My Love

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org) at [http://archiveofourown.org/works/3428345](http://archiveofourown.org/works/3428345).

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My Love

by VincentMeoblinn

Summary

Reid goes with Haley into witness protection to give her an edge over Foyet, but when things go spectacularly wrong Reid's latent Omega instincts kick in and he ends up forming a parental bond with Jack. Hotch blames Reid for Haley's death so Rossi and Morgan step in to protect the Omega and nudge Jack's father and 'mother' together. (Multiple pairings, but a Hotch/Reid fic at it's heart.)
Chapter 1

It had been five months and one of Jack’s birthdays since the poor thing had seen his father. If Reid was missing Hotch than Jack had to be in agony, but he bore it well. Reid sometimes would check the house when he had insomnia and he’d hear Jack crying in his room. He was an Alpha thru and thru, even if he was too young to present, so he never let his mother know. Reid never told her, because his instincts never told him to do anything about it except feel a bit bad for Jack and Haley.

Reid missed his own mother. He still wrote to her daily, but he couldn’t send the letters to her so they were a pile in a box waiting for a chance to send them. He hoped she was well, but he assumed that Hotch would pull him out if her health took a bad turn.

Haley walking into the kitchen in her bedclothes and giving him a tight hug from behind interrupted Reid’s thoughts.

“What’s that big brain of yours thinking about, Spence?” Haley asked.

Reid hugged her arms, “Just how it’s been five months since we last saw Hotch.”

Haley sighed and pulled away. She wasn’t happy. She hated it when Hotch was brought up. She was angry at him and missed him in turns. Despite their divorce Reid had learned that she still cared for him deeply. She had taken to mothering Reid in response to their false romantic situation. Reid wasn’t used to being so affectionate with anyone besides his own mother, so it was awkward for him when Haley wanted to hug or snuggle him. They were supposed to be pretending to be a gay Omega couple, but they had fallen into mother/son roles. They had to keep up appearances for company so he slept in the same room with her, but he took the couch in her room rather than the bed despite the fact she would have happily snuggled him all night long. He cared about her, but he wasn’t as into the cuddles as she was.

Jack came downstairs with a big yawn and Reid started on breakfast. Haley had a job at a coffee shop. It wasn’t glamorous but it kept her busy. Reid kept house since he wasn’t really suited to any jobs that would require him to hide his intellect and showing it off would draw too much attention to them. So Reid spent the first half of his morning cleaning and preparing food for them and the second half reading. He usually got their dinners done right after they left for work and school so he didn’t have to interrupt his reading later. Then Haley just heated them up when they came home. Haley hadn’t been thrilled at first, but after a while she let it go because the stress of their situation was just too much without nitpicking on Reid. At least she didn’t have to cook so she could focus on helping Jack get by.

They were on their way home from school when Haley got the call. She was terrified and immediately called Reid despite the fact that Foyet tried to tell her to go straight to the house without contacting anyone.

“Spence, thank god! He told me you were dead!” Haley whispered, trying not to alarm Jack.

“Who did?” Reid asked, bolting for the gun cabinet and typing in the combination.

“Sam,” Haley sobbed, “He’s dead.”

“Haley, this is incredibly important. Who told you?”

“Another Marshal,” Haley sniffled.
“No. Absolutely not,” Reid cut her off, “They would have contacted both of us.”

“But…” Haley argued, still whispering. “They said Aaron was dead.”

Reid closed his eyes a moment, took a calming breath, and tried again, “He may be, but we need to run away from, not to, this individual. I guarantee you that’s George Foyet not a U.S. Marshal.”

“Spence, I…”

“Listen to me Haley. Hotch put me with you because he wanted brains with his family, not just brawn. He did that because Foyet has managed to outfox us every single step of the way, so he knew a US Marshal wouldn’t have a shot against him. I won’t say I know exactly what’s going on here, but I will say we need to get out and get out fast. Understand?”


“None of that compares to his life,” Reid argued, “I’ll win us money by gambling. I’ll steal food. I’ll teach Jack myself. I’ll kill if I have to in order to protect you, but I can’t do any of that if you don’t do as I say. Now where did he tell you to go?”

“To our old house,” Haley sniffled, “He said it was the last place Foyet would look.”

“Wow. No. Try the first place. That’s still basically Hotch’s territory. We need to go anywhere else. Oh! You know what the last place he’d look would be? One of Foyet’s old houses. He had a whole bunch of them.”

“So we should go to his territory?” Haley asked.

“No, that will be the second place he’ll look, because he’ll realize we’d recognize it as the last place he’d look,” Reid mused.

“So where should we go then?” She asked hopelessly.

Reid was silent a moment, “Have you been driving this whole time?”

“Yes.”

“Good. Our phones are set up to ping off towers. We’ll be safe for a time with them, but Foyet is a genius. He’ll track us eventually. Come and get me, I’ll pack up some essentials and we’ll make our escape.”

“Do we have that kind of time?”

“You told him you’re going to your old house, right?”

“Yes.”

“Then take the battery out of your phone, toss it out the window, and meet me here. By the time he realizes and tries to track the phone we’ll be long gone.”

Spencer packed up Jack’s things first, figuring more of his things were the sort he couldn’t bear to part with. He grabbed a few favourite books, toys, his blankets and pillows, and a few outfits. Then he raided Haley’s things, feeling a bit guilty as he went through her stuff to profile what was more important to bring. She hadn’t been allowed to bring any pictures of her past life, but she had brought some jewellery that was significant to her. He stuffed her entire jewellery box into a shopping bag and then emptied all of her drawers. He blushed at finding a knotted dildo and a few vibrators but
simply dumped them in with her jewellery. On top he tossed underwear, bras, socks, stockings, and Omega pads. In the next bag went dresses, a pair of pants, a shirt, a sweater, and some hair clips he saw lying about. He gave the room a cursory glance, tossed in her Bible, and fled to his own room.

He only brought clothes for himself since that was all he’d had to begin with. He stuck his library books in the mailbox figuring the mailman would know what to do. Then he waited until Haley showed up and hurried out with what looked like bags of groceries. It was probably still suspicious, but it was all he had to work with.

“I had some money in my Bible,” Haley told him.

“I assumed,” Reid replied, slipping in and buckling in, “I packed it. And your jewellery, and as many of Jack’s things as I could. Um… the bag with socks in it has ‘personal’ stuff.”

“Oh. Okay,” Haley blushed, “So now, what?”

“Head to the freeway while I figure this out,” Reid replied, “Did you use my name while on the phone with him?”

“Oh no,” Haley groaned, “Spence, I’m so sorry.”

“It’s fine,” Reid replied, then quickly texted Strauss figuring she was the team member most likely to be safe, “You couldn’t have known. The FBI will get to my mom before Foyet will.”

“I’m such an idiot.”

“No you’re not,” Reid lied.

“How do you stay so calm? Knowing a child is in danger?” Haley asked, her hands clenching the wheel until the knuckles turned white. Her face was scrunched up and her eyes were damp.

“I’m broken,” Reid replied.

“What?” She asked in confusion.

“I have no Omega instincts,” Reid explained, “It’s why children and some animals are uncomfortable with me- what Hotch called The Reid Effect. Adults usually find me odd, but children have more instincts than adults do and can sense that I’m lacking them.”

“You don’t have Omega instincts? Whose instincts do you have?” Haley wondered, her eyes narrowing as she studied the road.

“I’ve made you uncomfortable,” Reid sighed, “Don’t be. I’ve been tested thoroughly. Aside from a lack of natural instincts there’s nothing wrong with me. I still empathize- feel love, pity, and all the things that stop a person from being dangerous to others- and I’m capable of functioning normally in society for the most part.”

“Then Jack not liking you at first…”

“Was completely normal,” Reid nodded, “As he got older it became less alarming to him, but infants are all about survival. It also helps that his father reassured him that I was safe, so he stopped worrying.”

“Does Foyet have instincts?” Haley asked after a prolonged pause. She looked a lot calmer, but her hands were still gripping the wheel so tightly he worried about her joints.
“Probably not,” Reid replied, “Though I should mention that a lack of natural instincts in only one of the criteria for a psychopath. I’ve changed my mind. Major roads are out. Turn onto Helm Lane and we’ll take some back roads.”

“To where?” Haley asked.

“Nowhere,” Reid replied. “That’s the point. We’re going to run and hide, and we’re not making this easy for him. That means I’m going to pick attractions where we can blend in as tourists while I scam people for money, and we’re getting there the back ways. We’ll be safe and untraceable. The second we can we’re picking up big hats that will hide us from cameras.”

“What if someone actually does need to find us?” Haley asked.

“Let me worry about that. Yours and Jack’s safety comes first. My phone is still around, but with it pinging off towers he won’t be able to trace us fast enough to find us. I’ll check it every three days but keep it off other than that. That’s pretty standard and the team will know to wait for me to respond. They know me, they know my specialty, but Foyet doesn’t. They’ll be able to find me, but I can promise you no one else will.”

XXX

“Reid,” Hotchner motioned for Reid to step further into his hospital room. Reid stood dragged himself in on his crutches and shut the door when he indicated it.

“We’ve worked together for… five years? Six?”

“Six years, three months, two weeks, three days, fourteen hours and roughly twenty… two minutes,” Reid replied, glancing at his watch.

Hotch gave him a warm smile, “That’s why I need to ask you to do something for me, Reid. I know Haley will have enough brawn with her, but I want her to have brains as well. I want you to pretend to be her gay lover and go undercover with her.”

“I… wait… what?”

“I want your brain protecting my m… ex wife and son.”

Reid ignored the moment he almost called Haley his mate. He knew the man was still in love with his ex wife and that sending them both off was destroying him. Hotch was a powerful Alpha who had taken quite the hit mentally when his Omega mate had left him. He’d leaned heavily on the team after that, taking them as pack when he hadn’t in the past despite their years together. Reid had become a sort of surrogate Omega to him, though not in a sexual way. Penelope was less so, but still clearly under his protection. JJ was clearly Will’s mate, but Hotch still treated her like a sister. Rossi appeared to be the pack Alpha, but without his instincts Reid really wasn’t sure. He knew that Morgan and Prentiss were their Betas based on how they treated him, but he had no way of returning that treatment. The times the two Betas attempted to get him to act like an Omega and lean on him for relationship advice he’d shied away. Now Hotch was asking him to act like an Alpha towards Hotch’s former Omega and Reid was beyond confused. Add into that the fact Hotch was terrified, a state Reid had never seen before. It scared him, but not nearly as much as the idea that Hotch would be broken by the loss of Haley and Jack.

“You’re thinking that my inability to act like an Omega will aid the ruse that I’m gay and in a relationship with Haley, providing her with someone to lean on and Jack with a comforting scent and a secondary parental figure.”
Hotch nodded weakly, “I need them safe. I don’t know if or when I’ll see my son again, but I will see Foyet dead before I let him near Jack.”

“So will I,” Reid replied, nodding firmly, “But I’m injured and they’re leaving in under an hour so…”

“The brains, Reid. I need your brains. Take the time to heal. I want you watching the neighbours, profiling them, anything you need to do to keep them safe. I just need to know that someone from my team is there, because there’s no way in hell I’m trusting a bunch of strangers with my family.”

Reid didn’t need to think for long, “I’ll need you to check in on my mom while I’m gone.”

“Done.”
Reid plopped down a straight and collected his winnings. He thought he could get more, but they had enough and him being pegged as a high roller wasn’t what he wanted. He nodded politely to the dealer and headed for the hotel that he and Haley were staying in. There he helped them pack up their things, pulled out a can of spray-paint, and defaced the wall above the bed. He knew the defacement would be reported as the last several had. He already knew their next destination, but only someone familiar with geographic profiling would figure it out. The group would have to find another genius or run the vandalism through a computer algorithm. Either way, they’d eventually track him down and place them in a new safehouse. Reid wasn’t worried that it had been a good two weeks or that Strauss had only replied with ‘Diana is safe, keep running’.

He had placed his very first bit of vandalism as a Foyet’s symbol, but after that he’d gone off and done symbols and quotes from previous cases. He knew his team would track them, but the police wouldn’t know what was going on. Since he was going from city to city they hadn’t been stopped for their actions, though he did feel bad for the housekeeping department that had to clean up the mess he left behind.

Haley had switched the license plates from their SUV to another car in the parking garage by the time he got downstairs. She’d gotten fairly good at it. At one point an Alpha had come across them doing it and she’d put on an act, crying and complaining about a stalker. He’d taken the license plate off his own car and put it on hers, claiming that since their vehicles looked similar it would throw the stalker off. He’d promised her he would find and kill the bastard, then track her down and take her as a mate. Reid had watched the whole thing in amusement, driven an hour away, and had her switch the plates with an abandoned car they found. Haley was disappointed and thought they should reconnect with the Alpha for protection (Reid thought she also might be thinking of reconnecting with him for other reasons) but Reid reminded her that Alphas were aggressive. Two Omegas travelling would garner sympathy again.

That had been four days ago, but he hadn’t thought about it overmuch. In less than an hour he would regret his lack of instincts that should have been screaming at him the moment Haley started flirting with another Alpha.

“You okay?” Reid asked.

“I think so,” Haley replied, giving him a wan smile as she wiped a bit of sweat from her brow, “I had the runs this morning. I think I’m coming down with something.”

“You okay to drive?” Reid worried.

“Yeah, I’m fine,” Haley replied, “License plate is changed over. We’ll be in the next county before they catch us. Anything in the news about the license plates yet?”

“No, they’re less sensational news and license plate theft is incredibly common. A license plate is stolen once every 26 seconds in the US. The police will either think it’s a prank or that if they publicise it the tactic will become more common.”

“It’s made it into a few blogs but so far people are treating it like one of those internet games,” Haley told him, “They’re tracking the plates. I’m worried because it’s basically tracking us.”

“In order to find us he needs to know where we’re going, not where we’ve been,” Reid replied, “He won’t find that by tracking where we picked up and dropped off the license plates. I’ve made sure of
“Is that why we’re always driving out of our way?”

“And dumping some of the plates elsewhere, yeah.”

“I hope this SUV lasts us,” Haley grinned weakly as they buckled into the vehicle, “We’ve already hit the hundred thousand mark and it only had fourteen thousand miles on it when they gave it to me!”

“We’ll be far out of that range soon. Eventually we’re going to have to trade it in. I suggest we then get a car you’d never buy, just in case Foyet is starting to try profile us or has information from any of our co-workers. I’m thinking something particularly ugly, but then it will probably stand out too much, so we’ll need to go for common as well.”

They were pulling out onto the freeway- a necessity in the area they were in- when it hit him. An odd, cloying smell in the car.

“What is that smell?” Reid asked.

“Smell?” Haley asked, sniffing the air, “I don’t smell anything.”

“Then the likelihood is it’s you.”

“Excuse me?” Haley asked, offended.

“We rarely notice smells on our own bodies since smell is the weakest of our senses. We adjust so quickly that… what?” Reid had stopped talking when Haley gave him a terrified look, “Keep your eyes on the road!”

Haley’s head jerked forward in time to avoid hitting the car to her left, but she overcompensated and flew into the off ramp. A car hit their side and Haley screamed as if she’d been the one struck. Reid figured out what was happening a second after the car flew back and was hit by a tractor trailer, but by then the SUV was already flipping over and his head hit the window hard enough for blackness to chase away his self-recrimination.

XXX

Hotch studied the map in front of him. He knew the pattern, he just had to figure out which of two attractions he’d be heading for. Reid favoured the resorts that had a lot of traffic and lots of activities for children. There he likely found people to con into gambling with him in a private game since he never seemed to lack for money to provide Jack with entertainment. While they did wear disguises Hotch could tell when he surveyed the footage who his ex-wife and son were. Haley’s walk was so familiar, and his son looked up often enough that they caught part of his face from time to time. All he needed was a glimpse of chin and he knew it was Jack. Reid was harder to spot, and they almost never saw him, but Hotch knew that he stayed by their sides at all times. He’d made the right call to put Reid with them. His loyalty was unwavering and his brilliance had stopped them from walking right into Foyet’s trap. Sadly, Foyet had gotten away from that day, but his life had to be miserable since they were carefully cutting off his supply to medication he needed. He’d be theirs eventually, but in the mean time he had to make a decision. Find Haley and Jack, or let them keep running since his path was virtually undetectable.

“Aaron,” Rossi’s voice contained warning, and Hotch instinctively braced himself.

“He didn’t find them,” Hotch stated firmly, “He can’t have.”
“No,” Rossi replied, stepping into the room with a miserable look on his face, “Haley went into Heat while driving. The SUV crashed. I don’t have many details, but I was told two are alive.”

“Two,” Hotch replied, his voice cracking.

“We’re ready to go,” Rossi replied.

XXX

“Where am I?” Reid asked as white lights flashed past his face over and again, “Where are they?”

“What’s your name, sweetheart?” A woman’s voice reached his ear.


“Is that their names? Which of you is Jack’s parent?”

Reid struggled for a moment, recalled his cover story, and forced it out, “We both are. We’re gay. Why aren’t you answering me?”

“Just hang on Joe, everything’s going to be okay.”

He was taken into a room but the lights still danced in front of his eyes. A man stepped in and looked him over. Then a woman. A needle went into his arm and they wouldn’t let him sleep. His eyes kept watering and his mouth was dry. Then he was suddenly salivating. He vomited all over himself. The nurses peeled back the covers and refreshed them, barely paying him any mind and not answering his questions.

Over and again he pleaded, “Please. He’s my son. She’s my wife. Please. Just tell me. At least tell me what happened to one of them. Please. Jack? Jack?”

Then they were moving again and he was spectacularly sick once more. A machine. His mind was so muddled he couldn’t even figure out which one it was. Off to another room, and they were kind enough to dim the lights and give him something for the pain. The spots vanished from in front of his eyes. A doctor finally came in to talk to him.

“Mr. Bell?”

“Doctor,” Reid corrected automatically.


“What happened to Jack and Haley?” Reid asked again.

“I’ll get to that in a moment, Doctor,” The doctor replied, “So what sort of doctor are you?”

“Philosophy,” Reid replied, “Doctor, where are my wife and son?”

“Is your son allergic to anything? The police find any.”

“No.”

“What about medications?”

“No. I take it he’s alive?”
“Yes, but he’s badly injured. He’s just coming out of surgery now. We had to act without consent to save his life.”

“Haley?”

“If you mean the woman you were with, I’m afraid she didn’t make it.”

“She went on Heat,” Reid groaned, “It’s weeks too early.”


“I’m so tired,” Reid replied miserably.

“You have a concussion,” the doctor replied, “And frankly you’re lucky it’s not worse. You’ve got staples in your head, but we were lucky it wasn’t a plate instead. They’re a pain during travel.”

Her tone was teasing, trying to lighten the mood, but Reid was alarmed.

“I suffered brain damage?”

“Not that we’re aware of, but we’ll know more in the next few days. What can you tell me about Jack? Any dietary restrictions?”

“He hates peas.”

“Duly noted,” The doctor smiled warmly and Reid managed to finally focus on her face.

“Will we be able to do open casket?” Reid asked.

“I’m sorry?” The doctor asked, looking alarmed.

“For my wife. For Haley. Can she have an open casket? She wants one.”

“I’m… not sure. I didn’t see her. She was dead on arrival. We’re just waiting for the ME.”

“I want to see her.”

That seemed to reassure the doctor for some reason, “We can’t do anything about that right now, but I’ll let the nurses know. You rest, but no sleeping. Okay?”

“Yeah,” Reid replied, then settled back to recite algorithms in his head in order to figure out how much damage he’d suffered.

After what felt like days but was probably more like hours Reid’s skin began to itch. He felt a growing sense of unease and wondered if this was the early onset Heat that Haley had gone through.

Am I panicked? I don’t feel panicked. I feel… as if I’m missing something. Jack’s image came unbidden to Reid’s mind and he felt a pang of longing pound through him. He had to get to Jack. He had to get to his Jack and keep running so Foyet couldn’t catch them. He’d failed Haley, but he wouldn’t fail Jack.

Reid tested his legs, drank some water, walked a few paces in his room, and rationalized the best way to get to Jack and get him out of there alive. When the doctor walked in again she was immediately knocked unconscious and Reid hurriedly changed into her coat and stole her badge. He waited a few minutes before walking out so it wasn’t too obvious and hurried out of the ward.
Instead of making for an exit, he made it to the next ward where he picked up a clipboard and frowned at the contents.

“I hate shift switching,” Reid sighed. A nurse looked up from the duty station.

“Something wrong, doctor?” Reid asked. The badge was intentionally flipped backwards so she could see neither name nor picture.

“I’m supposed to be covering a shift, but I must have been given the wrong info. I thought it was a John Doe. A little boy.”

“Oh! You mean Jack Bell! He was under John Doe, but he’s been re-listed. Poor thing. We’re all rooting for him.”

“Where is he now?” Reid asked, “I need to check his white blood cell count, we’ve just found out he was never vaccinated and with the measles on the… oops. I shouldn’t have mentioned…”

The woman paled, “Orange ward.”

“Thank you,” Reid replied, “And whatever you do… don’t mention the measles. I shouldn’t have said anything.”

“I won’t,” She replied softly, “Could you let me know how he’s doing later?”

“I’ll be sure to,” Reid replied, then snatched up a mask and hurried away.
Hotch walked into a hospital in chaos; police everywhere and a nurse sobbing in a chair. He knew instantly that something horrible had happened and grabbed the nearest police officer to demand an explanation, flashing his badge as he did. Rossi was hot on his heels, eyes narrowed at Hotch to watch him carefully.

“A pair of Omegas with no ID were in a car wreck.” The officer informed them, “There was a child with them. One didn’t survive the wreck, but the other did. He managed to talk his way through three wards and kidnap the kid. We’re now assuming he wasn’t related to the child at all and… sir?”

The room tilted. Rossi grabbed him by his shoulders and gripped him tightly, straightening him up and putting an arm around him from behind. He leaned into the steadying presence of his pack Alpha, closed his eyes, and took a few deep breaths. When he opened his eyes the officer had waved over his Lieutenant and the man was waiting for Hotch to calm down enough to answer questions.

“The woman was my mate, sorry, ex-wife. The boy was my son. The young man was my subordinate and packmate,” The men winced and Hotch shook his head at their apparent lack of understanding, “They were in witness protection. I asked Dr. Reid to watch over my son and ex.”

They nodded understanding, “So he fled for the boys safety, then. Whoever they’re hiding from might have found them because we released their pictures to the media when they came in without identification. If it helps any he managed to pickpocket three of my officers and made off with their guns. No idea why he needs three sidearms but…”

“He has little access to ammo without being exposed to a security camera,” Hotch sighed, “Taking numerous weapons will give him more protection.

“What is he, a thief?” The Lt asked.

“An illusionist,” Morgan snorted, “And a damn good one. Reid probably had their ID’s hidden somewhere. He’ll try to recover them unless he feels it’s too unsafe. We should check the impound lot where the car was taken.”

Hotch interrupted them, “What state was Jack in? And Reid, for that matter?”

“Jack’s the boy?” Lt asked.

“Correct.”

The Lieutenant called a doctor over and Hotch listened as his son’s injuries were detailed for him. He’d been hit with some flying debris during the accident that had left him with severe lacerations on his hands, arms, and face. He’d been patched up and a plastic surgeon had been called in for his face and hands to minimize scarring. The most dangerous had been on his left wrist, which had opened up very close to an artery. His tendon had been torn so they’d reattached it and placed it in a splint so it could heal. He’d lost a lot of blood, but had been well on his way to recovery when Reid had snatched him. Hotch paced the halls of the hospital, hoping that Reid was still there and his scent would bring him out of hiding, but it appeared he’d escaped before they’d arrived.

“He’s acting like we’re the enemy!” Lieutenant Cooper spat out, “That doesn’t make any sense. An Omega should be seeking out Alphas for protection.”

“Reid doesn’t have Omega instincts,” Hotch replied with a frown, “He runs on pure logic. As soon
as he knows it’s safe he should bring my son to me. Which begs the question why he hasn’t. By now the media will be screaming about how the FBI is here, playing it with the Amber Alert you guys put out.”

Hotch stared around the waiting room, trying to figure out where he could have gone.

“If Reid is still running than he must know something we don’t,” Rossi pointed out, “He must know where Foyet is, and that showing his face now would be too dangerous. Foyet has used a gun before. Him evolving to a sniper rifle wouldn’t be unusual.”

Hotch frowned, “Lock this place down. Now.”

“We have got this place locked down,” The Lieutenant replied, “No one coming in or going out. Between that and the Amber Alert he can’t possibly get out of here.”

“Except ambulance crew,” Rossi pointed out, “Your ambulances are still running, and they’ll have everything he needs to care for an injured child.”

Hotch nodded, “Get the location of all ambulances and add Foyet’s picture to the Amber Alert. In fact, take Reid’s off. Jack will be obvious because he’s injured, we need to make sure Foyet gets found first. And get me eyes in the buildings surrounding this one!”

XXX

Reid ditched the ambulance in a parking lot of the first big city he came to, shoved supplies into a bag, wrapped Jack in warm blankets, and gently placed him in a wheelchair. He pushed it across the road to the next shopping centre, found a cart in the side lot, and placed Jack gently into the shopping cart. He shoved the wheelchair into a water drainage ditch and pushed the cart into the back of the building. There he headed for some tall buildings.

“Where’s my mom?” Jack asked, staring up at him with one eye. The other was heavily bandaged but according to the chart he’d stolen it was only the eyelid that was damaged.

“I’m sorry, Jack,” Reid replied miserably, “She… she didn’t make it. I’ll take care of you now.”

“I want my mommy,” Jack sniffled, “My head hurts.”

“You have a concussion,” Reid replied, “According to your chart I can give you something for the pain in an hour.”

Jack began to whimper miserably, and Reid glanced at him worriedly for a while. After a few blocks he was convinced something was seriously wrong. Jack wasn’t acting right. His eyes didn’t track, he’d gone strangely limp, and as they turned into an alley he began to wail miserably. Reid hurriedly escaped deeper into the back alleys, searching for an adequate hiding place, but Jack’s cries were drawing attention.

XXX

“He’s feral,” The Lieutenant insisted, sitting down at his desk, “That’s the only explanation.”

They had cleared the hospital and the buildings around it and confirmed that an ambulance had fled city limits shortly after Hotch arrived. They tried to head to the next location they’d expected Reid to stop at, but he hadn’t arrived. They’d located the ambulance in a completely different area, off of his patterned track.
“He’s avoiding us too,” Hotch said softly, “He doesn’t want to be found anymore. Not even by my team.”

“He’s feral,” The Lieutenant sighed.

“He can’t be,” Morgan argued, “Reid has no Omega instincts. He’s basically a Beta with a uterus. Hell, not even that because he hasn’t got Beta instincts either! He’s a brain with legs and a uterus. The closest he comes to ever being a gender is when he goes on Heat, and his cycle hits like clockwork once a year. He wouldn’t take a kid if he were near Heat.”

“He might go on Heat afterwards, though,” JJ pointed out, “In an effort to draw in an Alpha to help him protect Jack. The way Ha- er- Omegas sometimes do.”

Hotch shook his head, “Going on Heat to protect a child still implies instincts, and even if Reid did suddenly have them kick in and went feral because of it he’d be looking for an Alpha. He’s not. He’s avoiding everyone. It’s been three days and he’s just gone.”

“What if…” Rossi frowned, “No, that can’t be it.”

“What?” JJ asked.

“Go on,” Hotch prompted.

“What if only some of his instincts have kicked in,” Rossi mused, “And now he’s drowning in the persona he took on. Think about it. Reid became Joseph Bell, the co-parent of Jack Bell, and now his ‘mate’ is dead. He’s running from Foyet and all his instincts- instincts that he’s never had before and never received training to deal with- are demanding that he protect Jack.”

“But,” Hotch continued, “the instincts that counter that, the ones that tell an Omega to seek out an Alpha to protect them while they protect the children, those are still dormant.”

“Exactly,” Rossi nodded, “It would explain everything.”

“So where is he?” Hotch asked, “He’s broken pattern and is hiding from all of us. If we were a terrified, suddenly maternal Reid, with an injured child, where would we go?”

“Oh no,” JJ gasped. Everyone looked at her for an explanation and JJ’s eyes widened, “Guys, I just remembered something they told us when I joined the bureau. Omegas who have kids have to have an Omega family member nearby to contact in case they die suddenly.”

“The reason,” JJ continued, “Is because children who suddenly lose their mothers can sometimes mentally regress to an infantile state.”

“So Reid’s out there somewhere dealing with a five year old in diapers?” Morgan scoffed, “Serves him right for not turning himself in!”

“No,” Hotch replied, “She’s right. Children are kept away from non-familial Omegas for the first year of their lives because they’re blank slates. They’ll bond with anyone, and that Omega’s brain chemistry will sync up with their scent and tell the Omega that they’re the parent. It’s a survival tactic from when parents often didn’t survive long enough to get the child to adulthood. They’d just lure in another mother, who in turn would seduce a mate. If Jack’s regressed than Reid will be convinced that he is Jack’s mother!”
Rossi’s eyes widened, “And then he’d be afraid that you, the rightful father, *who is not his mate*, will take his son away!”

“He’s not running from us,” Hotch turned to the map of Reid’s last known locations, “He’s running from me.”

XXX

Reid had been planning on roughing it for a few days to hide out, but with Jack acting strange and his wounds in danger of infection he was concerned that playing homeless would be the literal death of him. Instead he began to consider alternatives. He *had* to get to his next location- Hotch might meet him there- but if he was caught along the way Foyet might get to them first and there was bound to be an Amber Alert out by now. Reid had joined a group of indigent people around a burning barrel, but they were wary of him, especially since Jack was acting so strangely. Reid thought perhaps he was suffering from more damage than the doctors had realized, and then began to worry that perhaps his brain was swelling.

At that moment Reid felt a sharp pain in his chest. It hit him again, and again, and he shifted miserably and palmed his chest. That was when he noticed the swelling and unbuttoned his shirt to see if there were some bruising he hadn’t been aware of before. As far as he knew he had no broken ribs, but upon examining his chest he did see the characteristic shoulder belt bruising. That bruise was nowhere near where he was feeling pain, and a glance at those spots provided an answer to his dilemma.

Reid was producing milk. Reid was lactating and Jack was crying for *food*. He was hungry. Reid’s little boy was *hungry*. Of course! Reid’s eyes misted over as emotions he’d never knew he’d be able to feel left him anxiously plucking at Jack to make him more comfortable. He sat down on a nearby bench and carefully arranged Jack so his shoulders were in Reid’s lap. Jack was on his uninjured side, and once Reid shifted him it was easy to press him to his teat. Jack suckled hungrily, his miserable sounds abating now that he had what he wanted. It hurt at first, but his body adapted quickly. Reid hummed Mozart and stroked Jack’s hair while his little darling suckled hungrily. He switched off when the lad became frustrated again. Once both were drained Reid sat him up and rubbed his back to wind him.

“My beautiful little boy,” Reid sighed, breathing in his scent as he nuzzled the side of Jack’s face to scent him.

“Mama,” Jack sighed, and drifted into a peaceful sleep.
Chapter 4

Reid awoke with a jolt and stared around himself. He’d only been asleep for a few seconds. Hopefully the teenager sitting next to him in the driver’s side hadn’t called the police on a spare phone or signalled another driver.

“I didn’t,” The lad stated.

Reid rubbed at his eyes, sitting up a bit straighter. Jack was plastered against his side sleeping peacefully as his body recovered. Reid was sitting between him and the young man driving the truck down to Florida with his wheelchair in the back. Reid had narrowly gotten out before the roadblocks had been thrown up in Arkansas where he’d ditched the ambulance. He’d pulled a Haley, summoned up some tears, and told a group of catcalling Alpha teens that he was fleeing an abusive home and an Alpha who had crippled his son. The recently emerged Alpha teens had practically salivated over him, each offering up their bed to keep him safe, but he’d told them he needed to get to his mother in Florida. He’d shyly- and awkwardly- offered them sex to get them there. The fellow with the truck had readily agreed to a road trip to sunny Florida and sex with a pretty Omega. They’d gotten in the truck and driven a block with him fondling Reid the whole way before the older Omega had gotten disgusted and pulled out his gun.

“You didn’t what?” Reid asked.

“Whatver you were thinking when you gave me that suspicious look,” The teen replied, “I didn’t do anything except keep driving. Didn’t even look at anyone, okay? I’m only nineteen, I don’t wanna die a virgin, okay?”

“At nineteen you should have better goals than getting laid,” Reid sighed, tucking the gun between his thighs and checking on Jack’s wounds one at a time as the traffic slowed, “Jack? Sweetheart?”

Jack’s eyes stirred. He was still behaving far younger than his age, but now that Reid knew why he wasn’t panicked about it, “Mama?”

“Yeah, sweetheart. Mama’s here,” Reid smiled, his cheeks flushing as a rush of adoration flowed through him, “My beautiful boy. How are you feeling?”

“Hurts,” Jack whimpered.

“I know, baby. I can give you medicine but you have to eat first. Do you want us to stop and get food?”

Jack turned his face and suckled at a button on Reid’s shirt and he smiled softly, “Okay, you can have some, but we are stopping for food. You can’t live on milk alone, you’re too big for that.”

Reid unbuttoned his shirt, shifted aside the spare bandages he was using to keep his tiny (hopefully temporary) breasts under control, and pressed Jack’s face to his teet, wincing when his elbow dug into his thigh painfully.

“Oh my gods that’s so freakin’ hot,” The teen whispered.

“What’s your name again?” Reid asked.

“It’s James,” The lad replied readily, “You didn’t ask before.”
“I’m Spencer, as you might have guessed this is Jack.”

“I never thought mamas and babies could be hot,” The guy said.

“A lot of Alphas find nursing to be attractive,” Reid explained, “it’s a part of the hindbrain telling them that an Omega who can feed their babies is more valuable.”

“What are you going to do when you get to Florida?” James asked, “And where am I dropping you off?”

Reid gave him a suspicious look and slipped Jack to the next nipple, “Why would I tell you that? You’ll pass the info to the police.”

“So… you aren’t going to kill me?” James asked, his voice a tenuous mixture of hope and fear.

“I told you I wouldn’t. Just don’t grope me again. Or alert the police until after I’m out of sight. I won’t tell you not to go them at all, because that would just be stupid,” Reid sighed.

Jack popped off and he helped him sit up and gave him his pills with some water from a bottle.

“Food joints coming up,” James announced.

“Pick whatever you want,” Reid stated, “I’ll pay.”

“Cool!” James agreed readily and pulled off the freeway to head for the fast food restaurants.

Reid chuckled to himself. James thought he was being nice! He had cash on him and didn’t want them traced. He would keep the gun trained on James while he ordered for them and then put it back between his thighs while they ate. He wasn’t used to being the villain, but it was surprisingly easy. They picked up their burgers and fries through the drive thru- not the best meal for Jack but it would do while travelling- and continued on their way. Jack ate only when Reid ripped up his food into tiny pieces and pressed it to his mouth. He wanted to be pressed right up against Reid’s side, but that wasn’t a problem. It was part of the bonding process and Reid was well and truly immersed in his new son. He was sad he’d missed Jack’s real infancy, but it was so sweet to see him stare up at him as if he were the entire world.

“You know what?” James said softly, “I don’t know what you and your kid are running from, but I’m not going to tell the police when we get to Florida.”

“Thank you.”

XXX

Hotch had questioned his decision to take Reid’s face off of the Amber Alert right up until they found Foyet’s body. He’d been spotted by an Omega who had thrown up the alarm and convinced an entire group of Alphas to stop the ‘kidnapper’ in his tracks. He’d been beaten to death and left in an alley. No charges had been made against the group though one was arrested for having an outstanding warrant. Hotch walked away from Foyet’s corpse with little sense of relief. He’d still lost Haley. Jack and Reid were still missing.

“You know what we need, don’t you?” JJ asked.

“No,” Hotch sighed, “I don’t. I’m fresh out of ideas and haven’t slept in days. Reid vanished. Completely.”
“A press conference. Just like the good ole days,” JJ replied, “I’ve called a few friends. Let’s go over what you’re going to say.”

An hour later Hotch stood up in front of the press with make-up to hide the bags and coffee and coaching to give me the relieved smile he plastered on his face.

“Hello everyone, thank you for coming. My name is Special Supervisory Agent Aaron Hotchner, I’m the father of Jack Hotchner who you all have seen on the Amber Alert recently. As of today George Foyet, whom the media named The Reaper, was killed in a blitz attack by a mob attempting to rescue my son. Some charges have been pressed, but due to the sensitivity of the matter we are not charging anyone with murder or manslaughter. The Amber Alert has been taken down and we’ll be heading home in a few hours. Thank you all for your time.”

Hotch made to head off the podium, but the questions erupted as expected. He paused, giving them a surprised look, and started selecting hands for questions.

“You there, pink jacket.”

“What is the condition of your son?”

“We’re unaware of a current condition, but his mother took many medical supplies with him so until we are informed otherwise we’re assuming he’s stable.”

“I’m sorry, but…” A man in a black blazer asked, “Are you saying Jack Hotchner is not in your care?”

“No, he is not. Jack is with his mother, Dr. Spencer Reid. Dr. Reid took Jack from the hospital to protect him from Foyet when he realized the news broadcast of their faces would alert The Reaper to their location and put them in imminent danger. Dr. Reid is very capable and intelligent so we have no concerns at this time.”

“So you’re just,” A reporter in a blue dress called out, “Not looking for your son anymore?”

“Jack’s mother will bring him home when he’s ready,” Hotch replied, “It’s possible they need a vacation after all the trauma they’ve been through. I know I do.”

A few smiles, but most were still confused by Hotch’s reaction. The pink lady asked another question, “SSA Hotchner, wasn’t the recently deceased Haley Hotchner the mother?”

“She was, but we believe Jack regressed and bonded with Dr. Reid. Spencer is Jack’s mother now and I look forward to his return so the three of us can be a family.”

“Are you planning on bonding with Dr. Reid?” Blue Dress asked.

“It’s my intention to propose bonding, yes.”

JJ stepped in at that crucial moment, knowing that the offer to bond had to be the last thought floating around in Reid’s mind.

“That will be all for today, thank you for your time.”

Cameras flashed, reporters shouted for more information, and the media went on a hunt for everything Spencer Reid, but that interview was played over and over and over again for days on end. Unfortunately living on the streets in Florida didn’t provide one with many opportunities to watch the news, so it wasn’t until someone recognized Jack despite his hair dye that Reid even
became aware of the broadcast.

“S’cuse me, son,” A voice called.

Reid looked up from where he sat on the beach. He and Jack came here every day to soak up the sun and relax by the shore. Jack had progressed far enough that he was asking to go in the water, but his stitches were still too new so Reid wasn’t allowing it. When he finished his round of antibiotics he’d let him go. For now they enjoyed the fun on the beach during the day, Jack sticking close while Reid napped beneath a beach umbrella. At night Jack slept in a little bundle on top of some boxes beneath the same umbrella while Reid stood at the corner a few feet off and begged for money (and stole some when he had to).

“Can I help you?” Reid asked, squinting up at the young man. He was just putting more sun block on Jack, knowing full well the Vitamin D from the sun and the protection from the lotion would limit the amount of scarring he suffered from.

“I just wanted to show you a video, man,” The young teen grinned.

“Umm… no thanks,” Reid replied, looking away pointedly, “I’m not into younger men.”

“It ain’t that kinda clip, son. Just look, yeah?”

He started to approach and Reid went for his bag where his guns were stashed. The man put his hands up.


He hit play and inched close enough that the phone was under the umbrella. Reid studied it as Hotch appeared on the screen and the interview played through. The young man retreated a bit.

“I got a cousin whose a Beta,” The lad explained, “He can take you and yours up to DC if you want. That’s where his daddy is, right?”

“My dad?” Jack asked, perking up a bit, “You know my dad?”

Reid glanced sidelong at Jack. He’d been avoiding discussion of Aaron Hotchner for a while.

“It’s a trick,” Reid replied, “It’s common to reassure kidnappers and lure them into approaching the family and returning the child. Except I’m not a kidnapper. I’m his mother.”

“I know,” The lad nodded, “I get it, yo. See the thang is I’ve got a lil girl. Two months old. My Omega and I, we’re not bonded. Too different, see?”

Reid glanced around himself. The young man had friends with him, but they were hanging back and making no attempt to circle him. He kept his hand in his bag and wrapped around a gun.

“And?” Reid asked, “You can’t have my son.”

“I don’ want him. I want my baby, yeah? Her mamma let’s me see her every weekend, but it’s not enough, you feel me Holmes?”

“Yeah,” Reid nodded miserably, “I feel you.”

“Still ain’ no way I’m taking her from her mamma. No way.”

“Why? You probably could. If she’s young the Alpha’s family often gets ruled as guardianship in
“Yeah, but ain’t no Alpha with his dick on right gonna take a baby from an Omega. Shoot, sorry ‘bout the language.”

Reid thought about this for a moment, “So why are you telling me all this?”

“’Cause I figure this secret agent boss is missing his boy more than I’m missing my baby. You feel me?”

“Yeah,” Reid replied, slipping his hand out of the grip, “I haven’t got any rights, though. If I go back to Virginia with Jack they’ll take him from me.”

“You do what you gotta do,” The young man replied, “I just wanted you to know cause I saw you was living rough. I figure maybe you didn’t know he wanted you both.”

“He doesn’t,” Reid replied miserably, “He just wants Jack. No one wants me.”

“If he any kinda Alpha he wants his boy to have a momma.”

Reid nodded thoughtfully, “He’s an amazing Alpha. Thank you. I’m glad you stopped to talk to me.”

“You want that ride, bae?” The young man asked.

“You know what? Yeah. I do.”

“Cool. That’s cool. Imma call my cousin.”

The young man backed away slowly, still giving Reid his space. He made a call while his friends teased him.

“Having a kid made you soft, holmes.”

“Naw, having a kid made me a parent,” The young man corrected, “And it’s apparent that you don’t know how to adult fool.”
Chapter 5

Morgan opened his door and his jaw dropped at the sight of Spencer Reid standing at his door with Jack plastered to his side. Jack smiled up at him shyly.

“Hi, Uncle Derek.”

“Hi, buddy. Hi, Reid. Uhm… come in?”

“Thanks,” Reid smiled shyly, “Can I use your shower? And a razor? Or maybe a machete?”

Reid was scratching at his beard and Morgan was eying it worriedly.

“Reid, what are you doing here?” Morgan asked, “It’s been two weeks since Foyet was killed.”

“It took me a while to arrange a ride home,” Reid replied, “I found a Beta and we talked for a few days until I was comfortable with him. Then he had to request off of work and he drove me here. I don’t have fleas, by the way. I checked.”

“That’s good to know,” Morgan replied, “What I meant was why aren’t you at Hotch’s place.”

“George- the Beta, not Foyet- told me that I should go to a Beta I trusted,” Reid frowned, “Do you want us to leave? I don’t mean to impose it’s just…”

“You can always ask a Beta for help, Reid,” Morgan replied, “My concern is that you’re here when Hotch and Jack need you to be there.”

Reid ran his hand through his long hair, tucking it behind his ear, “I’m afraid he’ll take Jack.”

Morgan felt an intense pang of guilt and Reid saw it on his face and began backing up towards the door with Jack against his hip.

“No!” Jack pleaded, “I wanna see my daddy! Mommy, please! I want my daddy!”

“Reid, hold up. I’ll work with you, okay? I’ll help you deal with this. I’ll advocate for you with Hotch,” Morgan called out, hands up as he moved closer to the retreating figure. Reid paused, clearly torn, and Morgan continued, “You don’t have any legal rights, but Jack’s not going to want to let you go. We’ll reason with Hotch and remind him his son needs a mother. He’s still not through mourning Haley so it’s going to be hard on him, but we’ll make it work. You have to understand that you can’t keep Jack from him. It’s not okay. Not even close.”

“I know,” Reid replied, fighting down tears, “Call him.”

XXX

Hotch’s hand was shaking as he knocked on the door to Morgan’s apartment. He was ready to break it down but he knew full well that his actions had to be contained or Reid would flee again, and with how successful he was at hiding the first time he doubted he’d ever see his son again. Morgan answered the door and motioned for him to enter.

“They’re both fine,” Morgan stated as Hotch stepped into the living room and glanced around sharply, “We need to discuss this before you see them.”

Hotch took a deep breath and caught the scent of a child, but it didn’t smell like his child. It
smelled… off. It took him a moment to realize what it was, and when the reality of Haley’s scent being gone off Jack and replaced with Reid’s finally hit he felt both sick and angry.

“I’m discussing nothing. What state is Reid in? Is he armed?”

“Frantic, paranoid, maternal, and yes.”

“I’m going to grab Jack, you take Reid down,” Hotch stated, heading for the bedroom.

“It’s not going down like that,” Morgan called back, “Hotch, I’m a beta. We advocate for the Omegas. Hotch, stop!”

Hotch threw open the door and rushed Reid, who was trying to press Jack behind him. He didn’t raise his gun, didn’t even have it in his hand, and that was his first mistake. Hotch took one dismissive look at him and simply threw him against the wall to his left. Reid sailed through the air, hit it, and fell into a limp pile on the floor. Then he grabbed Jack and bolted, heading for the door to Morgan’s apartment since the Beta couldn’t be trusted. His mind was already deleting pack members and pulling up familial pack. He could go to Haley’s sister. Hell, he’d contact his own brother if he had to.

“Give me back my son!” Reid screamed, “Please! Please! I’ll do anything! Don’t take him away from me! You can’t just take him away!”

“Mommy!” Jack wailed, squirming in Hotch’s arms.

Morgan, surprisingly, just stood there restraining Reid so they didn’t have another altercation.

Hotch threw open the front door, ignoring Reid’s screams behind him, and came face to face with David Rossi. And froze. Rossi wasn’t the pack Alpha because he was physically the strongest. He was pack Alpha because he was the most dominant Alpha in their group, and easily the calmest person in the face of adversity that Hotch had ever met. He didn’t look angry or compassionate as he stepped forward, but he shied Hotch back with mere presence. His face was relaxed, one corner of his lips prone to shift up and back down again, a wealth of emotion in only a few of his facial muscles.

“Hello, Aaron, Jack, Spencer, Derek. Let’s talk, shall we?”

XXX

Jack was inconsolable. He wept brokenly in Hotch’s arms and no amount of words, comfort, favourite toys, or even rocking him was helping. Morgan sat beside them on the couch and Reid kneeled on the floor in front of Rossi, who was keeping him in check with a firm hand on his shoulder. Rossi was sitting in Morgan’s easy chair as if it were a thrown while Reid sobbed brokenly. The Omega never took his eyes off of Jack. Hotch mistook the moisture on his shirt for shed tears until Rossi calmly suggested letting Jack nurse if he wanted the lad to calm down enough for the grown ups to talk.

“Jack isn’t a possession,” Rossi pointed out when Hotch stiffened up at the suggestion, “He’s a child. You won’t keep him from his mother and Reid legally can’t keep him from you.”

Hotch released Jack and the lad slid to the floor in a miserable, sobbing heap. Rossi let Reid’s shoulder go and he flew to him, whispering soft reassurance and unbuttoning his shirt. Hotch watched angrily at first, but as Reid curled up on the floor with his son and pressed his face to his breast it was hard not to feel the surge of protective instincts and arousal that such an image always brought to an Alpha. *Omega*. Reid smelled like an Omega always to an Alpha, but he never behaved
like one, and that had always made it easy for Hotch to ignore his instincts around Reid. Now the young Omega was acting like a mother to his son and Hotch was fighting the urge leap on him and bite into the gland that would bind Reid to him.

“Why are you fighting it?” Rossi asked, his tone scathing, “You know it’s necessary. Jack and Spencer have bonded. You’ll either have to break that bond- and your son’s heart- or accept Reid as a mate.”

“Haley died three weeks ago.”

“And that hurts, believe me I know,” Rossi replied, “But you have Jack to think about and if you take him from his surrogate mother right after he’s lost his biological mother he’s going to need more therapy than even the Bureau can afford to get for him. Look, I’m not saying you two have to live happily ever after. I’m saying bonding with Reid might kick in his instincts towards Alphas. You’ll find it easier to deal with him. After that you can always get a divorce if you really can’t stand each other, but it would be healthier for Jack to have Reid around while he gets used to a whole new environment again. I assume he’ll be living in your apartment with you? He’s been there, what? Weekends? Not at all in the last five months?”

Hotch swallowed down his disgust at the situation and stared down at Reid. Reid wasn’t looking at him. He reeked of fear and it was making it hard for him to keep Jack calm. Jack had clearly finished off the milk judging by how flat Reid’s chest was again, but he continued to suckle at one teat in a clear attempt to comfort himself. He was glancing up at Hotch with worried eyes, turning his head just enough to spy him out of the corner of his eye.

What have I done to inspire fear in my own son? Rossi is right.

Hotch sighed, “We’ll need privacy.”

“Morgan will watch Jack for you. You got Netflix?”

Morgan nodded and turned on the TV, “Hey, little man, what you wanna watch?”

“Go,” Reid whispered softly, “It’s okay. Uncle Derek will take care of you and when we come back we’ll be a family finally.”

That bit of encouragement was all Jack needed and he hurriedly sat down on the couch between Morgan and Hotch and rambled off a list of TV shows he’d missed out on. Hotch pressed a kiss to his forehead, hoped that bonding with Reid would mean he’d stop feeling angry whenever he caught the scent of Reid instead of Haley in his son’s hair, and stood to guide the shaking Omega to Morgan’s bedroom.

Reid smelled like Morgan’s soap and that was oddly comforting as Hotch shut the door behind them. Reid was anxiously fiddling with the buttons on his shirt.

“I’ve never done this before,” Reid said, giving him an anxious look that was somehow still full of so much trust.

Not enough to bring my son straight back to me.

“It hurts a bit,” Hotch replied, trying to sound consoling, “You’re better off laying down.”

“On… on my back or…?”

Hotch walked up and slid Reid’s shirt off of his shoulders to keep it from getting blood all over it. He
shivered and his lips parted a bit, his eyes dilating as he responded to an Alphas nearness despite has lack of instincts. Reid was apparently capable of arousal, which fucked with Hotch’s brain on multiple levels. He stepped back and removed his tie, jacket, dress shirt, and after a moments hesitation he took off his undershirt. Reid was staring down his body with a slightly giddy smile on his face.

“You’re very handsome,” Reid said softly, and reached out a hesitant hand for his shoulder, but Hotch stepped back out of his way.

“Let’s get this over with,” Hotch stated, “Lie down.”

Reid looked a bit flustered, but he hurried to the bed anyway. Morgan had apparently been prepared for this situation and had laid down several towels. Reid didn’t know what they were for and started shifting them out of the way.

“They’re to catch any mess we might make.”

“Oh,” Reid stammered, and shifted them downward.

Hotch sighed, “You’re going to bleed when I bite you, Reid. Leave them where they were.”

“Yeah but… I might… you know… make a mess… down there…”

Hotch nodded and fetched more towels from the adjoining bathroom just in case. Reid anxiously rearranged them over and again, trying to make the corners meet, until Hotch lost his temper, grabbed him by one arm, and tossed him face down on the bed. Reid gasped and stiffened up, but Hotch just pinned him down with his body and grasped his hair to pull his head aside. He glared down at the gland at the crux of throat and shoulder as if it were his enemy, forced out the mating teeth that usually only emerged during a Heat with a pained groan, and bit the fleshy mass until it ruptured and a sweet and sour flood of pheromones hit his tongue. He almost spat it out. Haley had tasted sickeningly sweet and slightly coppery and he’d been expecting that, but Reid’s taste made his lips pucker and his eyes water. He swallowed them down, forcing them on himself despite the fact he was sure he’d retch, and the change was almost immediate.

Hotch moaned as arousal flooded his system, the taste in his mouth suddenly becoming so delicious that he guzzled it hungrily until his saliva dripped down into the wound and joined the blood and clear mating fluids that flowed from Reid’s shoulder. Reid was whimpering and pressing back with his hips, the fluids secreted from Hotch’s mating teeth would have burned at first and then become pleasurable. He was panting in arousal and Hotch could smell his slick even through his trousers.

“H-hotch. Aaron,” Reid moaned, one hand flying back to press Hotch’s face more firmly against his shoulder, “Oh gods, please!”

Begging. It always went straight to Hotch’s cock, but at that moment his mind supplanted Reid’s voice with Haley’s and a combination of disgust, resentment, and anger shot through him. He pulled his teeth free, barely stopping himself from doing something more violent and dangerous to Reid, and practically leaped off the bed. Reid’s hips flew up and he struggled with his clothes, baring his arse to Hotch in supplication. It was standard to mate after a bonding, and Hotch’s cock was hard with longing to bury itself in the Omega he’d chosen to bind his scent to, but he could see the tiny Omega testicles peering out beneath his wet and swollen pink pucker and felt a swell of nausea. He forced it down lest he accidentally disrupt their bonding, but had to turn away from Reid in order to do so. He’d been with male Omegas, but the stark contrast between Reid and Haley had nothing to do with primary gender and everything to do with his dead ex-wife.
Hotch took a few steadying breaths, acknowledging the change in his own body odour and Reid’s with a relieved nod.

“It worked.”

“Hotch,” Reid pleaded, “Sir.”

Reid’s instincts had kicked in. His tone was submissive, pleading, and should have been beautiful. Hotch felt nothing except overwhelming disgust. Reid had rolled over, his little Omega prick hard and leaking against his belly. His expression was wrecked, his eyes glazed and his lips swollen and red from biting at them. He was unbearably aroused and probably on the brink of subspace just from the pain and pleasure he’d given him during bonding. If he took Reid now it would be passionate, beautiful, and the hormones released would ease them into a relaxing sleep in each other’s arms, allowing them to bond on an emotional as well as physical level.

The very thought repelled Hotch.

“I think you need another shower,” Hotch stated, “I suggest this one be cold.”

Hotch grabbed his clothes and hurried from the room, relieved he’d left his shoes on. He dressed in the hallway, ignoring the sound of sobbing from the bedroom, and headed out to Morgan’s living room while fastening his tie.

“Daddy!” Jack called, standing up and running to him. Hotch scooped him up with a relieved smile, “You smell good again!”

Hotch felt his smile falter, his mind recollecting the divorce and how much Jack had cried and shied away from him when Haley’s scent left his body after their bond was broken.

“What’s going on?” Morgan asked with a frown, “Is Reid okay?”

“I’m sure he’s fine,” Hotch stated sharply.

Morgan pushed past him and opened the bedroom door. He stood there for a second and then entered quickly and slammed it hard behind him.

“Aaron?” Rossi asked with narrowed eyes, “What did you do?”

“I bonded with him,” Hotch replied coldly, “Isn’t that what you wanted?”

“And then?”

“Nothing,” Hotch replied, “Or are you going to force that on me too? Last I checked Alphas had a right to say no as much as Omegas.”

Rossi swore viciously in Italian and stormed passed him to deal with Reid and Hotch swallowed down a swell of guilt. Reid might go into subdrop from his rejection, but Hotch was having a great deal of trouble wanting to go back in there and help him through it. He just wanted to get Jack home.

Hotch found a piece of paper and a pen and wrote down a quick note before grabbing Jack’s few belongings and scooping him up onto his hip.

“Come on, Jack. We’re going to go make your mommy a key to our apartment so he can come home with us tonight. Would you like to pick out the key?”

“Yeah!” Jack crowed happily, hugging him tightly around the neck.
Hotch breathed in his scent again and felt his mind argue with itself. Reid’s scent was *good* now, but he didn’t want it to be. He just wanted everything to go back to the way it was. He just wanted his high school sweetheart alive and back to being his mate and the mother of his child.
Reid knocked hesitantly on the door. Morgan and Rossi had calmed him down after Hotch had left, but his arousal had passed like the wind so they’d only been able to comfort him and then direct him to the shower. He felt empty inside, both emotionally and physically. He hadn’t thought they’d fall madly in love, but after growing up hearing about how passionate initial bonding was he was confused and bereft. He’d thought he’d lose his virginity in that room, not in the way he’d always imagined but at least with a person he respected and cared for. Now he was settling down to the reality that Hotch was not going to embrace their marriage in even the ways he’d benefit from. He felt like a child for assuming that Hotch would bed him. Rossi kept telling him that Hotch’s instincts would make him care for Reid, if not care about him. He assured him that eventually love would follow, and with that physical intimacy. Reid disagreed. He’d seen the look of revulsion on Hotches face as he’d fled him.

Hotch opened the door and gave Reid a blank stare for a moment before stepping aside and motioning him in. Morgan entered with him.

“I want a word with you,” Morgan snarled.

“Save it,” Hotch replied, “It’s not your business.”

“It’s pack business when you leave an Omega a sobbing wreck in my bedroom!” Morgan hissed, careful about Jack hearing him.

“Mommy!” Jack called, running over to Reid and throwing his arms around him. Reid struggled to put down his suitcases and scooped him up, breathing in his scent.

“Jack,” Reid said softly, his voice shaking, “I love you so much.”

“He nearly went into subdrop, Hotch,” Morgan hissed, “We were going to take him to the hospital. You didn’t even answer your phone.”

“I was getting Jack settled. He has to come first.”

Morgan couldn’t argue with that, but he looked as if he wanted to. Instead he motioned to Reid’s things, “Where do you want them?”

“My office,” Hotch replied, “We’ll get it sorted after dinner. I made spaghetti. You’re welcome to stay.”

Hotch stated it all robotically and Morgan gave him a worried look, “Yeah, I think I will.”

“Where’s Rossi?” Hotch asked.

“He went home. He seems to think you two will settle in now that Reid’s instincts are all up and running.”

Reid headed to the kitchen after putting Jack down and Hotch hurried over to stop him.

“I’ve got this,” Hotch stated, blocking him from checking on the sauce.

“But…” Reid tried, his instincts were screaming at him to prove to Hotch that he was a good mate.

“Go play with Jack,” Hotch ordered.
Reid gave him a hurt look but wandered off to Jack’s bedroom to look at all the toys the boy had been missing for months on end. Reid’s things had been in storage, and most of it was still there, but now he had a few essentials with him and would be moving into a new home. He felt off and Hotch knew it, but there was no comfort or reassurance forthcoming from the Alpha. Reid was an unwelcome guest and he knew it.

Dinner was beyond awkward and Jack’s attempts to make them laugh or talk to each other fell on deaf ears. He eventually just stared down at his half-eaten plate and asked to be excused. Hotch told him he could go just as Reid told him to take a few more bites. Their eyes met and Reid’s dropped first with virtually no challenge. Jack fled to the living room and turned on the television to drown out the discomfort. When dinner was finished Hotch gave him desert despite Reid’s protests and he ate it in the living room.

“I can’t help but feel like you’re trying to undermine me,” Reid frowned.

“I’ve been raising him for years, you’ve been raising him for weeks. I suggest you get over your hang ups.”

“I suggest you take your own advice,” Reid frowned.

“I’m your Alpha now. I’ll punish you if you get out of hand.”

“We haven’t even got a contract yet.”

Hotch sighed and headed to his office. He printed out a checklist and a standard contract.

“Here. Check off your soft stops, double check your hard stops.”

“And circle my interests, right?” Reid asked, looking at the long list of fetishes, kinks, and play styles.

Hotch walked away without answering him and Reid sat down to stare at the list.

“You want help?” Morgan asked.

“I’m woefully ignorant about sex,” Reid frowned, “I’ve no idea what some of these mean. I need a book.”

“You need a Beta,” Morgan sighed, “Let’s put Jack to bed so you can focus on…”

“Hotch is doing it,” Reid replied, “He wanted me busy so I didn’t interfere.”

“This can not go on,” Morgan frowned, “I get that this wasn’t perfect, but arranged marriages do still happen. Being civil is a good way to deal with it, not this.”

“I think this was more like a shotgun wedding than an arranged one,” Reid frowned as he glanced up. Hotch had walked out of Jack’s bedroom and was giving him an accusing stare, “He wants me to kiss him goodnight?”

“Yes.”

“Okay,” Reid stood up, “You can go Morgan. I don’t think most of this will be necessary.”

“Reid, if you don’t check off the right stuff you could end up in a situation you don’t want and have no recourse to…”
Morgan shook his head and turned for the doorway, “Call me!”

Reid headed for Jack’s room without responding, pressed a kiss to his little boy’s forehead, and when he pleaded for it he began to recite their favourite book for him. Hotch interrupted.

“It’s past his bedtime and I usually read to him with *words* in front of him so he can *learn*.”

Reid paused, “Hotch, don’t do this. Please.”

“Fine. You put him to bed.” Hotch turned to leave, but Jack called out for his father and he paused.

“Let’s just do this together, okay?” Reid pleaded, “I’m his parent too now, for better or worse. I didn’t exactly ask for this either.”

“Are you going to get a divorce too?” Jack asked miserably.

Neither answered. Hotch walked to the bookshelf and pulled down Jack’s favourite book from five months ago. As he looked at it he realized that it was probably too simple for Jack now. He sat down in their story chair and sighed.

“Jack, come here. Reid will tell you a story while you sit in my lap, okay? We’ll share bedtime.”

Reid smiled warmly at Hotch’s efforts and Jack scrambled out of bed to crawl into his dad’s lap. Reid stayed on the floor where his instincts were telling him to remain. *Make the Alpha happy. Stay lower than him. Make him recognize how perfect and well behaved you can be.*

*And slowly begin to hate yourself.*

“Let’s see… where was I… Okay. ‘There have been five great kisses since 1642 B.C. ... (before then couples hooked thumbs.) And the precise rating of kisses is a terribly difficult thing, often leading to great controversy...Well, this one left them all behind’.”

XXX

Reid hadn’t really thought he’d be sharing a bed with Hotch, but deep down he’d hoped he would. Even platonically would have been nice. Jack, Haley, and his own mother were the only people he’d ever cuddled with and he was starting to feel as if he were missing out. Within an hour of his instincts being active he’d determined he hated them. He kept having this unpleasant urge to bare his neck to Hotch whenever the Alpha’s temper flared or to make silly whimpering noises every time Hotch rejected him.

So when Hotch took him into the study and showed him that the leather chair folded out into a very slim bed he simply stared at it miserably. Hotch dropped a set of sheets, a blanket, and a pillow on it.

“The bottom sheet doesn’t really fit, but I’ll ask you to use it anyway. For cleanliness.”

Reid shuddered. Hotch probably didn’t mean that he found Reid disgusting, but it sure felt like it when compared to the rest of his treatment.

“I leave for work at six AM precisely.”

“I’ll set my phone.”

“Goodnight,” Hotch stated.
“You know, I lost Haley too,” Reid muttered, “And I didn’t exactly want-“

Hotch slammed the door behind himself and Reid winced.

“Okay,” Reid sighed to himself, “Maybe not the smartest thing I’ve ever said.”

XXX

The weeks turned into months and Hotch’s aggression diminished to the point he was no longer lashing out at Reid, but while the team settled into their new dynamic- Reid was showing signs of submission now but was as awkward at it as any other social construct- Reid became more and more uncomfortable with their situation. Hotch was back to treating him like a co-worker, albeit one who shared his meals and a ride into work. While Reid was glad that he was no longer trying to one-up Reid for Jack’s affection, he was falling deeper and deeper into a pit of depression. Nothing he did mattered. If he made a perfect dinner Hotch ate it and said nothing. If he burnt it, he’d get the same results. If Hotch cooked then Reid felt like a burden. If Jack wanted to cuddle with Reid the Omega would feel guilty to the point of being unable to eat. If he wanted to cuddle with Hotch then Reid would take himself to Hotch’s office and cry… that is until Hotch kicked him out so he could work on paperwork after Jack went to bed. Half the time Reid slept on the couch because Hotch needed his office. The Alpha had cleared off the shelves so Reid could store things there, moving them to bookcases in his bedroom or Jack’s as needed, but he had done it while sighing as if much put upon and then glared at Reid for days until he put his things on the shelf.

In short, Reid felt like a misplaced toy that no one wanted to play with whose existence depended on the whims of a fickle child.

Or maybe that was just because Jack loved Toy Story 3 and watched it twice daily.

The team seemed oblivious and Reid didn’t want to whine and complain to them about it. After all, he’d gotten himself a beautiful, smart son and a successful husband without having to lift a finger. It seemed unfair that he wanted more from Hotch than he was being given. He could understand Hotch’s feelings even as he regretted them. He was just going to have to soldier on and look forward to raising Jack… and ignoring his newly awakened biological imperative to make more babies.

Until, of course, that imperative was completely obvious and unable to be ignored by anyone.

“Good morning everyone, let’s get started,” Hotch stated, walking into the conference room and gliding into his seat.

Reid wandered in behind him, mentally checking if he had done all the things he had to do to keep up the appearance of a healthy, happy Omega. His mind had been fuzzier and fuzzier lately; at least where his personal care was concerned. He could still remember facts and figures, and he’d never neglect Jack, but when it came to himself he was a wreck.


“Where are Garcia and JJ?” Hotch asked.

Reid looked up in surprise, not having really been observing his surroundings, and found that Todd was back and Garcia and JJ nowhere to be found.

“Sir, aren’t you forgetting something?” Jordan Todd asked, looking a bit embarrassed.
Hotch glanced up at her from his tablet, “Of course. The date. Garcia and JJ are excused for the next few days. Will we have a technical analyst?”

“Let’s see,” Todd shifted and glanced at her tablet, “Actually we won’t be having a TA for this case. George was all booked up. However, I was referring to… um… your absence?”

“Mine?” Hotch frowned, “Why would I…”

Hotch paused. Blinked in realization, and turned to stare at Reid, “What are you doing here? Your Heat is sometime today.”

*Fuck. I knew I forgot something.*

“Right,” Reid nodded, “Of course. I’ll just... go home.”

“I think an Omega-safe hotel would be smarter, don’t you?” Hotch stated firmly, “I don’t want Jack hearing all that for days on end.”

Reid winced, “Of course. I’m sorry. I wasn’t… okay. I’ll just… go.”

“Wait a second,” Rossi scoffed, “Come on now, Hotch. I know you’re Unit Chief, but this is your first Heat with Reid! Take some time off! You’re entitled to it!”

“Stay out of this. Please?” Hotch asked, clearly having trouble controlling his tone, “You’ve done enough.”

“What are you talking about?” Rossi asked, taken aback by his hostility.

Hotch opened his mouth to reply, but Reid cut in, “Guys, please don’t fight, okay? I’m not even going on Heat so it’s not an issue.”

“What do you mean you’re not going on Heat?” Hotch asked sharply, “Of course you are.”

“I forgot about it for a reason. I haven’t purged, have had no urge to nest, I ate breakfast this morning and kept it down, and I’m not even hormonal. It’s a non-issue so can we get to the case now?”

Reid sat back down and kept his head down and his eyes on his fingers as the room became incredibly silent. He could practically *smell* the tension.

“Why didn’t you guys say anything?” Rossi asked, “My god, I can’t believe you managed to keep it a secret! Congratulations!”

Reid looked up in confusion to find Rossi with eyes glistening with joy. Morgan was grinning at him as if he’d done something particularly ‘cool’ and Prentiss was smiling warmly.

All Reid could manage was: “I’m sorry?”

“You should be,” Hotch growled, pushing himself to his feet and turning for the doorway, “You just confessed to cheating on me in front of my team.”

“What? No!” Reid stammered, “No, I didn’t! I said I wasn’t going on Heat! I’m not cheating on you!”

“You have to have done, or you wouldn’t be *pregnant*,” Hotch replied sharply, and opened the door, “Get out. Go home. Pack your things. Don’t contact me or Jack again.”
“I’m not pregnant!” Reid argued frantically.

“You have to be pregnant because this is January. In January even Omegas on suppressants go on Heat, even if it is an unfertile one. It’s unavoidable. You clearly went into mock Heat with some other Alpha behind my back. Good riddance, I say. Let him have you!”

“Except sick Omegas,” Reid pleaded, sliding to his knees and grasping his hands together, “Please, don’t take Jack from me. I swear I’m just sick. You can have me tested. I’ll do anything. I swear I’m not pregnant, I haven’t cheated, and I haven’t even had a mock Heat to get pregnant off of!”

Hotch sighed, “You’re just humiliating yourself. Spare us the drama and leave.”

“Hotch, maybe we should hear him out,” Prentiss tried, “Think of Jack…”

“I am thinking of Jack,” Hotch replied, “Reid has been nothing but trouble since he moved in with us. And you know that an Omega doesn’t skip a January Heat because they’re sick.”

“Yes they do,” Reid insisted, “In 1957 there was an Asian flu outbreak that-“

Hotch snapped incredulously, “You know full well that Omegas miss Heats because of serious illnesses like cancer, not the common cold!”

“Reid, maybe you’re just late,” Morgan stated, “I grew up with a lot of Omegas. It hit them late sometimes. Let me get you some water and maybe it will trigger you.”

“This is embarrassing,” Hotch sighed, rubbing between his eyebrows, “Reid, just leave. I’ll deal with you after the case is over.”

“I’m still a virgin!” Reid tried, “I haven’t cheated on you! You can have me examined!”

“Virgin?” Rossi, Morgan, Prentiss, and Todd all repeated in shock.

“You’ve been married for months,” Rossi pointed out.

“To a gorgeous, devoted Omega,” Morgan pointed out.

“Who just figured out what kind of fun being an Omega is, and is likely hyper submissive,” Prentiss noted.

“And got my wife killed,” Hotch stated flatly.

The room dropped silent and Reid bit his lower lip and tried to will down the tears.

“Hotch,” Rossi stated, shaking his head, “That was not Reid’s fault. That was an accident. A horrible accident but-“

“I sent him with Haley to be the brains that protected her in case the brawn failed. He didn’t even notice she was going on Heat. An Omega with an obscenely high IQ was oblivious to the indications of an oncoming mock Heat. Clearly he didn’t care, and the result got her killed and nearly killed Jack.”

Reid’s head stayed bowed as Rossi walked around the table to him.

This is it. Now they’ll all reject me.

“Reid?” Rossi asked, dropping down on one knee beside him, “Spencer?”
Reid couldn’t manage to lift his head and Rossi put his hand on his shoulder, “Spencer, I’m worried about you. You said you’re sick. What from?”

“He’s had the flu for months,” Hotch snapped, “He’s weak and sickly.”

“Has he been to a doctor?” Rossi asked Hotch since Reid was staying silent.

“How should I know?” Hotch stated flatly, “He takes care of himself.”

“Spencer, has Hotch been mistreating you?” Morgan asked outright.

Reid sobbed, but it was buried beneath Hotch’s outburst, “What the hell kind of a question is that?”

“One I should have asked much sooner,” Rossi replied, and pulled out his phone, “Aaron he’s going into subdrop.”

“He’s not in subdrop, he’s conscious,” Hotch argued.

“I just… I just haven’t eaten in a bit and…” Reid muttered.

“He’s on his way and he’ll be there by tomorrow,” Rossi replied, standing again, “Omegas skip Heat if they’re severely depressed and on the verge of sudrop due to the rejection of their mate or because they feel unsafe. Reid, why haven’t you been eating?”

Reid opened his mouth to reply, but Hotch cut him off.

“I haven’t rejected him,” Hotch snapped, “I haven’t been abusing him. I’ve just not slept with him. He’s still in my home, under my protection, raising my son, and eating my food!”

“You know that’s not enough,” Rossi replied, his tone incredulous as Morgan came to Reid’s side and coaxed him to sit back in his seat. Rossi stood back up and shook his head at Hotch in dismay, “Have you even had a scene?”

“I never asked for this!” Hotch snapped, “You saddled me with a mate I didn’t want and then get angry when I don’t sleep with him?! Is everyone so hung up on Omega rights that they’ve forgotten I’ve got a right not to be forced into something?! I’ve given him a home and a son. What the hell else am I supposed to do?”

Reid sobbed again, “Guys, please just let it go. I’ll go home. I won’t bring it up again. I don’t want to cause Hotch trouble. I’m sorry. It’s probably not subdrop, I’m just broken…”

“Don’t apologize,” Prentiss soothed, sitting beside him and trying to pull him into her arms, but Reid pulled away and stood again on shaking legs, “Reid, you’ve had Heats before. This is new and clearly a problem.”

“Hotch, I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have said anything. We can leave. We can just go. They don’t have a say in-“

“Not happening,” Rossi stated, “I’m your pack Alpha and this is my business. If you’ve got no intention of making an honest Omega of Reid-“

“No, please,” Reid choked out, “I can’t lose Jack. He’s the only thing keeping me going. I’ll die without him.”

Hotch frowned, his eyebrows furrowing, “What are you talking about? You’re happy. Aren’t you? This is just… dramatics.”
Reid lowered his head, not knowing how to reply when Hotch was clearly starting to understand that the way they’d been living was abhorrent to him. It wasn’t that he expected Hotch to turn into his passionate lover, but to feel as if he were a burden and a nuisance at all times was stifling and depressing.

Reid looked up at him miserably and shook his head, when he spoke his voice was barely audible, “No. I’m not happy.”

“What more do you want?!” Hotch shouted at him, thoroughly frustrated and humiliated.

The room tilted and Rossi swore and caught at Reid before he could collapse to the floor. He pulled Reid against himself and tucked his face against his neck.

“Get Hotch out of here!” Rossi ordered.

Reid didn’t see Morgan and Prentiss drag a suddenly frightened and concerned Hotch out of the room. He was too focused on a warm pressure on his neck that was sending soothing chemicals rushing through his brain. He could vaguely hear Rossi speaking to someone, but couldn’t hear the other person. It wasn’t until he opened his eyes some time later and saw paramedics standing over him that he realized he’d lost consciousness.

XXX

Hotch sat at his desk with his head in his hands and took a few slow, deep breaths.

“I swear to you I didn’t see this coming. I don’t know what I did wrong,” Hotch told Morgan, “Why aren’t you with Reid?”

“He was clinging to Rossi. He needs an Alpha right now, not a Beta. His body is trying to right itself. Let’s go over this, Hotch. What’s your day like with him?”

“I wake up, he’s usually up a few minutes later. I make coffee. We drink it in silence. I get Jack up while Reid gets dressed because he’s completely incapable of moving faster than a snail in the morning. I drop Jack of with Jessica who sees him off to school because Reid works too many hours to do that part. Then it’s business as usual at work. Then-”

“Hotch, hold up. Did you hear yourself just then? You disparaged him in every other sentence. Please tell me you’re not talking to Reid that way?”

“I don’t… think… I have,” Hotch struggled, “I’m not trying to.”

“Af
d after work?”

“Home. One of us cooks dinner. It’s usually… okay. Reid helps Jack with his lessons while I get some paperwork done because if I do it after Jack’s in bed he whines about having to sleep on the couch.”

“How does he usually sleep?”

“The chair in my office folds out into a cot.”

“So the couch is just a slight step down, huh?”

“I never asked for this,” Hotch reminded him miserably, “I didn’t even date after Haley divorced me, then she dies and within a month I have a new spouse? I’m angry, Morgan. I’ve never been so angry
in my life and it scares me. I worry about what I’d do to him if I spent more than a few seconds
conversing with him outside of work. Here I can manage, but at home? Everything he does just
reminds me that Haley used to do the same thing, or did it better, or was adorable when she messed it
up.”

“You’ve got goggles on man,” Morgan replied, “Haley wasn’t perfect. Neither is Reid, but he’s still
your son’s mother. If you keep this up then instead of Reid being vaguely responsible for Haley’s
death you’re going to be directly responsible for Reid’s. What will Jack think of you then? What
does he think now, seeing how you treat an Omega?”

Hotch leaned back and stared across at Morgan with his face tense with worry, “I have to fix this.”

“I don’t know if you can.”

“I have to. Not just for Jack and Reid, but for me too. I feel sick. I don’t like what I’ve become,”
Hotch replied, forcing himself to meet Morgan’s eyes, “I threw him into subdrop. He was fighting it
for months and I never even noticed.”

“You ready to go to the hospital and see him?”

“Will Rossi let me near him?”

“No idea. Let’s find out.”
Reid opened his eyes despite the fact that he’d really have preferred to stay unconscious for the rest of his existence. Rossi was at his side staring at his phone with one hand and holding Reid’s hand with the other, his thumb stroking over Reid’s knuckles. Reid wanted to pull his hand away but he also sincerely needed the comfort. His entire body ached.

“Just relax,” Rossi said, pocketing his phone, “The doctor will be in soon. You had a bad bout of subdrop and we’re more than a bit worried about you missing your Heat. The doctor says nutrition is only partly to blame. You’re underweight and your body isn’t producing the hormones it normally would this time of year.”

“I just went off my suppressants. Isn’t irregularity normal?”

“Yes, but January is the peak of mating season for us,” Rossi frowned, “There’s very little reason for your body to shut down, especially since you’re newly mated and should be attempting to get pregnant. I need to ask you something, but you don’t have to answer me. Do you want to have children?”

“Yes,” Reid replied, swallowing down the tears that wanted to start.

“With Hotch?”

“With anyone,” Reid replied honestly, “I don’t think Hotch is capable of loving me or giving me children.”

“Do you want to dissolve your bond?”

Rossi’s eyes widened as Reid’s heart rate noticeably increased at the mere suggestion.

“Shhh,” Rossi soothed, reaching out and stroking his cheek. Reid realized Rossi must have sucked a subdual mark into his neck at some point because he pressed his first three fingers against it and Reid sighed in relief as calm washed over him, “I’m not going to make you and Hotch hasn’t suggested it. I just wanted to know how you felt. I’m your pack Alpha, Reid. I can help you. If you want children I can give them to you without your bond being broken, and you absolutely have the right to ask me for that.”

“I… I…” Reid mentally flailed, not a feeling he was used to.

“You don’t have to make a decision now,” Rossi soothed, leaning forward to press a kiss to his cheek, “You can sit on it for as long as you need to. I just want you to know that you have options. I’m going to talk to Hotch about making sure you stay in Jack’s life no matter what decision you make.”

“Thank you,” Reid replied weakly.

Rossi depressed the button to call for a nurse and took up Reid’s hand again. The nurse came in and looked him over, talking soothingly the entire time. Reid did his best not to lose his temper over the pandering, but he knew he was in a fragile mental state so they had a reason to treat him like a child. She pricked his finger for a test strip and a few minutes later the doctor came in and told Reid they had his hormone levels stabilized. He was free to go home as soon as he told them the situation that had caused him to go into subdrop.
“We can have Mr. Rossi wait outside, sweetheart,” The doctor soothed.

He was an Omega as well and Reid wanted to climb out of bed, shake him, and demand how he’d gotten to the point where he thought other Omegas couldn’t handle themselves. It helped that the expression on Rossi’s face was along the lines of ‘you believe this shit?’ so he at least had someone to roll his eyes to. Reid was avoiding their questions, trying to explain that he’d just bonded and they were having marital problems, but he was not being abused. Then Hotch walked in and the alarms went off on Reid’s monitors. Reid stared at them in confusion and the doctor shouted for Hotch to leave before he called security. Hotch turned around and hurried out, his face twisted in despair while Reid scowled at the doctor.

“There’s something wrong with your machines,” Reid told him, “I’m completely calm.”

“I don’t think so,” Rossi replied, then ran his finger across Reid’s brow and showed him the wetness that had appeared there, “You weren’t sweating until he walked in. Clearly your relationship with Hotch is worse than you’re letting on.”

“Rossi, he’s got my son,” Reid replied shakily, “I can’t just walk away.”

“That’s what I’m talking about,” Rossi soothed, finding the spot on his neck and pressing it again to release the chemicals that would calm the Omega, “You have choices you don’t seem to want to acknowledge. Hotch is in my pack. So are you. I’m your pack Alpha. That gives me the ability to walk through lines that you both can’t cross. I can take you from Hotch and still keep you a part of Jack’s life. He’d have to leave my pack in order to keep you away from Jack, and I don’t think he wants you out of Jack’s life. He won’t want his son to lose another mother.”

“So you’d just… take me? Won’t I be your burden then? How is that better?”

“For starters,” Rossi grinned, “I’ve got a much bigger house. For another, an Omega isn’t a burden, they’re a blessing. You’re one of the rare breeding class, Reid!”

“I can’t do anything right,” Reid shook his head miserably, “I’ve ruined his life.”

“No, Foyet ruined his life. You just got mixed up in it. None of this is your fault.”

The nurse pricked Reid’s finger to check his levels again, studying the test strip critically but declared him still in the safe zone. The doctor got Rossi’s assurance that Reid would be safe with him and Rossi walked out to deal with Hotch before coming back in.

“Hotch will drop Jack off at my place for a bit tonight right before bed. You won’t have to see him.”

“I work with him,” Reid reminded him.

“Not for a week you don’t,” Rossi reminded him, “You’re on medical leave. We’ll find out after that if you can keep working with Hotch. If not then we’ll talk to Strauss about getting you moved. You’ve got options and you could be doing more. Besides, you might like to take up a desk job while you spit out kids- assuming you want to do that, of course.”

“Birth children consecutively? Considering my age I think that’s a necessity, don’t you.”

“Most likely,” Rossi nodded.

The doctor came back into the room with a frown on his face, “Dr. Reid when was your last Heat? It’s not listed.”
“Last January,” Reid supplied, “I’ve been on suppressants since I emerged so I’ve only ever had the January Heat.”

“In that case I need to warn you about something,” The man replied, “Your body might decide to go on Heat at any point in time from now till the next micro-season in March. While your health is a factor, we believe your mental state is what’s keeping you from going into Heat so the likelihood is that as soon as you feel safe and protected by an Alpha your body will demand a mate.”

Reid swallowed hard, “In all likelihood, I’m about to get divorced.”

“Your pack Alpha would be the one to service you at that point,” The man stated as if such a thing were entirely normal. To the rest of society it probably was, but to Spencer Reid who was used to being treated like a Beta who needed the occasional masturbation vacation, it was like being given a prison sentence.

The doctor left and Reid turned to Rossi, “I can’t live like this. I don’t want to be a victim to my own body.”

Rossi frowned, “We can try to trigger your Heat, but it could backfire. You might end up right back here again. We should probably cancel you seeing Jack tonight at the very least.”

“What? No!” Reid argued, “I’m not going to miss out on my son because of my stupid biology!”

“Reid,” Rossi soothed, “Spencer, calm down. I meant just for tonight.”

“I haven’t missed a bedtime while not on a case since I became his mother. I need to see him!”

“Okay,” Rossi soothed, “Okay, we’ll work it out. What if we go there and you put him to bed. I’ll keep Hotch occupied. If you’re there you won’t go on Heat.”

“Okay. Good. We’ll do that. Let’s go now.”

XXX

Rossi watched Reid singing to Jack from the doorway for a moment and then headed into the kitchen where Hotch was pouring them both a drink.

“He wants a divorce?” Hotch asked without hesitation.

“He doesn’t know what he wants,” Rossi replied, “So I’m going to take things into my own hands.”

“How so?” Hotch frowned.

“I’m going to bond with him,” Rossi replied.

“You… wait… what?”

“The goal is to get him pregnant and keep him that way,” Rossi replied, “It’s what he wants deep down inside, and while it’s not ideal at least I can provide for him in ways that you clearly can’t.”

Hotch’s drink had been partway to his lips, but he lowered it immediately and gave Rossi a concerned look, “Dave, that’s old fashioned, sexist, and will destroy any chance he has at a career. You’re talking about taking one of the smartest people I know and turning him into a brood mare.”

“Yes, but a modern relationship hasn’t worked out,” Rossi shrugged, “Look, I know what you’re thinking Aaron, and if a younger Alpha comes along who Reid takes a shine to I’ll pass him along
just like I did with my previous mates. In the mean time he won’t lack for affection and he’ll have a family.”

“What about Jack?” Hotch asked, his eyebrows furrowed as he stared over his glass at Rossi.

Rossi shrugged, “Once Reid has his own biological babies he and Jack will drift apart naturally. I suggest you start bringing a familial Omega around for Jack to bond with. I’m sure they’ll both move on quickly. It’s not like Reid’s been his mother for long.”

Hotch’s glass left his lips without having taken a sip, his eyes narrowed, “I beg your pardon?”

“They’ll both move on,” Rossi repeated, “It’s for the best. You’re unhealthy for Reid. A broken Omega and a broken Alpha? I don’t think so. I have to protect the breeding class, it’s my duty as pack Alpha and I’ve already taken a wrong step with Reid. I never should have left his rehabilitation as an Omega to you.”

Hotch’s glass slammed down on the counter and his eyes narrowed aggressively and the insult to his Alpha side. He looked like he wanted to argue but he had little he could say to such accusations since he’d effectively sent Reid to the hospital. Reid took that moment to step out of Jack’s room and softly close the door behind him. He froze at the sight of the two Alphas squaring off. Rossi had his characteristic nonchalance going on while Hotch had gone cold and stiff.

“I won’t let you do that to them. The whole point of this was to keep Jack and Reid together. If you separate them now what will be the point?”

“You said you wouldn’t separate us!” Reid called out frantically.

“And I won’t,” Rossi replied, not breaking his stare down with Hotch, “However this situation is going to get worse before it’s going to get better. If Reid moves on to mother his own children then he’ll be better off.”

“He doesn’t want that,” Hotch argued before Reid could open his mouth.

“What he wants is no longer your concern,” Rossi replied softly, “Aaron, you f*cked up. You f*cked up, and you did it with someone who trusted you; who I trusted you with. You can either lie in the bed you made or you can own up and start working towards fixing it, but either way sitting here and moping about it while drowning yourself in liquor isn’t the solution.”

Hotch’s eyes dropped and his shoulders slouched as he tilted his head back. Rossi moved forward slowly rather than rushing him the way most Alphas did. He slipped a hand around Hotch’s waist and pulled him closer with a hand on his lower back. He suckled gently at the right side of his neck where pack Alphas left their subdual markings and Hotch sighed as the comfort slipped through him. The effects were subtler for an Alpha than an Omega, but it still left him soothed and unlikely to take things up to a physical altercation.

“Okay,” Hotch replied softly, “I’m calm. Let’s talk this out.”

Reid took their calm as a chance to step in and hurriedly grabbed a towel to start cleaning up the spilled liquor. He wondered vaguely who he was trying to impress with his ‘submissive’ behaviour: the Alpha who fathered his son or the one had promised him his own biological children. The question was answered when Rossi reached out and ran his hand down Reid’s spine, causing his entire body to still and his breath to falter in his chest. He wanted, but not necessarily in a sexual way. He wanted approval, and comfort, and acceptance, and to be admired. He wanted to be the cherished Omega from corny, stereotypical cartoons he’d watched as a child, never mind that those
things were generally less appealing once examined from a social aspect.

“Look at him, Aaron,” Rossi said softly, “He just wants what anyone would; to be cherished and appreciated. You didn’t have to *love* him, you could have *just respected* him.”

“How is what you’re proposing respectful?”

“You have another idea?” Rossi asked, “Perhaps you’re willing to share custody with Reid?”

Reid’s head shot up and hope lit his eyes, but Hotch was backing away with eyes gone dark in anger, “*Jack is my son!* He’s got no business even *smelling* him let alone mothering him! I will not…”

Reid was drawing back, his face flushed and his eyes dropping as pain lanced through him. Rossi caught it and put a halt to the whole thing.

“*Quiet Aaron,*” He stated, shutting the situation down without raising his voice at all. Rossi may have been soft spoken, but he was a powerful Alpha and Hotch’s voice caught in his throat at the power behind his words, “This is exactly what I mean. Look at how your words cut him open? Reid didn’t ask for this any more than you did. If you aren’t willing to treat him as a mate than I have no choice. I’m taking him, Aaron.”

Rossi put a hand on the small of Reid’s back and led him from the apartment. They took the elevator down instead of the stairs and for the entire ride Rossi kept his hand on Reid’s shoulder.

“What?” Rossi asked.

“You’re smooth, but you’re no match for my IQ,” Reid replied, “You’re obviously trying to instigate Hotch into amending his behaviour and reclaiming me as a mate on his own terms. The idea that something you can’t have is desirable is outmoded.”

“Maybe, but either way the fact of the matter is I can’t leave you in his care.”

“I can take care of myself!” Reid argued in frustration, “I don’t want to divorce and hop into another marriage with someone who *also* doesn’t want me!”

“Someday I’ll trust you to take care of yourself, but for now you’re coming out of an abusive relationship *right* after having basically emerged for the second time. You’re vulnerable and too easily manipulated. I’m not going to make the mistake of trusting you with someone else again, and since you didn’t walk away on your own I can’t sit back and let you take this into your own hands. You aren’t unwanted with me, Reid. I’ve had four temporary mates in my lifetime and I have never regretted it. Neither have they, for that matter.”

“What about Jack?” Reid asked.

“I’m not a monster, Spencer,” Rossi soothed, rubbing his shoulder gently, “I won’t take him away.”

“You are hoping I’ll forget about him if I have my own kids with you, though.”

“Yes,” Rossi admitted, “I am, but knowing you my efforts will be futile. However, first things first, we’re going back to my place and get you comfortable. If you go on Heat tonight we’re fine. If not then I have a few ideas of how to kick it in.”
Reid had been in Rossi’s place many times, but never upstairs to his bedrooms. Here he was told he could have his own room but that Rossi wanted Reid sleeping in his bed until his Heat had passed. Reid dropped off a few of his things in the room he’d been shown to, realized it was the nicest guest suite in the house when he saw it had it’s own adjoined bathroom. He also noted Omega-blocking panelling on the door and walls that would make it safe for him to have a Heat cycle in there undisturbed should he decide he didn’t want Rossi breeding him. At the moment there was nothing he wanted more than a child, and a glimpse in the mirror would have him turning sideways to run his hand over his flat stomach and ache with want.

Next, Rossi led him to his own bedroom and cleared out a dresser drawer so Reid could keep a few odds and ends in it. Reid put his sleepwear in there and a few essentials like his lube pads and a knotted vibrator that he kept in a velvet bag for discretion.

“We’ll work on a few things tonight,” Rossi smiled at him warmly, “I want you to learn how to act around Hotch to make yourself more desirable for him.”

“You mean when your plan backfires?” Reid smirked.

Rossi gave him a knowing smile, “First thing is body language. You never had the chance to really learn it.”

“I know to keep my head lower than an Alphas,” Reid replied with a sigh, “And how to do everything for them and fuss over them. So unless you’re going to teach me how to change my future baby’s diapers I don’t see much how-“

Rossi’s smile vanished, “Reid, that’s your instincts screaming that at you, but that’s not what you should be doing.”

“It’s not,” Reid frowned, “I’ve seen Omegas do it. Often.”

“Yes, in an established relationship submission can be beautiful, but you don’t need to submit to every Alpha you pass on the street. In fact you shouldn’t. Not only is it disrespectful to yourself, but any Alpha in a relationship with you will consider it a sign that you’ll be unfaithful to them. They might even start to challenge anyone you dip your head to out of sheer paranoia. Think about it. If you share that part of yourself with everyone than how is it special anymore? That and we’re paranoid possessive bastards.”

“If you’re so possessive why did Hotch just let you take me?” Reid asked miserably.

“Because he’s a moron,” Rossi replied, “Haley’s death has shocked him to the core, Spencer. He’s not thinking. If he were he’d be embracing you, and not just because you’re an Omega but because he’s always admired your mind. If things had progressed naturally I have no doubt that Hotch would have eventually courted you, even if your instincts hadn’t emerged.”

“Sometimes I just want them to go away,” Reid admitted.

“I know,” Rossi sighed, “So do I. The drive to mate, possess, and dominate everyone around me is damn inconvenient at times.”

“At least you’re not running around humiliating yourself all the time,” Reid groused.

“Oh no? Never mind the fact that an Alpha in a strop gets a raging, sometimes painful, erection which he’s then compelled to rub against the object of his ire? And then ignore until it goes away if a
chance to escape with a willing Omega isn’t available?”

“Oh,” Reid smirked, “You mean like how we have to wear pads in our underwear because an Alpha bossing us around makes us lubricate in preparation for sex even if we’re uninterested in them?”

“Oh,” Rossi chuckled, “How Alphas have this insatiable urge to hump everything, and I mean everything. I once got distracted by the sight of a chair at a crime scene that for some reason my Alpha brain decided I needed to hump. I had to leave the room in order to carry on a conversation!”

“How about me having a ridiculous urge to show my neck or even my butthole every time an Alpha flirts with me?”

Rossi opened his mouth to reply, but Reid’s face had suddenly taken on a stricken look and he looked down at the floor miserably.

“What is it?” Rossi asked, stepping forward and putting a hand on his upper arm.

“You’re about to bond with me,” Reid replied miserably, “Aren’t you?”

“Yes,” Rossi replied, “I intend to do so at some point tonight, but not if you don’t want that. I know I made a show of saying I’d take you in front of Hotch, but you do have choices here.”

“It’s not that,” Reid replied sadly, “I want to be bonded. I’ve never felt so out of control in my life and as much as I hate to lean on someone else I do need to.”

“Then what’s wrong, Spence?”

“My last bonding wasn’t exactly a fantastic experience. More like humiliating and depressing.”

“The last thing I’m going to do is shame you in any way,” Rossi replied, “But we should make up a list of things you’re uncomfortable with. Maybe that should come before submission training.”

Reid was sat down in Rossi’s study and left with a pen, paper, and a list of pre-made kinks/stops. He went down the list slowly, looking over all of the kinks and feeling more virginal than ever. Finally he walked back out to the bedroom where Rossi was humming happily and lighting candles. The bed had flower petals on it.

“Seriously?” Reid chuckled.

“Hey, the classics never get old.”

“Here’s my list,” Reid replied, handing it to him.

Rossi looked it over curiously, “No humiliation, mocking, or physical violence past required by bonding. You’re not interested in pain?”

“Not really, no. I’ve had quite enough for one lifetime, thanks.”

“Fair enough.”

“Is that… is that wrong?” Reid asked, frowning in worry.

“No it’s not,” Rossi replied, reaching up to stroke his cheek, “Reid, no one has a right to force you to partake in something you find distasteful and not all Omegas are masochists. Not all of them are submissive, for that matter. You need to be you, not the perfect Omega.”
“No worries there,” Reid scoffed, “I’m far from perfect.”

“Good,” Rossi snorted, “Your unbelievable brain is already intimidating enough. Now come to bed and let me show you what a bonding should be like.”
Chapter 8

A/N I think it needs pointing out that this is a Hotch/Reid fic at its heart, but that there WILL be other pairings within it. I should also mention for those unfamiliar with Omegaverse that Reid can’t get pregnant outside of a Heat.

Reid was moaning softly as Rossi massaged his shoulders to help him relax. He wanted Reid to go on Heat but he wasn’t about to hold his breath. He hadn’t been emotionally supportive enough for him to trigger a Heat, and frankly Reid being bred by him wasn’t the ideal. He would much rather Hotch got his head out of his ass and took up the young man himself, but Rossi knew that love was rarely so convenient.

“What if I don’t go on Heat tonight?” Reid worried.

“I was thinking of taking you clubbing with Morgan,” Rossi smirked, “With all the Omegas in the entire world off getting freaky you’ll be a sensation.”

“Or the clubs will be empty because the Omegas aren’t there,” Reid chuckled.

“The Betas are,” Rossi replied, “And therefore the Alphas will be. The Betas will be enjoying the attention from Alphas who normally only seek out Omegas, and the Alphas will be fully aware that the Betas are eager to bed someone before the competition comes back. We’ll get you hot and bothered and if a better deal doesn’t show up then you can come home with Morgan or I. Or both. Whatever floats your boat.”

Reid sighed as Rossi worked his way down to the lush ass he was looking forward to. He might have Reid’s best interests at heart but he was sincerely hoping he’d get to enjoy the young man before handing him over to his rightful mate. While pack Alphas maintained their right to bed whomever they wished in their pack Rossi found that those who took too much advantage of that ‘right’ had unhappy packs. The occasional roll in the hay was all well and good, but disrupting a happy marriage was a recipe for disaster.

“I’m just… a bit worried,” Reid replied.

“About?”

“Your age.”

Rossi smiled sadly, “You don’t want your kids growing up without a dad.”

“Exactly.”

“I kinda thought that was why you didn’t kick in the second I got you naked,” Rossi replied, “Do you want me to stop?”

“Rubbing my back? Hell no.”

Rossi chuckled, “It’s not only my hands rubbing at you right now.”

“I know,” Reid sighed, “Is it wrong that I want my first time to be with you? I feel like I’m using you.”
“We’re using each other a bit, but we’re also friends, Spencer. I’m here for you in whatever way you need me, and if you need me to make love to you- even if it’s only once- than that’s what I want, too.”

“I’m just… I was so scared,” Reid squirmed and Rossi let him turn over before settling down on his thighs again, “Hotch was so wound up. On one level I know he’d never hurt me, but on another he was being so cruel that the idea he’d take it to physical violence… I didn’t want that to be my introduction to physical intimacy.”

Rossi smiled down at him softly and reached out to run his hands along his cheek before leaning down and pressing a chaste kiss on to his lips. He stared down at the long expanse of pale flesh and felt his already rock hard cock twitch in longing. As all Omegas were trained to do, Reid was ignoring Rossi’s arousal until otherwise instructed. He was expected to be aware enough to protect himself, but not to embarrass an Alpha who was having an involuntary erection. At the moment Rossi wasn’t sure if Reid was aware that he should be acknowledging a naked and aroused Alpha. His behaviour so far could easily be seen as rejection.

“I want you to be happy, Spencer,” Rossi told him softly, running his knuckles along his cheek, “I don’t expect to be the solution to that need, but I will do everything in my power to help you find what- or whom- you truly want.”

“Thank you,” Reid smiled softly, “I’m just… I don’t want to lead you on.”

“You won’t,” Rossi chuckled, “You may be a great deal smarter than I am, but I’ve got a few years and a lot of experience on you. You won’t hurt me, Spencer. Now, let’s talk protocol. You’ve been ignoring something that’s literally right in front of your face.”

“Umm,” Reid frowned, “I’m going to need another clue.”

“My erection,” Rossi snickered.

“Aren’t I supposed to?”

Rossi shook his head, “That’s what I thought. Yes, you’re supposed to be oblivious about casual ones, but I’ve been running my hands all over you for an hour now. Trust me, this one’s yours.”

“Okay so…” Reid’s eyes slowly dropped down to take in Rossi’s long, thick member, the knot unformed at this time, and Rossi saw him swallow hard, “Wow. Okay. That’s not going to fit.”

Rossi chuckled, “Trust me, if a baby can come out, this can go in.”

“Isn’t the former extremely painful?”

“Yes, but the latter is extremely pleasurable,” Rossi smirked, “Trust me, this is something you want. I know you’ve masturbated, Spence. No way you got through years of Heats without sticking something inside yourself.”

“I’m… I’m still using a Jr model.”

“You’re kidding,” Rossi shook his head in shock, “How are you getting any satisfaction from that?”

“Well, I’m not,” Reid frowned, “Isn’t that the point? Omegas need an Alpha to feel good during Heat.”

“Damn television and it’s stupid sexist lies,” Rossi grumbled, then climbed off of Reid and headed
for a bag, “I’m glad I thought to buy you some new toys.”

“Did I do something wrong already?” Reid worried, even as a part of him wondered where Rossi got off assuming he didn’t have the ‘right’ sort of toys. He had what he was comfortable using and didn’t want something bigger.

“No, but we’re going to play a little game,” Rossi replied, “It’s ‘get off on your own’ time.”

“I know how to do that,” Reid grumbled, “I’m tired of doing that.”

“In a way that makes you actually satisfied.”

Reid shrugged. He clearly didn’t know what Rossi meant. Rossi grabbed the mid-sized knotted dildo and a bottle of lubricant and started slathering it up. He nudged Reid’s legs apart and knelt before him with a smirk.

“Stretch yourself, Spence,” He smiled, “Let’s see your technique, and we’ll go from there.”

XXX

Hotch paced the sitting room, his temper at an all time high. He was trying to rationalize Rossi’s actions with Reid’s behaviour. He knew Reid to be independent, intelligent, and capable. He knew Rossi to be a bit demeaning, sexist, and philandering. He also knew that they both cared about each other and would want what was best for the other, but would a simple miscommunication leave them in a worse state than he and Reid had been?

They clearly needed his intervention, but he knew he was unwelcome so he called Morgan. When he relayed their conversation Morgan sat in silence on the other side for quite a while before letting out a sigh.

“Hotch, you’re not his mate anymore, or rather you won’t be soon. I suggest you let it go. Rossi will do what’s best for Reid.”

“I don’t believe breeding him is what’s best. He should be so much more than a uterus with legs.”

“I agree, but this is Reid’s decision. Not yours.”

“Is it?” Hotch asked, “We’ve been making decisions for him since his instincts came online. I’ve been going over his behaviour in my head and I just can’t reconcile it. Reid’s not been himself. He’s acting weak and confused when I know full well he isn’t. He’s not assertive anymore. I think his instincts have overwhelmed him and he may need a Beta’s help to get him stabilized.”

“Okay,” Morgan replied, “I’ll go over and talk to him in the morning.”

“By then it might be too late!” Hotch insisted.

“Hotch, Rossi is my pack Alpha too. Unless he’s doing something illegal or abusing Reid- like you were- we can’t interfere. He has a right to claim any Omega, and frankly he could have had you arrested instead of just taking Reid from you. I know you’re hurting right now. I’m sorry about Haley and I’m sure having an Omega confiscated from you right after is pretty awful, but this is how it’s going down. You need to step off and get yourself some treatment.”

“Therapy for me? That’s your response to this? I’m worried about Reid’s future for the first time since Haley’s death and you think I need to get treatment?!”
Morgan sighed, “It’s late and this isn’t going anywhere. Do you need me to come over there? Would sex help? Or a sparring partner?”

“No.”

“Then goodnight, Hotch.”

Morgan hung up and Hotch barely resisted throwing his phone across the room. Maybe Morgan was right and he did need therapy, but there was no way he was going to stand by and let Rossi take Reid’s life away from him as if he were some brainless sex toy.

XXX

Rossi stood in the corner smoking a cigar and watching as Reid writhed in pleasure on the bed. He’d been reserved at first; hesitant to touch himself with someone watching, but with Rossi coaxing him on and the scent of an Alpha arousing him he was soon easing the midsized cock into his body. It was a mere ten inches with a knot that would inflate when Rossi pushed a button on the remote he held in his hand. In the mean time he was experimenting with vibration and Reid was a shaking, sweating, gasping mess on the bed. While he watched, the Omega milked his prostate with expert motions. He was clearly used to using abdominal contractions to achieve the results that a knot would do with far more ease and accuracy. Rossi took another deep breath of soothing tobacco, gripped the cigar in his teeth, and then walked forward while breathing out. He gripped the toy and pressed it deeply into Reid’s body, stopping him easily with his other hand when he tried to fight him, and hit the button with his thumb after a moment of fumbling. Reid was shouting in frustration one moment and then screaming out his release the next.

Rossi moaned as the scent of Omega ejaculate filled the room, the beautiful aroma overwhelming even the cigar smell. He stood up and backed away, flicking the cigar before it could drop hot ash on Reid. He flicked up the vibration to simulate the rolling motions an Alpha would be making while tied to an Omega and Reid thrashed on the bed as his pleasure escalated. He rolled over and thrust his arse in the air, the toy shaking wet his ass cheeks lewdly. Rossi moaned again, palming his own hard cock and the knot that had formed at the base. He was aching but he still wasn’t sure if taking Reid were the best choice.

“Please,” Reid gasped, “Please, more. Please, David. Please!”

“Tell me what you want,” Rossi breathed out, the smoke curling around his face like a dragon’s smoke.

“You, please,” Reid pleaded, “Please, I need more than this. It’s too… something…”

“Plastic?” Rossi suggested.

“It doesn’t smell right,” Reid keened.

“You’re getting off on my aroma,” Rossi replied, “That’s good.”

Rossi gently put out his cigar, saving the rest for later, and headed over to where Reid was frantically tugging at his cock in an effort to reach a more satisfying release. It was a measure of how much more he’d been pleased by the larger toy that he was realizing there could be something better. Rossi lowered his trousers and hit the button to release the knot on the toy. It popped out of him, forced free by his repeatedly tensing body. Reid howled in frustration but Rossi was on him like an animal, pinning him down and pressing his own hard, leaking cockhead against his entrance.

“Now! Now!” Reid demanded.
“Needy little…” Rossi growled, then pushed the head inside.

Reid stilled, his breath erratic and a little whimper of fear emerging. Rossi was a good deal thicker than the toy had been, and his knot was real, not the safe, soft air inflatable one he’d just had in his body. Rossi was all hot, hard shaft with blood pulsing into him eagerly. He was ready to knot Reid, but he wanted to make this as affectionate as possible so he slid into him just enough to stretch him further. He pumped a few times, moaning at the feel of that tight, wet heat around his cock. Then he pulled free and whispered an order for Reid to roll over onto his side.

Reid did as he was told, giving Rossi a wild, hungry look as the man laid down behind him on the bed. He pulled Reid against him, lifting the young Omega’s leg and instructing him to help him enter. Reid awkwardly guided Rossi’s cock into his own body and whimpered as Rossi began to move slowly. He ran his hands over Reid’s torso, stroking him tenderly and rolling his nipples between his fingers. He leaned forward to press slow kisses to his neck and shoulder.

“You’re huge,” Reid gasped, turning his head and initiating a deep, long intimate kiss. Rossi had to pull away so he could get a few words out that needed to be said.

“I’m average for an Alpha,” Rossi replied, “Large is twelve inches. They can reach right up and fuck inside your uterus during a Heat, opening you up and filling you until it overflows.”

“Oh gods!” Reid gasped in excitement, writhing on his cock.

Rossi decided that was as good a time as any to knot the young man, so he took a grip on Reid’s cock to control the angle of his hips and thrust as hard as he could to get the already-expanded knot passed his rim. The flesh stretched taught, Reid cried out at the pressure, and then the knot popped through and they both lost themselves to sensation. Rossi’s hips rolled fast and hard, grinding his knot into Reid’s prostate to drag his pleasure from him. Reid was a gasping, sobbing mess, his pleasure overwhelming him as he gripped Rossi’s arms to the point of painful and matched his movements instinctively. He arched his neck in offering and Rossi couldn’t have resisted the urge to sink his teeth in if he’d wanted to. He did, however, roll them so he had access to the other side of Reid’s neck. From this angle he had Reid arching his back and pressing against his groin so beautifully that he wished he could capture it on film to admire for the rest of his life. Instead he sank his teeth into the place a pack Alpha used to subdue or bond an Omega- on the opposite side of Reid’s neck from where his bonding mark with Hotch was.

Reid screamed at the pain and came hard beneath him, his body jerking as if he were having a fit. Rossi couldn’t contain himself any longer, not with the taste of blood and sweet/sour bonding fluids. Reid was perfect beneath him, his tight body grasping onto his knot and pulling his desire from him in waves. Rossi wasn’t even aware that he’d begun babbling after releasing Reid’s bonding gland until his ears stopped ringing. Then he cringed at the ridiculous things coming out of his mouth. Words like ‘perfect’ and ‘beautiful’ and ‘scrumptious’, but Reid was lapping it all up, making happy crooning noises and literally purring beneath him. Rossi eased them back down onto their sides, stroking Reid’s damp hair out of his face and kissing away his tears. He was smiling, but he was also trembling and holding tightly onto Rossi’s arms as he sniffled and turned his head to nuzzle Rossi’s whiskered face.

“Talk to me, kiddo. You okay?”

“Yeah,” Reid replied, voice ragged from his cries, “Just… overwhelmed. I thought it would be so much more violent than that. When Hotch bonded with me it was so much more painful.”

“I imagine so,” Rossi replied, “You’re meant to be deep in headspace by then, drowning in pleasure. From what I understand he was practically surgical about it.”
“Yeah,” Reid replied softly, his tone so sad it made Rossi’s heart ache.

“You didn’t deserve that.”

“I feel like I did,” Reid replied, “I tried to take his son from him. I know it was instinctive and that I couldn’t have controlled it, but it’s just so… this whole thing is unfair. For everyone involved.”

“Not for me,” Rossi chuckled, “I just got laid for the first time in a year.”

“Lecher,” Reid chuckled.

“Sexy twink,” Rossi replied, playfully slapping his thigh, “I’m going to hate giving you up to some young, strapping buck.”

“Mmm, you’re my pack Alpha,” Reid replied, arching his back and making Rossi gasp as it stimulated his not-quite-soft-yet knot, “You can have me whenever you want, even after I’m passed on to someone else.”

“You…” Rossi gasped, stilling his hips with a firm hand, “Are going to be the death of me.”

“Mmm, la petite mort.”

“Is there ever enough?”

“You only came once,” Reid worried suddenly, “Oh fuck, I’m sorry. We should…”

Rossi stopped him before he could overstimulate him by rolling his hips again, “Whoa! Hold it there, sweetheart. I’m not that young anymore! Outside of Heat I usually only climax once or twice. I was more concerned with getting you off enough to satisfy you. Trust me. I’m good.”

“Well… if you’re sure,” Reid worried.

“I am,” Rossi turned his head to kiss him gently, “Relax. Just get some sleep for-“

Rossi’s soothing words were interrupted by a loud bang on his front door followed by someone leaning on the buzzer. Then someone decided both were necessary.

“What the hell?” Reid asked, eyebrows furrowed, “That’s rude.”

“Hotch,” Rossi sighed, “I thought he’d show up sometime tonight. Glad he waited long enough for me to get a bit of tail.”

The very idea that another Alpha was at the door to his ‘territory’ had Rossi’s knot deflating. He’d need to protect his ‘mate’ from the intruder. Of course, since Rossi hadn’t bitten in the same spot Hotch had that made him as much Reid’s mate as Rossi was, but that was beside the point. His brain wouldn’t recognize that without scenting him first… and subduing the angry little shit. He stomped downstairs with Reid anxiously dressing behind him.

“Rossi! I know you’re in there!” Hotch raged at the door, “Open up or I’m breaking it down! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT!”

“No right to what?” Rossi asked, opening the door with his pants purposely left upstairs. He was covered with Reid’s natural lubricant and had his ejaculate still on his right hand.

Hotch went wild, throwing himself against Rossi with a savage snarl. His mating teeth were out, showing his intent to fight for the right to bond with Reid, and he was far into a feral state. At this
point a more dominant Alpha had two options- subdue him physically or verbally. Rossi chose verbal.

“KNEEL!”

Hotch’s knees hit the ground and he knelt there, snarling angrily and reaching out to try and grab at Rossi’s shirt tails. Behind him Reid let out a startled shout and fell down the last few steps from the force of Rossi’s Dom voice echoing through the chambers. Horrified, Rossi turned and fled back to Reid. He was picking himself up and grumbling in frustration at his inability to block out the Dom.

“Cor, Spence! I’m so sorry! Are you okay?”

“Yeah, fine,” Reid grumbled, glancing at his scraped elbow and bruised knees.

Hotchner snarling at them angrily as he struggled back to his feet and raged towards them, fully intending on challenging Rossi for the pack Alpha position interrupted them. Reid’s body gave a twitch towards moving in between them, but his instincts reined him in and he stayed put while the two engaged in a Dominance battle, Rossi carefully darting off the steps so they wouldn’t end up with a broken neck. Hotchner was feral but Rossi was calm, his mind collected as he carefully avoided swings from his fists. An attempt to simply wrestle him to the ground resulted in Hotch ending up on his face on the floor where Rossi simply sat on his back. Hotch struggled and writhed and Reid whimpered in the corner as his instincts warred with him.

“Spencer, sweetheart, it’s okay. This happens to pack Alphas pretty often. If we didn’t get challenged from time to time a pack would fall apart under poor leadership. Now come here, you can calm him down for me.”

“I can? How? I set him off!” Reid argued weakly, stepping forward as he adjusted the robe he’d thrown on to come after them.

“Come and kneel down before him, show him your neck. Show him I didn’t erase your bonding mark.”

Reid nodded and came forward, dropping to hands and knees and putting his face close to the snarling, foaming mouth. Hotch froze, sniffed the air, and then calmed with a soft croon of recognition through his feral state. Reid inched closer and Hotch nuzzled their mating mark- likely for the first time since they’d mated. Rossi watched sadly as a look of intense longing and misery flashed across Reid’s face. He pulled back, blinking back tears, and stared down at Hotch as he recognized himself again and flushed in humiliation.

“Rossi, I’m fine. You can get off me now.”

Rossi stood up and Hotch struggled onto his knees, rubbing at his back as his joints complained loudly.

“You didn’t take him,” Hotch observed.

“No,” Rossi replied, “I didn’t. You two have unfinished business. Reid can end it himself if he wants to.”

“Do you?” Hotchner asked, “I won’t blame you, I just… I wanted it to be on your terms. Not Rossi’s.”

“I don’t know. I just… we just…” Reid waved anxiously between himself and Rossi while tugging on his robe, “I’m not… that… anymore.”
“He means ‘a virgin’,” Rossi clarified.

Hotch nodded, still on his knees and showing no sign of rising. He was submitting to them both, it seemed. Perhaps he was overwhelmed by his failure. It was about damn time, in Rossi’s opinion.

“Was he… was it okay?” Hotch asked, his tone full of worry.

Rossi growled angrily, the very idea that he wouldn’t make sure it was good for Reid! Hotch winced at his faux pas and Reid blushed brilliantly, his eyes dropping.

“See for yourself!” Rossi snarled, grabbing Reid and spinning him around.

Rossi bent Reid over on the steps and lifted up the back of the robe, exposing his tacky bottom. He spread those pale orbs and some of his seed slid free, dripping down Reid’s nearly hairless bollocks. Rossi ran his hand over Reid’s bottom and gripped it firmly, drawing a gasp of surprise from the Omega. Reid’s instincts were telling him to submit to both his mates, and Hotchner took one look at his gaping hole and began to crawl forward with a predatory snarl. Reid’s thighs were trembling and Rossi could feel his phallus hardening again, eager to see his favoured Alpha finally take up the mate he’d rejected earlier. Finally, Hotch was seeing that Reid was more than a mother, more than some docile virgin that he had to keep tucked in a corner. Reid was an Omega, with needs beyond kneeling and making sandwiches in the damn kitchen. However… Reid needed to see something rather important about himself as well. He needed to see that he didn’t have to be an Omega who kneeled and rarely left the kitchen that spent all their time spitting out kids and begging Alphas for attention. The question was; would he see that now? This was undoubtedly an erotic situation and there was no doubt that Reid wanted Hotch, but it wasn’t happening on his terms and this was far from a respectful way to introduce him to his other mate’s sensual side. If Reid accepted this situation Hotch would never forget it and it might take ages to get him to see Reid differently, but had Rossi not so bluntly pointed out Reid’s sexuality it would have taken ages for him to see that. Overall, Hotch had filed Reid away as a Beta in his mind and breaking through that was going to require a wrecking ball.

Hotch prowled closer, a possessive growl low in his throat, and leaned in to breathe in Reid’s scent off of his thigh before moving to the side and lapping at Rossi’s semen around Reid’s hole. He moaned softly and pressed his face firmly between Reid’s arsecheeks to fuck his tongue into his entrance. Reid whimpered and Rossi smothered a sigh of frustration. Then Reid reacted and left both Alphas staggering back in horror.

“Moriarty,” Reid whispered, and the effect of the Omega’s safeword was instantaneous.

Both Alphas reeled back in alarm and Hotch gasped and choked as Reid’s pores spat out a chemical that was as repellent as skunk spray. Reid stood up, turning on them sharply with outrage lining his face while both Alphas tried to get as far away from him as possible without letting him out of sight in case he still needed them in some way. Hotch had pulled his shirt over his mouth and nose but since he’d gotten a closer dose it probably wasn’t helping. His eyes were watering and Rossi felt a twinge of pity for him.

“How fucking dare you?!” Reid shrieked at them both, “You spend your time arranging my life, and then you ignore me, while you seduce me, and then try to hand me off to the Alpha who ignored me in the first place?! You both think you can just have me after that?!”

Rossi smothered down the proud smile that wanted to grace his face and put up his hands placating. This was a rough lesson to learn, but Reid wasn’t a kid. He needed to learn fast how to deal with all forms of Alphanizing, and that included those who would treat him gently while not having the best intentions for him.
“Now, Spencer. We’re both your mates,” Rossi stated as if talking to a child, “There’s no harm in indulging us a bit, we won’t think less of you.”

“The hell you won’t!” Reid snapped, “And weren’t you the one who told me I didn’t need to submit to every Alpha? Well, I also don’t need to submit to my mates if I don’t want to!”

“Yes, but-“ Hotch started.

“NO!” Reid shouted, “I’m done! I’m so fucking sick of you making decisions for me! Right now I don’t want either of you! In fact, I don’t even want to look at you!”

“What did I do?” Rossi asked.

“You just tried to hand me to someone who’s been abusing me for months!” Reid shouted, “Do you think sexual intercourse will just fix that?”

“Reid,” Hotch started, “I want to apologize for-“

“No,” Reid snapped angrily, “No, I’m not ready to hear your apology, and you’re not ready to treat me like your mate if you can’t even call me by my first name.”

Reid turned sharply, Rossi’s robe swirling around his ankles.

“Where are you going?” Hotch asked helplessly.

“Out!” Reid snapped, but paused at the landing and turned to glare down at Rossi, “And don’t think for one second that just because I’m responding the way you want me to that I don’t know that this was exactly the way you wanted this to go down! When I’ve calmed down we’re having a long talk about you manipulating me!”

Rossi let his proud smile spread across his face while Hotch gave him a baffled look. Most likely the Alpha was still struggling out of the depths of a feral state if he hadn’t figured out that he’d just been played.

“Come on, Aaron. Let’s clean up and then go have that drink.”

“What?” Hotch asked, “But Reid… I mean Spencer…”

“-Is going out. And since I’ve manipulated this whole thing- as he mentioned- I know exactly whom he is going out with and that he’ll be safe the whole time. So. Drink?”

Hotch sighed and let Rossi lead him away.
“You’re pretty,” Reid giggled.

“Thanks, you too,” Morgan smirked, helping Reid up the steps to Morgan’s apartment.

“See, it’s funny because you call me Pretty Boy, but you’re the stud of the group.”

“Except I’m a Beta so you’re the sex symbol of the group,” Morgan snickered.

“I had more hands on my butt tonight than I’ve ever had in my life,” Reid informed him, “I think I may have had a few down my pants too.”

“Yeah, sorry about that,” Morgan smirked, “I tried to keep them off of you but an Omega in a club in January? You were hot stuff.”

Morgan wasn’t lying. Reid had let loose tonight in a way he hadn’t known the young man could. He’d asked Morgan to show him some dance moves and then gone off and invented a few of his own. He’d ended up wriggling around on the floor in a strange combination of jazz and hip-hop moves that was strangely endearing and worked for the slender young man. He’d been just short of assaulted as every Alpha in the room tried to get closer to him despite the fact that he smelled mated… twice over.

“I was supposed to go on Heat,” Reid grumbled as Morgan levered him onto the couch.

“Yeah, sorry it didn’t work out. You’re just going to have to wait it out,” Morgan smiled, “You want some water?”

“Do Betas have sex a lot? Because you have sex a lot,” Reid wondered, “And no one judges you for it. So why can’t I be a Beta still? I mean, I was always an Omega but I was always treated like a Beta and no one cared if I got laid or not, but now that I actually want to have sex I’m not allowed to.”

“Says who?” Morgan asked with a frown.

“Well, okay, I can and they want me to, but they’ll judge me on it.”

“They might,” Morgan acknowledged, “But that’s on them, not you. You get to decide what you do with your body and no one else. Alphas might try to demand it, but you put Rossi and Hotch in their place tonight. They won’t forget that. Next time, if you want it, you take one or both of them to bed and do your thing. Play on playa.”

Reid grinned, and burst into song, “Cause the player’s gonna play, play, play, play, play, and the haters gonna hate, hate, hate, hate, hate.”

Morgan joined in with a grin, “I’m just gonna shake, shake, shake, shake, shake!”

Reid hopped up and turned around, and they grinded against each other as they finished the song together while laughing together. When they stopped wriggling around Morgan’s arms were around Reid’s waist and Reid was leaning back against him.

“You looked so free tonight, Reid. I’ve never seen that before. Your face was all lit up and you just looked… uplifted.”
“I felt it,” Reid sighed, “I’ve never felt so… Omeganine before, you know? Is that wrong? Sometimes I feel like being Omeganine is wrong. People talk about how we should get out of the kitchen, and get jobs, and start companies, and that’s all well and good, but… I lost my train of thought.”

Morgan chuckled, “You’re drunk.”

“I’m very drunk. Sloshed. Pissed. Shit faced.”

“Yep, all of those,” Morgan chuckled.

“I want a baby,” Reid sighed, “Can you give me a baby?”

“Nope,” Morgan chuckled, “But you’ve got two Alphas who might be up for that.”

“Is it true that Omegas can have sex with Betas without it being a problem?” Reid wondered.

“Depends on the Alpha,” Morgan replied, pressing him down into the couch again, “Their instincts won’t tell them to stop it, but they might not like sharing on another level.”

“So I should probably not have sex with you,” Reid wondered.

Morgan laughed a bit, “Not without talking to your husbands. Good night, Reid.”

“Night.”

XXX

Hotch let himself into Jessica’s house and walked silently into her son’s room where he found Jack curled up on the roll out bed. He stroked his hair until Jack woke up and whispered for his son to get his things.

“Is mommy home?”

“Not yet, sweetheart,” Hotch replied softly, “But I’m working on it.”

“Like you did with my first mommy?”

Hotch winced. Jack missed Haley. You couldn’t just replace a mother, even if it did sometimes feel like that was the case.

“Better than like with your first mommy,” Hotch promised, “I’m going to find a way to make this right.”

“Then we can be a family?” Jack wondered as Hotch jotted a note for Jessica down on the chalkboard by the fridge.

“I hope so,” Hotch replied.

They climbed into his car and headed home while Hotch tried to tell himself not to veer off and drop by Morgan’s place. He’d chased Reid off and Rossi had tied him down, he deserved to sew a few wild oats. At least he was with Morgan.

As if to add insult to an already humiliating and emotionally draining day, Jack took that moment to throw up all over himself and the car. Hotch sighed and cracked the windows while the young man began to cry miserably.
“It’s okay son, we’ll get you cleaned up when we get home.”

Hotch got Jack cleaned up and took his temperature when they got home, frowning when he saw how high it was. He put a cool rag on his head and gave him some Tylenol, but he threw it up immediately after. Worried because his temperature was approaching dangerous levels, Hotch put a call in to the pediatrician’s emergency line and read off the symptoms. They told him it sounded like the flu and to keep him cool, give him crackers, and try the Tylenol again later. Hotch tried for an hour to get Jack settled, but he was becoming more and more miserable by the second. He missed Haley. He missed the sturdiness of an Omega and how they just always knew what to do when a child was ill.

Hotch waffled for a moment and then called Reid, hung up when the message came on, and called him again. This time he answered, but his words were slurred.

“Re… Spencer… Jack’s sick and-“

“J-Jack’s shick?”

“Are you drunk?”

“Mmn, yeah, but that’s not a thing. What’s wrong with Jack?”

“A thing?” Hotch asked.

“No judging,” Reid elaborated, “Jack. Sick. What way?”

“Ah, he threw up, he’s running a fever of one-oh-three point five. He’s told me today that he’s had a sore throat for a few days, but I wasn’t aware of that. Did you know?”

“Mmn, no,” Reid groaned loudly, “He was coughing a bit a day ago, but he said he was fine.”

“He always says he’s fine,” Hotch growled, “You have to make him go to the doctor.”

“Well, I didn’t know that, did I?” Reid snapped, “I’m new to parenting, Aaron. He’s been sick off and on for months, you never rushed him to the doctor any of those times.”

“Because his mother was here!” Hotch snarled, “I trust you to know when this is serious! You’re the Omega! Alphas are focused on the Omega’s needs, Omegas are focused on children’s needs. You’re the thermometer I judge his health by!”

“Tha’s not fair,” Reid snarled, “You p-push me away an then get mad cause I’m not there? The fuck is that?”

“Okay. Yes. You’re right, I’m sorry.”

“Damn ssssstraight yer sorry,” Reid grumbled, “Is Jack need to go to hospital?”

“I don’t know. I called his paediatrician and he doesn’t seem to think it’s necessary,” Hotch replied.

“M’ come back.”

“No, you’re tanksed, you stay there. You’re with Morgan still, right?”

“Yeah.”

“Good. I don’t want Jack seeing you like this.”
“M’ not dang’rous. I’m just *drunk,*” Reid grumbled, and then promptly hung up.

XXX

Once Reid was woken up he found it impossible to go back to sleep despite the throbbing in his head. He got up and drank a bottle of water to alleviate the dehydration. Then he drank another. Before he knew it he’d drunk an entire case of water and was suffering a brain freeze. He rubbed his tongue across the roof of his mouth until the searing pain stopped and then headed for Morgan’s bathroom. Once there he frantically collected all the towels and walked them into the living room, dropping them down in front of the radiator. He pulled the pillows off the couch and added them to the pile, arranging them *just so* before heading for Morgan’s room. He pulled the blankets off of Morgan’s bed, waking the young Beta up in the process.

“Reid?” Morgan groaned, “The hell are you doing?”

“Sorry for waking you up,” Reid smiled softly, “I need these.”

“You need those for what?” Morgan called as Reid turned and hurried back into the living room.

Reid dumped his blankets and headed back in for the pillows, but was cut off by Morgan, who was shaking his head and holding up his hands in clear denial.


“What?” Reid asked.

“What do you think you’re doing over there?” Morgan pointed to Reid’s pile of blankets, towels, and pillows.

“Um, I’m… uh…” Reid turned back to Morgan in confusion, “I’m not sure.”

“You’re nesting,” Morgan pointed out.

“Oh,” Reid blinked, “I’ve never actually done that before a Heat before. Are you sure?”

“Well it ain’t a pillow fort!” Morgan snapped, “Look, you can’t go on Heat here. I don’t have seals on the outer doors, just on my bedroom door, and I can’t keep up with an Omega on Heat without at least another Beta to help me along.”

“Well, what should I do?” Reid asked.

“Pick a husband and I’ll drop you off,” Morgan replied.

Reid frowned, “Jack is sick.”

“Okay… that was left field, but I’ll play along. So you want to go to Hotch?”

“Yes,” Reid nodded, “Most likely seeing my child ill will put off my Heat.”

Morgan groaned, “Reid, you’re supposed to be *embracing* your Heat!”

“I’ll embrace it when Jack’s well,” Reid replied.

XXX

By the time he walked through the door Reid was well on his way to sober- and a few hours of
bathroom breaks—due to all the water he’d drunk. He hurried into the house, finding the living room in partial darkness, and hurried off towards the bathroom. As he was going he glanced aside and saw Jack propped up in Hotch’s easy chair. His breath was rasping and he was pale in the light cast from the small table lamp set on a low setting. Reid froze, his heart clenching as fear coursed through him. On the peripheral he was aware of the hot fluid running down his thighs, but his conscious mind was focused on one task and one only. He had his phone out and was dialling for an ambulance before he’d even crossed the room to Jack’s side. Hotch sat up on the couch behind him, his mind sleep muzzy and his voice deep and tired.

“Reid?” Hotch asked, “I mean… Spencer. He’s fine. I got him to keep down some Tylenol and he’s having an easier time when sitting up so…”

“He’s not fine,” Reid spoke over his shoulder, turning up the switch on the light, “Yes, hello, I need an ambulance and a room ready to receive a highly contagious disease at the nearest hospital. My son has measles. He’s feverish-”

“He has what?” Hotch spat out, “Are you still drunk?”

Reid ignored him and turned Jack’s head to show Hotch what the side table lamp had revealed to him. Red splotches all across the back of Jack’s ear and along half his hairline. The woman on the phone asked Reid to try and wake Jack up to determine how cognizant he was. It was likely a tactic to keep Reid from panicking, but he went along with it anyway.

“Jack, sweetheart?” Reid soothed, “Jack, wake up honey.”

One of Jack’s eyes opened but the other was crusted shut. He whimpered and Reid told him not to force it, “Aaron get me a warm rag. He has conjunctivitis.”

“Jack’s been vaccinated,” Hotch cut in, “He couldn’t take the second vaccine because he had an allergic reaction, but I was told herd immunity would protect him without the second one.”

“Herd immunity relies on a 95% immunization rate,” Reid replied, “And even then it isn’t 100% effective. It lowers the risk substantially, but unvaccinated and autoimmune repressed people are still in jeopardy from anyone else who in similar circumstances. Warm. Wet. Rag. Now.”

Hotch moved to get the rag and Reid continued to talk soothingly to Jack, who whimpered miserably.

“He’s conscious,” Reid told the tech on the phone, “He’s disoriented and has conjunctivitis and a splotchy rash behind his ears.”

“We have an ambulance on the way with a tent to avoid spreading the illness. You won’t be taken in through the ambulance entrance, we’re going to get creative since measles can be spread just by being in the room.”

“Understandable,” Reid replied, “He’s been given Tylenol within the last hour and has no medical allergies…”

Reid continued to spout off everything he knew about Jack, knowing that cutting it out of the work after the crew arrived would mean he could get Jack treatment faster. The woman’s fingers tapped audibly on the laptop keys and he was reassured by the fact that she was taking notes. Reid took the warm rag from Hotch and held it over Jack’s swollen eye.

“Spencer,” Hotch stated, “Are you okay?”
“Yes.”
“It’s just… I think you’ve wet the floor.”

“Sorry,” Reid replied, “I was headed towards Heat so I binge-drunk on water. Luckily I haven’t eaten too much recently.”

“I thought it smelled like Heat scent,” HOrch replied, “You’ll have to stay here.”

“Not happening. Jack being in danger will hold off my Heat.”

“You’re going to have to use the bathroom repeatedly, even if your Heat has been put off. The process started so your body is going to purge.”

“I know,” Reid replied sharply, “I’ll deal with it.”

“With what, diapers?” Hotch snapped.

“Don’t start with me,” Reid snarled, “My baby is sick. I don’t care about anything else.”

“At least change your pants,” Hotch sighed, “I can do that while you do.”

Reid waffled for a moment and then stood up and passed the rag to Hotch, “It’s highly communicable. Don’t touch your eyes without washing your hands. Have you been vaccinated?”

“Yes. You?”

“Yeah.”

“Good,” Hotch nodded, and started to care for Jack while Reid dried off and changed into a fresh pair of pants. His crotch was bulging which let Hotch know that he’d put something on to catch any mess that might happen again.

A knock on the door had Reid bolting for it and indicating where Jack lay. One tech headed for Jack but the other cut Reid off from going towards him. Hotch also stood up and headed for Reid, rolling up his sleeves with a purposeful look on his face.

“What’s going on?” Reid asked, “I’m not sick, Jack is! The little boy right there!”

“We’re going to need to sedate you, sir,” The tech smiled softly, keeping his tone gentle, “It’s for Jack’s own good.”

“What?” Reid asked, “Aaron, what are they going on about?”

Hotch leaped at Reid who was helpless to defend himself against the stronger and more skilled Alpha, he wriggled and fought as Hotch pinned his arms behind him and the tech came up with a shot for his arm in one hand and a vial of orange liquid in the other.

“You can take the juice with medicine willingly or the shot unwillingly,” The tech stated.

“What? Why?!” Reid squirmed miserably, “Aaron, what is this?!”

“Omegas don’t like their sick children touched by others,” Hotch replied soothingly, “Your fear for his safety let you reach out for help, but your instincts are about to make you attack that help. Let us stop you.”
The tech descended on him and Reid shook his head frantically, “Juice. Juice!”

The tech held the juice to his lips and Reid downed the bitter fluid, he gagged on it, but it stayed down. Within a few seconds he felt lightheaded and sleepy. He sagged in Hotch’s arms and the man easily shifted him to carry him in his arms.

“How can we both ride along?” Hotch asked.

The tech nodded and started helping the other one take care of Jack. They had an IV giving him fluids already and were checking his vitals by the time Reid’s instincts started screaming at him. They were touching his child! His reason for living! They couldn’t possibly know what would make Jack happy and safe! They didn’t know him!

“Aaron,” Reid whimpered, “Aaron, stop them. They’ll hurt him. He needs his bear.”

“I know,” Hotch replied softly, “You have to trust them. They’ll keep him alive. Do you want to carry the bear for him?”

“Jack needs it,” Reid whined.

“This one?” A tech asked, reaching for the toy. Reid replied in the affirmative and they headed out the door with Jack clutching his toy on the stretcher and Hotch carrying Reid behind them.

“There’ve been no reported cases of measles in Virginia,” One of the tech’s stated as they climbed into the vehicle, “We’re going to need to isolate where he caught it and when and then figure out who he’s infected so far.”

“Measles has a 90% infection rate,” Reid slurred from Hotch’s lap where he was clutching the Omega like a life preserver, “It’s spread through mucus and can survive on the surface or in the air for up to two hours. His dad and I both travel for a living and we usually bring him back toys. The infection window is eight days in either direction, and since Jack is showing symptoms he’s at least ten days in. That means the book he got on our trip back from Florida is the likely cause if no other people have presented with the illness in the area. He’s been around his cousins, one of which is too young to have been vaccinated.”

“I’ll get you his cousin’s contact information,” Hotch stated while the tech’s stared at Reid in surprise.

“Maybe I should give him more sedative,”

“He’s a genius,” Hotch replied, “The fact it took him that long to tell you and that he spoke at a normal speed tells me the sedative is working.”

“Damn,” The blonde tech chuckled, “I bet he’s a handful. The smart ones usually are.”

“He’s something all right,” Hotch replied, shifting uncomfortably.

XXX

Jack was in isolation but since they had already been exposed there was no reason to keep his parent out. They lay in a wide bed made for the parents to join their children in a Fur Pile while their young ones were sick. Reid was directly beside Jack and Hotch was on the outside, his arm over Reid’s waist to lie comfortably on his son’s belly. He rubbed it whenever the young man awoke, but for the most part Jack was drained.
Reid was putting off distressed Omega scent, but Hotch was used to that by now. Reid had smelt distressed since shortly after their bonding and Hotch had built up a sort of mental wall to deal with what would normally send him into a paroxysm of concern and doting. As he lay there with his small family he couldn’t help but wonder if this would have happened if he’d been treating Reid like the Omega he was meant to be. Would he have noticed the clerk who sold them the book was sick? Or had he not been showing symptoms yet? Reid certainly would have been home and they’d have gotten him help sooner.

“I’m sorry,” Hotch whispered, pressing his face to the back of Reid’s head and breathing in his scent from his hair, “I’m so sorry, Spencer, Jack.”

“Shhh,” Reid soothed, rubbing his hand over Hotch’s forearm. Hotch didn’t think he deserved that comfort but at that moment the doctors came in to run more tests.

The lack of answers was frustrating Hotch, but Reid needed his help getting to the bathroom so he was distracted for a moment. When the poor Omega had finished purging, grumbling about wasted calories when his body was not going to go on Heat. Hotch held him after they had washed their hands and just stood there with Reid cradled in his arms.

“I want to get back to Jack,” Reid pleaded, his eyes heavy from the sedatives they were keeping in him.

“I know just… give me a moment,” Hotch stated.

“It stinks in here,” Reid complained, “I don’t like that you just saw me crap my brains out.”

“I know,” Hotch smiled, “I’m not to fond of it either, but the fact is we Alphas judge a lot by scent. I’ve been ignoring yours a lot lately.”

“So you’re punishing yourself?” Reid scoffed, “There’s nothing you can learn about my poop stink.”

“Sure there is,” Hotch chuckled, “I can learn what you smell like when you’re sick.”

“I’m not sick, though,” Reid frowned.

“That’s the thing about relationships,” Hotch replied, “You need to know the good and the bad, and sometimes even the good stinks a fair bit, but that doesn’t mean you avoid it.”

“I’m sure there’s an analogy in there somewhere, or maybe even an apology, but the fact of the matter is I’m tired, sedated, recovering from being drunk, and worried about our sick child.”

“Yeah, okay,” Hotch leaned forward so Reid could pull the handle on the door and they headed back out into the main part of Jack’s room. Jack was sitting there quietly, always a trooper at the worst of times, and Reid smiled at him proudly.

“I feel better,” Jack told them as Hotch laid Reid down and then walked to the other side of the bed to smile down at his son, “I want to go home.”

“You’re very strong,” Hotch smiled softly, “But we can’t go home until the doctors say so.”

“At least four days,” Reid replied, “Because you’re still contagious at this point.”

“I’ll miss school! And baseball!” Jack whined.

Reid smiled at his son and petted his hand gently, “I know sweetheart, but this is more important. We
want you healthy.”

Jack’s eyes widened, “More important than school?”

“Way more important,” Hotch replied, raising his eyebrows emphatically.

“If you want I can tell you stories like I used to when we were travelling,” Reid soothed.

“Okay, but no nursing,” Jack replied, making a face, “I’m not a baby anymore.”

Reid chuckled, “I know. I’m out of milk anyway.”

Hotch smirked. Jack had weaned a while ago, reaching his proper age mentally once his family had been united again. Now they just had to keep the family together. He wished the rest of the group were present, but the fact of the matter was that the second he’d been freed of his obligations Rossi had flown out to handle the case they’d been delayed on with Todd and Prentiss as his only back-up. It wasn’t common to send only a fraction of the team, but with half of them out on Heat there wasn’t much anyone could do. At the very least, the rest of the world would be down nearly half it’s population as well as the breeding class took to their beds in droves. In the past he’d looked at it as an advantage when a case hit during January. It meant they had a chance to get one up on an unsub while there were less victims available and they unsub was possibly distracted by hormones.

That led Hotch to recall all the times Haley had spent her Heats alone because his job had come first and felt a lurch of regret. No wonder she’d divorced him. Jack needed both his parents and Haley had needed her mate and he’d been gone, both mentally and physically. As he stood there watching and listening to his new mate he realized that he’d checked out long before Reid had come along. He’d left Haley before she’d ever left him and now it was too late to apologize, but he could make things up to Reid. He could be the Alpha he’d always intended to be. He could protect his family.

Hotch hit the call button on the bed and waited for their assigned nurse to enter the room, gloves and mask in place.

“I want to know what the prognosis is for my son and I don’t want any more diversion tactics. Get me the doctor and tell him to have an answer for me now.”

“Aaron,” Reid spoke up, sitting up in the bed with glazed eyes, “The tests they’re running aren’t complete.”

“I don’t care,” Hotch snapped, “I want to know what they’re testing him for! You’re convinced it’s measles and they’re treating him for that, but all these other tests…”

“Aaron,” Reid said softly, “His immune system should have fought this off and didn’t. They’re checking him for immunodeficiency disorders and cancer.”
Chapter 10

Trigger Warning: Here there be parasite mentioned

Hotch had to force Reid to leave Jack’s side to clean up. He was a wreck and he stunk and Hotch was worried about bacteria. If Jack was immunocompromised than they’d have to be extra careful. So he dragged Reid, whining and struggling weakly, into the nearest shower room and stripped both their clothes off. Reid attempted to get back out to Jack despite being half-dressed, but Hotch forced him into the shower with a few growled words in his Dom voice and Reid went with a miserable whimper.

“I’m sorry,” Hotch sighed, stepping in with him and unfolding the rag that a nurse had given them to use, “I know your instincts are screaming at you to be with him, but he needs medical care, not a bed warmer with BO.”

“It’s more than that,” Reid worried, “If I’m in here with you I might go on Heat, and then we’ll both be indisposed for three days!”

“That won’t happen,” Hotch replied, “Just keep thinking of him.”

Hotch meant what he’d said, but his body wasn’t listening. This was the first time he’d seen Reid naked since they’d bonded and he was surprised at how attractive he found the young Omega. Reid was willowy with slender hips- not best for childbearing but in an age of medicine he could always have a cesarean- and frankly his figure spoke to Hotch. He’d always gone for female Omegas, but Reid was sensual in his own way. His movements were submissive, and that alone was attractive, but to top it off Hotch couldn’t help but see the odd moments of fear in his eyes. He knew he’d put those there by putting Reid down every chance he got, and now his mind and body were aching to put things right. He was hard and throbbing, but he had no intention of acting on it. One sniff of Alpha semen would have Reid in Heat, his body prepared to make a biological child.

“Aaron,” Reid worried, glancing down at the hard member.

“Ignore it.”

“It’s huge,” Reid replied, “You’re bigger than Rossi.”

Hotch closed his eyes and shuddered, his mind flashing back to that moment when Reid had been presented for him, ass up and leaking his pack Alpha’s come. Pack Alphas were always the most Dominant male, regardless of actual physical prowess, and the Alphas who bowed to them were drawn to them in a way that was both sexual and asexual. If pressed Hotch couldn’t define the reason Rossi was his pack Alpha, and he would quickly deny any sexual attraction to him, but the very idea of sharing his Omega with the pack Alpha raised arousal to insane levels. It was an honour to lend an unmated pack Alpha your Omega. To share a session with him was… beyond erotic.

“Aaron!!” Reid squeeked, and Hotch opened his eyes to find he had pressed Reid into the corner of the shower and was rutting against he trembling Omega.

“Sorry,” Hotch gasped, “Don’t mention him again.”

“I’m sorry,” Reid replied miserably.

“It’s fine. It’s not your fault. It’s mine. Well, it’s biology. My mind screaming to get you pregnant and that having a powerful Dom involved would make it more likely.”
“Alpha sperm production increases by 12% in the presence of an aroused pack Alpha and Omegas are more likely to go both mock and scheduled Heats. There have been three recorded instances where a threesome with a pack Alpha resulted in a pregnancy despite birth control being used at correct levels.”

“Spencer,” Hotch panted, “Don’t.”

“Sorry, is this doing it for you?” Reid asked in confused dismay.

“The memory of you presenting with his come leaking out of you…” Hotch pressed Reid against the wall again and only the Omega shouting his son’s name got him to let up, “We need to get back to Jack.”

“Yes,” Reid agreed, “Fast.”

They dried off, redressed in scrubs the staff had left for them, and returned to Jack. He was sleeping peacefully, but woke up the second Reid started to climb into the bed.

“Mommy,” Jack murmured.

“I’m here, sweetheart.”

“I miss my first mommy,” Jack whispered.

“I know,” Reid replied, his voice choked, “Me too.”

“Did you love her too?”

“Yeah,” Reid replied truthfully, “I did. Haley was very special.”

“I wish she was here. She’d always rub my belly and sing to me when I was sick.”

“What would she sing?” Reid wondered, setting himself up to rub Jack’s belly in slow circles.

“Our special lullaby,” Jack replied sleepily.

“I know it,” Hotch stated softly, “How about we start a new tradition. Mommy rubs your belly and daddy sings.”

Jack didn’t reply so Hotch wrapped one arm around Reid’s shoulders from behind and started to sing softly. Reid rubbed Jack’s belly and waited for the young man’s breathing to settle, but the doctors came in before he could fully drift off and he woke up with a miserable mew. The sedatives were wearing off of Reid and he hissed angrily at the approaching doctor.

“Easy, Dr. Reid,” Doctor Morton soothed, “I have good news. We checked Jack’s white blood cells and they seem to be functioning properly. We’d like to run more tests but we’re leaning away from a secondary illness at this point.”

“Then… then what caused him to catch measles?” Reid asked, shaken by the news enough to allow the doctor to approach.

“We understand he was living on the streets for a while?”

“Yes, but I made sure he had good food,” Reid insisted, “And my milk.”

“And he was sick frequently after that?” The man asked.
Hotch stepped in, “We passed a stomach bug back and forth for a while and then Reid and Jack both had a chest cold that lasted ages.”

“We’d like to test both Dr. Reid and Jack for parasites. I’d also like to check Dr. Reid’s white blood cell count. Would you be so kind as to authorize that, Agent Hotchner?”

“Reid can speak for himself,” Hotch replied, “Spencer?”

“Yeah, it’s fine.”

“Then I’d like you to come with me,” He replied, “A nurse will see to Jack while I get someone to run some tests on you.”

“Stay with Jack?” Reid pleaded as he eased off the bed.

“I will,” Hotch promised, grabbing Reid’s hand on a whim and pressing a kiss to his palm.

Reid blushed and then followed the doctor out the door. Hotch watched as they stripped Jack down and searched him from head to toe, but whatever they were looking for they didn’t find it. On a whim the doctor shined a light in Jack’s eyes and then stepped back.

“That’s it. We’d need testing to prove my hypothesis, but at this late a stage we need to progress to treatment to save the eye.”

“Save his eye?” Hotch asked, “What’s wrong with his eye?”

XXX

“Toxocariasis?” Reid asked, staring in disgust at the little round circle on the bottom of his foot. It had been hiding beneath a callous that they’d shaved back for him, “I can’t believe I have roundworm. Is this what weakened Jack’s immune system?”

“Most likely, the nurse replied, “We’ll give you a treatment and it will be gone in no time.”

“Yes, but Jack? His symptoms are definitely measles.”

“He’s responding well to medication,” The nurse assured him.

“Yes, but he could get worse.”

The nurse smiled at him softly and patted his arm while Doctor Morton took a deep breath, “We believe Jack is well on his way to developing pneumonia from his multiple infections. Now, this can be very dangerous in younger children, but he’s got a fighting chance. He’s shown no signs of meningitis, and that’s the real killer where measles is concerned. Just maintain hope and let us treat him. That’s your best decision.”

XXX

Reid returned so subdued that for a moment he thought he’d been tranquilized again, then the young man sat down in a chair and burst into tears.

“They told you?” Hotch asked.

“He could lose his retina,” Reid sobbed, “It’s my fault.”

Hotch took a deep breath, pushed his own warring feelings aside, and walked around the bed to drop
to one knee in front of Reid.

“It’s not your fault. You were protecting him to the best of your abilities. Things went wrong. You had no idea you two had this. We’ll all three of us get treated, just to be safe, and Jack will get any further treatment the doctors suggest.”

“They think he’s developing pneumonia,” Reid hiccuped.

“I know,” Hotch nodded, “We’ll get him through it. We’ll get through it. Together. As a family.”

Hotch drew Reid into his arms and the Omega went limp, sliding to the floor to bury his face in Hotch’s chest while he rocked him gently. He didn’t even realize he was singing Haley’s lullaby until Jack sighed happily and opened his eyes for a brief moment to smile down at them both. Then he heard himself and smiled as well, letting a few tears of frustration and helplessness fall as he surrendered to the comfort of holding his Omega. When Reid drifted off to sleep in his arms he lifted the slender young man and carried him to the bed to lay him down beside Jack. Hotch climbed in behind Reid, reached over him, and gently rubbed his son’s stomach while continuing his song.

_Sung to tune of Brother John_

“Mommy loves you, mommy loves you,
Yes he does. Yes he does.
He will always love you,
He will always love you,
Yes he will. Yes he will.

Daddy loves you, daddy loves you…”
Chapter 11

It was touch and go for a while, and when Reid fell ill during Jack’s convalescence he had to be separated from him. Hotch ended up wearing a mask and going back and forth between the two rooms to try and help each recover. Reid was very distressed by Jack’s illness and their forced separation and had to be bound to the bed for a few days until they were able to get enough medication into him to ensure he was no longer contagious. Then he was right back by Jack’s side, singing to him despite his raw throat and holding him gently. Jack’s cough was absolutely heartbreaking, but after a week he was allowed to go home.

Reid hurried into the house with Jack in his arms, struggling under the weight of their child, and placed him gently down in his own bed with a satisfied sigh. He sat down beside him and brushed the young man’s hair out of his eyes.

“There. Better. Now we’re home and this is finally going to start getting better. You’ll see, Jacky-boy. Back in your daddy’s territory where we belong,” Reid crooned.

“Are you staying?” Jack asked softly, his voice barely above a wheeze.

“Of course,” Reid stated, his back going stiff as he glanced anxiously over at Hotch.

“Absolutely,” Hotch replied with a firm nod, “But first, a shower and a meal. Come on, Spencer.”

Reid sighed, but with them back in Hotch’s territory he was more willing to leave Jack’s side. He’d also no longer require sedatives, something Hotch was looking forward to. Seeing Reid drugged for days on end had been horrific and he was feeling the strain of being the Alpha in the worst way.

The doorbell rang while Reid was showering and Hotch headed over to answer it, his stomach dropping as he saw Rossi on the other side.

“Dave,” Hotch asked, feeling a bit of panic rise up, “Jack’s still sick.”

“That’s good to know,” Rossi stated, “Considering the fact I’ve been texting and calling you for a week now to find out if he was even alive. How’s Reid, while we’re on the subject of things you’ve been avoiding?”

“He’s fine.”

“Aaron,” Rossi stated firmly, “Move.”

Hotch stepped aside and allowed his pack Alpha to enter the room, “I’m sorry I didn’t reply. I was caught up in Reid being sedated and requiring my care. He and Jack got parasites while they were on the run and it lowered their immune systems and—”

“Morgan told me,” Rossi stated sharply, “He mentioned the contagion rate was low, but I picked up some steroids anyway. Look, Aaron, we need to discuss this. Reid is my husband now as well.”

Hotch stared down at the floor a moment and then sighed and motioned for the couch. Rossi sat down in his chair instead, clearly taking the seat that issued authority. Hotch sat on the couch and tried not to cringe as the shower turned off. Rossi was silent. Apparently he wanted to wait for Reid’s presence to start the conversation. A few minutes later Reid opened the bathroom door, paused as he caught Rossi’s scent, and then walked into the living room with a towel around his waist and another draped over his narrow shoulders.
“Um… hi,” Reid said softly.

“Put something on and come join us,” Rossi stated sharply, still staring Hotch down.

“I kept wishing you were there,” Hotch stated softly while Reid rushed off to the study to get his clothes, “I could have used the support.”

“Not enough to pick up the phone.”

“You married my husband, Dave. I’m not sure where I stand on that. As pack Alpha you could have had him any time you wanted without doing that.”

“I did it for Reid, not for myself. He was feeling abandoned and lonely. You caused that. Don’t go pointing fingers at me.”

“I know I messed up,” Hotch stated as Reid slipped into the room in sweats and a sweatshirt. Reid walked quickly over to Rossi’s side and dropped to his knees at his feet. The remainder of Hotch’s words dried up as Rossi reached out and stroked his cheek gently.

“How’ve you been, Spence?” Rossi asked, his eyes dropping down to Reid finally with a tender smile on his face.

“A wreck,” Reid confessed, voice choked, “My baby is sick and it’s my fault.”

“Who told you that?”

“The doctors,” Reid stated.

“Did anyone tell you otherwise?”

“Yeah,” Reid replied, “Hotch told me it wasn’t my fault. That it was circumstance.”

“He’s right. For once,” Rossi replied, raising his eyebrow as he glanced up at Hotch.

“Damn it, Dave!” Hotch snarled, lurching to his feet, “I’m trying to make things right! How can I do that if you undermine me with him?!”

“How should I know you’re trying to make things right?” Rossi asked, “You shut me out the way you shut him out.”

“Well, I am! Reid, tell him!”

Reid shuddered and Hotch winced. Rossi sighed.

“Spencer,” Rossi started, “We left things on a sour note. I hope you understand why I toyed with you a bit last time?”

“Yes,” Reid replied, “You were trying to get me to defy you.”

“No,” Rossi shook his head, “I was trying to get you to stand up for yourself. Defiance means you’re wilfully disobeying an order that was made fairly. Standing up for yourself means you’re rejecting an Alpha’s attempts to use or abuse you.”

Reid shut his eyes a moment and took in a shaky breath, “I also cut off my one chance to seduce Hotch.”
“I doubt it will be your only chance,” Rossi chuckled, “He’s an Alpha, not an ice sculpture, no matter what he’d have you believe. You did the right thing that day. How has he been treating you since then?”

“I’m right here,” Hotch grumbled under his breath. Rossi ignored him.

“It’s been a bit awful since then, but not because of Aaron,” Reid answered honestly, “We’ve… we’ve been spooning with each other, but I’m not sure if it was to be close to Jack or me. He could have laid on the other side and just cuddled Jack, but he cuddled me too.”

“Ask him,” Rossi prodded Reid with one sharply designed shoe.

Reid shuffled about, turning so he was kneeling facing Hotch with his hands on his knees and slowly raised his eyes. Hotch’s throat caught. Reid looked beautiful kneeling on the floor like that, his eyes shy and innocent behind long waves of honey hair. He’d never been able to really accept that Reid was an Omega, despite his scent, but here was the proof. Reid was behaving like an Omega. At the same time, Hotch was painfully aware that he shouldn’t have to act like an Omega to be viewed as and treated like one. He’d fallen for a stereotype and then dismissed Reid when he didn’t act like it. Sure, Reid had every right to behave as he was doing now, but it should never be demanded of him. He could, and should, be beautiful without having to behave ‘omeganine’. He should be respected as an Omega and his co-worker, the two shouldn’t be separate; especially considering their recent marriage.

Reid waited quietly on the floor, but Hotch didn’t answer. If he was going to establish a healthy Dom/sub relationship with Reid the younger man had to be willing to speak directly to him, not through Rossi. They waited quietly for a moment and then Hotch cocked his head a bit to prompt him. Reid blinked a moment, realized what was being silently asked of him, and nodded.

“Did you want to hold me in the hospital? Or was it just convenience or responsibility?”

“I wanted to hold you,” Hotch replied softly, “Both emotionally and physically. I needed the smell of an Omega nearby to assure me my son would be okay, and I wanted to hold you because I felt guilty about the way I’d treated you and was realizing I should have done better.”

“Do you think you could ever…” Reid paused, shut his eyes, swallowed hard, opened them and tried again, “Do you think we could ever have a marriage where you loved or at least cared about me?”

Hotch’s heart twisted in his chest, “Spencer, I do care about you. I’ve just been so angry about losing Haley that I’ve been lashing out at you. I won’t promise to fall in love with you, but I could see it happening. This is my problem. Not yours.”

“I was… I was in love with Haley,” Reid confessed out of the blue, his eyes dropping as he wrang his hands in frustration, “Jack was already starting to imprint on me long before her death.”

“You… you two were…?” Hotch couldn’t even say it, he was just staring at Reid in shock.

“We didn’t do anything,” Reid shook his head, “I think Haley wanted to, but I felt like I was encroaching on your territory. We shared a bed platonically, and that’s all.”

Hotch took a moment to just breathe, and then nodded his acceptance, “You’ve been trying to tell me you lost her too for months and I haven’t been hearing it. That’s what you were trying to say.”

“I didn’t want to minimize your pain, but I was trying to get you to see I was mourning with you,” Reid nodded.
“Every time you said that I got angry,” Hotch replied, “I felt like you were brushing off my relationship with her just because we’d been divorced. That you were comparing it to a friendship when I still saw her as my mate right up until she died. Hell, I still do see her has a mate.”

“I had this ludicrous fantasy,” Reid shut his eyes, voice shaking, and when he opened them a few tears ran down his cheeks, “That when we got out of witness protection you’d… you’d make up with Haley, and… we’d all…”

“You wanted to be with me too,” Hotch realized, “Gods, I’ve really fucked this up, haven’t I? Here you were, willing to raise my child, be my mate, and I treated you like furniture. I could have ended up heading home with a devastated child and no Omega to help me at all. Or worse, I could have lost Jack as well.”

The three of them were silent for a while, Rossi simply studying them. He reached out eventually and stroked Reid’s head gently.

“Do you want to stay here tonight?” Rossi asked.

“I can’t leave Jack.”

“That’s not what I asked,” Rossi replied, “If need be Hotch will share custody with you. As the pack Alpha I can take Jack to my home with his mother, remember?”

“I don’t want to do that to Jack.”

“Spencer,” Hotch interrupted, “You don’t have to give me another chance, but I’d like to ask you to. Please, let me try to be a proper mate to you.”

Reid looked torn a moment, staring up at Rossi with such misery in his eyes. He knew if he went home with Rossi he’d be treated to a Dom’s attention, but if he stayed here he’d be risking Hotch’s temper again.

“Go ahead,” Rossi said softly, “This isn’t a one-time offer. If you get upset at three in the morning call me. I can’t promise I’ll be happy to hear from you, but I can promise I’ll be right here to pick you and Jack up.”

“Okay,” Reid nodded, “Am… am I allowed to have sex with other people? I’d wanted to sleep with Morgan, but he said I should ask permission first.”

“I’m fine with you being with anyone you want, Beta or otherwise, but I’m assuming Hotch won’t want to share you,” Rossi glanced up.

“Not with an Alpha,” Hotch replied, “Morgan is fine… hell, I’m fine with Omegas as well. It’s just instinct that stops me from relaxing around Alphas.”

“I nearly went on Heat in Morgan’s place,” Reid admitted, “I think I’m comfortable around him because he’s the only one acting normal around me.”

“He’s not an Alpha,” Rossi replied, “He can’t give you what you need physically. He can, however, give you what you need emotionally. If you prefer you can start a relationship with Morgan while utilizing me for as a service Top.”

“I don’t want to use you,” Reid replied.

“I’m your pack Alpha, it’s my priviledge and honour to be used by you,” Rossi replied warmly, and
then added a lewd wink, “It’s also a hell of a lot of fun.”

Reid chuckled, shaking his head, “I think I’ll try and work things out with my first husband before starting a full-on harem.”
Chapter 12

Reid’s training as a sub was progressing quite well. In fact he was absolutely thrilled and halfway in subspace as Rossi walked around him, directing him sharply and correcting him with a gentle rap on the hip with a riding crop. Reid had no interest in pain so this was for corrective reasons only.

“Good work today, Spencer,” Rossi soothed, stroking Reid’s hair while he smiled up at him from where he knelt on the floor.

Reid had been exclusively caring for Jack during his convalescence while Hotch and Rossi returned to work. Reid had a set of instructions to follow each day and Rossi inspected his work at the end of the day. They’d had one case that took them away for a week, but other than that Reid had both Rossi and Hotch there each night.

Jack was steadily improving and Reid was learning what he should and shouldn’t do around a Dom. For instance, it was perfectly acceptable to not finish his chores list as long as he had a valid reason. However, if his reason was ‘I wanted to spend the day reading and cuddling Jack’ he was going to be punished. He was assured that once he ‘passed’ his training he would be given more leeway, which would allow him to have days when he just didn’t want to do anything and could make that statement without punishment.

Aside from submissive training he also had Omega training, which was something that was normally instinctive so the entire concept was groundbreaking. Reid had some instincts active but others completely inactive. He instinctively wanted to submit- submission being a part of an Omega’s disposition- but he didn’t have the instincts telling him who not to submit to. He was behaving like an Omega in subfrenzy, which was sometimes attractive but in this instance was unintentional and had the unfortunate aspect of making Hotch feel distrustful of Reid. They had to get his instincts under control or at least train him in how to not piss off his Alpha. The result was similar to marital counselling, with Hotch often voicing things that made him unhappy around Reid and them figuring out if it was Hotch being an ass or Reid being overly enthusiastic in his newfound submission.

It took a month and a few days for Jack to recover enough that Reid felt he could let him return to school. The doctors had cleared him a week earlier, but Reid was especially Omeganine around Jack and refused to allow him to return just yet. Hotch and Rossi weren’t about to step on that aspect of his life, especially since they couldn’t begin to understand the relationship between Omega and child, so they simply agreed with him and left it go. So when Reid simply got up one morning, argued Jack into his clothes, shoved his backpack in his hand, and took him to the bus stop, Jack was the least shocked of the group.

XXX

That night Rossi and Hotch got back from a case to find Reid pacing anxiously in the living room. He was drenched in sweat, flushed bright red, and wringing his hands.

“What’s wrong?” Hotch asked, “Where’s Jack?”

“Neighbors,” Reid replied, “That’s okay, right? She watches Jack?”

“Yes, that’s fine,” Hotch replied, “She… woah.”

Reid’s scent had just hit Hotch full in the face and he realized that strategically placed fans were the only reason he hadn’t caught it sooner. Reid was going on Heat. Rossi pulled out his phone.
“What’s Jessica’s number?” Rossi asked, “I’ll have her pick up Jack so the neighbor doesn’t have him for more than a few hours.”

Hotch stammered it from memory, shaking his head repeatedly to clear it of Reid’s intoxicating scent.

“Reid?” Hotch asked, glancing around the room, “Where’s your nest? Why aren’t you in it?”

“I haven’t got a nest,” Reid replied, “I can’t make one here. I don’t know where to put it.”

“Our bed would work,” Hotch reminded him, thinking of all the nights he’d spent chastly spooning the delicious young man before him.

“It’s not our bed, it’s your bed, and I won’t put my nest there,” Reid replied sharply.

“Okay,” Hotch replied, “Where do you want it?”

“I don’t KNOW!” Reid raged, pulling at his hair.

“Spencer,” Rossi asked, clicking his phone shut, “Would you like to go back to my place?”

“No.”

“Morgan’s?”

“He wouldn’t let me make a nest there,” Reid sat down on the couch and rocked back and forth anxiously, “I haven’t got a place to nest. I can’t do this. I feel sick.”

“Have you purged already?” Hotch asked.

“Of course I purged!” Reid ranted, “Hours ago! And showered, washed out my insides, drank liters of fluid, and now I’m just sweating it all out because I don’t have a nest!”

“Spencer,” Hotch approached carefully, “You can’t just sweat out your Heat, you need to build a nest.”

“I can’t!” Reid raged helplessly.

“Then we’ll have to take you without one,” Rossi replied, “Nests aren’t necessary. Spence. They’re for your comfort and to indicate to your mates your intention to breed rather than just engage in sex for recreation or due to a Heat naturally occurring. If you can’t build one it may be because you’re not feeling safe enough with us yet to have children.”

Reid struggled mentally for a moment, “So it’s not a necessary part of Heat?”

“No,” Rossi replied, “But maybe you’ll start wanting to build one if we give you a little tender loving care.”

Rossi strode forward where Hotch was still holding back anxiously. He sat down beside Reid on the couch and pulled him into his lap. Reid sat there with his arms around Rossi’s shoulders and stared down at him while nervously biting his lip.

“You’re so beautiful,” Rossi sighed, “Wish I didn’t have to share you.”

Rossi tugged Reid’s lips down to his own and Reid melted against him, moaning softly and beginning to squirm in longing. Hotch paced a bit away, his eyes glued to Reid’s rump where his pants were saturated from his lust. Reid began to fight Rossi’s grip and the Alpha released him.
Hotch expected him to bolt, but instead the younger man switched it up to straddle Rossi’s lap, rubbing his desire against the man’s trousers in a bid to smear his scent over the Alpha beneath him.

Hotch’s instincts were at war. His mate was on Heat, but his pack Alpha was present and had breeding rights before him. His mate hadn’t built a nest so Hotch’s instincts were on alert, telling him his mate was distressed so there might be an enemy nearby. His mate. *His mate.*

“Oh gods, finally,” Hotch breathed.

Rossi glanced over Reid’s shoulder where the young man was writhing in his lap. He tapped Reid’s shoulder and got the flustered man to look as well. Hotch was standing with his hands on his hips, grinning from ear to ear.

“What?” Rossi asked.

“He’s *my mate*,” Hotch grinned, “I’m finally thinking of him as *my mate.*”

“Well, that’s good,” Rossi chuckled, “Does that mean you’re going to come over here and give him what he needs?”

Hotch walked across the room, dragged Reid off of Rossi’s lap while the young man snarled and attempted to hang onto him, and dragged him kicking and flailing to the bedroom where he threw him down on their bed. The he peeled off his jacket.

“Strip,” Hotch ordered.

Reid turned to bolt out the door, but Hotch stopped him by utilizing his Dominant voice.

“I said *strip!*”

Reid keened, staggered halfway to the door, and began to struggle out of his damp clothes. Hotch undressed slowly, leaving Reid to stand there trembling with desire. Rossi had walked up to the entryway, but wasn’t entering despite the fact he had a right to be the first to mount Reid due to his status. Hotch walked towards the young man and herded him towards the bed with sheer proximity. Reid walked backwards, whining far back in his throat, and Hotch gave him a firm shove to topple him onto the bed. Reid squirmed up the bed, finding himself in the centre, and lifted his legs with a keen of need.

“That’s it,” Hotch growled, “So beautiful. I’m going to make you mine, Spence.”

Reid was panting, his entrance gaping and twitching in desire. Hotch slipped the last of his clothing down to the floor and climbed up onto the bed, walking on his knees to get to the needy creature in the centre. Hotch ran his hands along Reid’s thighs, sliding down the underside to grip his ass before spreading his cheeks for a better view. He lifted Reid’s hips and lapped at his sweet and sour pucker, running his tongue around his entrance before plunging it inside of him. Reid cried out in need and Hotch groaned against him.

“Please!” Reid cried out, “Please, I need you! Aaron, please!”

Hotch groaned and climbed up Reid’s body, laying between thin thighs and gasping as Reid wrapped arms and legs around him. His hips arched instinctively, his cock seeking warmth, and he rubbed his tip against Reid’s small opening. He couldn’t wait any longer before pressing deep into Reid’s body. His knot wasn’t formed yet, so it was no difficulty to pull back out and plunge in again, moaning at the tight heat around his cock. Reid was scratching at his back frantically, his gasps of pleasure spurring Hotch on. He hadn’t fucked this fast and this hard since he was a teen, but there
was no stopping him as he pounded into the man beneath him.

For a moment it was all about ass and cock, but then Hotch began to be aware of Reid’s soft mews of his name and found Reid’s lips with his own. Their kiss was long, deep, and infinitely tender despite Hotch pounding into him. Reid’s tongue met him without restraint, all of his shyness and reserve gone as Heat melted his uncertainties and left him the powerful sex symbol that Omegas were meant to be. He was grace and desire, heat and poetry. Reid was beauty personified and he was giving himself to Hotchner. He was gifting him with the very depths of his womb and a chance to sire his children. The trust was palpable and even if instincts had overrode some of Reid’s reservations Hotch wasn’t about to waste his chance with him.

Hotch’s knot was swelling at the base of his cock, the pressure building as his swollen balls tightened and pressed against his body in anticipation. It was now or never. Rossi could still come in, rip him off Reid, and take breeding rights. Hotch grunted as he pressed his knot hard against Reid’s soft ass. His tight pucker resisted for a moment, and then with a sudden increase of pressure Hotch was gasping as Reid’s body tightened around his knot and held him fast. The tip of Hotch’s cock was now firmly pressed against the soft, spongy entrance to Reid’s womb and as he panted against Reid’s shoulder he felt it open like a hungry mouth and swallow the head of his cock. Reid flailed in confusion, his body wanting the friction back even as he moaned at how full he felt. Hotch rolled his hips and the Omega beneath him let out a howl of pleasure, his cock pulsing hard as he came between them completely untouched.

“Yeeees,” Hotch moaned, rolling his hips several more times to milk the young man’s orgasm, “That’s it, Spence. Come for me.”

Reid gripped Hotch’s hair, his back arching in clear desire, and Hotch began to gyrate his hips fast to bring the young man off again. Reid’s head tossed from side to side, his soft cries escalating as he sought out another release. He was wild with desire and with Hotch firmly knotted inside of him there was nothing that even Rossi could do to stop him from breeding the delectable Omega beneath him. Hotch held himself off long enough to feel Reid shake and pulse between them once again and then came with a savage roar. His cock pulsed for a solid four minutes, wave after wave of semen flooding Reid’s passage to find it’s way through his open cervix. It would overflow his womb, but that was the point. He would fill the young man with his cubs and having mounted him first his were the most likely to take.

Three more days of breeding. Three days of frantic mounting and knotting. Three days and he knew Rossi would get into the act soon, but now that each had found initial release they were slowly drifting into the mindless state that Heat brought on for each. Reid would become almost catatonic, his body responding but his mind shut down to preserve energy for aftercare post coitus. Hotch would remain outwardly alert, but inside his mid would be feral and savage. Only Rossi- as their pack Alpha- would be able to safely approach them, and only a pack Alpha could remain mentally alert during Heat.

They sank into their respective minds, bodies in sync and pleasure no longer the goal as they writhed together in the age-old dance.
Chapter 13

Hotch woke up slowly to find Reid’s arm draped over his waist. The young man was sound asleep still, which was unusual for an Omega. They usually awoke first from a heat to spend time washing up and then pampering their Alpha. Hotch assumed that Reid’s odd hormones were what interfered in his usual role. Hotch tried to sit up, but every muscle in his body was protesting. Hotch groaned and Reid stirred beside him, sitting up and giving Reid an alarmed look.

“Oh! Wait! Okay. I know what to do just… just wait here.”

“You okay?” Hotch slurred.

“Fine,” Reid replied, scrambling up, “I was awake a few hours ago and washed up. I made sandwiches, but you were still asleep so…”

Reid hurried out of the room and returned a few minutes later with a tray full of sandwiches.

“Jack is asking for you,” Reid told him, “I told him you weren’t decent yet.”

“I need a wash,” Hotch groaned, “Badly.”

“Yeah, I did some spot cleaning, but you were raw so I was worried about hurting you,” Reid told him, kneeling on the bed and tearing off a chunk of sandwich to press food into his mouth.

Hotch nearly choked on it, spitting it out, “Water. Water first.”

“Sorry!” Reid hurried to grab a bottle of water and open it. Hotch swallowed it down as Reid held it to his lips. The sandwich vanished bit by bit until Hotch felt human again.

“Have you eaten?”

“A bit,” Reid replied, “I’ve got this weird urge to clean things.”

“Just let it lead you,” Hotch advised, “Those are your instincts telling you what to do.”

“It’s weird,” Reid replied, “I was horrified that I’d kidnapped Jack, now I’m afraid to trust myself.”

“You,” Hotch took his hand as firmly as he could in his exausted state, “You did not kidnap Jack. You protected your son, and I admire you for your strength and love.”

“Thank you,” Reid whispered, pressing a hesitant kiss to his lips.

Hotch smiled softly and Reid set about helping him limp to the shower. There he sat down while Reid gently washed him from head to toe using the extended shower head. Hotch sighed happily once he finally felt clean and Reid helped him rise and dry off. He wrapped his mate in his robe and helped him into the living room where he collapsed into a chair with a groan.

Jack came running down the hall to jump into Hotch’s arms with a happy cheer, cuddling up to him and babbling happily.

“So, your aunt watched over you?” Hotch asked.

“Yeah,” Jack smiled, “And Uncle Dave.”
“Oh?” Hotch glanced over at Reid where he was scrubbing up the kitchen, “Where is ‘Uncle Dave’ at?”

“He left shortly after I woke up,” Reid replied, “He just made sure that I was okay and then left. He said he and Jessica had been watching Jack off and on.”

“He didn’t…?” Hotch left the sentence hang.

“I don’t know,” Reid replied, giving Hotch an anxious look, “I don’t remember much.”

“That’s normal,” Hotch soothed, “Omegas tend to sleep through it.”

“What if… what if it’s his?” Reid asked, hand fluttering to his abdomen.

“You probably didn’t drop an egg,” Hotch replied, “But if you did and Rossi’s the father than there won’t be a problem. He’s both our pack Alpha so I’ll bond with the baby just fine.”

“We’d be even more of a broken family,” Reid said softly.

Hotch motioned him closer and then made the hand motion for kneeling. He was relieved to see that Reid not only recalled it but dropped immediately to his knees an stared up at Hotch with hope in his eyes. Reasure me, Alpha. Give me comfort. Stabalize my world.

Hotch reached out and ran a hand possessively through Reid’s hair, gripping the back of it and pulling him forward a bit. Reid let himself be pulled, but Hotch didn’t draw him in for a meaningless kiss. Reid needed more than a physical demonstration of Hotch’s prowess right now.

“We are not a broken family,” Hotch told him firmly, keeping any trace of anger from his voice, “We are a patchwork one, but we’re not broken. We’re put together. Understand?”

“Yes,” Reid replied, but his eyes still held uncertainty.

“I know I’ve done this completely backwards,” Hotch told him softly, “I know I’ve all but ruined everything. I can’t thank you enough for giving me another chance, and I will do everything in my power to show you that we can be a happy family. I can share you with Rossi if that’s what it takes, and I’ll happily make a family with him. He deserves another child. I’m… I’m half hoping that you do have his child. I want him to be happy. I want you to be happy. We can always have a child together later, but Rossi has lost so much and he has given us a second chance. I want to give him that back.”

Reid smiled up at Hotch, the reassurance finally processing in his face. He leaned forward and nuzzled beneath Hotch’s chin, encouraging the Alpha to pet him and cuddle him tightly. Jack snuggled in and Hotch spent a moment revelling in both of their scents. He had adjusted well to having Rossi’s scent on him, and breathed it in now as he held his boys in his arms.

When Reid drew back, glancing at him for permission to stand, Hotch smiled at him tenderly as the young man moved back to the kitchen to set himself up for the day. He was humming happily, his hips swaying as he moved through the kitchen. His body was clearly still achy, which lent to his movements, but like any Alpha Hotch thought the sight of an Omega walking with legs spread was sexy as hell. Of course, after days of sex he wasn’t about to respond to it, but it was still nice to watch and store for later.

Jack was showing Hotch his homework for the last few days when Rossi showed up, letting himself into their home with far more freedom than he usually observed as pack Alpha. Hotch could hardly fault him since his husband lived there. Rossi walked in, gave the room a careful survey, and smiled
“Spencer,” Rossi called, heading for the kitchen.

Reid bolted over and dropped to his knees, nearly tripping Rossi in his enthusiasm. He laughed and caught himself by grabbing Reid’s head.

“Oh oh,” Hotch snickered.

“Not what it looks like,” Rossi scolded, “You can stand, Spencer.”

“I’d rather not,” Reid replied, wriggling in excitement where he knelt on the floor.

“Deep in subfrenzy, are you?” Rossi laughed.

“I feel high,” Reid groaned.


“Sorry,” Reid apologized, “I feel fantastic.”

“What are you making?” Rossi asked.

“Chicken and rice. I was thinking of adding some Spanish spices,” Reid replied with a smile.

“Well, don’t let me stop you, though I’ll take a kiss before you go back to your wonderful efforts,” Rossi smiled.

Reid popped up to his feet and pecked a kiss to Rossi’s lips before rushing back into the kitchen. Rossi headed for Hotch, sitting beside him on the couch and watching Jack explain his schoolwork for a bit. Then he waited for Hotch to distract Jack with a movie and turned to discuss a few things with him.

“So?” Rossi asked.

“Did you?” Hotch asked, motioning with his hand, “I mean, I’m fine if you did, it’s just I can’t remember very much.”

“Are you kidding?” Rossi huffed, “I couldn’t resist! He was so…”

Rossi closed his eyes and smiled, pressing his fingers to his lips and kissing them firmly.

“Exactly,” Hotch nodded, “Gorgeous. Beautiful. I can’t even remember what I was keeping him at arm’s length for.”


“I…” Hotch closed his eyes and took a deep breath, “I need to apologize.”

“Save it,” Rossi replied, putting a firm hand on his shoulder, “I don’t want words I want actions, and I’m finally seeing them.”

Hotch hesitated for a moment, and then leaned in on a whim and pressed their lips together. It wasn’t sexual. It was an acknowledgment that he was submitting to his pack Alpha. Rossi leaned into the kiss, running his hand across the back of Hotch’s head and gently pressing on his mating gland to trigger a release of calming pheromones. He moved a moment later to take Hotch’s gland into his
mouth and suckle on it firmly.

Hotch moaned, leaning back and pulling Rossi on top of him. The older man rubbed against him, but he’d clearly had Reid more than once since he had no erection. Hotch sighed in bliss and sank into the couch, just laying there as Rossi climbed off of him, ruffled his hair gently, and headed for where Jack was sitting happily on the floor.

“You doing good, buddy?” Rossi asked, sitting crosslegged on the floor.

“Yeah,” Jack replied absently.

“You like your new mom?”

“Yeah,” Jack replied, “He tells cool stories and cooks neat food.”

“That’s great,” Rossi bussed his head fondly, “Okay, you three. I’m heading out.”

“Oh!” Reid called, “No, don’t! Stay for dinner!”

“Stay,” Hotch begged softly from the couch where he was starting to fall asleep again.

“Well… okay,” Rossi replied, smiling fondly, “Just for dinner.”
Chapter 14

Reid woke up next to Hotch for the third morning in a row and practically crowed with joy. The man was sleeping peacefully, with his arm wrapped around Reid’s body, and his cock had hardened firmly between Reid’s butt cheeks. Like most Alphas, Hotch had been completely incapable of an erection for several days after their mating; not that Reid was bothered by that, since he was sore and uninterested in sex. The reason Reid was excited was because Hotch was holding him, lusting after him, and treating him like a spouse for the first time.

Reid slipped out of bed and down to his knees, smiling softly as he turned to kneel by the bedside. He studied Hotch’s sleeping face for a moment and then forced himself to stand. It was hard to push past the instincts crushing in on his mind, but he couldn’t spend all his time crawling around on the floor and scrubbing things to impress Hotch. He had to get on with his life, and his life now involved a son and husband who needed him.

Reid headed for the kitchen and turned on the coffee maker. He sorted out breakfast. Jack would only eat cereal but Hotch preferred a full meal complete with a side of toast. Reid only ate toast and drank coffee in the morning. He made everything for them and set up the table before heading to Jack’s room to wake him up. He stuffed the whining boy into clothes and corralled him into the kitchen where he sat him down for breakfast. Jack sleepily sipped his orange juice and ate his cereal. Hotch stumbled out a few minutes later.

“Why didn’t you wake me?” Hotch asked in surprise.

“You usually wake up on your own,” Reid reminded him, “And you seemed to need it. I got breakfast together, so there was no need to shake you up just yet.”

Reid dropped some sausages onto a plate and then scooped out the eggs. He tossed some more toast into the toaster for himself while Hotch began to eat.

“I’m still exhausted,” Hotch told Reid, “I can’t believe we’ve been lucky enough not to get a case.”

“Even criminals go on a month long vacation after January,” Reid chuckled, “No one can take that much S-E-X and then just bounce back.”

“What’s essiexe mean?” Jack asked.

“Grown up stuff,” Hotch replied, “Finish your juice.”

“Will you have a case today?” Jack asked, sipping his juice.

“Probably,” Hotch replied, “It’s been a while.”

“Statistically it’s unusual for us to go for this long without one,” Reid replied, putting a glass of milk beside the juice, “This too, sweetheart. I want you to grow up big and strong like your dad.”

“I want to be smart like you,” Jack told him with a smile.

“I’d love that,” Reid smiled warmly, “Drink your milk anyway.”

Jack sipped on his cup slowly and Hotch enjoyed his coffee with a sigh of happiness, “This is unreal.”
“It’s Godiva brand,” Reid told him, “I like it almost as much as the Chock Full O Nuts and-“

“I meant us, Reid. Our lives,” Hotch smiled at Reid as he sat down to eat his own toast and drink his coffee, “I’m happy, Spencer. For the first time in a long time I’m happy. I’d forgotten what it was like. Haley and I-“

Hotch paused, shut his eyes as a moment as the pain washed over him, and then opened them again and took a deep breath. Reid waited him out.

“We weren’t happy towards the end, obviously. We divorced but I never stopped thinking of her as my mate. I didn’t want anyone else. Now I have you and… I’m happy again. The way I was with Haley in the beginning. I just don’t want to lose this happiness the way I lost that happiness.”

Reid put out his hand and Hotch slid their fingers together, “I wish I could promise to live forever but…”

“I know,” Hotch replied.

“I want to keep you happy,” Reid told him, “I’ll do anything for you.”

Hotch smiled softly, “A few days ago I’d have been tempted to ask you to break things off with Rossi, but after our mating… so beautiful.”

Hotch reached out and stroked Reid’s cheek and Reid smiled softly, “You aren’t jealous?”

“No,” Reid shook his head, “I’m pretty sure he isn’t going to act on our marriage anymore. He got what he wanted. Heat and our marriage settling down.”

Hotch nodded, “Probably not, but I want to make it clear that I’m not standing between you to. You have every right to share his bed and have a relationship with him.”

“I know,” Reid nodded, “I just don’t want to. I guess I got what I wanted, too. Not that I’m trying to sound like I used him.”

“You have a right to the pack Alpha,” Hotch reminded him, “All Omegas do. Just don’t forget that all the Omegas have a right to him, and the Alphas and Betas as well. He’s a man divided. Mark on your neck or not, he’s married to us all.”

“I know,” Reid replied, “I never thought I could keep him. I never wanted to.”

“Good,” Hotch smiled softly, “Because I do want to keep you. Forever mine.”

“Forever yours,” Reid replied, pulling his hand close and pressing a kiss to his knuckles.

Okay so… I wasn't expecting this sudden of an ending. Or this sticky sweet of an ending. Weird.

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