gambling. He’s actually gambled away most of the investment in the house, and Ted said that the store’s landlord has evicted him for non-payment of rent.”

“Oh God. I guess were lucky that we don’t depend on him for financial support for Jenny Rebecca.”

“Yeah… But… My guess is our situation with Brian will be changing once he’s granted part-time custody. After all he’s not obligated to pay us for Gus, especially if he lives with Brian half the time.”

“My God, Mel. What are we going to do? We’ve come to depend on the financial support from Brian.”

“All we can do is wait and see.”
“Lindsay! What is Gus screaming about? I can’t take it. It’s driving me crazy!”

“He’s mad because I told him he can’t spend New Year’s Eve with Brian and Justin.”

“Why in the fuck would you do that? He doesn’t need any more reasons to be angry with us, and that is just the kind of thing that won’t sit well with the court. Denying him his agreed visitation rights is a big mistake.”

“I was just so mad at Brian. I wanted to punish him for not giving us Baby J.”

“He’s name is Jamie!”

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“Michael Charles Novotny! How could you be so stupid?”

“Ma. I already feel bad, do you have to rub it in?”

“You need to apologize to Brian, and then beg him to reconsider his original offer.”

“I can’t… I said some really bad things.”

“You’re losing your house, your business, and you basically have no income.”

“I really thought that I could win it back. I thought that it was just a run of bad luck. I was sure I’d be able to get back on my feet. I just needed a couple more good hands.”

“You know that’s the exact description of a compulsive gambler. I didn’t believe Brian when he told me. I was so mad at him. Now I see I should have be grateful for all his generosity.”

“I know, ma. But what can I do now? Ben’s so angry with me I think he might actually leave me. I really fucked up this time.”

“What I don’t understand is why didn’t you accept Brian’s offer? So you wouldn’t own your house anymore. But you’d still have a place to live and Brian would have paid your back payments. And the same with the comic book store. The ideas he had might have really brought in business for you. So you wouldn’t own it but he’d never fire you either. You wouldn’t have to worry about how you were going to pay your bills.”

“Really, ma. Do you have to make me feel even more stupid than I already do?”

“Yes! I think I do! What is wrong with you?”

“I’ve lost everything… I’m destitute…”

“Stop feeling sorry for yourself and help me bring in the boxes from the car. We can at least start packing, and you can stay in your old bedroom.”

“Thanks, ma. I don’t know what I’d do if it wasn’t for you.”

“But it looks like Hunter will have to sleep on the pull-out sofa. We just don’t have any more room. And I won’t ask Emmett to move. Although he probably will, considering how crowded it’s going to be.”

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“You’re actually buying a birthday cake?”

“Yeah. It’s Jamie’s first month’s birthday on January first.”

“Ah ha. You just want to eat that chocolate torte.”

“Maybe.”

“Brian. You’re buying champagne that costs a hundred dollars a bottle?”

“It’s New Year’s Eve. I’m also buying filet mignon and shrimp cocktail.”

“Umm. That sounds great.”

“You’re sure it’s okay that we have New Year’s Day dinner with my mother.”

“Yes, dear. But shouldn’t we bring her some expensive champagne too?”

“I really do love you, you’re the best.”

“What about Molly? Is she going to feel left out?”

“Let’s see… How about we get that box of Godiva chocolates?”

“The huge one?”

“Yeah…”

“Then you and Molly can lay on the floor in a sugar coma the rest of the night.”

“Yep. I knew you’d understand.”

“And yet you never gain weight.”

“It must be our strenuous sex life. They say you use all your muscles during sex.”

“What would I do without my personal, public service announcements?”

“I’m brilliant.”

“Ah ha. Oh, we need to stop at the travel agency on the way home.”

“You’re going on a business trip? I thought that you said you were off work until March. That you’d just be working from home when absolutely necessary.”

“It’s not business. I thought that we could use some time away from all this freezing weather. I’ve rented a condo in Florida until the middle of February.”

“Really?”

“Yep. Right on the ocean. Merry Christmas, Sunshine.”

“Brian! Oh God! I really do love you!”

“Well, we can only stop answering our phones or the door for so long.”

“You really are the best!”
“Okay, come on, come on, come on. Let’s get out of this store, and back home so you can properly thank me.”

“Oh Brian!”

“I know, I know, I know… I love you too, Sunshine.”

“Now make sure he’s all bundled up, so he won’t get cold.”

“Brian. If he was any more bundled up he’d pass out from heat stroke.”

“Remind me to spank you when we get home… Smart Ass!”

“I love you!”

“I know…”

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There’s a note taped to the loft door, and Brian can tell from the handwriting that it’s from Michael. Justin notices the smile from Brian’s face disappear as he takes the note off the door. Justin remains silent while Brian unlocks the door, then he carries Jamie over to the sofa. Brian’s sets the groceries on the kitchen counter then walks over to the liquor cart. Brian’s resistance is waning as he pours himself several fingers of Beam. Justin is watching Brian out of the corner of his eye while fussing with all the layers of clothing on Jamie, removing them.

“There we are. There’s actually a baby boy under all those scarfs, blankets, and snowsuits.”

Then they hear a knock on the loft door. Brian braces himself for a confrontation with Michael as the loft door is pulled open. Then there’s a blur as Gus runs into Brian’s arms now crying again, “Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!”

“Hey, hey there sonny boy what’s wrong?”

“Oh Daddy, I need you! I love you Daddy!”

“I’m right here Gus. There’s no reason to cry. Come on now, let me see you smile.”

Now he’s barely able to talk he’s crying so hard. “Mom… Mom… Mommy said… She said I… She said I couldn’t see you…”

Now he’s truly crying as tears stream down his face. “Daddy I love you!”

“I love you too Gus!” Brian repeats over and over again, as Gus continues to cry. Looking over Gus’s shoulder, Brian glares at Mel questionably.

“I’m sorry, Brian. Lindsay was in one of her moods. But I convinced her that it wasn’t fair to not let Gus have New Year’s Eve with the two of you.”

“You two really shouldn’t put him in the middle of our disagreements. He’s too young to understand.”

“I know. I tried to explain it to Lindsay. I’m sorry for all this drama.”

“Jennifer’s invited us for dinner on New Year’s Day. How about you let us drop him back after dinner tomorrow?”
“Sure, that’s fine.”

She walks over and runs her hand through Gus’s hair. “You want to spend tomorrow with your Daddy and Justy? Then come home before bedtime?”

Gus is still sniffling, as he nods his head ‘Yes’. Brian reaches down and wipes his tears away. “Now say good bye to Mama.”

“Bye Mama, and Happy New Year!”

Now his tears are almost forgotten. It’s amazing how resilient he is as he kisses Mel good-bye. Justin moves over to Gus, helping him out of all his layers of clothing, removing mittens, scarves, and his boots and snowsuit.

“Justy, can we have cocoa? I’m freezing and Mama makes it for me to help me get warm.”

“Sure thing, that sounds good. I think I’ll have some too. Just let me get Jamie’s bottle on to warm first.”

“Can we have Oreos too?”

“Yep. We just bought a new package at the store. They somehow magically disappeared last night.”

Brian blushes. “You know I had help.”

“Daddy? I get to stay up until midnight, right?”

“If you can say awake, you can stay up.”

“Maybe I should take a nap after we have cocoa and Oreos?”

“That’s not a bad idea. We all might need a nap.”

“Can I give Jamie his bottle?”

“How about you sit next to me, and you can hold his bottle?”

“While I wait for my cocoa to cool?”

“That sounds perfect.”

TBC…
Chapter Seven ~ With Friends Like These…

Brian walks Gus up to the door when dropping him off from his visit. Mel answers and asks Brian to come in so they can talk. He waves to Justin to bring Jamie and come inside for a few minutes.

“Mama, Mama! I saw fireworks! And I got to drink something bubbly at midnight!”

Lindsay didn’t even give them a chance to explain before she went off on them, accusing them of bad parenting. Her anger is showing as well as her bitter tongue.

“Brian, how could you? We trusted you with him on New Year’s Eve and this is how you behave! Shame on you, you should know better.”

“Lindsay, stop! Just stop! He had a glass of ginger ale and it tickled his nose. He thought it was funny.”

“But still, you kept him up until midnight, and took him out in freezing weather down to the river to see the fireworks. You really can’t help yourself from using bad judgment, can you?”

“First of all, I resent you questioning my judgment and behavior! Second of all, he took a long nap, and we had a late dinner. Then we read stories, and finally we watched the fireworks from the loft windows. In case you forgot, being up high on the top floors has its advantages. We can clearly see the fireworks over the river.”

“Oh… I wasn’t thinking.”

“No, you never are. You always assume the worst and I’m sick of it.”
Mel breaks in trying to keep the peace, and steer the conversation back to the subject at hand.

“What we wanted to talk to you about is… Well… We got the summons from your attorney.”

“Ah ha, and now you want to talk!”

“There’s no reason for us to be fighting. I’m sure Lindsay feels bad for jumping to conclusions.”

“I bet!”

“We are hoping that we can discuss all this without having to go to court. I’m sure you’d rather we handled this privately.”

“Not on your life!”

“Brian! Brian, be reasonable.”

“Fuck you, Lindsay! Besides I thought you wanted to take me to court?”

“Mel’s tried to talk some sense into me.”

“How’s that working for you?”

“You can be so arrogant! God, I really hate you sometimes!”

“Yeah! Well who doesn’t?”

“Brian, please…”

“What? You and Mikey scared of big bad Brian now?”

“Brian please. We may have over-reacted.”

“Ya think?”

“Like I was saying. I’m sure both you and Lindsay would rather sit down and discuss this rationally.”

“No. I don’t. I want this little talk in front of a judge. I don’t trust either of you right now. And I’d like to hear what a judge has to say.”

“Brian please. We can save a lot of money if we work things out without going to court.”

“Yeah. I remember how things worked out for Mikey when you talked it all out without a judge.”

“Brian, please be reasonable.”

“Mel, I’m not the fool you took Michael for. So, no thank you. I want my lawyer there. I want it all spelled out in writing and filed in court. All nice and legal.”

Then Lindsay says in her sickeningly sweet voice, “Brian, I was thinking maybe we could share custody of both Gus and Jamie? That way you’d have more free time, and wouldn’t feel trapped with a baby.”

“But I don’t feel TRAPPED! I love being his father! Nice try though.”

“You are being so unreasonable! Why won’t you share him with me?”
“You mean us, right? You and Mel? Or are you planning on being a single parent again?”

“You’re making me so mixed up right now.”

Now she starts to cry, turning on the tears, knowing how that usually gets to Brian and makes him give in to her. But this time he just stares at her. Unmoved.

“Okay, I understand but how about this? Maybe we could have another child together? I really want to have another baby with you.”

“Not on your life…”

“Brian, please.”

“No Linds. One is more than enough.”

“So you’re never going to have any more children?”

“I can’t say what the future holds. But what I can say is, I won’t be having any more children with you.”

“You’re being totally unreasonable! I hate you!”

“Well, I see we’ve come full circle. So I guess this conversation is over. I’ll contact my attorney and have him set up a time for a hearing in front of a judge.”

“No. Wait. Please. Please, Brian?”

“Good bye, ladies. Come on, Sunshine, let’s take Jamie home.”

“Wait! Can I at least hold him before you go?”

“No.”

“Brian!”

“No. I don’t want you anywhere near him.”

After they leave Mel closes the front door, then turns and glares at Lindsay.

“Well, that went well…”

“I’m sorry, Mel. I…”

“I thought you were going to let me do the talking?”

“I know. I… I just thought Brian would understand.”

“Understand! He’s even angrier with us than he was before he got here. What possessed you to push him so hard? We wanted him to forget about going to court, not challenge him to sue us.”

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“They’ve really gone too far this time. Can you believe she want to share custody of Jamie? Then she had the nerve to ask me to father another child with her. She’s out of her mind.”

“I know. I know. Let’s put Jamie down and then we can relax and just watch an old movie or go to
“You always know what I need.”

“I was curious myself though, how you felt about having another child.”

“Oh Yeah?”

Justin nods, smiling his sunshine smile as he bats his eyelashes.

“Well I have a feeling that won’t be a question much longer, if we continue to skip the condoms.”

Justin gets a huge grin on his face as he saunters across the living room towards Brian.

“Come here, old man.”

He takes Brian’s hand and leads him into the bedroom. The two of them fall onto the mattress, barely able to stop touching each other. They hurry, pulling each other’s shirts off, struggling with unbuttoning and zipping one another’s pants. Brian has Justin nailed to the bed as he reaches down, pulling each sock off one by one. Justin’s skin soon has a glossy shine, as his breathing increases and he’s overcome with desire.

After running kisses around his jaw, Brian licks a path down Justin’s chest. He dips his tongue into his belly button, tickling him, making him squirm and giggle. Justin arches his back, pushing his plump cock towards Brian’s warm inviting mouth. Brian teases him by running his tongue around his crown before engulfing him. He slides his lips all the way down, deep throating his firm member. Justin moans his pleasure as his eyes glaze over. Soon he’s panting as Brian pulls him closer and closer.

“Oh Brian. Yes, yes, that feels great! More, more, more.”

Several more pumps and Justin shoots his sweet cream down Brian’s throat. His limbs tremble as his orgasm spirals through him. He hasn’t even caught his breath when Brian flips him over onto his stomach and spreads his cheeks. Soon his pucker is coated with saliva while Brian’s tongue dips, then plunges into him. Brian pulls him up until he’s kneeling with his ass in the air and his shoulders and head resting on the mattress.

Brian slips his dick between his cheeks and pushes in, loving the beautiful sensations of Justin’s warm wet ravine. He glides deep into him, caressing his prostate with his plump head. Justin resumes his moaning as Brian sets a steady pace, both lost in each other as their nerve endings spark, making them quake with pleasure. Since they’ve gone raw, they’re no longer able to hold back their climax like they used to. The silky sensations are overwhelming, as they get lost in the abyss, falling over the edge.

Brian collapses, resting his head in the center of Justin’s back, while they wait for their breathing to return to normal. Justin’s still moaning Brian’s name, pledging his love, babbling incoherently as he rides out the last waves of his orgasm. They roll onto their sides as Brian spoons him, knowing how much he loves it when Brian stays inside of him until he falls asleep.

“I love you, Brian, and I want to have your child more than anything.”

“I love you too, Justin.”

A huge grin spreads across his face knowing how hard it was for Brian to say that. He’ll remember this night for the rest of his life, especially after he learns that it was tonight that they conceived
their next child.

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Michael and Ben are getting settled into Michael’s old room. It was a long day packing and moving all their things. They rented a storage locker for everything that they couldn’t move into Deb’s. If it wasn’t January they might have had a yard sale, and sold a lot of their junk. But they decided to wait until spring hoping that their situation might change. It’s crowded at Deb’s and Hunter isn’t taking all the changes very well. It’s not because he has to sleep on the pull-out sofa. It’s about not feeling safe and secure in his place in their family. He can’t help thinking that if they couldn’t keep it together having to move in with Deb, maybe they won’t be able to continue to be his foster parents.

With all the unfortunate changes they’re going through right now, Ben knows that it’s not a good time to tell Michael that he’s taking a semester off from teaching. He hasn’t been feeling very well, and his doctor told him that it was a good idea to get lots of rest, and eliminate all his stress. He was waiting until after the holiday to give Michael the bad news, his t-cell count is low, very low. They’ve changed his meds, but that doesn’t seem to be helping. And as much as he hates to acknowledge it, he’s getting sicker, and he knows that he might not have much time left.

He had hoped that buying the house would leave them in a better financial situation, and Michael would always have a place to live. That his life insurance policy from the university would help towards the mortgage. But now that they’ve lost the house, they’ve had to dip into Ben’s savings just to survive. Ben’s worried that Michael will have to spend the remaining funds on his funeral, and then there’s Hunter.

He probably won’t take losing Ben very well. It will highlight his own illness and might make him depressed, deciding to go back out on his own. Hunter and Michael aren’t close like he and Ben. They tend to bang heads, and it’s obvious that Michael treats JR better than Hunter, instead of equally. Michael’s never really thought of Hunter as his real son, he’s more like an obligation than a member of the family. The main reason they decided to become Hunter’s foster parents was because Ben felt a connection to Hunter, not Michael.

And let’s face it, Michael’s in no position to care for another person. He’s never even provided financial support for Jenny Rebecca, let alone Hunter. It makes Ben sad to think that Hunter might be back on his own, back on the streets. He worries that he might not keep up his meds. He doesn’t know how he’ll pay for his meds. He won’t have any health insurance, of course neither will Michael. He never bought health insurance for himself when he owned Red Cape. He always felt like it was too expensive, and the university doesn’t recognize same-sex couples. This is just the kind of stress Ben’s doctors warned him against.

“You boys getting all settled?”

“Yeah, ma. When’s dinner? I’m starving.”

As much as Debbie loves Michael, she can’t help bristling at Michael’s tone of voice. It would be nice if they contributed towards the grocery bill. Having three more mouths to feed will soon be taking a toll on her financially.

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Brian and Justin have just left Dr. Burns’ office. It was Jamie’s one month well-baby checkup. His appetite is good and he’s gaining weight as expected; his heart, lungs, ears, eyes and breathing are all normal. The doctor checked him for infections, thrush, muscle strength, as well as jaundice,
rashes and birthmarks, and gave him his shots. The doctor asks how his sleep patterns are and if he seemed alert and content when awake. If he calms when hearing their voices, and follows movements with his eyes. Basically Jamie is doing great and is in the top 95 percentile as compared to other babies.

Brian and Justin leave the doctor’s office happy and proud. They got the okay for him to travel to Florida for an extended vacation. Dr. Burns even recommended a pediatrician to see while they’re away. It’s lunch time and Justin suggests that they stop by the diner. It will be the first time since he’s been back from California and they’d like to see how Deb’s doing. Things were a little rocky the last time they saw her. Of course Debbie’s all smiles as she coos, making baby noises, holding Jamie.

Brian is relieved that there’s no residual anger after the last visit when she slapped him across the face, and stormed out of the loft. He knows how hard it was for her to hear the truth about Michael’s gambling. But she needed to know the truth. Although it would have been better if Michael had confided in her, instead of making Brian give her the bad news.

“So, how is he?”

“Not so good. But that’s to be expected. He’s still angry, and he feels like you stole his comics and action figures.”

“I’m sure he does. You know I tried to help him, Deb? I really did. He was in so much denial, and he’s ungrateful for the help I gave him.”

“I just couldn’t give him any more money. Not without him conceding something on his part.”

“I know, Brian. He’s a stubborn fool. He still won’t admit that he did anything wrong. He’s so livid about the foreclosure on the house, and he was evicted by his landlord at the shop.”

“I had nothing to do with that, Deb. It’s not like I sent the bank to take his house away from him and Ben. He brought all that on himself.”

“I know… I just wish he could find a job. It doesn’t help that he quit the Big Q without giving notice, and of course he can’t collect unemployment because he was self-employed.”

“I’m sorry he’s struggling so hard.”

“I know, baby. Is there anyway the two of you could get together and write another issue of Rage? I’ve asked him to talk to you, but he refuses.”

“That’s not going to happen!”

“Brian! I was talking to Sunshine. So what do you think? It would do wonders for his self-esteem, he’s so depressed.”

Brian can’t help but butt in. “No way, after what he already did to Justin.”

“What did he do to Justin?”

“He embezzled all of Justin’s share of the profits from Rage for his gambling debt.”

“Brian, would you please let me talk.”

“Oh! My! God! Is that true, baby?”
“Yeah. I’m afraid so.”

“That little Asshole! He let me believe that you wouldn’t do it because of some vendetta against him.”

“Yeah! Poor wittle Mikey! Fucking Asshole!”

“Brian!”

“Sorry, Sunshine. But it’s true.”

“He’s really mad at me too. He asked me if he, Ben and Hunter could live in Carl’s house, rent free of course.”

“Figures.”

“Brian.”

“Carl wouldn’t hear of it. He’s fixing it up to rent out. Besides, I think, he thinks Michael would never move out once he moves in.”

“Gee, I wonder why?”

“Brian.”

“I’m sorry. I guess I’m a little angry myself.”

“That’s understandable.”

“Deb. Your order’s up.”

Brian’s back to having a big salad, while Justin has a greasy cheeseburger and fries. Some things never change. Jamie’s getting fussy, so Deb heats up his bottle. It’s getting a little busy in the diner now that it’s lunchtime. All the guys coming in can’t help checking out Brian, staring at him as he holds Jamie. Justin’s so proud to be the one who fathered Jamie. He practically has his chest puffed out, feeling like the cock of the walk. Most of the guys already figured that out, but a few are more than impressed as Brian rarely, if ever, lets anyone top him. That’s why his pregnancy came as such a surprise once he started showing.

Justin’s beaming smiling his big sunshine smile, it’s contagious as Brian can’t help but smile back at him. He’s happy, truly happy for once in his life; he finally feels content having Justin back home to stay. Just knowing that they’ve finally made a commitment to one another grounds him in a way he never knew it could.

Brian gets ready to pay the check and motions to Deb. He wants to tell her that they’ll be out of town for a while so she doesn’t send in the storm troopers when they’re not around. As they’re bundling up Jamie for the brisk weather outside, Brian’s phone rings. It’s Charles Murphy, his attorney. They’ve arranged a hearing with Mel and Lindsay for the next morning. It’s sooner than the girls wanted but Brian’s grateful, he wanted to get it out of the way before they went to Florida.

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Brian went into Kinnetik to have a staff meeting before his vacation. It’s agreed that they’ll have teleconferences weekly to keep Brian up to speed on the current advertising campaigns. He also plans on scouting out new business while he’s in Florida. He hasn’t been back into the office since
he went on maternity leave in October, having been bed-ridden the last month of his pregnancy. Ted and Cynthia have been coming to the loft to give him updates, to get his signature on important contracts and documents.

He rushes into the elevator, getting out of the brisk winter weather, happy they’ll be leaving tomorrow afternoon on vacation. The loft’s quiet as he comes in. It’s just starting to get dark out and the only light on is glowing from over the kitchen island. In the shadows he sees Jennifer rocking Jamie in her lap, giving him his bottle. He comes over and runs his hand across the top of Jamie’s head affectionately, ruffling his little tuft of hair.

He offers Jennifer a glass of merlot as he looks around to see where Justin is. Jennifer mentions that he has an upset stomach, and is taking a nap. Brian can’t help chuckling, saying that it’s probably all the greasy food he had at lunch. He invites Jennifer to stay for dinner, having picked up more than enough Thai food for him and Justin. He knows this will give her more time with Jamie before they leave the next day. She loves her new role as grandma, and she’ll miss him while they’re away.

Brian and her sit and talk about the loft just below them. It seems that it’s coming on the market and the owners offered it to Brian before they listed it. Once Justin’s awake they make plans to go down and look at it. It seems like a logical move. They’ll be needing more room now that their family is growing. Once Brian gets shared custody of Gus he’ll need his own room. And even though it’s working just fine having Jamie in a bassinet in the living room right now, they’ll need a nursery soon. Not to mention that Justin will need a studio for painting, and Brian a home office.

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Brian realizes that he’s had his phone turned off most of the day. Checking his messages he sees there’s a dozen or so from Michael. Part of him just wants to delete them but he decides that he’ll listen to them just in case Michael’s come to his senses. If what Brian had hoped for was an apology he’s sadly disappointed. Michael’s talked to Mel and Lindsay and his attitude is that Brian is taking advantage of the girls. He still wants to testify against Brian, accusing him of being an unfit parent. He not only wants the girls to get custody of Jamie, he thinks Brian shouldn’t be allowed to see Gus without supervision.

Brian’s truly stunned, he can’t believe Michael is so angry with him. So much for hoping they could put all this resentment in the past, it seems like it’s all front and center. Maybe it will be a good thing that they’ll be away on vacation for the next six weeks. Hopefully this will be enough time for Michael to calm down, although Brian wonders if their relationship will ever get back on track. Even with everything that’s happened between the two of them, Brian doesn’t have any ill will towards him. He mostly feels sorry that Michael has found himself in this situation.

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Later that evening Justin’s all curled up on Brian’s lap, they discuss all the changes they’ll need to make to the loft below. The major one being a staircase connecting the two lofts. They like the idea of having a family room with a kitchenette on the bottom floor, keeping the main kitchen, dining room, and living room upstairs. They’ve decided to turn their current bedroom into a playroom for Gus, and eventually Jamie.

Brian kisses Justin’s forehead, asking how he’s feeling. Justin mentions that he had a queasy stomach when he first got up that morning, but then it went away. That’s why he was surprised when he got so nauseous after lunch. They write it off to the flu, seeing that it’s wintertime. It will be a little while before they realize that it’s a more permanent condition. Well, not exactly permanent… But…
TBC...
Chapter Summary

Lindsay’s unhappy with the judge’s ruling in Gus’s custody suit…

Chapter Eight ~ Equal Rights…

Brian runs his hand through Justin’s hair, gradually trying to wake him up, but he’s dead to the world. Justin simply snuggles in closer to Brian, enjoying his tender touch.

“Justin. Justin, come on, we need to get up or we’ll be late for court.”
He mumbles into Brian’s chest, “Ten more minutes.”

Brian gently rolls him over until he’s lying on his back, with his arms out to his sides. Brian crawls up onto him, covering Justin’s body with his. He kisses him around his neck until his lips meet his ear. Then he softly licks behind it then blows into his ear, sending chilly sensations throughout him. Justin’s automatic response is to arch his back, causing him to brush against Brian’s cock stimulating both of them.

“Um… You feel good, good and hard.”

Brian leans into him further, pushing them together then starts grinding against him.

“Yes. Yes, more, more Brian.”

“Wake up, little boy. It’s time to take care of daddy’s big hard cock.”

“I’m waking up. I’m awake, I’m… umm… Oh God. Yes…”

Brian leans in, pressing his forehead against Justin’s, tickling him with his bedhead hair. Justin legs naturally encircle Brian’s waist, loving the sensation of their dicks sliding against one another. Justin tilts his head back, kissing Brian’s neck and shoulders as his senses come to life. He hears the snap of the bottle of lube opening, then the cool chill of the gel coating his pucker. Brian rubs the remaining gel onto his dick, then aligns himself with Justin and pushes deep into his rosebud.
“Yes. Yes. Yes… Oh God. You feel so good.”

Justin slides his legs from around Brian’s waist onto his shoulders, allowing Brian deeper access as he glides against his prostate. Justin loves morning sex, loves waking up to Brian filling him up, tickling him deep down inside. Their lips find one another, as their hips start grinding together. Soon Brian sets a steady pace, working them closer and closer until the friction between them builds. They’re both lost in each other as they reach crescendo, sending a symphony of vibrations reverberating throughout them. Panting, they ride out the last of their sonata as daylight breaks through the loft windows.

Finally they separate, knowing that a nice warm shower will find them in the throes of passion again, leaving them just enough time to dress and grab a cup of strong French roast.

“Hurry up, Sunshine! Just wear the suit I set out for you.”

“You want me to wear a suit?”

“Yes. We’re going to court. Now just get dressed, you’ll look great.”

“You really think so?”

“Yes. After all I picked out your suit.”

Justin beams his big sunshine smile.

“Justin, come on… Hurry, get Jamie. We still have to drop him off at your mom’s.”

“Yeah. Are you okay? You look a little green.”

“I’m just a little nauseous. I’ll be okay in a few minutes.”

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“I don’t seem to have a copy of the birth certificate. Ms. Peterson, can you tell me when your son, Jamie was born.”

“I’m sorry, judge. I didn’t mean to give you the impression that I was Jamie’s birth mother.”

“I don’t understand your request for shared custody of Jamie, if neither you nor your partner, Ms. Marcus are his birth parent.”

“Well we may not be his birth parents, but I think it would be in his best interest to be raised with his brother, Gus.”

“He will be raised with his brother, Gus. When he’s in the custody of Mr. Kinney and Mr. Taylor.”

Mel and Lindsay’s attorney asks, “Excuse me, judge, but is it necessary that Mr. Taylor be named as Gus’s other father?”

“I ask you, Mr. Saunders, is it necessary that Ms. Marcus be named Gus’s other mother?”

Lindsay can’t help interrupting. “That’s different.”

“Ms. Peterson, please have your attorney speak for you when addressing the court. Answering your question, the court fails to see any difference in the parental relationship of Mr. Taylor and Ms. Marcus. They’re both the respective spouses of Gus’s natural birth parents.”
“Now, moving on… I see that both parties have requested shared custody of Augustus Aidan Peterson-Kinney.”

“Your honor, his name is Gus Aidan Peterson-Marcus.”

“Not legally, Ms. Peterson, and I suggest again, that you start letting your attorney speak for you. I have a petition before the court to restore Gus’s legal name to Peterson-Kinney, representing both his birth parents.”

“It is hereby agreed that shared and equal custody will be granted to both Lindsay M. Peterson and Brian A. Kinney. All expenses for Gus will be shared equally including health insurance, educational expenses, and all everyday expenses including housing, clothing and nutrition.”

“But Brian’s been paying…”

The judge hammers his gavel several times. “Ms. Peterson, you will not interrupt me when I’m giving my summation to the court.”

Lindsay’s angry and she lets it be known.

“Mr. Kinney has requested that shared custody be granted on a weekly basis. Meaning each party will have custody every other week.”

“NO! I object…”

“I’ve warned you, Ms. Peterson. Please allow your attorney to address the court.”

“Your honor, Ms. Marcus and Ms. Peterson feel that it would be in Gus’s best interest if he were only allowed to spend time with Mr. Kinney and Mr. Taylor during the weekends – i.e. Saturday and Sunday, with Ms. Marcus and Ms. Peterson’s approval in advance.”

“Denied! What part of equal and shared custody do your clients not understand?”

“It is also requested by Mr. Kinney and Mr. Taylor that Gus be allowed to travel with them when they’re scheduled to be out of town.”

“No! No! I object!”

“Bailiff, please escort Ms. Peterson out of the court. I warned you, Ms. Peterson. I will not allow you to address the court directly.”

“Now, as I was saying, this court grants Mr. Kinney and Mr. Taylor the right to have Gus accompany them when traveling in and outside the United States.”

“This court grants Mr. Kinney and Mr. Taylor the following holiday visitation schedule: Christmas Eve, returning Gus to Ms. Peterson and Ms. Marcus by noon on Christmas Day. New Year’s Eve, returning Gus to Ms. Peterson and Ms. Marcus by noon on New Year’s Day. And the following holidays alternating yearly: Easter, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. As well as Gus’s birthday.”

The judge hammers his gavel several times and dismisses the court.

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Justin reaches out, taking Brian hand squeezing it. They’re both relieved by the judge’s ruling. It’s everything they had hoped for. Lindsay just glares at them as they walk by.
Brian stops and says, “Under the circumstances, Lindsay, I think it’s best that our attorneys work out the exact custody schedule. But so it doesn’t come as a surprise, Justin and I are leaving tomorrow to go to Florida on vacation. Jennifer will be accompanying Gus next week to Florida, unless of course you want him to go with us when we leave.”

“No, Brian. You can’t.”

“I can, and I am now, on every other week while we’re in Florida. I’ll be flying home for staff meetings at Kinnetik, bringing Gus back and forth with me. So you don’t have to worry, he won’t be traveling alone.”

“Just how long are you going on vacation for?”

“Not that it’s any of your business but we’ll be staying in Florida until February 17th.”

“That’s a long time to be on vacation.”

“It long overdue… Take care, Lindsay, Melanie.”

With that Brian nods at the two of them and Justin simply smiles and says, “Bye now, see you.”

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“Mel, why didn’t you object? Why didn’t you do something? How can he just take Gus out of school like that? Isn’t there some law about him going to school?”

“Lindsay, he’s in pre-school. He doesn’t start kindergarten until the fall. And I don’t think what Brian asked for is unreasonable.”

“Mel, how can you say that? He’s taking my baby away.”

“Lindsay, he isn’t doing anything, we’ll still have Gus. But now we have to share him, that’s all.”

“But Mel, what are we going to do? Brian’s been paying for all of Gus’s school expenses, and his health insurance. Not to mention he gives us two thousand dollars a month for child support. What’s going to happen now?”

“I don’t know, Linds. We’ll just have to wait and see. You know if you didn’t start all this nonsense about taking Jamie away from him, none of this would have happened.”

“You’re blaming me?”

“I’m just saying, things have been pretty good. Brian’s always been there when we needed him, and you’re the one that pushed to have him more involved in Gus’s life.”

“You are blaming me.”

“I’m just saying we should have been more grateful for everything Brian’s helped us out with.”

“Oh, that’s priceless. You’re defending him. That’s just like you to take his side.”

“I’m not taking anybody’s side.”

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“Brian, how do you think Lindsay’s handling everything?”
“Not well… Hell, she still wanted to share custody of Jamie.”

“Yeah. But the judge sure put her in her place. And I like that he included me in his decisions. He made me an equal to Mel as a parent.”

“You are, Sunshine. You’ve always been there for Gus. Even when I haven’t been, you’re the better parent.”

“No. You just think so. You’ve always been there for Gus. You love him. I saw it that first night, the night he was born. That look in your eyes. I think I started falling in love with you right then and there.”

“Always the romantic.”

Justin can’t help grinning, loving how Brian teases him.

“Come on. Let’s go pick Jamie up from your mom’s.”

“Maybe we should pick up lunch on the way. We have a lot to do before we leave tomorrow.”

“You don’t think Lindsay and Mel will let us take Gus with us?”

“Not on your life. She’s going to need the next week to come to grips with reality. I really think she thought she was going to win.”

“I feel kind of sorry for her. She seems so sad.”

“I would like to stop by. I want to explain to Gus why we won’t be around. Also tell him that I’ve made arrangements for him to come visit us in Florida.”

“Do you think Lindsay will freak out?”

“Probably.”

“I hope not.”

“Always the optimist.”

Brian looks at Justin, wondering if he’s feeling okay.

“Is it your stomach acting up again?”

“Yeah, I just need to eat something. I’ll be alright.”

“You sure?”

“Yeah. So what’s it going to be? Chinese or Italian? We just had Thai last night.”

“Your call.”

“I feel like Fettuccini Alfredo, or maybe Ravioli.”

“God. I’m gaining weight just talking about it.”

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Michael comes in the front door, excited and all smiles.
“I just heard they’re having a charity dinner auctioning off all kinds of comics and action figures. I can’t wait to go. I might find some rare items that I never had in my collection.”

Debbie looks at Emmett questioningly; she already knows the answer before asking. She takes a deep breath, hoping World War III isn’t about to start.

“Can you believe it? God, I’m so excited!”

“You know, Michael, it’s a charity dinner? It costs money, and it’s by invitation only.”

“How do you know?”

“Well… Actually I’ve been asked to cater it.”

“That’s perfect! You can get me in. Oh God, Em! I’m so excited! I can’t wait to spend all evening looking through the merchandise.”

“Michael, I can’t invite anyone. Like I said, it’s by invitation only. It’s one thousand dollars a plate.”

“What? One thousand dollars a plate? Who can afford something like that?”

“It’s a black-tie event. To raise money for charity.”

“I know. I can be one of the waiters.”

“I’m sorry, Michael. But, well… You’re a really lousy waiter. And when someone pays that much to attend a charity dinner they expect top-notch service.”

“Some friend you are! You won’t even give me a chance.”

“Like you said. You’d spend all night looking at the merchandise for the silent auction.”

“So who’s benefiting from this ‘charity dinner’?”

He says it like he doesn’t even believe it’s for charity.

“Well Remson Pharmaceutical is matching the funds raised from the ticket sales, which they hope to sell about two hundred tickets. And then there’s all the money expected to be raised by the silent auction. Half the funds will be going to the Gay and Lesbian Center, and the other half will be going to the Vic Grassi House.”

Debbie nearly faints; she’s so pleased that the funds will be used locally. What Emmett doesn’t tell them, and Debbie suspects, is that Brian through Kinnetik will also be matching the ticket sales. And then there’s the small fact that everything being auctioned off is what Michael forfeited when he reneged on his agreement with Brian. Brian had no desire to try and sell all the action figures and comics. So during a meeting with Ted and Cynthia they came up with a plan to give back to the community.

As much as Brian claims he hates the Gay and Lesbian Center, he knows they do good work. Besides, Justin insisted that they split the money between the two charities. Ted, of course, will be running the silent auction, as well as being Master of Ceremonies. It will all take place while Brian is in Florida, even though it has the sign of the master written all over it. He will be conspicuously absent and will deny it if anyone asks.
“He’s finally down.”

“Good. Now come here, and bring that perfect bubble butt over here.”

Justin wiggles his ass, as his jeans slide down to the floor. Next his shirt slides down his shoulders, landing on top of his jeans. He can’t help the big grin that spreads across his face, seeing Brian already naked and waiting for him, sprawled out on the bed. He climbs up onto Brian’s groin facing away, ready to ride Brian’s big beautiful cock. He takes the lube and spreads his cheeks, coating his pink pucker, giving Brian a view he knows will drive him crazy.

Soon he’s positioning himself, aligned with Brian. He slides down gently as Brian watches himself being engulfed by Justin’s chasm. They both moan as the sensations are completely overwhelming for both of them. Once he adjusts, he starts riding Brian, raising and lowering himself, loving the feeling of Brian’s cock gliding against his walls. Lost in his own euphoria, he closes his eyes and fucks himself on Brian’s dick.

He loves controlling the rhythm, as he pounds his prostate repeatedly down onto Brian’s plump head. Brian reaches out and holds his hips, making sure he doesn’t injure himself as waves of pleasure spiral out of control. Brian can’t help thinking Justin is the most beautiful man he has ever seen. And from his view definitely the most sexual. Just watching Justin ride him, slipping and sliding up and down on his shaft, is the hottest thing he’s ever seen and felt.

Justin moans Brian’s name as he frantically works his own cock. Brian can tell he’s close. Justin’s muscles clench and release Brian’s dick, pulling them both closer to climax. Just a few more thrusts downward, and they’re both there, coming together as their brains are flooded with endorphins and pheromones. Justin collapses, out of breath. Then he crawls up into Brian’s awaiting arms. Once they come down from their natural high they both drift off into a deep slumber.

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Hunter’s been out with his friends; he’s been spending more and more time away from the house. It feels too crowded for his tastes. And he hates that there’s no place for him to hang out without being in the same room as everyone else. Deb notices the changes in his temperament and is concerned that he might be getting into trouble. Michael’s oblivious as usual, only focusing on how things are affecting him. He hasn’t even noticed that Ben’s been looking rather pale, and he’s lost his appetite.

Ben knows he needs to make time to talk with Michael about his health issues. But he’s always in a foul mood and he doesn’t want to upset him anymore than he already is. Michael and Ben sit, reading the evening paper. Michael’s reading the comics, of course. Ben hands him the want ads, hoping he’ll start seriously looking for a job. But all subtlety is lost on Michael. So Ben finally says he thinks he saw a ‘help wanted’ sign at the Liberty Bakery. Who knows? Maybe Michael could even apprentice as a baker, learning a new trade. After all Vic was a baker for years.

“I’m not interested. Uncle Vic worked as a baker. He had to go to work in the middle of the night.”

“I’m sure you’d get used to it after a little while.”

“But I wouldn’t be awake or home when you are.”

“Michael, I’ve been meaning to tell you. I’m taking a semester off from teaching.”

“Ben, now isn’t a good time. We need the income so we can get back on our feet.”
“I know. That’s why I suggested you consider taking other types of jobs. Other than just retail.”

“You want me to support all of us?”

“Is it really any different than you expecting me to support all of us?”

“Yeah! You already have a job, and it pays better. You can’t expect me to make as much money as you do.”

“But I do expect you to make an effort. Broaden your horizons. Take something to get by with, until something better comes along.”

“Yeah. Well, I expect you to continue teaching. We need the income.”

“Michael, it’s not that I don’t want to teach. It’s because my doctors have told me that I need to slow down. To take some time off, and to rest.”

“Is something wrong?”

“Yes, Michael. I’ve been feeling weak. My meds aren’t working, and the new ones they switched me to don’t seem to help.”

“But you’re going to be fine? Right? You’ll be back to work for the next semester? Right?”

Ben’s stunned. He thought that Michael would have freaked out about him being sick. But he only seems concerned that they’re losing Ben’s salary.

“Michael, I don’t know when I’ll be healthy enough to return to work.”

“But you’ll still get sick leave right?”

“No, Michael. I’m not tenured.”

“I know you haven’t worked there ten years. But don’t you have sick benefits?”

“Tenured is a term for a professor who’s been hired permanently by the university. I’m hired per semester. The courses I teach vary from semester to semester. I only have sick benefits during the semesters that I’m hired to teach.”

“That sounds stupid.”

“Anyways, why don’t you put your application in at the bakery? It couldn’t hurt.”

“No. I don’t want to. I’ll look for something else.”

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Mel answers the door. She’s a little surprised to see Brian and Justin. But once Brian explains, she understands.

“I guess you came at a good time. Lindsay is lying down, exhausted from the hearing this morning, and pretty depressed about the outcome.”

“I’m sorry about us going to court. But I didn’t feel like I had a choice.”

“I understand. I don’t blame you.”
“Hi there, Sonny Boy.”

“Daddy! Did you come by to make snowmen with me?”

By this time Lindsay’s heard Brian’s voice echoing up the stairway. So she comes down to see what he wants. Justin hands Jamie to Brian to hold, and takes Gus’s hand to go outside.

“Mommy! Justy and I are going to make snowmen!”

“Bundle up. It’s cold outside.”

“I can’t believe you’re here. Did you come by to rub it in?”

“No, Linds. I wanted to talk with Gus to explain that we’re going out of town. So he understands why we won’t be around to see him and explain to him that he can come and visit us in Florida.”

“I really don’t think that’s a good idea.”

“I’m not here to argue with you.”

“So are you here to flaunt the fact that you’ll no longer be paying all of Gus’s expenses?”

“What? No! Is that what you think? You think this is about money?”

“Well, isn’t it?”

“No! All I wanted is to spend more time with Gus. For him to get to know his father. For him to know I love him. That I’ll always be here for him.”

Lindsay looks ashamed, staring at the floor. Knowing that she’s out of line again. Pushing too hard.

“This isn’t about the money. I have no intention of reducing the support payments. I know you two need the money.”

“Really?”

“God, Linds. I know you need the help supporting Jenny Rebecca. I know Michael isn’t in a position to help out. Don’t you know that I consider her part of my family, even if she isn’t my biological child? I would never want her to not have all the advantages that Gus has. I want them both to grow up getting the best education possible. Hell, I’ve even started college funds for both her and Gus. What kind of man do you think I am?”

Both Lindsay and Mel are stunned. Lindsay has tears in her eyes, as she begs for Brian’s forgiveness. Now truly ashamed that she missed judged him. Accused him of being unfit, shameless, and cheap.

“I’m so sorry, Brian. Can you forgive me? I’ve been acting poorly, and my behavior is deplorable.”

Melanie disappears while Lindsay is asking for forgiveness, feeling ashamed of her behavior. A few minutes later Gus and Justin come back in. It’s freezing outside and they need to warm up. They look up when Mel comes down the stairs, carrying Gus’s little suitcase.

“Gus. Your father’s here to take you with him on vacation to Florida.”
“Really, Daddy?”

Brian’s surprised by this turn of events. His heart swells just thinking about having all of his boys on vacation with him.

“You bet, Sonny Boy. We’re leaving early in the morning, so you’ll have to get lots of sleep tonight.”

He hugs Lindsay, then thanks Melanie for allowing Gus to go with them. Hopefully this will be a turning point in their relationship, and things will only get better from here on out. He still can’t believe that they thought he would reduce his child support payments. He never even considered it.

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Several days later Michael stops by to complain about Brian’s win in court, and to visit Jenny Rebecca.

“How could Brian win? I knew you should have let me testify for you.”

“Michael. Mel says we never could have won. We had no legal standing.”

“This is total bullshit! He got equal custody of Gus? How is this possible?”

“I know. I was upset for a while. But he really is a good father to Gus.”

“You know he’s a bad influence.”

“Michael. As much as I wanted to win. After thinking about it, I realize it’s the right decision.”

“Maybe you can prove he’s a bad father. That he uses poor judgment. Then they’ll take his custody away.”

“Michael. Didn’t you just hear me? I think maybe this is going to work out alright. Gus needs to have a father in his life. And Brian and Justin really do love him. And it goes without saying that Gus loves them.”

“It’s just a matter of time before he fucks things up. Mark my words. He’ll end up hurting Gus.”

“Michael. I’m beginning to wonder if all this anger and resentment towards Brian is becoming unhealthy for you.”

“He’s a liar and back stabber. He promised to pay my lease and mortgage payments. Then he stole all my action figures and comics. I’ll never forgive him! Never!”

“Michael. You really need to reevaluate that. You know you didn’t keep your end of the bargain.”

“Now you’re taking his side?”

Lindsay can’t help thinking it’s funny. Isn’t that exactly what she said to Mel a couple of days ago?

TBC…
~ Life’s A Beach…

Chapter Summary

Brian and Justin take a vacation in warm sunny Florida, but end up returning expectantly…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 3870
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: bigj52

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Summary: Brian and Justin take a vacation in warm sunny Florida, but end up returning expectantly…

Chapter Nine ~ Life’s A Beach…

“Daddy, are we going on an arrow-plane?”

“It’s airplane, and yes, we’ll be flying to Florida.”

“I never been on an airplane before.”

“Are you scared? There’s no reason to be frightened, Gus.”

“I not scared, Daddy. I excited.”

“It’s I’m. I’m not scared, I’m excited.”

“Is Justy scared, Daddy?”

“No, Sonny Boy. He just has an upset tummy. Don’t worry, he’ll be okay.”

Their flight was rather uneventful, but the flight attendants were more than enamored with the boys. They couldn’t stop fussing over Gus, treating him like a prince. He had waffles with fresh strawberries, bacon and sausage on the side, with chocolate milk. First class has its privileges. They couldn’t believe how good Jamie was. He was the perfect baby, and he never even made a sound. You know how babies can be on airplanes, but he was a little angel.

Justin and Jamie slept for most of the flight, while Gus and Brian looked out the windows, spotting all the tiny people and houses upon their departure and arrival. Gus was fascinated about being up so high in the air, and he really got a kick out of flying through the clouds. By the time they landed, Justin’s queasy stomach had subsided, and it was a beautiful warm sunny day. It felt good to leave
all the cold winter weather behind.

They decided to play things by ear, not having a strict schedule to adhere to. But they did plan on taking Gus to the Safari Wilderness Ranch to see all the exotic animals. And to the water park where both he and Justin want to play on the water slide. Since Gus will be coming back down every other week, Justin suggested they go to the aquarium, and the exhibit of classic cars. He’ll surely come up with a few more outings over the next couple of weeks.

Brian’s POV

Next week, after Gus is back in Pittsburgh, Justin wants to see the Bok Tower Gardens and do a little sketching so he can paint on the beach later. They also have a moonlight carillon concert every evening, and Mr. Romantic wants to attend. I don’t mind humoring him. I know he loves these things. There was a time when I wouldn’t even consider doing this kind of thing. But I now realize that keeping him happy, keeps him very attentive to my needs.

The condo we rented is right on the beach, you literally step right out the door into paradise. Gus is in awe, he’s never been any place tropical, or seen the ocean before. Once we’re settled in and unpacked, we head out for lunch and then do a little shopping.

Before we can lounge around in the sand, we have to get the boys some swim trunks, sunscreen and beach toys. Jamie and Gus will need clothes more suited for summer, as well as a sun hat or two for Jamie. Of course that’s not a problem, as I love to shop and Justin and I can use a few new articles of beachwear ourselves.

Justin seems to be feeling better, or at least his appetite has returned. He thinks he just has a touch of the flu, but he doesn’t seem to have all the usual ailments that accompany the flu. So I’m beginning to think he’s not sick at all, just suffering from morning sickness. I know how dreadful that can be, having suffered from it myself not so long ago. But I’ll keep my suspicions to myself for now. That way we can celebrate next week when it’s just the two of us. I’m mean three of us.

I’m feasting on a big seafood salad with all the local delicacies from the ocean delighting my taste buds. Gus is so excited, he’s having shrimp again. He had it for the first time on New Year’s Eve, and now he’s a true connoisseur. Justin of course is devouring his fish and chips, having an increased appetite, if that’s even possible. But I’m not worried; he’ll probably be one of those people that doesn’t have to worry about losing his baby fat, unlike me.

My cell phone rings just as we’re finishing up lunch. It’s Maria, our housekeeper and now nanny. I gave her an extended paid vacation for all her help with my pregnancy and Jamie, after he was born. She’s also here in Florida, visiting her sister and her family. I made plans with her to help us out while we’re here vacationing, and then she’ll return with us back to Pittsburgh in February. She’s thrilled because this also gives her another six weeks to spend with her family.

By the time we make it back from lunch and shopping, both Gus and Justin are exhausted and need a nap. I use this time to get online and check in with Ted and Cynthia. Ted informs me that Michael knows about the charity auction, but he doesn’t think he’s put two and two together, realizing that it’s his old collection that’s being auctioned off.

I can’t help worrying about how he’s doing, not that I’m still not angry at him for everything that’s happened. But I do wish he’d pull his life together, and start making wiser choices. Apparently after much prompting from Ben he put in an application at the Liberty Bakery, the same one Vic worked at for so many years. They decided to give him a chance, even though he has no experience. They remember Vic fondly, and want to help Michael get back on his feet.
He’ll be going through an apprenticeship, training with the head baker for the first six months. Even though it seems like a relative easy job, there’s a lot to learn about food chemistry and techniques. So he’ll be learning to produce some of the more delicate cakes, tortes, and pies. They’re in the process of expanding their business to include confectionery, adding a line of chocolates, truffles and toffees.

As much as Michael dragged his feet, complaining about working at night, and having to learn a new skill, he’s done really well. It seems to come easy to him, and he actually enjoys baking. He feels a real sense of pride in his creations. Ben couldn’t be happier that he’s finally found a trade that suits him. Having found Vic’s old recipe book, he’s been practicing at home, impressing both Debbie and Carl.

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Ted’s done some preliminary work scouting out a few new clients for Kinnetik: Skinz, a swimsuit company; Wetwear, a wetsuit company; Funfix, a Jet Ski company, and Cocoa Beach, a sunscreen company. I told Justin that I might take a few afternoons to approach several businesses for advertising. I just hope he isn’t upset, or feels abandoned. I’m pretty sure he’ll be able to use the time to paint, or visit museums, knowing how much he loves that. This is the first time I’ve ever taken this much time off from work. I guess I’m getting a little antsy, feeling like I need to keep my toes wet, so I don’t get rusty.

But we’ve come a long ways since he’s taken it personally, and he now knows it’s just business. So I don’t expect a hissy fit with him running off to Vermont again. Although I now know I should have explained to him the predicament I was in with Gardner Vance and losing my job. I’ve learned to communicate with him so there’s no misunderstanding. Or I should say I’m learning. He’d tell you I wasn’t very forthcoming about my pregnancy, but I’m learning.

I feel his arms circle around my neck as he stands behind me and snuggles his face into my hair.

“The sunset is going to be beautiful. I want to take some pictures with you and the boys.”

I can only imagine how many pictures he’s going to take during our vacation, but I’m okay with it. I understand he’s still in that ‘I’m a new father mode.’ And he wants to capture every moment on film. Although I do remember him during the Stockwell days joking about staying home and looking at pictures of the kids. Only now I think that just might happen. And I’m actually okay with that. I guess it’s different when they’re your own kids, and I have to admit my boys are completely adorable.

“Do you want to go out to eat, or I should just go and pick something up?”

“It might be easier to pick something up; we’ve done a lot of running around today already. And this way we don’t have to get the kids ready to go out.”

“Sounds good. Maria should be by tomorrow, and she can shop and stock up the cupboards and fridge.”

He’s smiling so I know he wants to cook. We’ve been on the go so much since he’s been home. I know he just wants to relax and hang out; he really is a homebody.

He kisses my neck as he climbs around to the front of my chair and sits on my lap.

“I love you, Mr. Kinney.”

“You too.”
He just looks deeply into my eyes and it sets my heart on fire.

“I love you too, Mr. Taylor.”

I didn’t think it was possible for him to smile any broader, but he is. He’s happy I actually said those three little words. And the truth is, I do. I do love him and it’s getting easier to say it all the time.

“You know, I think I saw a barbeque place just a few blocks away when we drove in this afternoon. How’s that sound?”

Honestly? It sounds fattening. But…

“Is that what you want? Ribs?”

There’s that smile again, he’s so easy to please.

“Yeah, maybe you should get some chicken too in case Gus doesn’t like ribs.”

Or he wants it for a midnight snack. I’m so onto him.

“And you should probably get some coleslaw, potato salad, and chips. Oh, and brownies, and see if they have any of those yogurt-covered pretzels.”

Yep. He’s definitely pregnant.

“Whatsoever you want. I’m guessing you want Coca Cola too?”

“Yeah, and you might want to find a place that sells coffee. I know how you are when you don’t get your French roast in the morning.”

“Me?”

“Okay, I guess I mean both of us. Oh and some milk and cereal for Gus, and Oreos too.”

“Are you sure I don’t need to go grocery shopping?”

“You’d do that for me?”

I just grin back at him. I know if I don’t, I’ll have to be making a late-night run for Snickers and ice cream, and who knows what else he’ll come up with.

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Justin’s POV

Both Gus and Jamie are fast asleep, all tucked in for the night. I find Brian sitting out on the patio, sipping a glass of chardonnay. He looks relaxed so I think getting away from Pittsburgh will do him some good. He’s been extremely stressed for a while now. I can only imagine how horrible it was for him having to deal with all his friends ganging up on him. Trying to convince him to give up his parental rights, especially after having just carried, and then given birth to Jamie.

I’m still struggling with the fact that they ended up in court over all of this. Thank goodness gay rights have finally gotten a fair shake in the judicial system. He was so happy when the judge didn’t even blink, giving him his just due. I was a little worried about what the girls might have brought up, considering Brian’s past indiscretions. He really is a good father, and he loves his sons.
I still feel like I need to be pinched. I can hardly believe that I’m a father. And hopefully, keeping my fingers crossed, I’ll be a father again sometime in the next year or so. There’s a part of me that thinks maybe I might be pregnant right now. Maybe I don’t have a touch of the flu, maybe it’s really morning sickness. But of course I have no idea what that feels like, and it would be really fast so I doubt that.

I grab a bag of chips and join Brian out on the lounge chair, lying with my head in his lap.

“Justin! Must you eat those chips lying down? You’re going to get crumbs and little grease stains on my clothes.”

I reach up and feed him one of my sour cream and onion Ruffles. They taste even better than usual, all crunchy, and nice and salty. He rolls his eyes but he eats the chip, because I know he loves them as much as I do. He just doesn’t give in to his desires as easily as I do.

“You know I can think of something else that would be all nice and salty on your tongue.”

I respond by rubbing my head against his. Then I turn my head and unzip him using my teeth. I know he wants to complain that I’m getting grease all over his trousers, but he’s too excited to care by now. He’s so easy sometimes, or maybe he just missed me and my playful gestures. He takes the bag of chips and continues to eat them while I start licking, and teasing him with my wet warm mouth.

He arches his back, springing his firm member completely out of his pants, giving me better access to complete my task at hand. Soon he’s moaning as I take him deep down my throat, loving the feel of him sliding against my silky mouth. I run my lips up and down his shaft, and then I finally start working him with earnest. I pump him in and out of my mouth in long smooth strokes, letting his plump head hit the back of my throat.

He’s getting louder, as the couple walking down the beach can hear him as he echoes into the darkness. Thank goodness we’re sitting in the dark, although I doubt he’d be embarrassed if they saw us. Always an exhibitionist. I swish my tongue across his slit and feel him thrust forward a little. He’s getting close as he’s now abandoned the chips and is fisting my hair, holding me in place as he takes over pumping himself against my firm cheeks. His head automatically leans back, resting on the back of the cushion, as he moans my name and shoots down my throat.

“Aaa-mazing”

I release him and snuggle my face into his crotch, kissing his slippery cock which makes him jump a little, as he’s still ultra-sensitive to my touch.

“You have the most amazing mouth.”

“Well, you did teach me everything I know.”

We relax, listening to the waves crashing on the beach. It’s still seventy degrees out, and a perfect evening to just cuddle with one another. I know Brian Kinney doesn’t cuddle, but really he does; he just doesn’t know it.

I awake several hours later as I hear Jamie through the baby monitor; it’s time for his two am feeding. I gently roll out of Brian’s arms, leaving him sound asleep, as I go and rock Jamie while I wait for his bottle to warm. He’s truly the most beautiful baby, but of course I’m biased. After all he does look like both Brian and myself.

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Brian’s POV

I wake to Gus calling me, as I pull myself out of a sound sleep. I’m in the master bedroom, although I have no memory of coming to bed.

“Pink! Pink, Daddy! Pink!”

I can’t fathom what he’s talking about but he’s excited, so I find the strength to keep my eyelids open as I make my way out into the living room. He’s standing at the patio door jumping up and down with delight.

“Pink, Daddy! Pink! Pink birds! There’s hundreds of them!”

And he’s right. There’s literally hundreds of pink flamingoes outside on the beach, feeding in the reeds. Justin already has his camera out taking pictures, and I can just imagine a painting or two of all this pinkness. Justin tells Gus to keep it down, or he might scare them off. It seems both my boys are captivated with the morning wildlife. I make my way to the kitchen, grateful there’s a huge pot of coffee already brewed.

I peek down at Jamie cooing away in his little baby carrier. I’m also grateful he’s the happiest baby in the world. We didn’t have time yesterday, but today we need to get him a crib, stroller, and all the other baby things an infant needs. Justin wanted to pack everything and bring it all with us, but I opted for just buying everything we need once we got here. I set my coffee down on the end table, and take Jamie out and rock him in his rocking chair. That’s one thing Justin insisted on buying yesterday; he was worried that Jamie would be fussy and need it to calm him down.

Gus and Justin are eating Oreos, dunking them in their milk while watching the flamingoes. I can tell this pregnancy is going to have a ripple effect on Gus and his eating habits. I want to yell at them to eat breakfast first, but I have a feeling Justin’s going to be indulging in whatever fancies him at the moment. I look down and see the Wall Street Journal sitting on the coffee table, and I’m happy to see that my subscription has started already.

An hour later Jamie is bored with all of us, and is fast asleep again, while Gus and Justin have polished off the whole packet of Oreos, and now plan on having pancakes. What can I say? They’re on vacation and no doubt will be passed out in a sugar coma in no time, leaving me to read through the business proposals Ted has emailed me for approval.

Maria’s here unpacking all the groceries while I try and put together Jamie’s crib and stroller. I should have remembered from putting these together at home that it takes an engineering degree to complete them. Meanwhile Gus is playing on the beach making sand castles, and Justin has Jamie all dressed up in his shorts and tee-shirt, complete with sun bonnet. All three of them are slathered with sunscreen, laughing and loving the warm January day in sunny Florida.

I can’t help but sneak a few photos of the three of them playing in the sun. What can I say? I’m a new father and I’m not immune to the cuteness of my little family. Besides, it will delight Justin to know that I’m actually human when it comes to being an indulgent father. Maria has lunch ready, and all of us sit at the picnic table, enjoying the crab cakes and fresh fruit that she’s made for us.

I’ve made dinner reservations for us at Fishbone Grill. Maria’s agreed to sit for the kids tonight and it will be nice for Justin and I to go on a real date. It’s been awhile since I’ve treated him to a night out, and just enjoyed each other’s company. Later we’ll go dancing at Blurr nightclub. It’s time we shook our booties and let loose a little. Besides I miss dancing with him, feeling like we’re the only couple on a crowded dance floor.
Michael didn’t get home until late morning, having spent some extra time learning how to make the perfect pie crust. They like to make it a little healthier by rolling the crust out on wheat-germ, giving it a nice nutty flavor. He’s surprised when he gets home and finds Debbie sitting with Ben, blotting his forehead and checking his fever. He’s refused to go to the hospital, too worried about the expense because he has no health insurance.

Michael senses the somber mood, and tries desperately to get Ben to be reasonable. It isn’t until he starts drifting in and out of consciousness that Debbie finally calls an ambulance. He’s immediately admitted to the hospital and taken to the ICU. They hook up an IV to help with his dehydration, and start running tests. Michael’s pacing in the hallway, waiting and worried about Ben’s health. Debbie’s in the Waiting Room updating Hunter, Emmett, Ted, Mel and Lindsay.

Unfortunately it doesn’t look good; he’s now in a coma and his diagnosis is poor. HIV has taken its toll, and his T-cell count is nonexistent. They’re monitoring his condition, but they don’t expect him to live much more than a day or so. Michael’s devastated and lost, wishing that he hadn’t terminated his friendship with Brian. He could really use a best friend and a shoulder to cry on.

Of course Ted and Emmett try to do everything they can think of to console him during this dark time. Ted finally calls Brian to let him know that Ben has passed away. He went quick, much quicker than the doctor expected, and Michael’s not handling it well. He never saw it coming. Ben just didn’t seem that sick to him, and he was sure he’d bounce back.

Brian’s cell phone rings in the middle of the night; he answers it and is shocked by the news. He goes out into the living room to take the call, and for the first time since he found out he was pregnant he wants a cigarette. But he’s persuaded Justin to quit, knowing the second-hand smoke is bad for the baby. He listens patiently as Ted goes through all the gruesome details, and then he has Ted make arrangements for Ben’s funeral. He knows that Michael’s in no condition to, or able to afford it.

Determined not to let this derail their vacation, Brian decides that they’ll all go back to Pittsburgh for a couple days and then return to warm sunny Florida. Maria will go with them to look after all the kids, including Jenny Rebecca. They’re too young to understand what’s happened, but it will be a comfort for the girls to have everyone together while they grieve. Hopefully they’ll allow Gus to return to Florida with them, understanding that it’s what is best for him.

It isn’t until late Friday evening that Brian and Justin make it to Deb’s. Michael’s a mess, but he’s grateful to see Brian. Even though nothing’s changed between them, Brian lends a supportive shoulder for Michael to cry on. Hunter’s still in shock; he didn’t know that Ben was even sick. They decided not to tell him, thinking he’d get better soon. Somehow it’s worse this time. Maybe because with Vic he had a reprieve. Everyone knew in the back of their minds that it was always a possibility but with Ben it just happened so fast.

Brian holds Michael, and he’s finally able to cry, really cry and let all his guilt dissipate. Brian’s there for him, for whatever it takes to get him through all of this. Who knows? Maybe there’s hope for them to rekindle their friendship after all?

TBC…
Chapter Ten ~ The Circle of Life...

It was cold and damp winter day when we laid Ben to rest. The crowd was somber, most of us still in shock. It happened fast, most of us didn’t even know he was sick. The funeral was well attended, not only our little gang of friends, but with Ben’s students and fellow faculty members. No one really knew what to say, or how to act, everyone grieves in their own way. And Michael was no exception, it hit him hard. For most of their relationship Michael was in denial that Ben was really sick, of course he accepted that he was HIV positive. It just seemed like they’d come so far with new treatments, that no one ever really died anymore. But of course that wasn’t any comfort at a time like this. Michael and Hunter’s lives were now turned upside down. But instead of pulling together, they seemed to be drifting apart.

Brian tried to be there for Michael, tried to lend a helping hand and a shoulder to cry on. But Michael wasn’t having any of that, he just wanted to be left alone. Now angry at the world, he spent most of his time drinking and gambling, staying out late. I guess it was an escape so he didn’t have to deal with reality. After a couple of days Debbie started to become even more concerned, quizzing him when he was around then the two of them just started bumping heads.

She wanted Michael to stay home more to spend time with Hunter. She reassured him that everything was going to be alright, that she was still there for him. But the truth was Michael didn’t seem to least bit interested in what Hunter was feeling. He basically ignored him, focusing on his own loss. He refused to show support, leaving him to flounder on his own. Deb was at her wits’ end trying to get Michael to show Hunter some kindness, knowing how frightened Hunter must be now thinking about his own mortality.

Even in the evenings before he goes to work, Michael’s out at the clubs drowning his sorrows. When he is home, he’s reading comics and surfing the web. He’s distant and removed, snapping at anyone who tries to talk to him. Debbie can’t help but think he might be gambling again, but she just doesn’t have the nerve to ask. She doesn’t want to know if that’s what’s going on.
Michael’s mad because most of Ben’s life insurance is needed to pay his hospital bills. The remainder Ben had earmarked for Hunter, not Michael, which burns Michael up even more. He should be grateful that Brian paid for the funeral but he’s not. It’s like he expected it because everyone knew he didn’t have any money to pay for it. And to make matters worse, if that’s possible, Michael figured since Brian footed the bill for the funeral, then Brian must have forgiven him. So he asked again for his toys and comics back.

When Brian told him he no longer had them, he blew a gasket. He didn’t believe him. Finally he accused him of stealing them and threatened to file a police report. When Brian said he donated them to charity, Michael became enraged. Now realizing that the charity auction was his forfeited treasures, he’s angry with Brian, Emmett and Ted and feels betrayed and used.

Debbie has had enough and as much as she loves her son, she asked him to find someplace else to stay. Even during the best of times they got on each other’s nerves. Now with Michael in a constant bad mood she can’t take anymore. Luckily for Michael, the one-room flat above the bakery is available. His boss agreed to let him live there, reducing his salary to cover the rent. Not that Debbie wasn’t worried about where Michael would go, she’s very grateful that he found some place he can afford.

Hunter moved into Michael’s old room; he agreed to go back to school and Debbie got him a job at the diner, bussing tables. After much discussion, Debbie and Carl completed the multitude of adoption papers for Hunter, foregoing the foster system, making him a permanent member of the family. Michael of course wasn’t pleased; he somehow felt like she chose Hunter over him.

Things happened so quickly just over a span of a week. Brian and Justin couldn’t get out of town quick enough. They wanted to be back on vacation, and away from the madness. But before they returned to Florida, Brian had a few things he needed to take care of. They signed the mortgage papers purchasing the loft below them, and then they met with an architect and drew up plans for remodeling.

They’ll be adding a staircase connecting the floor below, updating the galley kitchen and installing more power points for the computers in their respective offices and the television/gaming system in the family room. Of course there will be a complete remodeling of the master bedroom, and bath. Then the rest of the work is mostly cosmetic, painting everything, setting up a nursery, Gus’s bedroom, Justin’s studio, and Brian’s office. They hope to have everything completed by the time they return from Florida in the middle of February.

Brian had a staff meeting at Kinnetik this morning, so he’s picked up lunch on the way back to the loft. When he comes in he finds Justin sound asleep on the sofa, with Jamie nearby in his bassinet. He remembers how exhausted he used to get when he was pregnant, and he can’t help thinking that Justin looks absolutely adorable when he sleeps. Brian sets the table for lunch, knowing that the smell of Chinese food will pull Justin from his slumber.

It isn’t long before Brian feels Justin’s arm around his waist from behind, resting his head on his shoulder.

“That smells good. Did you get me Moo Shu Pork, and Kung Pao Chicken?”

“Yes, and no. I think the Kung Pao Chicken will be too spicy, and give you heartburn. So I substituted Sesame Chicken, but I did remember the pot stickers, and extra spring rolls.”

“I love you. You’re the best!”

“I know…”
They sit down and enjoy lunch while Brian gives Justin an update on the accounts he’s going to pitch once they’re back in Florida. He tells him that he spoke with Mel and Lindsay and they insisted that Gus stay with them for the next week. You couldn’t really blame them, they need the distraction from all the sadness and chaos. Brian reassures Gus that his mothers just miss him. Then he tells Gus that Jennifer will be bringing him back to Florida next week.

Gus knew that everyone was sad, but he didn’t really understand why. How do you explain to a four year old about death? All he really knew was that Ben wouldn’t be around anymore. It wasn’t like he spent much time around Ben and Michael so he just accepted it without much questioning.

After lunch Brian’s changing Jamie’s diaper when Justin calls out from the bathroom.

“Brian? Are you sick?”

“No. Why?”

“Because there’s a prescription bottle on the counter in here.”

Justin examines the bottle more closely. It’s ‘Wellbutrin’ and it’s prescribed by Dr. Alex Wilder.

“Brian? What’s ‘Wellbutrin’ for? And isn’t Dr. Wilder that shrink you had me talk to after the bashing?”

“Yeah…”

Justin comes out of the bathroom with shaving cream still on his face and the prescription bottle in his hand. He looks at Brian questioningly.

“What’s this about?”

“It’s nothing… It’s just something I started taking after Jamie was born.”

“What’s it for?”

Brian looks down at his feet. Then back up at Justin, looking him straight in the eyes.

“It’s an anti-depressant.”

“Did you have post-partum depression?”

“No. No, nothing like that.”

“Then like what?”

“Why don’t you rinse off your face and we’ll talk about it?”

“Okay.”

A couple of minutes later Justin comes and sits next to Brian on the sofa, taking his hand, looking directly into his eyes.

“So what is this about if it’s not post-partum depression?”

“Post-partum depression is when you have no interest in your baby after their birth. I assure you it was nothing like that. If anything I couldn’t stop holding and fussing over Jamie. I never regretted having Jamie.”
“I know that. So what’s going on?”

“I. I… I had a hard time for a while after Jamie was born. Well, truthfully, before he was born too.”

“Brian?”

“I’m doing much better now. But Alex doesn’t want me to stop taking it yet. And with all the craziness going on right now, I think that’s a good thing.”

“What kind of hard time?”

“I… I just felt alone. I was… I was lonely. I needed you. I was scared I was going to fuck things up. That maybe Mel and Linds were right. Maybe I wouldn’t be a good parent.”

“Brian?”

“I just needed you so badly, and you weren’t around… I asked you to come home for Thanksgiving about a week or so before Jamie was born. And you said no. I was really distraught at the time.”

Justin’s in shock. He remembers now, and he said no because he thought that they might finish up the movie over the next few weeks. It was never because he didn’t want to see Brian.

“Oh God, Brian…”

“Then, then after he was born I asked you to come home for Christmas, and you said no. Again.”

Justin feels sick to his stomach, and not because of his morning sickness.

“Brian? Why didn’t you tell me?”

“I wanted to. But I didn’t want you to only want me because of Jamie. Besides I thought you were in love with Brett. I thought I’d lost you. That you were never coming home again.”

“But, I did come home.”

“I know, but at the time… I was very depressed.”

Justin now has tears streaming down his face, he feels so guilty. He can only imagine how much he hurt Brian. And then there’s that little fact that Brian just admitted that he needed him. He now has his arms around Brian’s neck, kissing him everywhere, whispering over and over.

“I love you. I love you. I love you so much.”

“I know, Sunshine. I know, and I love you too.”

“Oh, Brian…”

More tears, he’s so upset. Now he’s shaking and crying, burying his face into Brian’s chest.

“Hey, hey, hey… No more tears. We’re okay. Justin, we’re okay now. Remember?”

“I just feel so bad.”

“Don’t. Just don’t. Now listen to me. I was going to tell you before you found the prescription bottle that I’ve made an appointment to see Dr. Doug MacDonald today at three pm.”

“Dr. MacDonald? Are you sick? Oh God, Brian, you’re sick?”
“No. No, silly. The appointment is for you.”

“No. I don’t think you have the flu. Dr. MacDonald is my obstetrician.”

“Obstetrician?”

“Yes, he specializes in male pregnancies. He’s one of the best physicians in the country.”

“I’m pregnant? I’m pregnant? You think I’m pregnant?”

“Well, I don’t know for sure. But I think it’s a real possibility.”

Justin has now thrown himself into Brian’s arms.

“I’m pregnant! I’m pregnant! Brian, I’m pregnant!”

They both have huge grins on their faces, and Justin can’t stop bouncing up and down, he’s so excited. Then he’s back to kissing Brian everywhere, and of course the tears have returned as well.

“I love you! I love you! I love you! Oh God, Brian, I really love you!”

“I love you too, Sunshine! Now calm down and stop bouncing, or you’re going to lose your lunch.”

It’s almost as if Jamie understood what was going on as he joins in cooing and making little baby squeals from his bassinette.

“Oh my God, Brian. You know what this means? We’re going to have two babies in less than a year.”

“Well, I guess you’re stuck with me now.”

Justin beams, he might actually be glowing.

“Brian, I’ve never been this happy before. I really do love you!”

Brian pulls him back into his arms and kisses him passionately. Looking over Justin’s shoulder into the kitchen he spots the clock on the stove. They need to leave in an hour to make it on time to see Dr. MacDonald. He’s figuring they have time, so he drags Justin into the bedroom to make mad passionate love to him.

Justin’s eyes have now turned a deep sapphire blue, showing so much emotion and desire. His eyes are still watering, overcome with happiness, never expecting things could change so fast. Brian reaches down and wipes his tears away, then he tenderly brushes his hair out of his eyes.

“I don’t think I’ve even seen you look so beautiful before.”

Justin’s smile grows as he blushing, bat his eyelashes, reflecting all his love back at Brian. Brian leans down and gently kisses his lips, watching Justin like he’s seeing him for the first time. Taking in all his splendor he slowly lifts his legs up onto his shoulders. Justin can’t help thinking about the first time they were together. Brian was very gentle with him that night as well.

Justin hands Brian the bottle of lube, and soon feels the gel coating his rosebud. Brian pushes the tip of his finger in and swishes it around, coating him inside while stretching him open. Justin leans his head back, closing his eyes just as Brian enters him, gliding deep into his chasm. Little moans
escape from some place deep inside of Justin as he welcomes Brian’s member.

At first everything is in slow motion. They’re both feeling each and every sensation flooding their senses. If Justin didn’t know better he’d be sure that his skin was on fire, as the intensity of each touch burns into his soul. Brian isn’t much better, the warm wetness of Justin’s ravine is welcoming as he slides back and forth.

Justin’s moans have turned to chanting, as their rhythm pulls them both closer to ecstasy. Brian increases his thrusts and is now igniting fireworks throughout them. Their hearts are racing as their pleasure pulsates out to the ends of their toes and fingertips. Brian’s now slamming head-on into Justin’s prostate, making him moan louder and louder. Several more thrusts and Justin’s now climaxing, causing his walls to clench Brian’s cock as they both shoot at the same time.

Justin’s still whimpering as he comes down from his natural high. That’s when they hear Jamie out in the living room squealing and laughing almost as loud as Justin. They both burst out laughing, wondering what he’s up to. Maybe he just doesn’t want to feel left out. It still amazes them what a happy baby he is, and they hope their next one is just like him.

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“Brian, it’s good to see you again, and this must be Justin.”

“Dr. MacDonald, it’s nice to meet you.”

“Now look how Jamie’s grown, he seems to be doing fine.”

“Jamie’s almost perfect. I couldn’t be prouder.”

“As you should be. Now what can I do for you boys today?”

“Well, Justin’s been feeling nauseous. He’s sleeping a lot, exhausted all the time. And I remember from when I first found out I was pregnant, that I experienced very similar symptoms.”

“I see. Is there any reason to expect that he might be pregnant?”

“Well, we stopped using condoms when we got back together a few weeks ago.”

“That would certainly do it. Justin why don’t you give me a urine sample and we’ll do a preliminary test here in the office.”

Justin excuses himself while Dr. MacDonald chats with Brian.

“It’s good to see that the two of you have worked things out. You seem much happier than you did after Jamie was born.”

“You have no idea. I’ve never been this happy before. I guess I didn’t know letting someone into my heart could make you feel so content and alive.”

Justin comes back into the room, and Dr. MacDonald starts giving Justin a basic examination checking his pulse, heartbeat, reflexes and lungs. In the meantime the nurse returns with the results of Justin’s urine test.

“Well Mr. Taylor, I have great news. Your test came back positive. I’m sure Brian can give you all the books, and literature I gave him to read. I’ll want to see you monthly for the first few months, and then more frequently.”
Justin’s all smiles, almost in a daze, taking in all the information Dr. MacDonald is giving him. Brian’s just as happy, smiling like the proud father he is. Dr. MacDonald gives them the okay to travel, and schedules Justin next appointment when they return from Florida. He tells them to call if they have any more questions, or if problems arise.

They get to the car and strap Jamie into his travel seat. Then Brian pushes Justin against the car, holding him tight. He kisses him deeply, letting all his emotions take over. Finally breaking for air they lean their foreheads together whispering, ‘I love yours’ to one another. Finally the cold weather pulls them apart as they seek the warmth of the car.

“Justin. Let’s hold off telling everyone about this for a while. I don’t want to send them all over the edge.”

“Yeah. I understand. Lindsay’s head is going to explode when she finds out.”

“That, and… Well, something might happen. Not that I really think anything will but it’s not unusual. Sometimes things happen.”

“Brian. Nothing is going to happen. Trust me. I’m going to be super protective of our baby. Extra careful, with everything I do.”

“I know you are, Sunshine.”

“Our baby… OUR BABY, God, I love how that sounds.”

“Me too…”

“I’m kind of starving.”

“Why don’t I doubt that? You’re always hungry.”

“Let’s go to the diner. It will give us one last chance to see Deb before we go back to Florida.”

“You just want a greasy hamburger and fries.”

“Don’t forget my chocolate milkshake.”

“Never…”

“Ah, there’s my Sweet Baby James!”

“Deb, can you take our order then hold him?”

“Keep your pants on. I just want to say hello to my grandson.”

“You’re just getting coffee?

“Sunshine, I don’t have your metabolism. I can’t eat like a horse and still look like a pony.”

“So what will it be? The usual?”

“Actually, I’ve changed my mind. I want blueberry pancakes, and lots of maple syrup.”

“Of course you do.”

“Brian. Don’t make fun of him. He’s still a growing boy.”
Brian grins. “In more ways than you know.”

Justin kicks him under the table. But it went completely over Deb’s head, not knowing what Brian was referring to.

“So do you have most everything packed and ready to go?”

“Mostly. I didn’t really get anything done when you went to Kinnetik this morning. But there isn’t that much to pack, since we didn’t bring much back with us.”

They said their good-byes to Deb, hugging her and telling her to call if anything happens. They make their way out of the diner and return to the loft. Brian ends up packing everything they’ll need, while Justin plays with Jamie and lounges around on the bed watching Brian. Their plane doesn’t leave until the next morning but Brian likes to be prepared, not leaving anything to the last minute.

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It was a whirlwind going to Pittsburgh, and then back to Clearwater. They’re both still a little sad, but it feels good being back on vacation. They couldn’t believe all the commotion happening back on the home front.

It seems too quiet with Gus gone but it lets Brian get more work done on the campaigns he wants to pitch this next week. Justin’s happily playing peek-a-boo with Jamie, and painting while he’s asleep. Just as I suspected he started painting pink flamingoes, mixing the colors to capture the tones just right. When he’s not painting he’s reading the stack of books recommended by Dr. MacDonald. He has a lot of questions, but that’s to be expected. He’s always been curious about how everything works, and his pregnancy is no exception.

TBC…
Chapter Summary

Everyone’s enjoying vacationing in Florida…

Chapter Notes

This is dedicated to my wonderful friend Dee Dee ~ rulistenngbj. Wishing you a speedy recovery…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 3632
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: bigj52

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Summary: Everyone’s enjoying vacationing in Florida…

Chapter Eleven ~ One Happy Little Family…

Brian’s POV

We’re lying out on our beach chairs with the warm sand under our feet. He’s still glued to the books on male pregnancy, while I’m absorbing the sun’s rays with Jamie sleeping on my stomach. Justin comes over and puts a sunhat on Jamie, he’s worried about him being exposed to too much sun.

“Justin, what possessed you to buy him a pink sunhat?”

“I liked it, it’s retro.”

“Let me guess, you had one like it when you were his age?”

“Hush! He’s totally adorable in it.”

Alright, I have to admit he does look adorable in his little sunhat. But then again he looks adorable in everything Justin dresses him in. I’m guessing this is a parent thing, because I never thought that babies looked cute until I gave birth. Or maybe it’s that he looks a lot like both Justin and myself. You have to admit the kid has great genes.
It’s almost eleven, and I have to leave to meet with the president of marketing for Skinz. I’m pitching my new ideas for their line of swimwear, featuring scantily clad models, glistening with suntan oil, frolicking on the beach, looking sexy and irresistible.

Justin kisses me good-bye, and tells me to look but don’t touch. He’s so cute, but does he really think I’d risk everything we’re building together, just for a little afternoon romp with some beach bunny? Well, considering my past behavior I guess it’s not hard to imagine me taking advantage of the situation.

But I’ve changed. I’m really happy, happier than I ever dreamed I could be. Our future together seems so promising, with a new baby on the way and one not even crawling yet. I’d be a fool to jeopardize everything we have. I’ve come a long way in the last twelve months and for once my future seems clear, and on track.

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Lindsay’s POV

I pack Gus’s suitcase, getting him ready for when Jennifer comes to pick him up. This last week has been tense; Michael has been feuding with practically everyone except us. He’s been spending a lot of time at our house, making his position known and looking for support. The problem is, we don’t really agree with his perspective.

He’s been treating Hunter like a stranger, accusing his mother of neglecting him. He expected her to see things his way, but she doesn’t, and she’s told him so. For once in Michael’s life he’s not getting his own way, and he’s acting like a spoiled child. It’s to the point that it’s getting on our nerves, and I’m about to ask him to leave, and to call before he decides to come visit next time.

Emmett’s tried talking to him. But Michael blames him for not telling him about the silent auction, and that it was his lost collection of comics and action figures. We all thought that this would blow over. But he’s digging his heels in, making everyone’s life miserable. I’m beginning to wish we could all go and visit Brian and Justin in Florida.

Gus of course, is oblivious to all the stress, singing and skipping around the house. He’s talking non-stop about going to see Mickey Mouse, and Brian’s promise to teach him to swim. I’ve never seen him so happy, and I now realize that spending time with his father is having a positive influence on him.

He and Brian have a ritual of reading before bed every night, and Gus’s interest in books has skyrocketed. He’s even asked if he can get a library card. Apparently Justin explained to him about borrowing books to read, and then returning them. Justin’s a huge reader, he always has stacks of books around. That must be where he gets all his PSAs (public service announcements) that Brian’s always kidding him about. It also explains his score of 1500 on his SAT’s.

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Brian’s POV

I finally finish up my sales pitch and head home. When I come in the door it smells like Thanksgiving. I even see pumpkin pie cooling on the counter.

“Justin?”

“Hey, you’re home!”
He’s happy to see me. He’s always happy these days and it’s contagious. I can never wait to get back to him and Jamie. I miss them when I’ve been gone more than a few hours.

“What’s all this? It smells just like Thanksgiving.”

“I got a craving for roast turkey, and knowing how much you love turkey, it just snow balled from there.”

“Please tell you didn’t make sweet potatoes with those miniature marshmallows.”

“No. Of course not. I made them with brown sugar and pecans. My grandmother’s family recipe”

“You really are trying to give me a heart attack.”

“Brian!”

“So how did you go shopping when I had the car?”

“They have a Whole Foods Market here in town. It’s open 24/7; you place your order over the internet, and they deliver it to you.”

“So does this mean no more late-night runs for Bon Bons and Doritos?”

“No… They need time to deliver your order, and well, I doubt I could wait when I’m having cravings.”

“That’s so true…”

Justin reaches out to smack Brian. But Brian pulls him into his arms kissing him, distracting him, making him desire him even more.

“Are you sure we don’t have to pick my Mom, Molly and Gus up at the airport?”

“Yes, dear. I sent the car service to pick them up.”

“Does this mean we have time before they arrive?”

“Time for what, Sunshine?”

He gets that sexy look in his eyes showing me all the passion he’s feeling. Then he flashes his smile, while crinkling up his nose slightly. I can’t help but find him completely irresistible. He runs his arms around my shoulders, standing up on his tippy toes. I lift him up off the floor kissing him deeply, repeatedly, all over his face. Then I carry him into the bedroom.

I pull his t-shirt up, and over his head, and I then unzip his pants, letting them fall to the floor. He’s still wrangling with the tie I’m wearing. I’m still dressed from my business meeting. I take over, shedding my clothes. Then I pull him down onto the bed with me. His cheeks are rosy, his eyes are dilated, and his lips are swollen. I feel him melting in my arms as I stroke his hair. His legs naturally fall apart as I lie between them. My elbows lean against the mattress on each side of his head as I gaze into his blue orbs. His lip trembles as he whispers my name softly.

“Brian.”

He’s practically begging me; he’s so turned on as he waits patiently for my next move. You’d think I hadn’t taken him in weeks, the way he’s now overcome with need. Yes, I remember being in that passionate state. So unbelievable horny needing release, only wanting his touch. The
exception being, he was nowhere around during my struggle.

I think it must be a pregnancy thing. That overpowering need to feel his touch, that incredible sense of need. Just being plain horny as all hell, unlike anything I’ve ever felt before, and for me that was one hell of a hard-on.

Looking down at him, he looks so beautiful to me even if he is drooling slightly. His breathing is already erratic, and his lip is still doing that trembling thing. That’s when I hear him again.

“Brian…”

I decide to put him out of his misery, bringing our lips together, pushing my tongue inside his warm mouth. Both our mouths are going to be bruised before the session is over. We finally break for air as he wriggles, delighting in the sensations of our dicks caressing across each other, releasing pre-cum, leaving a silky puddle between us.

He’s panting and moaning, begging me to continue with my assault on all his senses. I lick a path from behind his right ear, down his neck until I reach his breast. I gently pull on his nipple ring, as pain and pleasure radiates from his nub, driving him crazy. He arches his back, so I slide down until my face is nuzzled in his bush. I lick around his base and then up his throbbing vein, dragging my tongue across his slit, making him buck to my touch as my mouth encompasses his plump head.

He fists my hair, moaning my name again as I slide my lips up and down his shaft. He’s impatient so he starts directing me in a more frantic motion. He glides himself deeper into my mouth, loving the sensation of his head hitting the back of my throat. He’s moaning something unintelligible, while at the same time thrashing his head on the pillow. He finally arches his back off the mattress as he shoots down my throat.

He’s still moaning and whimpering, babbling on. I can’t help but think he sounds like Jamie, when he’s extremely happy, gurgling in his little wind-up chair. It sounds very similar to the buzz of a vibrator. At least I have two very happy babies on my hands. I look up at him, looking over his now glowing body, shimmering with drool, sweat, and cum. All his favorite bodily fluids.

“Oh! Brian! That was amazing!”

“I know, Sunshine!”

“You are so arrogant! But I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Just then something dings from the other room. He lifts his head and says, “I think it’s time to baste?”

“I thought I just did?”

He grins back at me in the sexiest way, motioning for me to go and check the turkey. I love giving him a hard time. The bird is fifteen pounds, and there’s only going to be Jennifer, Molly, Gus, him, and me. Although he’s right, I love turkey. It’s my favorite protein. Okay, my second favorite protein.

“Brian, I’m going to jump in the shower. Bring Jamie’s baby monitor with you when you come.”

“Yes, dear…”

I check the clock, and see that it’s already four thirty. Their plane landed about twenty minutes
ago, so I also grab his cell phone in case Jennifer calls from the airport. She’s no fool, she knows that it’s best to warn us before they get here.

“Did you check on Jamie before you came in here?”

“Yes, he’s sound asleep. Vibrating away in his own little slice of heaven.”

“I’m so glad that sales clerk showed us that chair. He’s seems to be totally in love with it.”

“I can’t imagine why.”

I grin down at him, while wondering if Jamie will have a vibrator fetish when he gets older. Looking into Justin’s eyes, he’s still floating on cloud nine. I start lathering up his back, running my hands down his body, washing all the little nooks and crannies. We wouldn’t want him smelling like sex when Mother Taylor gets here. He returns the favor while I start shampooing our hair.

I turn around so he can wash my back. Feeling his fingers grazing across my skin feels wonderful, but not as wonderful as when his hand loops around to my front, and starts jerking me off. I can’t help but lean into his touch, loving the sensation of his fingers encircling me, working me, sending signals straight to my balls as they pull up. He slides a finger back, and starts caressing my perineum in the same rhythm as his thrusts.

He knows exactly how I like it, practically making me weak in the knees. He increases his strokes, gliding a finger into my ass, now stimulating me on multiple levels. My senses are soon on overload as I lose control. My release comes fast as I lean my head back, resting it on his shoulders, naturally arching my back as I coat the tiles across the back of the shower.

I’m still moaning his name as he pumps the last remnants of my juices from my shaft. He’s fucking brilliant. I have no idea how I lived without him in my life while he was in LA. I’m just catching my breath when we hear his phone ringing. He sticks his head out of the shower, answering his mother’s call. I finally push him out of the shower so I can finish rinsing off. All that cool air is making me shiver.

“My mom’s on her way. The car service should be here in about a half hour.”

“Perfect.”

“Brian, did you call and confirm her reservation at the Four Seasons?”

“Yes, dear. You don’t have to worry about making all those high-pitched squeals with your mother in the next room.”

Justin wants to deny it, but Brian knows him too well. And it’s so true; he’d be mortified if his mother heard them having sex. Her perfect little angel screaming like a nymphomaniac.

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Ted reviews the signed agreement from Skinz that Brian faxed him a few moments ago. They’ve signed a five-year contract - that’s huge. Most new campaigns start out with only a six month, or maybe a year contract. Then they wait and see if the market is responsive to the new ads. Although Ted has to admit when he saw the artwork and literature for Skinz, he was more than aroused by the models, even if some of them were females.

He stops by the art department and congratulates them for a campaign well done. They’ve been
hitting the mark recently, developing more successful advertisements than usual. Ted wonders if it might have something to do with the fact that Brian’s been out of the office on maternity leave for so long. He makes a note to ask Brian about giving them bonuses.

~~~

Ted and Emmett are sitting in the diner waiting for their order, when Michael comes in. Michael looks at them sadly. Em smiles back at him, waving him over to join them. Michael climbs into the seat next to Em but remains quiet.

“So? How’s your new apartment?”

“It’s small… Very small, only one room with a pull-out sofa, and a tiny kitchen in the corner.”

“Well, you never really cooked much as I recall.”

“That’s not the point! My Ma was supposed to take care of me, me! Not some kid that’s used to living on the streets.”

“Michael, you know better than anyone, he’s not just some kid. What is it you’re so mad at Hunter about anyways? After all he used to be your son.”

“He was never really my son, he was Ben’s. They understood each other. Ben coached him in swimming, and helped him with his school work. Hunter and I never really had much in common.”

“But you were a father figure to him. I’m sure he depended upon you just as much as Ben.”

“I feel like I was robbed. If I had known that Ben was going to get sick and die, I would have never let him move in with us. That was our time, our special time together. We wasted it on fostering him, instead of doing all the things couples do when they’re in love.”

Ted’s taken back by Michael’s admission, just staring at the table top, unable to even look at him. Emmett’s even more in shock, showing it as he sits with his mouth hanging open, staring directly at Michael.

“You don’t mean that, Michael. That’s a horrible thing to say, and it’s not like it was Hunter’s fault that Ben became ill or passed away.”

“I’m just saying that we could have had quality time together. Instead we had to keep putting out fires, Hunter was always in trouble. That mess with Callie and her parents. Then being kicked off the swim team, and eventually quitting school. What a waste.”

“I doubt that Ben would feel the same way. I think he really loved Hunter.”

“He should have loved me more.”

“Children are never in competition for affection between their parents.”

Ted’s had enough.

“Maybe you should have been there more for Ben, instead of off gambling and drinking, and who knows what.”

Emmett tries to keep the peace.

“Teddy, please let’s not fight.”
“No. I won’t. I’m so sick of hearing ‘Oh poor me’ from Michael. Were you that jealous of Hunter that you decided you’d rather go out, leaving them at home alone? Why would you start gambling? I’ve yet to understand why you got into that, and I can’t help wondering if it’s all still in the past?”

“How dare you!”

“Well know this, Michael, in case you haven’t figured it out yet. The bank of Kinney is closed to you, and no one else is coming to your rescue. So pull your head out of your ass and stop feeling sorry for yourself and just grow up!”

Deb’s been standing off to the side trying not to eavesdrop, but it’s kind of impossible. The whole diner has been listening and is in shock. Hunter’s been working there for the last week or so, and they’ve all gotten to know him, and they seem to like him. Debbie’s so mad and disappointed in Michael’s attitude and behavior, she doesn’t even recognize him anymore. But she bites her tongue, looking in the other direction, taking an order from someone sitting at the counter.

Michael gets up without waiting for his lunch order and storms out of the diner, practically running into Deb on his way out. Their eyes meet, but neither of them smile. Watching him leave, Debbie shakes her head and wonders where she went wrong, and why he’s so angry. It’s almost as if he’s another person, or maybe he’s on drugs. What else could it be? She raised him better than this. Emmett comes over and puts his arms around Deb, consoling her. He wishes he had the answers, but he’s just as mystified by Michael’s behavior as she is.

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Justin’s standing in front of the stove, checking on the turkey. Brian is standing behind him, as he leans in and kisses Justin’s neck, cupping his cock through his jeans, gently squeezing him. Jennifer is sitting in the rocking chair, rocking Jamie in her arms, oblivious to Brian’s antics.

“He’s such a good baby, always so happy.”

“Yeah, and he sure likes to squeal a lot.”

“Now, Molly, be nice. You know Justin used to squeal loudly when he was a baby.”

“Really? You don’t say? Like father, like son.”

Then in a very low voice Justin says, “Brian! Be good. My mother’s here.”

“Yes, dear.”

Gus is lying on the sofa, sleepily yawning as he wakes up from his nap. He looks around for his little suitcase to get his GI Joes out to play with. Brian tells him it’s in his bedroom. Gus walks in and sees a new toy chest, he can’t resist looking inside. His eyes get real big, seeing it’s filled with all kinds of new toys.

“Daddy! Daddy! There’s a toy chest in my room!”

“There is?”

“Yes! Can I play with one of the toys?”

“Gus, you can play with all of the toys.”

“Really, Daddy? Did Santa bring them?”
“No, Gus, I bought them for you.”

“No, Daddy! ‘Cause I was a very good boy?”

“You bet.”

“Oh, Daddy! You’re the very bestest! I love you so much!”

“I love you too, Gus.”

“Daddy, do I get to take them home with me?”

“How about we keep them at the loft, and you can play with them when you stay with Justin and me?”

“Okay, Daddy! I love that idea!”

His eyes are as big as saucers as he looks through the toys, trying to decide what to play with first. Brian watches him from the doorway, happy to see Gus so excited. He finally settles on several matchbox sports cars, making engine noises as he races them around on the floor.

“Dinner smells wonderful, Justin. Molly, why don’t you help your brother set the table?”

Brian offers Jennifer a glass of wine, while he pours Justin a sparkling water. He wonders if Jennifer will comment on the fact that Justin’s isn’t drinking, or if she’s seen the stack of books next to the sofa on male pregnancy. Of course Jennifer’s way too polite to ask directly, she’ll probably corner Justin when they’re alone together.

“What’s up, Justin? Jennifer, Molly, why don’t you help your brother set the table?”

“Dinner smells wonderful, Justin. Molly, why don’t you help your brother set the table?”

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“Daddy, can I have a drumstick?”

“No, Daddy, I want the drumstick.”

Watching Gus I can’t help cringing; he’s got turkey juices all over his hands, face and arms. Hell, the damn drumstick is longer than his forearm, and if he’s not careful he’s going to hit himself in the head with it. But he’s happy, and he’s eating, so I guess I should just leave him alone and let him have his fun. Although there’s no way he’ll ever eat all of it.

“Everything tastes wonderful, Justin”

“Thanks, mom.”

“Yeah, you’re a perfect little homemaker.”

“Molly, please don’t bait your brother. I think he’s a very good cook. Maybe it’s time you started learning to cook.”

“I want pumpkin pie.”

“Gus, try and finish your mashed potatoes, and green beans and we’ll see about pie.”

Dinner went well, and it was good to see Jennifer and Molly. She’s right. Justin is a pretty fantastic cook, and I even had a slice of the pie. It must be all the tryptophan in the turkey, because he’s sound asleep on the sofa next to me, and Gus is sprawled out on the floor in his own food coma. It’s just me and Jamie watching CNN, while I give him his bottle and nurse my own glass of Jack
Daniels.

TBC...
Chapter Summary

Michael runs into an old flame, meanwhile Jennifer is surprised to learn about Justin’s pregnancy…

Title: Christmas Presents…  
Story Type: AU  
Word Count: 3832  
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Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…  
Beta Queen: bigi52

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Summary: Michael runs into an old flame, meanwhile Jennifer is surprised to learn about Justin’s pregnancy…

Chapter Twelve ~ Surprise!

Michael’s been working the night shift making doughnuts and cookies, when his boss asks him if he can stay and work the morning shift. He agrees reluctantly. He doesn’t have much choice because he only lives upstairs and has no excuse to say no.

It’s a busy morning. He never realized how many people came in to get coffees and donuts for the office. He’s plugging along, tired from working a double shift when someone asks him about the double-chocolate fudge cake. They need a birthday cake inscribed for their son.

He’s mostly been on auto-pilot all morning and he’s irritated about having to complete a special order. When the customer asks to have, ‘Happy Birthday Hank’ on the cake, he looks up and is surprised to see David standing on the other side of the counter.

David’s just as surprised to see Michael. He tells him that he’s been back in town a couple of months. David asks him if he’d like to have dinner with him and Hank for his birthday tonight. He tells Michael how much it would mean to Hank to see him again. Michael’s all smiles now, and can’t help wondering if David is just as happy to see him.

The rest of the day went by fast with Michael’s much improved mood and he couldn’t help daydreaming about getting back together with David. The reason it didn’t really work when he moved with David to Portland, was because Michael was lonely and missed Brian. David had finally had enough and told him to just ‘Go home, Michael’.

The truth be told, Michael missed being the so-called ‘doctor’s wife’, living a more glamorous lifestyle. He no longer cares what his friends think. Maybe he did change, but what difference did that make now? They weren’t really his friends anymore, after the way they’ve been treating him.
Yes, things are definitely looking up in Michael’s mind.

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Brian had promised to teach Gus to swim on this visit. He decided it would be best to give him lessons in the pool at the Four Seasons. He wanted to be able to control the situation and not have to worry about the undertow in the ocean. Gus is excited and not the least bit afraid of the water. Brian tells him to jump in the pool, he’ll catch him. Gus jumps right into Brian’s arms, laughing, having a great time.

They spend the next couple of hours with Gus floating on his stomach, kicking, and swishing his arms. Brian stands next to him, holding his arms underneath him, just in case he starts going under the water. He’s a fast learner, and now wants to swim with his head underwater. Brian instructs him to take a deep breath, and then hold it while he skims the water. Then to slowly release his breath, when coming up for air.

Justin’s sitting on the steps holding Jamie on his lap. Jamie’s thrilled, splashing his arms in the water, laughing and squealing. He loves the water. He loves it when Justin gives him a bath in the sink. But this is more adventurous and he can’t help splashing and gurgling, while making silly faces.

Justin wonders if maybe Jamie should take swimming lessons when he’s a little older. He’s heard that babies have a natural ability to swim at a very young age. Brian’s alright with Jamie sitting on Justin’s lap, or even Justin holding him in the water but he absolutely refuses to consider allowing him to go in the ocean. Not that Justin would ever even ask.

They have lunch with Molly and Jennifer poolside, then head back to the condo. They stop to buy Gus floating arm supports and a swim ring. To be on the safe side Brian even buys him a lifejacket. Always the over protective father, he lectures Gus about never going near the water when he or Justin aren’t right next to him. Brian plans on continuing his swim lessons with Gus in the ocean, impressed at how well he’s already doing.

Justin and Jamie are down for their afternoon nap, so Brian and Gus sit outside in the sun, reading. Brian is reading ‘Treasure Island’ to Gus, and he loves the adventure of pirates and treasure maps. He’s completely enthralled in the story and hates it when they come to the end of a chapter, checking on Jamie and Justin.

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Michael’s fidgeting nervously as he waits for David to answer the door. He had to borrow his boss’s old car to drive to David’s house because it’s not within walking distance, and there’s no bus route close by. He’s excited to see David again, hoping that all their problems and mistakes are behind them.

Hank answers the door and throws himself into Michael’s arms. He’s missed him and missed his dad having someone special in his life. David’s fussing with dinner in the kitchen, while Hank goes on and on about all his school activities and the girl he secretly has a crush on. Michael’s happy to be welcomed back into the family so easily, he’s missed feeling like he belongs. Somehow he always felt like an outsider with Ben and Hunter. Of course that was all in his mind.

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Ted and Emmett are leaning against the bar at Babylon, watching the crowd when they see Michael and David enter. Needless to say they’re both in shock, they never thought they’d see
David again. David smiles when he sees them, but Michael acts like he doesn’t even know who they are. David’s confused by Michael’s behavior and he encourages him to go over and say hi.

David offers to buy a round of drinks, thinking a little alcohol might loosen up Michael and get him to make up with his friends. When Michael goes to the restroom, David asks them what’s going on. Emmett tries to hedge his questions, but finally he explains how upset Michael’s been feeling. He explains that Michael’s husband, Ben, has recently died. David’s in shock, Michael never even mentioned that he had been married.

Later that evening David asks Michael about Ben, and Michael blows up. He says that it doesn’t concern him, and that it wasn’t really a marriage. That it happened in Canada, and wasn’t real here in the States.

“But you loved him, right, Michael?”

“Yeah, but it’s over and done with. I don’t want to talk about it.”

“You had a foster son?”

“They had no right telling you about that, and he’s no longer my foster son.”

“You sound angry about this. What’s going on?”

“I said I don’t want to talk about him. He’s just some loser kid, and he’s out of my life now.”

David’s completely in shock. He never thought that Michael could be so cruel and uncaring. And David doesn’t even know anything about Michael’s money or gambling problems. David tells him that he has an early office visit scheduled. Then he kisses him good-bye on the cheek and leaves him standing next to his boss’s car.

David needed to get away, needed some time to think about everything Ted and Emmett had told him. He doesn’t remember Michael being so cold hearted. He remembers him more like the boy-next-door type. He’s not sure he wants to get involved with Michael, unsure who exactly he is these days.

David drives to the baths, and indulges in a little group sex before heading home. Now that Hank is older, David rarely brings anyone home. He doesn’t date; he’s more like Brian these days, preferring anonymous sex and one-night stands, or should I say the old Brian. It’s kind of funny how they’ve both changed over the years.

Michael’s left standing in the parking lot, wondering just what happened. Things didn’t work out at all like he planned; he had hoped that David and he would start seeing each other again. He wanted to move back in with him as soon as possible, to take up where they left off. He decides to call him and ask him why he left so abruptly.

At first David doesn’t answer, then it becomes obvious that Michael isn’t going to give up, so he answers his phone. After Michael says hello, there’s dead silence, except for all the moaning and groaning in the background. Michael’s taken aback, wondering where David is, and then he hears someone cry out loudly as they cum. He’s so upset he disconnects his cell, standing there in shock, confused and angry.

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“Justin, are you ready?”
“Almost.”

“You’re bringing all those suitcases?”

“Yeah, I just want to make sure we have everything we’ll need at Disneyworld.”

“Justin, we’re only going for three days. I think we’ll make do without everything Jamie owns.”

Gus is skipping and singing, dancing around; he’s so excited about seeing Mickey Mouse. Of course it doesn’t help that he had waffles for breakfast and he’s now hyped up on sugar. Brian wonders how the car ride is going to go, and he prays that Gus spins out on a sugar rush and sleeps most of the way.

They’ve rented one of those huge SUV’s, a Ford Escalade that will hold everyone comfortably, along with all their luggage. Molly’s almost as excited as Gus, and the two of them talk non-stop about Disneyworld for the next hour. Then magically everyone seems to have fallen asleep except for Jennifer and Brian.

They talk about all of the changes happening with the loft remodel. Jennifer mentions that she went by and inspected the work before she left. She’s impressed with all the design elements Brian and Justin have included, saying how much they’ll add to the resale value if they should ever want to sell. Brian can’t help thinking that once the kids get older, maybe three or four, they’ll need a bigger place. Especially if Justin still wants to be on the baby train, having expressed his desire to have another baby in a couple of years.

They arrive at Disneyworld and get settled into their suite, relaxing a little from the long drive before they get ready to go out to dinner. Brian checks in with Ted at Kinnetik to see how things are going. Ted’s going to FedEx the storyboards for ‘Cocoa Beach,’ the sunscreen company he’s meeting with tomorrow afternoon. He plans on taking a few hours off from vacation to pitch his new ad campaign to the vice-president of marketing.

He has to admit that the ad is hot, even if it’s not his personal preference. He views the artwork over the internet, giving Ted the authorization to complete the storyboards. As usual the advertisement is practically porn, just the way Brian likes it, knowing that it will attract both men and women alike.

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The next morning after Michael gets off work he meets Emmett at the diner, he wants an explanation. He wants to know what they told David last night. He’s worried that David knows about his bad behavior and his poor treatment of Hunter. He’s sitting there playing with the sugar packets, steaming, when Emmett slides in across from him.

“What a surprise to see you with David last night. I didn’t know he was back in town or back in your life.”

“Well, he might not be after everything you told him last night. How could you? Couldn’t you see that was my chance to get David back? For good.”

“What do you mean, Michael? We didn’t tell him anything. Well, except you were grieving the loss of Ben, your husband. He seemed to honestly care about your wellbeing.”

“You had no right telling him I was married. Besides it wasn’t legal, it wasn’t real. If it had been real, I would have inherited Ben’s life insurance and bank accounts.”
Ted sits down next to Em. “And let’s not forget all his hospital bills and funeral expenses.”

“What?”

“I’m just saying that you would have been responsible for all of Ben’s debt, as well. Because that’s what loving husbands do. They honor their partners by paying all their final expenses, making sure that everything is taken care of.”

“But everybody knows I don’t have any money.”

“Yes. Now remind me where you spent all your money?”

“Teddy, please… I think you proved your point.”

“You two stay away from David. And don’t you dare mention to him about my store or anything else. That’s none of his business or yours.”

Michael storms out of the diner, angry as hell. Why can’t his so-called friends stop butting into his business? Deb couldn’t help overhearing Michael ragging on about staying away from David. She goes over to take their order, asking what that was all about.

“It seems that David is back in town, and him and Michael ran into one another yesterday.”

“David. I always liked him. I know that you and Brian didn’t think he was right for Michael, and Michael turned into a total snob. But maybe this is a good thing. Maybe they’ll make it work this time.”

“I wouldn’t count on that, Deb. It sounds like things didn’t go so well last night.”

“Damn. I wish things would turn around for Michael. I know he’s been acting like a little asshole, but I just wish he’d snap out of it.”

“I know, Deb, we all do.”

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Brian’s POV

Reading through the literature and checking the maps of Disneyworld we try to plan for the next few days. Some of the rides won’t be appropriate for Gus, he’s too young and too small. It’s nice to have Jennifer and Molly with us; that way we can take turns going with the kids on some of the rides, while other times we can split up so Molly and Gus can go on different rides that appeal more to their age. Then there will be times when Justin and I just want to get away and explore the park on our own.

The first morning Gus and Molly wanted to go on several of the same rides, and Justin was feeling a little under the weather. Jennifer went with the kids to Cinderella’s Castle, the Muppet Vision 3-D, It’s a Small World, and Mad-hatter’s Tea Party. Justin and I hung out, he sketched the crowd, and some of the Disney characters, while Jamie and I enjoyed relaxing in the sun, and I read him the Wall Street Journal. I’ve found that it doesn’t really matter what I read to him. It’s more about the tone of voice I use, that calms him and makes him feel secure.

Later Jennifer returned with the kids, loaded down with bags. She bought them Mickey Mouse T-shirts, and ears, several DVDs of Disney movies which no doubt we’ll be watching this evening, and of course, huge suckers and cotton candy. Gus is dancing and singing, “It’s a Small World” as
he spins around, practically making himself dizzy.

“And Daddy, we got Jenny a tiara just like Cinderella’s.”

Gus lifts up his Mickey Mouse ears to reveal the sparkly tiara underneath it.

“I’m just wearing it for Jenny so it doesn’t get lost.”

“He’s totally in love with that tiara. I doubt he’ll be able to part with it when he gets home.”

Justin can’t help grinning, he can totally relate. He wanted “My Little Pony” when he was Gus’s age but his father absolutely refused to allow it.

Justin’s starving so we search for someplace to eat lunch and end up at Planet Hollywood. Gus loves it because, like everywhere else in the park, it’s filled with Disney characters, and movie-themed graphics. He’s still rambling on about Cinderella and the magic castle. It’s obvious that everything is making a big impression on him. The waitress gives him a coloring book and crayons and he’s content until his lunch arrives.

Later that afternoon Brian takes Molly on several rides that were too scary for Gus. They visit the Tower of Terror, Haunted Mansion and the Pirates of the Caribbean. Brian thinks that maybe it might be okay to take Gus on the Pirates of the Caribbean, knowing how much he loves pirates these days, he’ll have to think about it overnight.

In the meantime Justin takes Gus on a few more appropriate rides: Under the Sea with the Little Mermaid, Buzz Light-year Space Ranger, Adventures of Winnie the Pooh, and Kidcot Funstop where they do arts and crafts. They’re all up for taking a break, there’s so many rides it’s almost overwhelming for Gus and he’s ready to decompress for the day.

The next morning Brian is reviewing the storyboards and materials from Ted, putting a few finishing touches on his presentation. When he’s all dressed up in his suit, Molly can’t help being attracted him. She daydreams about having a boyfriend just as gorgeous as Brian someday. She watches longingly as he kisses Justin good-bye and leaves for his meeting.

After having breakfast from room service they make their way down to the park. Molly and Gus get in line for the rides, while Jennifer, Justin and Jamie sit and talk. It’s obvious that Justin’s feeling a little under the weather, and Jennifer can’t help asking if he feels alright.

“I’m fine, Mom, I just have a touch of an upset stomach.”

“Justin, you’ve been ill every morning since Molly and I arrived. What’s going on? Maybe you should see a doctor?”

“Mom, trust me, it’s nothing.”

“I highly doubt that, Justin. Are you sure there isn’t something you want to tell me?”

Justin hesitates, looking at his shoes, then up at his mother. He knows she’s no fool and that she probably saw the stack of books on male pregnancy back at the condo.

“I’ve actually seen a doctor when we were still in Pittsburgh… Brian and I thought that it was best if we waited, but I can tell you’ve already guessed. So yes, you’re going to be a grandmother again in September.”

Jennifer smiles broadly and places her hand over her heart.
“Oh Justin, that’s wonderful news. But aren’t you worried about having two small children so close together?”

“No. I really want this, and it’s not like this is an accident. Brian and I both decided not to wait.”

“Oh… Oh, so does this mean?”

“Mother, please…”

“I’m sorry, Justin, I didn’t mean to embarrass you. I guess that must have been a big step in your relationship. I mean, it’s wonderful that Brian’s ready to make such a big commitment.”

“Mom…”

“I’m sorry, Justin, this must be embarrassing for you. But it shouldn’t be, it’s a beautiful thing. So are you two planning on getting married?”

“Yes. He asked me at Christmas, but we haven’t really made any plans as of yet. And with my pregnancy, I think I might want to wait until after the baby’s born.”

Jennifer can’t help frowning. “Are you sure? Don’t you want the baby to be born… You know what I mean.”

“Mom, Brian and I don’t need locks on our doors to prove we’re committed to one another.”

“I know… I know, of course not. It’s just, I don’t know… I guess I’m just old fashioned.”

“I know you mean well, but please just let us takes this at our own speed. Trust me, everything’s going to be alright.”

“Of course it is darling. It’s so obvious how much in love the two of you are. I didn’t mean to pry.”

“Oh, look, here comes Molly and Gus.”

“Justy! Justy, we saw Nemo and Peter Pan! And Peter Pan was flying, he was flying up really high!”

“He was? Wow! That’s exciting!”

“I know it was, it really was!”

“Can we go on the train?”

“The train?”

Molly offers, “It’s called Big Thunder Mountain Railroad.”

“Sounds good to me.”

“Yay! And then can we go to the Boneyard and see Dinosaurs?”

“Absolutely. Then we should get some lunch and meet up with your dad.”

“Oh, Justy, this is the best vacation ever!”

They have lunch back at the hotel, and Brian joins them just as they’re sitting down. Gus is excited as he tells Brian all about the rides he went on this morning. They decided to take a break this
afternoon and relax at the beach. Gus and Brian go swimming, and Gus practises his swim lessons. They all have a great time splashing in the water.

That evening they go out to dinner at Coral Reef, and after dinner they go and watch the fireworks. Gus was totally in awe, loving all the explosions going off over his head and he even gets to meet Mickey Mouse and have his picture taken with him. By the time they make it back to the hotel everyone was exhausted, retiring to their bedrooms for the night.

Justin and Brian decided to grab a quick shower before bed, well maybe not that quick. Justin stands leaning back against Brian as the warm water flows down over the two of them. He wiggles his ass up against Brian, making him come alive. Brian, of course, anticipated their playtime and brought the tube of lube with him.

He leans down and kisses Justin’s lips, then works his way around his neck to his ear and whispers, “Such a horny little boy.”

He takes Justin’s cock in his hand, palming him, sliding his firm member in his fist. Deep moans escape Justin, and it’s a good thing the water is drowning out all his loud cries. Brian slides his other hand down the small of Justin’s back and over his plump ass. Justin can’t help but lean forward, awaiting Brian’s next move.

He hears the snap of the cap on the lube, and then the cool gel coating his rosebud. He’s back to moaning again as he feels Brian’s fingers slip inside, stretching him. He tries as hard as he can to keep his moaning down so his mother won’t hear him. But he’s truly turned on and he can’t stop all the sounds escaping. Soon he’s chanting.

“Brian, Brian, Brian.”

Brian glides his dick down between Justin’s cheeks, and gently starts pushing. Soon he’s breaching his tight ring of muscle, penetrating him, thrusting forward until he hits Justin’s prostate. Waves of pleasure pulse out to his limbs, and his breathing becomes erratic.

“Brian, Brian, Brian.”

Brian’s hands hold Justin’s hip as he thrusts his pelvis forward, gliding against his slick walls, back and forth. Justin’s so horny that it doesn’t take much for him to start trembling as he becomes consumed with his climax. He moans loudly again as he shakes with pleasure. Brian works his cock in his hand as he cums, splashing his juices in his palm, following close behind. He floods Justin’s tight ass with his seed as he falls over the edge.

Soon they’re all warm and toasty, tucked in bed, drifting off to a deep slumber.

TBC…
Chapter Thirteen ~ Almost Perfect…

They’ve had a great time vacationing with Jennifer, Molly and Gus. Justin’s happy that they all seem to accept each other as family. Jennifer considers Gus her grandson just as much as she does Jamie. And now that the cat’s out of the bag, she’ll soon be planning for her next grandchild. She plans on playing an active role in all their lives, having them spend weekends with her, as well as taking them on day trips, and spoiling them like any doting grandmother would.

It was their last evening together before they caught their flight back in the morning to cold and dreary Pittsburgh. Justin wanted to make it special, deciding to have a barbeque on the beach, so they could all relax and enjoy their remaining time together. Justin made shish kebab, fresh corn, along with skewers of pineapple, peaches and apples. He loved how the fruit caramelized, bringing out all the naturally sweet juices.

They sat out on the patio enjoying their feast, and sipping champagne, with sparkling cider for Gus, Molly and Justin. Jennifer couldn’t help reflecting on the past week and how wonderful it was to spend time together. She missed spending time with Justin, especially after him being in Hollywood for most of last year. This was a much-needed vacation to enjoy her family, her rapidly expanding family. She’s so excited about Justin’s pregnancy, she just hopes she will be able to keep his secret.

There was a time when Brian would have been running for the hills just thinking about having a family barbeque, but those days have long since passed. It’s now dark out and the stars are shining high above them. Brian is pointing out all the constellations to Gus and Molly, they even saw a shooting star. Justin said they should all make a wish. Brian pulls him in close, telling him, “I already have everything I’ve ever wished for.”

Justin can’t help grinning, loving how open and attentive Brian is these days. Jennifer’s not the only one loving their vacation, Justin’s happy that Brian and he have finally gotten away together.
Having canceled several vacations in the past, he truly appreciates the quality time spent together. He hears Jamie waking up through the baby monitor, and goes to check on him.

When he brings him out to the patio to give him his bottle, Jennifer asks if she can do that. She knows how much she’s going to miss him once she returns home. She still can’t get over how much he looks like Brian, yet he acts like Justin at that age. The campfire is still popping and crackling in the background and Molly whispers something in Justin’s ear. The two siblings disappear for a few minutes, returning with their hands full of marshmallows, graham crackers and Hershey bars.

Soon they’re all toasting marshmallows over the fire. Justin’s shocked to learn that Brian’s never had a s’more before. He’s never gone camping, and his parents never allowed them to have many sweets, except for the annual chocolate chocolate-chip birthday cake. Brian’s tastes buds are dancing with delight as he enjoys the sticky treat. He wanted to believe that he wouldn’t like it, because he rarely likes sweets, but he can’t help moaning slightly as he devours the s’more.

Later that evening Brian tucks Gus in, after reading him another chapter of ‘Treasure Island’. He promises him they’ll continue the story back at the loft when he starts spending time there. They had planned on having Gus return for one more week-long visit, but Melanie but a stop to that. She felt like Gus needed to be spending more time with them. Brian decided not to argue with them, figuring that there would be plenty of time for that when they returned.

The following morning they hug and kiss each other good-bye, and promise that they’ll see each other soon. It’s obvious that Gus doesn’t want to go home yet, so Brian promises him that they’ll go to the zoo once he’s back home. Gus keeps looking back over his shoulder on the way to the car, blowing kisses to Brian and Justin. Justin’s taking pictures with his camera phone, capturing all of Gus’s sweetness and innocence, knowing that they’ll soon be framed and sitting on their dresser.

“What’s this?”

“Oh, my mom left it. It’s from Deb. She forgot to give it to us when she got here.”

“Justin. You know he’s never going to wear that.”

“Oh Brian, it’s not that bad. Besides he can wear it to sleep in. By the time it’s summer in Pittsburgh he’ll have outgrown it. And he won’t ever have to be seen in public wearing it.”

“Okay, but I sure hope he pukes on it.”

“I’m sure Deb meant well.”

“It’s just like one of those ridiculous t-shirts she’s always wearing.”

“Actually, it’s better. Just think, it could say something like ‘Spawn of Satan’.”

“Very funny…”

“You love me.”

“So I guess from all the art supplies, you plan on painting this afternoon?”

“Yeah. You want to be my model? Maybe you could hold Jamie, and I could capture you both on canvas.”
“You really think he’s going to sit still for that long?”

“I’m more worried about you. I usually capture your essence when you’re busy working, reading or sleeping.”

“I’m sure I can sit still long enough for you to recreate my greatness.”

“Always the modest one.”

“You so love me.”

Brian gets comfortable lying with Jamie asleep on his stomach. It’s only a matter of a few minutes before they’re both sound asleep. Justin gazes at his family and his heart swells; never in a million years did he think he’d ever have all his dreams come true. He remembers babysitting JR, and Daphne asking him when he and Brian were going to have kids. At the time just the question made him uncomfortable, and a little sad.

He was sure he’d have to pursue another relationship to ever have a family. Yes, they’ve come a long way over the last year, and his heart can’t help aching a little, thinking about how much he missed out on while being in California. He did a lot of growing up being so far away from home. Sure, in the beginning it was exciting living by the ocean, and working in the movies. The endless parties, and so many perfectly sculpted men to indulge in. But none of them held a candle to what he had left behind. He missed Brian right from the beginning, missed the closeness and the intimacy that they shared. The intimacy that you only have from knowing one another so very well.

His mind keeps drifting, and all he can hear now is his mother asking when they plan on getting married. It still makes him cringe, thinking about his mother talking about them finally making a commitment to one another, knowing that she knew that they were no longer using protection. Talking about sex with his mother has never been easy, but before when he was younger he used it like a badge of honor. He made sure she understood that he was sexually involved and loving it. Christ, he still can’t believe that he told that shrink that he liked sucking cock, and that he was good at it too. The things he used to do for shock value; he has really become modest in his old age at just twenty-two.

Now he was about to marry his sex god, the man of his dreams. Maybe his mother was right, maybe they should get married before the new baby comes. He might be too busy, and possibly too exhausted to plan a wedding later on. But maybe he’s just scared, scared that it might change things between him and Brian. Or maybe Brian might back out at the last minute. Then what would that mean for their relationship? He can feel his tears starting, and he knows it’s just his hormones; this pregnancy thing has him on a rollercoaster of emotions.

He wipes the tears from his eyes, and goes in to wash his face. Why is he crying? Why is he having all these negative thoughts? Brian hasn’t given him any reason to doubt that their future is anything but bright. He’s been totally supportive but maybe it’s just the ghost of Brian’s past that’s haunting his thoughts. He feels Brian’s arms come around his waist from behind.

“Hey, what’s with all the tears?”

“I don’t know…”

“Justin. This is no time to start keeping secrets from me.”

“I guess I’m just being emotional.”

“Yeah, I remember being like that. You can’t let yourself get carried away, things are rarely as bad
as you’re feeling.”
“I guess I’m just a little scared.”
“Scared of what?”
“I don’t know…”
“Justin.”
“Scared that everything is going too well. Scared that the other shoe is going to drop, and things will fall apart.”

Brian pulls him into his arms, kissing his neck and whispering in his ear.
“Everything’s going to be fine. Trust me, things have never been so good.”
“I know, that’s what I’m afraid of.”

“Justin. I understand that you might not believe in me, that you might have some doubts. Lord knows my track record is for shit, but I’ve changed. Parenthood has a way of making everything clearer. Being responsible for another person, especially one so small and defenseless makes you have a sense of responsibility, a reason to be a better person. I didn’t get that when Gus was born. I think that’s because the munchers kept me at bay. But with Jamie, I’m totally committed, and not just with Jamie, with us too. I’m in this for the long haul. I need you in my life. Don’t give up on me. I need you just as much as you need me.”

Justin wraps his arms around Brian’s neck, and stands on his tippy toes to kiss him passionately.
“Oh Brian. I love you so much, and I do believe in us. I do but I’m just an emotional wreck right now.”

“Yeah. All those hormones are playing havoc with your psyche.”

“Is Jamie still sleeping?”

“Yeah. Now come here… Brian takes his hand and walks him into the bedroom. They lie down next to one another and start kissing, running their hands all over one another. Soon they find themselves naked and writhing. Justin rolls Brian over on his back and climbs up onto his lap. Brian stares up at Justin, loving how beautiful he looks; he seems to be glowing with happiness. Justin rubs himself against Brian’s cock, letting his balls graze over Brian’s, sending electrical charges through both of them.

Justin leans back with hooded eyes, loving the sensations that are now flooding his body. Little moans escape him as he motions for Brian to hand him the lube. He coats Brian’s firm member and then positions himself above, slowly lowering himself onto Brian’s dick. He loves the intense pressure that he feels as he consumes Brian, engulfing him completely until he hits his prostate, sending out waves of pleasure.

Slowly he starts raising and lowering himself. Brian’s cock is gliding in his channel, caressing his walls, ripples of pleasure radiate to consume his senses. He continues to ride Brian’s member with his eyes closed and his mouth open. He loses himself in all the sensations, letting himself drift into oblivion, close as he teeters on the edge.

His body is covered in a sheen of perspiration, unable to stop his climax from claiming him.
Brian’s hands are on his hips, holding him steady, as his body jerks and spasms. Leaning his head back he finally shoots, coating his chest as he falls over the edge.

Brian grins up at him as he slowly falls back down to earth. His cum is running down his belly, pooling on his thighs. He opens his eyes, whispering, “That was incredible! I mean totally amazing! I’ve never felt my orgasm so strongly, so intense. God! You’re simply the best!”

Brian just continues to smile up at him. He decides not to be so smug and tell him he knows. He just wants Justin to glow in the aftermath, to know that was all just for him. And Justin feels it, feels so special and so loved. He leans down and kisses Brian passionately, expressing all his emotions.

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Justin’s cell phone rings and it startles them both awake. Justin answers it, surprised by the voice on the other end.

“Justin. I need to talk with you. I feel horrible about how I acted when you left. I know I was an asshole, treating you badly for no reason and I wanted to explain.”

“Connor?”

“Yeah, it’s me. I miss you.”

“Connor, listen you don’t need to explain. I told you when we first met that I wasn’t looking for any kind of relationship.”

“I know. But things change. I’ve changed. I need to see you.”

“No. Why?”

“I miss you. I need you in my life.”

“No. No, stop! I told you, I was involved in a serious relationship. I’m in love with Brian.”

“Yes, but we both know the long-distance relationship thing wasn’t working for you two. Besides if he really loved you, he never would have let you go.”

“No one lets me do anything! I don’t need anyone’s permission.”

“I didn’t mean it that way. I just meant that… that I think I’m in love with you.”

“No. No, no, no. Just stop. Now hear me. Brian and I are together. We love each other, and we’re planning on getting married. I never had those kinds of feelings for you. Never. And you know that. We talked about this on several occasions.”

“I don’t believe you. There was something between us. If you’d just given us a chance, I know you’d feel the same way too.”

Brian lies awake with his eyes closed. He has no idea who Justin’s talking with, but he can only assume that it’s someone that Justin had a relationship with in California. But when they talked, Justin always said that there never was anyone special in his life. Now Brian can’t help but wonder if he has competition for Justin’s heart. If he might lose him to this mysterious man from California.

“Listen! Are you listening to me? I Love Brian… I always have, and I always will… We’re getting
married. We have a family together. A life together and it’s everything I’ve always wanted.”

“What do you mean, you have a family? Are you pregnant or something?”

“Yes. That’s exactly what I mean. Plus we have an infant son. My life is better than I even imagined it could be, and it doesn’t include you.”

“I think this would go better if we talked in person. I’ve already made reservations to fly out to Pittsburgh. I can’t wait to see you.”

“Connor! Connor! I’m not in Pittsburgh. I’m out of state on vacation. I don’t want to see you, or talk to you in person. Besides it wouldn’t change a thing.”

“But Justin, I really think I’m in love with you!”

“Remember the day we met? I told you I wasn’t interested in dating you. I told you I was in a long-term relationship. That I planned to do the movie, and then return to the man I loved. Nothing’s changed.”

“Please don’t hang up. Justin? Don’t you even want to try?”

“Good-bye, Connor. Don’t call me again.”

Justin hangs up. He feels bad that he had to be so blatant to Connor, but he just wasn’t listening. Of course his phone starts ringing again, and after several rings he answers it, afraid that it might wake Brian, even though Brian’s been lying next to him this whole time, and has probably heard everything he’s said. But that doesn’t bother him, because he has nothing to hide from Brian. He’s totally committed to them, and their future.

“Connor, listen, I’m only going to say this once. Then I’m hanging up and turning my phone off. If you call again I’ll block your phone number. Okay? Now, you’re not my boyfriend, you’re not even my friend. You’re just someone that I met and had casual sex with. It meant nothing to me, you mean nothing to me. So please make this easier on yourself and just hang up and let it go. I’m with Brian. I’m with Brian and I always have been, even if we lived three thousand miles apart. I love him. Him and only him.”

With that Justin hangs up the phone and tosses it on the bed as he gets up to take a piss. Of course it rings again and Brian answers it.

“Yeah?”

“Justin, I knew you couldn’t not take my call. I heard your little speech, but I think we need to talk in person. I need to see you. Please tell me where you are? I’ll meet you. He doesn’t even have to know. I just need to see you. Justin? Justin? Justin, are you there?”

“Yeah?”

“Oh thank God. I knew you missed me. Now tell me where you are.”

“1791 Palm Street, Clearwater, Florida.”

“Okay, great. I got it. Your voice seems deeper, or is that my imagination?”

“Umm…”

“Okay, okay never mind. I’ll fly out to see you. God, I miss you so much.”
Brian hangs up, and immediately knows that he shouldn’t have done that. He knows Justin is going to be furious with him, but he just couldn’t resist. He had to know who this ‘Connor’ was, who his competition was.

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Justin comes back and lies down next to Brian, spooning him from behind. Loving the security of holding him in his arms, he daydreams about their future and their wedding. He kisses Brian’s shoulder and snuggles down again, slowly drifting back to sleep. When he wakes several hours later he finds Brian sitting out on the patio, giving Jamie his bottle. He yawns, stretching his muscles as he wakes up. He sits next to Brian to watch the sunset.

He’s inspired to paint so he sets up his easel, and soon images start taking form on the canvas as he captures all the orange and pink hues reflecting on the ocean.

TBC…
Chapter Summary

There’s lots of surprises for the boys on Valentine’s Day…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 3484
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
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Summary: There’s lots of surprises for the boys on Valentine’s Day…

Chapter Fourteen ~ Ghosts of Boyfriends Past…

Brian’s POV

I’m reviewing my presentation for Wetwear - a company that makes sexy wetsuits and as much as I wanted a sexy male wearing the wetsuit, I have to admit that they all look like wet dogs, compared to the sexy model Ted found. The way the suit clings to all her curves you can’t help being attracted to her.

Because in the end it’s all about selling wetsuits, and I have a feeling the vice-president of marketing is going to cum in his pants when he sees her. Hell, I’m practically getting hard and I’m not even attracted to women.

I hear Justin talking to someone out on the beach, and I go out to see who’s here. He’s been painting all day, and it’s good to see him so inspired. He’s always in a good mood when he’s creating a new masterpiece, besides, the boy’s a genius. He introduces me to the dykes he’s met, Kate and Jude, who are staying in the condo several doors down. Apparently Kate works at the Pace gallery in Chelsea, New York, and she loves Justin’s paintings.

He offers to send her slides once we get back home, but she insists that they need to come and visit because she wants to see his work in person. He’s totally flattered so it’s good for him to get his ego stroked, having someone else gush over his talent instead of just me. He needs to know it’s true, and that I’m not just praising him because I’m biased.

After chatting with them for a while, Justin makes a playdate with them for the next afternoon; they have a son who’s six months old. I can’t help thinking it’s a little strange. How can you have a playdate with someone who’s only ten weeks old? He can’t even crawl yet.
Michael was daydreaming while he was working, he couldn’t stop thinking about David. He played out all kinds of scenarios of how they would run into each other’s arms, pledging their love for one another. The fact that he had left over a dozen messages for David, and he’s never returned any of them, never crosses Michael’s mind. He just assumes that David is busy with his practice, and he’d see him on Valentine’s Day. That would be the perfect day to commit to each other, then Michael could start planning their dream wedding.

He baked David several dozen heart-shaped cookies frosted with pink and red icing. All of them are decorated with little sayings like, ‘I Love You, My True Love, Yours Forever, Marry Me, You’re Mine For Eternity and I Can’t Live Without You.’

He couldn’t wait for Valentine’s Day so he decides that he’ll surprise David and stop by to give him the cookies. Hank answers the door, telling him that his father is at a business meeting, and he doesn’t know when he’ll be home. Michael doesn’t take the subtle hint, and insists on waiting for David to return.

After about an hour and a half, Hank tells him that his ride is there. He is having a sleepover with his friend, and Michael will have to leave. Michael is disappointed, but not deterred. He leaves to wait at home for David’s call, a call that will never come.

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Emmett’s sitting in the diner, stirring the cream into his coffee. Michael comes over to ask him how everything’s going. Michael seems upbeat for a change; Emmett asks him if it’s because of Doctor David. Michael beams, and says that things are looking up. He mentions that he’s talked with David a couple of times and visited him at home last night. Emmett’s happy for him, happy that things are finally turning around for him.

Ted scoots in next to Emmett, nodding to Michael, while waving Deb over to indicate he wants coffee. Emmett can’t help gushing, spilling Michael’s news.

“Michael and the Doctor are back together. Isn’t that wonderful? And it’s so romantic, especially being Valentine’s Day!”

Ted’s a little shocked. “Really?”

“Teddy, what kind of attitude is that? Of course they’re working things out. They’re meant to be together, they’re in love. I’m so happy for you, Michael!”

Ted just looks at him, slightly confused by Michael’s update.

“So where have you been? I seems like I haven’t seen you for days. The last time I talked to you, you said you had some business meeting to attend.”

“Yes, I’ve joined the local ‘Small Businessmen’s Association’, the Pittsburgh chapter.”

“Yeah, I’ve heard of it. I think David’s a member.”

Ted just raises his eyebrow, but remains silent. Michael continues bragging about how wonderful things are with David, and Ted can’t help becoming more uncomfortable the more he hears. He knows for a fact that Michael wasn’t with David last night, because he was. He ran into David at the meeting and they went out for a beer afterwards. Then David came over and they ended up spending the night together, while Hank had a sleepover with one of his friends.

Ted knows that Michael’s left many messages for David, but he’s never returned any of them.
When he talked with David this afternoon, he said that Hank mentioned Michael stopped by and left him a box of cookies. Hank told him he was out, but Michael insisted on waiting for him to return. He finally left when Hank’s friend’s father picked him up for the weekend. Ted hopes that Michael’s just exaggerating; the last thing he wants to learn is that Michael is delusional.

He told David he was concerned, that he didn’t want to come between him and Michael. But David reassured him that whatever he and Michael had, ended in Portland. He’d only seen him once on Hank’s birthday but not to worry, as there didn’t seem to be any sparks left between the two of them. That’s when they both agreed that they wanted to start seeing each other; they couldn’t deny how strong the chemistry was between them. David said he’d talk with Michael and explain the situation. The problem is that he hasn’t had time to have the talk just yet. And the fact that it’s Valentine’s Day doesn’t help.

“So where are you and David going tonight? It’s so romantic starting over again on the holiday of love.”

“Let me call David and check.”

Michael flips open his phone, and soon he’s talking with David. It’s obvious that he doesn’t like what he’s hearing as his smile turns into a frown. He just keeps saying, “A-ha, a-ha. What? Why? Why? How could you?”

Then he just stares at Teddy with pure hatred in his eyes. He snaps his phone shut without even saying good-bye.

“How could you? You’re a total backstabber! I hate you! I hate you! Don’t think I’m going to let this go! You’ll pay for this! He’s my husband, and you can’t have him!”

Emmett’s confused, “Husband. Husband?”

“Well, I would be if Benedict Schmidt didn’t seduce my boyfriend!”

“What? Benedict who?”

“You better watch your back, Teddy! You never know when I’m going to get revenge! You just wait!”

With that, Michael runs out of the diner crying.

“Teddy, what’s he talking about? Why did he call you Benedict Schmidt?”

“I was going to tell you at lunch today, but I didn’t expect Michael to be here. You never said you invited Michael to join us for lunch.”

“I didn’t. He just came over and sat down across from me. What’s he talking about? Are you seeing David?”

“Yeah, it just kind of happened. I sat next to him at the Small Businessmen’s Association dinner, and he asked me out for a drink. We hit it off, and he really likes classical music, so I asked him over. Then later on we couldn’t help the passion we were feeling for each other, and he ended up spending the night. We’re going to the opera together tonight for Valentine’s Day, and Sunday night he wants me to meet his son, Hank.”

“Oh My God! Teddy! I’m so happy for you! But what the fuck are you going to do about Michael?”
“I don’t know, I just don’t know. I never wanted to hurt Michael, but I’ve never felt like this before. I’m pretty sure we’re meant to be together.”

“Oh My God! Teddy! I’m so happy for you!”

“Thanks Em, you don’t hate me, do you?”

“No. No. Of course not… But I am worried about Michael. This just might push him over the edge.”

“I know, and I’m truly sorry about hurting him. But he had to know there wasn’t anything left between him and David. Besides, is it fair for me to have to sacrifice my happiness just because it might upset Michael?”

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Justin’s POV

It’s Valentine’s Day but I’m sure Brian doesn’t even realize it, or care. He’s never been one to celebrate romantic holidays, so I know it’s best not to get my hopes up. Although I might just be wrong. He just asked me to go for a walk on the beach, and watch the sunset. Maria’s here cleaning up, so she agrees to watch Jamie until we get back from our walk.

Brian’s POV

Justin’s checking on Jamie one last time. He’s already had his bottle, and he’s vibrating happily away in his special chair. I can’t help being a little nervous. I’ve planned a special dinner for tonight and I want everything to come off perfectly. I know it’s hard to imagine me being nervous, especially with Justin, since we’ve been together for years, but all the same it’s how I’m feeling.

Justin’s POV

I can’t help smiling when he takes my hand in his, as we walk barefoot along the edge of the water. The sky is beautiful in many shades of purple and pink. It feels so romantic as we watch the sun sinking into the ocean. It’s the perfect end of the day, as well as the end of our vacation. We’re flying back to Pittsburgh on Sunday afternoon and I’m really going to miss waking every morning to the sound of the waves on the beach. The last six weeks have gone by so fast. I’m glad Brian surprised me with this vacation. It’s just what we needed to reconnect to one another.

He pulls me into his arms, holding me tight as he whispers, “I love you, Sunshine.”

I’m surprised as he rarely spouts declarations of love to me. But I guess he’s caught up in this romantic moment just as much as I am. He looks beautiful, so golden from weeks of lounging out in the sun. Once we come up for air he puts his arm around my waist, and directs me towards the patio. I stop in my tracks looking over at the table set with fine china and crystal champagne glasses. There’s candles burning inside glass hurricane lamps, and a vase of long-stemmed red roses set between them.

I look up at him with tears in my eyes. He has his lips pulled into his mouth, smiling back at me.

“Happy Valentine’s Day!”

“I can’t believe you did this. This is so uncharacteristic of you.”

“I wanted you to know just how much you mean to me, just how much I truly love you.”
“Brian, you never cease to amaze me. I love you so much!”

He directs me to the table, pulling out my chair for me. Then appearing out of nowhere there’s a waiter in dress whites, with a towel across his arm. He shows Brian the label on the bottle of champagne. Brian nods and he pops the cork and pours Brian a glass. It’s just like in the movies, or some fancy restaurant. He fills our glasses, telling me he thinks a single glass of champagne should be alright. Then Brian toasts us. “May your heart be mine until the end of time.”

I can’t help blushing. This is the sweetest, most romantic moment of my life, or at least I thought it was, until Brian surprises me again. He’s hired a personal chef to cook us a gourmet dinner with everything I love the most. It starts with almond-crusted Brie, and fresh-baked sourdough bread, then we’re served lobster bisque, followed by asparagus spears and artichoke salad. My taste buds are dancing with delight, when the waiter appears with seared sea scallops in garlic butter.

Then we’re served a small scoop of lemon sorbet to cleanse our palate. For our entrées the chef has prepared crab claws and shrimp with linguini, along with lobster tails and a medley of braised baby vegetables.

After dinner we take a break to relax and enjoy cappuccinos while letting our dinner settle. Brian goes in and checks on Jamie. He was sleeping when we first got back and I told Maria to go home but she insisted on staying just in case Jamie woke and was fussy. He’s now awake and Maria is telling him a story in Spanish. Brian comes back out, kissing me on the top of my head. I look up and our lips meet in a sweet and sensual kiss. Tonight has been the most romantic evening we’ve ever had together.

Brian steps around to the side of my chair, lowering himself to his knees. That’s when our eyes meet I see just how completely open and happy he is. He reaches over and runs his hand down the side of my face, saying, “So beautiful.” I turn my head and kiss his fingers as they graze my skin. Something catches my eye, and then I see that Brian is holding a blue velvet jewelry box.

He smiles at me as he slowly opens the box; inside is the most beautiful engagement ring I have ever seen. It’s platinum with four large diamonds, yet it’s very masculine and I can hardly believe my eyes. Yes, I know he asked me to marry him at Christmas time, but he’s actually giving me a ring. Somehow this makes me realize just how serious he is about this and I’m completely speechless, as tears run down my face. I’m so happy.

“Oh my God, Brian! It’s so beautiful.”

“Let’s get married? I think it’s time I made an honest man out of you.”

“Yes, yes, yes… I will marry you! Oh Brian, I love you so much.”

He’s all smiles now, and of course I’ve launched myself into his arms. The passion between us keeps growing. Soon we’re lying on the chaise lounge making out like teenagers, groping each other, panting, running our hands all over each other. We break for air, and he reaches over and wipes the tears from my eyes. He sits up and takes my hand, slipping the ring on my left hand. He smiles and says that when we get married I can wear it on my right hand and my wedding band on my left. I’m still in shock, and happier than I’ve ever been before.

We lean our foreheads together, marveling at how sparkly it is on my finger. He tells me he had it engraved with, ‘it was love to me’ on the inside. I’m on Cloud Nine on the most natural high. I never expected him to be so romantic, so open and so honest about his feelings for me. It’s then that the waiter asks if we’re ready for dessert. Brian nods, knowing how much I love sweets; he returns with a chocolate heart, filled with truffles.
Now I’m truly in heaven, as the sweet confection melts in my mouth and I can’t help moaning at how delicious they are. Brian laughs, and then tells me not to worry, there’s a dozen more truffles in the kitchen. He knew once I tasted them I’d have cravings. I’m so happy. I’ve never been this happy before, my life is perfect.

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It was hard but we waited for the catering staff to clean up, and leave before we fell into each other’s arms and made mad passionate love. He lies across me, covering my body with his, sending desire racing through my body. He starts just below my left ear, knowing how sensitive I am, running kisses around my neck.

I have no idea why I was worried about us making it work. I’m overcome with so much passion for this man I love. He makes me feel like I’m the only man alive, and I can’t help feeling so special, knowing that he’s finally ready to make a commitment to me, to marry me. It makes having to return to Pittsburgh, and all of Michael’s problems bearable.

He leans his forehead against mine, as he looks between us to coat his dick with lube. He lifts my legs onto his shoulders, and soon I feel his stiff member parting my cheeks, pushing into my rosebud. I arch my back as he glides deep inside of me. I moan again as he brushes across my prostate. He thrusts in and out of me, sending waves of pleasure pulsating into my limbs.

I wrap my legs around his waist, and my arms around his neck, lifting myself off the bed, letting my body swing to the rhythm of his thrusts. I moan in sync with him as he penetrates me, diving a little deeper with each downward movement. I’m lost in the sensations that are spiraling through me, like waves on the ocean. He just keeps coming, until we’re both splashing our cum, coating each other inside and out. He holds me tight, feeling me quake with pleasure as I ride out the last of my orgasm, unaware that I’m chanting his name over and over.

Once I’ve regained my senses, he rolls off me and we lie together, looking deeply into each other’s eyes. We see so much unspoken passion, just knowing how much we love one another. He rolls onto his back, and I can’t help but watch him as he drifts off to sleep.

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The next morning he’s up early; he has a meeting with ‘Wetwear’ even though it’s a Saturday. It was either today, or we would have to stay through Monday, and I know how much we want to get back and see Gus. It’s been a few weeks since we’ve seen him, and Brian’s still ticked off that Melanie wouldn’t let him come back for our last week of vacation.

I sleep in for a few more hours, and then Jamie and I meet up with the girls for brunch, and Jamie’s playdate. I dress him up in his new outfit, and I can’t help thinking he looks so adorable. We decide to go down to the wharf, window shopping and finally getting lunch from one of the street vendors to have a picnic on the beach. Naturally I bring my sketch pad, sketching the crowd as they talk about life in New York, and how Brian and I will have to come and visit. They know how much I’d love seeing all the museums and galleries.

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Brian’s POV

I’m just getting back to the condo after giving my presentation to ‘Wetwear.’ They, of course, loved the campaign and signed a contract with Kinnetik for two years, with an option for three more years if they’re pleased with the ad campaigns we continue to develop. I call out to Justin, but
he’s still out with the munchers from New York. I head for the bedroom to change and start packing for our return trip to Pittsburgh. I hear someone knocking at the front door and assume that Justin has his arms full and doesn’t want to get his key out.

I open the door and just stare. It takes a moment for my mind to register who exactly it is standing on the other side of the door. At first I’m confused, and a little star-struck. Then I realize that this is the other man in Justin’s life. I just never realized that he was a fucking movie star.

Connor is just as surprised as Brian as he stares at him, finally registering that this is Justin’s ‘Brian’. Damn, he’s hot. Hotter than all the drawings Justin had all over the place. He was always doodling, and sketching Brian. But none of them did the man justice. He’s probably the most gorgeous man Connor has ever seen. Connor’s first reaction is to say, ‘fuck Justin’, and go for Brian. Yes, he definitely wants to sleep with Brian; he can feel his cock straining against his jeans as he smiles at Brian.

Brian takes a deep breath, knowing that all hell is about to break loose… His mind can’t stop all the images that keep bombarding his thoughts, and his jealous streak is about to come surging forward…

TBC…
Chapter Summary

Justin is stunned by Brian’s behavior, but then again it’s so like Brian to have done this…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 2842
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: bigj52

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Summary: Justin is stunned by Brian’s behavior, but then again it’s so like Brian to have done this…

Chapter Fifteen ~ Really? Really, Brian…

Brian’s still standing in the doorway, looking Connor up and down, not liking what he sees at all. Connor is fidgeting, shifting from one foot to another, looking back at Brian. And as much as Connor is attracted to Brian, and thinks about coming on to him, it’s obvious that Brian’s not at all pleased by his presence.

“Is there something you need? Are you lost?”

Brian will be damned if he’s going to make this easy for Connor. He wishes he never answered Justin’s phone, and the more he looks at Connor the more his jealous streak comes to the surface.

“I’m Connor.”

“Oh?”

“Connor James…”

“Should I know who you are?”

Connor is flabbergasted. Usually everyone gushes over him, becoming speechless and star struck. But it appears that Brian doesn’t have a clue who he is, or what he means to Justin.

“Well, most people recognize me. After all I am famous.”

“Oh? What for? I’ve never heard of you before.”

Connor is completely taken aback, he was sure Brian would put two and two together and finally
recognize him.

“Well. I’ve been in several box-office hits.”

“Really? They must have been ‘B’ movies. Because you weren’t in anything I’ve never seen.”

“I guess you don’t get out much.”

“I’m a very busy man. So is there something you want? Or did you just come by to inflate your ego?”

“I came by to see Justin.”

“Oh? You think Justin will be impressed with your fame? Maybe interested in getting your autograph?”

“Justin and I are friends… More than friends…”

“Really? You think so?”

Connor is becoming unnerved. No one’s ever treated him this way. He’s not used to being ignored or unrecognized, and he’s not sure what to do next. Brian didn’t even seem to flinch when he insinuated that he and Justin were lovers.

“I believe he’s expecting me.”

“I highly doubt that. But if you’d like to come in and wait for him, you’re more than welcome.”

“Thank you. I appreciate that.”

Brian leaves Connor in the living room as he excuses himself to finish getting dressed. He answered the door just wearing his jeans. He was still changing from his business meeting when he assumed Justin was at the door. He leaves Connor sitting all alone for about ten minutes, hoping he’ll become more uncomfortable the longer he waits.

And it’s working. Connor is starting to wonder what the fuck he’s doing here. He originally came because he thought that he was head-over-heels in love with Justin. But he knows that’s not really the case. Considering that he was more than willing to throw Justin under the bus, when he thought he had a chance to make it with Brian, now it seems that none of those are valid options for him now.

Brian finally comes back into the room with his laptop. He sits down and starts to send an email off to Ted, letting him know about the new contract that he signed this morning with ‘Wetwear’. Brian looks up at Connor periodically, watching him squirm uncomfortably in his chair. He’s grateful that Justin hasn’t returned just yet. He knows all hell will break loose once he sees Connor here, and his anger is apt to scathe both of them.

“So? What was it you wanted to see Justin about?”

“I need to speak with him in private.”

“Oh?”

“Yes. What I have to say is very personal.”

“Really? Because Justin and I are engaged to be married. We don’t keep secrets from one another,
and he’s never mentioned you.”

Connor hesitates, and then decides to take the plunge. He’s sick and tired of being the one feeling uncomfortable. And he wants to see how Brian will react to having his feelings for Justin questioned. After all, Justin had told him that Brian never told him he loved him, and he rarely showed affection.

“Well if you must know, I’ve come to tell Justin how much I love him.”

“Oh?”

He really thought that he’d get more of a reaction from Brian. He’s slightly confused as what to say next.

“He needs a man in his life who’s willing to express his feelings towards him. To take care of him, and provide for him in a manner that he deserves.”

“And just how would you do that?”

“First of all, I’d tell him how much he’s loved. How much I can give him so he’ll know he never has to want for anything from now on. I’m a very wealthy person.”

“Really? I doubt that.”

“I’ll have you know that I’ve been offered a million dollars for my next picture deal.”

“How nice for you. But I made more than that before lunch today. Much, much more…”

Connor’s thrown off his game a little. He actually thought that would have impressed Brian.

“Besides, if you knew Justin at all, you’d know that he’s not interested in how much money a man can make. It’s always been more about what he feels in his heart. The passion and desire that lives in his soul.”

“But I’m willing to tell him those three little words that you’ve never been able to say. I can give him the romance that he so desperately needs.”

“You actually think pretty words and flowers, and floor picnics will be enough for him? He’s been there, done that, and he knows in his heart what he truly wants.”

“You know nothing about romance! If you really loved him, you would have made an effort to have visited him while he was on location. You would have made sure he felt loved and needed. I’m willing to give him everything he needs.”

“Justin knows how I feel… He’s a big boy and I’ll let him decide what and who he wants. I’ll never stand in the way of his happiness; he’ll always be free to follow his heart.”

“You see, that’s the difference between you and me. I’d never let him go, not in a million years…”

“Brian! Just what the fuck is going on in here?”

Oh shit, speak of the devil… Brian’s betrothed has returned just in time to crucify both of them. He looks from Brian to Connor, and then back at Brian. He’s not happy, not happy at all…

“Really? Really, Brian?”
Connor stands and starts to walk towards Justin. Justin glares at him while bouncing Jamie in his arms.

“Oh my God! You… You have a baby?”

“Two babies… and one on the way. But I told you that on the phone, or weren’t you listening to me?”

Connor starts to speak again, moving towards Justin.

“Justin. Justin, I thought we should talk in person.”

Justin puts his hand up in the air. “Not a word. Not one motherfucking word! From either of you!”

He continues to stare at Connor. He’s so angry that if this was a cartoon he’d have steam coming from his ears.

“What part of ‘I don’t want to see you’ don’t you understand?”

“Justin…”

“Shut the fuck up when I’m speaking to you.”

Connor’s in shock, he’s never seen Justin so mad. He sees Brian standing behind Justin, smirking with an ‘I told you so’ expression on his face. He hates how smug Brian is, always so self-assured about his place in Justin’s life.

“I can’t believe you two! I have made it perfectly clear just how I feel about both of you! Just what part don’t you two understand?”

“Justin… Please. I just thought that you should hear what I have to say in person.”

“Why? Why the fuck should I listen to you? You obviously didn’t listen to me!”

Connor just shakes his head, trying to think of something to say.

“Connor! I’m not in love with you! I’m not even in like with you! Nothing’s changed. What we had was just sex, casual sex! Do you hear me? It was just a fuck, nothing special. I don’t want you in my life!”

“I… I don’t believe you!”

“I really don’t give a fuck what you believe.”

Watching Justin ranting and raving, he finally sees how strongly Justin actually feels about Brian. He also sees out of the corner of his eye all the little rainbows that his diamond ring is casting across the walls and ceiling. He feels like a complete fool. He can’t believe that he came here, thinking that Justin wanted him. Wanted him to come charging to his rescue, like a knight in shining armor.

“I guess I should go… I understand now, you two deserve one another. But Justin, if you should ever change your mind…”

“He won’t!”

“Brian!”
“Just go, Connor. I’m never going to change my mind... It was just a fuck, that’s all...”

Connor stands and walks towards the door. In the background he hears Justin start in on Brian.

“Brian! Don’t think I’m finished with you just yet!”

The two of them look into one another’s eyes. Brian has the decency to look ashamed, pulling his lips into his mouth.

“Sometimes I wonder what that fuck is going through your mind?”

“Jus...”

“You just had to know, didn’t you? You had to see for yourself.”

Justin is pacing, angry, and frustrated. He stops abruptly and turns to stare at Brian.

“I need some space...”

With that Justin walks outside and sits on the patio. He picks up his sketch pad and pencils he left out there earlier this morning and starts drawing. Brian stands there, looking out the sliding glass door, wondering how long it will take Justin to calm down and actually talk to him. Yell at him, anything, that he knows how to deal with. This, angry silent treatment is new, and it scares the hell out of him. If they’d just fight and have it out, then they could have makeup sex and everything would be okay.

After a half an hour of reading emails and keeping an eye on Justin, waiting for him to cave, he decides to start packing. They’re leaving tomorrow, so he might as well start organizing everything and getting things ready to be shipped. They’ve bought a lot of things for Jamie, and there’s no way they’ll be able to take it all on the plane.

After another hour goes by he takes a break, making Jamie a bottle. He rocks him to sleep for his afternoon nap. Brian’s bored and nervous so he lies down on the bed, with Jamie resting on his chest and soon they’re both sound asleep. Justin comes in to fix something to eat. He sees them sleeping and his heart goes out to Brian. He can only imagine how stressed out he is. And as angry as he is with Brian, he also knows that it was Brian’s own insecurities that made him do this.

Justin’s POV

I know this stems from Brian’s childhood, and never feeling loved. Always expecting things to fall apart, leaving his heart ripped open and abandoned. But shouldn’t he know by now, just how much I love him? Especially after last night. It was so perfect, so romantic, and his proposal... God, that was the best!

That’s why I’m so angry about seeing Connor here today. But thinking about it, he must have told Connor to come to Florida before yesterday. He must have answered my cell that afternoon Connor kept calling. So why didn’t he just ask me about Connor? Was he waiting for me to tell him about Connor? The reason I didn’t say anything was because to me it didn’t mean anything, so there wasn’t anything to tell.

I stand in the doorway of the bedroom, watching both my boys sleep, and I’m overwhelmed by how much I love them. Glancing at the clock I see that it’s almost six, so I start dinner while I wait for him to wake up. I marinate the steaks, and make vegetable skewers using zucchini, mushrooms, onions, and grape tomatoes. I start the brown rice, knowing that it will take a while. Then I open a bottle of merlot and have a glass. I’m pretty sure one glass won’t hurt the baby.
I’m back sitting out on the patio, watching the sun set across the ocean, and it’s beautiful. I’m a little sad that this is our last night in Florida, and as much as I don’t want to fight anymore I know we need to resolve all this anger and frustration between us. I look up to see him standing in the doorway.

“You’re not still mad at me, are you?”

Justin turns around, then pours Brian a glass of merlot, handing it to him.

“Don’t you know by now how much I love you?”

“Yes. Yes, of course…”

“You know right in the middle of starting to rip you a new one, I realized that you really can’t help yourself. Yet, you had to know I wouldn’t be pleased. But you couldn’t stop yourself, you had to know who your competition was.”

Brian glances at Justin, pleading with his eyes for forgiveness.

“Well? Do you feel better now? Have you gotten it all out of your system, or do you want the graphic details?”

“Justin…”

“He meant nothing to me… Nothing! That’s why I never even brought him up!”

Justin knows looking at Brian that he is actually jealous. He almost wants to laugh. ‘The Great Brian Kinney’ jealous of some cheesy actor. He watches Brian’s face, as he pulls his lips into his mouth, then pokes his tongue in his cheek.

Justin shakes his head. “What am I going to do with you?”

It’s then that Brian smirks, moving towards Justin, taking him into his arms.

“I’m sorry. I don’t know what I was thinking. I guess there was a part of me that was worried that you only stayed with me because… You know, because of Jamie.”

“The Great Brian Kinney is sorry? You don’t do sorry!”

“This time it’s true. I really am sorry. I didn’t mean to upset you.”

He looks Brian in the eyes, and he can’t help thinking that it’s totally sweet that Brian is jealous.

“Come here…”

That’s all it took. The two of them are in each other’s arms, holding each other tight.

“I love you, Brian. But you drive me absolutely insane sometimes.”

“I love you too, Sunshine… I guess you’re right. I did just have to know who this bastard was, who thought he could just show up, and you’d run into his arms.”

“I wouldn’t… I’m done running away from you. The only arms I’m going to run into are yours…”

“Now why don’t I show you, just how much I love you.”
Brian’s POV

Round One: After turning off the oven and stove, Justin takes my hand, walking us into the bedroom. Soon we’re both naked and writhing, unable to get enough of one another. All we feel now is our love for one another. All the anger and stress has disappeared, replaced with intense passion.

It’s fast and hard, we both need it this way. Today has been very stressful, and now we just need to be connected. To be as one, loving the feeling of our flesh hot and silky, gliding all over each other. Every motion is heightened by the next, there’s nothing like it. No one has even come close to what we have and what we feel for one another. Our bodies move in perfect harmony, knowing each other so well, being able to anticipate each other’s needs, and desires. We’re both flooded with pheromones, and feeding off one another. Our passion is so strong, and we both know that no one will ever come between us, our love can survive anything.

I’m close, on fire, and falling over the edge, as I hammer his prostate. Our bodies are shaking with pleasure, as his slicks walls squeeze and release my cock, pulling me with him as our orgasms consume us. It’s almost too much, I feel like we’re fused together as one. Our bodies quake with ecstasy on a high I never want to come down from.

Round Two: I flip him over on his back, and his legs naturally curl around my waist; he’s excited, barely having come down from our last romp. My cum is coating him inside out, creating a silky friction as I pump and thrust. He’s already crying out my name, as tremors vibrate throughout. He’s purring like a kitten, making all kinds of little noises, squealing, and thrashing his head across the pillow.

I love it when he’s like this. So open, so vulnerable, every reaction is intensified as I assault all his senses. His lip is quivering, as his eyes practically roll back in his head. My boy is writhing as his orgasm washes over him again, and again. I follow close behind, holding him tight against my body as we both shudder with pleasure, floating someplace close to heaven… God, I love him so much…

TBC…
~ Oh Yes I Did…

Chapter Summary

Jealousy and envy go hand in hand…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 2919
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: bigj52

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Summary: Jealousy and envy go hand in hand…

Chapter Sixteen ~ Oh Yes I Did…

We loaded all our suitcases into the elevator, along with Jamie’s fancy stroller and with a box of Krispy Crème doughnuts that Justin absolutely had to have, once he saw the kiosk at the airport. His cravings and mood swings are happening more frequently than I remember mine being. But then again, I’ve always been demanding and unpredictable even when I wasn’t pregnant. He’s already hyped up on sugar from eating two doughnuts on the way home from the airport, and there’s still ten in the box. This was going to be a fun day.

I unlock the loft door for him as he carries Jamie and his precious doughnuts in, leaving me to take all the luggage down to our new bedroom. What can I say? Pregnancy has its privileges. I remember being pregnant and Michael always making a fuss, constantly underfoot. I guess I should have seen it then that he never gave up hope of us being together, so eager to play father to my unborn child. I can only imagine how that must have made Ben feel.

After I’ve dragged all the suitcases into the newly remodeled loft, I open them on the bed and put everything away. Unpacking doesn’t take very long. Almost everything was dirty clothes and Jamie’s toys. I’m still trying to figure out how a ten week old could need so many toys, but I guess that’s partly my fault. Both Justin and I tend to buy him everything that looks cute and adorable, or is educational, although we know he’s too young to play with them.

Coming back upstairs I find Justin’s changing Jamie’s diaper, so I check the answering machine. There really shouldn’t be very many messages because everyone knew we were on vacation. But of course that’s not the case; there’s several from my sister Claire, and even one from my mother. And what seems like dozens from Michael, him telling me how sorry he is about everything, and how he wants to make up. I guess he must have thought that I was checking my messages while I was in Florida, and waiting for me to return his calls. And of course there’s one from Deb making sure we know that she expects us at dinner tonight, after all it is Sunday night.
Justin is patently waiting for me, he wants to see the newly remodeled loft together. Even though I just walked through it to the master suite I didn’t really look around, so we descend the stairway together until we reach the family room. It’s beautiful, all the new furniture looks great and the remodeled kitchen is perfect. It gives us a place on the lower floor to heat up Jamie’s bottle, and there’s a new bar area for entertaining. Next we poke our heads into Gus’s bedroom and I know he’ll love it; it’s playful yet functional. We’ve incorporated storage for all his toys, and a little desk area where he can draw and eventually do homework.

There’s a bathroom that connects to Jamie’s nursery. Justin chose a soft creamy butter color for the walls and white furniture. Again there’s lots of storage cabinets built in, and a changing station. The room is big enough to have another crib set up for when the new baby comes. Next we look into the newly remodeled master bedroom and bath. We put in a huge shower like upstairs and a Jacuzzi tub. Justin fell in love with the one we had in the condo on vacation.

I insisted on having a huge walk-in closet, one that’s as big as the bedroom itself. There’s built-in cabinets and drawers all around the room; we each have our own side, although I already plan on commandeering part of Justin’s side for my extensive shoe collection and designer suits. This way the bedroom itself is very open, without having any dressers. There’s a small gas fireplace that’s set in between the tall windows and a small seating area to relax in.

My office is large, again with built-in cabinets, bookcases and a plasma screen for video conferencing with the office. There’s a large mahogany desk and burgundy leather chairs set up in front. Last but not least is Justin’s studio. The outside wall is a solid row of windows that lets in lots of light for painting. He has granite counter tops across two walls, one with a sink to clean up his brushes. There’s storage cabinets below, with a tall cabinet at the end to store all his canvases and paintings. We also had a shower put in so he doesn’t track paint back through the house.

The one thing I like best about the remodel is we put in an intercom and stereo system. You can flick a switch and listen to what’s going on in every room, as well as pump music throughout both floors. The builders did a great job, and I’ll have to remember to tell Jennifer how much we appreciate her managing the remodel. It’s so great to come home and have everything completed. It would have been hell to have all the work men in and out all the time, with a small baby and Justin being nauseous all the time; he really needs his rest.

It’s already getting late, and as much as I’d like to take a nap, well not exactly a nap… There really isn’t time, we’re already late for dinner at Deb’s. So we load up all of Jamie’s paraphernalia into the jeep and head over to the inquisition that’s sure to ensue. He isn’t even all the way through the door when we hear everyone yell ‘surprise’! I jump about a foot in the air, startled by everyone’s enthusiastic welcome.

He just smiles at everyone, as he zones in on the buffet set up on the counter. Everyone is welcoming us home, hugging us, and asking how Florida was. I can’t help asking why they felt they needed to throw us a welcome home party.

Emmett hits me in the arm and says, “It’s a surprise baby shower!”

That’s when I see the many presents stacked up over by the sofa, and Cynthia with an assortment of friends and employees from both Babylon and Kinnetik.

“How in the Hell do you all know about Justin’s pregnancy?”

“Mom! You promised not to tell anyone!”

“I didn’t, Sweetheart, but you just did…”
“Oh my God, baby! You’re pregnant?”

“Well, I guess the cat’s out of the bag now.”

Now everyone is talking at once, and they’re all back to hugging and kissing him, congratulating us, and Emmett’s close to crying. Everyone’s overjoyed except Michael, he looks pissed. And to tell you the truth I’m kind of surprised to see Michael here. Last time I saw him, he wasn’t even talking to me he was so bent out of shape, but then again he did leave me all those messages.

Lindsay looks rather upset as well, but she has no right to be. Neither one of them has a right to object. It’s none of their business what Justin and I do, or don’t do. We’re a couple, an engaged couple at that. But that doesn’t stop Michael and his tirade that’s about to break loose.

“So! I guess this is another accident! Did the condom break again?”

Now the room is very quiet…

“No, Mikey”

“No? You mean you planned this?”

“Well yeah… Kind of… I mean, we expected it. Since we stopped using condoms.”

“What? Why?”

“Why? Why do you think, Mikey?”

“But! But you always said, never! Never let anyone fuck without a condom! You never know where their dick’s been!”

“Yeah well… Things change.”

“What things?”

“If you must know, I asked Justin to marry me.”

“What! No way! How did he manipulate you into doing that? No doubt some romantic midnight stroll on the beach?”

Debbie yells, “That’s enough, Michael!”

“But Ma! Everybody knows Brian hates marriage!”

“Actually Michael, I asked Justin at Christmas, and we decided right at that time, we wanted another kid. So after being away from each other for almost a year, we never went back to using them.”

“This is total bullshit!”

Another flash of anger crosses Michael’s face as he focuses on Justin’s diamond ring.

“You bought him a ring!”

Now everyone’s looking at Justin’s hand, oohing, and aahing with approval. Well, everyone except Michael and Lindsay.
“I can’t believe you bought him a ring!”

“That’s what people do when they get engaged, Mikey.”

Justin appears next to Brian, puts his hand on his shoulder and tries to get him to just drop it. Michael’s secret longing for Brian isn’t much of a secret. Everyone’s known about it forever. The only one he’s been fooling is himself.

“Wow! Look at all that food! I’m starving, let’s eat…”

“Of course you are! Now we wouldn’t want junior to go hungry…”

Justin punches Brian in the arm, grateful for the light banter breaking the tension in the air.

Debbie seconds the motion. “Justin’s right. Let’s eat before all the food gets cold.”

Michael’s still angry about the news and sneaks outside to cool down. His feelings are hurt and it doesn’t make him feel any better finding out that Brian and Justin have truly made a commitment to each other.

Brian goes outside to talk with Michael, they need to get a few things straight.

“Come on, Mikey, you’re not going to stay out here all night feeling sorry for yourself, are you?”

He just stands there pouting, with his arms folded across his chest.

“What are you so upset about?”

“You wouldn’t understand!”

“Is it because I asked him to marry me and I bought him a ring? Or is it because we stopped using condoms?”

He just looks solemn, tears forming in the corners of his eyes.

“Oh God! Don’t tell me you’re jealous… You can’t still be carrying around that silly adolescent schoolboy crush!”

“You just don’t get it, do you?”

“God, Mikey! That was so long ago, and nothing even happened. It meant nothing! Why are you clinging so desperately to a memory of something that never happened?”

“It’s not supposed to be this way.”

Brian refuses to be manipulated. He should have made it blatantly obvious long ago, but he didn’t want to hurt Michael’s feelings. But Michael knows damn well how he feels about Justin, and he just can’t coddle him any longer.

“How about my feelings, Michael? Do they count at all? Do I get a say in my own future?”

Silence.

“I’m not doing this, Michael! It’s time you stopped all this ridiculous pining for me and accept that it’s never going to happen.”
“But Brian…”

“...You need to stop all your whining, and insidious behavior towards Justin. I’m going back inside to the party. You do whatever you have to do…”

Everyone’s eating, enjoying the feast that Deb spent all day making. Emmett’s telling everyone one of his southern gothic tales from his wild teenage youth. They all act like they don’t notice Brian rejoin them at the table, although everyone knew what he went out to say to Michael. Sometimes you have to just pull the band-aid off, no matter how much it hurts.

After dinner they’re all eating cake and ice cream while Brian and Justin open their presents. The girls gave them a baby carrier/car seat, Debbie a playpen, Jennifer chose a couple of sheet sets, baby soaps, shampoos and several towels. Molly picked out the bath toys. Everyone else indulged in lots of wind-up toys that played lullabies, little baby dishes, soft cuddly blankets and an assortment of baby clothes. There’s also a baby leather jacket, designer blue jeans, t-shirts, little sweaters and sweatshirts, pajamas, and a bunch of themed outfits - a cowboy outfit, chef’s uniform, doctor’s costume, camouflage fatigues, a sailor’s uniform, overalls, and a little baseball uniform.

“What’s with all the Halloween outfits?”

“Brian… Those are just little layettes. You know, to play and sleep in.”

Brian rolls his eyes as Justin tells everyone, “Ignore him…”

It seems like they opened up presents for hours, and as much as Brian complains about everything, you could tell he was really taken aback by everyone’s generosity. He’s always hated holidays and birthdays, but that stemmed from his parents always ignoring him during those occasions. So he learned to avoid them as a way of protecting himself from the pain of being forgotten. But now that he’s a fulltime father, he’s learned to embrace them, loving to see the joy and excitement on his son’s faces.

But the best present they received was gift baskets for each of them. Justin’s is full of Godiva chocolates, caramels, chocolate-covered cherries, fudge, pistachios, Snickers, Oreos, macadamia nut cookies, popcorn, and a cheese cake. Brian’s basket has cashews, chocolate-covered coffee beans, assorted cheeses, French bread, wine, Jim Beam, massage oils, designer lube and a few porn DVDs. And when no one was looking Ted snuck in a nine-inch dildo for those nights when a little something extra was needed.

There was so much stuff, Brian will need to stop by after work the next day to pick everything else up. After hugging and thanking everyone for everything, they were able to pry Jamie from Deb’s arms and head home. Justin’s beaming he’s so happy about the surprise shower they threw in their honor, although he’s a little worried about Michael. He never came back into the party, apparently leaving without saying good-bye.

“I’m sorry about how things went with Michael.”

“There’s no need for you to feel sorry. I should have done that years ago.”

“Yeah, I know. But he’s your best friend.”

“Was… He was my best friend.”

“But Brian, you can’t just cut him out of your life.”

“We’re obviously not as close as we once were, nor should we be. It’s better for both of us this way. We both need to move on with our lives.”
Justin doesn’t say anymore, he knows how hard this is for Brian. He just wishes that Michael could have taken his blinders off, and accepted that Brian was growing up. Then maybe then they could have stayed friends.

Back at the loft, Justin gets Jamie his bottle and sits rocking him to sleep, as Brian brings in all their gifts. Once Jamie’s down, they go and relax in their new bedroom. Brian turns on the fireplace, and soon the flames are the only light illuminating the room. They lie naked on the bed, curled up together. It’s been a long day and it just feels good to unwind.

Brian can’t help playing with Justin’s hair, loving the soft touch of his silky mane. Justin turns in Brian’s arms and their lips soon find each other. What starts out soft and gentle slowly develops into a deep and passionate kiss. Brian rolls Justin on his back, and nibbles around his neck and collarbone. Justin throws his head back giving Brian better access, as he licks and blows gently into his ear. This sends chills down his spine and his legs naturally circle Brian’s waist. They grind their erections against one another, loving the feelings that are building.

Moments later they break for air, and Brian gently rolls Justin on to his stomach. His tongue glides down his spine, accentuating each and every vertebrae, dipping into the recesses and up across the next ridge. Brian’s breath on his back sends a cooling sensation down the wet path. Moans of delight escape Justin’s throat as he relaxes to Brian’s touch. Anticipation builds the closer he gets to end of his backbone, finding his rosebud quivering with need.

Justin legs fall open to welcome Brian’s wet tongue as he swishes it around the outer folds of delicate skin. Delving deeper he circles around, tickling his tender tissues as he pushes in, penetrating him, making his juices flow with desire. Justin’s moans are growing louder, making his pleasure known as he relaxes, opening up more, patiently waiting for Brian to take him.

Sensing Justin’s eagerness, Brian pulls him up onto his knees, leaving his head and shoulders resting on the mattress. This position leaves Justin at the perfect angle to enjoy the full force of Brian’s thrusting. Brian coats his dick with plenty of lube, then quickly aligns himself, pushing into Justin’s pucker. Brian’s cock is swallowed up as he glides deep into Justin’s chasm, caressing his prostate. Justin practically squeals in delight as Brian’s plump head strokes his prostate, sending vibrations throughout.

Brian’s hands come to rest on Justin’s waist, as he thrusts his hips back and forth. It’s still overwhelming, feeling their flesh glide together to create an intense friction that’s still new to them. Such a beautiful feeling to be this close to each other, sending waves of pleasure spiraling through them. The love they feel for one another builds more and more every time they’re together.

Just as the body is humming with delight as he’s pulled closer and closer to ecstasy. Brian can tell he’s getting close, hearing him panting. Then his legs shudder and his walls clamp down tight on Brian’s dick, as he falls over the edge. Brian holds Justin tight as he cums, shooting his sperm, filling his ravine. Brian’s forehead rests in the center of Justin’s back until his breathing returns to normal. Then Brian rolls him onto his back, and they hold each other as they drift off to sleep.

TBC…
~ United We Stand ♥♥♥

Chapter Summary

Brian and Justin are unapologetic about the path their future is taking, no matter how much Michael and Lindsay whine…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count:
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: bigj52

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Summary: Brian and Justin are unapologetic about the path their future is taking, no matter how much Michael and Lindsay whine…

Chapter Seventeen ~ United We Stand ♥♥♥

Justin’s POV

The next morning Brian’s showering, having to return to work after a very long hiatus. He’s been on maternity leave, and then we took a long and much-needed vacation. I’m in the kitchen starting the coffee, and warming up Jamie’s bottle when someone starts pounding on the loft door. I answer it with Jamie in my arms, wearing only my pajama bottoms, and a very bedhead hairdo.

“Lindsay. Come on in…”

Gus barrels past us, obviously already hyped up on Captain Crunch or some other high fructose cereal.

“What’s up?”

She looks pissed but she won’t talk to me about it.

“Brian should be up in a few minutes, he’s getting ready for work. It’s his first day back. So… do you want some coffee?”

She turns and shakes her head, staring at me, and I can only imagine what she’s so upset about.

“What?”

“Do you want me to give Jamie his bottle?”

“Nope, I’m fine. Why don’t you have a seat? Maybe this would be a good time to go over Gus’s visitation schedule.”
That just seems to make her even more pissed. She looks around and notices that there’s no bed in what used to be our bedroom; it’s a playroom for the kids now. There’s a little table and chairs, a blackboard, a bulletin board, a toy chest, and bookshelves with children’s books and games, along with a dresser, two rocking chairs (one for me and a miniature one for Gus), and a changing station and crib for Jamie.

Gus is already rocking in his little rocking chair, jabbering away as he reads a story. He’s really just making up a story from looking at the pictures, but he’s happy and enjoying himself playing quietly. Then she notices the stairway downstairs that connects the lower floor of our loft.

“What’s going on? You’ve expanded the loft to another floor?”

“Yep. We had all the construction done while we were in Florida.”

“Oh my God! I didn’t know.”

“Nope, we didn’t tell anyone. The other loft came on the market just before we left, so we made an offer. Then when we came back for Ben’s funeral we Okayed the floor plans with the architect.”

“Well… I had no idea.”

“We really needed the space, with Jamie and the new baby coming, as well as Gus staying with us every other week. So it just made sense, besides we didn’t really want to move.”

“Well. I guess you’ve just got it all figured out now, don’t you?”

There’s an edge to her voice, and she seems to be getting more, and more upset the longer we talk.

“So let’s talk about the schedule for Gus’s visitation?”

“I… I’m not sure that’s a good idea.”

“Oh? We’ve been very lenient with you and Mel. We didn’t have to agree to you keeping Gus here that last week he was scheduled to be in Florida.”

“He needed his parents…”

“Yes, I agree… Brian and I are his parents, just as much as you and Mel. You do remember going to court, right?”

“I still don’t agree with that decision.”

“Well, that’s too bad, Lindsay. That’s what the judge ordered.”

“Brian? I didn’t hear you coming up the stairs. Are you going to show me around?”

“No. It’s seven o’clock in the morning, Lindsay. What are you doing here?”

“I wanted to talk to you.”

“Obviously… Speak…”

“Can we talk alone?”

“No. I have to leave for work in a few minutes. So what’s with the early morning visit?”
She looks at Justin, wishing he would go away.

“I’m waiting!”

“Brian. I don’t think that was very funny last night. Springing your news on everyone like that.”

“Well I assure you that wasn’t my intention. But I wasn’t expecting a surprise baby shower.”

“That was Deb’s idea…”

“No doubt. I’m sorry you had to find out about Justin’s pregnancy that way, but it really shouldn’t matter. After all we don’t need anyone’s approval on how we live our lives.”

“But when I asked you about fathering another baby together after Jamie was born, you said you didn’t want any more children.”

“No. I believe what I said was, I didn’t want any more children with you.”

“Brian… I don’t understand. Why?”

“Because I’m not your husband.”

“Brian… Please…”

“Don’t get me wrong. I love Gus, and I’m glad that we have joint custody and we do have joint custody! I’ll contact Mel today and set up a permanent schedule. No more refusing to allow him to stay with us.”

“Brian…”

“What? What, Lindsay? Why are you here?”

“I don’t like the way you treated Michael last night. You hurt him, and it was cruel and unnecessary.”

“Oh yeah? Well guess what. I’m not his husband either… So neither of you get a say in how, and who I live my life with.”

“Brian…”

“MY GOD, LINDSAY! Stop saying my name like that! And get over it!”

Justin hands Brian a cup of coffee, then he turns to Lindsay and says, “So Gus will be staying with us this week. Thank you for dropping him off, I appreciate that.”

“No. No, he’s not staying.”

“Yes, he is…”

“Brian…”

“Justin’s right. He’s staying here this week. Now I’ll walk you down to your car on my way out.”

Brian walks over and leans down kissing Jamie on the top of his head. Justin leans his head back, and Brian captures his lips kissing him passionately.

“I’ll call you after my staff meeting. Gus come give me and your mom a kiss good bye.”
“Bye, Mommy. Bye, Daddy. I love you.”

Brian bends over and kisses Gus on the cheek, then he and Lindsay get in the elevator going down to the parking garage.

“Brian, I’m not happy about leaving Gus here.”

“I know. Too bad…”

“Brian, he doesn’t even have any clothes here.”

“Yes, he does Lindsay. They’re in his dresser, in his bedroom on the second floor.”

“Well… He didn’t know he was staying. He might be upset.”

“He didn’t seem upset to me. Besides, Justin can handle it if he is, which I’m sure he isn’t.”

“Well I am…”

“Obviously…”

He walks her to her car, and says good bye. Then he gets in his and he drives off without another word.

Lindsay calls Mel to complain, wanting Mel to say it’s okay for Gus to come back home with her.

“Where the hell are you? I was going over my briefs for court, and JR started crying. I was surprised that you weren’t here. Why did you leave without saying anything?”

“I wanted to catch Brian before he left for work.”

“So, I guess things didn’t go as you planned?”

“Don’t be so sarcastic. He had no right talking to Michael like that, making him cry.”

“You’re got to be kidding, right? I, for one, was glad he was so direct. He should have done it years ago.”

“But he really hurt Michael. You know how much Michael loves him.”

“Yeah, just like I know how much you love him too…”

“That’s not fair!”

“But it’s true… Both you and Michael need to stop all your pining and daydreaming about being Mrs. Brian Kinney. Because it seems Brian’s already filled that position.”

“I don’t, I’m not… Mel. You just don’t understand.”

“Yes, I do… And here I thought you were my wife.”

“I am…”

“Then stop acting like you just got jilted, and start acting like my wife.”

“But what about them keeping Gus, without approval?”
“They don’t need approval, and considering that he’s stayed with us for the last three weeks, I think it’s their turn. Just be glad they’re not calling their lawyer. We had no right to prevent him from going to Florida, but you insisted on it.”

“I didn’t want him becoming spoiled, going away so often.”

“Bullshit! I think you were jealous of him, and I think you’re jealous of him now.”

“What am I jealous about?”

“My guess is because he’s spending time with Brian.”

“Mel…”

“Lindsay, hurry up and get home, I have to be in court in an hour. And stop all this ridiculous whining. You sound like Michael.”

Was she whining? Was she really jealous? The more she tried to justify her feelings, the more she realized that it was true, she was jealous of Justin. She wanted to go on expensive vacations, live in a newly remodeled home, and be Mrs. Brian Kinney. There was a time when that might have actually been how things worked out. She can’t help fantasizing about her and Brian getting married.

She always held out hope that one day they’d be together, even if she always knew he was gay. During those few weeks when they had their fling, she knew he was sleeping with other men. She’d caught him, and he didn’t even seem to care, he simply told her it wasn’t any of her business who he fucked.

It’s just that now it seems so real, with a new baby on the way and that ring. God, Justin’s ring was absolutely beautiful, with four diamonds, and she only had an inexpensive band of gold. And she’s sure that when they do marry, it will be someplace legal. Not that she didn’t feel like her and Mel’s wedding wasn’t real, but it wasn’t legal. Who would have ever thought that Brian Kinney would be in a committed relationship? Yes, she was jealous and that made her even angrier.

Lindsay’s not the only early riser. Just as Carl is leaving for work, Michael shows up at their door. Deb’s in the kitchen making bacon and eggs for her and Emmett when Michael walks in.

“Michael, what a surprise to see you here so early.”

He sits down and she puts a plate in front of him, then she gets him a cup of coffee. She half expected him to show up sometime today, to lick his wounds. He needs a sympathetic ear to listen to his side of the story.

“Can you believe all that bullshit Brian was spouting last night? He doesn’t even believe in marriage, and I’m sure Justin tricked him into getting pregnant.”

Emmett can’t resist saying, “Yeah, giving up condoms is some trick.”

Michael just glares at both of them. He’s still smarting from the verbal abuse he feels Brian inflicted on him last night. But Debbie thinks that Brian finally did the right thing, and she’s not about to let him wallow in self-pity. He needs to finally accept that Brian never had any intention of romancing him.

“Michael, you need to man up and face reality. Brian was never interested in you as anything more than his friend.”
“Ma! You’re supposed to support me, be on my side.”

“Michael! I’m not taking sides. I’m just saying that it’s time to open your eyes and see the truth. It was never going to happen between you two, and all your rude comments and undermining Justin was never going to change that.”

Michael looks like he’s going to cry. “But it might have happened, if he never met Justin.”

Emmett doesn’t want to be part of this conversation, some things are best left to a mother to explain. So he excuses himself and goes upstairs to get ready to meet with his clients.

“If it wasn’t Justin, it would have eventually been someone else.”

“I don’t think so…”

“Michael, I know you’ve always held out, hoping for your fantasy, but you’re almost thirty-five. It’s time you acknowledged that it’s only a fantasy.”

“But we became so close again, when he was pregnant. It was like old times, me taking care of him. Then Justin came back and ruined it all.”

“That was just another fantasy, you thinking that. What? Maybe you and him would raise the baby together? And what about Ben? Did you already give up on him? Because it was obvious that you two were having problems.”

“You don’t understand. Brian needed me… He depended on me to be there for him.”

“Michael! Everyone knows that you misled, no, lied to Brian, telling him that Justin and Brett were lovers. You manipulated him into thinking Justin didn’t love him, wouldn’t want him or a baby. You should be ashamed of yourself!”

“I really didn’t think Justin would want a baby.”

“Bullshit! That’s total bullshit! And you know that! You know that Justin would have flown back here in a nano-second if he knew the truth.”

“But he needed to stay in LA, to work on the movie. We were supposed to have made a mint on that project. In the end it all turned to dust. That was probably Justin’s fault too.”

“You, young man, have to stop blaming others for all your unfortunate failures. Can’t you see how happy Brian is? I think it’s great that he’s finally opened up his heart, and allowed himself to love someone.”

“But that someone was supposed to be me!”

“Only in your head. It was so obvious to everyone that he fell in love with Sunshine right from the beginning. The only one he was fooling was himself and you. I guess he was just too scared to admit it.”

“I know you came here looking for support, but the best advice I can give you is to let go… Move on with your life. You’re still young and I think you’ll be much happier if you accept reality.”

“He actually said I wasn’t his best friend anymore.”

“Of course you’re not… And you’re not going to be any kind of friend if you don’t follow my advice and open your heart to others.”
Why couldn’t everyone see he was the one Brian needed?

“I have to go. I’m working the front counter in the bakery this morning.”

“Michael, take my advice to heart. Stop trying to convince yourself that Brian needs you. He’s already moved on, a long time ago.”

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“Justy, I love my new playroom!”

“I’m glad, Gus. We wanted you to have someplace special to play. Do you want to see your new bedroom?”

“No, no… I don’t want to take a nap!”

“It’s nine o’clock in the morning, you don’t have to go to sleep.”

Although, I’d really like to go back to bed myself…

“Justy, why are we making lunch so early?”

“Because I thought it would be fun to surprise your dad with a little picnic lunch.”

“Are we going to eat outside in the snow?”

“No, silly, it’s still February. We’ll eat in his office, or maybe the break room.”

“Justy, I love ‘tato salad, and fried chicken!”

“Me too, although your father will complain, and then proceed to overeat.”

“Can we have ‘tato chips, and chocolate-chip cookies too?”

“Why not? We’re already practically giving him a heart attack as it is.”

“I love just-baked cookies! And you know what, your cookies are always better than mommy’s.”

“Well, don’t tell her that…”

“Okay, it’ll be our secret.”

They spent the morning baking, and frying, having a great time making a huge mess in the kitchen.

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Brian’s in his office when he hears all the commotion at Cynthia’s desk. It’s the first time Jamie’s been to Kinnetik, and all the employees are stopping by to see him. Well, him, and the dozens of chocolate-chip cookies that Justin brought in for the staff.

“What’s all this?”

“Daddy! We made you a picnic lunch!”

Brian kneels down and kisses Gus as he doesn’t want him to get jealous of all the attention Jamie is getting.
“A picnic lunch, that sounds great.”

“Yeah, Justy says it’s time for your heart attack.”

“How thoughtful. Hopefully I’ll make it through lunch.”

Justin comes over and kisses Brian hello, hands him the picnic basket then he and Gus go into his office. It takes him a few minutes to pry Jamie from Cynthia’s arms, and gets him settled in his stroller. Brian clears off the table, and starts unpacking the basket.

“You weren’t kidding, sonny boy, I should be dead by dinnertime after eating all this.”

“I helped, Daddy! Justy let me stir the cookie dough, and I watched them bake through that little window in the door.”

“Well, they smell great!”

“Yeah, but you have to wait and have them for dessert.”

“Fried chicken, Justin? You really do want to give me a heart attack. I’m guessing this is another one of your insatiable cravings, no doubt.”

“Shut up! Besides I know you love it, even if you complain. You can’t fool me. I’m on to you.”

“I never could… Besides you make the best fried chicken… Even if I’m going to gain twenty pounds.”

“Well, I don’t want to be the only one gaining weight.”

“Just promise me, I can have a big salad for dinner.”

“I promise.”

“’Cos you love a big salad?”

“Yep!”

“I love ice cream.”

“I’m sure you do.”

“Do you think Justy will let me have ice cream for dinner?”

“Let’s get through lunch first, then worry about dinner.”

“How about an ice-cream sandwich?”

“You’re so silly.”

“You know what? Justy made me chicken strips, just like McDonalds.”

“That was very clever of him. Just try not to get all that grease on the furniture.”

“I won’t, Daddy.”

As Gus proceeds to wipe his hands all over his clothes, Brian can’t help cringing, watching him make a total mess. Brian’s glad they stopped by for lunch. It’s only been a few hours but he was
already missing his boys. Justin was right. Even though he complained about the fried chicken, he ate three pieces, savoring each and every fattening bite.

“I trust that you have everything worked out with Mel concerning Gus’s schedule?”

“Yeah, she was fine. It’s Lindsay who’s struggling with accepting our place in Gus’s life, and apparently she’s now depressed after hearing about your pregnancy. She feels betrayed for some reason, just like she felt after Jamie was born.”

“I’m telling you, she’s in love with you. I know she’s a lesbian but she still has a secret desire to be married to you.”

“Yeah, her and Michael… I guess I’m just irresistible…”

“Unhealthy! That’s what it is… I just wish they could both let go of their fantasies!”

“Now, Sunshine, no need to worry. They’re the last people I’d ever be tempted to stray to.”

Justin loses that sparkle in his eyes, looking away…

“Not that I’d be tempted to stray at all these days.”

Brian hopes that reassures Justin enough to keep him from worrying. Sometimes he could just kick himself for the things he says. The last thing he wants is to make Justin think he’s open to tricking again. He pulls Justin into his arms, and kisses the top of his head.

“You know I was just kidding. Right?”

“Yeah…”

Justin starts packing up their lunch into the picnic basket, while Brian takes Gus into the bathroom and helps him wash his hands. On the way out of the office, Cynthia comes over to have one last glance at Jamie. She gushes about how adorable he is, and then she thanks Justin for the huge platter of chocolate-chip cookies he left for the staff.

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Brian stops at Deb’s on the way home. She tells him about Michael’s visit and how distraught he is about their falling out.

“What the fuck am I supposed to do, Deb? If I didn’t throw it in his face, he was never going to get it.”

“I know, kiddo. I tried to tell him that’s it’s time to give up the fantasy. But he’s as stubborn as a mule sometimes.”

“You’d think the fact that Justin and I now have a family would be enough to make him see reality. I hated hurting him like that, but I had to do it.”

“You don’t have to explain it to me. If you remember correctly, it was me who called you out about acknowledging how much you loved Sunshine.”

“I guess we’ll just have to wait it out, and hopefully he’ll come around. I don’t really want to lose his friendship, but Justin has to come first. He’s my partner, and soon he’ll be my husband.”

“So when do you two plan on tying the knot?”
“I’m not sure. Justin’s trying to decide if he wants to do it before, or after the new baby comes.”

“It won’t be any easier after the new baby’s here. With two babies in diapers, and one just learning to walk, getting into everything. Yep, you two are going to have your hands full.”

Brian grins. “That’s what Grandmothers are for, so I expect lots of help from both you and Jen.”

“Yeah, you two are going to need it.”

“Thanks, Ma! Now help me finish loading all these presents into my Mercedes. I’m already late for dinner, and I’m sure Justin’s exhausted by now.”

“You’re a good father, Brian. You’ve really changed so much this last year.”

“I just wish Michael could see it.”

“Give it time… He’ll come around, I hope…”

After everything’s packed up, Brian leans in and gives Deb a kiss on her cheek. He’s thankful for her support and understanding with Michael’s dilemma.

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When Brian finally gets home Justin already has a glass of wine poured and waiting for him. He’s tired, after catching up on all the new ad campaigns, storyboards, and signing what seemed like a million contracts, he’s happy to be home, and back with his boys. Gus is showing him the pictures he’s drawn for him this afternoon, while Brian helps him hang them up on his bulletin board in the playroom.

Justin’s glad Brian is home and hopes he doesn’t mind making dinner, he just doesn’t have the strength. He’s been a little nauseous this afternoon and glad Gus could entertain himself coloring. Jamie is now sleeping on Justin’s tummy as he rests on the sofa, watching Brian and Gus in the kitchen. Brian decides to heat up the minestrone soup Deb sent home with him, and make a salad to go along with it. By the time everything is ready Brian notices that Justin is sound asleep, so he decides that they’ll save him some soup to heat up later.

After dinner Brian is giving Gus his bath when he asks, “Daddy, is there really a tiny baby in Justy’s tummy?”

Brian’s a little surprised by the question so he hesitates as Gus continues.

“That’s what I heard Mommy and Mama arguing about this morning. Mommy was mad that you put a baby in Justin’s tummy.”

“Did you do that because he put baby Jamie in your tummy?”

Brian’s at a loss for words, when he realizes a simple ‘Yes’ will suffice.

“Because you love Justy?”

“Yes, very much so…”

“Don’t you love Mommy anymore? She was crying because you wouldn’t put a new baby in her tummy.”

Again Brian hesitates. “Of course I love her, but it’s different now… She has your Mama.”
“Why doesn’t Mama put a new baby in her tummy?”

“It’s not that simple…”

“Because Mama doesn’t have a penis?”

“That’s right.”

“So Daddy, when I grow up can I put a baby in Justy’s tummy too?”

“Well… By the time you’re all grown up, you’ll probably meet someone else who you want to make a baby with.”

“No. I love Justy, just like you, Daddy.”

“I know, Gus…”

“I’m always going to love him.”

“I know, but it’s different. You’ll understand when you’re older.”

“Maybe Justy can put a baby in my tummy. I know he loves me.”

“Well that’s a long time from now. Let’s just wait until you’re older.”

“Okay! I’ll tell Justy when he wakes up.”

Brian’s at a loss for words again, but he’s pretty sure Justin will know what to say. He always knows the right thing to say. Gus is satisfied with Brian’s explanations so he finally lets this conversation go. Brian gets him dried off and into his pajamas, then they lie on his bed reading stories until Gus is asleep.

Brian goes upstairs to check on Justin, but it’s dark and locked up so he makes his way to their bedroom. There lies Justin, naked by candlelight, slowly stroking his hard cock.

“What took you so long?”

Brian looks down at him with sultry eyes, as he shimmies out of his jeans and t-shirt. He crawls up Justin’s body, pushing him onto his back. Their lips find one another as their passion builds, and their skin becomes warm and sensitive. Rubbing and grinding against one another, they roll around on the bed ending up with Brian on his back as Justin continues his onslaught of kisses. They can never seem to get enough of one another, their love just keeps growing stronger every day.

They’re happy, happier than they ever thought they would be. Brian never thought he would be, or could be a family man, but he wouldn’t want it any other way. He loves Justin with all his heart and he’s really looking forward to getting married. He’s been thinking about it a lot since he talked with Deb tonight. He doesn’t just want a commitment ceremony, he wants it to be legal, which means they’ll have to go out of state, because Pennsylvania doesn’t recognize same-sex marriage, at least not yet.

He smiles up at Justin, watching him as he starts running kisses down his chest. His cock is firm and hard, poking Justin in the stomach. Justin changes gear and runs his tongue around his belly button, and then down lower until he captures the head of his dick between his lips. Brian arches his back, making Justin take him deeper down his throat. Soon he’s overwhelmed with sensations as Justin runs his lips up and down his shaft.
Brian loves it when he hits the back of Justin’s throat, loves the feeling of his head gliding against his warm wet mouth. Justin increases his movements, heightening Brian’s desire, pulling him closer to his climax. Brian moans the more excited he becomes, and soon he feels Justin sucking him harder as he fondles his balls, sending sparks shooting through his groin.

Justin can tell Brian’s getting close so he flicks his tongue across his slit and round his crown, triggering Brian’s orgasm. He shoots down Justin’s throat, who continues running his lips up and down his cock, pumping the last of his juices from him, then he crawls up and gives Brian a taste. Brian loves tasting his own sweet cream on Justin’s lips, almost as much as Justin does. Justin lies with his head resting on Brian’s chest as he comes down from his erotic high.

Brian plays with his hair, loving the feel of his soft silky mane running through his fingers. They lie together for several minutes until Brian’s ready for round two, then he rolls Justin over until he’s lying on his stomach. He positions himself behind Justin, between Justin’s legs, with him on all fours. Even though Justin is wet with excitement he coats his fingers with lube, and spreads the gel around his pucker just to be careful.

Then he pushes deep into him, as moans escape Justin’s throat in approval, loving the feeling of being full. What starts out slow and gentle quickly develops into a steady pace with Brian plunging deeper, caressing Justin’s prostate. As the friction builds waves of pleasure radiate throughout their limbs. Several more deep thrusts and soon they’re trembling as they both climax.

They roll over onto their side, as they catch their breath, still loving the connection between them, loving the intensity of being together flesh on flesh. Sometimes it’s almost too much, their senses on overload, consumed with the passion they feel for each other.

They lie together until they hear Jamie start to cry. Justin gets up to check on him, knowing that it’s time for his bottle. While Justin is taking care of Jamie, Brian sneaks a cigarette. Of course Justin will bust his balls when he gets back, he promised he’d stop smoking. He did throughout his pregnancy, but he was feeling a little stressed today at work and bummed a couple of cigarettes from one of the junior ad execs.

TBC…
Chapter Eighteen ~ Reality Check

The sun is shining brightly although there is a crispness in the air. Justin’s taking the kids for a walk downtown when Gus decides he wants a cookie. Just the thought of cookies makes Justin’s mouth water, and his stomach grumble. They’re practically in front of The Liberty Bakery. He hesitates for a moment, and then decides that now is as good a time as any to talk with Michael. Gus is standing looking into the huge display case, but he can’t seem to make up his mind; he wants doughnuts, cookies, and cannoli.

These days Justin’s cravings make it hard for him to say no, so they buy a huge box of pastries with a variety of baked goods to indulge in over the next couple of days. Gus loves that Justin is pregnant; he never says no like he used to when he’d asked for candy and ice cream all the time. They’re both happy campers these days.

Michael comes out from the back with a tray of fresh-baked cupcakes and sees Justin and the kids at the counter. At first he thinks about ignoring them, but they make eye contact and Justin smiles back at him.

“Michael, do you have a minute? Maybe you could take a break and we could have coffee?”

“What for?”

“I was hoping we could talk.”

“What about?”

This wasn’t going to be easy. Michael seems determined to make this difficult, still being stubborn, and unreasonable.
“Michael, just a few minutes. I think we need to talk about what’s happened between you and Brian.”

“That’s between me and Brian!”

“No, I don’t think it is. It has everything to do with me, and we need to clear the air.”

Michael stares at him for a minute, “Fine!”

He throws his apron under the counter and comes over and takes a seat in the farthest booth from the counter. He doesn’t want his boss, or co-workers hearing their conversation.

“What do you want? I’m working!”

“I was hoping that we could talk about what’s happened between you and Brian. I know you’re upset, but we need to get past all this.”

“You expect me to just accept that you’re going to be around forever now? Accept that Brian wants to marry you?”

“Yes. Yes, I do. Because that’s exactly how things are, how they’re going to be. And the sooner you realize it, the sooner you and Brian can start to rebuild your friendship.”

“As if you care about my friendship with Brian.”

“You’re right, I don’t. I think it’s unhealthy and run its course. But I do care about Brian, and if he needs your friendship then I want to help him rebuild it. I want him to be happy. You and I are never going to be friends, although I thought at one point we might have had a chance. It’s obvious that you’re full of resentment and anger towards me. But if you want Brian to remain in your life, then you’ll have to accept that we’re a couple. We have a family, and we love each other.”

“I HAVE TO? NO, I DON’T! AND DON’T TELL ME WHAT TO THINK!”

“That’s your choice. I just thought that you’d want to rekindle your friendship with Brian.”

“What I want is for you to leave Brian! To get out of all our lives and for things to go back to the way they were before you showed up under that damn streetlamp.”

“That’s just another one of your childish fantasies! For once try and live in reality. Even if Brian and I split up, which we won’t. But if we did, I’d still be a very integral part of his life. That’s what children do. They bind people together for life. So I’m not going anywhere and you need to accept that.”

“So, I guess you won!”

“Michael it was never a contest. Please, for Brian’s sake. Try and accept reality.”

“I have to go back to work!”

After returning behind the counter he watches Justin help Gus on with his coat, zipping him up. Then he tucks blankets in around Jamie to keep him warm in his stroller. He hates it when Justin’s right, it’s like another slap across his face.

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“Daddy! Daddy, you’re home!”
Gus comes running towards him, and then he jumps into his arms. Brian can’t help reminiscing about how in the early days Justin would rush to him, thrusting himself into his arms after a long day of work.

“Yeah, Sonny Boy!”

“Daddy, I have your money!”

“You do?”

“Yep. Cynthia says you were a very good boy today, so I have your pay.”

“Oh…”

Gus runs over to his animal crackers box and pulls out a wad of cash—little pink, white, blue, green, yellow, and gold bills. He’s thrilled as he spreads the cash on the table, deciding how much to give Brian. He settles on $4,517.00. Brian’s fascinated how he came up with that amount. Gus explains that he loves pink, so only he can have the pink bills. He gives Brian eight $500 bills because he hates the color gold, then he mixes in two $100 bills, five $50 bills, six $10 bills and seven singles.

“Gus, do you know what the number is on your pink dollars?”

Gus looks at it, thinking, then looks at Brian. “Five?”

“That’s right, do you see the number on my gold bill?”

Gus stares at it, really thinking about it then he says, “Five, zero, zero? Daddy, does that mean it’s less than five?”

“No, silly, I just wanted you to know that the gold one is much, much more money.”

“Okay, Daddy, so let’s say the pink ones are really a million dollars.”

“That’s my boy.”

Justin comes upstairs with a load of Jamie’s clean clothes, folded and ready for the dresser in the playroom.

“You’re home!”

Brian comes over and takes the laundry basket, bending over and kissing Justin hello.

“Daddy! You kissed Justy! That will be ten dollars!”

“Ten dollars? Hmm…”

“Yep, and Daddy. No funny stuff! That’s extra!”

“It always is…”

“He found the monopoly game after lunch, and he’s been fascinated by the money all afternoon.”

“So how much was your pay?”

Justin chuckles. “He actually said that I had to take out a loan. You see, I don’t have a job.”

Brian burst out laughing. “Yep, that’s my boy. He’s no fool.”
Justin playfully smacks Brian across his chest.

“I have to check on the chicken enchiladas.”

As Justin starts to step away, Brian pulls him into his arms and kisses him passionately while Gus’s back is turned. He’s watching Jamie struggle as he tries to lift himself up on his arms, looking like he’s doing pushups. Gus loves his baby brother and is fascinated with his ever-changing facial expressions.

Brian is going upstairs after changing into his jeans and t-shirt, when Gus calls out to him.

“Daddy! Daddy, do you want to buy one of my beautiful pictures I colored for you?”

“Oh my, that is beautiful. How much is this one?”

“For you Daddy, it’s only five hundred dollars. But not the gold one.”

They have dinner and Brian suggests that maybe Justin needs to get a car. Now with the kids, they’ll need another vehicle. Justin worries about Brian buying him another expensive gift and about how the family or Michael will react.

“Justin? You know once we’re married I don’t expect us to have separate money. I understand that it takes time to sell your artwork. But I have no doubt that you’ll be hanging in the homes of very wealthy clients in no time.”

“Brian…”

“I’m serious, about both. You already know that I’ve had your name added to all my bank accounts. And you’re so talented, it’s truly just a matter of time…”

“Oh, Brian…”

Not that he wants to bring this conversation down, but he knows he has to tell Brian about talking with Michael.

Justin says, “Brian, I ran into Michael this morning, and things didn’t go as well as they could have.”

“I don’t doubt that. It seems Michael is really digging his heels in about this. He actually expects me to apologize to him.”

“Oh God, Brian… I’m sorry if I’ve made things between you two so strained.”

“Don’t worry about it… I’m not. Michael will come around, or he won’t. It’s up to him.”

After dinner Gus slips a $100 bill next to his plate, leaving Justin a tip. Brian and Justin can’t help laughing at Gus’s antics. Who knows? Maybe it will be educational for him learning the value of a dollar. He’s now playing with all the little monopoly charms, houses and hotels from the game, when he comes over and gives Justin the sports car.

“Now you have a car that’s all your own.”

Justin can’t help but think he’s just precious, loving to be able to share these simple interactions with him daily.

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Later that evening Michael meets Emmett for a drink at Woody’s.

“Can you believe that little bastard had the nerve to tell me I had to accept that Brian and him were a couple? That they’re getting married.”

“Well… You do, don’t you?”

“I can’t believe that Brian sent him over to do his bidding, rubbing everything in my face.”

“I seriously doubt that Brian sent him to see you.”

“Who the hell does he think he is?”

“Michael, Justin’s right. He’s always going to be part of Brian’s life. If you want to remain friends with Brian, you’ll have to learn to accept that.”

“I can’t believe you’re taking his side. I thought you were my friend.”

“I’m not taking anybody’s side, and I’m friends with all of you. I mean, really, Michael! Brian and Justin have been a couple for years now. I’m just trying to make you see reality.”

“They are not a couple! Brian’s doesn’t do boyfriends!”

“Whatever you want to call it. They’ve been together longer than you and Ben were together.”

“They have not!”

“Really, Michael? You know they may have had an open relationship, and even split up for a while. But they’ve never stopped loving each other. They’re meant to be together.”

“No! No! Brian and I were meant to be together.”

“Michael, don’t you think it would have happened by now, if it was going to happen?”

“He wasn’t ready, but now he is.”

“Michael, please don’t take what I’m about to say the wrong way but… Brian needs someone in his life that will inspire him, challenge him, someone who is more his equal.”

“Are you saying that I’m stupid?”

“No, you just have different interests. Like with David, you didn’t really have anything in common. And as you found out it’s hard to make a relationship work if you’re not mentally stimulated by one another.”

“So you’re taking Ted’s side too. You think I was too stupid to have a relationship with David?”

“I’m just saying that you need to find someone who shares more of your own interests.”

“You really do think I’m stupid!”

“No, no. It’s just that I can’t imagine that you’d be very comfortable if you were out to dinner with one of Brian’s clients. You wouldn’t know what to talk about.”

“Oh, because I’d rather drink coca cola and read comic books, instead of drinking fancy wines and talking about the latest art exhibit at the museum?”
“Quite frankly, yes. You need to find someone who’s a better fit, someone you have more in common with.”

“Well, fuck you, Emmett! I don’t need you ragging on me just like my mom or Justin!”

With that, Michael stomps out of Woody’s, practically in tears. Why couldn’t anyone understand how he felt? Why didn’t they want to help him find a way to make Brian see that they belonged together?

Once home he sits in his tiny apartment thinking about how much his life has changed since Christmas. It’s true he is resentful towards Justin for having come home to Brian, especially now they’re engaged and expecting a second child. He is angry about Ben’s death; he feels like Hunter has somehow robbed him of their time together. He is mad that everyone found out about his gambling, and he’s ashamed that he lost the house and his comic book store.

But mostly he is angry that everyone’s life seemed to be moving along, while he is stuck treading water, or worse sliding backwards. He hates that David is back, and now dating Ted. Ted, of all people? How could this have happened? His own mother didn’t even support him or understand how he feels. She is taking everyone else’s side: Hunter, Ted, Brian and Justin’s. Why doesn’t anyone understand what he’s going through?

He finds himself standing at his kitchen counter, downing his third beer in the last half an hour. The alcohol is starting to take effect, numbing the pain. That’s when he’s startled by someone knocking on his door. He opens it and is surprised to see Keith, one of his gambling buddies standing there.

“I ran into your mom at the diner and she said that you were working at the bakery, and living upstairs.”

“Yeah, I ended up losing my comic book shop. I had a run of bad luck and just couldn’t seem to turn it around.”

“I know how that is. I’ve had my share of bad runs myself. So do you still play? Or are you truly reformed?”

“I haven’t been back to Big Jack’s since I got in over my head and had to have my best friend bail me out.”

“So, you’re not tempted to try your hand at it again?”

“Well, yeah… But I’m trying to stay clean. My mom would kill me if she found out I was gambling again.”

“Your mommy, ha, ha, ha…”

“Shut up, Keith! It’s not funny. I really fucked up.”

“I understand. I just thought that you might want to have a little fun. Try your luck at a few hands, for old time’s sake.”

“Well… It is tempting. But I don’t really have any cash.”

“I’ll tell you what, I’ll front you a couple of hundred to get you started.”

“Okay, that sounds like fun. Besides I need something to take my mind off my troubles. So why
Keith and Michael head out to Big Jack’s and play cards into the wee hours of the morning; Michael ends up spending the night with Keith. He wakes up at the crack of dawn, barely having had four hours of sleep before he’s scheduled to start his morning shift at the bakery. But he’s feeling good about himself; he won four hundred dollars last night and he has plans to see Keith again tonight. Keith is great for his ego, and it is time that things turned around for him. He’ll show Brian he doesn’t need him. He has someone who is just as good looking as Brian, someone who wants him.

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Brian is putting Gus to bed but as he tucks him in he hears the crinkling of paper and asks Gus. “What is that?”

“Nothing, Daddy.”

Brian leans down to kiss Gus goodnight, and hears the crinkling again as his hand rests on the bed. He looks at Gus as he pulls the blanket back to see all of Gus’s monopoly money under his pillow and blankets.

“Gus, let’s set this aside, it’s got to be uncomfortable laying on it?”

“No, daddy. I don’t want the tooth fairy to steal it.”

“Gus, she won’t steal it. She isn’t even scheduled to stop by, unless you’ve lost a tooth I don’t know about.”

After much coaxing, he finally convinces Gus that it will be safe on his nightstand. Brian can’t help thinking Gus is so adorable, and he wonders if he was ever this sweet and innocent.

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Brian walks into the bedroom after finally getting Gus to sleep and sees Justin eating potato chips in bed, getting crumbs all over the sheets.

“Justin! Must you eat that in bed?”

“What?” he says innocently…

“You’re getting grease and crumbs all over our 800 thread count sheets!”

Justin just rolls his eyes, and brushes off the sheets, motioning for Brian to join him. Brian shakes his head as he leans over to capture his lips, tasting the salty flavor, making his desire for both Justin and his bags of chips increase tenfold.

“What am I going to do with you?”

Justin smirks as he rolls over on his stomach, flaunting his perky bubble butt as a peace offering. Brian’s never been able to resist temptation, as he shimmies out of his jeans and crawls up Justin’s back. Covering Justin’s body with his, he starts nibbling and running kisses over his neck, until he reaches that special place just below his left ear. The one that he knows drives Justin crazy with need and desire. Justin wiggles underneath him, pushing his plump ass against Brian’s raging hard-on, loving the way it feels pressed between his cheeks.
Little moans escape his throat as Brian nips and sucks his neck which is sure to leave a mark. Brian makes good use of his hands, pulling Justin up onto all fours as his lips and tongue continue to assault him, leaving Justin wanting more. He’s putty in Brian’s hands with his senses on overload, and his desire bubbling within. He’s practically purring, so excited because he knows what’s coming next. Brian’s tongue runs down his back, leaving a wet trail over his spine, as his hands spread his cheeks.

He trembles as waves of pleasure wash over him as he feels Brian tongue lick and prod his rosebud. His moans are getting louder, the deeper Brian’s tongue delves into his crevice, and he can’t help remembering hearing Brian say, “Now you know what rimming is.”

Yes, he’s learned from the master; learned everything he knows about giving and receiving pleasure. It may have taken them years to get here, but they’re finally at the precipice, ready to commit to each other, forsaking all others. Yes, that persistent little twat has definitely snuck in under the wire, turning Brian’s world upside down and the strange part is Brian wouldn’t have it any other way.

Justin is chanting, “Brian, Brian, Brian.”

Brian swirls his tongue around his pucker one more time, bringing Justin to the brink as his thumb caresses his mushroom head, triggering his orgasm. Justin cries out Brian’s name again as he shoots into Brian’s hand. Soon it’s dripping down, soaking the sheets as Justin’s body turns into a puddle of love. Brian loves that he can still turn Justin into that naïve little boy, begging to experience everything Brian can make him feel.

Justin collapses onto the bed, catching his breath as his heart races, barely conscious of the fact that he’s now laying on the wet spot. He rolls over and Brian quickly lifts his legs up onto his shoulders, using his cum-covered hand to coat his dick. Then he’s ready with his cock aligned with Justin’s opening. One long smooth thrust and he’s breached his tight ring of muscle. They’re both overcome with intense sensations as they feel their skin gliding against one another, still in awe of the delicate ripples that vibrate through them, knowing this is the way it’s meant to be. They’ll never experience this with anyone else. This is love. This is the true commitment they’ve made to one another.

They’re both so lit, it doesn’t take much thrusting for them to find themselves close to the edge. Justin’s moaning again and Brian’s grateful that they soundproofed the bedroom. Justin’s always been a screamer, and now that there’s no barrier he’s even louder that he used to be. Justin’s in heaven as Brian hammers his sweet spot, finally giving in, letting his body quake with pleasure as his climax pulsates throughout him. Brian explodes moments later as Justin slick walls clench and release him, triggering his own orgasm.

Brian rests his forehead in the middle of Justin’s back, both spent as they linger in that euphoric state, still amazed that their lovemaking has reached such an extreme high. They can’t help feeling like they’re the only ones to ever experience such intense pleasure, and the bond between them seems unbreakable. Brian may not be able to verbalize all the emotions that he’s feeling, but knowing that Justin is his, makes him feel an inner peace he never knew existed before.

They disengage, and then snuggle together, spooning one another as sleep takes them. Neither one of them has ever felt this happy before…

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The next morning Justin is making cocoa for him and Gus, having woken up with a craving for chocolate. He’s just adding miniature marshmallows to the hot chocolate as he waits for Jamie’s
bottle to warm up. He sets Gus’s cocoa down on the table, reminding him that it’s still hot and he needs to let it cool. Gus looks at Justin like he thinks he’s still a baby. “I know that.”

“Of course you do, but I’d hate to have you burn your mouth.”

They both turn towards the door when they hear someone knocking. Justin quickly finger combs his bedhead hair, and smooths out the wrinkles in his shirt before he pulls the loft door open. Joan Kinney stares back at him, holding her famous chocolate-chocolate-chip cake.

Justin’s slightly shocked as the last time he saw her was at Christmas time when she actually said that she had talked with Father Thom, and was working on accepting Brian’s lifestyle. Always being the polite WASP that he was raised to be he asks her in, offering her cocoa or a cup of coffee; surprisingly she accepts the offer of hot chocolate.

Justin quickly makes her a cup, and brings plates and silverware back to the table where they make small talk, enjoying the rich cake as it delights their taste buds. This is the first time that Joan has met Gus, and she’s so surprised at how much he looks like Brian at that age. Just then Jamie starts to fuss, crying out for Justin. Just like his father he always wants to be the center of attention. Joan looks on, watching the interaction between father and son. Even Gus stands next to Justin as he holds Jamie close to his chest, swaying back and forth to help calm him. Justin notices that faraway look in Joan’s eyes, and asks her if she’d like to hold him.

“They grow up so fast. I can still remember holding Brian when he was just a baby.”

Again she’s struck by how much both of Brian’s sons look like him when he was a child, and she knows that they’ll both grow up to be just as handsome as their father. She knows she’s stalling for time, and she’s still a little unsure how this conversation will go. But she really does want to find a way to bring her dysfunctional family back together. She just hopes that Justin will agree to talk with Brian; she can see just how much they care for one another. No, make that love each other. It’s so apparent that the two of them share a special bond. A bond that was never shared between her and Jack, and she’s happy for Brian, happy that he’s finally found a way to be loved.

As Justin and Gus make their way through a second piece of cake, Joan mentions that she’s worried about her daughter Claire. She’s separated from her husband. It seems that he’s run off with his PA, leaving Claire to try and support herself and the boys. She been working two, sometimes three jobs to keep from losing the house, and as a result the boys have been on their own and getting into trouble. Joan casually mentions that she knows that John was way out of line when he accused Brian of molesting him, but she hopes that Brian can forgive him.

She thinks that the boys need a strong male influence in their lives, and wonders if maybe Brian might be willing to spend some time with them when Claire is at work. John and Peter are both interested in soccer, and she knows that Brian played on a team in high school. She even mentions that there’s a soccer league that meets a couple of times a week in the afternoons, but they need a coach. She looks at Justin with a hopeful look in her eyes, knowing that she’ll need his help in convincing Brian to consider helping out.

Justin’s actually thinks that this might be a good idea, more so because Brian’s working too much and needs a healthy outlet for all his pent-up energy and stress he’s under. It’s the part about being the strong male influence that he’s concerned about. After all this is Brian’s mother and sister we’re talking about. But they both have been more accepting of their relationship, and Justin agrees that it would be a good way to mend fences between him and his family.

“Mrs. Kinney, I think this is something you need to talk to Brian about.”
“I know, but… I’m worried that he won’t be very receptive if it comes from me, or Claire. I was
hoping that maybe you’d talk with him. Help him understand that we really do want to let go of the
past, and build a relationship with him, to be a real family.”

“I don’t know, Mrs. Kinney. I admit that things have been better between all of you since
Christmas, but I’m afraid that Brian still harbors some resentment over the incident with John.
Have you even asked John and Peter how they feel about spending more time with Brian? The last
thing we need is for them to resent Brian inserting himself into their lives.”

“No, I haven’t spoken with Claire, or the boys. I wanted to find out if Brian was even interested
before I approached them.”

“It seems that we both need to have a talk with them and see if they’re even on the same page. I
can’t promise you anything, but I’ll try and talk with Brian about this over the weekend. Maybe
you’re right, maybe this would be the perfect thing to try and heal old wounds.”

Joan thanks Justin for hearing her out, knowing that it might be like trying to move a mountain to
get Brian to even consider coaching the soccer team, and getting to know his nephews. Justin
walks her to the door, and of course thanks her for the yummy chocolate-chocolate-chip cake,
telling her he’ll try but he can’t promise anything. As he watches the elevator descend he thinks to
himself that he’s surprised that Claire wasn’t asking for money, and Joan didn’t seem to have been
drinking at all. Wonders never cease…

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Brian has just finished up pitching the new ad campaign to ‘Full Beams,’ a start-up lighting
company that specialized in modern lamps and lighting. He’s taken them out to lunch to seal the
deal. When he opens his wallet to pay the bill, several gold five-hundred dollar bills fall on the
table. Everyone’s eyes shifted to them, as a smirk spreads across Brian’s face and he thinks about
Gus.

“I see my son’s been playing with my wallet.”

“That’s so sweet. How old is he?”

“He’s four. He just discovered the monopoly money yesterday afternoon, and he’s totally obsessed
with it.”

“That’s adorable. He sounds like he takes after his father, knowing the value of a dollar.”

Brian pays the check and walks his clients out to their car, setting a date for presenting the final
television commercials they discussed. As he watches them drive off he pulls out his phone and
calls Justin, letting him know that he’ll be home early after having just signed the new contract
with ‘Full Beams’. He offers to pick something up for dinner, so Justin won’t have to worry about
cooking. They’ll both be glad when Maria returns from her extended stay in Florida. She’s a great
help with the boys, and it will give Justin time to get back to painting.

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Michael’s mood swings are almost as dramatic as Justin’s. One minute he’s mad at Emmett for not
supporting him when he was wallowing over his fallout with Brian. Next he’s inviting him to join
him at Babylon as he chatters on and on about his new boyfriend, Keith and how he’s so in love
with him, even though they’ve only been together once. Emmett tries to be understanding, not
knowing if he might set him off again by saying the wrong thing. They have drinks, and several
dances as Michael keeps an eye out for Keith who’s supposed to meet him there.

Little did they know that Keith was there watching them together. He can’t help himself from becoming jealous, sure that Emmett is trying to seduce Michael. He waits in the shadows as they dance, and laugh, evaluating all the cute guys there tonight. Finally Emmett has to leave as he has an early morning appointment to plan a quickie wedding to take place next week.

Emmett doesn’t know what hit him when he feels himself being punched in the gut, and then thrown up against the building, as someone threatens to beat him to death if he ever goes near Michael again. Keith has a hold of Emmett by his collar as his cold dark eyes stare at him, making sure he’s understood.

Then he releases Emmett, letting him fall down onto his knees, shaking and in shock, wondering what Michael has gotten himself into. Keith leaves Emmett cowering in a fetal position next to the brick wall, afraid to look up, afraid that he’ll get punched again. A couple minutes later he feels strong arms around him, pulling him into their chest, asking if he’s alright.

Emmett looks up into the eyes of the most beautiful man he’s ever seen, as the man asks him again if he’s alright. If he needs to see a doctor, and if he can give him a ride home telling him that his name is Joshua. They stand and Josh helps him over to his car, Emmett can’t help worrying about Michael and he insists that he needs to call Michael and warn him about Keith.

Michael doesn’t believe a word of it, and actually accuses Em of making up stories, trying to ruin his relationship with his new boyfriend. Emmett tries desperately to convince Michael that he’s in danger, but Michael just hangs up on him. Keith pulls Michael out onto the dance floor like nothing even happened. He tells him how much he means to him, and he’ll never let anyone come between them. Michael can’t help grinning like a fool. It’s been so long since he’s felt this happy and he’s not going to let Emmett’s jealousy cloud his future.

TBC…
Chapter Nineteen ~ Choices

Michael was flying high, his relationship with Keith was moving fast. It’s the first time he’s ever been involved with someone who so openly professes his love for him. Sure he’s noticed that he’s a little possessive, and slightly jealous. But he thinks it’s cute, and it makes him feel special. Now he just wants to see if Brian’s a little jealous, now that someone wants him and is more than willing to flaunt it. Michael’s sure that Brian will realize what he’s lost and finally admit to being in love with him.

Emmett’s tried to talk with Michael, tried to tell him that Keith’s not what he appears to be. But he’s even more delusional than usual, and he can’t wait for everyone to meet his new love. Emmett’s even showed him his bruised rib cage and the black and blue splotches that cover him from his stomach all the way around to his back. Michael doesn’t believe a word of it, he thinks Em must have just had rough sex with some one-night stand. After all, Keith loves him, even if they’ve only been seeing each other for a week.

The only good thing to come out of all this is the fact that Emmett met Josh. They’ve talked on the phone almost every day and have plans to go out to dinner on Saturday. Josh works a lot of overtime, and often has to be available on short notice. He’s trying to impress his boss Inspector Horvath, he’s up for promotion once he passes the sergeant’s exam. He hasn’t told Emmett yet that he’s a police officer because so many guys aren’t interested in dating cops.

Considering all the drugs, and sex that happens at gay bars, most guys don’t trust cops, they’re too afraid of getting busted. Josh keeps it on the down-low about being a cop because he does a lot of undercover work, and it’s best to blend in when needed. The last thing he wants to do is put anyone in danger because of his job. He’s totally smitten with Em, and hopes that something develops between them. Emmett refused to go to the hospital, or make a police report after Keith had beaten him up and Josh has tried to be understanding. So he’s taken it upon himself to keep an eye on Em and be there for him if he needs him.
Debbie is so excited when Michael tells her he’s met someone new, she hopes that he’s given up his ridiculous dream of being with Brian. From everything she’s heard from Michael, Keith sounds like a dream come true. She insists that Michael bring him to Sunday dinner, she’s looking forward to everyone meeting him. She’s so proud that Michael is finally moving on, and it’s time he turned his life around. She gloats, telling Emmett all about him.

When Emmett tries to tell her he has a bad feeling about this, she gets mad, telling him that Michael already told her that he was jealous and trying to break them up. The more he tries to explain, the more she’s convinced that Michael’s right. Emmett is just ridiculing him because he hasn’t had a steady boyfriend since Drew, and that was a couple of years ago now. She wonders why he can’t just be happy for him instead of making up lies, putting Keith down.

Emmett’s nervous. He thinks about making some excuse to get out of the family dinner. The truth is he’s frightened of Keith, and doesn’t want to be on the receiving end of his fist again. He considers asking Josh to Sunday dinner, but they’re going on their first date on Saturday and he hates to subject him to the family after only one date. But then again they’ve talked on the phone every night and he feels like he already knows him so well.

Debbie’s made sure that the whole family knows about Sunday dinner, and refuses to let anyone wriggle out of it. Ted tried to explain that it might not be a good idea, that Michael might harbor some resentment about him dating David. But Debbie reassured him that he was completely over David. She can’t wait to show off Michael’s new beau.

Brian finally gets home after fighting traffic, hungry and missing his boys. He sets the Chinese food down on the counter and notices the familiar cake plate from his childhood; he can’t help himself from lifting the lid. It’s his favorite chocolate-chocolate-chip. He runs his finger around the edge, licking up the crumbs and frosting. He wonders how Justin and his mother got along, worried about what she might have wanted.

“Daddy! You have to wait until after dinner before you can have cake and ice cream.”

“Oh? Is that why two thirds of the cake is missing?”

“Well… Justy and I had to make sure it wasn’t poisoned.”

“A-ha…”

“Yum, that Chinese food smells good.”

“Well I would have been home sooner, but someone insisted that I go to “Lotus Gardens” way across town. Do you know how much traffic there is this time of day?”

Justin comes over, wrapping his arms around his neck and stands on his tippy-toes to give him a kiss.

“I’ll show you later how much I appreciate it, much later.”

“I can’t wait.”

“I see my mother was here.”
“Yeah, she brought us a chocolate-chocolate-chip cake.”

“I noticed that. If I didn’t know better I’d think that little butter ball you’re developing is a result of all the sugar you consume.”

“I’m going to pretend that you didn’t just call me fat.”

Brian pulls him in closer. “I love your little butter ball.”

Justin’s all smiles, it’s just the last couple of days that he’s noticed that he’s developing a round belly. He’s so proud that he’s carrying Brian’s baby. He loves being a father, loves being home with Jamie, being able to see him growing and developing right before his eyes. He’s grateful that he’s an artist, and will be able to work from home, and be with his children during the formative years. It’s all he can do to not call Brian all day. Instead he waits for him to come home to tell him about everything Jamie’s learned.

Justin sets the table as Brian transfers the food into serving dishes. Gus helps by putting the silverware and the napkins around the table. Gus wonders why they don’t just eat from the cartons like mommy and mama, but Justin told him that Brian likes dinner to be served properly. It’s just another one of Brian’s quirks, he’s very structured and likes things done a certain way. Justin gave up a long time ago trying to change him.

“No, Gus, you don’t want that.”

“Yes, I do, daddy. I want mine just like yours.”

“Here, try the soy sauce on your eggroll, that mustard is very hot. I don’t think you’ll like it.”

“Hot? Like the cocoa?”

“Cocoa?”

“We had cocoa this morning with your mom. I made him wait for it to cool off.”

“It’s a different kind of hot. It’s spicy, you have to develop a taste for it. Maybe when you’re older.”

“How old, daddy? A hundred? Daddy, are you a hundred yet?”

Brian turns and stares at Justin as he laughs uncontrollably.

“Careful there, little boy, it’s not nice to disrespect your elders.”

“Daddy, are you an elder?”

“Let’s focus on eating your dinner, then you can have more cake.”

“Oh yeah! I love cake.”

“And you can stop snickering anytime now.”

“I can’t wait until we have a table full of little munchkins asking you questions.”

“Don’t worry, it will happen soon enough.”

“I love you too, Brian.”
“Oh, by the way, Lindsay called and she wants to pick Gus up on Sunday night at Deb’s.”

“Deb’s making a special dinner, she’s all excited about everyone meeting Michael’s new boyfriend.”

“Mikey has a new beau?”

“Yeah, but Emmett said he’s a real creep. Super jealous and controlling. He said the guy actually punched him in the stomach and ribs, and now he has bruises.”

“What the fuck? Why would anyone hurt Em? I mean he’s so… So, you know.”

“Brian.”

“Emmett said he’s a real manipulator, and he has Michael completely snowed. He said Michael actually thinks it’s cute that he’s possessive. He thinks it means he loves him.”

“Oh God… Where did he meet this guy?”

“I don’t know, but it should be an interesting dinner. Ted and David are coming and you can imagine how that will go over, and Emmett’s thinking about inviting Josh. He just met him a few days ago, but he feels a real connection with him.”

“Well, good for Em, he deserves someone in his life. Michael, he’s never had good judgment. I can’t wait to meet this loser.”

“I just hope he doesn’t tell him about the schoolboy crush he has on you. I don’t want you in any danger.”

“Sunshine, don’t you think I can take care of myself?”

“I’m just worried about you.”

“You do remember your pink posse days, right?”

“Yes. Okay. I guess you can take care of yourself.”

After dinner, and more cake and ice cream, Gus is one sticky mess. Brian runs him a bath adding Mr. Bubbles and his bath toys. He happily plays until his skin is pruned and the water is cold. Then he snuggles down between Brian and Justin in bed to watch ‘The Little Mermaid’. Brian can’t believe that Gus can watch the same movie practically every day and still love it. It was just a matter of time before Brian realizes that all his boys were asleep. He carries Gus to bed, and Jamie to his crib. Justin naturally snuggles up into Brian’s arms, as he switches from the DVD to CNN to watch the news.

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The next morning Brian finds himself knocking on his mother’s front door. She is surprised to see him and even more surprised when he asks to take her out to breakfast. They find themselves sitting in a nice restaurant sipping coffee, waiting for their omelets to arrive.

“Justin mentioned that you stopped by yesterday and wanted to talk.”

“He’s such a nice young man.”

“Yes, he is.”
“You two seem so happy together.”

“Yes, we are.”

“He’s good for you Brian, and he really is in love with you.”

“Yes, he is.”

“I’m happy for you, for the both of you.”

“Thank you, and thank you for the chocolate-chocolate-chip cake. That was very thoughtful of you. You know it’s my favorite.”

“I’m glad you enjoyed it, Brian.”

“Mom… What’s this all about?”

“Justin didn’t mention it?”

“He simply said that you wanted to talk.”

“Oh… I had hoped he might have mentioned… The thing is… I’m worried about your nephews…”

“What about the demon spawn?”

“Brian, please… I was hoping that you might be able to let go of the past. I can see that we’re both trying here. I’d really like for all of us to be closer. Family’s important, you know.”

“Mom?”

“Brian, I know I’ve made mistakes in the past. I know I wasn’t there for you when you were younger but I’m trying to change. Father Thom says the first step is acknowledging your mistakes, and asking for forgiveness.”

Brian looks directly at his mother. As hard as it is for him to be understanding, and let go of his resentment, he knows that’s what is necessary for them to be able to move forward. Now that he’s a father, he knows carrying around all this bitterness isn’t healthy and maybe it is time to truly make amends.

“Brian… I want you to know that I’ve stopped drinking. I’ve joined Alcoholics Anonymous, and I haven’t had a drink in over a month. I know that isn’t long in the scheme of things, but for me it’s a lifetime.”

As hard as it is for Brian to acknowledge it, he is proud of his mother, and prays that she’ll be strong enough to stay sober.

“Well, that’s a start. I hope you’re strong enough to stick with it.”

Brian can’t help thinking back to a year ago, when he found out he was pregnant. He realized that he had to quit drinking, and drugging, and basically change his lifestyle, especially if he was going to be a single father, or so he thought at the time. It was one of the hardest things he’s ever had to do, and now he rarely drinks. He never does drugs and he knows Justin will skin him alive if he smokes. And men, yes he could kiss his little blond beauty good-bye if he cats around these days.

Brian and his mother continued their conversation over breakfast, revealing more about themselves
to one another than they had ever done before. Brian listened patiently as she mentioned Claire’s pending divorce, and how hard she is working to keep her family together. Brian contemplates her suggestion about getting to know his nephews better, and the possibility of coaching their soccer team. He doesn’t make any promises, but he agrees to consider it.

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Emmett had tried on almost every shirt in his closet, finally settling on the first one he started with. Deb was there listening to him fret over every detail, knowing how nervous he was about his first date with Joshua. She was having a hard time keeping up with hanging his rejects back in the closet as he primped in the mirror. Now he wasn’t sure about his pants, as he started to toss pair after pair out of the drawer onto the floor.

“Oh, for crying out loud, Em, you look great. Stop all his fussing and go brush your teeth.”

“My teeth? My teeth. Oh my God, do I have something between my teeth?”

“No, no for Christ sake, you look great. Now just relax. Everything is going to be fine.”

Just then the doorbell rang, and Debbie trotted down the stairs to answer it. She knows that Carl is watching the game, and nothing would move him, short of a fire. She smiles when she sees Josh. Emmett wasn’t kidding; he sure is hot.

“Please come in. Emmett will be right down.”

Josh looks at Debbie and wonders if Emmett still lives with his mom. Then Carl turns to look at him, to give him the once over. He immediately stands up, recognizing officer Navarro. “Joshua, what a surprise to see you here.”

“Inspector Horvath, it’s nice to see you, sir.”

Emmett was coming down the stairs and saw the exchange between the two of them.

“You two know one another?”

Emmett hoped that Josh wasn’t some criminal that Carl had arrested. He wasn’t sure what was going on.

“Oh yes, Office Navarro and I work together down at the precinct.”

“Oh my, now I really do feel safe with you here to protect me.”

Josh smiled, glad that Emmett didn’t seem to have a problem with his occupation. He helped Emmett on with his leather jacket, and said that he had made a reservation at Pappagano’s. Emmett couldn’t help feeling special. No one had ever taken him some place so fancy.

Debbie says, “Now you boys have a good time and enjoy the evening.”

Emmett had heard about Pappagano’s but he had no idea just how classy it was. Josh was a total gentleman, even pulling his chair out for him when he sat down. Emmett was a little taken aback when he realized that the menu didn’t have any prices on it, unsure what he should order. Josh grinned, then asked if he’d like him to order for him. Em couldn’t help thinking it was totally romantic.

They sat by candlelight sipping a glass of merlot. Em is surprised how at ease Josh is in a place
like this, and even more surprised that the wait staff know him by name. He knew that police officers didn’t make a lot of money, and he couldn’t help worrying about how expensive everything was.

“Emmett, stop worrying. I promise you won’t have to wash dishes.”

“I’m sorry. It’s just that this place is so elegant and, well… I don’t know.”

“Emmett, I have a little secret. I joined the police academy because I wanted to make a difference. I guess I’m a bit of a dreamer. I like to think I can change the world. You see, my older brother Tony… Well, he got mixed up with some shady characters, and one night he just didn’t come home. It was over two years before his body was found, and it looked like the work of a professional. The police think he overheard something, and someone put a hit out on him.”

“Oh my God, I’m so sorry.”

“Thank you. But I’m okay now. It was over ten years ago. I became a policeman because I wanted to be a detective. I wanted to solve murders. I’m hoping to make sergeant soon. I work under Inspector Horvath and he’s one hell of a detective. I’ve learned so much from him, and he’s so well respected, his reputation precedes him.”

“Carl really is a great man, and a good friend. I know it seems a little strange, but Debbie is like a mother to our little dysfunctional family. When she met Carl, and fell in love with him, he just became part of the family.”

“That’s great. I’m glad you’re so comfortable with being around policemen. You know a lot of guys just aren’t interested when they find out what I do for a living.”

“Really, I find it to be a bit of a turn on… Promise me we can try out your handcuffs sometime.”

Josh burst out laughing; he loves Emmett’s sense of humor. They had a wonderful dinner and learned quite a lot about each other. Emmett was most surprised to learn that Josh came from money, old money. His grandfather made a killing in the steel industry back in the day and his family has been set for life ever since. But he’s not arrogant, or snobbish. He’s truly humble and prefers that people don’t know too much about his inheritance. He wants to be judged by his accomplishments, and not his background.

After dinner they went to the ice rink. Josh is an expert skater and Emmett, well, Emmett grew up in the south, so not too many skating rinks to speak of. Josh was a wonderful and patient teacher and after an hour or so Emmett really started to get the hang of it. It really was very exhilarating, so graceful, almost like they were floating on the ice.

It had been a long time since Emmett had tried something new and this was something he could really enjoy doing. Josh explained that he liked to skate to unwind from the stress of his job, and it took him back to his childhood when he and his brother would skate on the pond. It was obvious how much he loved and missed his brother.

Afterwards they went back to Josh’s place. He has a modest two-story brick house on the Monongahela River. Emmett loves it. It was built in the forties and has character and charm with all its architectural details. Josh mentions that out front in the spring the landscaping is beautiful; the previous owner was quite a gardener. There is a red climbing rose covering the white picket fence, with a large hedge of lilac bushes running across the side yard, and wisteria growing on the pergola arching over the front porch. Out back there is a big multi-level deck facing the river and a winding fieldstone walkway down to the river. Josh mentioned that he has a couple of boats: a
canoe and a speedboat.

Emmett can’t help thinking about having picnics and barbeques once the weather permits. He is sure he’s met the man of his dreams and only prays that Joshua is feeling the same way. He knew it was early in their relationship to subject him to all of his crazy family, but he couldn’t help the words as they escaped his mouth, asking him to come to Sunday night dinner. After all why should Michael bask in all the glory of having a new love? Besides, maybe everyone would be able to see through Keith’s manipulations and see his true self.

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Sunday afternoon Debbie is rushing around, organizing everything, so it’s all perfect when Michael and Keith arrive. Emmett is dusting all the furniture, and knick-knacks covering what seems like every surface in the living room. Carl’s busy opening the extra leaves in the table, and gathering up the extra chairs from around the house, while Hunter is emptying all the trash cans and sweeping off the front porch.

Debbie is excited about meeting Keith. Michael’s been talking, practically bragging about his new boyfriend all week. He seems to think Keith’s the one, he’s never been happier. Sure he thought he loved Ben, but what he feels for Keith is so much stronger than that. Debbie just hopes Keith feels the same way, she hopes that this isn’t just another unrealistic infatuation on Michael’s part. She’d hate to think that Michael just simply transferred his fixation of Brian onto Keith.

The girls are the first to arrive, and Debbie can’t help making a fuss over holding JR. She acts like she hasn’t seen her in months, while it’s actually only been days. They get her all set up in her playpen so she’s can’t escape. She’s at that age where she’s getting into everything once your back is turned. Lindsay complains that she hasn’t seen Gus all week, that Justin insisted he stay with them. It’s obvious she’s still ticked off about having joint custody, making snide remarks, questioning if he’s actually capable of taking care of an infant, let alone two children.

Mel chides her, saying that it probably isn’t any harder for Brian and Justin than it is for her and Lindsay to care for two children. She starts to object when they hear someone else knocking on the door. She answers it, being closest. Besides she wants to see Gus as soon as possible. She’s surprised when she sees Josh, not having any idea who he is. Emmett rushes over and hugs him, introducing him to the girls. Both of them are surprised, it’s been a while since Em has had someone special in his life.

Josh comes over and gives Debbie a bouquet of mixed flowers, thanking her for allowing him to join them for dinner. She acts like she hasn’t seen her in months, while it’s actually only been days. They get her all set up in her playpen so she’s can’t escape. She’s at that age where she’s getting into everything once your back is turned. Lindsay complains that she hasn’t seen Gus all week, that Justin insisted he stay with them. It’s obvious she’s still ticked off about having joint custody, making snide remarks, questioning if he’s actually capable of taking care of an infant, let alone two children.

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Josh comes over and gives Debbie a bouquet of mixed flowers, thanking her for allowing him to join them for dinner. She’s all smiles as she gives him a big bear hug telling him that it’s nonsense, he’s one of the family now. Next to arrive is Ted and David. Debbie welcomes them with open arms, remarking about how it’s been years since she’s seem him. David gives her a hug, and says he hopes it’s alright that he brought his son Hank, who’s just a year younger than Hunter.

No sooner have they all greeted each other than Michael and Keith come barging in the door. It’s obvious that they’re in the middle of some sort of snit; everyone can feel the tension in the air. To make matters worse Keith glares at Emmett, and turns to Michael asking, “What’s he doing here?”

You can hear the accusation in his comment that he thinks Emmett is interested in dating Michael. Michael notices David and Hank, and becomes very uncomfortable having them there. He pulls his mother into the kitchen questioning why she invited them. Didn’t she understand how he felt about Ted and David dating? He feels like she’s rubbing his face in it.

“Now, Michael, you told me that you were madly in love with Keith. So I just assumed that you were over David. Besides, Ted’s one of my lost boys and he’s always welcome in my home.”
It’s clear to Keith that there’s something upsetting Michael and he plans to find out what. To break the tension, Carl offers everyone a drink; the girls have wine while the boys all have beer. Michael goes over and picks up JR, swings her around, making her laugh. “Here, my little Honey-Bun! Daddy’s missed you so much.”

Keith’s expression changes dramatically. He had no idea that Michael had a kid and he’s not happy about it. He hates children, and he hates the idea of sharing Michael with anyone else. It’s bad enough that Michael committed them to coming to this *family dinner*; this is the last place he wants to be. He made it clear on the way over that this is the last *family dinner* they’ll be attending. Michael is not to spend time with anyone else when he’s not at work.

Everyone’s doing their best to make small talk, ignoring the elephant in the room. Deb’s already disappointed; she had such high hopes for tonight, and it seems like everyone is having trouble with someone here. Finally they hear Brian pull up and they’re grateful for the distraction, knowing that when the man is in the room he’s always the center of attention. Brian holds the door as Gus comes barreling in, running up to his mommies, already telling them all about his week with his daddies.

Justin’s holding Jamie, and Brian’s loaded down with all the baby paraphernalia. Soon Debbie once again is smothering the baby with kisses, saying how much she misses him. She scolds Brian for never bringing him into the diner to see her anymore, even though he was just there the day before yesterday when Justin and the kids met Brian for lunch.

Michael can’t help getting that misty eyed look, thinking that it should be him and Brian with their perfect little family. The look isn’t lost on Keith as his blood starts to boil, and of course he can’t believe there’s more rotten children under foot. God, he can’t wait to get out of here, and Michael has a lot of explaining to do once they get home.

Once all the introductions are made, Justin grins at Emmett, seeing how happy he is with Josh. It’s also been years since him and Brian have seen David, and for all the sparring they did in the old days, Brian’s actually happy for Ted. Hunter and Hank go up to his room to check it out, and mostly get away from the tension between all the grown-ups.

While no one is looking, Keith pulls Michael into the bathroom, questioning just what the hell is going on. He still has a hold of Michael’s arm, twisting it behind his back, making Michael beg for him to stop. Michael’s sure if he twisted it just a little more his bone just might pop. Keith is sure that practically every male in the living room, short of Carl, is interested in bedding Michael. The only thing that breaks them apart is Debbie calling for Michael; she wants him to run to the store. She forgot to get ice cream for the cake she baked.

Keith pours on the charm saying that they’d love to, asking sweetly if there’s anything else she needs. Possibly more wine for dinner? She thinks Keith is just a sweetheart, so polite and gracious. She agrees Michael just might have found the perfect man for him, he seems so attentive. Of course, once they get out of the car at the grocery store Keith has Michael right up against the car, his face just inches from Michael’s, threatening him with bodily harm if he doesn’t come clean about him and Em, him and David and him and Brian.

Michael just stammers, “Nothing, there’s nothing going on.”

Keith doesn’t believe it for a minute as he presses his arm against his windpipe, cutting off his breathing.

“There better not be! We’ll continue this when we get home and we will be leaving right after dinner. I’ve already had too much *family time*! Do I make myself clear?”
Michael’s still in denial, thinking to himself that it’s his fault he didn’t know who was coming to dinner. He’s still telling himself it’s cute that Keith gets jealous so easily. He just can’t see that this is the start of a very abusive relationship.

Once they all settle down to dinner everything seems to be going smoothly. Josh and David are made to feel welcome, the conversation steering towards occupations. David talks about his chiropractic practice, and Ted mentions he works for Brian, an advertising genius. Debbie asks Keith what he does for a living, and he temporarily pauses, thinking, then says that he’s in security. Josh glances at Carl, and then Carl asks who he works for. Defensively Keith says he freelances. Carl and Josh both look at each other questioningly.

Michael hates that Keith is being scrutinized, so he asks Josh what he does for a living. Josh knows there something up with Keith, so he gives his standard response that he works in construction. That certainly explains his well-built pecs and abs, which are blatantly seen as his shirt hugs his body. Michael looks a little confused. He knows that Keith is not a security guard, but has no idea what Keith does for a living. It was obvious that he was lying, and Michael can’t figure out why.

Trying as hard as they can to get along, everyone at the table keeps sizing up each other. Even though the conversation is polite, the underlying tension could be cut with a knife. Surprisingly, after dinner, Justin sits with the girls as Lindsay holds Jamie, bouncing him on her lap as they talk about how fast he’s growing, and how JR is headed right into the terrible twos.

Melanie chuckles and says, “You can laugh now, but just wait. Jamie will be there before you know it.”

Josh and Carl weren’t the only ones giving Keith the third degree. Brian senses that something is really off with his and Michael’s relationship. First of all, Michael’s quiet, very quiet, especially for Michael. At most family dinners by now, Michael usually has put his foot in his mouth, acting like a fourteen year old. Everything just seems too good to be true. Of course Debbie thinks he’s a dream come true, and Lindsay’s right there with her. Mel, on the other hand, thinks she recognizes him from court, but she can’t put her finger on it.

Lindsay talks about the new exhibit at the gallery that’s coming up, and asks Justin if he’s christened his new studio. Of course he blushes fifty shades of red, and Brian states they sure did.

“Brian, you know that’s not what I meant!”

Michael is irritated, just the mention of Brian and Justin making love burns him deeply. So he decides it’s time to announce that he and Keith have decided to move in together. Emmett can’t help being shocked. “Michael, you’ve only been dating a week!”

“Em’s right, Michael. This seems a little fast. Not that I don’t think Keith is a wonderful and charming man, but maybe you should wait a bit.”

“Ma! I’m thirty-four years old. I don’t need your permission!”

Mel steps out back to smoke a cigarette, Ted and Brian follow. They mention that they know they’ve met this guy before, but where? Mel agrees she’s seen him before. She has a feeling that he works in security alright, but more like as a thug.

That’s when the light goes off… Of course, it was Christmas day and Michael was being shaken down for his gambling debts. Some guy who worked for Big Jake drove them, blindfolded, to the payoff location and Keith was the guy who collected the debt.
Ted says, “Shit! He really is a thug!”

Mel is flabbergasted. “My God! How could Michael get caught up with some loan shark type?”

“Oh God!” Brian cried, “He better not be gambling again! Christ, I’ll kill him…”

“I don’t want that thug anywhere near my daughter!”

“Or your son, right?”

“Yes, yes, of course, Brian. That goes without saying.”

“We have to tell someone! We have to tell Carl!”

“Ted’s right. We have to tell Carl, maybe he can talk some sense into Michael. Lord knows he’s so mad at me right now, he’d never believe anything I say.”

Everyone else has now moved to the living room, drinking wine, the conversation now revolving around the kids. Keith is getting antsy as he hates all this ‘make nice’ family time, and he hates kids even more. Of course Michael is all starry eyed, playing with JR on the floor, realizing he isn’t spending enough time with his daughter. No one seems to notice when Ted comes in and Carl and Josh disappear back outside with him. Minutes later Em joins them.

At some point David looks up and all the men have somehow disappeared, except for Michael, Keith, Justin and him. He wants to investigate what’s going on but if he were to leave just now it would be obvious that something was happening. So David quietly plays cards with Hank and Hunter, as he eyes the back door, wondering if this evening could get any stranger.

It’s not lost on Hunter that everyone’s out back, and even though he hasn’t said anything, he knows all too well who Keith really is. Back in his hustler days, it wasn’t unusual for a group of boys to be taken out to Big Jack’s for the high rollers to have their way with them. Usually it involved rough sex, and multiple partners. They were paid well, but he only went once. That was more than enough; he couldn’t work the streets after that for almost two weeks, he was so banged up.

Keith’s more than ready to leave, and Michael can’t seem to take a hint. Finally Keith stands up, announcing that he has to work early the next morning, and he and Michael have to leave. Michael looks at him, a little startled with a questioning look in his eye; he really is slow on the uptake. He wanted to protest, he wants to stay and play with his daughter. But he finally sees the glint of anger in Keith’s eye, so he hugs his mom good-bye and says good night.

TBC…
Chapter Summary

The boys decide it’s time to make a commitment, let the games begin…

Chapter Twenty ~ Commitments

“Oh my God! Oh my God! Jamie, you just rolled over. I can’t believe you just did that all by yourself.”

Justin is totally enthralled by his son. Jamie woke up and heard Justin singing and he actually turned over to see him. It seems that Jamie is just as enthralled with Justin as Justin is with him. Now Jamie’s laying on his side sticking his tongue out at Justin. Of course being the proud papa that he is, he quickly takes a picture on his phone and sends it to Brian.

Brian’s in the middle of a meeting listening to Ted drone on about the quarterly projections. His phone vibrates so he checks the caller ID and sees that it’s from Justin, so he opens up the pic of his adorable son. Sometimes his misses staying home all day with him, being able to see all the changes and nuances in his development. He’s lost in his thoughts when Ted’s voice finally penetrates his consciousness.

“Brian? Brian? Are you even listening to me?”

“I’m sorry, Ted. I needed to take this text that Justin sent me. Go on, you have my full attention now.”

Cynthia’s sitting next to Brian, so she looks over his shoulder. Then she lets out a little squeal at seeing how adorable Jamie is. Ted just looks at the two of them and finally says.

“Do you two want to share with the class?”

Cynthia gushes, “Oh Ted, he’s so cute. You have to see the pic just Justin sent of Jamie.”

Thankfully it’s just the three of them in the financial review meeting. Nobody would believe that the great Brian Kinney would be smiling so broadly, looking at baby photos, but of course it’s
different when it’s your baby.

“He is one cute kid, Bri. Just wait until there’s two of them running around.”

“Yeah, everyone keeps saying that, but Justin and I can’t wait. He loves being a stay-at-home dad, and to tell you the truth, I’m a little jealous.”

“You two are great parents, Brian. You should be proud. Who would have ever thought?”

“Life’s a funny thing. Just when you least expect it, everything changes and you find out that you wouldn’t want it any other way.”

“I’m happy for you, Brian. You deserve some happiness in your life. I’m so glad you and Justin finally got on the same page.”

“Thanks. Now let’s get back to all your spreadsheets and financial reports so we can wind this up, and I can go home for lunch.”

Lindsay’s getting Gus and JR ready to be dropped off at daycare. Gus keeps telling Lindsay how much he loved staying with his fathers last week. How him and Justin painted pictures, baked cookies and watched the Little Mermaid DVD over and over. Lindsay’s getting a little irritated with all this happy talk about how much Gus loves spending his days with Justin. She can’t help being a little jealous that Justin can stay home all day, while she has to go to work. Gus’s enthusiasm is a bit overwhelming, and instead of hearing what a great time he had, she only hears that she’s not there for him the way Justin is, and somehow she’s failing as a good mother.

The truth is by the time her and Mel get home from work the kids are a handful, often snapping at them or each other. They’re so exhausted that just getting them dinner and a bath wears them out. And there’s no time left for them to be a couple, to be romantic. As much as she hates to admit it, she never would have been able to raise Jamie. She wouldn’t have the time or energy to be there for him. She hardly has time as it is now, and this just makes her even more envious of Justin and his life.

By the time she’s finally at work, she’s already exhausted and wonders how she’s going to be cheerful enough to sell paintings and sculptures to the few patrons who happen to come into the gallery. She knows that the gallery isn’t making much money, and Sidney is struggling to make ends meet. She tries to looks busy when she notices him looking her way. But the truth is she hates having to be the one who vacuums and dusts, cleaning everything, making sure the gallery is spotless.

She used to be the one directing where the paintings should be hung, and now she’s the one having to move and rehang everything. Sidney offered her the extra duties, letting her know he would have to cut back on her hours otherwise. So she accepted, and the maintenance man was let go. As much as she’s resentful about having to do the menial tasks around the gallery, the last thing she wants is for Mel to find out that Sidney will soon be bankrupt if things don’t pick up.

Ideally she’d like to be a stay-at-home mom, they never figured that raising two children would be so expensive. Although Brian more than helps out supporting Gus and Jenny Rebecca, Michael hasn’t supported JR since she was born, and Mel refuses to allow her to ask Brian for more money. Even before they had kids, Mel was always chiding her about her frivolous spending, but she’s never felt she had to give up all those little extras.
Raising two children was now putting a burden on their bank account, and Mel actually suggested that she look for a more lucrative job. Working at the gallery made her feel like she was still part of the art world, and gave her a prestigious title, but the pay was minimal, and there was no chance for promotion. Of course she was in total denial about that and her wasteful spending. She felt she deserved to live the same lifestyle as her mother, even though her father was a CEO of a large corporation.

Sidney asks to talk with her. She’s nervous as she can read him and knows that something is wrong.

“Lindsay, I appreciate that you’ve taken on more duties this last month, but we both know your heart isn’t in it. The gallery is often still dusty, and the floors need to be vacuumed daily. My wife has been coming in some evenings to help out, and as hard as it is, I’m afraid I’m going to have to let you go.”

“No, please, Sidney. I promise I’ll be more attentive. I’ve been under some stress at home, and I really need this job.”

“Lindsay, I told you when we talked about this last month that it might come to this. I suggested that you start looking for another position. I’m sorry but I just can’t afford to keep you on. I can run the gallery myself with how few buyers we’ve had the last six months.”

Lindsay’s in shock, she just didn’t believe she’d ever be fired. She never even looked for another job as finding a position in a gallery is difficult. She feels like crying, and she can only imagine Mel’s reaction to the news. Especially since she asked her to look for something else months ago. Her response to Mel was that she couldn’t leave Sidney. He needed her, and he couldn’t run the gallery without her.

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Michael was tired as he had worked a double shift at the bakery and all he wanted was to take a nap. But as much as he tried to ignore his cell phone and just get some sleep, whoever was calling was persistent. He finally answers it and is met with a very angry Keith.

“Don’t you ever ignore my phone calls again! I want you to answer your phone by the third ring from now on. I will not be ignored! Is that understood?”

“I’m sorry, baby. I’m just so tired from work. Please forgive me. It won’t happen again.”

“See to it that it doesn’t!”

“So what was so important anyways?”

“What? Do I need a reason to be checking up on you?”

“No. No, of course not. It’s just that you made it seem so important.”

“It is always important that you’re available to me at all times.”

“Alright, okay… I promise…”

“That’s better. Now I’ll be by in a little while and we can pack up your things. I think it’s best that you move into my place immediately. That way I’ll always know where you are.”

“Okay? But don’t you think maybe my mom might be right. Maybe it’s a little too soon?”
“Are you questioning me?”

“No, no, never. I just… I don’t know.”

“Michael, I will not allow you to question my decisions. What I say goes! Is that understood?”

“Yes, yes, of course. I can’t wait for us to be together all the time.”

“That’s better. I plan on keeping close tabs on you from now on, and you’re to ask before you go out. I don’t want to catch you hanging around with those so-called friends without my permission. Do I make myself clear?”

“Yes, of course. I love that you’re so protective of me, you must really love me.”

“I’m glad we understand each other. Now don’t disappointment me.”

Michael hangs up the phone and lies down for a little shut-eye, but he can’t sleep, he’s too excited about moving in with Keith. Things are really turning around for him. He’s finally found someone that really cares about him and what he’s up to. A huge smile spreads across his face as he daydreams about his new life with Keith.

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It’s only lunch-time, so Lindsay decides to go to the diner and get something to eat. Deb’s running around taking orders and serving the pink-plate special to all the guys. She wonders where Michael is as he usually stops by for lunch. When she finally gets a breather, she sits down across from Lindsay noticing that she’s reading the want ads.

“Are you looking for a second job?”

“Oh, hi Deb. I was just checking to see what was out there.”

She looks up at Deb with tears in her eyes, finally confiding in her that she’s lost her job and she’s afraid to tell Melanie about it.

“Lindsay, this isn’t your fault. The economy is bad everywhere. It’s a wonder you weren’t let go sooner. Besides, I’m sure Mel will understand.”

“I don’t know, maybe you’re right. I just feel so… so worthless, my job was everything. It made me feel special, like I was someone. Now I just feel lost.”

“Nonsense! Stop feeling sorry for yourself and make a new start. Look, Michael did it and now he has a new career. I’m so proud of him. He’s pulled his life together after everything he’s been through. He’s finally happy, and Keith is so nice, and so good for him.”

She was feeling a little better after talking with Deb. Maybe Deb’s right, maybe it’s time for a new start. Teaching really isn’t her thing. Sure she taught before, but it’s so seasonal. Right now it’s the middle of the semester so no possibilities of teaching even if she wanted to. She orders a big salad and iced tea as she reads through the want ads, although she’ll probably have better luck looking online. Most jobs these days were posted on the internet.

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“Brian, you’re home for lunch!”

“Yeah, my lunch meeting was canceled at the last minute, so I decided I’d come see my favorite
boys.”

Justin reaches up to give Brian a kiss. He feels Brian lift him off the floor, and kisses him passionately. Jamie lets out a little squeal to let Brian know much he missed him.

“Hey there, Sonny Boy. I didn’t forget about you.”

Brian reaches down and picks him up, cradling him in his arms, as he kisses him on the top of his head. Justin smells the take-out Brian set on the counter and starts unpacking the Thai food, as his stomach starts rumbling.

“Oh God, Brian, this smells so good. I’m starving.”

“Of course you are. You’re always starving.”

“I’m eating for two now, and I need my strength.”

Brian sees Jamie’s bottle ready by the stove, so he grabs it and sits down with him, giving him his bottle. Justin sets the table and brings over the plates he’s fixed, loaded with sesame noodles, peanut chicken, curry beef and the cucumber salad Brian likes so much.

“I talked with Maria and she’ll be back on Monday. She needed time to get settled in after being in Florida for the last couple of months. She couldn’t stop thanking me for us letting her spend so much time with her family.”

“I’m glad she spent some time away, she deserved it after taking care of me. She really was a godsend those last few months of my pregnancy, and after Jamie was born.”

“Yeah, she misses Jamie. She can’t wait to get back here and see us. She’s going to love the loft now that we’ve remodeled. And she’ll be able to watch Jamie while I concentrate on my painting.”

“Have you given any thought to our wedding and when you might want to get married?”

“Well… From everything my mom and Deb have said, maybe it would be best if we did it before the new baby comes. They keep telling me how much work two babies are going to be. But you’ll take some time off again when he’s born. Right?”

“He’s? Is there something you haven’t told me?”

“No, no, I just have a feeling it’s a boy. I wonder if we’ll be able to tell during my next ultrasound, it’s only two weeks away.”

“Maybe. I don’t remember when they told me it was a boy.”

“So you knew?”

“Yeah, but I didn’t tell anyone. Besides everyone was acting so strange, and expecting me to give the baby up. I still can’t believe they thought that I would ever consider that.”

“I really wish you had told me. I missed out on so much.”

“I know, Sunshine, and I’m sorry. I was wrong to not have told you what was going on. I just didn’t want you to lose out on your big opportunity of making the movie with Brett.”

“I know, and I forgive you. It’s just… I really wish I had been here with you. I can’t imagine doing this without you.”
“And you won’t have to. I’ll be by your side the whole time. So there’s nothing to worry about.”

“Do you really have to go back to work this afternoon?”

“Someone has to bring home the bacon.”

“Umm, bacon… That sounds good.”

“How can you even think about more food? I’m so stuffed after eating all that Thai food?”

“I know, but bacon. I love bacon.”

“Well, I don’t have any bacon. But I could put Jamie in his crib and you can play with my big kielbasa!”

Justin rolls his eyes, but he loves it when Brian is so corny.

“Ever the romantic.”

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Josh is counting down the hours until his shift is over. He can’t wait to meet up with Emmett; they’re having a drink at Woody’s with Ted and David. He’s bored with sitting in his car, staking out the abandoned building across the street. It’s rumored to be used as a drug distribution center and he’s trying to snap a few photos of who’s coming and going. So far it’s just small-time dealers, but his interest is piqued when he sees Keith enter the building, carrying one of those silver briefcases. He can’t help thinking it’s so clichéd, just like in the movies.

He snaps a few more photos, and then zooms in to get a close-up of Keith. He’s concerned for Michael, even if he doesn’t really know him. He knows how much he means to Emmett and Carl. He can’t help having a bad feeling about the direction of Michael and Keith’s relationship. He doubts that Michael will listen to anything he has to say, at least not without proof of Keith’s wrongdoing.

He’d like nothing better than to go in there and bust Keith. But he’s been ordered to just observe, and make note of the activities taking place. Carl is much more interested in catching the big fish, and let’s face it, Keith is nothing more than a bag man for his boss Big Jack. Even though he hasn’t talked with Carl about it, he knows that Michael is gambling again. He can’t really mention it, because Emmett told him about it in confidence. So he’ll just have to wait until Carl brings it up, or they arrest Keith.

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David is just finishing up at the office when Hank calls; he knows that he and Emmett have a date tonight. Hank and Hunter seemed to have hit it off the other night at dinner, and Hunter wants him to come over tonight and hang out. David’s fine with that, he wants Hank to start making friends back here in Pittsburgh, now that they’ve moved back and he has full custody. It seems that the ex is too busy dating to have time to raise a teenage son these days.

But David doesn’t mind. He loves being able to rebuild his relationship with his son, having spent so much time apart when they lived so far away from one another. David really is a good parent. He remembers how strict his parents were with him, always pushing him to be the best. He now knows that all that really matters is being honest with him, and being there for him when he is needed.
Even though he’s no longer with Michael, it seems that he’s inherited Deb as a mother-in-law anyways. But he knows that Deb has his best interest at heart, and she’ll look out for Hank just like he was her own son. Nothing ever gets past Deb, she’s more like the police than Carl. And she makes her opinion known, whether you like it or not, so he’s sure Hank is in good hands even when he’s not around.

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Lindsay is making Mel’s favorite dinner, trying to set the mood for when she has to tell her the inevitable. Mel’s tired and cranky when she comes in, having spent the afternoon in court and losing her case to an unseasoned DA. She can’t believe that know-it-all, sarcastic prosecutor actually won. She was so sure the judge would find there wasn’t enough evidence against her client and let him go.

But he was picked out of a lineup, and he fit the description of the guy holding up the liquor store. He swore to Melanie that he wasn’t there, that he didn’t do it. But after listening to the case against him she wasn’t so sure anymore. But she still hated losing, it wouldn’t bode well back at the office. She needed as many acquittals as possible to prove that she deserved a raise, and even a promotion. Now it looked like that wouldn’t happen anytime soon.

So instead of being happy about Lindsay making Beef Tips in Burgundy Sauce, with asparagus and double chocolate cake for dessert, she snapped at her, complaining that they couldn’t afford to eat Sunday dinner in the middle of the week. She filled her wine glass to the rim from the bottle of burgundy on the table and said she had work to do in her office. Lindsay watched her walk out of the kitchen, wondering what to do to try and make things better, worrying even more about the news she had to share.

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Keith was instructing Michael as to where he should put all his things as he unpacked. It was obvious that unlike when he moved in with David, and could keep some of his toys out for display, Keith quickly rejected that idea. He told Michael to grow up, and pack his toys away, or even better yet, get rid of them, saying they were tacky and it was childish for a grown man to collect children’s toys. He showed his disgust by saying he hoped that Michael didn’t actually play with them.

Michael quietly packed them back up, the few remaining toys he still had after losing most of them when Brian closed his comic book shop. For the first time he felt hurt that Keith was being overly brutal talking to him the way he did. He didn’t understand why Keith was being so mean, and now he really was questioning his relationship with Keith. Maybe his mother was right, maybe they were moving too fast. But he wanted to show Brian that he had someone special in his life. He wanted Brian to think twice about how he had rejected the idea of them being together.

A little while later after all of Michael’s doubts had vanished, he found himself tied up on Keith’s bed. He was getting excited as Keith tied his wrists and ankles just a little too tight. There wasn’t much give for movement as he struggled against the knots.

“Ouch! That hurts!”

“Did I give you permission to talk?”

“Keith, really. I think the ropes are tied too tight.”

“You want me to punish you, don’t you? Do not speak again without my permission.”
Keith proceeded to crack his whip a little too forcefully as the ends of the leather slashed across Michael’s back, and buttocks. Michael took a deep breath, afraid to make any noise. He remembered the one time Ben tied him up and it had been a total turn-on, but this, this was damn scary. He silently prays that it will be over soon, trying to ignore the sting from the welts that are forming across his backside.

“Promise me, Michael, that you will never look at another man. That you will never daydream about another man. Promise me that you will devote yourself to me and all my desires. Never questioning my demands, and never divulging our secrets.”

“I promise.”

“Good… Understand that I will not tolerate disobedience. You will always do as I say. If I find out that you haven’t, I will have no choice but to inflict you with unimaginable pain. You belong to me now, heart, mind and soul…”

Michael’s head was swirling as he nodded in acknowledgment of Keith’s commands. He bites his tongue, as he repeatedly feels the ends of the whip striking his flesh. He is wishing that the torture would end and the pain would subside. But it continues for what feels like an eternity, until Michael has blacked out from the pain.

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Emmett’s running late to meet up with Josh, Ted and David; they meet regularly after work at Woody’s these days. It’s funny how things change. It used to be Brian, Michael, Ted and him getting together for a drink after work. But these days Brian likes to spend his evenings with Justin and Jamie. Who would have ever thought that Brian would enjoy being domestic, having dinner with his family and cuddling on the sofa, drinking wine?

And Michael. Who even knows what he’s up to these days? It seems like they never see him anymore. Even Deb has started to complain that he never comes to the diner for breakfast or lunch. She misses him, getting the daily rundown on his everyday life. But she’s sure that he’s too busy now that he and Keith are together. And as hard as it is for her to let him go, she knows that it’s the natural course of how his life should be.

As Emmett runs out the door he answers his phone. Justin is calling to ask him if he has time to stop by tomorrow. He wants to start planning their wedding, so they make it a date to go over all the details for their nuptials. Now Emmett can’t wait to tell the guys, he loves being the first one to know the current gossip around Liberty Avenue.

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Brian and Justin lie spread out across their king-size bed, sweat glistening on their skin as they catch their breath. He plays with Justin’s hair, loving the feel of his silky blond locks between his fingers.

“I thought about what you said, and I think you’re right. We should get married sooner, rather than later.”

“It makes sense. Besides I don’t want you stressing out over all the details and I’d prefer to be married before the new baby comes.”

“Oh, you want to make an honest man out of me…?”

“Something like that.”
“You sooo love me!”

“Brat!”

Brian reaches down and runs his hand across Justin’s back as he snuggles closer to him. Justin’s practically purring, loving the feel of Brian’s touch, never being able to get enough of him.

“You know I’m thinking it would be great to go someplace warm and sunny on our honeymoon.”

“That sounds great, Brian. But are we going to take Jamie with us? I don’t think I’m ready to be away from him just yet.”

“I had a feeling you’d feel that way. How about we have Maria come with us? She can have her own set of rooms next to ours and then you can see Jamie anytime you want and we’ll still have our privacy.”

“Yeah, that sounds good, and I’m sure she won’t mind getting away again.”

“I’ll call the travel agency tomorrow and start looking for some place special.”

“I asked Emmett to come by tomorrow as well, so we could start planning the wedding.”

“I’m sure you two won’t have any problem spending my money.”

“You know, it will have to be relatively soon. I really don’t want my little butterball showing… Well, not too much anyways.”

“Whatever you want, Sunshine. I’ll tell you what. You plan the wedding, and I’ll plan the honeymoon.”

“Does that mean you’re not going to tell me where we’re going?”

“I have to have some surprises for you now, don’t I?”

Justin crawls up Brian’s body and gives him a passionate kiss. Their erections caress each other and soon Brian finds Justin lowering himself down onto him again, until he’s completely engulfed in his tight channel. It’s a good thing Justin’s still wet and well lubed from their prior activity.

Their eyes lock on one another, as Justin slowly starts raising and lowering himself on Brian’s hard shaft. He loves the feel of Brian gliding against his snug walls, loves feeling the ripples as they build throughout his body. Being pregnant has only made his sex drive more intense. Sometimes when Jamie’s napping he can’t help thinking about Brian, and soon he finds himself horny and overcome with desire. He’s been known to put in one of their sex DVDs and work himself into oblivion.

Justin’s head leans back as he finds himself consumed with sensations. His thrusts increase and soon he’s slamming himself down hard on Brian’s beautiful head, as it pounds his prostate. He’s moaning a little too loudly, and Brian’s grateful they soundproofed the walls when they remodeled the loft. The last thing he wants is to have to rock Jamie back to sleep, after rocking Justin to sleep.

Soon that tingling sensation starts building in Brian’s groin. He feels Justin’s slick walls clamp down on him, pulling them both closer to their destination. Justin’s hand automatically encompasses his cock as he works himself to fruition. They both reach their climax together, as Justin shoots across his chest and Brian coats his ravine. It still drives Justin crazy as he’s filled with Brian’s warm spunk.
Justin’s panting as Brian reaches up, helping to lower him to his chest where they remain until they’ve both recovered from their intense love-making session. Justin loves falling asleep in Brian’s arms, still fully penetrated until Brian becomes flaccid. Only these days there’s no worry about losing the condom, which only intensifies their union being flesh on flesh.

Michael woke up late the next morning, his welts still stinging, and unable to sit comfortably without feeling extreme pain. He smells coffee brewing in the kitchen, and goes to get a cup. He finds a note from Keith saying he’ll be back soon, letting Michael know that he has called the bakery and told them he was sick. Michael is relieved that he doesn’t have to go to work, but he is also concerned about Keith returning so soon. He needs a little down time, a little time to himself.

He calls Brian at work but Cynthia informs him that Brian’s in the middle of a presentation and can’t be disturbed. He stands drinking his morning coffee, wishing that he could talk with Brian. He needs to confide in someone, needs to rationalize what he’s feeling. He hates the idea that he’s made a mistake, then he thinks he must be overreacting. After all, Keith loves him, otherwise he wouldn’t be so over protective. Right?

In his fantasies about him and Brian living happily ever after, he always daydreamed that Brian would be like this. Always wanting to know where he was, who he was with, and showing just a little jealousy when other guys looked at him. Yes, he must be overreacting; Keith wouldn’t act this way if he wasn’t in love. After all, actions speak louder than words. Just then he hears Keith’s key in the lock, he goes over to open the door for him. That’s when he realizes it’s a double dead-bolt, that he needs a key to open the door.

This should be setting off all kind of alarms in Michael’s head, but he’s too blind to see the implications of it. It doesn’t occur to him that he wouldn’t be able to leave if he wanted to, that he was a prisoner in his own home. Keith comes in and hugs Michael, asking him what he’s been up to this morning. Michael just shrugs, telling him not much of anything. Keith grabs a cup of coffee and starts to read the newspaper. A few minutes later he gets a message on his phone. He’s downloaded an app that monitors all of Michael’s phone calls, as well as a GPS app showing exactly where Michael is at all times.

“Who’d you call this morning?”

“Huh?”

Keith frowns at him, asking again, “I said, who-did-you-call-this-morning?”

“Oh. I just called Brian to see how he’s doing?”

“Brian? Why Brian? You think I didn’t notice the way you were looking at him on Sunday night? Are you sleeping with Brian!!! Don’t lie to me, Michael! I’ll know if you’re lying.”

“No. No, of course not. He’s my best friend.”

“I thought we went over this before, Michael? I’m your best friend now. Is that understood? I don’t want you talking to him without my permission.”

“But, we’re just friends. I swear, that’s all…”

Keith angrily gets up from the kitchen table and pushes Michael against the wall, wedging him between the stove and the fridge. Keith turns on the gas, lighting the burner, and then he holds Michael’s hand over the flame. Michael cries out in pain, begging Keith to stop. Finally he does.
Michael slides down the wall holding his arm, waiting for the pain to subside.

“Next time you think about calling one of your so-called friends, you’ll think twice and remember to ask permission first.”

“I will. I will, I promise.”

Michael remains paralyzed, sitting on the floor as Keith goes back to reading the paper like nothing happened. He occasionally glances over at Michael, hoping he’s learned his lesson.

“You know, Michael, it hurts me more than it does you, when you make me punish you like this. Now get up and fix me some breakfast. I’m hungry.”

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Justin’s been nauseous all morning, worse than usual. He’s lying on the sofa, with Jamie sleeping on his stomach. He called his mother a little while ago, and she said she’d be over to see him later this afternoon. So he’s surprised when he hears someone knocking on the loft door. He looks over to see Deb pulling the door open, carrying a batch of her homemade chicken soup.

“You’re mother called and mentioned that you’re not feeling well, so I made you some soup. It’s the best medicine. Besides you need to eat something to keep up your strength. Being pregnant isn’t for wusses, you know.”

She makes him a bowl and brings it over to the coffee table, taking Jamie from him as he sits up and tries to eat some of her famous soup. He’s hungry and it tastes really good, just what he needed. He thanks her for being so caring, and for bringing him some of his favorite sesame rolls he loves so much from the diner. It’s obvious that she needs someone to look after, now that Michael hasn’t been around much lately.

Justin’s grateful for the help. He’s getting exhausted more lately, and it seems that the change of seasons have his allergies kicking in, only making things worse. Deb goes to fix Jamie a bottle and notices all the cookies, cakes and pastries in the kitchen.

“Geez, you could open your own bakery with all the baked goods in here.”

“I can’t help it. My craving seems to get the best of me. I actually found a place on-line that will pick up and deliver you just about anything you want inside the city limits.”

“Well, it’s a good thing I brought some soup. When I leave here I’m going to go to the grocery store and get you some real food. You know it’s not healthy for the baby, if you eat all this sugar.”

Justin doesn’t even try and complain, although he thinks it a little strange since he just told her that they deliver anything he wants. But he knows she’s lonely, missing Michael and she needs to be needed. Of course he already has a list of things he wants, so he gives it to her, along with Brian’s credit card. He knows she can’t really afford to be buying their groceries.

He actually starts feeling better after eating lunch which is a good thing because Emmett should be there soon. So he starts daydreaming about the wedding, still in awe that it’s really happening. A huge sunshine smile spreads across his face as he envisions him and Brian exchanging vows.

TBC…
Chapter Summary

Lindsay seems desperate, almost on the verge of being delusional…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 6022
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: BigJ52

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Summary: Lindsay seems desperate, almost on the verge of being delusional…

Chapter Twenty-One ~ Think Before You Speak…

“Lindsay, what are you doing here? I told Cynthia that I didn’t have time to see you. I’m in meetings all day.”

“You’re always in meetings.”

“Busy! Busy!”

“I have to talk to you, Brian. It’s important.”

“Alright, five minutes.”

“Well… Ah…”

“Lindsay, spit it out! Time is money!”

“I just wanted you to know… To know you don’t have to do this.”

“I’m afraid I do. Leo’s flown in from Chicago for this meeting.”

“That’s not what I meant!”

“Oh???”

“I saw Deb, and she mentioned that Emmett was meeting with Justin to start planning the wedding.”

Brian raises his eyebrows, looking at her questioningly.

“Brian. I know Justin is pushing you to marry him. But you really should consider the
consequences.”

“Consequences?”

“You know what I mean… Mel mentioned that you’re changing your living will and life insurance. That you’ve already added Justin to all your bank accounts.”

“And this concerns you? How?”

“Brian, I’m one of your oldest friends. You need someone to look out for your best interests. Like I said, it’s no secret that Justin’s manipulated you into marrying him and having you change your life insurance, will and bank accounts.”

“Lindsay! I’m the one who asked Justin to marry me.”

“But only because he’s pregnant with your child.”

“Is that what you think? Well you’re wrong. I’ve asked Justin to marry me multiple times since he’s returned from California. The first time on Christmas Eve, then on Valentine’s Day, and again just a couple of days ago.”

“But have you really considered the implications? I know you. You’ll become restless and start to trick. Then you’ll feel like you have a noose around your neck. You’ll resent Justin for trapping you into this and eventually you’ll leave him.”

“I don’t think so… I’m very committed to our relationship. Thank you very much!”

“But have you considered that fact that he’ll eventually leave you to go to New York? It’s where he belongs. You’ll only be holding him back. You’ll be sorry when he takes half of everything you’ve worked so hard for.”

“Is that what you think?”

“Yes. Yes I do…”

“Wow, Lindsay! Tell me how you really feel?”

“I’m just stating the obvious. You need to consider the ramifications before you jump into the fire.”

“Why do I get the feeling that you’re more concerned about the fact that I’ve changed my insurance policy and living will? Is it because you’re worried that I won’t take care of Gus? Or maybe, because you wouldn’t be the one inheriting my wealth should anything happen to me?”

“How can you say that? How can you even think that? I love you so much!”

“Yeah! Maybe a little too much!”

“Brian…”

“Lindsay, if you’re this uncomfortable with me marrying Justin, then maybe it’s best if you don’t attend the wedding.”

“What? How can you even consider that?”

“Good. Then it’s understood. You’ll never question my decisions again. Whether it be about my
choice of who to marry, who I leave my estate to, or how I choose to live my life.”

“Brian. I’m just trying to protect you. Saving you from making the biggest mistake of your life.”

Brian walks over and opens the door, gesturing for Lindsay to leave.

“Lindsay. I have story boards to review and I want to go over my presentation once more before my meeting. I’d say it’s been nice to see you, but we both know that’s not true. Now don’t ever talk to me like this again, or you’ll be the one suffering the ramifications… Is that clear?”

“Brian. Please don’t be this way, and think about what I’ve said… You know it’s the truth.”

“Lindsay! Don’t show up again without an appointment. I don’t have time for your bullshit!”

With that Brian slams his office door shut, and pinches the bridge of his nose. He can’t help wondering when Lindsay changed. He always thought of her as the one who supported his and Justin’s relationship. Now he questions her motives, and thinks she’s the one trying to manipulate him, not Justin.

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Justin chows down on the muffins that Em baked this morning and brought over for them to enjoy. They’re brainstorming ideas for their wedding. He wants it to be classy, elegant and tasteful, just like Brian. Of course he wants a big wedding, he wants everybody to know the Brian is off the market. He can’t help feeling so proud and happy. He’s wanted this since the first night he met Brian. He’s daydreamed of this day for so long you’d think he’d have it all planned out in his head. But now that he’s actually planning the big event, he’s at a loss as to what he wants.

The only thing that Brian insisted on was that it be legal. He wants a real wedding, not just some pathetic commitment ceremony. And now that Pennsylvania has joined the other eighteen states to legalize same-sex marriage, the timing couldn’t be more perfect. So he’s given Justin free rein over all the details in planning their wedding, as well as free rein over his checkbook to pay for it, and Justin plans on sparing no expense. Meanwhile, Brian insists on planning their honeymoon, sparing no expense himself.

“Well… Where to start? Have you thought about colors? You know you need a color scheme for the wedding?”

“Hum… Blue really makes my eyes pop, but then I know Brian loves red.”

“They both sound like great color choices, either one would work well.

“Red looks so gorgeous on him, so masculine. You know he hates anything frilly, so definitely red.”

“You know, Em… I’m already into my second trimester. I really don’t want to wait until I’m showing to be married. So how hard is it going to be to find a venue on such short notice?”

“Well… Hmmmm… This could be a problem, but then again money talks. Let me make some calls and see what I can do.”

“Sorry, Em… I know this is last minute, and everything…”

“Here, you look at wedding cakes. You can pick any flavor of cake you want and decorate it in whatever style you like.”
“Okay, but you know Mr. Persnickety. He won’t want anything with flowers or bows…”

“Justin… You know they all have flowers and bows. Right?”

“Of course they do.”

Justin flips through pages and pages of wedding cake pictures while Emmett tries his best to get through to all the local hotels, banquet halls, conference centers and country clubs, hoping that they might have something available before a year from tomorrow. He’s not feeling very hopeful, as he listens to all the event managers’ hem and haw, sigh, chuckle. One even out and out laughs when he tells them he’s looking for something in the next six weeks.

He hangs up after trying his last possibility and says, “Well let’s talk about flowers. Don’t tell me Mr. Fussy has anything against flower centerpieces?”

“No, I think he’ll be fine with that. Just so long as they’re plain and not gaudy.”

“Of course. I expect no less.”

“I’m thinking roses. What do you think?”

“They are the flower of love, and of course they’re beautiful in red.”

“I’m thinking a single red rose on each table.”

“I like it. It will fit right in with your red and black theme.”

“Simple, But elegant.”

“I like this one.”

“Looks perfect.”

“I think Brian will like it too.”

“Have you found any cakes you like?”

“Yeah. I downloaded the pics of the ones I like.”

“Justin, honey… You have over twenty cakes picked out.”

“Yeah, I know. I’ll try and narrow it down… I just can’t decide.”

“For someone who doesn’t want frills, flowers or bows, you do realize that most of them are covered in bows and roses?”

“I may have been wrong about the flowers and bows thing. You’re right, they seem to all follow that theme.”

“Oh. Oh I really like this cake design. Even if it does have a bow on the top…”

“And this one…”

“And this one…”

“Oh, I agree. That first one is so unique. You know you could put a couple of grooms on top instead, if you wanted.”
“No, I think not. Remember we’re trying not to be too over the top.”

“Right, right… Because Mr. Finicky might just realize that he’s actually making a commitment.”

Justin punches Em in the arm, and they both start laughing. Even Jamie squeals in the background, not wanting to be left out of all the excitement…

“Oh, and I really want to have fancy chocolates at the guests’ place settings.”

“I like that idea, and it looks so delicious.”

“I know. I’m starting to get a craving for chocolate now.”

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Deb’s becoming concerned, as she’s left several messages for Michael and even stopped by the bakery to see him. His boss told her he hasn’t been in for a couple of days; he’s been out sick. So later that day she packs up a picnic basket full of all of Michael’s favorite foods and heads over to his and Keith’s apartment. After knocking for several minutes, she wonders if she should continue knocking or just leave.

Keith’s in a sour mood and the last thing he wants is company. Especially company he didn’t invite over. He barks at Michael that it better not be any of his so-called-friends. Michael prays that it’s not, knowing how irritated Keith would be if he didn’t ask permission first. Finally Deb hears someone unlocking the door and Keith is surprised to see her standing there. He quickly adjusts his mood and welcomes her in. He takes the basket full of goodies, politely thanking her for thinking of them.

Deb comes in and hugs Michael. Then she complains that he hasn’t been in touch with her for days. She notices Michael’s bandaged hand and asks him what happened. Michael quickly answers her, telling her that he burnt his hand at work on one of the ovens. That’s why he’s missed so many days recently, and therefore hasn’t been by the diner.

Keith pours on the charm, asking if Deb will join them for lunch, as he compliments her on the home-made fried chicken and potato salad. She tells him there’s also some baked lasagna, chicken parmigiana and German chocolate cake for later. He’s all smiles, telling her she can cook from them anytime, while at the same time mentioning that Michael can barely boil water. Debbie, of course, makes excuses saying that she’s always spoiled him, cooking for him several times a week so he never really learned.

Deb can’t help hovering over Michael, insisting that she put a new bandage on his wound, and asking if he needs her to do their laundry. Keith thanks her, but makes it clear that Michael’s more than capable of doing the housework and laundry all by himself. Debbie senses that they need their space, and she’s overstayed her welcome.

Michael walks her to the door and as Debbie kisses him good bye, she tells him what a great catch Keith is. How lucky he is to have found him, and not to fuck it up this time. He’s no spring chicken anymore, and he needs to make this work. Michael bites his tongue, wishing he could confide in her but he knows now’s not the time. And from her attitude, she wouldn’t be able to see that everything’s not all roses in their household.

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Both Emmett and Justin look up, surprised to see Brian coming through the door. He comes over and pulls Justin into his arms, giving him a deep, passionate kiss. Emmett looks on in envy and
astonishment. It still surprises him how much Brian has changed since Justin came into his life. He hopes that maybe someday he’ll feel the same kind of passion with Josh that’s so apparent in their relationship.

“What are you girls giggling about?”

“Nothing.”

“I didn’t realize it was so late. I guess time got away from us.”

“Emmett. It’s so good to see you.”

Emmett nods… “Brian.”

“Emmett came over this afternoon to help me start planning the wedding.”

“So have you two found a way to bankrupt me yet?”

“Not yet. But give us time.”

“So when is the wedding? Have you decided on a day?”

“We can’t pick a date until we can find a venue to have it at, and that’s turning out to be more of a problem than we thought it would be.”

“Oh? You know I signed a new account earlier this week. Mr. Jensen just happened to mention that they’ve remodeled several of their reception and ballrooms. Maybe we might be able to reserve one or two of those.”

“Really? Who’s your new account?”

“It’s the William Penn Hotel.”

Emmett gushes, “Oh my! That place is like a fucking palace. Have you seen it?”

“As a matter of fact I was given a tour on Tuesday. Would you like to see a couple of pics?”

“Oh God, Brian! It’s beautiful! Do you really think you could arrange for us to rent one of the banquet rooms?”

“I think it can be arranged. Mr. Jenson said their construction actually finished ahead of schedule. But you know it would mean we’d have to get married in the next two weeks.”

Justin and Emmett both start squealing, jumping up and down they’re so excited.

“Brian! Brian, please call them and see when we can get a room. I want to get married as soon as possible!”

“Allright, Sunshine. Don’t pee your pants…”

“Brian, call me if you get a reservation and a date for your wedding. Why don’t you two look through all of the different styles of cakes and decorations tonight and see if you can decide on one you both like? Remember that you can have any flavor cake you want.”

“Thanks, Em. I have a really good feeling about this. Everything seems to be coming together for our wedding.”
“Okay, I’m off. Justin I’ll see you tomorrow so we can continue planning and ordering what we’ll need. A couple of weeks isn’t much time to organize everything.”

“I’m sure you two will make it all work. After all you have full access to my bank account.”

Brian nuzzles Justin closer, kissing the top of his head, loving how wonderful it smells. Justin uses coconut and vanilla-scented shampoo that’s all natural so it makes his hair extra soft and shiny.

“So I guess it’s pizza tonight?”

“Yeah, I kind lost track of time and forgot to take anything out for dinner.”

“I’ll order the pizza, and then I’ll call the hotel and see what they can schedule for us.”

An hour later both of them are stuffed from eating too much pizza, and they have a date for their wedding, Saturday, May 29th at seven thirty. Justin’s all smiles as he tells Brian about what Emmett and he planned this afternoon.

“So… I was thinking that we’d both wear black suits or tuxes, and you’d wear a red shirt and black tie, and I’d wear a pink shirt and black tie.”

“Alright.”

“You’re okay with me wearing a light pink shirt?”

“It’s your wedding, Sunshine. You can wear anything you want. Besides I know how much you love pink.”

“That way we’d match, but be different at the same time. I want to use red and black as the predominant colors for the wedding.

They go over all the plans him and Em outlined earlier that afternoon. Brian likes the idea of a single red rose on the guest tables, and a larger arrangement of roses and candles behind the altar and on their banquet table. Even though they’re not getting married in a church, they plan on having the actual wedding in one of the grand ballrooms and the reception in another.

The ballrooms have beautiful marble walls and floors and the one they plan to use for the reception has a water feature, complete with waterfall. Justin can’t help drooling over the pictures Brian snapped of the interiors. It’s even more beautiful than he ever imagined. Brian suggests that they serve champagne and hors d’oeuvres, prior to the ceremony in yet another one of the elegant reception rooms while the guests wait.

Brian, of course, wants a full dinner service complete with waiters in formal tuxes; no self-serve banquet tables for his guests. Even though he said Justin could plan everything, and, as much as he thought he wouldn’t have an opinion about the details, that’s obviously not the truth. If he’s going to actually get married (which he never thought he would) he wants everything to be exquisite, sparing no expense.

Justin writes pages full of notes of Brian’s suggestions for him and Emmett to incorporate into the wedding plans tomorrow. After spending hours hashing over every intricate detail Justin’s exhausted and ready for bed. Brian checks on Jamie, making sure he’s sound asleep for the night, or at least until he wakes for his bottle.

Justin gazes over at him with hooded eyes; he can’t help getting hard just looking at his gorgeous partner, now fiancé, soon-to-be husband. Brian sees the glint of passion in his eyes and crawls up
his body. He gently grazes his erection across his thighs, and then against Justin’s own weeping cock. Justin’s legs naturally circle his waist as the two of them lock lips and get lost in their passion.

Several minutes later Brian pulls back, needing air. But his eyes never leave Justin’s as he reads the yearning written within them. Brian runs kisses around his jaw, and then across to his left ear where he gently licks him, knowing that it drives him crazy with desire. Justin leans his head back, exposing his porcelain neck as Brian continues to nibble and suck at his flesh, sure he’ll leave a mark.

Brian has a way of practically making Justin purr, as little moans and sighs escape his lips, letting him know that Justin is more than turned on. Justin’s cock is now poking Brian in his stomach, oozing pre-cum, creating a slippery pool filling his own belly-button. It’s turning Justin on even more as he feels the friction build as the head of his penis is rocked gently between the two of them, and soon they’re rutting against one other.

His pregnancy has a way of making him even more horny than usual, as he’s flooded with endorphins. Brian can’t help noticing Justin’s breath hitch, knowing that he’ll soon to be consumed with pleasure. Oh yes, he remembers how incredibly horny he was during his own pregnancy, and there’s nothing he wants more than to fulfil all of Justin’s desires.

He slips his hand between the two of them while gently rocking his hips, feeling Justin’s dick gliding back and forth. He takes his finger and circles Justin’s crown several times and then runs his thumb across this slit, triggering Justin’s orgasm. Justin cries out in pleasure as he coats their bellies with warm spunk.

His eyes are wide open now, looking like the deep blue waters of the ocean. Brian doesn’t think he’s ever seen him look more beautiful. Sometimes his love for Justin fills his heart so full it’s a wonder it doesn’t burst out of his chest. Brian dips his head down and captures his lips, letting more passion flow between them. He can still feel Justin’s body quivering as he rides out the remaining waves of ecstasy.

Finally able to finally catch his breath he whispers, “Brian…”

Brian leans his forehead against Justin’s, feeling his breath on his neck. Justin raises his head until their noses are touching. Brian tilts his head to the side and brings their lips together. Their kisses start off soft and gentle, but grow until they’re filled with passion. It doesn’t take long for Justin to recover and soon Brian feels him growing firmer against his stomach, and his breathing increases, making his desire known.

Their lips part, but their eyes remain gazing into each other’s. Brian reaches down and lifts Justin’s legs up one at a time onto his shoulders. He finds the tube of lube Justin set on the pillow next to them and squirts a dollop onto his fingertips. After warming it up a little he coats Justin’s rosebud, and then his shaft. He nudges the tip of his cock against his opening, and then glides into Justin’s welcoming tunnel. Brian’s amazed that he still gets a rush of excitement feeling him, caressing him as he enters.

They’re both in heaven as Brian slowly starts driving deeper with each thrust. Justin’s back to moaning, as Brian’s plump head makes contact with his prostate. It isn’t long before he’s sending sparks of pleasure pulsating through his limbs. Brian increases his thrusts, loving the way Justin’s wet walls clench and release him.

Brian reaches down and pulls Justin closer to his body, sliding deeper into him, as he starts hammering his prostate. Waves of ecstasy wash over both of them as they’re both pulled closer to
fruition. Just a few more deep plunges and Justin falls over the edge. Brian follows close behind as he shoots inside him. Just like the first time, those three little words escape Brian’s lips.

“I love you…”

Justin’s smile spreads across his face as he hears them, but words aren’t necessary; he knows exactly how Brian feels. How much he loves him, and he can’t help feeling like the luckiest man alive. They lie there in their bed holding each other, never wanting this feeling of love and passion to fade. The moonlight dances through the window, illuminating the space, making everything look magical. Brian holds his hands on the sides of Justin’s head, caressing his face with his fingertips as they relax and drift off to sleep.

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Brian’s putting the finishing touches on the revamped story boards for Brown Athletics. After his presentation yesterday Brian made a few changes to the layout and adjusted the colors. He now knows that he finally has them just right, giving Leo the feel he is looking for.

Later that morning Brian walks Leo out to the reception area, both pleased with the new designs. Leo congratulates Brian on his great work and presentation; he’s excited to start implementing the new advertisements and commercials they discussed. Cynthia rushes to tell Brian that he has a visitor, but she’s too late as Brian walks into his office to see that Lindsay is back, sitting on the sofa waiting for him.

“Lindsay. What a surprise! What could you possibly have to say to me now? I’m pretty sure we covered everything yesterday.”

“Please, Brian. I really need to talk to you…”

“Lindsay, don’t you have a job you should be at? Doesn’t Sidney need you there to run the gallery?”

“Brian… That’s what I wanted to talk to you about…”

“Oh… What’s that?”

“I was hoping that maybe I could start working in the art department?”

“The art department where?”

“Brian… Here. Here at Kinnetik.”

“I don’t really have any openings right now. Besides I’m not sure that would be a good idea.”

“Brian! It’s perfect. I’m an artist. Besides, you let Justin work here.”

“No. He interned at Vanguard, and he got that position all on his own. It was a requirement for school. Besides, he’s an exceptional artist.”

“What is that supposed to mean?”

“Lindsay, it takes a certain type of person to be able to produce artwork for advertisements. Besides you’re not even a graphic artist”

“I’m sure I can draw advertisements!”
“No. I don’t think you can. It’s not some art project that you can simply take all the time you need
to complete.”

“Brian. I’m sure I can. Won’t you just give me a chance?”

“Lindsay, you have to understand there’s strict deadlines. You have to be able to create the ideas
that are given to you, not what you want to draw. Anyway, I don’t think you’d be able to take the
criticism when I critique your work. There’s often lots of changes and corrections involved until
the storyboards are tweaked and meet with my approval.”

“Brian, please?”

“I’m sorry, Lindsay but you haven’t really drawn anything in years… And well… You know, you
weren’t very good even then. After all, you graduated with a degree in Art History, not with a
Bachelor of Arts degree.”

Lindsay is shocked. She can’t believe that Brian is being so direct with her, so blatant. Pointing out
that she really didn’t graduate as an artist.

“Brian! I can’t believe you just said that! I’m totally offended. Is that what you think of me?”

“Oh please, Lindsay. It’s the truth, and this is exactly what I’m talking about. You can’t take the
criticism and scrutiny of your own work. And that’s what I would do. It’s what I do with all my
employees. I only accept excellence, and you know I’m a perfectionist when it comes to my
business. I have to be. I’m the best at what I do, and I don’t have time to coddle my employees.”

Now crying she spits out, “And apparently you don’t care about your friends’ feelings either!”

“I won’t apologize when it comes to my business. I’m sorry the truth hurts.”

“I always thought that you loved me, that you respected me. I can’t believe you won’t give me a
chance. At least let me try and prove myself.”

“Linds, I don’t think it’s a good idea for me to have my friends as employees.”

“What about Ted?”

“Ted’s an exceptional accountant. Besides he’s capable of separating our friendship from our
business relationship. He doesn’t take personal offense when I criticize him, the way I know you
would.”

“Why do you have to intentionally try and hurt my feelings?”

“This isn’t about you… Can’t you understand that?

She just stares at him, at a loss for words.

“What’s this all about anyways? Did you get fired from the gallery?”

Lindsay starts crying again, barely able to talk…

“Yes. Sidney had to let me go. Sales have been down and he can’t afford to keep me on anymore.”

“I’m sorry, Linds, but maybe this is a good thing. I mean the pay is for shit, and you obviously
need to make more money. I can’t keep coming to your rescue every time the furnace needs
replacing, or the oven breaks.”
“Oh, I guess you want your son to live in a house without heat, or go without a home-cooked meal.”

“Lindsay, you’re a grown woman, and you have a wife. You two need to start budgeting your money better. Besides you’ll feel better if you make your own way in life.”

She pours on the tears again, begging Brian to help her. She’s surprised when her manipulations don’t even make a dent in his stance.

“I’ll do anything, anything at all.”

“What does Mel say about all this?”

“I haven’t told her, and I don’t want you saying anything to her.”

“Right. Because I talk to Mel all the time…”

“If I didn’t know better I’d think you were being intentionally cruel, trying to hurt my feelings. But I know being a total asshole is just your personality. I don’t know how Justin puts up with you. I guess love really is blind.”

“Are you through? Did you get it all out of your system yet? Because I have to get changed. I’ve got a soccer practice to coach and I don’t want to be late. It’s important for these boys that they learn the game and build their self-esteem.”

“You? You’re volunteering to coach soccer for kids you don’t even know? How altruistic of you! Mel will never believe this.”

Brian takes a deep breath, trying hard not to snap at her. It’s none of her business that he’s taking the time to get to know John and Peter better. He likes the idea of coaching; it’s been a while since he’s taken the time to be athletic. And as Justin pointed out, it will be good for him, helping him release some of his stress and have fun at the same time.

“I think we’re done here…”

“Wait, Brian. What I’m I going to do? I can’t continue to leave the house each day pretending to be going to work.”

“Jeez, Linds. Maybe you should start applying for jobs?”

“But I don’t have any skills…”

“Well, thank God I wasn’t the one to have to point that out…”

“So you’re not going to help me?”

“For once in your life, help yourself. I’m sure you’ll come up with something, and for Christ’s sake, tell your wife the truth.”

Brian turns and walks into his private bathroom, quickly changing his clothes to meet with John and Peter at the local park.

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Ted and Emmett are on their second drink, a Cosmo for Em and seltzer water for Ted. They’re waiting for Josh and David at Woody’s to have cocktails and then they’re trying out the new
Mexican restaurant that just opened up. Ted mentioned that it got rave reviews from the restaurant critic in latest issue of ‘Out’. David loves Mexican food, and Ted thinks it might be a good prospect as a new client for Kinnetik.

After David shows up they have another round of drinks. Emmett can’t help wondering what’s keeping Josh. But dating a cop has its drawbacks; you never know when a case might keep them working late. Emmett’s feeling no pain as they finish off their drinks and review the menu at the restaurant. Finally Josh calls and tells them he’ll meet them there as he has to process the arrest he just made.

A half an hour later he joins them, apologizing for making them wait. He looks at them and says that they arrested Keith. Even though they had planned on keeping him under surveillance for the time being, some rookie cop saw him run a red light and pulled him over. Josh was tailing him at the time, when the rookie took it upon himself to search the car because it smelled like marijuana.

Not only did they find two kilos of grass in the trunk, they also found a dead teenage hustler. Josh was so grateful he was right behind them when the rookie pulled him over. That gave him a chance to come up on the other side of the car, holding his gun on Keith. Otherwise they would have had two dead bodies on their hands, and the rookie would never have seen it coming.

Sometimes multi-tasking isn’t a good idea. Keith thought that making a drug deal down at the docks would give him the perfect opportunity to dump the kid in the river. This isn’t how Carl wanted things to go down, but at least they have Keith stone-cold with the dead kid, and the grass is just icing on the cake. The only problem is that Josh has now been made, and won’t be able to continue to work undercover on taking Big Jack down.

Keith is furious at being caught. He punches the concrete walls of his holding cell, breaking several fingers and his wrist. Josh, along with a couple of uniformed policemen, take him to the hospital to be treated, and then to night court. He pleads not guilty and is sentenced to remain in jail until his court date, or he makes bail.

Carl tries calling Michael to tell him the bad news but he’s not answering his cell. Keith has taken it away from Michael in a fit of rage, and left him in the apartment with the deadbolt locked, unable to leave if he tried, He’ll be locked inside for the next couple of days until Big Jack posts Keith’s bail, and he finally goes home. Debbie’s worried about Michael, but she hesitates to go over there. She’s left several messages and thinks Michael will contact her when he’s ready to talk about it. Little does she realize that he’s imprisoned in his own home.

The boys all drink a toast to Josh’s arrest. They hope they can talk some sense into Michael, making him see just what an asshole and criminal Keith is. But sometimes Michael is just too bull-headed to hear or see the truth. Maybe a few days stuck without much food and no phone will open his eyes to Keith’s manipulations and sadistic behavior.

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Brian’s beginning to feel like Lindsay is stalking him when he pulls into the underground parking garage for the loft and he sees her sitting in her car, waiting for him.

“Lindsay! What the fuck are you doing here?”

“Brian. I wanted to catch you before you went upstairs.”

“Oh? What do you possibly have to say to me now, that you can’t say in front of Justin?”
“Well… I was thinking…”

“For Christ’s sake, spit it out, Lindsay. I’m not a mind reader.”

“You know, Brian? I was thinking I should watch Jamie, and help out around the house.”

“We already have help, Lindsay.”

“I know. But you could let Maria go, and I’ll do everything.”

“No.”

“No? You’re not even going to consider it?”

“No.”

“Brian!”

“I don’t think it’s a good idea, and I’m sure Justin wouldn’t be comfortable with it.”

“Justin! Why must everything have to involve Justin!”

Brian just stares at her…

“Why??? Because he’s my husband, or will be soon enough.”

“Brian, I’m sure I’d be able to handle taking care of Jamie better than Justin. After all, I have experience with children. He knows nothing about babies, and I’m sure he gets overwhelmed and resents not having any free time.”

“Justin is great with Jamie, he loves being a stay-at-home dad, and with Maria there he can paint whenever he gets the urge. Besides, quite frankly I don’t think he’d appreciate spending all day with you.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“After our conversation yesterday I would never consider having you as our housekeeper/nanny. Maria does a great job and there’s no friction between them. I can’t imagine that the two of you could spend even an afternoon together without killing each other. And then there’s the whole not-employing-your-friends issue again and we’ve already addressed that.”

“Brian… That’s not true. I’d be great at helping around the house and Gus would love seeing Jamie every day. And even though you can’t see it, I’m sure Justin is resentful; he’s young and I’m sure he hates being a housewife.”

“Lindsay, Justin is not a housewife! And I’ve already told you he loves taking care of Jamie. He’s free to do whatever he wants. He’s not trapped, and he’s definitely not resentful. Besides, that’s why we have Maria, so he has all the freedom he needs.”

“But Brian… I’d be a better choice, and after all I’m his mother.”

“You’re what?”

“I meant, I’m a mother. And Maria is practically a stranger.”

“Maria has worked for me for years, she’s hardly a stranger. She works hard. She cooks, cleans,
grocery shops, runs errands and helps Justin with Jamie. As well as thinking this is a bad idea, I
don’t think you’d do a good job. After all I’ve seen your house and it’s a disaster on your best days.
I like everything neat and tidy; you know how anal I am when it comes to my personal space.”

“Brian… You’re just mad about yesterday, but I was only trying to make you see reality. I
understand you’re upset with me, but I think you’re making a huge mistake getting married. You
need me!”

“Go home to your wife and kids, Lindsay. Shouldn’t you be cooking and cleaning for them now
that you’re unemployed?”

“But Brian, please think about it.”

He just stands there, glaring at her until she starts her car and drives away. He can’t help thinking
she seems desperate, almost on the verge of being delusional.

TBC…

Now you’re finally caught up with me… Thanks for sticking with it…
I hope you’ve enjoyed my little story so far, more coming soon…
Later Kids ~ Kathleen
Chapter Summary

Bad Moon Arisen – It’s a bad day in Pittsburgh, and it just keeps getting worse…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 5240
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: BigJ52
Banner: aaa_mazing

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Summary: Bad Moon Arisen – It’s a bad day in Pittsburgh, and it just keeps getting worse…

Chapter Twenty Two ~ She Did What!

Brian leans over to kiss Justin good bye before he leaves for work. “Don’t rock the bed!”

“Sorry, Sunshine. Are you still feeling nauseous?” Brian asks as he peeks at Justin under the covers he has pulled up over his head.

“It’s too bright. It’s making me feel more nauseous.”

Brian runs his hand through Justin’s hair. “What can I do to make you feel better?”

“Just go! Go to work and leave me alone.”

“Okay, I’ll tell Maria that you’re not feeling well. That you need your rest.”

“Brian, Brian, I need a kiss before you go.”

Brian smirks, it’s going to be one of those days. He leans down again, making sure he doesn’t touch the bed. He carefully kisses Sunshine’s precious forehead, and then more passionately he kisses his lips.

“I’ll call you after my meeting’s over and see how you’re doing.”

“Brian, could you bring me some of those really creamy Dove chocolates tonight when you come home? I really need chocolate.”

“Of course you do… Maybe you should make a list. I’m sure you’ll be having more cravings before I see you tonight.”
“Okay, I really love you!”

“I know. I love you too.”

Just as Brian is getting into his car, his cell rings. He thinks about ignoring it, but he knows from the ring tone that it’s Deb’s house phone.

“Good morning, Deb. Is everything okay? It’s a little early for you to be calling.”

“It’s not that early, it’s 7 a.m.”

“Right…”

“Well, I haven’t slept much lately. I’m worried about Michael.”

Brian shifts uncomfortably in his seat. He’s not sure how he feels about Michael these days. It seems like he isn’t sure where Michael’s head is anymore, and he can’t for the life of him understand what the attraction to Keith is all about.

“Brian? Are you still there?”

“Yeah Deb, I’m here.”

“I said I’m worried about Michael. I’ve left him several messages, and he’s not answering his door. I don’t even think he knows about Keith being arrested.”

“Maybe it will finally penetrate his thick skull, that Keith is a real loser.”

“Brian, I liked Keith. I can’t believe he’s involved in all this trouble.”

“Trouble? It’s way more than just trouble, Deb. But then you always see the good in people.”

“Brian, I know you’re busy with Kinnetik, but I was hoping you could go by his place and talk to him.”

“Deb, we haven’t really been on talking terms much lately. He’s still smarting from our last knockdown drag-out fight. I’m not sure he wants to hear from me.”

“Please Brian, if anyone can talk to him it’s you.”

“I don’t even know where he’s living?”

“I’ll give you the address. Thanks, thanks so much, Brian. I knew I could count on you.”

With that, Brian hangs up the phone. He’s irritated that he’s now responsible for telling Michael about Keith’s arrest. He can just imagine how Michael will spin this to be all his fault. After all, all Michael’s problems must surely he his fault. He pulls out of the underground parking garage, unaware that he’s being watched. They’re just waiting until after Brian leaves to put their plan into action.

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Emmett’s making Belgian waffles with crisp bacon for Josh, while he sleeps in. He has a few days off after his big arrest. He’s waiting for his next assignment, now that his cover has been blown on investigating Big Jack, and the drug cartel. Emmett kisses him on his lips, bring him to life. He was exhausted last night; this case has taken a lot out of him. A few days off is just what the doctor
ordered; he just wishes that Em could take a few days off himself.

They have breakfast in bed as they watch the sunrise over the river. Josh has never felt more pampered. He usually has to be at the station by seven for roll call and hear all the case assignments for the day. Josh’s place is really comfortable and it feels like home to Em. He just wished that was the case, but they need time, time to feel secure in their relationship. Neither one wants to rush into anything, and find out later they made a big mistake. They have a lazy morning making love, then enjoy a long hot shower together. But eventually Em has to head over to see Justin, as they need to finalize the wedding plans.

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Shortly after Brian leaves for work, Lindsay’s knocking on the loft door. It sure was easier when she still had a key. But Brian took it away last fall when she kept coming over, harassing him about her and Mel raising Baby J.

“Maria, good morning. Is Justin here?”

“No, he’s not available.”

The last thing Justin needs right now is to have to deal with Lindsay and her attitude. So Maria makes sure Lindsay knows today isn’t a good day for an unexpected visit.

“You need to call first. Today’s no good.”

“Maria, I’m family. I don’t need an excuse to drop by.”

Maria just stares at her. She doesn’t trust her for a minute, and it’s too early to just drop by for a visit.

“Do you have Jamie already? I’m sure Brian told you that I would be taking care of Jamie from now on. After all, you have enough to do around here without having to care for a baby.”

Maria continues to stare at her, something isn’t right… Brian never mentioned to her that Lindsay would be caring for Jamie.

“Maria! I asked you a question. Now, is he ready? Or do I have to get Jamie’s things together?”

“No! Senior Brian said nothing about you caring for the baby.”

“I’m sure it just slipped his mind. Now where is he?”

Maria stood firmly in her way, placing a hand on her chest, stopping her from entering the loft any further.

“Maria. What’s gotten into you? Now let me pass, I need to get Jamie.”

“No! You should leave. I don’t believe you!”

“Maria. You’re hardly in a position to question me. Like I said, I’m family and you’re well, you’re simply the hired help.”

“I’m calling the police if you don’t leave!”

“Really? Well, I’m calling immigration if you don’t get Jamie for me right now!”
Maria stands her ground, frustrating Lindsay and throwing her off her game. She pushes past Maria, and goes into the play room. She finds his diaper bag and starts filling it with clothes and toys, more than he’ll need for the afternoon. Meanwhile Maria slips into the study and calls Brian, but he is in a meeting.

Justin has finally fallen asleep, after eating the oatmeal Maria made him. She was sure the problem was that he was weak from not eating. She’s told him he needs to keep his strength up while he’s pregnant. He hears loud talking, almost yelling, but he thinks it’s probably one of Maria’s soap operas she’s so fond of. Brian has subscribed to a Spanish speaking channel so she can watch all her soaps in her native tongue. So when he hears yelling in Spanish he just falls back asleep.

While she is calling Brian, she decides to lock the bedroom door where Jamie is sleeping. She doesn’t trust Lindsay not to try and take him by force. Once Lindsay has Jamie’s things all packed, she starts looking for him. She hasn’t actually been in the lower level of the loft before so she isn’t sure about the floor plan, or where he might be.

They have been fighting for quite some time now, threatening each other and making a ruckus. More yelling breaks out as Maria stops Lindsay from going down the stairs. They become even louder, so they don’t hear the knocking at the door. They both freeze as they watch the loft door being pulled open. Two uniformed police officers walk in, saying that they had a report of a disturbance at this address.

Lindsay automatically states that she is Jamie’s mother, and Maria is holding him against her will. She demands that the police get her son for her now! Of course, with Maria’s broken English and limited use of the language she has a hard time explaining the situation.

“So Mrs. Kinney, if he’s your son and she works for you, what’s the actual problem? Is she holding him hostage?”

“Well no, not exactly. I’m separated from my husband. But I have joint custody and I’m here to pick him up.”

“No! She lie! She’s not his mother! She has no custody!”

“Well… One of you is lying.”

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The loft door isn’t the only door being pounded on this morning.

“Michael! Michael, for fuck’s sake, answer the door!”

Brian continues banging on the door. He hears someone moving around inside and he’s not happy that Michael seems to be ignoring him. He can’t understand why he just doesn’t open the door.

“Christ, Michael, I can hear you! Novotny! Just open the fucking door!”

“Go away, Brian. I have nothing to say to you!”

“Your mother called. She’s worried about you, about how you’re handling Keith’s arrest.”

“What do you mean Keith’s arrest?”

“Why don’t you open the door and we’ll talk?”
“No! I don’t believe you.”

“What? Why? Why would I lie about something like this? And why won’t you open the fucking door? Or for that matter, answer your phone?”

Silence.

“Michael! Do I have to break down the door?”

“Just go away!”

“What’s wrong with you? Open the damn door!”

“No! I… I can’t…”

“What the fuck does that mean?”

“You shouldn’t be here. Keith’s going to be mad.”

“He’s in jail, Michael. Since when am I not allowed to visit you? Is Keith that insecure?”

“He has a bit of a temper. So just go away.”

“I’m going to count to ten, then I’m going to kick the door in unless you open it.”

“I can’t… I can’t open it. It’s locked and I don’t have a key.”

Brian thinks, ‘What? What the fuck!’ Then he stands back and kicks the door. It cracks and splinters, one more kick and the door frame gives a little. One last kick and the panel breaks and falls to the floor. Brian breaks the rest of the wood out, creating a large enough space for him to enter.

“Just what the fuck is going on, Michael?”

“Oh God! Do you have any idea how much trouble I’m going to be in? Keith’s going to kill me when he finds out it was you. Then he’s going to kill you, he thinks we’re having an affair.”

“An affair, Michael? Really? After your little hissy fit, it should be obvious that I’m never going to be interested in you in a romantic way.”

“But Keith doesn’t know about that. He’s seen the way I look at you, and he’s figured out that I’m attracted to you. He’s consumed with jealousy. He even thinks Emmett is interested in me.”

“Why are you even in a relationship with him? He sounds like a complete loser, not to mention a criminal.”

Michael waves his arms around, gesturing. “You just don’t understand him. He loves me. He’s not afraid to show me how much he cares.”

Brian frowns, then reaches out, running his hand over Michael’s exposed stomach, then his back. He sees all the bruises, some still deep purple, while others are now an ugly shade of yellow and gray. Brian just shakes his head, wondering just what Michael has gotten himself into.

“You think that’s love? Why don’t you pack your things? I think you should leave.”

“No, Brian. You just don’t understand him.”
“Michael! Did you hear me when I said he was arrested? He was caught with two kilos of grass, and he had a dead hustler in his trunk.”

“I don’t believe you! You’re lying! You just want to split us up! You’re jealous that I finally have someone who loves me.”

“He’s a fucking thug, Michael! I didn’t want to tell you this, but he’s the same loan shark who was going to kill you at Christmas time! Remember when you couldn’t pay your gambling debts?”

“That’s total bullshit! Keith works in security, and I’m sure he isn’t involved in drug deals and murder.”

“How can you be so blind? Look at the door. He has you locked away like a prisoner in your own home.”

“I told you, you just wouldn’t understand!”

“Michael, Michael, Michael! Beautifully naive Michael! Open your eyes, listen to yourself. You’re in over your head, but you can get out of all this. You can tell Carl what’s been going on. I’m sure he can add domestic abuse and holding you hostage to the list of crimes he’s already being held on.”

“Brian, you should leave. I simply don’t believe you. If you ask me, that Joshua has probably set him up for all this. I think he’s a police informant.”

“You’ve got to be kidding me?”

“Keith told me, he’s seen him sneaking around watching him. It’s like he’s following him for some reason.”

“So you’re really not coming with me?”

“Like I said, I don’t believe you. Besides, Keith loves me. Now just go!”

“Michael, I don’t feel good about leaving you here like this.”

“I’m fine… But wait, you have to pay for fixing the door. I can’t believe you kicked it in. That was really stupid. Like I said Keith’s going to be pissed. So you better watch out!”

Brian just shakes his head, Michael needs an intervention or something. What the hell is he going to tell Debbie? Maybe he should call Carl. He’ll know how to handle this situation. He just can’t believe Michael; he’s really digging his heels in this time. He’s so fucking gullible. Why can’t he see through all of Keith’s lies? Brian has to go as he’s already running late for his meeting. Hopefully Ted’s stepped in and started pitching the campaign to their new client, ‘Leather and Lace,’ a start-up company that sells lingerie and sex toys.

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Meanwhile Emmett has just gotten to the loft and it’s crowded on the sidewalk. He can’t get past everyone to go upstairs and see Justin. All of a sudden there’s lots of loud sirens coming down the street, fire trucks and ambulances as well as more police cars. Justin sits up in bed, wondering if the building is on fire. He hears even louder yelling, and several male voices telling everyone to calm down. He climbs the stairs to see who’s there.

“What the hell is going on here?”
Everyone turns to see Justin standing at the top of the stairs, wearing only sweatpants. His belly is protruding over the waistband, because it’s making him nauseous having the elastic across his stomach. He has total bedhead hair, and if you didn’t know better he looks like he’s just come off a bender and has one hell of a hangover.

The police ask, “Who are you?” What’s your relationship to Mrs. Kinney?”

“Mrs. Kinney? There is no Mrs. Kinney. Brian Kinney is my fiancé. What are you doing here, Lindsay?”

Lindsay looks like a deer in the headlights, sure she was going to get her way. She stutters and stammers for a few minutes while everyone waits.

“Justin, I… I didn’t think you were home.”

“What’s going on, Lindsay?”

“Let me get this straight. She’s the ex Mrs. Brian Kinney, and you’re the future Mr. Kinney?”

Just then the phone rings and Justin hits the speaker by mistake when answering it.

“Hello?”

“Justin? It’s Cynthia. Is everything okay?”

“Who’s she? Another wife?”

“Kind of… She’s Brian’s work wife.”

Justin thought they could use a little levity but the police officers don’t think it’s very funny.

“Justin, I was worried. Maria called and I couldn’t understand her, she was really upset. She was talking low like she was frightened and sounded panicked. So I called the police.”

“Yeah, they’re here now. Can you have Brian come home when he gets out of his meeting? Something is not quite right about this situation.”

Lindsay tries to explain her way out of all the lies she told, but the police wise up and realize that she was trying to take Jamie without authorization. Only they’re calling it attempted kidnapping. They start to read her rights to her when there’s another knock on the door. Then the phone starts ringing, and Jamie can be heard crying through the baby monitor. Justin goes downstairs to Jamie’s room, making sure he’s alright. He answers the phone in the bedroom and it’s Emmett. Emmett’s downstairs and he sounds panicked. The police won’t let him come up, his voice is weird, and he sounds like he’s crying. Justin can only make out a few words over all the sirens, and those walkie-talkies that the fire department uses.

“Justin, it’s Gus. Something’s wrong with Gus!”

Justin runs upstairs and hands Jamie to Maria, then he heads for the door. Pulling it back he’s faced with another group of policemen, asking if Lindsay Peterson is there. The police start arguing about who’s going to arrest her, and who has jurisdiction, and which case is more pressing.

Justin starts going downstairs to talk with Em, to find out what’s going on. That’s when he’s met by a woman from Children’s Services. She’s been informed that he has parental rights for Gus Peterson-Kinney. She explains that he’s been taken to the hospital, and that Justin needs to go with
her now. Justin keeps asking, “What’s going on?”

He runs into the playroom and changes clothes, so glad he keeps a change of clothing for when Jamie spits up on him. Emmett finally composes himself enough to call Josh and Carl. They make it to the loft in record time, both coming from different directions. Justin meets them as he’s trying to leave the loft, grateful that someone’s here that he can trust. Josh takes control of the kidnapping case, and Carl takes Justin aside to talk with him, knowing that they’ll need some privacy.

He explains that someone walking down the street noticed that two children were locked inside a car, with all the windows closed. It’s a very warm spring day and the temperatures are over eighty degrees, but inside a locked car the temperatures can rise very quickly. Both JR and Gus have passed out from heat exhaustion, and they’ve been taken to the hospital.

Justin tries to compose himself, knowing that it won’t do any good to freak out. He can’t help glaring at Lindsay, thinking she is totally contemptible. Carl asks Emmett to drive Justin to the hospital. Justin keeps trying Brian’s cell, but it’s obvious that he’s turned it off.

Lindsay has yet to grasp the gravity of the situation. When asked if she left her children in a locked car, unattended, she says that she only meant to be gone just a few minutes. The police ask her why she didn’t bring the children upstairs with her. They reprimanded her, telling her how easily they could have been taken by someone walking down the street. She tells them that Gus’s car seat buckle is broken and it’s hard for her to release it.

She explains that it was too much trouble to bring the children upstairs with her. After all she never meant to take so long collecting Jamie. Then she tries to blame everything on Maria, because Maria wouldn’t give Jamie to her. She’s totally grasping at straws now, tattling on Maria. She says that Maria’s in the country illegally, and that she should be the one arrested.

Lindsay just doesn’t seem to understand how serious the situation is. JR barely has a pulse, and Gus is unconscious and extremely dehydrated. The woman from Children’s Services is questioning if maybe she should remove Jamie from the house. She’s skeptical of everyone at this point. Carl reassures her that the Kinney home is a safe and stable environment for a baby, and Maria is a great caregiver.

Justin and Emmett just miss Brian as he pulls up to the loft moments after they leave. Brian has to fight with the police officers and finally threatens to call Carl if they don’t let him go upstairs. After checking his ID and making sure he lives there, he’s allowed to pass. If you thought that things were bad before this, all hell’s about to break loose.

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At the hospital Justin’s never been more grateful that he now is a legal guardian for Gus, as the doctors allow him into the Intensive Care Unit to see him. He’s on a ventilator and he has several IVs connected to his little arms. He’s covered with cool towels that the nurses keep changing, trying to help bring his temperature down. Emmett’s in the waiting room, frantically trying Brian’s cell. He finally calls Ted and can hardly speak, his voice is shaky and he’s more than panicked.

Ted consoles him, telling him he’ll get a hold of Brian, Mel and Lindsay, unaware that it is Lindsay who neglected the children in the first place. Mel’s in court, but is given a message that there’s a family emergency. She calls Lindsay at the gallery and is shocked to learn that Lindsay was let go a week ago. She wonders just what the hell is going on. Just then Carl calls her and explains the situation.

He tells her they’ve taken the children to the Intensive Care Unit at Allegheny General Hospital,
and they’ve taken Lindsay there as well. She’s been admitted to the psych ward, and is now under suicide watch for a forty-eight hour observation. She’ll be charged formally in a few days and then arraigned.

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Big Jack’s attorney has posted bond for Keith, and he’s just gotten home. The door is still smashed, but the workmen are in the process of replacing it. Michael asks him where he’s been because he hasn’t seen him in days. Michael says he was worried, and asks if he’s okay. Then he makes the mistake of asking whether it’s true that he was arrested. Keith’s face becomes red and distorted as his temper flares, but he keeps his cool until Michael and he are alone.

Michael being the idiot that he is, asks him just what it is he does at the security company he works for. Keith snaps at him, twisting his arm so tight it might break, but loosens his hold as he looks at the men from the door company. He says it’s confidential and to never question him again. Michael accepts his answer, and is sure Brian is just jealous and making the whole story up. He’s sure Keith was just out with his buddies tying one on; he knows that Keith is into crystal.

He’s even done it with him a few times; it makes sex incredible. Michael’s even consented to doing it while they’ve been into S & M. Keith says it’s a total turn-on for him watching Michael. Keith often allows his friends to indulge in sex with Michael when he’s tied up. Michael’s never thought of it as dangerous situation; he likes the intense pleasure. It makes him feel special, being touched by more than one man at a time. He finally understands Brian’s fascination with going to the baths and sex parties to satisfy his needs.

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Mel’s in shock with all the events of the day. She checks in on Gus; Brian and Justin are with him. He’s stabilized, but he’s still on the ventilator. They’re waiting for him to wake up. They won’t know the extent of any possible brain damage until he’s awake. His brain waves seem active and they’re hopeful that he hasn’t suffered any injuries. Because JR is so much younger her brain couldn’t take the intense heat or stress.

She’s slipped into a coma, and they’re all praying for the best. Mel’s already been informed that it’s most likely that she’s suffered trauma to her brain, leaving her with limited capacity, possible learning disabilities, as well as other handicaps. That’s if she even wakes up. At the moment it’s all very sketchy. It’s just a matter of waiting it out.

Brian’s putting on a brave face while seething inside; he feels like killing Lindsay. Once she was admitted to the hospital they automatically put her on suicide watch as a precaution. She’s also now under a forty-eight hour observation to determine her state of mind. Brian knows this isn’t some break with reality, that whatever’s happened isn’t a momentary bout of stress, or delusions.

She knew what she was doing, and was too consumed with her obsession of having Jamie in her life. He questions why she felt so strongly about caring for Jamie, while neglecting her other children. Is she so jealous of Justin and their upcoming marriage that she just can’t stand to see them happy and committed? He wonders just what is going on with both her and Michael.

Carl and Brian talked at the loft about his concern for Michael. So after Lindsay is admitted to the hospital, as much as Carl wants to be there for Deb, he feels he needs to go see Michael, to make sure he’s alright, and try to talk some sense into him about Keith.

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Debbie’s pacing in the waiting room outside the Intensive Care Unit, unable to comprehend all that’s happened that day. How could so many of her family members end up here in the hospital? And the waiting to hear their prognosis is killing her. She can’t believe her eyes when she sees Carl come into the emergency room, covered in blood. Blood, she soon finds out is Michael’s. She is sure her heart is breaking, she can’t take much more today.

Carl went to Michael’s apartment and for the second time that day the front door is smashed to smithereens. He finds Michael unconscious in the bathroom, with blood everywhere and no sign of Keith. It’s obvious that they’d find him now he’s undoubtedly on the run.

Michael has his own room in the Intensive Care Unit at Allegheny General Hospital; he has a closed head injury, broken ribs, and a fractured pelvis. Keith has really done a number on him. Now half the police department is looking for him, stopping anyone who fits his description. But it is dubious that they’ll find him now he’s undoubtedly on the run.

Not only is he facing a narcotics possession charge, he is also wanted for murder, and attempted murder. That’s what Carl is calling Michael’s beating, you really can’t call it anything else. It still burns him that Big Jack’s fancy lawyer pulled some strings and got him released on bond. He obviously has friends in high places, and is no doubt halfway to some country with no extradition policies. It’s unlikely that he’ll ever return to the States, or face charges for all his crimes.

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Justin’s rubbing Brian’s shoulders as he sits next to Gus’s bed, holding his hand, praying that he’ll come out of it. The good news is that they kept referring to him as being unconscious, unlike JR which they’re calling a coma. The truth is Brian doesn’t really understand the difference between the two. He hopes like hell that they’ll both wake up soon. He can’t help flashing back to when Justin was in his coma, ten days… But he finally woke up. He had some work to do to regain all his motor skills, but he survived.

Brian has yet to find out about Michael’s hospitalization, it just might put him over the edge. Justin’s sure he’ll blame himself, thinking he should have forced Michael to leave with him. But Michael is one of the most stubborn people they know, and Michael truly never thought that Keith would seriously hurt him. Just like so many other victims of abuse, he was sure he had caused it. He believed Keith when he promised that it would never happen again. He was holding onto Keith’s hollow words, not wanting to have failed in another relationship.

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It is in the early hours that Mel holds JR in her arms for the last time. She sits rocking her as she comes to grips with reality, kissing her baby girl one last time. The hospital staff contacted Mel’s Rabbi to make sure JR was watched over by a shomer, and to help her with the funeral arrangements. She has been up for almost twenty-four hours, and Mel will sleep very little from now until her daughter is laid to rest.

Mel has never felt as alone as she does now. She’s filled with so many emotions that range from pain, grief, sorrow and of course, anger. How could this have happened? She remembers holding her that very morning. She was so alive and happy, even laughing as Mel dressed and fed her. It was a normal morning for them, just like every other morning. How could this tragedy have occurred? She’s inconsolable, trying to come to grips with her loss, and then there’s Gus.

She knows she should go and sit with him, be strong for Brian and Justin. But right now she needs a few minutes to decompress, and let herself feel the pain. She’s not sure she’s strong enough to get through everything that lies ahead of her over the next couple of days. She just keeps asking
herself, why. Why did this happen?

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It’s early, just before dawn and the night shift is almost over, the patrol cars are headed back to the precinct for the change of shifts. Most officers and detectives have been looking for Keith all night long, knowing that it is Carl’s family member who is now at the hospital, holding on for dear life. Just out of the corner of his eye Detective Daniels spots Big Jack’s shiny black limousine. After checking the license plate they follow him at a distance. After a few miles, Big Jack’s driver realizes they’re being tailed.

He speeds away, trying to lose the police when he makes a hard turn to get on the freeway. As they enter the ramp he accelerates, the car fishtails and spins out of control on the bridge over the Susquehanna River. Their car crashes through the guard rail, and sounds of twisting metal and broken glass break the silence of the early morning. The limousine plunges into the river and quickly fills with water. It’s a good twenty minutes before they have a rescue team in place. By the time the divers reach the car all the passengers have drowned, including Keith and Big Jack.

This wasn’t how they wanted the chase to end. They would have much preferred to have arrested them and face trial. But sometimes things have a way of working out one way or another. The city is now relieved of a major crime boss, and several hardcore thugs. Very few tears will be shed over the loss of life, and maybe a few petty criminals may find their way out of the lifestyle and into the mainstream of society.

They say it’s always darkest before the dawn…

TBC…
Daybreak…

Chapter Summary

They say everything always looks better in the light of day. Just who are they, and what do they know?

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 6528
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: BigJ52

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Summary: They say everything always looks better in the light of day. Just who are they, and what do they know?

Chapter Twenty Three ~ Daybreak…

Justin’s POV

As the sun crests over Pittsburgh’s skyline and peeks into the window, its golden rays bring hope. Brian wakes to Gus squeezing his hand, and asking for a glass of water. I’m so grateful that our prayers have been answered, his coloring has returned to his skin, and his eyes are sparkling brightly. Tears runs down Brian’s face as he pulls Gus into his arms, holding him tight as he tells him how much he loves him. I go to find Dr. Rose, who’s the pediatric specialist in charge of the Children’s Intensive Care Unit. Several minutes later we return and Brian finally releases Gus from his embrace.

This whole experience has shaken him, and he seems even more committed to us and our family. I guess it takes almost losing someone to get your priorities straight. I already know that Brian will be more focused on his personal life, and finally start delegating more responsibilities at Kinnetik. His business means a lot to him, but I now know that our family means more. You only get to experience your children growing up once, and he feels like he’s missed out on so much with Gus.

Dr. Rose starts a series of procedures testing Gus’s sight, hearing, speech and reflexes. Gus cries when they draw his blood, he’s frightened by the needles. But Brian’s right there reassuring him that it will only hurt for a minute. He tells him how brave he is, and then of course it’s finished before he knows it. Dr. Rose reassures us that he thinks Gus is going to be just fine, but he wants to do a complete physical just to make sure.

I’ve kept everyone away from Brian, knowing he needed his privacy while we’re waiting for Gus to regain consciousness. I’ve taken several breaks to update my mom and the gang throughout this whole ordeal. I’ve also been updated on everyone else’s condition, but I haven’t told Brian about
any of it. I just didn’t want him to worry about everyone else. But now I need to tell him, and I know it’s going to ruin the happy moments he’s having with Gus right now, so I wait.

I tell him I’m going to get him a latte from the Starbucks in the cafeteria and that I’ll be back soon. When I get to the waiting room I’m greeted by Emmett, Ted and David. My mom’s asleep in the chair while Debbie’s with Michael and Carl. Josh has been called back to the station as there’s been a break in the case. I think they’ve arrested Keith. Mel’s in with her Rabbi, her family is flying in from Florida this afternoon. I know she has her hands full and I’m worried about how she’s handling everything.

I update everyone on Gus’s progress and they’re all relieved, it seems he’s out of the woods. The doctors have been in and out of Michael’s room throughout the night. The thing about all of his injuries is, you can’t really operate or mend them. You basically have to wait for them to heal on their own. He’ll be bedridden for months, and hopefully the swelling in his brain will go down and he won’t lose any cognitive abilities. He hasn’t been informed about JR’s death. He’s barely conscious himself but, thank God, he isn’t in a coma.

I wake my mom and let her know that Gus is conscious and the doctor’s running tests, then I insist that she go home and get some sleep. Emmett and I go down to get some coffee and muffins for everyone. It’s been a long night, and most of us have been here since early yesterday afternoon. Mel’s extremely distraught, feeling like her life is spinning out of control. Debbie goes and checks on her, knowing that she shouldn’t be all alone. She hates to have to break the news to her about Michael’s hospitalization. They comfort each other as only family can. Both in need of a break, they end up in the cafeteria just behind us.

“Em, it just doesn’t seem right celebrating a marriage with so much pain and sorrow happening in the family right now.”

“Whatever you think is best. I totally understand.”

All of a sudden we hear Debbie’s voice, “Wait just a Goddamn minute!”

We turn around and see her and Mel standing a few people behind us.

“Deb. How are you?”

“Well, I’ve been better, that’s for sure. But we’ll all get through this.”

“I’m so sorry about everything that’s happened to Michael, and of course I was devastated when I heard about Jenny Rebecca.”

I reach out and hug Melanie. She’s barely holding it together and I’m not sure what I can do to help, except just let her know that I’m here for her. She tells us that she’s planning on having a service for JR this evening. I’m surprised that it’s so soon, but Em explains to me later that it is a Jewish custom to have the funeral right away. We sit with them and sip our coffees as we catch them up on Gus’s progress. They both seem relieved, and grateful that he’s pulling through and will have a full recovery.

“Now, Sunshine, I don’t think it’s a good idea to cancel your wedding. It isn’t for a couple of weeks and by then we’re all going to need something to look forward to, something to celebrate.”

“Oh Deb. I don’t know…”

“Nonsense. I’m serious. We’ll need some happiness to balance out all this sorrow. It will help take the focus off of all our worries, and it will do both you and Brian some good to get away and go on
“your honeymoon.”

“But Deb, Michael will still be in the hospital and… I just feel awkward after just loosing JR. It seems so callous, you know.”

“No. I think Deb’s right. You and Brian shouldn’t change your plans.”

“Really, Mel?”

“Yes. Yes absolutely. Jenny Rebecca’s funeral tonight is a celebration of her life. In no way do I want you to feel the need to postpone your wedding. Debbie’s right. We’ll need a reason to come together as a family. Celebrating your marriage is a new beginning and we all need to share in your happiness.”

“Wow! I just thought that with everything that’s happened… But you’re right, we need to celebrate our love and the beginning of our new life together. I feel so much better than I did. But now I have to go and tell Brian about everything that’s happened. I’ve kind of left him in the dark, not wanting to upset him more than he already is.”

“Justin, I’d like to come and sit with Gus for a while. You and Brian can take a break. Maybe go and sit in the park across the street while you tell him. Then when you come back we’ll tell Gus together about Jenny’s passing. I’m not sure he’ll really understand, but I think he’ll remember when Ben passed away. He’ll feel better knowing that they’re together now, looking out for each other.”

“Okay. You’re right. Just let me get Brian his latte and I’ll see you up in Gus’s room.”

They all walk to the elevator together but when we get to the ICU we part. I thank Mel again. I really do feel better now, even though I’m still very sad about everything. I call Maria and ask her if she wouldn’t mind bringing Jamie to the park. I think we both need to see him, and make sure he’s alright before we head back up to Gus’s room.

When I enter Gus’s room he’s chattering away. He looks so much better, even happy as him and Brian read a book the nurse gave them. A few minutes later Mel comes in and hugs Gus, she’s happy he’s feeling better. Of course he doesn’t remember any of it and just wants to go home. His lunch arrives and Mel offers to help him with it so we can take a break.

Brian’s pacing, obviously distraught by all the news. I hate that I have brought him down like this, but he needed to know. His emotions are on a rollercoaster. He’s furious with Lindsay, and shocked about Jenny’s death. He feels guilty about Michael’s abuse, and he’s angry that he didn’t drag him out of the dump and protect him.

He can’t imagine how Mel’s feeling, and knowing that we have to talk with Gus when we get back is stressing him out beyond belief. But when Maria shows up with Jamie he’s so grateful to be able to hold and kiss him. So grateful that Maria is part of our little family. She understands us so well and always knows just how to take care of us.

She’s brought with her a picnic lunch, but Brian’s says he can’t eat anything as he’s too upset. Then he proceeds to eat two turkey sandwiches and the whole container of fruit salad. I’m glad. He needed to eat something, and he didn’t have any lunch or dinner yesterday. I’m more than happy to eat half the pan of brownies. I can’t help wondering how she knew I needed chocolate.

Just holding Jamie has helped relieve some of his stress, and I wish we all could just go home and relax. But we have Gus to care for, and we’re not sure when he’ll be released from the hospital.
Jamie, of course, fell asleep about twenty minutes ago, and we both know that we have to go back and join Mel in telling Gus about JR. I know this conversation is going to be hard. I wish there was some way we didn’t have to do this. But I also know honesty is best, even if he is so young.

Lindsay gains access to a phone by sweet talking Dale, one of the male custodians. She’s shamelessly flirting with him, suggesting they meet up during the late shift. She calls Brian cell. She’s sure there’s been some mistake; she shouldn’t be here. He’s left his phone on the nightstand next to Gus’s bed. Thank goodness it’s turned off. Lindsay’s mad, cussing at the nurses and demanding to be released. She doesn’t understand why she’s been admitted to the hospital, let alone the psych ward. She’s furious. After all she didn’t do anything wrong. If anyone’s at fault it’s Maria.

She wants to know if Maria’s been arrested. The longer she waits for Brian to answer his cell, the more vicious her words become. Of course the nurses and attendants don’t know what she’s talking about. They just know that the police have brought her in for a forty-eight hour observation. Dale seems to have disappeared, as the head nurse chastises Lindsay for disobeying the strict policy of no phone privileges. Lindsay panics, acting like a caged animal. Finally she’s subdued and given a tranquilizer. This knocks her out for a few hours. When she awakes she finds herself tied to the hospital bed.

Gus and Mel are crying as she rocks him in her arms, he doesn’t understand what’s happened to Jenny. He asks Brian if he’s going to die too, and it breaks my heart. Brian comforts him, telling him that she was smaller and weaker than him, making sure he knows he’s going to be fine. Then Gus surprises us by asking if Jamie’s going to die, because he’s even smaller and weaker than Jenny. Death is never easy to understand, especially when you’re only four years old; it can be terribly confusing.

Dr. Rose returns with all of Gus’s test results and reports that he’s fine and has a clean bill of health. Gus still needs to drink lots of fluids, and rest. But he should be able to go home in the morning. Brian pushes, asking if he can please go home this afternoon. Brian tells Dr. Rose that we all need to be in our own home, together, resting. He thinks Gus will recuperate faster in his own bed, than if he stays in the hospital. He finally agrees, and goes to get all the paperwork ready for Gus’s discharge.

I encourage Brian to go and visit Michael, and to check in with Debbie, Emmett and Ted. When he returns Gus will probably be checked out and ready to go home. He finds Michael’s room, but hesitates in the hallway. His feelings of grief, regret and guilt overwhelm him. He blames himself, if only… Debbie sees him out of the corner of her eye. She comes over and hugs him. They’re both struggling to accept that Keith has beaten Michael within an inch of his life.

Finally Deb pulls away, looking Brian in the eyes. “This is not your fault. Do you hear me? This is not your fault. Michael chose to stay with Keith. I doubt that anyone could have gotten through to him.”

“I know… It’s just that I was there this morning. I should have seen this coming. I mean, we all knew Keith would be angry and resentful.”

“Yesterday morning I was still in denial about Keith and all his issues. We all thought that he’d be locked up for a while. We never could have guessed that this would have happened.”
“I knew what a bastard he was. I knew something bad would eventually happen. Michael can be so gullible sometimes. How can I not feel responsible for all this?”

“Oh please. Stop with the guilt trip. That’s my thing, remember. “No apologies, no regrets.”

“Deb…”

“Stop! I don’t want to hear it. Now go and sit with him. I think he’ll know you’re here even if he is still unconscious.”

Again Brian’s curious how the doctors can determine when a patient is unconscious, or in a coma. Weren’t they the same thing? He watches as Michael shifts in his bed, similar to Justin when he was having a bad dream. Brian stands, but he has no idea what to do as he looks down at him. Ted and Emmett grin slightly, letting Brian know that they’re there for him, that they understand what he’s feeling. For the first time Ted and Emmett see behind the famous Kinney wall. They see his emotions, even as he tries so hard to bury them.

Emmett breaks the silence. “So how’s Gus? I understand he’s awake.”

“Yeah, he’s good. He’s really good. I convinced the doctors to let me take him home this afternoon. I think it’s best for him to be some place familiar. Some place he’ll feel safe. I know I will.”

It’s a given that Gus will be staying with Brian and Justin. It’s unlikely that Brian will let him out of his sight, except for short periods of time. Like the service for JR this evening. God, that still shocks him, making him realize just how fragile life really is, reinforcing even more that you have to live in the moment. He knows now that he needs to learn to express his emotions. He has to let people know how he’s really feeling, because he might not get another chance.

“I talked to Josh, he said that there was an accident on the bridge. Apparently Big Jack’s limousine plunged into the river. Everyone inside drowned, including Keith.”

Brian glances up at him but remains silent. It’s understood that this is the best outcome possible. It saves everyone the agony of a trial, and Michael having to face him after everything Keith’s done. Michael shifts in the bed again, and then he cries out as he cowers under the covers. Brian remembers Michael’s words, “Keith has a temper… Besides, it’s probably my fault…”

Brian can’t help wondering how common it was for Michael to cower and withdraw from all of Keith’s actions and words. He stays with Michael another half an hour to see if he’ll wake up. But he seems to be in a deep, deep sleep. That’s probably a good thing, his body needs rest so it can heal.

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Once they get home Maria makes them a light snack, and Justin rocks Jamie while giving him his bottle. Brian and Gus snuggle down and watch ‘Beauty and the Beast’ again. Gus loves this movie. Soon sleep overtakes them as they’re all exhausted from not having much sleep over the last twenty-four hours. Brian tosses and turns as the past day’s events cloud his dreams and his guilt sets in again. It seems to take forever for his brain to relax and let go.

Brian’s finally settled down and is sleeping peacefully. Justin hates to have to wake him up, so he lets him sleep a little longer. He lays out their suits, shirts and ties and starts a strong pot of French roast brewing in the kitchen. Back in the bedroom Justin snuggles up against Brian, running his hands through his hair, gently caressing the side of Brian’s cheek.
He kisses Brian softly, pulling him from his sleep. Brian eyes flutter open as he gazes into Justin’s eyes that sparkle like sapphires. A few minutes later they crawl into the shower. The hot water awakens their senses, and eases the tension they’ve been feeling. Justin brings Brian back to life as he floats down to his knees to give him one of his phenomenal blowjobs. Brian grasps his wet hair as he thrusts his hips. Moments later he’s tipping over the edge, pumping himself down Justin’s beautiful throat. They quickly dress and kiss Gus and Jamie good bye, leaving time to pick up the gift basket that Justin ordered.

Unsure what is an appropriate gesture following Jewish customs, and not wanting to come empty handed, Justin ordered a gift basket. It’s filled with apple coffee cake, chocolate, cinnamon and raspberry rugelach, assorted dried fruits, black and white cookies, honey sticks, Sahale glazed almonds, and dark chocolate bars.

There’s a small crowd in the synagogue, all of Mel’s family including many aunts, uncles and cousins who have traveled to be with her during her time of mourning. Mel and her family greet their visitors in a small chamber before the service, receiving condolences from everyone showing their respect. As the service starts the rabbi distributes black ribbons cut from a cloth, then starts the service reading the “Minyan.” Many of Mel’s close relatives recite prayers from the book of psalms, followed by the traditional memorial prayer.

The service is relatively brief, followed by a short walk to the small cemetery located behind the synagogue. More psalms are recited at the grave site followed by the attendees who take turns to place a shovel of dirt on the coffin.

It’s a very somber occasion as family and friends gather at Mel’s home. Everyone shows Mel their support, letting her know she’s not alone during her time of mourning.

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Lindsay is led from her lockdown ward to the small cafeteria for dinner with the other patients. Afterwards she is escorted to a small office to consult with Dr. O’Malley, the psychiatrist in charge of her case. She works exclusively with the police department for patient evaluations.

“Ms. Peterson, do you know why you’re here?”

“There seems to be some misunderstanding. They say I’ve endangered my children. But I can assure you I would never harm Gus and Jenny. I love them very much.”

“But do you understand that leaving them unattended in a car put them in danger?”

“I only meant to be gone a few moments.”

“Any amount of time is detrimental to your children’s welfare. Anyone could come by and take them. Do you have any idea how many children are abducted in the Pittsburgh area each year, let alone the country?”

“But I locked the car. I planned on returning just a few minutes later.”

“Surely you must have considered the consequences. What you did is considered neglect in the eyes of the law.”

“Why can’t you understand that I was coming right back? They were fine.”

“Hasn’t anyone told you? Don’t you know what’s happened?”
“What’s happened is that illiterate fat Mexican housekeeper of Brian’s is making trouble for me, when all I wanted was to see my son.”

“Your son? You’re not the biological mother of Jamie, are you?”

“He’s better off being raised with his brother Gus. I was supposed to have guardianship of him once he was born.”

“So then the answer is no.”

“The answer is, ‘Not yet. You stupid shrink!’”

“Ms. Peterson. It’s in your best interest not to become hostile towards me. After all I’m the one who will decide if you’re fit to be released.”

“I’m not crazy! And I don’t need some bitter shrink, who no doubt couldn’t cut it in medical school to evaluate me. I’m perfectly sane!”

“Psychiatrists have the same education and medical degree as all other doctors, they simple specialize in mental health. And I agree with you. I don’t believe you’re insane. I believe you’re simply angry and hateful, but fully capable of understanding right from wrong.”

“Of course I know right from wrong! I’m not some stupid lunatic.”

“Good. I’m glad we understand each other. Tomorrow afternoon you’ll be released from the hospital and formally charged with neglect, child endangerment, child abuse and manslaughter.”

“What? What are you talking about?”

“What you’ve done is a crime. I’m sure your attorney will explain everything.”

Dr. O’Malley stood, smiled cunningly and dismissed herself. A nurse was waiting to escort Lindsay back into the patient lounge where she’s allowed to read or watch TV, as long as she doesn’t disrupt the other patients. The words of Dr. O’Malley start echoing through her head. ”Formally charged with neglect, child endangerment, child abuse and manslaughter.”

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Justin’s POV

When we remodeled the loft decorated a guest room for when Maria spends the night, and it’s come in handy recently. Maria’s spending the night knowing how stressful the last couple of days have been. She’s making waffles for everyone, even Brian. We’re having a lazy day just relaxing, reading books and watching Disney movies. We plan on taking a long walk this afternoon, and if it’s hot enough outside maybe we’ll even go for ice cream.

Brian’s reading the newspaper and checking his email when there’s a knock on the door. He looks up at me and I shrug. I’m not expecting anyone, so I answer it, wondering who it might be. Again I’m faced with more police officers who question me about our hired help. I can’t help thinking hired help… Maria is so much more than an employee, she’s part of our family and I hate the condescending tone of their voice.

“Is she here?”

“Yes, may I ask what this is concerning?”
“We have a report that she’s in the country illegally.”

“That’s not true, you’ve been misinformed.”

“May we please come in?”

“Yes, of course.”

I wave them into the loft, knowing this is going to piss Brian off and it’s the last thing he needs. Brian looks up again and then stands, walking towards them. They’ve caught Maria’s attention as well, but she just continues frying bacon, watching the officers as they enter.

“What can I do for you, officers?”

“Mr. Kinney, we need to ask you some questions about your housekeeper, Maria Sanchez?”

“Yes?”

“How long has she been employed by you?”

“About three and a half years. She worked for me part-time until several months before my son was born.”

“Did she show you her green card?”

“Yes. The agency that referred her assured me she had all the necessary documentation to be employed in this country.”

“Most green cards are usually only for a year or two. Are you sure she still has the proper documentation?”

“Yes. Absolutely.”

“You’ve actually seen her paperwork, and verified that it’s current?”

“Yes. Maria is a US citizen. I sponsored her, and my personal financial consultant filed all the official paperwork for citizenship. I even accompanied her to court when she was sworn in.”

“I see.”

“What’s this all about? It’s starting to feel like Nazi Germany, you coming to my door asking to see her papers.”

“I’m sorry, Mr. Kinney. It’s just that we’ve had a complaint and I’m going to have to ask to see her actual citizenship paperwork.”

Maria looks nervous and says, “I not have… It’s at home.”

“It’s alright, Maria. I have a copy in my office safe.”

Brian excuses himself and returns with the documents. After reviewing them the officers apologize repeatedly, and Brian shows them out.

She’s still looking nervous, and it’s obviously upset her. She apologizes, “I’m so sorry, señor Kinney.”
“There’s no need to apologize, you haven’t done anything wrong. It was wrong of them to come here like that. They should have called Immigration first. Then they would have been informed about your citizenship. Please don’t let them upset you.”

She still looks unsure and shaken up. I motion for her to sit and have a cup of coffee. I finish making breakfast and serve everyone, including Maria. We really do think of her as family.

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The next few days are very stressful for everyone as we all come to grips with everything that’s happened. Debbie visits Michael often and is grateful for the night nurse Maryann. She sits with Michael after Debbie leaves for the night, knowing that Deb hates the idea of him being all alone. Several times she’s caught Maryann reading the Bible to Michael as he sleeps, this somehow seems to comfort Deb. Maybe this is just what Michael needs in his life. After everything he’s been through, finding God might be just the right thing.

It took the police several days working around the clock to thoroughly investigate the crime scene/Keith’s apartment. Once Carl gave them permission, Ted and Emmett went over and cleaned out Michael’s things, storing them in Debbie’s basement. Who knows where he’ll be living once he’s released from the hospital? And that won’t be for several months from now.

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After being arrested and brought to the police station Lindsay is allowed her phone call. She calls Mel, angry that Mel hasn’t been to see her, or had her released from the hospital. Mel’s voice is tense, and she’s a little curt with Lindsay. She reminds her that she was under a court order for observation and wasn’t allowed any visitors. Mel informs Lindsay that she can’t represent her. Lindsay needs someone who specializes in family law and child welfare cases. But Mel does agree to recommend someone who can help her.

“When are you coming to visit me?”

Mel takes a deep breath, trying to keep her cool and not go off on Lindsay.

“I should probably be doing this in person, but I just can’t see you right now. I think we need to take a break. I’m very angry with you, and I can’t be a part of your life right now.”

“What? Why?”

“Why? Where do I start? First of all you promised me that you’d let go of this whole obsession with Jamie, and wanting to be his mother. I can’t understand the things you’ve done, you’re unfit to be a parent.”

“Mel, Melanie, you can’t mean that. I love you, I need you. I love Gus and JR. I miss them and I need to see them.”

“No! Lindsay! Listen to me. I’ve filed paperwork with the court asking that your parental rights be revoked. And I’ve asked that Brian and Justin be granted full custody, allowing me visitation rights.”

“No! No. I don’t want him raising my son!”

“I’m not finished! You lied to me, and led me to believe that you still worked at the gallery. But when I called Sidney, he said he had to let you go.”
“Mel, I can explain. I didn’t want to upset you. I was going to look for another job. Really, I was.”

“Listen, Lindsay, I need you to hear this. When we bought the house you didn’t qualify for the mortgage, so it was put in my name only. Then you promised that you’d start paying part of the house payment, but you never did. Therefore, I’m packing all your things up so you can make arrangements to have them picked up. I’m keeping the house, and I don’t want you coming back here to live.”

“Melanie. You can’t abandon me like this. I need you. I love you. Please forgive me. I promise, I’ll make it up to you.”

“You’ll make it up to me? How? How can you ever do that? I buried my daughter, my darling sweet baby girl! I’ll never see her grow up! I’ll never see her again… How can I ever forgive you?”

“What are you talking about? What do you mean you buried Jenny Rebecca?”

“I know the police arrested you for child endangerment. You’re being charged with manslaughter. You’ve admitted to leaving Gus and JR locked in a car. You never came back for them! Do you know how hot it was in the car? It’s a Goddamn miracle that Gus didn’t die too, that he doesn’t have residual brain damage!”

“No! No, this can’t be right! I don’t believe you! No! No! No!”

Silence…

Mel can’t even talk to her, she’s so hurt and upset. It’s lucky she’s in jail because Mel just might actually kill her if she wasn’t.

“Mel? Melanie, please tell me you forgive me. I need you to forgive me.”

“I’ll call you an attorney. He’ll contact you at the jail in the next day or so.”

“Mel! Don’t hang up! Mel! Mel!”

Lindsay sinks to the floor, feeling sick to her stomach. She can hardly grasp what Mel has told her. She’s scared and frightened. For the first time she’s really all on her own. She can just imagine how upset Brian must feel, how he must really hate her. She sits on the floor crying, feeling sorry for herself as the cold hard truth of her actions sinks in.

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Michael floats in and out of consciousness, he’s now sleeping a good part of the day while his body recovers. Debbie notices that Maryann has taken an interest in Michael, she now visits him even on her off hours. They talk often about Michael’s progress and Deb’s really beginning to like Maryann. It’s like Michael has his own guardian angel watching over him. Deb has taken leave from the diner so she can spend most of her day with Michael. Carl’s glad, he hates how much she works and he’d rather she not work at all.

She makes her famous chicken soup for him now that he’s more alert, although he’s in a great deal of pain and on some strong painkillers. So she discounts his snarky and snide comments, writing it off to his injuries. She understands how hard it is to have to know you’ll be hospitalized for months to come. He’s having some trouble with his hand and eye coordination, and that frustrates him. He now has a sense of what it was like for Justin after the bashing. Not that he actually feels sorry for the way he treated Justin, he’s still spiteful about Justin’s place in Brian’s life.
Ted and Emmett visit daily, bringing him comic books and lemon squares. Mostly they just hang out and catch him up on all the gossip from Liberty Avenue. They try to avoid talking about Jenny. Rebecca, as well Brian and Justin. The last time they brought up the wedding, he was back to being resentful and angry, making it clear that he thought Brian should be here with him while he’s in the hospital. They had hoped that he had gotten past all his jealousy. But it seems angry Michael is back, and he thinks it should be him marrying Brian, not Justin.

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Brian’s POV

I’ve only visited Michael twice since Gus left the hospital. I’ve sat with him for a while reading ‘The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes’ to him. I picked up a copy in the gift shop. Michael mostly sleeps and when he’s awake he’s quiet and withdrawn. Sometimes it feels like we’re strangers instead of best friends. Michael seems so sensitive these days when I mention some of the things that have happened, I feel like I’m tiptoeing around landmines. The truth is that after Jamie was born, and Michael had his meltdown at Christmas, we’ve been drifting apart. We really don’t seem to have much to say to one another anymore.

Gus is back to his usual self, playing and reading. He paints with Justin during the day and helps Maria make dinner. He’s still fascinated by everything that Jamie does, and he loves being a big brother. Justin’s butterball is starting to grow and it’s becoming noticeable, which excites and frightens Justin at the same time. We talked about it and decided to go ahead with the wedding. We just got the invitations from the printer and Justin is addressing envelopes like a madman. I suggested that we just print labels for them but apparently that’s a no-no according to Miss Manners. So I have my work cut out for me when I get home.

Justin’s POV

After spending the good part of the evening addressing invitations we’re finally done. I’m pretty sure my hand’s about to fall off, it’s been cramping on and off most of the day. I’ve been able to hide it from Brian for the most part so let’s just hope tonight’s activities focus more on my big bubble butt. I don’t know if it’s my imagination, but it seems to be growing just like my belly. It’s a good thing we’re getting married in two weeks because my suit might not fit if we wait much longer.

I love how round it’s getting and Brian can’t seem to keep his hands off me. He loves standing behind me, circling me with his arms and running his hands across my not-so-little butterball. Most of my clothes fit a little too snugly these days and Brian insists that we go shopping. Of course I still want to wear cotton t-shirts, sweats and cargo pants as they’re comfortable. Besides I’m only hanging out at home, painting or cooking.

Brian has other ideas. He thinks I should wear more sophisticated clothes so he’s made an appointment for me with his tailor. I agreed to let him design a suit for our wedding, because I did want something stylish and classic that actually fits. But I don’t wear dress slacks, tailored shirts, and lightweight sweaters. It’s not like I’m some high-powered ad executive.

Brian cringes when I joke about looking more like Larry the cable guy, than a high-fashion model stepping off the cover of GQ. I can just imagine them doing a spread on Fashions for the Expectant Father. Thankfully Brian’s favorite way to see me is unclothed. I worry that he might be turned off by my chubby tummy. After all he’s always boasted that he’s not into fat. But he tells me I’m not fat, just pregnant and he thinks I’m beautiful. We’ll see what he thinks when I’m nine months pregnant. But then again he’s been there, so maybe he knows what I’ll be feeling like when I can no longer see my swollen feet.
God, it feels good lying here on our big comfortable mattress with Jamie sleeping on my big belly. I think my heartbeat calms him, maybe it lulls him off to sleep. Brian’s busy tucking Gus in and reading him a bedtime story. He was surprised, but very happy when Mel asked us if we’d consider agreeing to full custody of Gus. She still wants to spend time with him on a regular schedule, with him staying overnight on the weekends. But she works ten hours a day and really doesn’t have the time and energy to be a full-time single parent. We all agree that it’s best for him being home with me during the day, and not at some daycare center.

I’ve almost fallen asleep when Brian comes into the bedroom, carrying a tray of milk and Oreos. I smile broadly, he knows I’m always hungry these days. I’d probably be in the kitchen looking for Twinkies in the middle of the night if I didn’t have a bedtime snack. Besides, I now know that he loves milk and Oreos as much as I do. After he’s gotten Jamie snuggled down in his crib, he comes and joins me. I’m dunking the cookies in milk, and then popping them in my mouth. I can’t help dripping milk drops across my stomach and chest. He licks them up, in between eating the milk-soaked cookies I’m feeding him.

The feel of his wet tongue across my warm skin is sending shivers through me. I can’t help sporting an erection just feeling the sensations as his tongue glides across my chest. Soon the cookies are forgotten as he makes a meal out of me instead. I arch my back and sink deeper in the mattress, my minds flooded with endorphins. No one ever talks about it, but being pregnant heightens your need for sexual contact. You’d think that now that I’m pregnant our sex life would be decreasing, but it’s just the opposite. We’re like little bunnies, okay, maybe he’s not so little and neither am I these days.

I’m panting and I’m pretty sure I’m drooling as my body comes alive with desire. I relax here on my back and let him do all the work. I know I’m spoiled, but he likes to always be in control. Soon he’s climbing up my body leaving a trail of wet sloppy kisses across my torso and chest. Our eyes meet, reading all the lust and passion we’re feeling for one another. Soon his lips capture mine as our tongues dance together.

I moan and whisper his name as my yearning increases. I feel him hard against me and I need him inside of me. He senses my desire and brings my legs up onto his shoulders. Considering how horny I am these days I sometimes wonder if I even need lube. But he’s not willing to take a chance that he might hurt me. Even knowing that it’s coming, I’m always surprised by the coolness as he spreads it across my rosebud.

He’s fast. Soon he’s inside of me, gliding against my tight walls, sending ripples of pleasure through both of us. He takes it nice and slow as the sensations build, long steady thrusts as he pulls himself in and out of me. Then down again, as he picks up the pace driving deeper into me. I’m like the surf cresting, drowning in wave after wave of pleasure, lost in my own tide pool.

I’m chanting, “Brian, Brian, Brian.”

Then he’s there with me. We’re both satiated, washed up on the shore like beached whales as the tide rolls back into the sea.

TBC…
~ What’s with Michael?

Chapter Summary

Michael starts his long recovery. But he seems to be changing right before their eyes, and not in a positive life-affirming way…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 4669
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Summary: Michael starts his long recovery. But he seems to be changing right before their eyes, and not in a positive life-affirming way…

Chapter Twenty Four ~ What’s with Michael?

“Justin! Justin!”

“Daddy! We got cake!”

“I see that…”

“Brian, you’re home for lunch.”

“Justin, there’s two hundred cakes in the kitchen.”

“I know… It’s great! But really it’s only twenty-two.”

“Twenty-two cakes?”

“They’re very small… Besides…”

“The baby’s going to be born a diabetic.”

“Brian.”

“That’s a lot of cravings! You must have made several runs to the bakery.”

“Don’t be silly, I had them delivered.”

“Of course you did. But did you have to have a slice or two out of each cake?”
“We’re doing a taste test.”

“Of course you are.”

“Daddy, they’re really yummy. But Justy says you can only taste five.”

“I said we’d narrow it down to the top five, then you can help us decide.”

“Decide? Decide what? When to call the ambulance when you go into a sugar coma?”

“Hi Brian.”

Brian nods his head. “Em.”

“I see you’re here for the taste test.”

“What the fuck is a taste test?”

“You know, dear… For the wedding. Or did you forget you’re marrying me?”

“Oh… Oh yeah…”

“Daddy, we’re getting married! Do you want to come?”

“I’ll have to check my calendar.”

“So, I’m guessing you want more than cake for lunch?”

“I’ll order pizza. That’s what you want. Right?”

“Yes, daddy! Pizza! Pizza! Pizza!”

“I can see he’s had more than enough cake.”

“I’m sure as soon as he eats his pizza, he’ll crash and be sound asleep in no time.”

“So Em, I’m guessing you need another check?”

“That would be great, Brian. We’ve got just about everything finalized and I trust that you’ve got the whole honeymoon thing planned.”

“I’m working on it.”

“Just let me know if you need any help with that. I’m more than willing to do anything you need.”

“That’s good to know. I’ll call you later and we’ll talk. I could use a little help with a special surprise.”

Emmett claps. “I love surprises.”

Justin grins. “Me too!”

“Sorry, little boy, you’ll have to wait and see.”

“Fine!”

“Now, now dear. Don’t you want the perfect wedding?”
Justin smiles his bright sunshine smile. Just thinking about their wedding makes him so excited.

“Yes, I want it perfect! So do you want to start tasting the different flavors now or after lunch?”

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Lindsay’s new lawyer got her out on a bond that her parents posted. She is now staying with them, as the Board of Children’s Welfare investigated her and the death of Jenny Rebecca. She is also requesting her rights to Gus be reinstated, granting her and her parents full custody. Now that she’s living with them she’ll be able to provide a stable home in a good neighborhood, was well as being with him during the days.

From her perspective she is the perfect parent, and everything that happened with Jenny Rebecca was a big misunderstanding and a tragic accident. It was Justin and Maria’s fault that she was delayed at the loft and therefore the children were put in jeopardy. She’s actually insisting that her attorney have Maria, Brian and Justin investigated, claiming they’re unfit parents.

Her parents hope that now that her relationship with Melanie is over she’ll see the error of her ways, and abandon her desire for companionship with other women. She’s even agreed to be set up on a date with Ken, her father’s junior business partner. Nancy and Ron are so happy that they have their little girl back, they’ve decided to build her a small house in the back of their property. They have no idea about Lindsay’s delusional behavior concerning custody of Jamie.

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Michael’s starting to feel better; he’s awake more and often spends time talking with Maryann. He feels comfortable with her as she listen to all his problems without passing judgment. She’s taken an interest in him, and makes him feel special in a way that he’s never felt before. Deb’s noticed that he seems to be undergoing some changes. It’s subtle at first. Little things, like he becomes irritated easily and seems more critical of her and his friends.

His doctors mention that it’s not unusual for patients with closed-head injuries to experience slight personality changes. Of course it could also be a side effect of him suddenly stopping his use of crystal meth, although no one but Keith knew he was using. The oddest change is that he’s started reading the Bible when he’s alone in his hospital room. Deb imagines that with everything that’s happened Michael might need to turn to God for guidance. After all he’s lucky to be alive.

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Mel feels lost. It’s strange being in an empty house and the couple of times she’s tried to go and pack up Jenny Rebecca’s things, she ends up sitting in the rocking chair, crying her eyes out. She knows she needs to get her things out of the house. Once everything’s gone maybe she’ll be able to start accepting what’s happened. Her life is in chaos as losing a child is the worst kind of tragedy to have to suffer. But she’s also lost her wife, and she feels so alone. Then there’s the stress of her job which is becoming more demanding. They of course gave her the week off to grieve, but they expect her back next week all bright-eyed and bushytailed.

So she sits packing JR’s things for the children at the women’s shelter, folding her tiny little dresses and packing away her black patent-leather shoes that JR loved to wear. Tears run down her face and she wonders if she’ll ever feel normal again, if she’ll ever have the opportunity to raise another child. After all she’s already thirty-five and her biological clock is ticking away, and with her career choice, being a single parent is out of the question. So she not only grieves for JR, but for any other children that she’s unlikely to ever have.
She’s brought out of her sorrow as she hears someone knocking on the front door. It’s her cousin Mona who can only imagine how sad and lonely Melanie is feeling. She’s brought her apple pie from the bakery and insists that Mel get out of the house for a while. She suggests that they go to the movies. It will help take her mind off everything that’s happened, for a few hours, anyway. Mel’s resistant at first, but after having some of the pie with vanilla ice cream she finally agrees to go to a matinée.

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Brian chuckles when he realizes that just as Justin had predicted, Gus is fast asleep for his afternoon nap. He thinks it’s adorable that Justin and Jamie are also fast asleep on the sofa. He remembers how tired and exhausted he would get when he was pregnant, so he completely understands. After deciding on the different flavors for each layer of the wedding cake, they keep several of the small cakes for Justin and Gus’s sweet tooth. Then Brian helps Emmett box up all the left-over cake, some for his nephews and the rest for Emmett to deliver to the Vic Grassi House.

Brian gathers his clothes together for soccer practice with his nephews, and walks Emmett out to his car. They make arrangements to meet for breakfast the next day to go over Brian’s wedding and honeymoon plans. He’s grateful for the help as planning everything in only a few weeks is proving to be more time consuming that he expected. He wants Justin to be totally surprised and he just hopes that Emmett can keep his secret. But he is a wedding planner, so he should be able to handle all the arrangements.

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Once Michael’s started to heal he’ll have to go into physical therapy. Between his broken ribs and broken pelvis he’ll probably have a hard time walking, and it’s possible that he might have to use a cane once he starts getting around. Lying in a hospital bed is giving him lots of time to think about the direction of his life, he’s even started confided in Maryann.

She’s young and a recent graduate from Nursing school, her father is a minister. She’s very strait-laced, but tries not to pass judgment on Michael’s past lifestyle. She thinks he deserves better, thinks he just needs someone more patient and understanding of him and his needs. Michael seems distant when Ted and Emmett visit and it’s almost as if he questions the value of his friendship with them.

But as the days continue he seems to be coming more and more religious. He questions Deb about why she seldom attends church and why he wasn’t raised more religiously. He knows she was raised Catholic, but he never went to catechism, or attended Catholic school. She’s starting to feel uncomfortable with his questioning her about these issues. She can’t imagine where all this is coming from. The truth is, that although she worked hard, money was always tight. She often worked extra shifts on the weekends and seldom attended mass.

Although she always brought Michael to church on the holidays and observed most of the Catholic traditions throughout the year, for the first time she starts to question how close he and Maryann are staring to become. She never thought that reading the Bible or bringing God into his life would start him changing, but it is and in ways she never expected. He’s started to question all the choices he’s made, and now refers to his homosexuality as a lifestyle choice. Debbie’s at a loss, but doesn’t say anything because he seems too touchy about everything and she doesn’t want to set him off.

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Brian’s relationship with his mother and sister has improved; they’re trying to accept him for who
he is. Claire’s thankful for the time he’s spending with John and Peter whether it’s helping them with their homework, or coaching their soccer team. They seem happier and are doing better in school. They’re at that age where they might start hanging out with the wrong crowd, experimenting with drugs and just getting into trouble in general. She never thought she’d feel this way but she’s grateful to have Brian as her brother.

Father Thom has spent time talking with her and Joan about Brian and Justin’s relationship. He’s helped them understand that Brian’s homosexuality is just as natural for him as their heterosexuality is for them. They can now see that Brian is happy, maybe for the first time in his life. That his childhood has left him with scars, and an unresolved feeling of being rejected and unloved.

Brian has changed. He loves his sons, and he’s become very well respected in the business community. He has lived a lifestyle in the past that might have glorified his sexuality, and he might have even flaunted it. But now that Justin is part of his life, and they’ve decided to raise a family, he now has a positive outlook and has let go of some of his condescending and judgmental attitude that he so often displayed.

Joan has even opened her eyes to see that her own judgmental ways and Jack’s harsh behavior and punishments have left Brian with feelings of inadequacy and resentment. Now that she’s opened her heart to him, Brian seems willing to try and do the same towards her and Claire. Justin has taught him that family is everything, and that you don’t get to choose who your parents are, or who you fall in love with. Since he’s started to accept this, he’s now making an effort to let go of the past and build a future as a family.

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Emmett stops by the hospital to see Michael and he’s introduced to Maryann, who seems shy, quiet, and very reserved, especially compared to Emmett in his tangerine pants and peach colored dress shirt. Michael welcomes him to sit down, he almost seems happy to see him and then the questions start.

“Em, when you first started going to those ‘See the Light’ meetings, did they make you feel better?”

“Better? Better than what?”

“You know, Michael, they acted like they were teaching God’s word. But the truth is they never really talked about God at all, they only talked about how to become straight. About how they were going to help cure you, like you had a disease or something.”

“I don’t think they think it’s a disease. I think they believe that you deserve a life, a better life. One where you feel whole and complete.”

“That’s just it. It took finally seeing you and Ted to realize that I already was complete.”

“No. No, I don’t think you are, and I don’t think I am either. I think there is a better life, one where we can find happiness. One where we can feel fulfillment living a better quality life.”

“I’ve come to believe that life is what we make it, that you need to find your own happiness in life.”

“That’s exactly what I’m talking about. Making a better life living for ourselves the way God
intended us to.”

“Michael, you’ve never really been a religious person before. What’s happened?”

“That’s exactly what I mean. I’ve never really thought about God before. But now, after everything I’ve been through, I can’t help thinking there’s a better life for me.”

Michael’s words echo through Emmett’s head, some of them seem so similar to those same words he heard from the people at ‘See the Light.’ He believes they were trying to reprogram him, trying to make him think that homosexuality was a sin. He stares at Michael, just waiting for him so say something similar, and he’s scared to death. Deb wasn’t kidding this morning. Michael really is changing and he wonders how he can help stop all this nonsense from happening. The problem is that Michael has always been so gullible and naïve, believing everything that he’s told.

“Michael, what’s happened to make you think that you need a better life?”

Of course as soon as the words came out of his mouth, he knew Michael would justify all this religious talk by all the bad things he went through with Keith.

“Emmett, you have to admit that I was living in a bad situation. Even when I was with Ben, it was a really unhealthy situation.”

“Yes, of course Keith was bad news, a really bad person. But Ben, Ben was a great guy and you really loved him.”

“No. I just thought that I loved him, just like I thought that I loved Keith. But they both put my life in danger, maybe not in the same way. But I was living an unhealthy life just the same. I’m so lucky that I didn’t contract HIV from Ben. Do you have any idea what he exposed me to on a daily basis. How could I have been so blind?”

“Michael, I think you’re overreacting. Ben was a great guy, and you really loved him. I don’t understand how you can say these things about him.”

“No, I don’t think I did love him. I think I did what everyone made me feel like I should do.”

“No one made you date and fall in love with Ben.”

“No. No it started a long time before that. It was my mom, and Uncle Vic. I was just a child and their influence made me think that homosexuality was natural and normal.”

“What’s that’s supposed to mean?”

“You, of all people, should know exactly what I mean, Emmett. You know it in your heart that you’re living a lie, just like me.”

“No! No, I don’t, and I can’t believe that you really think that either.”

Emmett’s had enough, he just wants to get out of there. He knows he should stay and argue with Michael. Make him understand that he’s being brainwashed but he just feels panicked and needs to leave.

“Michael, can you hear yourself? Because I can’t believe you’re saying these things. I have to go, I’m meeting a client. But you need to really listen to yourself, maybe talk to your doctor. You sound unstable.”
“You’re wrong. For the first time in my life I’m seeing things the way they really are. But you go, run away. But you’ll be back. You know I’m right and God will welcome you back when you’re ready to accept the truth.”

Emmett rushes out of the room and stands at the elevator, pushing the down button over and over again, needing to get out of there. Maryann comes over and asks him to please stay away from Michael until he’s ready to accept the word of God, and live a life, free of his deviant homosexual behavior.

Soon Emmett’s pacing as he talks a mile a minute waving his arms in the air, practically hysterical as Justin pours him a few fingers of Jim Beam. Justin’s trying to take in everything Emmett’s been saying, but it all seems so unbelievable. Could Michael really have had a break from reality?

After listening to Emmett rant for the last hour until he really did have to meet with a client, Justin’s left feeling concerned and confused about Michael’s stability and this nurse Maryann. He calls Brian and asks him to stop by to see Michael on the way home. He knows Michael’s been upset that he hasn’t been visiting him enough while he’s been in the hospital. Brian’s dirty and sweaty from practice but agrees to go the next morning to see Michael.

Brian’s drops the boys off at home. He makes plans to pick them up after school the next day to buy them some new clothes as theirs are faded and tattered. Besides he wants to buy them each a new suit for the wedding, and a pair of dress pants and sports jacket for the rehearsal dinner next week. Jennifer’s even agreed to take Claire and Joan dress shopping so they have several new outfits to choose from for the upcoming events.

The next morning Deb’s refilling his and Emmett’s coffee cups as they finish breakfast. Emmett’s beaming; he can’t believe he’s been given the task for arranging the band for the wedding and it’s not just some band. It’s Justin’s favorite band, but it’s a surprise so Emmett’s lips are sealed until the big day. He’s also been put in charge of the travel arrangements for their honeymoon, and Em is so excited he wishes he could go with them.

Brian has secretly asked Maria’s sister Consuela to travel with them on their honeymoon. Maria will need help caring for both Gus and Jamie, because Brian knows there is no way Justin will agree to be away from the kids for three weeks. This will give them a much-needed vacation and still be able to spend time with the kids. It will also give Maria a vacation with her sister; she works hard for Brian and Justin and deserves a little down time herself.

Emmett rushes out to start on all the arrangements he needs to make, so Brian waves Debbie over and asks her to sit with him for a few minutes. She sips her coffee, as she holds back the tears in her eyes. This is so not normal for Debbie and he knows it. Her usual self is made of steel and can handle anything that comes her way. But today she’s a wreck, and the stress is making her show her age.

“What is it, Deb? You look so distraught.”

She shakes her head, as she tries not to raise her voice and show her emotions.

“I went to see Michael before my shift this morning. I baked him some sugar cookies, his favorite. That nurse of his, Maryann, said that she didn’t think it was a good idea for me to be visiting him so often. She thinks it is unhealthy for him, and hindering his recovery. I went by early, so I could explain to Michael that I could only visit him in the evenings. I agreed to pick up Kiki’s morning shifts this week, she’s having reconstructive surgery. You know, to…”

“Yes Deb, I get it. But why would she say that to you? I mean you’re his mother. You’ve been
there every day.”

“I know, it makes no sense. Emmett said that she asked him not to come by at all anymore, that he wasn’t welcome. Can you believe that?”

“Yes, I just got an earful from Em during breakfast. I can’t imagine what’s gotten into Michael these days.”

“It’s that skinny-assed Maryann and her high and mighty attitude. Sure, she acted all nice and sweet in the beginning, but now she seems to be convincing Michael that homosexuality is a bad thing.”

“Yeah! Right! Like Michael’s going to actually give up cock! He’s almost a bigger nelly bottom than Em.”

They both crack a smile. Michael is a total bottom boy. Besides, they know Michael’s never been able to stick with anything for more than a day or two.

“Give him a couple of days, and a few good-looking male nurses and he’ll be back. I’ll guarantee it.”

“I hope so, Brian. I’m really worried about him.”

“Trust me. Michael’s a big old queer. Not even nurse Mother Theresa can change that.”

“Thanks, I do feel better now. But you’ll go see him. Right?”

“Yes, mother… But not until after work tonight.”

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Gus is helping Maria to make peanut butter cookies. She’s showing him how to press the fork across the tops to flatten them out, leaving a waffle pattern on the tops. Justin’s folding laundry as he watches Jamie playing on his baby quilt on the floor. He looks away for a minute and when he turns back he sees Jamie cruising across the floor, crawling at a fast pace. It seems he tossed his teddy bear, Mr. Snuggly under the table and, Lord knows, he can’t live without his teddy bear.

He’s still a very happy baby, although he’s fussy when Justin tries to feed him any kind of baby food. He still prefers his bottle, although Justin wonders if it has more to do with being held close in his arms when he’s feeding him. Gus runs to get him his bear. But Justin tells to let him get it, but just make sure he doesn’t hit his head on the table legs. He thinks it’s good for Jamie to be learning to crawl on different surfaces, although now he washes and vacuums the floor several times a day. Can you say neurotic?

Jennifer stops by after dress shopping with Joan and Claire. They found several new formal dresses and well as some clothes for Joan to wear to church, and Claire to wear to her new receptionist job she starts next week. She eats lunch with them, bringing everyone sandwiches from the deli and Justin’s much-needed Reuben sandwich, pickled beets and sushi. Yes, his taste buds are craving some weird foods these days. Afterwards they enjoy the fresh-baked cookies before she takes Gus to the park to play before his afternoon nap.

Brian’s POV

After a long day I’m headed to the hospital to see Michael, hopefully he’ll be in a good mood. I enter his room as he sits looking out the window, lost in his thoughts.
“Michael, penny for your thoughts.”

“Brian, I’m glad you’re here. I’ve been thinking a lot about us - how we grew up and all the influences on our teen years.”

“Oh? Just what influences are those?”

“You know, me not growing up with a male influence and only Uncle Vic. You and your dominant mother and abusive father.”

“What about my parents?”

“I’m just saying that neither one of us had positive role models. They didn’t really let us see how real men should live and behave.”

“I agree. My old man was a bastard. But Vic, he was a great guy. When he was in town, he was always there for us. He helped guide us and helped us understand what it meant to be gay in a not-so-accepting world.”

“Do you ever think that maybe it was such an unaccepting world, because there was a better way to grow up and learn to become a man?”

“You know, Michael, both Deb and Emmett said you seem to be questioning your sexuality. But I just can’t believe that you’re really all that confused. I think this Maryann is pushing her religion on you.”

“Maryann is a great girl, and a great friend. I won’t have you dissing her just because you don’t agree with her beliefs.”

“Her beliefs? It sounds like she’s brainwashing you.”

“Think about it, Brian. You had no one to turn to when you were young. I know about your… your tryst with Uncle Vic. I know you tried to hide it from me, you and him. But you both knew it was wrong, and you were so young at the time.”

“Michael.”

“No! Hear me out! Then there was our gym teacher. He basically raped you, even if you don’t want to believe it. He was a grown man, and an authority figure. He knew better, but he did it anyways.”

“Michael, you’re way off base.”

“No. Please listen to me. It’s not surprising that you tried to seduce me, we were so young. And it’s only normal to have questions about your sexuality, and to experiment with sex. But you should have been trying it with girls.”

Brian shakes his head. This nurse has really done a number on Michael.

“First of all, I didn’t try to seduce you. We were teenage boys. Besides, you were hard before I even touched you. Blame Patrick Swayze if you need to blame someone.”

“Everything’s a joke with you! I’m trying to tell you that it’s not your fault. You probably couldn’t help it when you came on to your nephew John. After all he’s about the same age as when you started touching me.”
“I didn’t touch John! And I didn’t start touching you! I may have cupped your cock for all of about ten seconds. So please stop making that encounter some turning point in your life.”

“I’m not done!”

“I am!”

“You sit and hear this. Damn it! Look what you’ve done to Justin. He was a virgin, and you seduced him. Made him want you and now, now you’re marrying him.”

“It that what your real problem is, Michael?”

“No! Not anymore. I don’t want you and I don’t want to be with men anymore.”

Brian raises his eyebrows. “Sure, we’ll see about that.’

“I’m going to marry Maryann when I get out of the hospital. I’ve found my way to God, and it’s not too late for you. You don’t have to marry Justin. You could give your children to a loving Christian couple who would raise them properly.”

“Fuck you, Michael! I love Justin! I love my sons, and I’m not giving any of them up because of your misguided sense of religion!”

“Think about what I’ve said, Brian. The Lord forgives. It’s not too late!”

Brian’s already halfway down the hall, he doesn’t even know who Michael is these days. It seems he’s like a sponge, absorbing everything anyone spews at him. He’s unable to see the truth or deceit behind their words. It truly makes his skin crawl, thinking about how fucked up Michael has become. He stops at Woody’s on the way home and has a drink with Ted and Emmett. He gives them an update on his visit with Michael and they’re beside themselves, wondering where their friend has gone, and who this stranger is living in his body. It’s like he’s a pod person right out of ‘Invasion of the Body Snatchers.”

TBC…
Chapter Twenty Five ~ From This Day Forward…

Chapter Summary

Their big day is finally here, and they're both having trouble keeping their emotions in check. Now if they can just get through the day without turning into total lesbians in front of all their friends...

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the loooong hiatus, but I promise the next chapters will be posted every 4 weeks or so from now on....

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 6501
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Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
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Chapter Twenty Five ~ From This Day Forward…

“Justin, honey. You really have to stop worrying, everything’s going to be fine.”

“I’m not worried, Mom!”

“They why are you pacing? You’re going to wear a path in the carpet.”
“I’m just going over all the details in my head. I want our wedding to be perfect.”

“Everything’s going to be fine, Emmett’s a professional.”

“I really need to see Brian. I didn’t think it would be this hard not having him here with me.”

“Justin, I’m sure Brian’s just as nervous as you are right now. I mean, you don’t think he’ll change his mind or anything, do you?”

“What! No! God no, I hope not… Do you think he’s changed his mind? Did he tell you he was getting cold feet?”

“No, of course not.”

“No, you’re my mother, he would never confide in you.”

“I’m sorry, Justin. I didn’t mean to upset you.”

“I better call Ted, he’ll know. Oh God, what if he has?”

“Justin, honey…”

Emmett breezes into the sitting room in Justin’s suite. Startled by the look on Justin’s face, he rushes to him.

“Justin! What is it? Is something wrong?”

“I don’t know. I need to see Brian. You don’t think Brian’s having second thoughts, do you?”

“WHAT! No! Why would you say that? What did he do? I’m going to kill him!”
“No, no… It’s nothing. It’s just me worrying about everything. I just wish I hadn’t insisted that we not see each other before the wedding.”

“Oh, you scared me. I thought something actually happened. Here, I brought you something to eat, it will help calm your nerves.”

Emmett hands Justin a plate of fresh fruit and tea sandwiches. Justin looks at him like he’s lost his mind.

“I haven’t had anyone cut the crust off my sandwiches since I was six years old. Besides, I’m eating for two these days, so we’re going to need more than tiny sandwiches.”

“Just try them.”

Justin takes a bite and makes a face. “What the hell is that?”

Jennifer, on the other hand, smiles nostalgically and says, “I haven’t had cucumber and watercress sandwiches since my bridal shower.”

“Emmett, do you think I could get a Reuben or maybe a cheeseburger? Eating always seems to calm me down.”

“You don’t want to be sick on your special day. Now try the chicken salad, or even the deviled ham.”

“Why in the world would you ruin ham and chicken like this? Maybe I could have some fried chicken instead?”

“Justin, you need to eat something light, something that won’t make you feel bloated or uncomfortable.”

“Em, in case you haven’t noticed I’m five months pregnant, and expanding by the minute. I’m
already feeling bloated and uncomfortable.”

“Well, you look great! You’re so handsome, and you’re glowing.”

He can’t help smirking, remembering Brian always tells him that right after they have sex. Realizing he’s not going to get anything else to eat, he tries the chicken salad sandwich. It couldn’t be worse. He swallows, even though he’d like to spit it out.

“So is everything going according to plan, so far? No problems?”

Em just looks at him, smiling. His mind flashes to the case of champagne that was dropped in the driveway, the wrong colored tablecloths that were delivered, and the piano player who has a case of stomach flu. The stress of finding another pianist is worrisome. If need be he can always ask a few of the musicians from the small chamber orchestra that is set to perform during the beginning of the reception to play, even though Brian wants a solo pianist during the ceremony.

“Everything’s perfect, right on schedule. Now I have to get back to the kitchen. You try and relax. I’ll send Daphne up as soon as she arrives.”

*Meaning as soon as she finds someone to replace the pianist for the ceremony; she’s sure her friend from the music school can fill in.*

“And don’t worry about Brian, I’m sure he’s just running behind. *Everything’s going to be fine.*”

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Once out in the hallway he whips out his phone, calling Teddy to find out where the hell Brian is. Waiting for him to pick up, he wonders how many times today he has already said, ‘Everything’s going to be fine…’

He just keeps telling himself that because he knows he can fix anything that happens, he’s a professional. He just wishes that everything would stop happening.

He enters the room set up for the ceremony and comes to a screeching halt. No, no, this can’t be
happening…

“What is the meaning of this?”

“Oh hi, you must be Emmett. My friend, Devin asked me if I could fill in for him. He’s sick and he said you needed someone at the last minute. I don’t play piano, but I play violin.”

“I know you play the fucking violin! But you’re not playing the fucking violin here, today, for this wedding! Now get out of here! Go! Now!”
Ethan just stares at him. “Are you sure you don’t want to reconsider? At least make sure you can get someone else as a replacement?”

Just then they hear someone clear their throat behind them. Emmett cringes, Oh dear God, kill me now…

They both turn and look right at Brian, who glares at them with raised eyebrows.

“You’ve got to be kidding me, right? What the fuck is Ian doing here?”

“Emmett stutters, “It’s not what you think. He was just leaving.”

Daphne comes rushing into the room and runs right into Brian. She looks around him, blinks then freezes. The silence is deadly…

“Good news. Carolyn can be here in a half an hour so pianist problem solved.”

Brian’s still staring at Ethan, wanting to strangle him for no other reason than the fact that he’s still breathing. He better not be here to see Justin.

“I guess you won’t be needing me after all.”

“We never needed you!”
“It’s good to see you too, Brian. Now don’t tell me this is your wedding? Who in their right mind would marry you?”

Emmett grabs hold of Ethan’s arm, pulling him out of the room, while Brian and Daphne just stare him down.

“Did I really just see that slimy musician here, in the same room where my wedding is going to take place?”

“Nope, I’m pretty sure that was just an illusion. Now please stay calm, Brian. Everything’s going to be fine.”

Emmett rushes back into the room with Teddy, directing them both to Brian’s suite. He already has Brian’s club salad ready and waiting for him. “You just need to relax and have something to eat, it will help calm you down. Quickly exiting the room, he shakes his head, saying to himself, ‘Just take a deep breath, and remain calm. Everyone needs to remain calm. Everything’s going to be fine’.

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Daphne knocks and enters Justin’s suite. Jennifer is now the one pacing, wondering if Brian might actually leave Justin at the altar. After all she’s left him countless messages, and he’s not answering his cell. Justin’s lying on the bed with a wet washcloth covering his face.

“Brian, is that you?”

“No, it’s me.”

“Daph, I need to find Brian. Something’s wrong, I just know it.”

She stares at him, then concludes that he really doesn’t know anything about the Ethan fiasco downstairs.
“Brian’s fine, I just saw him. He and Teddy are in his suite having a bite to eat, before he gets ready.”

“Did Emmett make him have tea sandwiches, too?”

“Tea sandwiches? Do people still eat those things?”

Justin waves to the plate of mostly untouched tiny crustless sandwiches. Wrinkling her nose, she opens up her big canvas bag and pulls out a large Tupperware container filled with cartons of Chinese food.

“Oh God, Daph! I love you so much, you’re a life saver!”

“So if Brian is here, why hasn’t he returned any of my messages? Is something going on we should know about?”

Just then the phone rings, and Justin grabs it. “I need you! I have to see you! Now!”

“All right. I’m right next door. I’m pretty sure these suites connect to one another.”

Before Brian can finish his sentence he’s standing right next to Justin. They hand their phones off to Jennifer and Daphne and fall into each other’s arms.

“I’m sorry I insisted you leave the house this morning at six o’clock. I’ve missed you so much, and I was practically on the verge of a panic attack.”

“I missed you too, you little twat.”

“So where have you been? What have you been doing all day?”

“Well let’s see. I started out at the baths for the early-bird special. Then I hit the massage parlors when they opened, and ended up at Woody’s to scope out the scene for one last hurrah.”
“Brian! You didn’t?”

“I was at work. Where do you think I was? We’re going to be gone for almost a month, and I had a lot of loose ends to tie up.”

Raising his eyebrows he says, “Not that kind of tied up. I’m saving that for later.”

Jennifer looks away, blushing.

“Sorry, Mother Taylor, but sometimes he just needs a good spanking.”

Jennifer doesn’t know if he’s kidding or not, so she just continues to look away, blushing even more.

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Downstairs, Emmett’s directing the kitchen staff, checking on the bartenders, making sure everything’s set up for the cocktail hour before the ceremony. He’s inspecting the wait staffs’ uniforms, instructing them on the timing of the dinner service, and to make sure all the guests have champagne before the toast to the newlyweds begins. New linens have arrived, this time in the correct color, the tables are being set up and the flowers are being arranged. Hors d’oeuvres are being prepared, the wine and champagne glasses are all washed and ready for service, and the cappuccino and latte bar is ready. He circles around once more, happy with the results, then makes his way into the main kitchen where dinner service is being prepped.

The chef is overseeing the sous chefs, as they prepare all the different courses. Brian insisted that it be very formal, with each course being served. No buffet-style tables at his wedding. It seems that all of gay Pittsburgh will be attending this wedding, if not as guests, then as waiters, bartenders and valets. Nothing’s too good for the Lord of Liberty Avenue, and the King of Babylon. Maria and Consuela have arrived with Gus and Jamie and they’ve been escorted to their suite next to Brian and Justin’s. Gus will be part of the ceremony and attend the reception briefly. He looks just like Brian, so handsome in his matching miniature tuxedo, and contrasting red shirt, complete with black tie. Justin is still having separation anxiety when he’s away from Jamie, so having the kids close by is reassuring, and helps calm his nerves.

Ted has arranged for a car service to drive Joan, Claire and the boys to the wedding; Joan and
Claire are taken aback when they see how beautiful and lavish the venue is, just like a palace right out of a fairy tale. Once they’ve arrived Jennifer excuses herself to check on them, and make sure everything is going according to schedule. Ted escorts Brian’s tailor to their suite; he’s brought them their suits and is here to make any alterations that might be needed. Brian didn’t tell Justin, but he had a second larger suit made just in case their little butterball had a growth spurt. Besides, he might want another suit on their honeymoon. Lord knows Brian kept his tailor on retainer during his pregnancy. Heaven forbid he not look like a GQ model at all times.

The guests have started to arrive, and waiters are circulating with trays of hors d’oeuvres. Bartenders are serving fine wines, and the tea and cappuccino bar is in full swing. Carolyn is playing classical music, while Jennifer, Daphne and Cynthia are mingling in the crowd acting as hosts and making introductions. The guests range from Brian’s prestigious clientele and business associates, Justin’s fellow art students, a few friends from Hollywood, and their family and friends. The hotel is elegant and sophisticated with marble floors, and beautiful architectural details, crystal chandeliers and a grand piano. There’s even a fountain in the middle of the room, and several seating areas with plush furniture and a dozen small bistro tables and chairs, arranged around the edge of the room.

The cocktail party has been in full swing for the last half hour, and the guests will soon be escorted to the hall where the ceremony will take place. Brian is helping Justin into his suit, amazed at how gorgeous he looks. The kid cleans up well, although you’d never know it by the paint-spattered clothes he usually wears. Brian’s mind flashes to the last time he saw Justin all decked out, and it takes his breath away. He remembers them turning heads as they parted the crowd, clearing the dance floor until it was just the two of them. They’re in their own world, floating across the dance floor in the most romantic moment of their lives. He leans down and kisses Justin passionately, whispering how beautiful he looks, determined to recapture those special moments for Justin, giving him a dance he’ll never forget. Justin blushes, loving that Brian finds him so attractive. He’s still slightly nervous, but Brian’s in his element. He’s used to entertaining clients, and dressing to the nines, it all comes naturally to him.

He takes Justin’s hand and leads him to the mirror, showing him how handsome he is. Brian straightens his tie, dusts off his shoulders, then reaches down to get the boutonniere to pin to Justin’s lapel. Even though it doesn’t show, he’s overwhelmed by what’s about to happen himself. He never thought he’d want this, want to belong to someone else, or be in a committed relationship. He never thought he’d be able to love someone this much, or be loved in return, but now he knows just how wrong he was. He’s amazed at how his life has changed in the last two years, he no longer prowls the bars and backroom after midnight. These days he looks forward to checking on Jamie and making sure he’s sleeping soundly, and reading Gus a bedtime story and tucking him into bed. Soon his little family will be expanding once again. And then there’s Justin, who never knew how full his heart could be until he allowed himself to love him. He completes him in every way. He truly is his partner, his soul mate and his equal and in just a few more minutes he’ll be his husband.

“What are you grinning about?”
“You, us, everything… This is the best day of my life!”

“Mine too!”

“I love you, Brian. You have no idea how long I’ve wanted this. It still amazes me that it’s finally happening.”

“I love you too, Justin. I can’t imagine my life without you these days, and I never want this feeling to end.”

Just then there’s a knock at the door. Ted sticks his head in to let them know everything’s ready whenever they are. Brian leans down again, kissing Justin’s cheek, swiping his tongue across the shell of his ear. Justin shivers with anticipation and takes Brian’s hand, walking him towards the door. Brian stops momentarily, and Justin’s heart skips a beat. Oh God, no…

“Wait.”

Justin’s eyes get really big as he stares at Brian. Brian takes his hand in his, and smiles. “Let’s switch your engagement ring to your right hand, that way it won’t be cumbersome when I put your wedding band on your left hand.”

His heart soars, as he chides himself for ever doubting Brian’s commitment to him.

As they’re approaching the outside of the double doors there is beautiful classical music filling the air. Emmett hugs both of them, then steps forward and opens the large ornate doors. The music changes and everyone stands as they walk inside hand-in-hand, and down the aisle towards their future. Justin’s overwhelmed with emotion as they stop in front of the altar. Brian reaches over and dabs Justin’s eyes with a silk handkerchief, smiling at his soon-to-be husband. He takes Justin’s hand in his to help quiet his nerves. He’s surprised at how calm he is, how natural all this feels, never feeling so sure of anything in his life before.

Brian and Justin stand together, the candles on the altar glowing, illuminating them and the scent of fresh golden gardenias fill the air. They’re finally ready to take their vows.

Father Thom smiles and nods to them. “Everyone, please sit.”
“We are gathered here today to witness the union between Brian and Justin. To celebrate their love and commitment, as they are joined together as one.”

Justin’s tears are back as Brian once again gently dabs his eyes as they sparkle and shine like blue sapphires. Justin looks up at Brian as he starts to speak.

“Justin, the night I met you, you stood proud and tall, illuminated under a streetlamp, much like you are tonight by these candles. You awakened something in me that had been missing for so very long, and truthfully it scared the hell out of me. I didn’t understand at the time, and it took me a while to recognize it. But it was there deep inside of me, and I’m so grateful that you felt it too. Through persistence and perseverance you finally broke through all the walls I had built around my heart. I’m so honored to be able to call myself your husband, and I look forward to sharing my life with you.”

Needless to say, Justin’s tears are flowing again as Brian kids him. “If I had known I would have brought a whole box of Kleenex with me.”

He dabs the tears from his cheeks and eyes, then Justin clears his throat. He’s truly choked up by Brian’s words of commitment.

“Brian, you are my life, you’re everything I need, and everything I’ve ever dreamed of. I may have been young when we first met, but I knew right from the start that you were the one. It may have taken me a while, but I was determined to make you see it too. Our love for each other knows no bounds. I love you so much that sometimes it hurts. We’ve been through deep pain and sorrow together, but we’ve survived and it’s only made us stronger. You’ve always been there for me, even when I wasn’t there for you. You showed me you loved me in so many ways, even if I couldn’t see it at that time. I’m so grateful for your support, and to have you as my best friend, my lover and now my husband. I’m so proud to share my life with you, to raise our family together, always supporting one another until the end of time.”

Now Brian’s the one who’s choked up. He should have known that his little twat would pull at his heartstrings. He’s brought all his emotions right to the surface, especially with that ‘until the end of time’ part. He knows there’ll be no getting rid of him now, not that he’d ever want to.

Gus is squirming in his seat, not used to having to sit still or be silent for so long; Melanie shushes him, hoping he’ll settle down. Brian turns to him and Gus smiles and waves. “Hi, daddy.”
Brian grins and motions for him to come stand next to him. Gus is relieved as he wasn’t sure when he was supposed to join them. Brian looks down at him, so proud of his little boy. Gus takes something out of his pocket, handing it to Brian.

“It’s a honey bear, daddy.”

“I see that.”

“It’s for your moon…”

“Moon?”

Then Brian snickers, “Well, that gives a whole new meaning to honeymoon.”

“Yeah, daddy. I thought it would be better than that grease you were talking about.”

Melanie looks like she’s going to have stroke. Justin grins, mouthing, “Grease?”

Brian chuckles, ruffling Gus’s hair as he tells Justin, “Later…”

He kneels down to straighten Gus’s suit and smoothes down his hair. “Ready, Sonny Boy?”

Gus just nods, reaching in his other pocket to take out a small Spiderman action figure, a roll of Lifesavers and finally the ring box, handing it to Brian. Father Thom continues with the service, foregoing the part about if anyone should know of any reason these two should not be wed.

Brian and Justin decided to go with traditional wedding vows, surprising everyone in attendance.

“Brian, would you repeat after me, ‘I, Brian Aiden Kinney, take you, Justin Coleman Taylor, to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, from this day forward until death do us part’.”
Brian leans down slightly, taking Justin’s hand then kisses it and continues. He slides the platinum band onto his left ring finger. Then of course, he wipes the tears from Justin’s eyes.

His voice is filled with emotion as Justin says, “I, Justin Coleman Taylor, take you, Brian Aiden Kinney, to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, from this day forward until death do us part.”

Brian once again dries Justin’s tears. Slightly trembling, Justin takes Brian’s left hand and glides the shiny wedding band onto Brian’s finger, while he whispers to him, “This is the happiest day of my life.”

Before waiting for Father Thom to announce it, Brian takes Justin into his arms and kisses him passionately, eliciting oohs and aahs from the audience. Surprisingly, Debbie doesn’t shout ‘get a room,’ she must be on her best behavior today.

Gus tugs on the hem of Brian’s tuxedo, asking, “Are we married yet, daddy?”

“We sure are, Sonny Boy.”

Brian lifts Gus up into his arms and Brian and Justin simultaneously kiss him on his cheeks. Then they proceed down the aisle, hand-in-hand, Gus sitting on Brian’s hip with his arms around Brian’s neck, giggling and waving to everyone as they pass.

The receiving line is long. Surprisingly, everyone they invited to the wedding has shown up, so after an hour of hugs, kisses and well wishers, they take a small break and check on Jamie. Melanie and Gus had decided to enjoy a little down time themselves; Gus is playing with his action figures on the floor in his underwear. Melanie had insisted that he take off his tiny tux so as not to get it dirty or wrinkled. It’s funny, but after years of insults and bickering with each other, Brian and Mel seem to have come to a truce. It now seems that Lindsay was the one who loved to push each of their buttons to make them turn on each other.

Brian pops the cork on a bottle of sparkling apple cider, since both Gus and Justin shouldn’t be drinking champagne. Mel toasts to them, saying how thrilled she is for them, that they seem to finally be on the same page, and she hopes that they have a long and happy life together. For once, Brian sees the sincerity in her words and he’s glad that she’s supportive, and will be co-parenting with them to raise Gus. Justin’s finished giving Jamie his bottle, who has just fallen asleep, when
Brian suggests that they join their guests to celebrate their marriage. Mel says she’ll bring Gus over in another twenty minutes or so, knowing that he won’t last long after dinner service.

Justin enters the dining hall which is decorated tastefully with the chamber orchestra playing classical music off to the side room, only adding to the ridiculously romantic setting for the evening. He isn’t disappointed that Brian has decided not to hire a band or DJ for the evening, everything seems perfect to him. They decided not to have groomsmen during the ceremony, but they asked their close friends and family to join them as part of the wedding party at the front table. Daphne and her boyfriend, Joel, Jennifer, Tucker and Molly. Emmett and Josh are seated to Justin’s right, while Ted and David, Claire, Joan and the boys are seated to Brian’s left. Brian felt it was only right to ask his family to join them. After all, they had been making a real effort to accept him and his relationship with Justin.

Brian finally agreed with Mel that Gus would be better off sitting at a nearby table with her, Debbie and Carl, and the lesbian contingency. Dusty and Marie have brought their children so Gus has someone to play and dance with after dinner.

The wait staff serves what seems like an endless number of courses throughout the dinner, and Justin is in heaven, his taste buds dancing with delight at all the delicious flavors. He’s consciously trying not to eat too much, as he doesn’t want to get sick from so much rich food on his wedding night. Brian hands him a glass of ginger ale. Sliding his arm around his waist, he leans in and gives Justin a deep, passionate kiss. They both gaze out at the crowd, mingling and enjoying themselves. Daphne is the first one to make a toast to the happy couple.

“Justin and I have been best friends since kindergarten, and there was a time growing up that our parents were sure that we’d get married someday. But, obviously things turned in a different direction, although neither one of us was surprised by this development. Justin always had his eyes on my Ken and Allan dolls when we played Barbies. But who knew he’d actually grow up and find his own stunning Prince Charming?”

Everyone laughs, knowing that it was no secret that Justin was gay.

“I remember the first time I saw them together. Brian’s jeep raced towards St. James’, swerving down the road like he intended on taking out a few students as they crossed the street. As he came to a screeching halt, everyone stood and stared in shock as he kissed Justin good-bye. Walking into school, grinning like a fool, he says to me, ‘I just met the face of God, and his name is Brian Kinney.’”
More laughter from the audience.

“He was already totally and completely in love with Brian, he even confided to me that, “He loved him and that he was going to live with him someday...” And of course he did, repeatedly over the next couple of years. But this time around, it will be forever, because there’s no mistaking the love and passion that they both feel for each other. Please join me in a toast to celebrate the commitment they’ve finally made to one another!”

Ted stands. “Thanks, Daphne. How am I supposed to top that?”

The crowd once again laughs.

“I, too, remember the first time I saw Brian and Justin together. Justin was standing under a lamppost, and he looked like an innocent angel glowing in the distance. It was no surprise that Brian was drawn towards him, he was beautiful and alluring. That old saying that opposites attract had never been truer. It was like the rest of the world faded away until it was only two of them.”

The audience sighs, hearing how romantic their first meeting was.

“Brian may have been blind to it, but it was obvious to those who knew him that his life was about to change, and he didn’t seem to have any control over it. Oh, he may have denied it, he may have consciously run away from it. He even tried his best to push the poor kid out of his life, but Justin had other plans. He saw something in Brian that no one else ever did. He saw right through all his mantras and so-called self-imposed rules.”

The crowd chuckles.

“Justin saw through all his layers, seeing the real man in Brian that was deep beneath the surface. He chased him, challenged him and finally captured him. He brought out something in Brian that no other man ever could. He melted his heart and filled him with love. Yes, Justin has changed Brian, making him finally realize that life is not worth living without being loved.”

“So let’s all raise our glasses to the man who did the impossible, and tamed the wild beast that we once knew as Brian Fucking Kinney.”

Everyone stands and claps, toasting to the couple who will always been known as royalty on
Brian stares into Justin’s eyes, whispering in his ear, “You know, little boy, I’m going to have to spank you for all this lesbionic talk of cuffing my balls.”

“I’m looking forward to it. I can’t wait.”

Then Justin leans in on his tippy-toes and kisses Brian, showing his love and devotion. Brian wraps his arms around him, lifting him off the floor, deepening the kiss. This makes all the guests swoon, seeing the passion between the two of them. They all break out clapping, hooting and hollering.

Finally they break their kiss and Brian puts his arm around Justin’s shoulder, pulling him in as Justin leans his head on Brian’s shoulder.

“Thank you, Daphne, and Ted. I’d like nothing more than to deny all of it, but it’s true. I may not have seen it coming. I may not have wanted it, or welcomed it, but this little twat somehow slipped in under the wire. He made me feel things I never knew existed outside of fairy tales and romantic novels. It took almost losing him for me to admit to myself that I loved him, and even longer to admit to him my true feelings.”

He turns to Justin, looking deeply into his eyes. “I love Justin! I always have, and I always will!”

There’s another round of applause and then the traditional sound of the silverware tapping the glasses, demanding a passionate kiss from the happy couple.

Ted, acting as MC for the wedding, directs everyone’s attention to the cutting of the wedding cake. Brian and Justin make their way over to the cake table. It’s beautiful with layers and layers of white and dark chocolate cake and white and milk chocolate frosting. On the side they have French vanilla and chocolate fudge gelato ice cream, one of Brian’s secret obsessions.

They remove the top layer, because Justin is a fond believer in all the traditional wedding customs, so they’ll freeze it for their first wedding anniversary. That is, if Justin can wait that long. Cutting the cake, Justin can’t help getting teary eyed. At this point Brian’s sure it’s a hormonal thing, although it could just be Justin being a sentimental twat. Feeding each other the decadent confection, Brian can’t resist mashing it on Justin’s lips and cheeks. Of course that gives him a reason to lick Justin’s face in public while giving him more passionate kisses. Justin smirks, knowing he has asked the chef to have some of the gelato sent to their suite for later that night, to
help celebrate their union privately.

Gus is sitting at the table with the wedding party enjoying his cake and ice cream. He’s having the time of his life, but the late night hour is catching up with him and he’s having a hard time keeping his eyes open. They decide to take him back to the suite with Maria and Consuela, and tuck him in for the night. This also gives Justin a chance to check on Jamie, and spend a few minutes with him before they return to the reception. While they’re away the chamber orchestra packs up their instruments, and the band sets up.

Once they’ve returned to the ballroom they’re mingling with the guests enjoying themselves, when Justin gazes out over the crowd and is surprised.

“Brian?”

“Yes, Sunshine?”

Justin is staring intently across the room trying to decide if what he is seeing is real, he’s sure he is seeing things.

“Brian, did you hire an Adam Lambert impersonator?”

“Justin? Do you think I would really hire someone like that?”

Justin looks up at him, seeing his smug face grinning back at him.

“Do you really think he looks like Adam Lambert?”

Justin doesn’t know what to make of it, as he looks back across the room, slightly confused. He’s about to tell Brian that yes, he really does think he looks just like Adam. Then he notices Tommy Joe Ratliff walking in sync with Adam towards them.

“Brian! Brian, what’s going on?”
“Justin, you didn’t actually think I wouldn’t have a band play for our wedding? Don’t you know how much I love dancing with you?”

Justin is practically gaga, he loves, loves, loves Adam Lambert. He can’t believe that Brian arranged for him to play at their wedding. Could this night get any better!

Justin is so happy, as he squeezes Brian’s hand in all his excitement.

Adam is taken with the beauty of the newlyweds, he had no idea they were so gorgeous. It’s obvious to him that they’re both completely head-over-heels in love with each other. He’s totally charming as he approaches them, introducing himself and Tommy, although they need no introduction. Justin’s tongue tied, as Brian welcomes them and thanks them for making an exception to play at their wedding at such a small venue. Adam tells them that he’s honored to play for them, and wishes them well, congratulating them on their marriage. Then he nods to Brian, mentioning that he understands there’s a special song he’s requested for the first dance, then he excuses himself, and he and Tommy join the band.

Justin looks at Brian questioningly, but Brian just smiles, whispering, “Hopefully you won’t forget this one.”

Just then Ted announces, “For the next part of the reception, it is my honor to welcome Adam Lambert!”

Everyone turns around and starts clapping, most of them almost in as much shock as Justin.

Adam says, “I’d like to start tonight with a traditional dance between the grooms.”

Brian takes Justin’s hand and the lights are lowered, and much like on prom night they find themselves alone in the center of the dance floor glowing in the spotlight.

They hear soft strumming of the guitar, and soon Justin recognizes that they’re playing what is now their song, ‘Save the last dance for me.’

Brian holds him close as they start to sway to the music, starting their ridiculously romantic tango. Justin listens to the words of the song, really hearing them for the first time and wonders if Brian actually requested this song for them at his prom. Soon Brian’s dipping him at just the right
moment, then he spins him around and pulls him in close again.

They continue their provocative dance as their movements come so naturally to them, like they’ve practiced their ballroom dancing routine for years. Their guests look on in awe, as the two of them float around the dance floor appearing lost in each other.

Justin beams his sunshine smile, as he surprises himself by twirling Brian around then suggestively removing his tuxedo jacket, tossing it to Daphne. His mind flashes and he sees his younger self performing a similar dance move. He closes his eyes as he sees the look in Brian’s eyes from that night so long ago. Opening them again he looks at Brian, his facing showing so much emotion and love, and they both know he remembers.

So many emotions locked away until this very minute, finally breaking free and filling his heart with awareness of the love that Brian felt for him, but didn’t know how to voice. His heart soars with this knowledge, and he feels overwhelmed. He curses Chris Hobbes for taking away from him such an important moment of his life. But that was so long ago now, and they’re finally back on track, right where they should be. Brian pulls him back in close and then the two of them kiss, practically making the audience swoon, feeling their love for each other.

The newlyweds finished their magical dance, leaving everyone mesmerized by how stunning beautiful they were. Next they dance with their mothers, switching partners midway through. Yes, it was a little awkward at first for Brian and Joan, but soon she relaxed and actually enjoyed herself. She remembers how it felt to be young and in love so very long ago. She flashes back on her life and truly regrets spending so many years unhappy and resentful. She makes a promise to herself that she’ll change her outlook on life and embrace her future, hoping that it’s not too late to rebuild her relationships with her children, and be a loving grandmother to her grandsons.

The band sounds great and everyone is enjoying themselves, the dance floor crowded as Adam belts out one hit song after another. Brian and Justin continue dancing on and off for the next hour or so, but the night is catching up with Justin. These days Justin’s pregnancy often leaves him tired and exhausted, and he rarely stays up much past nine or nine-thirty in the evening. Justin’s sitting on Brian’s lap as he holds him close in his arms, and Brian realizes that he’s beginning to get worn out, which is fine with him. He’s ready to take his husband to bed and enjoy their first night as husband and husband. Even though he’s always said it’s just a piece of paper, and it wouldn’t change anything, he’s not so sure anymore. He already feels different, and he has the thrill of excitement in the pit of his stomach, similar to when he was still a very small child and got excited about Santa Claus.

They circulate around the room one last time, thanking everyone for coming and letting them know how much it means to them that they shared this special evening with them. Of course, Ted won’t let them escape so easily, he makes an announcement of their imminent departure. All the guests gather around and unbeknownst to them they have all been supplied with tiny bottles of bubbles to
blow at the retreating couple. Justin can’t help grinning his sunshine smile, loving the opalescent spheres as they reflect all the colored lights floating around them. After several minutes, Brian smiles and says good-night one last time. Then he raises Justin up in his arms, then over his shoulder and carries him out of the ballroom for a romantic wedding night together.

TBC…
Romantic Sunsets…

Chapter Summary

Brian and Justin have fun with their new Nikon D800-E camera, capturing the beautiful sunsets and sunrises…

Chapter Notes

_{This chapter has 27 pictures of their romantic honeymoon featured in it…_

_{So you might want to read it on Livejournal;_  
http://7wildwaysup.livejournal.com/tag/christmas%20presents…
_{or on Midnight Whispers; http://www.midnightwhispers.ca/viewstory.php?sid=1550

AO3 does not provide a feature for inserting pics into your fics without using an outside service. Due to the graphic nature of the pics I mostly use in my fics they are usually banned and blocked on photo-bucket…

Title: Romantic Sunsets…  
Story Type: AU  
Word Count: 1100  
Rating: R, Porn…  
Warnings: Passion and Lust…  
Beta Queen: bigj52  
Challenge: The Evil Kinney Girls Club ~ August Prompt ~ Romantic Sunsets…

This is part of the “Christmas Presents” Universe ~ A moment in time during their honeymoon…

Summary: Brian and Justin have fun with their new Nikon D800-E camera, capturing the beautiful sunsets and sunrises…

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Romantic Sunsets…

“Good Morning, Mr. Taylor-Kinney.”
“Brian, it’s too early. Besides I need my beauty sleep.”

I sit on the bed, running my fingers through Justin’s hair as he falls back to sleep. He’s never been a morning person, but now that he’s expecting he sleeps all the time. He doesn’t get up until almost noon, takes a nap with Jamie in the afternoon and is practically falling asleep by nine at night. But that’s okay, it’s our honeymoon, and I expected to spend a lot of time in bed. I just didn’t think so much of it would be reading and watching him sleep.

I kiss him on the cheek and tell him I love him. Gus and I have plans to go to the beach; hopefully he’ll be up by lunchtime. The morning goes by pretty fast. Gus and I have built a castle, with guard towers and a tall wall enclosing the fortress. I’ve been clicking photos with my phone and periodically take small videos as we complete different sections of our sandscape. It’s low tide now, but the tide will be coming back in soon and will wash it all away. It’s a little game we play in the morning, improving on our designs as the days go by.

I look up and see Justin walking towards us with Jamie in tow; they both look happy and well rested. Of course we’ll probably just lie in the sun until their afternoon nap, like always. But so long as he’s happy, that’s all that matters. I see Maria has packed up us a picnic lunch, so I get up and help him carry everything to our cabana. Gus comes over and welcomes Jamie and Justin; he’s excited as he explains today’s castle design, and all about how we channeled the water around the moat. He’s very proud of our work and I’m just glad I have this time to spend with him as I’m usually busy working.

Bringing Maria and her sister Consuela with us has been a godsend. We have the flexibility to play with the kids during the day and share meals, but also it gives Justin and I time together, alone in the evenings. The first night here Justin discovered how much he loves the beautiful sunsets, and it set the mood for the rest of our honeymoon.

Now no matter what we’ve been up to during the day, we always make time to watch the sun go down together. He’s been taking lots of pictures to use when he gets home to paint. It’s our quiet time, to relax and unwind, and sometimes we talk about what we want for our future and when the new baby comes. This is something we should have been doing all along, but I never made the time or effort before. Now I know it’s something I’ll change in the future, because it makes him so happy and I have to admit that it is ridiculously romantic, just being together.

As you can see he’s more than a little obsessed with his new Nikon D800-E camera. He should be - it cost $2500. But I’m not bitching, really, he can have anything he wants. Besides, he’s getting really good. I think maybe he should have a show of his sunset photographs. I didn’t think they could get any better and then we went to Athens and he just kept improving by the minute.

Santorini is beautiful, with all the white stone buildings and sandy beaches. I’ve never really been
one to get excited about nature, but there’s just something about being here that makes you so in
tune with your surroundings. I’ve even started taking photos, and not with my camera phone, but
with the expensive Nikon that Justin insisted we buy for our trip. And I have to admit that I’m not
too bad, maybe I’ll also be featured in Justin’s photography show.

Yea, I have to admit that I’m pretty damn good too…

And he insisted that I take a picture of his handiwork, he’s written 'Just Married' in six feet tall
letters in the sand... He’s such a romantic brat…

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Okay, there are those rare moments when he actually wakes me up in the morning, and damn,
what a beautiful morning it is. I feel his breath on my groin, and then his long blond hair is tickling
my sensitive skin. The feel of his tongue as he starts licking me sends signals to my brain and I
can’t help arching my back. I need to feel him taking more of me down his throat. I moan loudly
and soon my hands are in his hair. I don’t actually mean to pull so hard but I just become
overwhelmed, as I hold on to his head for dear life.

Soon I realize that I’m bucking my hips to meet his downward strokes as his head is bobbing up
and down on my shaft. I need this, need him, love him… Oh God, yes! I love him!

My moans have now turned into chants as I call his name over and over again. And then I’m right
there, so close and he knows it. I pray that he just keeps going. I need this and I’m not in the mood
for games. I need him to take me all the way over the cliff.

And he does. I cry out his name, practically shouting. My hips thrust upwards as I shoot down his
throat. I’m pulling on his hair so hard that I’m surprised that I haven’t pulled large chunks out in
my hands. My body’s quaking, rippling as I’m filled with waves of pleasure washing over me. It’s
only as I start to come down from my euphoric high that I realize that his finger is stroking my
prostate. I don’t even remember him penetrating me but it feels so goddamn good!

As I catch my breath I look down at him, seeing him grinning at me. He’s such a clever devil,
knowing just what I need. I’m so fucking happy he’s my husband. I really am head over heels in
love with him.

It’s isn’t until later that I find out that he had set up his Nikon, so he has pictures of this part of our
honeymoon as well. Maybe spending that $2500 dollars on his camera was well worth it…
We had to get up at the crack of dawn to catch our flight back home, but he still found time for a few more pics. Only this time they were of the sunrise the morning we left…

Yep, he’s a total romantic…

TBC…

This is just a sidebar of Christmas Presents, their honeymoon… A more detailed honeymoon chapter it will be up in the next few days to a week…
Chapter Twenty Six ~ It’s All Greek To Me…

I walk from the ballroom and through the lobby, with Justin in my arms; he’s laughing all the way back to our suite. He slides his arms around my neck, and I hold him close as we cross the threshold into our new life. Even though he hasn’t been drinking he is high on life, and maybe happier than I’ve ever seen him before. His eyes sparkle as I lie him down on the bed; he looks up at me with a look of wonder in his eyes. It’s so similar to the first night I brought him home to my bed. Reading all his love and trust he has for me stirs up something deep within. Hasn’t this man of mine evoked enough emotions from me already tonight? Yet it seems that this is just the beginning. He reaches up running his finger across the tented fabric of my dress pants, increasing my blood flow.

I guess I wasn’t fast enough for my pushy husband as he grabs hold of my tie and pulls me closer to him. Our lips caress one another’s as his tongue makes its way into my mouth, deepening our kiss. Soon I’m feeling confined by my clothes and I need to disrobe.

Sitting back I actually hear him whimper at the loss of contact between the two of us. After shedding my suit jacket and shirt I lean back down to resume our kiss. But he’s now distracted as he pulls at my belt, and then his hands are on my zipper, freeing my cock. His desire for me is intensifying by the minute, and he is still fully clothed. I strip him of his suit, letting it fall on top of mine on the floor. Any other day I would have had a hissy fit at the thought of our designer clothing lying on the floor, getting wrinkled. But tonight it doesn’t matter. Nothing matters but him, and pleasing him.

Hovering above my now beautifully naked husband, I can’t help thinking he is the most handsome man alive. His porcelain skin is flushed, and the soft blond peach fuzz covering his limbs is starting to glisten. I place butterfly kisses all over his face, neck and shoulders, soon he’s moaning with desire. I can’t resist kissing his perfectly round belly that holds our unborn child. A reminder
to be gentle with him, even though I want to ravage and devour him. Slow, slow is better. Slow is sensual, and slow is driving him crazy with need. Not that I’d ever tease my boy.

I nuzzle my face into his bush, as his hairs tickle my lips. Shifting a little, I start kissing his inner thighs, nibbling him, making him shiver. I work my way towards his perineum, knowing how much it turns him on. He now has his legs stretched open welcoming me. Since he’s asking so nicely, how can I refuse? So I lick his pucker, swirling my tongue around then I push forward, breaching his opening. I hear him laughing, but before I can even ask, he says, “Now I know what rimming is.”

Yes, tonight is very nostalgic for both of us. I guess it truly is a new beginning, a journey that will have no end. I snap the lube open and squirt a dollop of the cool gel onto my fingers, circling his rosebud, feeling him relax. He’s such a horny little boy, I’m surprised he’s not begging. I know how turned on he is, I can feel it by the way he holds his body. That’s the thing about being with someone for years, you get to know every sound and nuance, anticipating their next wish.

I sit back admiring his beauty, then I move up, licking my way from his ankles to his groin. I continue kissing him back up his chest, to just below his left ear where I know he’s most sensitive. His legs circle my body, since he’s no longer able to stretch them high over his head. Our little butterball has restricted his movements these days. I run kisses around his neck as he wriggles beneath me, then I kiss him passionately on his lips. Leaning forward, resting my weight on one arm, I reach down between us and align myself with him. I love watching his expression as I penetrate him, filling him as I glide inside.

He arches his back taking more of me in, pulling me closer. Our lips find each other’s again, and our tongues dance just like our bodies. We’re both loving the sensations as they build, taking us both to a heightened state of arousal. He throws his head back into the pillow, closing his eyes as his mind takes him to that special place. He’s moaning as our rhythm increases, and soon I feel him tightening his walls around me, squeezing me as I drive deeper. My thrusting is not only bringing him closer to the edge, it’s pulling me along with him.

I feel all those tingly sensations start and soon they’re spiraling throughout my limbs. His breathing has increased, and he’s panting. I know he’s right there too, as I feel his legs trembling. Sometimes I love him so much I want to crawl deep inside of him, and never come out. We’re both on the brink of our climax, so I thrust, one, two, three more times and we fall over the edge. He quivers and shakes as I hold him close, riding out the last waves of our orgasm.

I love watching him come down from cloud nine. He’s so fucking beautiful covered in a slight sheen, glowing like an angel. He’s lost in the intense sensations that continue to pulse through him until he’s practically asleep in my arms. I lean down and kiss him once more, whispering how much I love him. Then I roll off him and pull him in close so that I’m spooning his body, resting the palm of my hands on our butterball.

I can feel our son under my touch, just starting to move around a lot. I remember what it was like when I first felt Jamie moving in my belly, that’s when I knew for sure that I could never let him go. Not that I ever really considered it, but the girls were always trying to make me feel like I was unfit to be a fulltime father. But once Justin came back to me, I knew I could do anything if he was here with me. God, I love him so much, and now he’s really mine in every possible way.

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Several hours later, I wake to hear Justin moaning and making yummy noises from across the room.
“Justin? What’s going on?”

But all I get in response is, “Mmm, so good!” followed by a few more moans.

“Justin. Why are you sitting in the chair across the room masturbating in the middle of the night?”

“Mmm. Gelato…” followed by some slurpy noises.

“What? Gelato?”

“Brian. This is so good! It’s better than sex!”

“What the fuck? Justin. Nothing is better than sex.”

I join Justin in the big overstuffed chair, taking the ice cream carton from him, tasting the Gelato.

“Yeah, this is amazing!”

It’s one of my indulgences that I developed when I was pregnant. I hold the container out of Justin’s reach.

“Brian. Aren’t you going to share it with me?”

“Justin. You’ve already eaten most it,”

“I’m eating for two.”

“You know you can only get away with saying that for the next few months. Maybe you should slow down. You don’t want to have to join a gym once our butterball’s born.”

“Did you just call me fat?”

“No. No, of course not. But there’s a good chance all this ice cream isn’t just going to go to your perfectly round ass.”

Justin stands looking at himself in the mirror. The problem is he can’t see behind himself because of his protruding belly.

“Brian. Do you think my stomach is bigger than yesterday?”

“I think it’s bigger than it was a half an hour ago. You’ve consumer 80% of this carton of Gelato.”

“Do you still love me?”

I look at him, silently praying that his tears aren’t back.

“Yes! I love you more today than yesterday, but not as much as tomorrow.”

Even as I hear the words come out of my mouth, I knows it’s some line from a cheesy 70s song. Thank God it was popular before he was born, and he’s never heard it before.

“Really?”

“Yes, now come here. Let’s go back to bed.”

“Did you save me the last spoon of Gelato?”
I hand him the container. “Yes, you little twat.”

Because I know better than to eat the last bite.

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The sun is shining brightly as Justin sleeps sprawled out on the big king-size bed. I take the time to call Ted, verifying that everything is set and confirmed for our honeymoon in Greece. The plane leaves this afternoon at two, and the limo is picking us up at noon out front. Ted has arranged for all our luggage to be delivered and checked in at the international terminal at the airport. Our passports and tickets are all together and in my briefcase. All we have to do is arrive and go through the check-in process.

I look over at Sleeping Beauty who’s now snoring slightly, and I can’t help but want to jump his bones. But knowing him he’ll be more interested in breakfast. He has a healthy appetite these days, even more so than before. So I lean down and gently kiss him awake, although he’d rather just continue to sleep. So I whisper, “Good Morning, Mr. Taylor-Kinney.”

His eyes slowly open and his sunshine smile spreads across his face.

“Today’s our first day as husband and husband.”

He looks so happy it makes my heart sing. I’m finally getting it right after so many years of getting it wrong. He begins to wake from his comatose sleep, as he smells the coffee I’ve set next to the bed for him.

“Is that for me?”

“Yes, of course. I’ve already drank a whole pot by myself, besides yours is decaf.”

He sticks his tongue out at me, he hates decaf but he’s getting used to it. He looks around for the breakfast tray and I can’t help smirking at him. I lean over and hand him a plate of blueberry muffins and custard-filled doughnuts. Now he’s really smiling that sunshine smile of his.

“Thanks! This is so sweet of you. Do you know how much I love you?”

“I know how much you love pastries in the morning.”

He flicks his tongue out at me again, looking adorable.

“Now hurry up so we can take a shower. We’re meeting everyone for brunch before we leave for the airport.”

They’re already seated, drinking coffee and juice when we enter the private dining room. Emmett has outdone himself again. There’s every kind of breakfast, I mean brunch food, imaginable, spread out on the side table, with waiters hovering to fill our coffee cups and remove any dishes as we go back for seconds. I insisted that Maria and Consuela join us, after all they’ll be traveling with us on our honeymoon. I don’t want them to feel like the hired help, they’re more like part of the family these days.

It’s an emotional brunch for Justin, who’s beaming with pride at being the center of attention. Everyone’s still gushing over the wedding last night, the food, the venue, Adam Lambert, and then there was our ridiculously romantic dance. Besides the wedding videographer, many of them captured it on their cell phones. He’s sitting with his mom, Daphne and Em watching the videos clips from last night and of course his tears are back.
He looked beautiful all decked out in his suit, then seeing us at the altar taking our vows, and of course there’s Gus acting so adorable. Em filmed the champagne toasts from Ted and Daphne, but the best part was seeing his eyes light up as we floated around the dance floor. We look so in love and I know he’s happy as he watches how magnificently we move together. I’m glad he finally has a few memories of the prom and then us dancing last night, reconfirming everything we feel for one another.

It was like our reception line all over again as they all say hugged and kissed us good bye, wishing us a happy honeymoon. It’s tearful for both Justin and Gus, knowing that we won’t be back until the middle of the summer. I haven’t told him yet that Jennifer and Tucker will be visiting us at our villa in July. I know he’ll be starting to miss her by then, and it will be a perfect surprise.

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It’s a long flight to Athens, almost eleven hours, plus there’s all the time waiting at the airport getting checked in, and then disembarking and collecting our luggage. It’s going to be a long flight, and I’m hoping all my babies sleep through most of it. I’ve packed several carry-ons with toys, books and of course, treats. Even though we’re in first class, there are just some things I know Justin and Gus will crave that they won’t have.

Once again I’m surprised and grateful that Jamie is a very happy baby, he hardly cried the whole flight. And when he wasn’t sleeping all the flight attendants kept fawning all over him and Gus. By the time we’re settled into our suite, everyone’s exhausted and just wants to relax and order room service. Gus is amazed that we can get just about anything by lifting the phone and asking for it. I can see that my little munchkin is going to be a very spoiled boy by the time we get home.

Because we’re taking a very long extended honeymoon/vacation we don’t feel any need to be rushing off anywhere or to keep to a schedule. Well, except the schedule of one week here and there. I’ve arranged for us to spend time on various islands over the next two months, it will give us much-needed time together as a family. Our itinerary includes Athens, Iohannis Island, Corfu Island, Cycladic Island, Andros Island, Mykonos Island, Milos Island, Santorini, Rhodes, and Parga.

Our first morning Gus is up at the crack of dawn, while Justin is almost comatose and dead to the world. I take him out for breakfast and then down to the beach, while Maria and Consuela watch Jamie. One thing’s for sure, I’m learning to be a very patient father. Watching Gus eating breakfast is like watching a train wreck. But I let him make a mess playing with his food, so long as he’s eating. Besides we’re outside and the birds seem to be enjoying a free breakfast.

Afterwards we visit the beach where he plays near the shoreline. He laughs as the waves come in, then rushes towards them and runs back before he gets all wet. I’m glad we’re spending more time together, as I don’t ever remember spending time with my father. I was always cowering in fear, and I don’t ever want Gus to experience that. I don’t want him to grow up with all my hang-ups and anxiety. Although I do worry about him accepting the loss of JR, he seems to understand that she’s now with Uncle Vic and Ben.

After inspecting every rock, seashell and piece of driftwood we settle down to play in the sand. At first he just wants to dig holes, but soon the piles of dirt start taking shape with a little help from me. This is the beginning of our daily sand castle adventures. We soon start adding castle details, drawbridges, moats and enclosing them with tall walls. I start capturing them on my phone, and then eventually on Justin’s fancy camera. It is always a battle against time, before the tide returns to wash our fortresses away.

Justin sleeps in most mornings, but eventually he and Jamie join us on the beach for a picnic lunch
that Maria sends along with him. Sometimes he surprises us with a basket of goodies from a local restaurant or one of the many Greek delis. Gus is getting better at trying different foods. Of course seeing Justin indulging in so many new flavors helps a lot.

Jamie loves the beach almost as much as Gus, although I’m still a little nervous when he’s in the water. The three of them often sit near the shore, getting splashed by the waves. Gus stays close when he swims around in the shallow water, just a few feet away. I can’t help smiling as I watch my boys playing in the sun. This is the way childhood should be, with not a care in the world.

Justin seems so happy, he’s the perfect father. I remember when there was a time that I would have run away from this lifestyle faster than I could rip a condom open with my teeth. I never knew you could feel so much contentment in sharing your life, being married and raising kids. Who knew that little twat could change me in ways no one ever expected? Of course he’s the only one who could ever have helped me see that I needed to grow up. He’s the only one who ever accepted me the way I was. I guess what I needed was to feel secure, allowing myself to be loved.

Tonight Justin and I are a going out on the town, leaving the boys with Maria and Consuela. We don’t go out every night, but several times a week we make time for just the two of us. It’s something I think we need to continue once we return home. Just time for us, no distractions. It’s important for him to not feel overwhelmed with fatherhood, especially with our little butterball arriving in September.

We walk around the cobblestone streets admiring the architecture, and occasionally stopping to window shop. Justin is busy snapping pictures with his fancy camera; the view is incredible as we look out over the rolling hills. We have dinner at Novalis, a cozy restaurant with a laid-back atmosphere. We end up sitting on the balcony enjoying a traditional Greek dinner. Later we walk back to the hotel, holding hands as the sun starts to set. The sky is amazing and Justin captures it beautifully, centering it through an old archway in the city.

Later in the week we take a tour visiting the old ancient archeological sites. The Parthenon at The Acropolis, Delphi – Olympia, Temple of Apollo. Being in another country and seeing so many historical structures really makes you realize just how young America really is, and gives you a real appreciation for history.

TBC…
Chapter Summary

It’s a boy! Everyone’s surprised when Justin delivers six weeks early…

Title: Christmas Presents…
Story Type: AU
Word Count: 2907
Rating: R, Porn…
Warnings: Passion, Lust, M-Preg…
Beta Queen: BigJ52

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Summary: It’s a boy! Everyone’s surprised when Justin delivers six weeks early…

Christmas Presents

Chapter Twenty Eight ~ Nicholas Declan Taylor-Kinney

Brian’s POV

I’m drinking my morning coffee watching Justin try on shirt after shirt. He hates the way they all seem to pull a little too tight across his belly. Of course this was never a problem before. He used to love when his shirts clung to him in all the right places. That was way back when he was just a twink trying to catch my eye. But with his pregnancy and the baby having growth spurts, he’s become concerned that he looks fat. I try to reassure him that I find it sexy, even erotic. He thinks I’m just placating him, but I’m not. Just knowing that he’s carrying our little butterball fills me with this huge sense of pride, and maybe even a little touch of jealousy. Yes, I admit it. I don’t like other guys looking at him, and I’ve become a bit possessive, I mean, protective of my little family.

Finally I suggest that he try the bottom drawer of the dresser and see if he likes any of those clothes. He slowly opens the drawer and then he looks at me, grinning.

“You bought me new clothes?”

“Justin. We’re going to be here all summer, and by the time we get back to Pittsburgh you’ll only have another few weeks before the baby comes.”

He smiles and starts crying, his emotions are all over the place these days. But I’ll never tell him how often I cried when I realized that I needed to start wearing larger sizes. Back then my tailor pretty much doubled as my shrink, because I wouldn’t let anyone else see me in that state of distress. He finally settles on a deep red shirt. It looks great and he knows it. I believe I have a diva
in training. He never used to care how he looked, but these days he’s very self-conscious. Of course he always looks beautiful to me.

“Okay, I’m ready. Let’s go eat!”

I grin, but I don’t say anything. I don’t want more tears on the way to the restaurant. But that doesn’t stop him from throwing a pillow at me; he knows what I’m thinking. Twat!

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Meanwhile in Pittsburgh…

~ Michael ~

Michael’s still under the delusions Maryann has planted in his head. She’s spent so much time reading him the Bible and nursing him back to health, he’s basically been brainwashed into thinking that his homosexuality was God’s way of testing him. He’s angry that Deb hasn’t been to visit him. Sure he said some very hurtful things to her and the guys, but he didn’t think they’d just abandon him while he was in the hospital. Little does he know that Maryann has restricted their visiting privileges. She feels that it’s best that he severs all ties with his past, even his relationship with his mother.

Maryann is planning her dream wedding; she wants to be married as soon as Michael is released from the hospital. She’s found him a job working at the Christian bookstore next to the Evangelist church where her father preaches. They’ll be living with her father after they’re married. Her idea of a honeymoon is to travel with her father and fellow parishioners on a religious pilgrimage, visiting the sites connected with the birth, life, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. She plans on having Michael re-baptized in the Jordan River to wash away all the sins from his former life.

~ Melanie ~

Slowly but surely she’s adjusting to life without JR, but she’s lonely and depressed. She not only misses her baby girl, but she also misses Lindsay. They were together for the last decade, and even though she knew Lindsay’s obsession with Brian was unhealthy, she never knew just how delusional Lindsay really was.

She’s joined a women’s support group for grieving mothers who have lost their children, and has befriended several of them. She even met a fellow attorney, Georgia, who’s going through a divorce as a result of her son’s death. The attraction between them is undeniable, but Mel’s not sure if she ready to be Georgia’s first lesbian relationship. She’s concerned about all the drama that will be involved when Georgia finally acknowledges her sexual orientation.

~ Ted ~

Ted and David have been seeing each other now for several months, and things have taken a serious turn. They’re both cautious about moving too fast, both having been burnt in past relationships. Besides there’s Hank to consider, who’s now a teenager and has his own issues to work out. He and Hunter have been spending more and more time together, and even though they both claim to be straight, they have been experimenting sexually.
~ Lindsay ~

Lindsay’s been struggling with her incarceration, escalating between fits of angry, complete denial and severe depression. When she read in the local paper about Brian and Justin’s nuptials she threatened to kill herself, and she’s been on suicide watch ever since. Her condition just keeps deteriorating as the weeks go by and she still hasn’t accepted that it was her fault that JR has died.

~ Debbie ~

Things just aren’t the same without Michael constantly needing her. They used to talk every day and now she just seems lost. She feels like she’s been stabbed in the gut, not being allowed to see Michael in the hospital. Her baby needs her; she’s sure he’s being brainwashed and she wants an investigation into Maryann and her father. She’s sure that if she could talk with him he’d see that Maryann is filling his head with biblical nonsense. Deep down she has no doubt that he knows that homosexuality is nature, not nurture.

~ Carl ~

It’s upsetting to see Debbie in such a state of depression, but he has to admit it’s nice for her to just be focusing on them without Michael’s interference. Of course he’s been working overtime, wrapping up all the paperwork on the case for Big Jack and Keith. Even though they were killed in the car crash, Josh and he now need to round up the underlings of his criminal organization before they seize control of the operations. Afterwards he’s planned a surprise vacation for Deb to the Virgin Islands. Getting away from Pittsburgh will get her mind off everything, and do them both some good.

~ Emmett ~

Fabulous has really taken off. After Brian and Justin’s wedding with all of Pittsburgh’s gay population attending, as well as the who’s who in the business world, he’s now booked solid well into the next year. Emmett and Josh have grown closer over the summer. Both of them are working long hard hours during the day, and when they’re home, they work long hard hours into the night. Emmett’s never been happier and the more time they spend together is icing on the cake.

~ Jennifer ~

Emmett’s not the only one who gained popularity from attending Brian and Justin’s wedding. She started seeing one of Brian’s business associates, and it’s quickly becoming serious. It’s not that she wasn’t happy with Tucker, it’s just that Tom Mitchell has swept her off her feet. She never thought she’d feel this way again about a man. She always thought feeling this way was a first-love thing. But Tom has a way of making her feel like she’s the most beautiful woman in the world. He loves to pamper her with gifts, and take her away for long weekends. She’s sure Justin will be thrilled that she’s no longer seeing Tucker, but she’s worried about his reaction to her new relationship.

So needless to say it’s probably a good thing that Brian and Justin are away on their honeymoon.
Brian’s POV

Consuela has agreed to stay on with us once we return to Pittsburgh. With both Maria and Consuela working for us, Justin will have time for himself and his artwork. I put a bid in for the remainder of our building, buying out the other tenants. I plan to remodel the floor below us into an apartment for Maria and Consuela. That way they’ll be close by, but they’ll also have their own space. The bottom floor will be Justin’s new art studio, and eventually a small gallery for him to show his artwork.

I know it seems like were moving a little fast expanding so much, but I know he wants to be near the kids. He’ll also need a place to escape too, as being at home 24/7 will probably become a bit overwhelming and claustrophobic. I just want to give him everything he needs. I know eventually we’ll probably have to move, we’ll need someplace with a yard where the kids can play. But right now he really wants to stay in the heart of the city. He likes being able to walk to the local shops, the diner and the bakery. Have I mentioned he has developed a doughnut obsession?

It’s summer and as the heat rises and his belly grows, every morning he stands looking in the mirror, gazing at his reflection. It’s almost become a ritual, him questioning if he looks fat, then complaining that nothing fits right. I come up behind him, wrapping my arms around him. I start by kissing him on the cheek continuing until I reach his mouth, reassuring him that he’s still the sexist man I know.

He frets about his looks, then I surprise him by filling his drawer with new clothes. Of course we aren’t in Pittsburgh and we don’t have a personal tailor. So Maria and Consuela do their best to make alterations on the new clothes I buy him. The problem is he really has a small frame, so finding men’s clothes that fit through his shoulders, and allow enough room for his stomach is becoming impossible to find.

So without him becoming too suspicious, I resort to buying him maternity clothes. Nothing too girly, mostly tees, tank tops, jeans and shorts. Thank God it’s summertime but it still requires the girls to remove bows, lace, and all those ridiculous little design appliques of teddy bears and storks. It was working fine until one day they forgot to remove the label on the neck that said, Mommy To Be.

I wake to him frantically pulling all his clothes out of the closet and drawers, inspecting them with a critical eye. He’s on the verge of tears and I know if I lie to him he’d never forgive me. So I try to explain why I had to purchase him maternity clothes, as if the explanation wasn’t obvious. He pouts, which I think is adorable, but then I make the mistake of laughing at him, and that sets off his tears.

He hates all his clothes, and won’t go out in public wearing women’s clothes. Even the outfits he loved the day before he now loathes. Depressed, he resorts to eating half of the room service menu, and refuses to leave our suite. I’m not sure if it was his emotions, or all the food he inhaled throughout the day that set him off, but by early evening he’s sure he’s dying. His stomach aches, he’s complaining of intense cramps, his back hurts and he’s an emotional mess.

So I take him to the hospital, thinking they can give him something to help with his indigestion. Several hours later our son Nicholas Declan Taylor-Kinney is born. He’s perfect, with his fuzzy hair, and hazel eyes, and now I’m the one who’s become an emotional mess as I hold him for the first time.
Once we’re back in Pittsburgh…

Gus runs ahead of us, pulling the screen door open with so much force that it hits the wall.

“Grandma! We have a baby!”

“What? I thought the baby was due in September.”

Several minutes later we come into the house, Justin’s carrying Nicky, and I’m carrying Jamie. We decided to surprise everyone, and not tell them the baby came early. So we show up to our welcome home dinner, with our absolutely adorable butterball in tow. He’s swaddled in the soft cotton quilt that Deb and Jen made for us while we were in Greece. We found it in the baby’s crib when we got home last night. I was so grateful that it wasn’t made of pastel fabric with cutesy animals on it. I can just imagine the drama that would have ensued if it was even remotely girly. He’s still not happy about the maternity clothes, and it’s been three weeks.

Jennifer’s crying, and Debbie’s voice is booming even louder than normal. Emmett’s gushing, and Ted and Mel are looking on with goofy smiles. Justin’s standing there grinning with pride, he looks incredible. He insisted on wearing one of his crop top tees that shows off his scar, and the slight curve of his stomach. Call me crazy but I think he’s incredibly sexy. I don’t know how he still does it, his metabolism must be working overtime. He did start doing situps as soon as his stomach healed, and he’s now running several miles every morning.

Jennifer has that dreamy look in her eyes. “Oh Justin! Why didn’t you call me? He’s just beautiful.”

Justin’s concerned about germs, but he does allow Jen and Deb to hold Nicky. Everyone else will have to wait until Mr Germophobic calms down and realizes he’s being extremely overprotective. After the excitement and shock subsides, Justin asks what’s for dinner. Yep, he’s still eating for two, but now his excuse is he has three sons he has to chase after.

Deb and Jen planned an outdoor barbeque for this afternoon and Justin’s practically drooling when he sees chicken and ribs grilling, potato salad, corn on the cob, and both apple and pecan pie. He’s in heaven, because although he loved trying all the traditional cuisines of the region, he’s longed for a good old artery-clogging American meal. Barbeque and pie are just what he’s been wanting, and I have to admit it smells great.

We settle down under the tree in the shade, and enjoy our picnic lunch, catching up on all the gossip around Liberty Avenue. Debbie looks sad when she talks about Michael; she’s still shocked that she wasn’t invited to his wedding. It’s heartbreaking to see her in so much pain, especially after everything she’s done for Michael over the years.

Emmett regales us with all his stories about how his business is booming, and he thanks Brian for introducing him to all of Pittsburgh’s élite. After we finish up our lunch and Justin’s gets his pie, a slice of both the apple and pecan, he pulls out his tablet and starts showing everyone pics of our honeymoon.

“The whole summer we were island hopping, spending a week or two on each island, enjoying ourselves and exploring all the historical sites.”

“We visited the Aghiou Nikolaou Church and the Temple of Nephesros.”

“We sunbathed on the white sand and swam in the beautiful waters of Zakynthos.”

“We just loved all the old architecture, and cobblestone streets of Corfu Island.”
“The whole area was formed by volcanoes, developing into all these islands with beautiful scenery and landscapes. It was just amazing and I really want to go back some day.”

"Then we visited Rhodes. I just loved seeing the old castle. It really takes you back in time, making you realize that America really is a young country, compared to the rest of the world.”

“On our last leg of vacation we visited Santorini. We loved all the beautiful white architectural buildings, and the city just seemed to hang on the cliffs overlooking the sea. That’s where Nicky was born, and after traveling so much it was nice to just settle in and enjoy ourselves and our new baby.”

“We had an amazing honeymoon and vacation, but it feels great to be home. We really missed all of you and we’re ready to be home bodies for a while.”

“I also took lots of pictures of the amazing sunsets. I don’t want to drone on and bore you to death.”

“Yeah, you’ll have to wait to see them when he has his show at the Bloom Gallery.”

“What? You’re having a show at the Bloom Gallery?”

“Apparently, my husband took it upon himself to email Sydney copies of my sunset pictures during our vacation, unbeknownst to me, and I now have an art opening coming up this fall.”

“Oh Justin! That’s wonderful! I’m so proud of you!”

“Thanks, mom.”

Deb gushes, “Your life is just perfect. You’re exhibiting your photographs at a gallery. You and Brian got married, and you’re adding another son to your family. It’s probably a good thing to finish up having kids while you’re young and you still have the energy.”

“Oh, Brian and I want a big family. But we’ll probably wait a couple of years before we try again.”

They all look at them stunned…

“Brian really wants a daughter.”

Brian leans into Justin nuzzling his neck, then he gives him a big kiss.

“It’s true. I do.”

TBC…

End Notes

This is a WIP, I usually update it every two or three weeks…

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