Fallout

by Whisper91

Summary

As far as the rest of the world is concerned, Gary 'Eggsy' Unwin is a registered Dominant. It's on his driver's licence. It's on his National Insurance card. Hell, it's even on his bloomin' GCSE certificates. And the fact that it's all a load of bollocks is a secret Eggsy had intended to take to his grave.

Course, he hadn't been expectin' a bloody sub-drop to sweep in and knock him on his arse in the wake of the Valentine Massacre. Turns out grief and adrenaline ain't a good combination.

Notes

Requested by my dear PixieLi, who wanted a D/s story similar to my Teen Wolf universe, but set in the world of Kingsman.
Given how much I'm in love with this film and its fandom, I didn't take a whole lot of convincing. ;)

Enjoy!
Revelations

The best part about knocking Valentine out of his control box is that the fuckin' surround-sound speakers finally stop playing *Baby Give It Up*, leaving blissful silence in its wake as the disco lights flicker off, the wall-mounted observation screen flashing red with the triumphant words 'CONNECTION LOST'.

"Well done, son!" Merlin crows in his ear, Scottish accent made thicker in his enthusiasm. "Och, well done, Eggy. And you, Lancelot."

And Eggsy grins at the praise, because thank fuck it's all over. Turning, he limps slowly across the body-strewn dance hall towards Valentine's prone form, swiping the back of his hand over his mouth to clear away the blood from his split lip. Everything aches, and he's pretty sure his whole body's going to seize up overnight and make walking a fucking torment tomorrow, but he's alive. And so is the rest of mankind – aside from all them selfish VIPs whose heads had been blown up, of course.

His shoes squelch wetly in the congealing blood of Valentine's guests and he pointedly averts his gaze from the gruesome corpses. There's only one body he needs to check on. He knows how this shit works - bastards like Valentine always find a way to claw themselves back from the brink of death, and Eggsy doesn't plan on giving him the opportunity. He'll blow a hole in the man's head himself if he has to. The dude ain't getting a second chance at mass genocide.

Fucker's still breathing, though god knows how. His glasses are cracked and blood-splattered, but when his eyes flicker upwards to meet Eggsy's gaze, they're alarmingly clear for a bloke who'd just been impaled on a steel spike and plummeted twenty feet.

"Sup, man?" Valentine chokes, and there it is, that telling gurgle in his chest as his breath catches mid-word. "Is this the part where you say...some really bad pun?"

Eggsy could. He's got a whole dictionary of witty one-liners stashed away (ace pick-up lines for the right kinda girl/guy on a Friday night), and if he gave it half a thought, he's fairly confident he'd be able to come up with something of the fly. But he's standing in a pool of blood hundreds of miles from home, and he's fucking *tired*, and you know what? He's not willing to give Valentine the satisfaction.

"It's like you said before," he replies after a brief pause,直ening his cuffs before bending down to meet the dying man's eyes head-on. "This ain't that kinda movie, bruv."

Valentine, the mental bastard that he is, just grins at him, blood staining his teeth as he coughs. "Perfect."

And then it's over. Eggsy stares at the lifeless body a moment longer, just to make sure, before straightening again and smoothing down the fabric of his suit with hands he keeps from trembling through sheer willpower. His pulse is still pounding double-time in his ears, and there's something
wound tight beneath his skin, like he could run a mile in a minute despite how mentally drained he feels. It's an unnerving sensation.

A distraction, that's what he needs. After all, why waste an opportunity like the sexy one waiting for him back in that detainment cell? He just saved the fucking world; he's earned it. Besides, he's confident that everything'll seem better somehow after a healthy serving of victory buttsex.

"Harry would be proud of you, Eggsy," Merlin tells him over the com, his voice softer now. "He was right."

And just like that, the feeling of relief and triumph and pride inside of him curdles and turns sour, his stomach twisting as the cold, hard truth of it smacks him in the face. He'd been so focused on Arthur's betrayal, on stopping Valentine and saving the world, that for a brief moment he'd forgotten about the empty house he'd be going back to. About the man who'd saved him; a man whose body's still lying on a cold slab in Kentucky, waiting to be buried.

Fuck, it's not fair.

He drops his hand from the neck of the champagne bottle he'd been intending to swipe, curling his fingers into loose fists as he turns towards the exit abruptly, stepping over the fallen corpses of Valentine's guests as he makes his way back out into the corridor.

"Merlin," he manages, and he's bloody impressed with himself for keeping his voice so level. "We're goin' home now, yeah?"

"The plane's ready and waiting," the other man promises, and thank fuck the Dom doesn't call him out on his sudden change of pace. "Don't worry about Valentine's prisoners; MI6 have half a dozen extraction teams en-route to our location, they'll handle cleanup this time. Figure they owe us that much, seeing as they've been as useful as a wet sock so far."

"Right you are, guv," Eggsy agrees with forced cheer, trudging his way through the blood-soaked corridors on numb legs until finally the private Kingsman jet comes into sight.

He takes a few steadying breaths as he ascends the ramp and has managed to plaster a convincingly cocky grin onto his face by the time he emerges into the midsection of the plane. "So. Was I ace or what?"

Merlin rises from his seat at the control desk, mouth curling into an answering grin the likes of which Eggsy's never seen before on the usually-stoic agent, pulling the Sub into a brief, tight hug and clapping him firmly on the back.

"Well done, lad," the agent murmurs. "You did him proud."

It's meant to be comforting, Eggsy knows that, but all it does is twist the knife in his gut a little deeper. He can't help but remember the man; picturing that subtle upwards tick at the corner of Harry's mouth, the warmth and weight of his hand on the back of Eggsy's neck, a constant reassurance. All that's gone now. Gone for good. It hurts so much he can hardly breathe.

Merlin pulls back after a moment, regarding him steadily, his expression sobering as he reaches up to settle a hand on Eggsy's shoulder, squeezing softly. It's not Harry hand, it's not what he really wants, but it's still something. Even if it does turn his joints to jelly, muscles in his legs twitching reflexively as though to send him to his knees.

And fuck, if he isn't treading on thin ice here. What with his Kingsman training and shit, it's been months since he last went under. He needs it, craves it, wants it; he can lie about his Dynamic
until the cows come home, but at the end of the day, he can't rewrite his own biology. He's a Sub. And he's on the verge of one helluva fuckin' drop.

"Are you alright?" Merlin asks quietly, his hand still lingering on Eggsy's shoulder, thumb brushing along the collar of his suit. And maybe it's the man's Dominant instincts, or maybe Eggsy just looks as shitty as he feels, because the instructor's brow has a crease in it now; the same one Eggsy had seen him wearing the day Harry had turned up in the infirmary with a breathing tube shoved down his throat.

The man's concern stokes the painful fire in Eggsy's chest, a hot pressure building behind his eyes. He can only nod, his lips pressed together in a thin line, his throat closing up as he pulls away from Merlin's touch and strides over to the minibar near the sitting area to poor himself a generous drink. It's either that or have a fucking breakdown, and he ain't had a proper cry in years, 'cept after he'd watched the video feed from Kentucky. He's not one of them stuffy traditionalist wankers who thinks that Doms can't cry or shit like that, but he knows he can't afford to lower his guard, not right now, not when he's on the brink of a fucking sub-drop with nowhere to run. As far as Merlin and the rest of the Kingsman service are concerned, he's a Dom. Hell, he doesn't even know if they'd allow him to be a field agent at all if they found out the truth. Certainly all of the other Lancelot trainees had been Doms, and the only Subs he'd seen back at HQ had been lab technicians or groundskeepers or medical staff.

He can’t risk losing his place as a field agent, not after everything he's been through; not when Harry’s sacrificed so much getting him here.

"I'll get us in the air," Merlin says after a pause, and Eggsy's never been more grateful for the man's discretion. "We'll rendezvous with Lancelot in half an hour, shouldn’t take us too long to get home after that. Strap yourself in, alright?"

Eggsy's grateful for the order. It's not much, it's not what he needs, but at least he can pretend for now that Merlin's in control here; that all he needs to do is obey and keep quiet.

Maybe he'll make it through this after all.

Fuckin’ hell, he’s dying.

There's a buzzing beneath his skin now, a restlessness that can't be sated no matter how much he jiggles his leg and flexes his hands. He wants to stand up and pace, but he's so fucking tired, and
there's a leaden sort of weight seeping into his limbs the longer he sits there stewing in his own thoughts.

The ache in his lungs is fucking awful, a tightening sort of pressure that restricts his airways the deeper he breathes, and his throat has grown painfully sore, thickening his swallow, with the threat of tears a constant burn at the back of eyes as he tries to distract himself with thoughts of his mum, his sister, his two best mates from school who'll get a right kick out of seeing him all dressed up posh-like in his new suit.

It's a fruitless attempt; part of him already knows that. He's a ticking time bomb, and there's no locking himself away in his room until it all blows over, no taking a bus to into the city centre to pick up a random Dom at a club for a quick, rough fuck to get it all out of his system. There's nothing to slow his momentum this time – he's crashing. And in a few short minutes there'll be not one, but two fully trained and highly intelligent Kingsman Dominants with him on this very small, very un-private private jet, and where the fuck's he supposed to hide when it all goes to shit? The plane’s Kingsman property; there's probably a load of hidden cameras in the loo, for fucks sake.

"Great work, Lancelot," he hears Merlin call over the intercom from the cockpit as Roxy clunks up the stairs into the plane. "You did your country proud, lass. Go on back and strap yourself in, we'll be home in a jiffy."

"Thanks, Merlin."

There's the sound of footsteps approaching, and Eggsy lifts his too-heavy head with considerable effort to flash a smile towards the partition as she steps through into the passenger section, the outer latch sealing with a hiss behind her as Merlin fires up the engines again.

"Lancelot," he greets, with a grin he hopes doesn't look as shaky as it feels. "Nice of you to join us."

"You look awful," she tells him frankly, tossing her helmet onto the nearby chair and tugging off the skin-tight gloves of her Halo suit. She crosses over to him, leaning down to peer at the cuts on his face critically. "Have you iced any of these yet?"

"Nah. It's all about glory an’ battle scars, innit?" he dismisses easily. "Have to show ‘em off while I can."

She sighs, but he's pretty sure it's fond rather than exasperated, and half a second later she's throwing her arms around him in a crushing hug, and god, it feels good. Her Halo suit’s covered in buckles and straps an’ shit, but the hug is fucking amazing. Safe and secure and wonderfully tight; an anchor he can cling to so he doesn't get swept out to sea by the overwhelming whatever it is that's brewing up inside of him.

Eggsy closes his eyes and just breathes, hands coming up to grip the airpack on the back of her suit. And he’s probably being fucking selfish, what with her bent over at an angle like this, but he can’t bring himself to let go just yet. Just one more minute, that’s all he’s asking. Maybe it’ll be enough to pull himself together.

Roxy goes still suddenly, her arms wrapped around him, and Eggsy holds his breath, muscles tensing as his stomach drops.

"Eggsy?" she murmurs after a tense pause. "What's wrong?"

He doesn't open his mouth, because he's pretty fucking sure he'll say something stupid like "everything" and then the whole sorry mess will come pouring out. He's kept his Dynamic a secret
since he was sixteen, he ain’t about to blab it to the world willy-nilly.

"You're shaking," Roxy points out…and oh, yeah, he is. Shit. How long’s he been doing that for? Fuckin’ hell. "Eggs, what is it? Tell me."

He shakes his head, because it's all he's capable of doing at present, cursing his damned biology for betraying him like this. Roxy's secure hold, her gentle concern, her soothing voice - it's all tipping him further and further over the edge, the trembling in his limbs worsening to a point that he feels like he's clinging onto his sanity by his fingertips.

He can't do this. He can’t. He wants to fucking die.

"You're dropping," Roxy breathes in a moment of clarity, her voice hushed. "Oh my god, Eggsey, are you dropping?"

In spite of his better judgement, and despite how desperately he wants to deny it to the bitter end, he finds himself nodding against her shoulder; the barest fraction of movement, but it's there. And suddenly Roxy's hand is settling gently over the nape of his neck, squeezing gently as she guides his forehead down to rest against her collarbone.

"Alright," she murmurs, and God fucking bless the Dom who raised this woman to be so bloody perfect. Her voice is like a balm to his aching, fractious mind, her touch soothing the restless buzzing beneath his skin. "I've got you, Eggsey. We'll get through this together, yeah? What do you need? Just tell me what you need from me. Do you want to kneel?"

"Eggsy, Lancelot," Merlin's calls over the plane's intercom. "You two alright back there?"

He tenses, because of course the man would’ve noticed that something was off. This is all going so horribly wrong, and it ain’t even fucking funny. He's kept his Dynamic to himself for years, tricked the education board and guidance counsellors at school into thinking that he was a Dom just so that he’d be able to protect his mum and stand up to Dean. Fuck knows how the bastard would’ve treated him if he’d realised it was a Sub back-talking him all this time – probably forced Eggsey into a drop just to keep him obedient. He’s never once considered that his ruse might backfire, and now…now it feels like his whole fucking world is about to come tumbling down.

"Eggsy, does Merlin...?" Roxy's arms tighten around him further, her voice a low hum against his ear. "I won't tell him if you don't want me to."

"Just so you know, there'll be no canoodling on my plane," Merlin warns, faux-sternly, and it's enough to startle a strangled breath of laughter from Eggsey, although the sound that comes out is far closer to a sob than he’d intended. "Don't make me pull over."

“Eggsy?” Lancelot whispers. “Do you want him involved or not?”

And God help him, but he nods. Everything’s gone to shit now anyway, it’s not like he’s gonna be able to keep this from Merlin indefinitely; the man’s too smart for that. And besides, Merlin’s a decent sort of bloke, and they did just save the bloody world together - maybe he won’t hold Eggsey’s Dynamic against him.

Roxy presses a kiss to the side of his head, squeezes him again, then pulls back a little to call over her shoulder, "Merlin, Eggsy's dropping. Do we have any Ritinal on board?"

There's a beat of silence, then, as serious as the man’s ever sounded: "Lancelot, take the cockpit."

"Sir," she tries to protest, keeping her hand on the back of Eggsey's neck as she twists her upper body
towards the front end of the plane. "I'm not about to leave him on his-

"Roxy, get in here, now," the senior agent orders firmly, and Lancelot exhaled a sharp sigh, face pinched, but abruptly climbs to her feet and moves away from Eggsy's side with a parting squeeze to the back of his neck.

And oh, fuck, that's not good. Even that single point of contact had been enough to ground him, to keep the overwhelming cacophony of sensations at bay, and without it he feels like he's drowning. He braces his elbows on his knees, burying his face in hands that won't stop shaking, and tries not to hyperventilate. The impending sense of doom is growing worse. He's either going to burst into tears or beat his head against the wall of the plane until he knocks himself into blissful unconsciousness, and the inclination he feels towards both options is alarmingly strong.

"Shh. It's alright, lad."

It's Merlin, close enough that the words are a warm puff of air against Eggsy's temple, which means the man must be kneeling on the floor in front of him. The notion feels wrong, somehow – a powerful Dom like Merlin kneeling for a splintering sub like Eggsy – but he doesn't have long to agonise over the issue, because suddenly there's a hand on his back rubbing in slow, soothing circles, another one settling on his knee and squeezing, and the reassuring contact means everything.

"Easy now," the Scotsman soothes, and his thick brogue rolls down the sub's spine in a pleasantly warm wave, some of the tension easing from his shoulders. "I've got you."

The agent carefully slides a hand up to rest against the side of Eggsy's neck, his fingers warm and gentle. “There’s an emergency stock of Ritinal in the medkit. But I should warn you, it's strong stuff, and the side-effects aren’t pleasant. It might be better if we try to ease you down the natural way.” His thumb brushes against the corner of Eggy's jawline. “Will you let me help you?”


Nasty stuff, that; a cocktail of fast-acting hormones and shit that fucks with the chemicals in your brain, yanks you out of a sub-drop and dopes you up for a few hours, but leaves you with fucking awful whiplash. Eggsy'd used it once in an emergency back when he was still a teenager, before he was old enough to legally get into the kind of places where he could pick up a Dom for a quickie. Dubbed the 'lonely Sub drug' (not to be confused with actual LSD, though), it was real popular with his Mum before Dean arrived. Fuck, even after Dean had come along she’d still slapped on a patch every week or so, never bothering to cancel her regular prescription from the GP.

And yeah, maybe for a couple of hours it makes you feel fucking perfect, but waking up on the other side of that high is like crawling out of Satan’s arsehole. It had messed with Eggsy’s head for days afterwards, kept him awake at night, made everything taste weird, and muted all his senses to a point where he just felt wrong.

He isn’t about to take it again – not willingly, not if he can help it.

So he nods, and let’s himself be eased to his feet on shaky legs, supported by Merlin’s strong hands. He sags against the older man’s chest when the Dom’s arms come up to pull him into a crushing hug, and fuck, it’s perfect. It’s chips and cheese after a night out, or a hot shower and a steaming cuppa after walking home in the rain – it’s comfort, the ultimate self-indulgence, and he doesn’t ever want it to end.

“Well. It’s alright,” the Dom murmurs against his ear, one hand cupped securely over the back of
Eggsy’s neck, the other rubbing soothing circles between his shoulders. “Deep breaths for me, Eggsy, there’s a good lad.”

Eggsy feels himself go boneless at the soothing mantra, the tension in his body dissipating as though a switch in his brain has been flicked, and if Merlin hadn’t already been supporting him so steadfastly, he probably would’ve ended up in a crumpled heap on the floor when his knees suddenly give way.

“There we go, easy now,” Merlin says softly, slowing his descent, guiding him gently to his knees. “That’s the way, son.”

A hand settles on the back of his neck again, applying gentle pressure, enough that Eggsy knows he’s got permission to rest his head against Merlin’s knee as the man sits down in the vacated chair. The fabric of Merlin’s pants is soft against his cheek, and he can feel the man’s warmth through the thin material, a reassurance that this is all real, that it’s not just in his head.

He’s still shaking, but it’s beginning to subside now, an intermittent trembling that stays mostly in his hands as the storm in his chest eases with every breath, the fire beneath his skin cooling rapidly as Merlin cards his fingers through Eggsy’s hair.

“Good lad,” the agent murmurs, and another wave of warmth ripples through him at the praise.

Fuck, that shit’s has always been a weakness for him. Maybe that’s why he’d been so gone on Harry from the get-go. I see a young man with potential, a man who is loyal – that’s what he’d said. Accepting Harry’s offer to become a Kingsman had been a no-brainer after that. He’d wanted to do anything, everything, to win the man’s approval; to see that proud little quirk of his lips when Eggsy presented him with his test results and marksmanship scores; to hear him say “well done” and “excellent progress, Eggsy”, even if it wasn’t the ‘good boy’ he’d secretly wanted to hear.

Truth be told, he feels the same way regarding Merlin too – has done so right from the first task. The man isn’t as free with his praise as Harry had been, but that had made it all the more gratifying when he’d done something to earn it. To see the quiet pride in the Dom’s expression when Eggsy took out six Kingsman security officers during hand-to-hand combat training, or to be singled out at the end of a task and congratulated for some small moment of bravery or ingenuity. That’s why he’d been so annoyed when he’d thought Merlin had left him without a parachute. Forget the fact that Eggsy had almost pulled Roxy’s cord too late and plummeted to his death; he’d felt hurt and betrayed that Merlin apparently cared so little about him compared to the other candidates.

And, naturally, he’d felt horribly guilty afterwards for mouthing off to his instructor when it transpired that he’d been wearing a parachute all along. Merlin’s low, warning “no, no, no – you don’t talk to me like that” had sent shivers down his spine for days to come afterwards. In the privacy of the showers near the firing range, he’d let himself imagine what might’ve happened if Merlin had known his true Dynamic. Thrilling fantasies of being turned across the Dom’s knee and paddled with that bloody clipboard of his until Eggsy had learnt his lesson, or bent over the desk down Mission Control while the man’s strong, long-fingered hand turned his arse pink. Or simply being put on his knees while the man worked at his computer station, forced to kneel at Merlin’s side for hours on end until the man eventually accepted his apology and fed Eggsy his cock.

There had been very few men in Eggsy’s that he’d legitimately wanted to kneel for, and Merlin was one of them. He never pictured it happening like this, though – shivering his way through a sub-drop on the floor of a private jet after saving the world from a madman in a baseball cap.

It’s fucking comfortable, though. More than it ought to be, really, given that he’s kneeling on the hard floor without a cushion or nothing – but then his legs have gone numb, so he ain’t really all that
bothered.

He must doze off or something, ‘cause next thing he knows there’s a warm hand cupping his cheek and the background hum of the plane engine is missing, and everything hurts again. But not in the imminent-drop way; in a pulled-every-fucking-muscle-known-to-man way, which he’d kinda been anticipating, what with how that steel-footed chick had tossed him around like a bloody ragdoll. Baby Give It Up an’ all.

“Eggsy.” Merlin’s thumb strokes along his cheekbone (thankfully not the one that’s throbbing), and the Sub blinks his eyes open groggily to peer up at him.

“We back already?” he asks, his voice coming out slurred, like he’s been on a three-day bender.

Merlin’s lips twitch up at the corner, but there’s still a faint crease in his brow that belies the lightness of his tone. “You’ve been asleep for quite a while. Feeling better?”

Eggsy nods, then winces when even that pulls on abused muscles. “Yeah. Thanks, guv.”

His legs are completely dead, and he’s gonna have the worst pins and needles attack ever in a minute or two, but he’s just so fuckin’ relieved that the turmoil of emotions inside of him has settled down to a background murmur, he could bloody kiss Merlin.

“Don’t mention it,” the senior agent replies, dropping his hand from Eggsy’s cheek after a final caress. “And I do mean that, Eggsy; what happened here can stay between the three of us, if that’s what you want.”

The Sub blinks at him, feeling hope begin to stir in his chest. “You mean I can stay registered as a Dom on my files and stuff?”

Merlin nods. “I don’t see why not.”

“There ain’t, like, a rule against Subs being field agents?” Eggsy presses, stunned. “I thought Kingsmen were all traditionalist and shit, ‘cept you an’ Harry.”

“There are certain individuals who might protest the presence of a Submissive agent during particularly dangers missions,” the Dom acknowledges, reaching to pick up a glass that’s sitting on the small coffee table by his elbow. “But like I said, nobody else needs to know about it unless it’s something you want advertised.”

The younger man stares at him, still hardly daring to believe what he’s hearing. “You’d do that? For me?”

“You’re a good lad, Eggsy,” Merlin tells him, and oh, that still feels fucking awesome. “Your secret’s safe with me. And we’ll find a way to keep you from dropping again, don’t you worry. Here.” He presses the rim of the glass against the Sub’s bottom lip. “Drink this.”

Eggsy obeys without question, gulping down the refreshingly cold water, suddenly realising how utterly parched he is. Clearly saving the world is enough to seriously dehydrate a guy.

“Thank you,” he says again once the glass is drained, and he holds Merlin’s gaze for a moment, hoping the man realises he’s grateful for far more than the drink.

Merlin’s lips curl into another quiet smile, his thumb brushing gently over Eggsy’s chin to wipe away a stray droplet of water. “You’re welcome.” Then he seems to rouse himself, tearing his gaze away from Eggsy to glance out at the Kingsman hangar beyond the window. “Come on. We’ve got an
organisation to put to rights. And you need to eat something.”

“Sir, yes, sir,” Eggsy replies, with a grin that actually feels half-genuine, and lets himself be pulled slightly unsteadily to his feet.

Merlin’s right. They may have stopped the whole mass-genocide thing, but for seventy seconds the world had gone to shit, and it’s bound to have left ’em with one helluva cleanup. He needs to ring his mum, and check up on his mates (they’re both pants at fighting, so he hopes they didn’t get caught up in anything too serious), and make sure JB’s still alright back at Harry’s house. And Harry…

Well. There’ll be time to sit down and have a proper cry later on. Right now there’s shit needs doing, and Eggsy ain’t no skiver. He’s saved the world once already today, he can bloody well help fix it up.
Chapter Summary

The world's gone to shit, God save the Queen, and even the dead won't stay dead.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Realistically, things could’ve been a helluva lot worse.

Sure, they’re still pretty dire, what with most of the main roads in and out of London closed due to traffic accidents, and hospital staff struggling to deal with the sudden influx of walking wounded flooding into local A&E’s, but the initial casualty reports that get broadcasted over the internal news feed at Kinsman HQ ain’t half as bad as Eggsy had anticipated.

And maybe Valentine hadn’t thought things through as thoroughly as he’d claimed, ‘cause it turns out that shitty phone signal had played a significant part in protecting the more rural areas of the UK from the effects of his SIM cards. Major cities an’ stuff hadn’t fared quite so well, of course, but Kingsman HQ – tucked safely away in the Green Belt beyond civilisation with its expansive grounds and no-external-technology policy – had been mostly unaffected by the two-minute massacre. Bit of property damage, a few minor injuries from the junior tech department (who’d apparently been in the process of analysing one of Valentine’s SIM cards after an anonymous tip-off), but no fatalities. And more importantly, no implant-induced head explosions. It looks like Arthur, the selfish bastard, had intended to be the sole survivor of the Kingsman Service.

Fat lot of good Chester King would’ve been as a field agent. The mental image of the aristocrat tottering after moving targets, red-faced and out of breath, is downright ludicrous. Eggsy would’ve laughed if he weren’t so bloody exhausted.

Instead he leans back against the support strut of the underground safehouse and wipes the sweat from his brow with the sleeve of his fancy-pants bespoke suit, his breathing laboured as he slips the gun back into its holster at the small of his back.

“We’ve secured the crown,” he reports, watching as Roxy and a small host of armed MI6 operatives free the royal family from their forced confinement in the fucking nuclear bomb shelter beneath Buckingham Palace.

Well. At least he can tick ‘meet the Queen’ off his bucket list.

“Good work,” Merlin replies, and if his tone is a touch warmer than usual when he says it, Eggsy’s not about to point that out. “Percival and Kay have secured Downing Street. Thought you’d be interested to know that the Prime Minister was found to be missing his head.”
“Fuckin’ prick,” Eggsy mutters under his breath, stepping over the body of a fallen hired mercenary. “Should’ve known he’d side with the all them rich tossers.”

“Mm,” the Dom agrees absently. “Needless to say, the government’s in shambles. We’re initiating emergency cabinet procedures.”

Eggsy sniffs a grin, careful to hide his limp as he makes his way across the bunker towards where the remaining agents have gathered at the foot of the staircase. “Don’t suppose that involves hidin’ in a cupboard and havin’ a nervous breakdown?”

“Not quite,” Merlin answers, and Eggsy counts it a personal victory that he can hear the amusement there. “It means that MI6 have assumed temporary control of the nation in the absence of a functioning government.”

“S’pose they can’t do much worse than the last lot,” Eggsy comments, wincing as he brings a hand up to press against his aching side. His new Kingsman suit might be bulletproof (fuck yeah), but he can tell that he’s be bruised black and blue underneath. “The Conservative party’s gonna have a hard time winning back seats when word gets out that the PM was a fucking trai-…hello.”

“Eggsy?”

He stops walking, carefully lowering himself into a crouch, overused muscles protesting the strain. “It’s alright, love. Come on, c’mere.”

A pair of dark eyes watch him warily from beneath the layer of tarp that covers the storage crates along the wall of the bunker, black nose twitching. Eggsy slowly extends a hand towards the creature, letting it snuffle at his fingers for a moment. He hears Roxy call his name from across the room, but he doesn’t shift from his position, holding still as the dog inches closer, short tail giving a couple of half-hearted wags as it bumps up against his knee.

“Come on,” he says again, smoothing a hand over the pup’s head to settle it before drawing the corgi close and hefting it up into his arms. “There we go, darlin’. What you doin’ down here all on your own?”

“Ah. I see you’ve found Winston.”

It’s that good-looking MI6 bloke from earlier. The man looks miraculously unruffled in the wake of the brief but intense close-quarters fight with the royal family’s armed captors, with the exception of a small laceration along his cheekbone. He graces Eggsy with a frankly disarming smile that’s two parts professional killer, ten parts make-your-knees-tremble Dominant seduction, and the Sub immediately slams his mental shields up. He might not be dropping any more, but it’s been less than six hours since he had the rug pulled out from underneath him and he still feels unnervingly sensitive, like a forceful nudge from the right kind of Dom will have him on his knees again in front of everyone. It’s fucking terrifying.

“The Queen’s rather fond of the little bugger,” the agent tells him, slipping his gun back inside the inner folds of his suit jacket, where the tailored fall of the fabric conceals its shape effortlessly. “I ought to return him. May I?” He waits for Eggsy’s nod before carefully plucking the dog out of the Sub’s arms, lifting his chin to avoid the corgi’s eager tongue as it wriggles in his hold, tail wagging. “Thank you. I’m sure her Majesty will be much obliged.”

Eggsy shrugs, mindful to mask how much the movement pulls on his aching ribs. “S’all part of the job, innit?”
“Quite.” The agent flashes him another one of those quiet, knee-melting smiles, and winks, inclining his head in a parting nod. “Say hello to Merlin for me.”

“Cocky bastard.” There’s a sound in Eggsy’s ear that he suspects is Merlin jamming his fingers against the keyboard with unnecessary force. “Eggsy, Lancelot, if you’re not too busy having a wee chit-chat with your new SIS friends, there’s a helicopter waiting for you on the roof.”

“Old acquaintance of yours?” Eggsy asks innocently once the MI6 agent is out of earshot, making his way upstairs after Roxy on sore, protesting legs.

“Mm,” Merlin hums noncommittally, then, perhaps in retaliation: “I want both of you to report to the infirmary as soon as you get back to headquarters. Understood?”

“Yes, Merlin,” Roxy acknowledges.

“Eggsy?”

The younger man sighs, resigned. “Yeah, alright.”

“Good. I’ll see you both shortly.”

Well. Bollocks.

…………………………………………

Thing is, Eggsy’s never been all that good at following orders without a decent incentive.

During his Kingsman training it had been a doddle, ‘cause obedience had kept him in the programme and he’d wanted to do as he was told. He’d wanted to be Lancelot; for himself, yeah, but mostly for Harry. He’d been driven by the instinctive need to make the man proud, to prove that he was just as good as all them rich tossers with their Cambridge degrees and fifty-grand wristwatches. And every trial he’d passed, every “congratulations on completing another task” from Merlin and “bloody well done” from Harry had just made him that much more determined, until obeying was as simple as breathing, Sub-Eggsy and stubborn-Eggsy singing from the same hymn sheet for the first time in as long as he could remember.

But that incentive’s gone now. Harry’s gone. And Eggsy’s just so bloody tired, he can’t find it in himself to give a fuck about anything else, orders or no orders.

In the end, even Roxy’s attempts at logical reasoning fail to persuade him to head to the infirmary
with her when they arrive at HQ. Instead, he detours to the temporary living quarters they’ve been assigned (for the foreseeable future), and strips out of his blood-splattered jacket and trousers, hanging them up with care to be dry-cleaned at a later date. It’s more than just a suit now; he’s not going to lie to himself by pretending otherwise. Harry commissioned it for him, and Eggsy owes his life to the bulletproof fabric ten times over in the past twelve hours alone. Figures - even from the grave, Harry’s still saving his arse. Damn him.

He turns up the temperature gauge in the en suite bathroom’s shower until the water’s almost unbearably hot, gritting his teeth as he lets the steaming jets hit his back, the heat seeping into his sore muscles until everything feels slow and heavy and the ache in his chest is finally drowned out by the answering ache from everywhere else. He can’t even summon the energy to soap himself down, allowing the water to cascade over him instead, his forehead pressed against the cool tile of the bathroom wall.

God, he’s exhausted.

So much has happened in the past twenty-four hours, he can barely even begin to wrap his head around it. Failing the final Lancelot trial, losing Harry, uncovering Arthur’s betrayal, breaking into Valentine’s secret VIP lair, Baby Give It Up, his catastrophic Sub-drop in the wake of it all, telling Merlin and Roxy his true Dynamic, stabilising Kingsman HQ, rescuing the bloody Queen of England from where she and the rest of the royal family had been held at gunpoint beneath the palace…to say it’s been an eventful day is a huge bloody understatement.

Fuck, it ain’t even daytime anymore. Must be nearing midnight by now, and he feels so fucking drained. A part of him already knows it’s going to be a struggle getting to sleep, though. He’s barely had time to breathe, let alone stop and process everything that’s happened, and his mind’s a chaotic jumble of voices and faces and feelings. He’s not dropping again, not yet, but it sure as hell feels like he could.

At least his mum an’ Daisy are alright. He’d managed to phone her earlier (before the strike team had been called out to the palace); a very brief conversation due to time constraints, but it had been enough to reassure himself that neither of them were injured, that Dean hadn’t come home yet, and that his mum had secured the latch and chain-lock across the inside of the front door so that the bastard couldn’t get back inside even if he did have a key. Once things have calmed down, the first thing he’s gonna do is find a new place to live and get his mum as far away from Dean as possible. Someplace safe, someplace with a garden where she can grow flowers an’ shit, so that Daisy can grow up surrounded by light and life and colours instead of the cold, unforgiving grey of concrete housing estates.

“When are you comin’ home, love?” she’d asked him during the three-minute call he’d managed to make in between rescue ops, her voice wobbling with the threat of tears that she’d never let fall, at least not when someone was there to witness it.

“Soon,” Eggsy had assured her, gaze flickering down the hallway towards the conference room where Roxy was beckoning to him urgently. “Thing is, there’s a lot of work needs doin’, an’ I sort of promised I’d help clean up. Plus there ain’t much use in tryin’ to get home tonight, public transport’s all gone to pot.” Roxy’s gesticulating took on a more violent tone when he failed to hang up straight away, and Eggsy winced. “Need to go, Mum. I’ll phone you tomorrow, yeah? Love you.”

“Love you too, babe.”

He opens his eyes with a start, realising just how close he is to nodding off against the wall and braining himself on the tiles when he inevitably falls over, and quickly turns off the water. The cool
air beyond the shower cubicle is an unpleasant shock to his overheated skin, and he winces as his muscles tense automatically against the unforgiving cold, wrapping a towel around his waist and another around his shoulders as he shuffles out into the warmer air of the main bedroom.

“What part of ‘report to the infirmary as soon as you get back’ did you fail to understand?” Merlin asks him, deceptively calm, leaning against the wall near the bed with his arms crossed over his chest. He’s changed out of his pilot uniform and is back in his usual white-shirt-and-cashmere-jumper combo, looking unfairly attractive in the warm yellow glow of the bedside lamp.

Eggsy’s never been the slightest bit body-shy, but there’s something about Merlin’s stare that’s always made him feel weirdly exposed even when he’s fully dressed, so being pinned by that same gaze now with nothing but a towel to protect him is somewhat unnerving. That, and the fact that his state of undress puts all of his injuries fully on display; every cut and graze and blossoming bluish-black bruise.

“Leave off, guv,” he answers wearily, crossing over to the chest of drawers without bothering to hide his limp and rummaging around until he finds a pair of boxers, cotton trousers and a shirt that look roughly his size. God bless Kingsman and their well-stocked guest rooms. “It’s nothin’ I haven’t dealt with before.”

Merlin’s gaze follows him, his expression unchanging. “Post-mission medicals aren’t up for negotiation, son. It’s standard protocol.”

Eggsy pulls the clothes on with uncoordinated, fatigue-clumsy movements, tossing one towel back towards the bathroom and slinging the other around his neck to scrub at his damp hair. “Like you said before, the whole world’s gone to shit. Protocol ain’t exactly a priority right now, is it?”

The Dom exhales a short, sharp sigh through his nose. “I thought you might say something like that.” He bends down, hefting up a dark satchel by its shoulder-strap as he nods towards the bed. “Take a seat.”

Eggsy obeys without question, too accustomed to following the man’s orders after months of Kingsman training. Besides, he trusts the Dom, probably more than he’s trusted any man in his life ‘cept for Harry, and after everything that’s happened between them these past twelve hours, he knows he doesn’t have to worry about the man turning around unexpectedly and stabbing him in the back – both literally and figuratively.

That is, of course, until Merlin crosses over to the bed and sinks fluidly to his knees in front of him. Eggsy tenses, every Submissive instinct within him screaming no, no, wrong, stop it, get up!

“What?” he manages, dazed.

Merlin unzips the bag, which turns out to be a fully-stocked medkit, and quickly snaps on a pair of gloves. “If the mountain won’t come to Mohammad,” he says cryptically.

“What?” Eggsy repeats, perplexed, and it earns him one of Merlin’s quiet, amused glances, the corner of the man’s mouth twitching upwards.

“Hold still,” the Dom cautions, not unkindly, unscrewing the lid on a small silver tub (it’s completely unlabelled, which Eggsy finds mildly concerning) and dipping the tip of a cotton bud into the beige-tinted cream. “You don’t want this getting in your eyes, trust me.”

Shit, it burns. Merlin dabs it along his bruised cheekbone, and over the still-fresh cut above his eyebrow, and it’s all Eggsy can do not to screw his face up in discomfort at the heat that builds up
there, like someone’s applied a match to his skin. The sensation only lasts for a minute or so, however, and once the fire’s abated it simmers down to a pulsing sort of warmth that seems to eclipse the initial ache of his injuries.

“Is this stuff even legal?” he asks, lifting his shirt obligingly when Merlin scoops out a generous dollop of the cream onto his gloved fingers, gritting his teeth as the agent carefully dabs it onto the still-tender gunshot bruises that litter his torso and abdomen.

“Strictly speaking, it doesn’t actually exist,” Merlin answers, calm as you please.

“Ace,” Eggsy grunts, eyes half-closed as the second wave of fierce heat ebbs away again and he can breathe without wincing for the first time in several hours. He holds still as the Dom finishes rubbing the last smear of cream into his abused skin before Merlin strips off his gloves and tosses them neatly towards the bin near the chest of drawers

Warm fingers pinch his chin gently. “Look at me, lad.”

And fuck, Eggsy’s glad the man ain’t listening to his chest with a stethoscope or anything, ‘cause he swears his heart stutters at the order.

It’s alarming, really, just how willingly he’d submit to Merlin right now if the man asked him to. How eagerly he’d get on his knees for the Dom, when twelve hours ago he would never have dreamt of embracing his basic Dynamic instincts in front of someone he knew, least of all someone he admired. Maybe it’s because he knows that Merlin won’t ask him; won’t take advantage of his position of authority, won’t treat Eggsy differently despite what biology dictates. Or maybe it’s because he’s tired, and everything hurts, and Harry’s gone, and when he looks at Merlin all he wants to do is bury his face in the man’s jumper where he knows everything’s quiet and warm and safe.

His mouth goes dry as their eyes meet, but Merlin’s demeanour is nothing short of professional, his brow creased a little in concentration as he flashes a pen-torch in Eggsy’s eyes briefly.

“Follow my finger.”

And Eggsy does, because disobedience isn’t even an option any more, not with how fucked-up his Submissive instincts are feeling. He tracks the digit with his eyes, touches his nose and the tip of Merlin’s finger half a dozen times as instructed, answers the agent’s questions promptly and without his usual witty deflections (well, mostly – he can’t help but reply to “who’s the prime minister?” with a deadpan “headless Harvey”, and it’s worth it when Merlin’s eyes crinkle at the corners in quiet amusement).

“Good news,” Merlin tells him after a minute or two, slipping the pen-torch back inside his medkit and zipping it closed. “There’s no evidence neurological damage, so I won’t have to keep prodding you awake every thirty minutes overnight. But I am taking you off active field duty for the next forty-eight hours.”

Eggsy opens his mouth to give a token protest (his heart’s not really in it, he’s so fucking tired), but Merlin shakes his head, his expression serious as he opens a side-pocket in the satchel and starts rummaging around.

“Most of the Kingsman knights are already on British soil, and those who aren’t are making their way home as we speak. We’re not – here, give me your hand.” He tumbles a couple of white, oval pills into Eggsy’s palm. “We’re not short on mission operatives. Concentrate on getting your strength back; there’s no use in sending you out into the field when you can barely walk straight.”
“Never been straight in my life, guv,” Eggsy quips, because he can, and it earns him another one of those subtle lip-twitches that an eagerly hopeful part of his brain has taken to calling fond.

Merlin hands him a bottle of water, supervises Eggsy swallowing the pills as though convinced he might refuse them otherwise (like fuck he’s going to turn down painkillers, his ribs hurt like hell), before slipping a shiny new smartphone from his trouser pocket and setting it down on the bedside table.

“Private Kingsman network,” the Dom tells him, something warm in his expression that makes Eggsy want to squirm pleasantly. “Untraceable, unhackable, with half a dozen security features that are on a strictly need-to-know basis. There’s also a particularly tasteful selection of ringtones. All the Kingsman knights own one.” He taps a finger against the device emphatically. “If it rings, pick it up. Might just save your life. Oh, and I took the liberty of giving Lancelot your number – hope you don’t mind.”

Eggsy shrugs, yawning against the back of his hand and grimacing when it manages to pull on just about every abused muscle in his body. Merlin’s wince is sympathetic as he finally pushes himself to his feet, settling a hand on the younger man’s shoulder, the inner curve of his thumb resting flush against the bare skin of Eggsy’ neck. It takes a significant amount of self-control not to lean into the contact.

“Get some rest, Eggsy,” the Dom murmurs.

And then he’s gone, closing the door behind him. Eggsy switches off the bedside lamp and carefully eases his aching body beneath the duvet, his eyes already half-closed, exhaustion sweeping in to steal him away. And if he falls asleep with his hand pressed against the still-tingling patch of skin on the side of his neck, only the darkness knows it.

…………………………

A persistent buzzing tears him from the warmth and safety of a sleep too deep for dreaming, and he pushes himself up on one stiff arm, groggy and disorientated, fumbling blindly for the lightswitch above his bed.

“Rox!” he calls, his voice hoarse from disuse. If this is another drowning simulation thing, he ain’t letting the others sleep through it. “Charlie, wake the fuck up.”

He manages to wrench his sleep-heavy eyelids open, enough that he spots the mobile phone where it’s vibrating on the bedside table, and just like that he remembers everything. Valentine. Arthur.

Fuck, it *hurts.*

The digital alarm clock tells him he’s only been asleep for four and a half hours (no wonder he’s still so bloody exhausted), and he drags a hand down his face with a shaky exhale, picking up the mobile and pressing it to his ear.

“Yeah?”

“*Eggsy, it’s me,*” Roxy’s voice replies, and she sounds worryingly out of breath given that it’s five in the fucking morning. “*Where are you?*”

“Kingsman headquarters. Why?” he answers slowly, confusion and fatigue making his words drag. “*Where the hell are you?*”

“*Never mind about me.*” There’s yelling in the background, and a couple of bangs that sound like car doors being closed. “*Can you walk?*”

“What kinda question is that?” Eggsy asks, incredulous, his brain feeling slow and sluggish. “You high or somethin’?”

“*Eggsy,*” the Dom snaps, and the note of urgency in her voice finally makes his heartbeat quicken, adrenaline helping to clear some of the fog from his mind.

“Yes, I can walk.” He swings his legs over the side of the bed with a wince, free hand clutching at his ribs. “*Now what the fuck is goin’ on?*”

“I didn’t know,” she says instead of giving him a proper answer. “*I swear to God, Eggsy, I didn’t know, or I would’ve called sooner. I only overheard Kay and Percy talking about him before we made the jump and—*” There’s another shout in the background, and a louder ‘bang’ that’s definitely not a car door. “*Shit! Hang on.*”

There’s a deafening thwack, which Eggsy suspects is Roxy’s mobile hitting the ground, then three clear gunshots ring out through the tinny phone speaker and the background yelling goes silent. There’s a snap and a shuffle, before Roxy’s laboured breathing fills his ear again.

“*Sorry about that. Unwanted company.*” He hears the tell-tale click of a reloading rifle, and hopes it’s hers. “*I don’t have much time, I’m in the middle of a rescue op. But I had to tell you.*”

“Tell me *what?*” Eggsy asks, exasperated and unnerved in equal measure.

“*Go to the infirmary,*” Roxy says by way of a reply, and by the sound of her breathing she’s running again, someplace enclosed enough to have an echo. “*Find Merlin. Ask him about Galahad.*”

Eggsy’s insides go cold, his heart stuttering in his chest. “Wait, *what?*”

But Roxy’s gone, the beep of the terminated call his only answer. Eggsy stares at the screen of the mobile long enough for the backlight to switch off, and it’s only as he puts it back on the bedside table that he realises his hands are shaking. He doesn’t understand. He doesn’t *understand.* What the hell is going on?

Any residual fatigue well and truly banished, he launches himself out of bed and shoves his feet into his unlaced boots, grabbing a too-big jumper from the chest of drawers and tugging it over his sleep-
shirt as he exits his temporary quarters, stomping his feet to wedge them more firmly into his boots and ignoring the screaming protest of too-stiff muscles as he makes his way swiftly through the upper corridors of Kingsman HQ, towards the central lift that’ll take him to the lower levels. He gets a few odd glances from patrolling security personnel, but on the whole the mansion is quiet, and Eggsy’s grateful that he doesn’t bump into anyone who’d try to stop him. With how on-edge he’s feeling right now, that wouldn’t end well.

It’s a route he’s taken a hundred times or more these past few months, either visiting Harry during his recuperation in the infirmary, or reporting to the labs as part of his Kingsman training. He knows these corridors like the back of his hand, and he’s bloody grateful for it now; with his body running on adrenaline-induced autopilot, he’s lucky he doesn’t end up walking headlong into the incinerator.

It probably only takes him a few minutes, but he feels like he’s stumbling his way through HQ for hours, his breathing rapid and shallow, his heart pounding in his ears. He knows he must look like hell – rumpled and bruised and sleep-deprived with his bootlaces untied and his jumper on back to front – and he gets more than one alarmed look thrown his way as he barrels past medical personnel, making a beeline for the single-patient ICU at the far end of the infirmary wing. He hits it shoulder-first, throwing the door wide open and glancing around wildly, hardly daring to hope.

And there, looking pale against the white sheets with half his face obscured by bandages, covered in wires and cables and IV lines and God know what else, but asleep and breathing and alive, is Harry fucking Hart.

Merlin rises from his perch on the edge of the mattress, unclasping his hands from around one of Harry’s, eyes widening fractionally at Eggsy’s sudden appearance, before creasing again in concern at the younger man’s dishevelled state.

“Eggsy,” he starts, moving towards him, hand outstretched in a soothing gesture of placation.

All at once, fear and adrenaline and grief and hope and shock and disbelief combine as one in a sudden, intense pulse of anger, directed towards the man he’d trusted, the man who’d kept this whole thing a secret and allowed Eggsy to mourn for his fallen mentor, that fucking bastard.

So he does the only sensible thing: he pulls back his fist and throws the first punch.

Chapter End Notes

Wow! Thank you for the overwhelmingly positive feedback from the first chapter, I'm totally delighted that you all seem as eager about a D/s AU as I am. Now that Harry's back, things can finally kick off properly. :)

Of course, Merlin isn't going to be overly thrilled about that punch. Poor Eggsy won't know what hit him. ;P

(And for those of you who enjoy crossovers, feel free to envision the 'good-looking MI6
agent' as the one and only James Bond, as played by Daniel Craig. That's the man I had in mind when I wrote that particular scene. Also, the notion of Bond being a shameless flirt whenever he bumps into Merlin or Harry during an undercover op really tickles me. That, and Merlin being delighted that they've finally got a Quartermaster in Q-branch who knows how to hack worth a damn.)
The infirmary floor is unforgivingly cold beneath Eggsy’s cheek.

The shock of it is enough to kickstart his brain back into motion, and he realises in a moment of devastating clarity that he’s just had his arse thoroughly handed to him. Eggsy’s punch hadn’t even landed; Merlin had just side-stepped his fist like a fucking ninja, pushed his arm out of the way with an easy backhand, and neatly swept his legs out from underneath him with a well-placed kick. The whole thing had been too pathetic to even call a fight.

Now he’s pinned on his stomach with Merlin’s weight braced against his back, effortlessly immobilised, and it’s all Eggsy can do to blink back the hot, frustrated tears that are stinging threateningly behind his eyes.

“Are you ready to calm down now?” Merlin asks him mildly. “Or would you like to throw another tantrum?”

Eggsy tugs against the man’s hold on his wrist where his arm is twisted up behind his back, but the senior agent might as well be made of rock for all the good it does.

“Fuck you!” he spits out, and means it, his voice raw and treacherously uneven. “You let me think he was dead, you fucking bastard.”

The fingers of Merlin’s other hand (and what the fuck, how the hell is he managing to pin Eggsy with only one arm, that’s just embarrassing) settle lightly over the back of his neck. The Sub tenses, his face screwing up, hurt and anger and betrayal clawing at his insides, his throat too tight to yell further insults despite the long list of profanities poised on the tip of his tongue. Merlin squeezes his nape with surprising gentleness.

“Enough,” the Scot murmurs, in a voice so low and firm and authoritative that it seems to reverberate through Eggsy’s very bones. “You need to listen to me, lad.”

And despite the temptation to tell the agent to take his words and shove them up his arse, Eggsy finds he can’t quite bring himself to push against that unflattering tone of command. Perhaps it’s the ‘lad’ that does it. Reminds him that this isn’t just some random pushy Dom, this is Merlin; the man who’s spent the past year acting as mentor and counsellor, confidant and instructor, showing Eggsy how to integrate his streetwise skills with his combat training in order to better himself as a Kingsman candidate. The man who’d carefully eased him up from a Sub-drop so that the youth wouldn’t have to deal with the aftermath of hormonal drug use, and fervently sworn to keep Eggsy’s Dynamic a secret despite the potential ramifications to his own position of authority within the agency if the truth was ever discovered.

And hell, despite the sharp ache of betrayal in his chest, Eggsy desperately wants to trust the Dom. He wants it so much it hurts.

“I didn’t keep anything from you,” Merlin tells him, his grip on Eggsy’s wrist easing up a little as the Sub stills beneath him. “As far as I was aware, Richmond Valentine had shot and killed Galahad outside a mission church in Kentucky. I sent in a local extraction team to retrieve the body shortly
thereafter, but instead of finding a body, their search led them to an acute neurosurgical ward at the nearby memorial hospital. They attempted to relay this information back to headquarters en-route to England, but given that you and I were a tad preoccupied trying to stop Valentine from committing mass-genocide, the message ended up getting passed on to the wrong people.”

Merlin squeezes his nape again, thumb brushing back and forth against the skin there soothingly as his voice gentles. “The extraction team turned up on our doorstep just over an hour ago. I’d hoped to let you sleep a little longer; break the news to you gently once the surgeons had finished patching him up. You weren’t supposed to find out like this.”

Eggsy’s already melting into the floor beneath the Dom, anger and frustration deserting him in one shaky exhale as he absorbs the information, hurt giving way to heady relief as the truth finally becomes apparent. The grip on his wrist loosens enough that he could easily pull away and clamber to his feet if wanted to, but for a moment all he can do is lay there and breathe, struggling to clamp down on the turmoil of emotions in his chest before they can bubble up to the surface and betray him.

His legs feel weak and shaky when he finally summons up the oomph to push himself to his feet, and if it weren’t for Merlin’s hands supporting him, he probably would’ve ended up flat on his face again after the first step. Instead, the agent steers him closer to the bedside, hooking an ankle around the leg of the nearby chair to pull it closer and easing him into it, acting for all the world like it’s Eggsy who’s the invalid here, not Harry. And speaking of…

“How is he?” he manages, once he’s remembered how his voice works, eyes fixed on his mentor’s pale face, hope and grief at war in his chest because although Harry’s here, and he’s breathing, he also looks like a bloody corpse.

And God help him, he can still see it now, in his mind’s eye. Valentine’s arm coming up, gun aimed squarely at the camera feed; a terrible, deafening bang and an answering crunch as the bullet hits its intended target. That sickening jolt of horror and disbelief as the camera pans upwards sharply when Harry topples backwards.

Shit. It still makes his blood run cold.

“Valentine’s bullet hit the outer frame of Harry’s glasses; helped reduce the force of the impact,” Merlin explains, his hand settling itself on the back of Eggsy’s neck again, a comforting weight. “Must’ve struck him at an angle. It entered at the corner of his left eyebrow, just above the socket, and cut along his temple. The surgeons had to remove a section of his skull to avoid further brain trauma, but judging from the initial MRI scans, the damage to his cerebral tissue is minimal.” The agent tugs at the blankets covering Harry’s chest, smoothing them down with his free hand. “Can’t even die properly, can you, you stubborn bastard?”

Eggsy presses the back of a shaking hand against his mouth, but he can’t quite smother the half-laugh, half-sob that chokes itself from his throat. “Fuck.”

He’s either gonna throw up or have a complete meltdown, and since neither option seems preferable at this point, he braces his forearms on his thighs and sticks his head between his knees, sucking in shaky gulps of air like a man drowning. He’s so fucking relieved he could cry, and it feels like he’s wavering dangerously close to another Sub-drop, fingers tingling and pulse pounding a frantic tattoo in his ears. But part of him doesn’t even care anymore because Harry’s alive. He’s fucking alive.

“Easy now.” Merlin’s voice is closer to him, a low hum near his ear, which probably means the man’s kneeling again. The notion still feels wrong, but Eggsy’s grateful nonetheless, especially when the Dom’s other hand comes up to rub soothingly along his spine. “You’re alright, son.”
Eggsy grinds the heels of his palms against his eyes, willing the tears to stop, but he’s so bloody tired and everything hurts and Harry’s alive and he...he just can’t find the strength to keep fighting anymore.

He presses his lips together (if he’s gonna blub, the least he can do is try to keep quiet) but he can’t do anything to hide the shuddering of his shoulders, or the way every inhale is a hitching snuffle that sounds dangerously loud in the otherwise silent ICU.

He hasn’t had a proper cry in fucking years, not even after he’d watched Harry get himself shot (at the time he’d been too shocked and angry and overwhelmed to do more than shed a few silent, devastated tears), and he remembers now how much he hates it. Hates the way his nose gets clogged to the point where he has to breathe through his mouth in loud, hiccupping gulps; hates how his throat closes up so that he can’t swallow properly, a radiating sort of ache that spreads downwards to his chest and curls cruelly around his lungs. It’s fucking awful. But suddenly he can’t think of a single reason not to cry. He’s crying because he’s crying. Fuck, maybe he’ll never be happy again.

Merlin’s arms close around him, his embrace warm and strong and secure, with a gentle hand on the back of Eggsy’s head to guide his face to rest against the Dom’s shoulder, the navy blue cashmere jumper soft against the dampness of his skin, and fuck, that just makes him cry even harder. It’s like his stupidly volatile Submissive side is making up all those other times in the past when Eggsy’s clamped down on his instinctive emotions and plastered on a cocky grin instead, because now that he’s started crying he just can’t stop.

But in spite of it all, there’s a part of him that feels inexplicably comfortable here, crying into Merlin’s shoulder like a fucking child. There’s a weird sense of rightness about it; something clicking into place in the back of his mind, like the unexpected solution to a puzzle that’s been niggling at him as far back as he can remember.

“I know, lad,” the Dom murmurs, a hand cupped securely over the back of Eggsy’s neck, lips moving against the Sub’s hair. “I know. It’s alright.”

And strangely enough, it is.

“Ta,” Eggsy croaks, scrubbing at the residual dampness on his cheeks with his sleeve as he reaches out to accept the steaming mug of tea from Merlin’s hands. “Sorry about your jumper, bruv.”

The Dom gives an easy shrug, apparently unconcerned about the sizeable wet patch on his shoulder.
“It’ll dry. Here.” He tumbles a couple of white pills into Eggsy’s palm. “You’re about due another
dose.”

Eggsy sends him a grateful (albeit wincing and red-eyed) sort of smile and knocks back the
painkillers with a quick gulp of too-hot tea. Between faceplanting on the floor and crying his bloody
eyes out, he’s depleted what little energy that sudden burst of shock-induced adrenaline had given
him, and now every inch of him feels achy and wrung-out. He’s half tempted to fold his arms on the
side of Harry’s bed and take a quick kip, but he desperately wants to stay awake a little while longer,
at least until he knows the man’s going to be alright.

Because yeah, although Harry’s alive – and the tube down his throat ain’t even connected to a
ventilator or nothing, which means he’s breathing on his own this time – he’d still been shot in the
fucking head. Graze or no graze, the situation’s still gotta be pretty serious.

“So, what happens now?” he asks, hating how hoarse and uneven his voice still sounds. “We just
gonna have to wait around for ‘im to wake up like last time?”

Merlin settles into a careful perch on the edge of the mattress, a hand wrapped around his own mug
of tea, the other moving to rest lightly over one of Harry’s.

“Actually, he’s due to go back to theatre within the hour,” the agent informs him calmly. “Now that
they’re certain Harry’s condition has stabilised, the surgical team want to go in and mend the residual
damage to his skull.” He apparently catches sight of Eggsy’s creasing brow and smiles at him over
the rim of his mug. “Don’t worry, it’s a fairly straightforward procedure. They’ll fix a plate in over
his skull fracture, suture up his lacerations, and let him wake up on his own. Shouldn’t take more
than a few hours.”

Merlin’s gaze shifts back to the sedated agent, his lips twitching into a smile that Eggsy’d be hard
pressed not to call fond. “He’ll be so bloody pissed when he wakes up half-bald,” he murmurs.
“Harry’s always been so particular about his hair.”

“Yeah?” Eggsy hedges, his interest piqued. There’s never gonna be a day when he’s not eager as
fuck to learn anything and everything about Harry Hart, and the man’s always been so bloody
private about stuff like that. The number of times the Dom had neatly deflected a personal question
with a well-placed clearing of his throat and a quiet, amused “that’s classified, my dear boy”.

“Mm.” The Scotsman takes a gulp of his tea, but Eggsy can see the smile he’s hiding behind it, and it
warms something deep within his chest. “He still gets it dyed. Visits the same old barbershop on St
Phillip’s street every fortnight, gets a professional touch-up. Grey hairs are for old people, don’t you
know?” Merlin’s eyes crinkle at the corners as he watches the man sleep, his thumb moving gently
over the back of Harry’s knuckles. “Used to be curly, too, once upon a time. But God, we’re talking
twenty-odd years ago now. Back when even I still had something up top.”

Eggsy can’t imagine Harry with curls; the image just doesn’t compute. But then again, neither does
the notion of Merlin having hair. The bald look suits him like he was born that way, and Eggsy
won’t deny that it’s one of the many reasons he finds the Dom so bloody attractive.

“You’ve known each other that long?” he asks, curious.

Merlin nods. “He became Galahad ‘round about the same time I was recruited into the Kingsman
technology department. We were among the youngest operatives in the service at the time, and we chose to
tolerate each other out of necessity, despite our differences. Eventually we ended up training together
between missions. He taught me how to kill someone with a paperclip; I taught him how to diffuse a
dirty bomb. By the end of that first year, we were fast friends. Then my predecessor got himself
assassinated, and Harry decided to nominate me as his candidate.” He sniffs a quiet grin behind the rim of his mug. “I called him an idiot, right to his face. But he was right.” The man’s expression softens again, his eyes trained on Harry’s pale, lax face. “Bastard’s always right.”

And just like that, it clicks, and Eggsy wonders how the hell he’s never put two-and-two together before. He’d never thought to question the Dom’s presence at Harry’s side during the man’s initial recovery following his run-in with Professor Arnold; come to think of it, he can’t remember a time when Merlin hadn’t been at Harry’s side between tasks, diligently working on his laptop or tapping away on his touch-sensitive clipboard whenever Eggsy had popped by the infirmary.

It explains a lot of things, actually. Like how Harry’s dressing gown and slippers (which Eggsy knows he keeps back at his house) had appeared out of nowhere the day after the man had woken up. And why Harry’s CD collection contains so much bloody Celtic music. And why the upstairs study he’d been shown during his brief tour of Harry’s house had looked so modern compared to the rest of the place, tastefully (if sparsely) decorated, with a four-screen desktop computer setup that looked like it’d been plucked right out of some IT geek’s wet dream.

Eggsy’s gaze flickers briefly to where Merlin’s hand is still curled around Harry’s, before shifting away again out of respect. He doesn’t want it to look like he’s been judgemental or nothing; there’s plenty of Doms these days who decide to settle down with other Tops. And yeah, homodynamic relationships maybe aren’t as commonplace as the more traditional setup, but there’s definitely nothing wrong with ‘em.

“So, you an’ Harry?” he finds himself asking after a brief pause, because the mood between them is comfortable and he feels warm and loose-limbed, and his mouth tends to run away with him when he’s tired.

“Mm,” Merlin hums, glancing towards him, that quietly amused half-smile tugging at the corner of his mouth again, and something in Eggsy’s chest flutters pleasantly.

Before the man’s stare can make him do something totally embarrassing like blush, Eggsy shifts his gaze back to Harry and lifts his mug to his lips, trying to convince himself that the heat in his face is just the steam rising from the hot tea.

They sit quietly for a while, the soft hiss of oxygen and the steady, electric hum of machinery filling the silence, and Eggsy’s limbs gradually begin to get heavier and heavier, his posture slumping, his eyes drooping. The painkillers have finally started to kick in, easing the ache in his muscles to something more tolerable, and apparently his body’s decided to take this as an invitation to shut down from his feet upwards. He can’t remember how to move – and even if he could, he definitely can’t be arsed. He’s so fucking tired.

“C’mon, lad.” Merlin’s slipping the empty mug from his lax grip, his fingers warm and soft where they brush against Eggsy’s. “Let’s get you back to bed.”

Eggsy shakes his head, surprised by how much effort it takes to make his weary muscles obey him. “I ain’t leavin’.”

Merlin’s hand settles on the back of his neck again, and this time Eggsy doesn’t fight the urge to lean into the man’s touch. That whole crying jag’s left him feeling raw, vulnerable in a way he’s not used to, and that single point of contact is fucking perfect.

“You’re exhausted,” the Dom reasons, his voice dropping low again to a deep, soothing rumble that makes Eggsy’s eyelids droop involuntarily. The man’s thumb strokes back and forth against the side of his neck, the heat of his palm seeping into Eggsy’s skin and trickling like warm water down his
“They’ll be taking to theatre in a wee while, anyway. You should go and get some rest while you still can.”

Eggsy’s always been stubborn, he ain’t ashamed to admit that, but to be honest it’s really fucking hard to keep pushing against Merlin’s gentle coaxing. The fact that he’s genuinely knackered probably has a lot to do with it, but the way the man’s voice seems to hum straight through him like a warm vibration, and the way his fingers curl snugly against Eggsy’s nape…fuck. He’s putty in Merlin’s hands.

“C’mon,” the Scot says again, easing Eggsy up out of the chair and steering him towards the exit. “You don’t have to go far.”

And true to his word, Merlin only moves him to the private recovery suite a few doors down. It’s sparsely furnished, and looks more like a hotel room than something you’d find in a hospital, but the bed’s a double and looks so fucking inviting, Eggsy’s legs threaten to buckle beneath him just glancing at it. It doesn’t take a lot of persuasion before he’s collapsing facedown onto it, moaning appreciatively at the softness of the sheets. And the mattress, God, the mattress feels like a fucking marshmallow.

“You’ll come an’ get me, right?” he asks once he’s managed to unstick his tongue, turning his head to squint up at the Dom through fatigue-itchy eyes. “If somethin’ happens to Harry? Promise?”

“I promise.” Merlin gives his ankle a brief squeeze, before tugging off Eggsy’s unlaced shoes and pulling the blankets up over his legs. “Now go to sleep.”

Eggsy does.

Chapter End Notes

Bit of a shorter chapter this time, saving up for some major Harry/Eggsy fluff in the next one. Not gonna lie, totally stoked for domestic Harry/Eggsy/Merlin with bonus Roxy cuddles. This threesome is my life. I'm being a terrible author and totally neglecting my other fics, but I'm so addicted to Kingsman at the mo, I just can't help it!

Hope you enjoyed! I've loved hearing from you, thank you all so much for your lovely feedback. Let me know if there's anything specific you'd like to see!

More coming in a couple of weeks. ;)
JB buts his head against Eggy’s shin, huffing muffled little *woofs* around the bright red ball in his mouth, back end vibrating with the enthusiasm of his tail-wagging.

“Again?” Eggy asks, amused, lowering a hand palm-upwards and chuckling when the dog obligingly drops the ball into it. “You sure?”

The pug’s tongue lolls out, front paws dancing against the grass in half-aborted jumps as the pup tries to remember his obedience training in the midst of his obvious excitement. Eggy rubs the back of his hand gently against JB’s wrinkled forehead, sniffing a grin when the pug tries to keep his gaze fixed on the ball and ends up going cross-eyed in the process.

“Alright,” the Sub relents. “But this is the last one, yeah? Can’t stay out here all day, darlin’, gonna freeze my arse off.”

Eggy tosses the ball across the open stretch of grass, using mostly wrist-action to avoid pulling on his injuries and watching as JB scampers off after it with his usual lack of grace, snorting excitedly. A sudden gust of wind picks up and he grits his teeth as his abused muscles tense against the cold, wrapping his (no doubt insanely expensive) Kingsman jacket tighter around his aching frame.

It’s been three days since the Valentine Massacre, and he still feels like he’s just been hit by a fucking bus. His torso’s now a multi-coloured canvas of darkened bruises, a mottled array of red and blue and purple and yellow to match his swollen left cheek. The cut above his eye has finally begun to knit back together again with the help of a few Steri-strips, having reopened and started bleeding the previous morning after he’d overbalanced and bumped his head against the corner of his bedside table. He’s taken to putting on his shoes and socks *sitting down* since then, just in case.

A couple of cold droplets splash against the back of his hand suddenly, and he tilts his head back to send the cloudy sky a dour look.

“Don’t you fucking *dare*.”

“First sign of madness, you know,” Roxy tells him cheerfully, sinking down onto the stone bench beside him, discreetly ignoring the way that Eggy almost has a fucking heart attack at her sudden appearance. She loops her arm through his, leaning in to brush a chaste kiss against his temple. “You look bloody awful.”

Eggy smiles, even though it pulls on his still-healing lip. “Ta, Rox.”

He extends his free hand to towards Archie as the poodle comes trotting across the grass towards them. The dog snuffles at his fingers and gives his knuckles an obligatory lick, tail wagging, before moving to sit pressed up against Roxy’s outer thigh, looking effortlessly elegant in a way that Eggy’s dog never will.

Still, Archie ain’t half as cute as JB. Not that he’s bonkers enough to say that to Roxy’s face, mind.
The Dom yawns as she sets her thermos mug down on the corner of the bench, gloved fingers settling lightly over his own half-frozen ones. “How’s Harry doing?”

“Alright, I guess,” he answers, leaning a hairsbreadth closer to the left so that their shoulders are touching. “They did another brain scan earlier today. You know, to check for swellin’ an’ stuff? Well, the docs are all sayin’ it looks even better than the last one, so I guess that’s somethin’. An’ Merlin says Harry started talkin’ again last night.”

“Oh Eggy, that’s great,” Roxy enthuses, squeezing his arm. “What did he say?”

He manages another smile, although something in his chest aches at the same time. “Told Merlin he looked like shit an’ asked him for a cuppa.”

The Dom throws her head back and laughs, an open and carefree sound. His smile twitches wider in response.

Eggsy only wishes he’d been there to see it himself. Last night marked the fifth occasion that Harry had woken up post-surgery, skull patched up and pressure bandages removed and looking far less ghastly than he had done initially, but Eggsy hasn’t been there to witness even one of them. And it’s not like he ain’t spending enough time at Harry’s bedside or nothing – he and Merlin have been rotating in six-hour shifts to sit with him around the clock, so that Harry’s got a familiar face to wake up to. It’s not his fault that the bloke just seems to prefer waking up when it’s Merlin’s turn. Picky bastard.

“God, it’s bloody freezing out here.” Roxy tugs her coat closer around her to guard against the bitterly cold breeze. “Wouldn’t you rather be inside?”

“Merlin kicked me out of Harry’s room again.” Eggsy ain’t sulking, but it’s a close thing. “Said I needed to get some fresh air. So, this is me.” He sweeps out a hand in a broad gesture to indicate the vast, grassy lawns of Kingsman HQ. “Gettin’ some fuckin’ fresh air.”

Deep down, he knows that Merlin’s only looking out for him. And truth be told, he’d been going stir crazy down in the windowless infirmary, with only the rhythmic whir of the drip machine to distract him from Harry’s comatose state. The last time his mentor had wound up in a coma, Eggsy had been able to use his Kingsman training as a distraction, filling the time between visits to the infirmary with long hours of studying and rigorous exercise. But he’s got none of that now. He’s been banned from the gym and the firing range until he’s been deemed medically fit, and Merlin’s benched him from active duty for at least another week or more to give his ribs time to heal, so he can’t even help Roxy and the others with the national security stuff. Least he’s got JB to keep him company now – Roxy, bless her fuckin’ badass heart, had popped over to check up on his Mum and Daisy a couple of days ago, under the ruse of collecting ‘her’ dog that Eggsy had been ‘dogsitting’ before the world went to shit. He’d come back from a long six-hour stint at Harry’s bedside to find JB curled up on his jacket at the foot of the bed, and a note from Roxy telling him he owed her a pint.

Eggsy might’ve got a bit teary-eyed at their reunion, but in his defence it had been a helluva long day, and he’d never really been separated from the pug for more than a few hours before.

But even though JB’s been brill at helping to keep him occupied outside the infirmary, there ain’t much he can do to distract Eggsy from how pale and sick Harry looks, all wired up to them cardiac monitors and drip machines. He’s stuck for hours at a time in the armchair at Harry’s bedside, watching over the Dom, waiting. And waiting. And waiting. But Harry hasn’t shown any further signs of wanting to wake up on his watch. Not even a fucking twitch. Just the steady rise and fall of his chest to reassure Eggsy that he isn’t actually as dead as he looks.
A part of him yearns to go back home to his Mum, but he knows he’d only scare her, showing up on her doorstep looking like he’s gone ten rounds with a brick wall. And although it makes him feel like a selfish prick, he can’t help wanting to stay close to Harry too, just in case something happens. His Mum and Daisy are alive and unhurt, and Dean’s in the hospital after getting stabbed by one of his own goons (good riddance), so for the moment they’re both safe and it ain’t like he’d be able to do much at home except sit around and fret over Harry. There’s a nationwide clean-up process currently underway, run mostly by volunteers, so he’s told his Mum that he’s signed himself up to the movement and been sent further outside the city to help with the hefty task of clearing the blocked motorways of car wreckages and broken debris so that supplies can start moving in and out of London again. It’s a handy way of excusing his extended period of absence, and his Mum had bought the lie without question.

“I’m so proud of you, babe,” she’d told him tearfully over the phone that morning, and Eggsy had tried not to choke on his own guilt.

“You look tired,” Roxy comments, the soft leather of her gloved fingers brushing over his knuckles. “Are your ribs still keeping you up?”

Eggsy gives a one-shouldered shrug, aware by now which muscles he’s better off not using. “Sometimes. Guess it’s mostly just stuff on my mind, y’know?” Then his lips twitch up in another smile. “Besides, I ain’t used to sleepin’ on my own. It’s too quiet without you snorin’ like a bloody chainsaw behind me.”

Roxy smacks the side of his leg, but there’s an amused gleam in her eyes. “Gary Unwin, you fibber!”

He laughs, catching her hand when she tries to smack him again. “Kiddin’, kiddin’! Ow, Rox, Jesus.”

“I’d been planning on letting you have this,” the Dom tells him, sitting back and picking up her thermos mug from the edge of the bench. “But I don’t know if you deserve it now.”

“Aw, c’mon, darlin’,” Eggsy wheedles, leaning in to smooch an unnecessarily loud kiss against her cheek, grinning when she wrinkles her nose and cracks a smile. “You know you love me really.”

The Dom heaves a put-upon sigh, but hands over the flask. “Ace.” Eggsy beams, wrapping his cold hands around the metal and popping the cap to take a huge gulp of the hot, strong coffee (sweetened with just a little too much sugar, the way Roxy likes it), and moaning appreciatively. “Oh my god, you’re a lifesaver.”

“Mm-hm,” she agrees, looking smug. Then she rubs her arms briskly, giving a visible shudder. “Fuck this, I’m frozen. Think it’s time for a run.” She pushes herself to her feet and gives Eggsy a sympathetic smile. “I’d invite you along, but I’m under strict orders to make sure you avoid strenuous exercise. Merlin doesn’t make idle threats, as I’m sure you’re aware.”

“Yeah, yeah. Try not to fall in any bushes, love,” Eggsy tells her pleasantly, and winces when she kicks his ankle in retribution.

“Shut up, that happened once.” Turning her chin up with an air of exaggerated dignity, she pats the side of her leg. “Come on, Archie.”

Smiling, Eggsy watches her set off at a jog, the poodle trotting along happily beside her. At his feet, JB gives a particularly enthusiastic snort, and he glances down at the pug to see that he’s set the ball
next to Eggsy’s boot and has been waiting patiently for it to be thrown again. Seeing that he’s caught the Sub’s attention, JB shifts from paw to paw eagerly, wheezing out a croaky bark as he gazes up at his human expectantly.

Eggsy sighs, reaching down to scratch JB on the head before scooping up the ball. “Alright, alright, one more. But this is the last one, yeah?”

“Evenin’, Dumbledore.”

Merlin glances up from his laptop with a tired-looking half smile, then peers down at his wristwatch in apparent surprise. “Is it that time already?”

“Yep.” Eggsy crosses over to the leather armchair at the bedside and nudges the Dom in the shoulder. “Naff off, guv, it’s my turn.”

“Alright, keep your breeks on,” the Scotsman relents, amused, tapping a final few commands into his laptop before he closes it, slipping the device into the satchel at his feet. “I presume you’ve already eaten?”

“Yes, Merlin,” the Sub confirms, feigning a put-upon sigh.

He knows what’s expected of him now. He’d skipped dinner two days ago in his eagerness to take over from Merlin and return to Harry’s bedside, only to have the Dom shoo him right back out the door again with firm instructions to go and get something to eat first. And Eggsy might act all long-suffering about the man’s fussing, but really it’s just for show – underneath it all, he’s preening at the Dom’s nesting habits. He is a Sub, after all, and there’s no suppressing his natural biological instincts.

“Good lad,” the Dom murmurs without missing a beat, and Eggsy feels his knees judder for a moment at the praise, the way they always seem to around the other man at the moment.

He leans against the side of Merlin’s armchair a little more, wishing the soft leather cushioning wasn’t separating him from the warmth of the Dom’s skin and the softness of his cashmere jumper. Seriously, Eggsy’s had dreams about those fucking jumpers these past couple of nights. He wants to rub his face up against them and inhale Merlin’s scent – tea and mint and some sort of subtle, faintly sweet cologne. Fuck, he’s so far gone on the man it’s unreal. And it’s also bloody inappropriate. To be so utterly enraptured by Merlin when the Dom’s partner lies in a state of catatonia only two feet
But to be fair, Eggsy’s totally gaga for Harry too, so it ain’t like he’s taking advantage of the situation or nothing.

“Are you alright?” Merlin asks, and Eggsy realises he’s been leaning silently against the man’s armchair for perhaps a moment too long.

“Mm,” he hums, cheeks heating as his gaze flickers across the monitors briefly to make sure everything looks alright, before settling on Harry himself.

The man looks an even better colour than he had done earlier that afternoon, apart from the darkened bruising around his left eye. They’ve changed his dressings again while Eggsy’s been away – there are a couple of neat black stitches peeking out from beneath the op-site pad at the corner of his half-shaved eyebrow, the white dressing spanning from socket to ear, hiding the rest of the wound from sight.

“How’s he been?”

Merlin leans forward slowly and settles a hand over Harry’s in an easy, familiar motion, thumb brushing against the man’s knuckles. “He came around for a couple of minutes this time. Managed a wee sip of water. Told me I was working ‘too bloody hard’. Asked for his slippers.” The Dom turns his head to look at Eggsy, his gaze so full of tenderness and warmth that sets Eggsy’s heart a-fluttering. “He asked about you, too. Wanted to know if you were alright.”

Eggsy doesn’t quite sag with relief, but it’s a close thing. Head injuries are tricky, and TV and movies always tend to dramatize amnesia to the extreme, so there had been a very small, panic-stricken part of Eggsy’s brain that had convinced itself that Harry wouldn’t remember anything about him. It had been a pretty fucking stupid fear, given that all the scans and stuff had shown minimal brain damage, but still...it had been one of the main reasons he’d not been sleeping well these past few days. And now that he knows his fear isn’t a reality...fuck. It’s like a ten-stone weight’s been lifted from his shoulders.

“Are you sure you’re up for this?” Merlin asks him, eyeing him closely. “You look about ready to pass out.”

“M’alright,” Eggsy insists. “An’ you’re one to talk. When’s the last time you slept anyhow?”

Merlin sighs, pulling off his glasses to rub tiredly at his eyes. “God knows.”

To be quite frank, the Dom looks like shit. Very attractive, Eggsy-would-still-like-to-climb-him-like-a-tree shit, but shit nonetheless. Currently considered to be Kingsman’s highest ranking knight alongside Percival, Merlin seems to have shouldered the brunt of Arthur’s responsibilities in addition to his usual role as head of the tech department and chief handler. Somehow he’s managed to keep Kingsman HQ running smoothly, help prevent the collapse of modern society in the wake of the Valentine Massacre, and sit beside his comatose lover all at once. Eggsy wants to have a stroke just looking at the poor bastard. Up until now, the man’s appeared remarkably unfazed by it all, but it’s clear that the emotional strain and the sleep deprivation is finally starting to get to him.

“Go on,” Eggsy murmurs, nudging him in the shoulder a second time. “I got this.”

The Dom sighs again, but doesn’t argue the point. Instead he pushes himself to his feet slowly (Eggsy can practically feel his own joints creaking in sympathy), and hooks the strap of the laptop bag across his shoulders as he leans over Harry’s bed, brushing the man’s fringe away from the away.
uninjured side of his forehead and pressing a kiss to the skin there. Eggsy averts his gaze out of respect, warmth stirring in his chest at the intimate gesture, a deep-down part of him secretly preening that Merlin seems comfortable enough with his presence to be intimate at all. It’s something he’s certain Merlin would never have done in front of him a week ago, but apparently saving the world together changes things. That, and Eggsy’s had an earth-shattering Drop and a huge fucking meltdown on the man’s shoulder over the course of the past three days. There ain’t really any boundaries left to cross.

“I’ll be just down the hallway if you need me,” Merlin says, a hand coming up to rest on the small of Eggsy’s back, warm through the thin material of his (borrowed) shirt. “If I’m not awake by two, come and give me a wee nudge, alright?”

“Nah, bruv, you need sleep way more than I do,” he argues, leaning into the contact a little. Merlin’s gotten freer with both his touch and his praise these past few days, to the point where Eggsy’s starting to crave it whenever they’re in the same room.

“That wasn’t a request, lad,” the Dom tells him, his tone infinitely patient but also brooking no argument. “You’re to wake me up if I’m not back in six hours. Understood?”

Suppressing a shiver at the man’s effortless authority, Eggsy nods. “Yes, sir.”

“Thank you.” Merlin’s hand slides slowly up Eggsy’s spine to gently squeeze his nape. “Be good.”

And then he’s gone, and Eggsy’s left standing there with a hand clutching onto the back of the armchair for dear life, knees turned to jelly with the impulse to kneel, heart fluttering a giddy samba in his chest. He wonders if Merlin has any idea just how much Eggsy wants him. Maybe the man doesn’t even realise what he’s doing; a lot of those casual touches and gentle orders probably stem from Merlin’s natural protective instincts. The man’s a Dom after all. A bloody Alpha Dom, judging by how easily he’d gotten all those posh wankers to follow his orders during training. Even Charlie, the Toppiest fucking Top that Eggsy’s ever had the displeasure of knowing, hadn’t tried to push back against the chain of command. Merlin just has this natural air of authority; it’s effortless, written into his voice and his posture and his calm, assessing gaze. Subjugation is the only option, and with Merlin it’s so easy. He’s never given Eggsy a reason to fight against that instinctive pull.

Not like Dean. Dominants like Dean wield authority like a sledgehammer, the force of their commands hitting you like a slap to the face, with obedience always expected but rarely rewarded. The man’s very presence is usually enough to unsettle him, carefully-suppressed Submissive instincts going haywire at the Dom’s overbearing personality, caught between the need to back down from someone his body recognises as being strong and powerful and Dom, and the impulse to punch Dean’s fucking lights out for being an abusive bastard.

Maybe that’s why he’d fallen so hard and so fast for Harry. After Dean’s stifling, overly domineering presence, Harry had been a breath of fresh air. Effortlessly authoritative in a manner similar to Merlin, but quieter, calmer, with a sort of gentle patience that wrapped itself around Eggsy’s half-starved Submissive core like a woollen blanket. Eggsy’s knees had never felt so weak. It had taken every last ounce of his self-control to keep from sinking down onto the lush carpet of the dressing room elevator during his first visit to the shop.

“I see a young man with potential,” Harry had murmured, his hand exerting gentle pressure against the small of Eggsy’s back, kindness in his gaze as their eyes met in the mirror. “A young man who is loyal. Who can do as he’s asked, and who wants to do something good with his life.”

There had been a moment – a terrifying stretch of two or three seconds – when Eggsy’s brain had latched onto the words “do as he’s asked” and sent him into a flat-out panic, convinced that the
Dom had seen through his carefully fabricated Dynamic shield, that somehow Harry knew Eggsy was a Sub. But then the moment had passed, Harry’s expression unchanging, nothing in his posture indicating that he intended to exert his Dominance on the younger man, and he’d been able to breathe easy again. Besides, after seeing Harry’s soft, amused smile at his knowledge of *My Fair Lady*, Eggsy had forgotten all about his reservations regarding the man. He’d been too overwhelmed by the realisation that he was willing to do anything and everything possible to win the man’s favour, and if that meant becoming a Kingsman, so be it.

Eggsy sighs tiredly, dragging a hand down his face as he leans forward, elbows resting on the edge of Harry’s mattress.

“Why’d you have to be so fuckin’ perfect?” he murmurs, propping his chin up in his hand and watching the steady rise and fall of Harry’s chest. “You an’ Merlin both. My life was totally uncomplicated before I met the two of you, an’ now look at me. I’m a bloody mess.”

He crosses his arms on top of the bedcovers, close enough to Harry’s arm that he can feel the man’s body heat radiating against the backs of his fingers, and rests his head in the comfy nest they create. He’s so fucking tired. Doesn’t help that the medical staff have dimmed the lights to their ‘night setting’ (something about trying to maintain the sleep/wake cycle, apparently – though what difference it makes when Harry’s still unconscious, Eggsy can’t honestly say for sure). And it’s warm, and his head hurts, and closing his eyes for a couple of minutes sounds like a really good idea…

There are fingers combing gently through his hair.

Eggsy’s still half-asleep, wrapped up snugly in the warmth of semi-consciousness, unwilling to surrender his hold on the cosiness of slumber but unable to fully submerge himself back in the dreamworld now that he’s aware of the hand resting softly on the crown of his head.

At first he thinks it’s Merlin, come to relieve him from Harry-sitting duty. He gives a soft, contented hum at the man’s soothing touch, stirring a little further into wakefulness but keeping his eyes resolutely closed. If he opens them, Merlin might stop, and he doesn’t want that.

The fingers card through his hair again, sending a pleasant sort of warmth pulsing through him, and he hums a second time, rubbing his face against the blankets beneath his cheek sleepily.

“Eggsy.”

He freezes, eyes snapping open as his heart clenches in his chest. *That’s not Merlin.*

Slowly, careful not to dislodge the hand in his hair in case he somehow manages to break the spell, Eggsy tilts his head back far enough to glance up the bed, something hot and bright swelling in his chest when he’s met with a familiar (albeit tired) half-smile.

“Good evening,” the man says, quiet and hoarse and weighed down by his obvious fatigue, but *fuck*, he’s talking. He’s awake and he’s talking. He’s talking to Eggsy. Bloody hell.

And suddenly Eggsy can’t think of anything to say to him. It’s ridiculous – he’s spent the past three days mentally preparing himself for the moment Harry that wakes up; he’s had fucking daydreams
about it, about what he’ll say, about how he’ll put his relief and gratitude into words. He’s contemplated blurt ing out the truth, revealing his Dynamic willingly for the first time in his life, but he’s talked himself down from that one already. It’s too big a revelation for a man who’s just come out of a semi-comatose state. But he’d planned a whole ‘welcome back to the land of the living’ speech, with witty jokes and biting sarcasm and everything. But in the face of Harry, awake and alive and smiling at him, he can’t remember a damn word of it.

Instead, he manages a soft and slightly tremulous. “Took you long enough, bruv.”

And it’s fucking lame as far as opening lines go, but it seems to be the right thing to say, because Harry’s smile is curling wider, the corner of his unbruised eye wrinkling in fond amusement, and Eggsy’s just so fucking relieved he could cry.

“My apologies.” Harry’s fingers move through his hair again, this time sliding down past his ear until there’s a warm hand cupping the side of his jaw carefully. “What on earth happened to your face?”

And it’s so typically Harry, to be worried about a few cuts and bruises when he just got shot in the fucking head, that Eggsy can’t quite choke down the half-laugh, half-sob that manages to escape from the tightening heat of his throat.

“Got into a scuffle with some of Valentine’s thugs,” he manages, forcing a smile that feels traitorously wobbly, his eyes stinging. “Had to teach ‘em some manners, didn’t I?”

The worry’s still there in Harry’s gaze, and it makes his chest ache to see it. The last time he’d seen those eyes, the Dom had looked so fucking disappointed that his protégé had failed the dog-shooting test, sadness and frustration written into his features in a way that had almost killed Eggsy. Now there’s just warmth and concern and gentle affection, and it’s killing him for an entirely different reason.

“I’m alright,” he promises, lifting a hand to hook his fingers over Harry’s arm gently. “Not as bad as it looks.”

Harry’s throat moves as he swallows, tongue running over his dry bottom lip before he points out, “But serious enough to be taken off active duty.”

Oooh, Merlin. That bloody snitch.

“I’m fine,” Eggsy insists, and promptly contradicts himself when he twists around to reach for the glass of water on the bedside cabinet and pulls the hell out of his injured muscles. He sees Harry arch a speculating eyebrow and huffs an embarrassed “shut up”, hiding his wince as he lifts the glass and angles the straw towards Harry’s lips. “Here, drink some o’ this.”

“Thank you.”

“Want me to get Merlin?” he asks, once the Dom’s finished drinking and has let his head drop back against the pillow again, looking pale and exhausted, breathing a little more heavily than before.

Harry pats his hand gently. “That’s quite alright,” he murmurs, the words slurring a little with fatigue. “I must confess…I’m rather enjoying your company. Although I…I do feel a tad…”

And just like that, he’s gone again.

Eggsy’s gaze darts towards the monitors at the bedside, eyeing the steady rhythm of his vitals, the unchanging cardiac trace, and he feels his momentary spike panic recede. The Dom’s just sleeping. Everything’s fine.
Fuck, everything’s better than fine. Harry had woken up. Harry had talked to him. Harry had stroked his fucking hair.

He knows he’s smiling dopily, but there ain’t much he can do to stop it. He’s just so fucking happy. He glances down at where the Dom’s fingers are still resting gently across the back of his knuckles, warmth swelling in his chest fit to burst, and lays his other hand over Harry’s to sandwich it between both of his own carefully.

“G’night, Sir;” he murmurs.

The moniker’s never fallen from his lips so easily. It just fits. Like with Merlin, it feels natural, almost as easy as breathing, and suddenly he’s fucking desperate to tell his mentor the truth. He’s been living a lie all his life, and he’s forced himself to be content with that, but he doesn’t want to keep secrets from Harry anymore.

Even if it alters the way the man looks at him, it’s better than spending the rest of his life pretending to be something he’s not. Right?

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed the chapter! Eggsy reveals all to his mentor in the next installment. :) Also, cuddles. And Eggsy finally giving into those tempting submissive urges. <3 xxx
Eggsy’s leg won’t stop bouncing, knee jiggling restlessly against the underside of Merlin’s desk as the handler calmly guides Roxy through a network of tunnels towards the extraction point.

“This take the next left, Lancelot,” the Dom instructs, his gaze fixed on the screen even as his fingers fly over the touch-sensitive keypad, relaying Roxy’s coordinates to the evac team. “There should be a ladder at the end of this shaft, it’ll lead you up through a manhole in the central plaza. I’m sending a car to your location; ETA two minutes.”

“Understood, Merlin.”

The Dom’s gaze flickers away from the screen briefly so that he can fix Eggsy with a quiet, assessing look, the crease between his eyebrows deepening as the Sub’s knee judders against the desks audibly.

Eggsy reins in the urge to jiggle his leg through willpower alone, wincing apologetically. Merlin has sent him more than one significant glance during Lancelot’s two-hour mission, but so far the younger man has elected to ignore him in favour of trying not to shit himself in nervous anticipation of his impending visit to the infirmary wing this afternoon. ’Cause fucking hell, this is it. Today’s the day he tells Harry the truth about his Dynamic.

He’s never been so fucking scared in his life.

It’s been over a week since the injured Dom first woke up from his semi-comatose state, and he’s come along in leaps and bounds these past few days, gaining strength by the hour. The medical team had moved Harry out of the Intensive Care bay earlier this morning (under Merlin’s watchful eye) and into a private side-room with minimal monitoring for the remainder of his recuperation – no whirring infusion pumps or drip stands, just a high-tech cuff on his wrist to keep an eye on his vitals. The Dom is, however, under strict orders to remain in bed unless otherwise instructed by the physiotherapist – turns out Harry’s a bloody awful patient, much to Eggsy’s amusement.

At least the man’s had company during his forced immobility – while Eggsy’s bruises have finally begun to fade and the cut above his eyebrow has scabbed over and started to heal properly, his ribs are still tender enough that any sort of upper-body physical exertion is currently out of the question. Needless to say, he’s been benched from active field duty for another week, and under strict orders from Merlin to stay out of the gym until his follow-up medical assessment next Monday.

Eggsy’s gonna go mental if they don’t leave off soon; he doesn’t do the whole ‘bedrest’ thing even when he’s proper poorly, so being restricted when he feels fucking fine is driving him bonkers.

And of course, with nothing to help distract him from his own thoughts, he’s gone and worked himself up into a right tizzy about the whole “surprise, Harry, I’m a Sub” thing.

He’d felt so sure about it the other day, but now? Now he’s fucking terrified.
“Eggsy,” Merlin says, low and firm, reaching beneath the desk to lay a restraining hand over his bouncing knee. “Stop it.”

The younger man freezes, wincing again. “Sorry, sir.”

Merlin exhales a grim sigh, lips thinned, and casts one last glance towards Roxy’s camera feed up on the wall-mounted screen to ensure that she’s safely in the extraction vehicle, before tapping at a few controls on his touch-panel.

“Guinevere, I’m transferring Lancelot’s feed to your station,” he says into the desk-mounted microphone. “Get her home safely.”

“Roger that, mon Capitan,” comes the cheerful reply, barely audible above the loud opera music that’s playing in the background.

Eggsy used to wonder why the two most tech-savvy knights in the Kingsman service refused to share the same lab, up until last week when he’d had the pleasure of meeting Guinevere in person. Suffice to say it’s no longer a question he needs answering. He’s seen Mei’s workspace. Compared to Merlin’s squeaky-clean, carefully-indexed tech lab, it’s a veritable rubbish dump. Albeit a very cool, predominately computer-based rubbish dump.

A warm hand is suddenly cupping the back of his neck, and Eggsy realises that the Dom must’ve scooted his chair closer while he was lost in thought. He glances up quickly, startled, and finds himself pinned beneath Merlin’s concerned gaze.

“You don’t have to go through with this,” he reminds the Sub. “Not if you don’t want to.”

Eggsy’s posture sags a little, tension seeping out of his tightly coiled muscles like the air out of a balloon as Merlin’s squeezes his nape gently.

“I do, though,” he insists. “You an’ Harry…you were kinda the only two people I ever really wanted to tell, y’know? But fuck if I know how.”

“I could come with you,” the Dom offers quietly. “If you think it’d help.”

"No," Eggsy shakes his head, but sends the senior agent a grateful look. “Thanks, guv. But this is somethin’ I need to do on my own, yeah?”

Merlin nods his understanding, and gives Eggsy’s nape another brief squeeze. “Well, you know where I am if you need me,” he murmurs. “And for what it’s worth? I’ve known Harry a hell of a long time. And I can promise you, lad, he won’t take it badly. Granted, he might be a wee bit surprised; God knows I was. But he’s not gonna hold it against you.”

The Dom’s reassurance acts as a soothing balm to the fretful fire in his chest, and he embraces the words gladly, letting them sink in. Merlin’s right (of course). Harry’s already seen him at his lowest, scuffed up and smelling like the inside of a holding cell after bailing Eggsy out of the slammer that fateful day last year. Look how far he’s come since then; he’s learned how to be a spy, mastered three foreign languages, and hell, he helped save the fucking world two weeks ago. Submissive or Dominant, he knows Harry’s proud of him for that. The man’s told him so half a dozen times during this past week alone. He won’t suddenly take it all back just ‘cause Eggsy’s a Sub, right? That’d be daft.

Aw, hell. Might as well get it over and done with; ‘bite the bullet’ and all that; face the music. Fuckin’ jazz hands an’ all.
Harry’s busy reading a newspaper when Eggsy reaches his private suite.

The Sub pauses in the doorway, taking in the room at a glance. Judging by all the expensive-looking flowers and professionally-arranged food hampers, the Dom’s received a fair few visitors since Eggsy last saw him at breakfast. It makes sense, he supposes – knowing what he does of Harry, he doubts the man would’ve been keen to receive visitors while he was still dressed in a hospital gown, with wires and tubes sticking out of him all over the place. The Dom must’ve passed on a memo or something this morning to let everyone know that he was finally up for a bit of company.

Truthfully, though, Harry’s looking loads better now that he’s out of ICU. He’s sitting propped up in bed, wearing a pair of pale blue pyjamas and wrapped snugly in his dark red dressing gown, hair perfectly styled, the side-parting altered by an inch so that it almost covers up the patch of scalp from left temple to ear that the surgeons had been forced to shave. There’s still a sickly sort of pallor to his skin, and a few more weary lines etched into his face, but the swelling and bruising have all but faded from around his left eye. He looks as devilishly handsome as the day Eggsy first met him.

“It isn’t polite to stare,” the Dom says without looking up from his paper, although his tone is amused rather than scolding.

“Ain’t polite to ignore visitors, neither,” Eggsy replies, falling easily into their usual pattern of faux-arguing. “Thought you was all about good manners an’ shit?”

“Insubordination.” Harry folds the paper neatly in one smooth motion and sets it down on his table. “I won’t stand for it.”

Eggsy grins, leaning back against the door to close it. “Yeah? Gonna grass me up to Merlin?”

“I ought to.” Harry’s detached expression slips, warming into his usual quiet, pleasant half-smile. “But I have a feeling when it comes to you, he’s rather a pushover.”

“I’m tellin’ him you said that,” the Sub warns, ducking his head to hide the pleased flush that’s threatening to heat his cheeks.

“Do so at your own peril, my dear Eggsy.” Harry reaches for a fancy-looking box on his table, nodding towards the armchair at the bedside. “Come and sit down. There’s something I’d like you to try.”

“Yeah?” Eggsy’s curiosity temporarily distracts him from the mission at hand, and he drops down
into the padded leather seat eagerly, scooting the chair closer so that his knees are pressed up against the edge of Harry’s mattress. Then a thought occurs to him, and his grin falters. “Wait. This ain’t gonna be like that time you made me try fish eggs, is it?”

Harry’s smile is fond and amused. “It’s a little sweeter than caviar, I’ll say that much.”

“I ain’t eatin’ jellied eels, neither,” Eggsy tells him. Honestly, posh food is so fucking weird. “Just so we’re clear.”

“Perfectly.” The Dom removes the lid carefully, lips twitching. “There’s a delightful café in central Lübeck that offers an exquisite range of confectionery. Bedivere, God bless him, made a brief stop there on his way home from Germany yesterday afternoon.” He offers the open box to Eggsy. “Try one. I wager you’ll be surprised.”

“That’s what you said about the caviar an’ all,” the Sub mutters, but he leans closer anyway, glancing briefly at the varying shapes and colours of what he assumes are chocolates (although who can honestly tell when it comes to posh shit; them god-awful fish eggs had come topped with a fucking gold leaf), before selecting a safe-looking oval one. “Cheers, guv.”

He bites it in half, still semi-suspicious after the caviar incident from last month. The outer chocolate shell breaks unresistingly, revealing a soft centre that seems to melt on his tongue, flooding his mouth with its rich sweetness and holy shit, he’s found heaven.

“Fuck me, that’s good,” he moans, uncaring that his mouth is full.

Harry’s expression is tellingly satisfied as he puts the lid back on the box. “Quite.”

“Next time there’s a mission in Germany, you can put my name down.” Eggsy pops the second half of the chocolate-cherry-marzipan-sex into his mouth and tips his head back with another moan. “I’m so there.”

“I’ll keep that in mind.” Harry takes a dainty sip of his tea, and Eggsy has a feeling he’s hiding a smile behind the delicate china cup. “I take it Lancelot’s mission was a success?”

The Sub nods, sucking a smudge of chocolate from the pad of his thumb. “Yeah, she’s fine. Got the intel, decked a few bad guys, an’ went speedin’ off into the sunset.”

“What a wonderfully detailed report,” the older man remarks blandly. “Perhaps I ought to have taken notes.”

Eggsy grins at him. “Short an’ sweet’s the way to go, innit?”

“Apparently so.” The Dom hides another smile behind his teacup. “No JB today?”

“Nah, he’s upstairs with Roxy’s poodle,” Eggsy explains. “Keepin’ him company ‘til Lance gets back from Norway.”

“Ahh.” Harry swirls the tea around in his cup carefully, his expression mild. “I must confess, dear boy, I hadn’t expected to see you until our appointment this afternoon. Not that I don’t appreciate the company, of course, but why the sudden change in plans?”

Eggsy gives a one-shouldered shrug, averting his gaze, feeling as though the eyes of the nation are suddenly on him. “Nothin’ special. Figured you might be getting’ bored stuck in here all day, that’s all.”
“Mm.” The Dom’s brow creases fractionally and he tilts his head a little to the side, regarding Eggsy closely. “Something’s troubling you.”

_Fuck._ Why does the man have to be so bloody perceptive about everything? The nervous butterflies in Eggsy’s stomach renew their frantic fluttering as his heartbeat begins to quicken, the skin on the back of his neck pricking as the hairs stand on end. Shit, son, calm the _fuck_ down. Harry doesn’t even know anything, not yet. Fucking _breathe._

He’s fine. He’s got this.

“I know Merlin told you about everythin’ that happened after you…after the thing at the church,” he begins falteringly. “The whole showdown with Valentine an’ stuff at his secret bunker?”

Harry nods, setting his china cup back in its matching saucer and pushing the rolling table out of the way to give Eggsy his full attention. “He did, yes. I also took the liberty of watching the events recorded by your Kingsman glasses.” His smile is subtle and proud. “Your form was excellent, by the way.”

Eggsy can’t quite suppress the flush of pleasure that heats his cheeks at Harry’s gentle praise, and ducks his head a little to hide his smile. “Yeah, well. I learned from the best, didn’t I?” Then he recovers enough to remember where he wants this conversation to go, and the smile slips again. “Did Merlin mention anythin’ about what happened…afterwards?”

“Afterwards?” Harry echoes patiently.

“After I killed Valentine,” Eggsy clarifies, rubbing his sweaty palms against his trousers, fingers twitching as his pulse starts to throb in his ears. “On the plane goin’ home. Everythin’ sorta came rushin’ back to me all at once; I mean, I still thought _you_ was dead, an’ I’d just killed a fuckload of people, an’ I didn’t even know if Mum an’ Daisy was alright. So…well, I kinda had a bit of a freak-out, yeah?”

“Quite understandable,” the Dom reassures, and _fuck_, why does he have to be so bloody _nice_ about everything? The kindness in his voice is making this even harder. “Going by what I witnessed, you went through a significantly traumatic experience. Coupled with the loss of adrenaline in the wake of your victory, I’m afraid emotional repercussions were somewhat unavoidable.”

Eggsy takes a deep, steadying breath, and then another, gaze fixed on a crease in Harry’s bedsheets because he can’t bear to witness the man’s reaction to what he has to say next.

“It was a Drop,” he confesses, relieved that he manages to keep his voice even. “Ain’t had one in years, and _never_ one that bad – felt like I was _dyin’_ at first, an’ it came out of fuckin’ nowhere. Scared the shit out of Roxy, but she realised what was goin’ on pretty quick. An’ Merlin was there to help pull me out of it, so I didn’t need Ritinal or nothin’ like that.”

He wets his lips, hands clenching and unclenching in his lap. “Merlin said it didn’t even matter if I was a Sub. He said nobody else in the Service had to know; that I could keep it a secret an’ still be marked down as a Dom on my official records an’ stuff. But I wanted _you_ to know, ‘cause…well, just ‘cause.”

There’s a beat of silence in which Eggsy swears his heartbeat must be audible even to Harry, it’s pulsing that fucking loud in his own ears. Then a large, gentle hand settles over one of his clenched fists, and everything in him _freezes._

“You truly are a remarkable young man,” Harry murmurs, a tender sort of warmth in his voice that
immediately soothes Eggsy’s frayed nerves. The Dom’s thumb strokes over the sensitive skin of his wrist. “Thank you for confiding in me, Eggsy. I can’t even begin to imagine how hard it must have been for you, keeping it a secret all these years. I shan’t tell a soul; you have my word.”

And just like that, Eggsy feels as though a huge weight’s been lifted from his shoulders. He kinda wants to grab his mentor’s hand and hug it to his chest and never let go. Harry finally knows. And the world hasn’t come to an end. *Fuck yeah.*

Warm, slightly calloused fingers curl beneath his chin, tilting his head upwards an inch or so and bringing his eyes up with it. Harry’s gaze is filled with understanding, but there’s affection there too, and pride, and concern, and all of it at once is overwhelming for Eggsy’s already-worn emotional volatility. It hurts just *looking* at the Dom; his chest aches with relief and hope and want, and it’s *too fucking much.*

Harry’s thumb brushes gently against his jawline. “Are you alright?”

*No,* Eggsy doesn’t say, because his throat’s grown hot and tight and he’s too busy trying to will the moisture back behind his eyelids. *You’re gonna make me cry again, you beautiful bastard.*

And suddenly there’s a hand curling around his wrist and *tugging,* and he’s being pulled up and out of the armchair. He somehow ends up half-perched, half-slumped on the edge of the mattress, but he doesn’t have time to register the logistics of it all because Harry’s arms are closing around him securely, fingers cupping over the back of his neck to guide his head down against the Dom’s shoulder, and it’s *everything* Eggsy’s ever wanted.

He makes a hoarse, strangled sort of noise in the back of his throat which sounds mortifyingly close to a whimper, bringing his arms up to clutch at the back of Harry’s dressing gown, face buried in the sweet-smelling fabric.

“I’m sorry,” Harry murmurs against his hair. “I didn’t mean to upset you.”

And the Sub can’t quite help but choke out a tearful laugh at that, because it’s just so *Harry*; to be the perfect, polite, apologetic gentleman when Eggsy’s the one blubbering over nothing. Again. *Fuck,* sometimes he hates his Submissive side. He ought to be grinning like a loon, not crying into Harry’s shoulder, but his instincts are telling him to *cling* and *cuddle* and *tremble like a fucking leaf.* Bloody biology.

“Fuck,” he says croakily, once he’s managed to get his throat working again. “This wasn’t supposed to happen. Sorry.”

“That’s quite alright, dear boy,” Harry reassures, stroking his hand over the back of Eggsy’s head a couple of times, smoothing his hair down gently. “Take as much time as you need.”

It’s not every day an opportunity like this presents itself, and Eggsy ain’t *totally* daft. So he clings just a little bit harder and a little bit longer and basks in the all-encompassing feeling of relief, sating a hunger that’s been gnawing at him for almost a year now, ever since he first met Harry Hart outside that police station. The Dom makes appropriately soothing noises every so often, his arms wrapped snugly around Eggsy’s frame, a hand stroking from his hair to his nape and back again, and it’s *fucking perfect.*

For the first time in his life, Eggsy Unwin feels utterly content.
“Thing is, I’ve been with loads of Doms in the past, right?” Eggsy says, watching his toes pop up out of the water at the other end of the bathtub. “But I ain’t never felt like that before.”

“Like what?” Roxy encourages, raising her voice to be heard above the wet spattering of the shower.

Eggsy leans back, resting his head against the smooth edge of the tub and sinking down a little further to let the warm water envelop him up to his shoulders. “Like nothin’ else in the world mattered anymore. Could’ve been flashin’ my bollocks to the Queen, an’ I still wouldn’t have cared.”

“And it’s the first time you’ve felt that way with a Dom?”

“Well, sort of.” He pokes at a mound of floating, rose-scented bubbles until they’ve formed a peak, then squashes them with his hand. “It happened once with Merlin, just after I found out Harry was alive. An’ I wasn’t kneelin’ or nothin’, so it wasn’t about being Topped. It was just…a bloody good hug.”

He closes his eyes, head still tilted back, a smile tugging at his lips as he remembers how safe and protected he’d felt in the Dom’s arms. In his head, Merlin’s voice and Harry’s become interchangeable, and the memory of that plush red dressing gown transitions into the softness of a cashmere jumper against his cheek. Then they’re both there, two sets of hands stroking over his head, rubbing his back, squeezing the nape of his neck. Harry’s calm, patient voice murmuring in one ear, Merlin’s low, shiver-inducing timbre rumbling in the other. Fuck, it’d be too much; both of them at once, holding Eggsy close like he’s something precious, something worth protecting – it’d fucking kill him.

The hiss of the shower cuts off abruptly. “Eggsy?”

“Mm?” Fuck, he’s comfortable. With the water making him weightless, he almost feels like he’s floating.

“Shit.”

There’s the sound of the shower door opening, and he keeps his eyes closed to give Roxy some privacy, letting the warm water ease the ache of his still-healing ribs. Eggsy had never been big on baths in the past, but he’s definitely become a fan over the course of his recovery. Turns out Ibuprofen can only do so much for muscle tenderness, while baths apparently work miracles.

Unfortunately, he’d made the big mistake of taking one earlier in the week when he was still bone-tired from sitting up with Harry all night, and had consequently fallen asleep ten minutes in. After a somewhat frantic Roxy had been forced to kick the door down in order to wake him up (wearing
those noise-cancelling headphones had been his second big mistake), she’d since insisted on chaperoning Eggy whenever he went for soak. He would’ve been more embarrassed about the whole thing if they hadn’t already shared bathroom facilities for almost a year during their Kingsman training. At the end of the day, there wasn’t anything left for her to see.

A hand settles in his hair suddenly, smoothing the damp strands back, and he opens his eyes to see Roxy looking down at him, her expression caught somewhere between fondness and concern. Her hair’s hidden beneath a twisted-up towel (a year of showering together and he still doesn’t know how she does that turban thing-emy-watsit), a second bath towel wrapped around her like a strapless dress as she perches carefully on the edge of the marble tub.

“What you felt with Harry,” she hedges carefully, spiking up his damp fringe with gentle fingers. “Have you considered the possibility that it might’ve been Subspace?”

Eggsy’s brow creases. “What, just ’cause he hugged me? I ain’t that sensitive, Rox, Jesus.”

“I never said you were.” Roxy tugs lightly on his hair. “But sometimes that’s all it takes, love. Attraction, heightened emotions, and physical contact.” She regards him closely for a moment, then holds up a hand. “One question, and please do tell me to fuck off if you’d rather not talk about it; have you actually experienced Subspace before? Only you said you’d been with other Doms…”

“I’ve fucked other Doms,” Eggsy clarifies calmly. Ain’t anything to be ashamed of, after all; he’s young, he’s fairly attractive, and he’s got one helluva libido. “Might’ve spent the past six years pretendin’ to be a Dom, but sometimes I had an itch that needed scratchin’, know what I mean? An’ fit Tops are easy to find if you wear super-skinny jeans an’ look eager enough.”

Not that he’d ever allowed himself to completely lower his guard. Even when he’d taken the added precaution of jumping on a couple of late-night trains to take him far away from his usual crowd, he’d always been hyper-aware of the partners he chose, careful not to give into his instincts too much in case he (or they) got attached, never leaving his number, never taking pictures of the Doms he picked out in case they somehow ended up online. And he was a fucking good Sub, too – they’d all told him so. But he’d learnt early on to make it clear from the start that he was looking for something with no strings attached. Wasn’t usually an issue – most Doms his age tended to be more than happy with a one-night stand anyhow.

“An’ even if it was Subspace,” Eggsy murmurs, allowing his eyes to creep shut again, “what difference does it make? Harry an’ Merlin ain’t exactly available. An’ even if they was, why the fuck would they be interested in a pleb like me?”

Roxy flicks him gently between the eyebrows. “Shut up. You’re bloody marvellous.”

“Mmm, talk dirty to me,” Eggsy purrs, cracking an eyelid open to grin up at her and then spluttering out a surprised laugh when she dunks his head under the water in retaliation. “Ugh, you’re mean,” he gripes, but gratefully accepts the towel she offers him, scrubbing bubbles out of his eyes. “Does Amelia know you have a vicious streak?”

“Oh, I think she rather enjoys my vicious streak,” Roxy tells him, a glint in her eye. Eggsy clutches a hand to his sternum, feigning surprise.

“An’ all this time I thought the two of you was cute together,” he laments. Then he considers the facts. “Although I s’pose it makes sense, her bein’ the masochistic type; she did volunteer to get herself drowned for the sake of a trainin’ exercise.”

It had come as a bit of a shock to learn that Roxy had known about Amelia’s subterfuge right from
the start. Apparently, while Eggsy and the rest of the recruits had been ushered out of the observation room and down the hallway towards their new, significantly dryer dormitory, Roxy had stayed behind to argue with Merlin, the older Dom all but using physical restraint to stop her from climbing back through the shattered two-way mirror to begin CPR on their ‘deceased’ comrade. Looking back, Eggsy himself feels pretty stupid that he hadn’t tried to do more; he’d been trained as a first-responder during his time with the Marines, so he should’ve bloody remembered that a lungful of water wasn’t actually enough to kill a person, so long as they were resuscitated properly.

Turns out Roxy hadn’t been willing to just sit back and let oxygen starvation kill a fellow candidate, and it had taken her threatening to deck Merlin (and fuck, Eggsy wishes he’d been a fly on the wall during that argument) for the Dom to finally drop the whole act and admit that none of it was real. At which point Amelia had apparently stood up, blown Roxy a kiss, and sauntered out of the flooded dorm like nothing had happened.

“When’s she transferrin’ over to us again?” Eggsy asks, sitting up to scrub at his wet hair before it can drip in his eyes any more.

He doesn’t miss Roxy’s quiet, proud smile. “When Berlin headquarters manages to find someone good enough to replace her. Don’t worry, Percy’s working on it.”

Over on the stool by the door, his phone gives a low, croaky bark – a recording of one of JB’s wheezy efforts at howling. He sees Roxy arch a judgemental eyebrow, and elbows her hip gently.

“It’s adorable an’ you know it,” he insists. “Pass it over?”

“Lazybones,” she grumbles, but moves away to fetch it nonetheless. “It’s a text from Merlin.”

He scrambles to get out of the tub, tender ribs forgotten in his haste to wrap the towel around his waist and exit the bath without braining himself on the tiled floor. “Oi, no peekin’!”

“I wasn’t,” Roxy protests, although she sounds more amused than offended at the accusation. She glances towards him, lips twitching, then pointedly averts her gaze the ceiling. “Although while we’re on the subject of peeking, you might want to tighten up that towel, Michelangelo.”

“Shit.” Eggsy makes the required adjustment quickly. “Sorry.”

She hands him the mobile with an amused grin, and very unsubtly tries to read the screen upside-down when he unlocks it and opens Merlin’s message.

*Pop down to Harry’s room when you’ve got a spare moment. There’s something we need to discuss with you. - M*

“Does that sound like a ‘good’ kinda discussion, or the ‘bad’ kind?” Eggsy demands, shoving the phone at Roxy, his stomach suddenly in knots. “I can’t fuckin’ tell.”

Roxy skims the text briefly, and when she glances up again it’s with a reassuring smile, so the frantic buzzing beneath Eggsy’s skin dies down a little.

“That’s the sort of text Merlin sends me when I’m about to get briefed for a mission,” she discloses calmly. “Trust me, you’ll know when he’s not happy. The sentences tend to be shorter, and he generally uses all-caps. You can practically feel the frowny-face emoji he wants to tack on the end. This?” She waves the phone at him, text message still glowing on the screen. “Happy, calm Merlin.”

Eggsy blinks at her, flabbergasted. “Wait, you managed to piss off Merlin enough for ‘im to send you angry texts? How the fuck did you do that?”
“He leant me Brenda last Thursday,” the Dom explains, and mimes holding and firing a particularly large gun. “For that messy extraction op in Budapest. I might’ve brought her back in more than one piece.” She waves away the issue with a dismissive hand gesture. “But never mind about that, go get dressed.”

“Bossy,” Eggsy gripes, but steps out of the steamy bathroom and into the comparatively cool bedroom, making a beeline for his chest of drawers.

“Wear a white shirt and that nice beige cardigan I got you for Christmas,” Roxy advises through the open door. “Makes you look cute.”

The Sub rolls his eyes, nudging Archie out of the way gently as the poodle trots over to sniff at his rose-scented skin. “It’s not a fuckin’ date, Rox.”

“Of course not,” she agrees without missing a beat. “Doesn’t hurt to make a good impression though, does it?”

Right. Beige cardigan it is.

Chapter End Notes

I hope that you can practically taste the Merlin/Harry/Eggsy Dynamic triad because IT’S FINALLY COMING. Don’t get me wrong, I love writing the build-up to this, but I have SO MANY domestic fluffy scenes already hashed out, I just wanna give you cuddles. And still-has-some-authority-issues Eggsy. And you-don’t-speak-to-me-like-that disciplinarian Merlin. And come-and-let-me-kiss-it-all-better Harry. Ooooh. So close. I fucking need this triad more than Eggsy does.

Hope you enjoyed the chapter! As always, I’d love to hear your thoughts. <3 xxxx
The two Doms are deep in conversation by the time Eggsy reaches the private rehabilitation suite. Harry’s still sitting propped up in bed, having exchanged his dressing gown for a navy woollen cardigan, brown buttons fastened up to his sternum with the pale cream of silk pyjamas peeking out from underneath (and come on, it’s downright unfair that the man can even make sleepwear look so fucking fancy). Merlin, seated in the armchair at the bedside, has his glasses dangling from the fingers of his right hand and a cup of tea in the other, posture open and relaxed as he nods along to whatever his partner’s saying.

Eggsy lingers at the threshold, briefly toying with the notion of scooting back out of sight so that he can try to listen in, but there’s a very Harry-Hart-like voice in his head that’s saying “a gentleman never eavesdrops”, so he dismisses the idea quickly.

After a couple of seconds, Merlin’s gaze flickers up to the doorway, the crease in his brow smoothing out as his expression softens. Harry stops talking mid-word (which is suspicious as fuck), but if he’s at all startled by the sudden interruption, he hides it well.

“Ah, there you.” He beckons the younger man closer with a casual gesture. “Do come in.”

The Dom’s smile is as pleasant as Eggsy’s ever seen it, but that doesn’t really put him at ease; after all, Harry had directed that exact same look towards Dean’s goons moments before very thoroughly handing their arses to them. But when it comes to Harry Hart, Eggsy’s defences are pathetically weak, and coupled with that calm, easy half-smile Merlin’s sending him from his seat at the bedside, he doesn’t really stand a chance.

So it’s with a cosy sort of warmth blooming in his chest that he closes the door behind him and crosses the room, moving to sit on the edge of Harry’s bed when the Dom pats the empty space of mattress invitingly. The leather armchair’s close enough to the bedside that he and Merlin are in danger of knocking their knees together if either one of them moves too quickly, but he doesn’t feel claustrophobic about the lack of personal space (his usual issue when it comes to taking any form of public transport, ‘cause he’s forever forcing himself to ignore the instinct to make himself smaller, hyperaware of the fact that he needs to maintain the posture and bearing of a Dominant). Instead, their close proximity actually puts him at ease a little. He might be metaphorically shit in about whatever-the-fuck he’s done to warrant this apparent intervention, but his Submissive instincts are telling him he’s safe with these two men, and that feeling’s still enough of a novelty that the lack of elbow room makes it downright cosy.

“Got your text,” he says, casual-like. “I ain’t in trouble, am I?”

Merlin’s smile twitches wider at one corner, fond and amused, and fuck, it don’t half make him look gorgeous. Eggsy might actually stop breathing for a second, transfixed by it.

“Not this time,” the Dom reassures him. Then he arches an eyebrow enquiringly. “Unless you’ve
done something we don’t know about yet?”

“He did seem to jump to that conclusion rather too quickly,” Harry agrees mildly.

Eggsy knows when he’s being teased, those pricks, but it still leaves him feeling flustered. He does his best to shrug it off with a flippant, “Don’t know what you mean, guv. I’m a fuckin’ saint.”

“Mm-hm,” Merlin hums, amused, deftly slipping his glasses back on.

It’s a bit surreal, this – facing the both of ‘em at once. Sure, they’ve been together in a room before, but it’s never been anything official like this. Never anything planned. It almost feels like he’s back in secondary school again, getting sent to the head’s office for beating up that sixth-form twat who’d nicked Jamal’s inhaler. He certainly hopes the two Doms aren’t going to send him away with a week’s suspension and a month’s worth of afternoon detentions.

“Tea?” Harry offers, gesturing towards the teapot and delicate china cups arranged neatly on a silver tray nearby.

“Nah, I’m alright, ta,” Eggsy declines. But he does take a biscuit when Merlin offers him the plate with a knowing look. He’d have to be on his deathbed to turn down chocolate Hobnobs.

“You’re probably wondering what this is all about,” Merlin says once the Sub’s mouth is too full to interrupt and/or try to direct the conversation elsewhere. Sneaky bastard. “And we’ll try not to drag the issue out more than we have to.” He leans forward a little, elbows braced on his thighs, fingers interlocked. “Harry and I have spent the past few hours discussing what happened on the flight back from Valentine’s bunker. And while that information will remain strictly confidential until you say otherwise, we feel it’s necessary to talk to you about the nature of your role as a Kingsman agent in light of your…situation.”

Eggsy kinda wishes he hadn’t eaten that biscuit now, ‘cause it’s gone and turned hard and cold in his stomach. He feels the beginnings of a frown tugging at his brow as he glances between the two Doms, a nervous sort of defensiveness making his muscles tense up.

“Thought you said it didn’t matter if I was a Sub?” he manages after a weighty pause, palms sweating and fingers twitching with the urge to form fists.

Harry’s fingers brush against his shoulder briefly, even as Merlin holds up his own hands in placation.

“It doesn’t,” the Scotsman pacifies, low and sincere. “I didn’t mean it like that, lad.”

“What Merlin is trying to say, albeit in a rather hodgepodge manner,” Harry interjects calmly, thumb smoothing over the collar of Eggsy’s white shirt, “is that the Drop you experienced the other week is unlikely to be a singular event if you choose to remain a Kingsman agent. You will, on occasion, be forced to make difficult and often morally challenging decisions, and there will inevitably come a time when a mission gets the better of you.”

“Happens to all of us,” Merlin says quietly. “Occupational hazard, I’m afraid.”

Eggsy still ain’t liking where this conversation seems to be going. He’s waiting for the other shoe to drop, for the “at the end of the day, Eggsy, you’re a Sub; we can’t risk entrusting you with the sort of high-profile missions we’d give to a Dominant agent”. And it hurts, because they’d told him it wasn’t gonna be like this. Merlin had fucking promised. He’s spent the past six years learning how to suppress and control his Submissive side – how to compartmentalise his biological instincts until the job was done, until he was someplace safe where he could finally let himself Drop without any
witnesses. He shouldn’t have to put up with this *bullshit*.

“We don’t intend to limit your activities within the service,” Harry reassures, as though reading his mind. “You’ve already proven beyond a shred of doubt that you’re capable of handling confrontation as adeptly as any seasoned Kingsman agent. Missions will be assigned to you according to your individual skillset, not your biological Dynamic.”

The wave of relief that hits him is powerful enough to leave the room spinning a little, and he feels his posture sag again as the tension bleeds from his shoulders in a shaky exhale.

*Thank fuck.*

“And please understand, you’re under no obligation to agree to anything we’re about to suggest,” Harry continues, calm but persistent. “If you so choose, we can all pretend this conversation never happened, and we’ll do our utmost best not to mention your Dynamic to you again. We only ask that you hear us out.”

Eggsy nods slowly. “Seems fair.”

Harry graces him with a small, pleased smile. “Thank you.” Then like a switch being flicked, he’s all business again. “Now, hypothetically speaking, should you experience another Drop post-mission, there are a number of options for how you may wish to proceed from that point onwards.”

“Options,” Eggsy echoes warily, his heartbeat picking up pace again.

“You aren’t the only non-Dominant employee in the service,” Merlin reminds him, reaching out to squeeze his knee briefly. “As part of the standard Kingsman contract, Submissives are usually asked to detail their preferred emergency Drop procedures, and we do our best to accommodate them accordingly. There’s even a Dynamic therapist who lives here at headquarters, full-time, to provide Drop support when it’s needed. The vast majority of Submissive employees choose to go to him. He’s very good at what he does, I can promise you that much; and he adheres to a strict code of confidentiality, so you don’t have to worry about your secret getting out.”

It doesn’t come as a huge surprise that a place this big has an on-site Drop counsellor – a lot of large businesses do these days. Thing is, though, Eggsy’s always been a bit uneasy about going to random therapists for help; all the emergency Drop clinics he’d googled as a teenager had asked for personal details to get in contact with his registered Dominant next-of-kin, and that had never been a viable option for Eggsy ‘cause of the whole hidden-Dynamic thing. Even if he’d told them a bunch of lies, it would’ve been too much of a fucking gamble in case he got recognised or went Sub-spacey enough to let slip something important. The risks had always far outweighed any potential benefits.

And yeah, okay, so maybe this Kingsman-hired therapist is actually a great guy and shit, but he’s still a *stranger*. Eggsy’s had a hard enough time admitting his Dynamic to the people he loves, he ain’t exactly keen to go blabbing it to some random bloke just like that.

“It’s only a suggestion, Eggsy,” Harry reiterates, probably catching sight of the wary look on the Sub’s face. “As I said before, you needn’t agree to any of this.”

“If you want to be left alone to handle a Drop in whatever way you normally would, I’d see to it that you weren’t disturbed,” Merlin adds quietly. “It’s not ideal, and certainly not something I tend to encourage, but at the end of the day it’s your decision.” Then his brow creases a little and he adds, with apparent reluctance, “Of course, there’s always Ritinal.”

Eggsy wrinkles his nose at that. “Fuck no. Messes with my head. Tried it once a few years back –
never again, bruv.”

He remembers vividly how that brief, pleasant, drug-infused buzz had soured all too quickly, leaving him groggy and disorientated, numb to the world around him for what felt like days. The aftermath had been almost as unpleasant as the Drop itself, and in the end Eggys had been forced to skip town and find an eager Dom just to get the lingering effects fucked out of his system. He’d missed his maths A-level exam because of that shit.

“You do have one last option,” Harry mentions, and there’s something in his tone that Eggys’s never heard before, something that almost sounds hesitant.

“Yeah?”

Merlin nods, looking as serious as Eggys’s ever seen him. “You have us.”

And everything in him just freezes. He can practically hear the screech of brakes as his brain comes to an abrupt standstill, lungs seizing up and heart swelling in his throat as hot and cold chills sweep through him. He can’t quite bring himself to believe his ears, can’t dare to hope that Merlin means what Eggys thinks he means, because life just ain’t that fucking generous when your last name’s Unwin.

“Come again?” he asks, in a voice that only cracks the tiniest bit.

Harry’s hand squeezes his shoulder gently. “I realise the offer might come across a tad intrusive, Eggys, especially in regards to such a personal matter. But both Merlin and I want you to know that our office doors will always be open to you, should our assistance ever be required.”

“And it doesn’t have to be anything special, lad,” Merlin tacks on without missing a beat, his hand still resting on Eggys’s knee, a warm and reassuring weight. “Even if all you want is a cup of tea and a pat on the back, that’s alright. On the other hand, if you ever felt like you needed something a little more formal, that’d be fine too.”

Eggys glances from one man to the other, still struggling to comprehend the sudden turn of events. There’s something swelling in his chest fit to burst, something that feels suspiciously like hope, blooming so hot and bright and clear that he can practically taste it.

“You’re really offerin’ to Dom me?” he asks, once he’s managed to unstick his tongue. At their synchronised, serious nods, he splutters, “Why the hell d’you want me as a Sub?”

“My dear Eggys,” Harry murmurs, his voice kind. “The simple fact of the matter is, we’re both terribly fond of you. And if our support can in any way provide some small measure of happiness in your life, we’d more than gladly offer you our services. If you’ll permit us the honour.”

Eggys swallows past the lump in his throat, feeling slightly overwhelmed by everything. Fucking hell. Fucking hell on a stick. He’s gonna have a bloody stroke. They’re offering to Dom him? Harry and Merlin, the both of ‘em? Holy shit.

“Yeah,” he manages, but it’s croaky and uneven instead of the whole ‘casual’ thing he’d been aiming for. “Alright.”

Harry squeezes his shoulder again and Merlin pats his knee and they’re both smiling at him like he’s done something amazing, and Eggys’s gonna fucking explode in a minute if his heart keeps beating so fast, Jesus Christ.

Turns out maybe life can be good to you if your last name’s Unwin.
“An’ Merlin said it didn’t even have to be an emergency or nothin’,” Eggsy recounts cheerfully, draping his shirt over the stool in front of the vanity and pulling on the t-shirt he’d grabbed from his room. “I can go to ‘em anytime I feel like goin’ down for a bit. Harry even said it’d probably better to do it every so often instead of waiting for things to build up into a Drop. Fuck. I just can’t believe they actually want to Top me, y’know? Thought I was dreamin’ back there for a while.”

He flops backwards onto the bed in a sloppy starfish, one hand still hanging over the side as he grins up at the ceiling, a warm sort of buzz thrumming pleasantly beneath his skin.

“I’m tellin’ you, Rox, I wanted to drop to my fuckin’ knees right then and there.” he sighs as JB snuffles at his fingers, angling for a cuddle. “The way the two of ‘em was smilin’ at me like that…Jesus. Never wanted to go down so bad.”

“Then why didn’t you?” Roxy asks evenly, leaning against the doorjamb to the bathroom, toothbrush in hand. “I’m sure they wouldn’t have minded.”

She’s changed into one of his baggy workout shirts and a pair of cotton boxers while he was away visiting the infirmary, but he’s too fucking happy to even call her out on the obvious act of wardrobe theft. He rolls over briefly to scoop JB up off the floor, flopping onto his back again with a contented sigh.

“Can’t go lookin’ too eager, can I?” he reasons, as the pug snuggles down against his chest, cold nose bumping against Eggsy’s neck. “Have to take these things slow.”

Roxy gives a quiet hum of understanding and goes back to brushing her teeth. Eggsy turns his attention to the squirming ball of pug on his chest, cuddling the dog close as JB snorts and grunts excitedly, trying to lick at any part of Eggsy he can reach. It’s not often that he allows the dog up onto the bed (he’d done his best to raise JB proper an’ shit, for the sake of his training), but every once in a while can’t hurt him, and tonight’s success definitely feels like it calls for a bit of indulgence. Eggsy’s certainly feeling very indulged.

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“Budge up,” Roxy says, appearing suddenly at the bedside and nudging his shoulder.

Eggsy obligingly scoots further across the double-bed so that she can climb in next to him, propping herself up with a pillow against the headboard. JB, utterly thrilled to have another person to demand cuddles from, wriggles his way out of his master’s hold to paw at Roxy’s thigh instead, croakily vocalising his need for attention.
While the Dom’s totally badass at the whole secret-spy thing, Eggsy knows she’s a bloody pushover when it comes to dogs; predictably, she only gives a token protest before letting the pug clamber up into her lap to be fussied over.

After a moment, Roxy breathes a quiet laugh. “And there was me thinking you were about to be assigned your first proper mission.”

“This is way better though, innit?” Eggsy rolls over onto his side, grinning at her.

The Dom smiles down at him. “Of course it is.” She flicks him between the eyes gently. “That being said, I’m still looking forward to having you back in the field. It’s hard being the only newbie out there.”

“Kay still teasin’ you?” he asks, amused.

Roxy rolls her eyes. “Kay teases everyone, regardless of how recently they’ve been employed by the Service. I have it on good authority that he’s the only Knight insane enough to perpetually try to piss off Merlin. Quite a hoot at Christmas parties, according to Percy. I’d try to stay on his good side, if I were you.”

“Noted.”

She leans over the side of the bed to gently deposit JB back down on the floor. He grumbles a bit in protest but, at a look from Eggsy, obediently trots over to Archie’s makeshift pillow-and-blanket bed, curling up next to the poodle.

“Looks like you’re staying the night again,” the Dom comments wryly, watching the pug settle himself down.

Eggsy hums and shuffles closer. “No complaints from me. Your bed’s way softer.”

She sniffs a grin, switching off the bedside light. “Pretty sure they’re standard issue, Eggs.”

“Nn-nn, lies.” He presses his face into the warmth of her hip, exhaling a contented sigh when she buries her fingers in his hair. “How long are you stayin’ at headquarters?”

“I fly to Istanbul tomorrow evening,” she replies softly, fingernails scratching lightly against his scalp. “Percy’s due to rendezvous with another agency contact about Valentine’s underground network, and Merlin wants me there as backup.”

He grunts against her hip, too sleepy to move, but manages to open his eyes to a squint to peer up at her in the darkness. “No, I mean, how long are you gonna live here? Like, in the mansion? The other Knights all have houses an’ stuff, right?”

“Oh.” Her hand pauses in his hair. “I hadn’t actually thought that far ahead. To tell you the truth, between boarding school dorms and military barracks and here, I’m not really used to living alone. Don’t think I’d know what to do with a house all to myself.” She sighs, soft and resigned. “I suppose I ought to bring it up with HR, see about getting someplace small nearby. My family’s estate is on the other side of the country, so they’re no help.” She tugs lightly on his fringe. “What about you?”

“Don’t much care what happens to me,” Eggsy replies quietly. “But I wanna get a house for my Mum an’ Daisy. Someplace nice with a proper garden. S’pose if I found one near enough, I could live there too. But then there’s always the worry about how I’d handle explainin’ all the weird bruises an’ shit I’d be coming home with after every mission.”
“Mm,” Roxy agrees, and leans down to drop a kiss against his temple. “We’ll sort something out, don’t worry about it. Get some sleep.”

“Bossy,” he mutters, but obligingly closes his eyes.

………. ………

Turns out getting a house for his Mum ain’t quite as straightforward as he would’ve liked.

The HR manager, Julie – a kind-faced, middle-aged Sub who’s just been dragged in off her lunch break by the panicked Dominant underling who’d been trying (and failing) to deal with Eggsy’s request for the past hour – smiles at him politely from the other side of the ornately carved wooden desk.

“A house, Sir?”

Eggy nods, trying to maintain the air of someone who actually knows how to be a functioning adult. “A friend of mine said your team was the best people to ask about kinda sh—stuff.”

They’re alone in her office; a sparsely but tastefully decorated room at the end of a long corridor in the lower east wing of the mansion, large windows overlooking the vast, green grounds of Kingsman HQ. Eggsy had scrubbed up all posh-like and everything before he came, figuring a nice shirt and grey cardigan would work in his favour, but sitting opposite Julie he feels like he’s in trackies and trainers. She ain’t even wearing diamonds or nothing, just pearl earrings (which are probably legit) and a necklace with a weird looping silver pendant on it, but the way she pulls off that blouse-and-jacket combo wouldn’t make her look out of place next to the fucking Queen.

“It’s not an issue of financing your request, Mr Unwin,” Julie explains, with the sort of forced, cheerful politeness that Eggsy knows a person has to develop when they deal with rich wankers on a daily basis and want to keep their jobs. “Looking at your Kingsman account, you certainly have the means to put down a deposit for a modest-sized property with minimal support from my department.”

Eggsy blinks at her, momentarily stumped. “I’ve got a Kingsman account?”

“Of course, Sir,” she replies, in a tone that very nearly says ‘well duh’. “As I’m certain my colleagues down the hallway will already have explained to you during the induction process, salary distribution and banking services are handled internally here at Kingsman. Makes things neater.” At his blank look, her eyes narrow slightly in concern. “You did attend your induction interview with the finance department, didn’t you?”
“Um…no?” Clearly his employee package must’ve gotten lost in the post or something. “I just go where I’m told, love – uh, Miss.”

Julie pinches the bridge of her nose like she’s fighting off an oncoming tension headache, but after a deep breath her professionally-polite smile is back in place again.

“I’m afraid managerial errors do happen,” she sympathises. “Not to worry. Let’s see if we can get this mess straightened out, hm?” She turns her chair a little to face the super-fancy desktop computer, brushing her fingers against a nearby paperweight so that a section of the wooden desk lights up to illuminate the inbuilt touchpad. “Now, from what I can see, your personal account has only been on our system for nine days, with a single monetary deposit made at the time of activation. I’m assuming you’re a relatively new employee?”

Eggsy shrugs. “I guess so, yeah.”

“I don’t doubt your manager’s been unusually busy these past two weeks,” she says with a sigh, then purses her lips. “But to be quite frank, failing to adhere to the standard induction process is rather inexcusable, crisis or no crisis. I’d best have a word with them, for both our sakes. The clerical backlash from this is going to be dreadful.” She fixes him with a mildly exasperated look. “Have they at least given you adequate security clearance?”

“My prints work for most places,” he replies casually, miming the act of pressing his thumb against a scanner. He’d gone exploring as a trainee, of course, but a lot of corridors had been restricted back then. Now he gets access to about ninety percent of the mansion instead of just twenty.

Julie nods, visibly relieved. “Good. That’s one less thing to worry about.” She reaches up to pluck the curving silver pendant from her necklace, hooking it neatly over her right ear, and holy fuck, is that thing a phone? “Who do you work for, Mr Unwin?”

Eggsy hesitates, several different answers poised on the tip of his tongue.

Huh. Who does he work for? He’s an agent now, a Knight, so technically he works for the not-yet-found Arthur replacement (him an’ Roxy are secretly rooting for Harry to get the position, ’cause he’d be ace at it). But then, how much is he even allowed to say about the whole spy-thing? The organisation’s built on secrets and codenames, is he even supposed to tell people that he’s a Knight? Is it like a Fight Club scenario, with everyone pretending that the espionage side of the service doesn’t actually exist?

“Kingsman?” he answers after a lengthy pause, drawing out the word doubtfully.

She gives him a flat look. “Which department, Sir?”

Oh shit, that question’s even harder. What’s he supposed to say, “the round table”? Well, actually, that sounds kinda cool now that he thinks about it. But he’s pretty sure it ain’t something he’s supposed to be blabbing to just anyone. Fuck, why hadn’t they covered this in his training? He can handle an undercover op and spin a false identity off the top of his head, but this is internal, and nobody’s told him shit about the whole security clearance side of things. What if telling Julie somehow compromises her position in the service or something daft?

Julie’s brow furrows a little. “Can you at least tell me the name of your supervisor, Mr Unwin?”

“Oh, yeah. It’s Merlin,” Eggsy answers, this time with more confidence. That codename, at least, he knows ain’t a secret. The Dom pretty much runs this joint (no matter what the recently-deceased Arthur might’ve thought).
The other Sub’s fingers hover above the keypad, her expression flitting between surprise and concern before smoothing out again into that same forced politeness as she sets about removing the curvy pendant from her ear and reattaching it to her necklace with a soft, metallic clink. (A detachable magnetic necklace-phone? Fucking hell. Eggsy wants one.)

“I’m certain the necessary paperwork will find its way to you eventually,” she reasons smoothly. “And when it does, be sure to make an appointment with my secretary at your earliest convenience.”

“I will, thanks,” Eggsy agrees, flashing her what he hopes is a charming smile to settle her apparently ruffled feathers. “About my Kingsman account; don’t suppose you could tell me how much I’ve got in there?”

“One-hundred and fifty thousand pounds,” she answers calmly, after briefly consulting her computer screen. “As I said, Sir, your financial stability isn’t what’s stopping you from purchasing a house.”

“Right,” Eggsy answers numbly, keeping the raw shock from showing in his face through sheer willpower. “I’m guessin’ the market’s in shambles after the Valentine Massacre?”

Julie’s lips form a thin, grim line. “At present, yes, I’m afraid so. In light of recent events, you’ll be hard-pressed to find a homeowner who’s willing to give you a viewing. There was rather a lot of property damage, as you might expect.”

Eggsy sighs, but nods, resigned. With how totally unflappable everyone at Kingsman seems to be about the whole thing, it’s sometimes easy to forget that the rest of society’s still staggering back to its feet. Britain had certainly fared a lot better than many of her tech-heavy, gun-loving western allies, but there had still been casualties. Even now, almost two weeks after the event, schools and universities are only just beginning to open again. It’s not really a huge surprise that smaller businesses like estate agents are still struggling to get back on track. Ain’t like moving house is gonna be a huge priority in light of the recent almost-apocalypse.

Thing is, though, his window of opportunity’s pretty narrow. Dean’s still in the hospital after getting himself stabbed half to death by his own employees, but the bastard’s not gonna be out of the picture forever (Merlin’s been tracking his progress, ‘cause he’s ace like that), and Eggsy’s keen to get Daisy and his Mum as far away from their old flat as possible before the wanker comes back. The new house don’t even have to be properly furnished or nothing, Eggsy can work out the details later. He just wants his family somewhere safe. Somewhere Dean can’t touch ‘em.

“What about someplace to rent?” he asks. “Like a short-term thing?”

Julie shakes her head, and manages to look genuinely sympathetic this time. “Buying or renting, Mr Unwin, you’d still need to go through a letting agency, and they’re currently all closed for business. The only London properties we’d be able to acquire at such short notice are the safehouses currently owned by the service, and I’m afraid they’re reserved for Kingsman agents.”

He brightens up at that. “Oh, cool. So I can get one of those in the meantime, yeah?”

…………………………
“An’ then she laughed at me!” Eggsy complains, throwing his arm out in an emphatic gesture.

Merlin observes him calmly over the rim of his mug, index finger tapping out a quiet rhythm against the blue ceramic. The Dom’s wearing Eggsy’s favourite jumper today – the soft cashmere one with the brown leather shoulder-patches – and it’s proving to be frustratingly distracting. He came down here to have an angry rant, but seeing Merlin all sexy and huggable in that outfit has dampened the flames somewhat.

“Did you tell her you were a field agent?” the Dom asks evenly.

Eggsy shrugs. “Told her you was my boss, didn’t I?”

“Well, in all fairness, that only narrows it down to about two-hundred employees,” Merlin reasons. He watches Eggsy pace for another moment before sighing and setting down his mug of tea. “Julie probably assumed you were one of the new recruits I recently hired in for the tech department. In which case, no, you wouldn’t be allowed access to any of the reserved Kingsman properties.” He tilts his head a little to one side. “As a matter of interest, how come you’re suddenly so keen to buy a house?”

He shrugs again, scuffing the toe of his converse against the floor. “It’s my step-dad, innit?”

Merlin’s brow creases fractionally. “You want to buy a house for your step-dad?”

“Fuck no.” Eggsy feels himself pull a sour face just at the thought of spending money on Dean. “He ain’t gettin’ nothin’ from me.”

“Not exactly a paradigm of virtue, I take it?”

The Sub gives a derisive snort, shoving his hands into his pockets and scuffing his shoes against the floor again. “Dean Baker’s pretty much the only reason I’ve been pretendin’ to be a Dom all these years.”

“I see.” Merlin’s frown has deepened now, and there’s a dark look in the man’s eyes that’d be making Eggsy really fucking nervous right about now if he thought for a minute that it was directed towards him.

“Anyway,” he says, moving on before Merlin decides to put out a kill order for his step-dad or something (not that the bastard wouldn’t deserve it). “That’s why I wanna get Mum an’ Daisy the hell away from my old flat before Dean gets out of hospital. The house ain’t really for me at all, it’s for them.”

Merlin nods, expression smoothing out as he hooks his ankle around the second rolling chair at his desk, beckoning Eggsy closer. “Come and sit down, son.”

Eggsy crosses the room obediently, gaze flickering up to the giant viewscreen on the wall when Merlin begins tapping at the controls on his desk, bringing up a list of seemingly random word and number combinations.
“The fuck is ‘GreenTea89’?” he asks, dropping down into the chair and scooting it unobtrusively closer to Merlin’s. “Sounds like a bloody Tinder username.”

The corner of Merlin’s mouth twitches. “I seem to recall it having something to do with the ghastly colour of the upstairs bathroom, but I can’t say for sure. And the number generally indicates the year the property was purchased by the service.”

Eggsy blinks, surprised. “Wait, you’re actually gonna let me have a house?”

“They were bought specifically for agents and their families,” Merlin answers calmly, like he’s not doing Eggsy the biggest fucking solid ever. “Most Knights already had properties of their own when they joined the service, so the vast majority of these safe-houses are only used for the occasional witness protection program. It’s about time they were put to good use.”

The urge to throw himself at Merlin and hug him half to death in gratitude is slightly overwhelming, but Eggsy manages to limit himself to a gentle elbow-nudge and a quiet grin.

“You’re fuckin’ amazin’, guv.”

The Dom’s clearly pleased, but he hides it well, tapping away at the touchpad diligently. “Ah, here we are, this one shows promise. Fully furnished, three bedrooms, detached, fully insulated. There’s an external CCTV network wired into the main security system, and a reinforced storage cellar that’ll double up as a panic room. Not that I anticipate it ever being required,” he adds hastily, perhaps seeing Eggsy’s wide-eyed look, “but I find it’s always good to be prepared for any eventuality.”

Eggsy studies the various snapshots up on the screen, falling a little bit more in love with the house the more of it he sees. It’s all tastefully decorated without looking too posh, the furniture obviously good quality, but also something he could’ve picked out himself from an Ikea catalogue. The master bedroom looks huge, with a massive double bed and a whole wall of wardrobes that his Mum’s gonna absolutely shit herself over. And there’s a small study leading off from that which could easily be converted into a nursery for Daisy until she’s big enough to sleep in one of the other large bedrooms.

“Does it have a garden?” he asks eagerly, half-lean ing over the desk in his attempt to study the images more closely.

Merlin obligingly brings up the required photograph, and Eggsy knows he’s grinning fit to burst now because fuck, it’s perfect. An oval-shaped green lawn surrounded by trees and flower beds, a path of cream-coloured paving stones curving in an elegant S down the middle and fanning out into a raised patio in the far right hand corner. There’s even a fucking pond at the very bottom of the garden.

“I’d have to send in a team to patch things up, of course,” Merlin says conversationally, apparently realising that Eggsy isn’t capable of speech just yet. “The house gets cleaned periodically, but there’s bound to be a few wee maintenance jobs that need doing. And I’ll see to it that the place gets childproofed properly; we can’t have your sister falling into the pond.”

“Yeah,” Eggsy manages, intelligently, still staring up at the screen with wide eyes.

“Actually, I’d best send in a tech crew to disassemble some of the more extreme security measures,” the Dom comments, more to himself than to Eggsy, studying something on one of the desktop screens. “I hadn’t realised just how thoroughly I’d fortified this place. Wouldn’t want the postman to get himself vaporised trying to deliver the morning paper. But all going well, the house should be fit for tenancy by the end of next week at the latest.” Merlin glances sideways at him with a knowing sort of smile. “Unless you’d rather look at another house?”
“No,” he blurts, because he doesn’t need to look anywhere else, he knows he’s found the right one. “No, it’s fine, it’s perfect, it’s…” He peers back at the house, at the sheer size of the place, and knows it’s probably worth ten times more than his Mum’s two-bedroom flat. “It’s too much, Merlin, Jesus. Are you sure? I mean, we’d be happy with something half this size.”

Merlin’s hand settles on his shoulder. “It’s yours, lad,” he insists, his voice a low murmur. “You’ve earned it. Consider it a ‘thank you for saving the world’ present.”

Eggsy feels his cheeks heating, but he rolls with it, too elated to care about playing it cool as he flashes the Dom a sideways grin. “Had you to help me through it, didn’t I? Would’ve been a nice bloody wall decoration if you hadn’t activated all them implants.”

“Mm.” The Dom’s face twitches, his hand squeezing Eggsy’s shoulder a little tighter. “Thank you for that charming visual.”

“Welcome.” Eggsy knows he’s still smiling like a loon, but there ain’t much he can do about it. He’s just so fucking happy, he wants to hug the stuffing out of Merlin, or maybe sink to his knees and wrap his arms around Merlin’s legs and show him just how much he appreciates everything. Fuck it, he wants to do both.

He hesitates for what feels like hours but is probably only a matter of seconds, Submissive Eggsy at war with faux-Dominant Eggsy. After six years of forcefully suppressing these kind of urges, his brain automatically starts setting off all kinds of warning bells when the joints of his knees suddenly go warm and loose, and the rest of his leg muscles have tensed up in response to make sure that he under no circumstances ends up going down. Except that’s what Eggsy wants, dammit. It’s like when he was eight and got dared by Josh Wilson in the year above him to jump from the highest diving board at the community swimming pool during their twice-weekly lessons, and he’d stood there a full five minutes trying to psyche himself up to it. His heart had been there, but his body had locked up, refusing to let him make that final step over the edge. It’s as frustrating now as it was then, but at least Josh Wilson ain’t here to call him a wuss.

Eventually he gives up trying to persuade his legs to work properly, and settles for scooting to the edge of his chair and throwing his arms around Merlin’s shoulders instead.

“Thanks,” he mumbles into the brown leather patch on Merlin’s jumper (it’s just as soft as Eggsy had imagined it). “You’re the governor.”

The Dom’s arms close around him in return, one hand coming up to settle over the back of Eggsy’s neck as it always does, squeezing gently – and oh, Eggsy’s missed this. Back when Harry was still unconscious and Eggsy had still been a tired, emotional wreck, hugs had been a semi-frequent thing. Every time they switched with each other for the next six-hour shift at Harry’s bedside, the Dom would pull him in for a quick squeeze, or wrap an arm around his shoulders for a sideways hug, and it had been amazing. Probably one of the only things that kept him sane back for those first few, torturous days before Harry started waking up. And it’s not like Merlin isn’t still affectionate or nothing – he’s always squeezing Eggsy’s shoulder or running a hand briefly over his hair or resting it on the back of his neck, and that’s awesome, but those kinda touches always feel so fleeting compared to this.

Merlin’s just a bloody good hugger; it’s entirely his fault that Eggsy’s been craving cuddles this past week. Snuggly bastard, with his ridiculously soft jumpers. And why does he always have to smell so good?

The Dom’s hand squeezes his nape again after a few minutes. “Are you alright, lad?”
“Yup,” Eggsy reassures, eyes closed, inhaling deeply as he rubs his cheek against the soft leather shoulder-patch. He’s feeling decidedly...fuzzy. It's fucking amazing.

He hears Merlin sniff a quiet grin. “Alright.”

Eggsy’s whole body feels loose and floaty. His seized-up leg muscles are a thing of the past, and he’s not a hundred percent sure he even has feet anymore, ’cause they’ve gone a bit numb. Merlin’s hug is everything, strong and sure and wonderfully warm, and it’s also pretty much the only thing keeping him from toppling out of his chair gracelessly. But he wants more. He wants to give more.

He wets his lips, keeping his head tucked against Merlin’s shoulder where it feels safe, hidden from sight and also unable to see the Dom’s face just in case the man says no.

“Merlin?”

“Mm?” the Dom enquires.

“I...” Eggsy feels his heart begin to beat a little faster again, but he ploughs on before he can lose his nerve. “Remember how yesterday you said I could come to you even if I wasn’t dropping?”

The hand that’s been rubbing slow circles over his back pauses, and the one on the back of his neck tightens a little in support. “I said that, yes.”

Eggsy swallows, his mouth dry. “Mind if we do it now?”

Merlin’s arms tighten around him in a brief squeeze, and Eggsy’s pretty sure he’s being rewarded for something (he’s not sure what exactly, but the hug feels fucking awesome, so he ain’t complaining).

“What do you need, lad? Do you want to kneel for a wee while?”

He nods quickly, relieved that he doesn’t have to ask for it directly (baby steps, after all – everything about this is still new and wholly uncharted territory for him).

“Okay,” the Dom murmurs, and resumes rubbing his back again in slow, soothing circles. “We haven’t really had a chance to talk about any of this properly, so I’ll be letting you call the shots this time, alright? Let me know if there’s anything you’re not comfortable with.”

Eggsy nods again, inhaling another lungful of Merlin’s scent, the unique blend of tea and fabric softener and mildly sweet cologne that’s haunted his dreams these past couple of weeks. Honestly, he can't think of anything the Dom could possibly do that might make him feel uncomfortable. Everything's just so damn awesome. And snuggly. It’s the weirdest feeling, almost like he’s tipsy with contentedness.

“Alright,” Merlin says again, and loosens the hug slowly. “Let me just...” He leans away, keeping one hand closed gently around Eggsy’s elbow to keep him from toppling over. There’s the sound of a drawer opening and closing, and a moment later a soft flump as something hits the floor next to Eggsy’s feet. “Technically it’s meant for my back; Harry likes to nag me about bad posture every now and then, so I bought this a few years ago to shut him up. Never used it, of course, but let’s keep that to ourselves.”

It’s enough to make Eggsy smile and glance back up at the Dom’s face, warmth swelling in his chest at the open affection he sees there – and just like that, kneeling for Merlin seems so easy. There isn’t even the teensiest ounce of self-doubt left, his body simply wants.

And oh, look...he’s on his knees.
The whole thing seems a little anticlimactic after so much internal battling – that is until Merlin’s other hand comes up to settle on his head, gentle fingers carding through his hair, nails scraping lightly against his scalp, and he realises he’s somehow managed to unlock a secret gateway to heaven.

*Ohhh, fuck.*

“That’s the way, easy now.” Merlin’s fingers move to cradle his chin gently, tilting his head back just far enough to make eye contact. “Is the cushion alright for your knees?”

Eggsy blinks up at him, half-dazed, and watches Merlin’s mouth twitch up at both corners in a fond smile, even as he strokes the Sub’s cheek to refocus his attention.

“Hey,” the Dom murmurs quietly. “I need to know if your knees are okay, lad.”

He doesn’t want to nod and accidentally dislodge Merlin’s warm, gentle hands, so he makes an effort to unstick his tongue enough to answer verbally.

“M’good,” Eggsy manages, although he sounds fucking *drunk*. “Thank you, Sir.”

The honorific seems to get easier every time he says it, and this occasion is no exception. He doesn’t even need to think about it anymore. Here, on his knees in front of a Dom he trusts implicitly, it’s just instinctual.

“Close your eyes,” the man instructs, the pads of his fingers smoothing gently over the Sub’s forehead. “That’s it. Deep breath in for me…and out. In…and out. Beautiful. One more.”

Those talented fingers are back in his hair, stroking tingling lines across his scalp, the warmth of Merlin’s hand resettling on the back of his neck and squeezing just so – and then Eggsy’s next breath is pure liquid warmth, filling him up to the brim with that cosy, floaty fuzziness he’d tasted earlier. But this is *more*, this is bigger and deeper and so much better.

“There we go,” Merlin purrs, his voice dropping to the deep, gravelly rumble that Eggsy seems to spend half his time daydreaming about. “All the way down, there’s a good lad.”

God, that voice. It fucking makes him *shiver*. Listening to those low, soothing words is like being drenched in warm syrup, heat gliding smoothly all the way down his spine, tingly warmth fanning out to his extremities as his head drops forward a little, his brow coming to rest against Merlin’s thigh.

“That was *very* well done,” Merlin tells him, stressing the praise as he smooths a hand over the Sub’s hair. “Good boy.”

Eggsy presses his face into the fabric of Merlin’s trousers, so contented he could practically *purr* with it, the Dom’s words wrapping themselves around his warm, fuzzy-limbed body like a great big protective blanket. It’s the best fucking thing he’s ever experienced in his *life*.

Merlin squeezes the back of his neck again briefly. “Go ahead and stay down as long as you need to, love.”

*Oh*, Eggsy plans on doing just that. He ain’t never coming up again.
Chapter End Notes

Hope you all enjoyed the chapter! This one ended up being a tad longer than expected, because how could I resist Roxy/Eggsy BFF snuggles? My eternal headcanon is that they have platonic cuddly sleepovers where they watch really bad spy films and make pillow forts for their puppies. <3

As you may have imagined, I had a MARVELOUS time writing that end scene between Merlin and Eggsy. Our stubborn, brave, kind-hearted little snuggleball finally got the care and attention he deserved. He's still got a long way to go before he's learned how to fully embrace (and love) his Submissive side, and the road's gonna be pretty bumpy at times, but luckily he's got two doting Doms to keep him in check.

And speaking of - Eggsy will get his subspace snuggle-time with Harry in the next chapter, worry not!

Hoping to get another chapter posted in a week or so! <3 xxx
When Daisy’s a bit older, Eggsy’s gonna buy her a dog. A poodle, to be precise, if her open and unreserved delight at Archie’s presence is any indication of her preference in dog breeds.

“We’ve only got him on lone for a few days,” he reminds his sister, scooping her up off the floor before she can yank out any of the dog’s dark fur, wincing at the strain it puts on his ribs. “Just until Rox gets back from work.”

Eggsy collapses onto the sofa with a sigh and settles the toddler in his lap, brushing her curly fringe out of her eyes and grinning at her nonsensical babbling as she twists in his arms to reach for the poodle again. “Well, he ain’t as cute as JB, but I guess he’s alright,” he concedes. “Maybe Roxy can bring him over to visit some other time, yeah?”

He scratches Archie behind the ears with his free hand when the poodle’s head comes up at the mention of his owner’s name. Eggsy’s on dog-sitting duty while Roxy’s in Istanbul – it’s the first time she’s been away from the Kingsman base for more than a twenty-four hour period, and it’s been tough on both of them. Feels weird not to have seen her in two days, considering they’ve spent so much time in each other’s company this past year – truth be told, Eggsy doesn’t know who’s missing her more; him or the dog. Archie keeps shooting forlorn glances towards the nearest door every five minutes as though anticipating his owner’s imminent return, but he’s been doing it since seven o’clock that morning, and it’s kinda starting to break Eggsy’s heart. He’d figured a change of scenery might help to keep the dog’s mind preoccupied, so he’d ducked out of headquarters shortly after breakfast to surprise Daisy and his Mum at home.

The flat’s the cleanest it’s been in almost a decade, almost like his Mum’s scrubbed everything within an inch of its life (possibly twice), and he can’t work out if it’s to make up for the mess she must’ve made during the V-Day rage or if Dean’s current absence has simply given her the time and freedom that she didn’t have before. He certainly remembers the flat being clean as a kid, even with his Mum struggling to come to terms with the death of her husband, but after that there’d been a short string of boyfriends that had cluttered up the place (and their lives), and when Dean Baker had finally moved in when Eggsy was just starting secondary school, everything (both figuratively and literally) had gone to shit.

It’s good to see the place looking nice again, even if it’s only a temporary fix. He’s spent the vast majority of his life in this flat, but he won’t miss it when he moves his family across town next week. Their new home will be bigger and better and safer, with everything his Mum and sister might want, and a fat enough bank account to live very comfortably. With Eggsy supporting them, his Mum won’t need a bloke like Dean with his dodgy probably-laundered cash and dangerous criminal connections. They can start again, proper-like, and with any luck Daisy can live the childhood Eggsy never got to have.

He glances down with a smile as his sister tugs at the golden ‘K’ of his Kingsman medal, trying to yank the chain right off his neck in her eagerness to put it in her mouth.
“Oi, that ain’t for eatin’, chick,” he laughs, but makes no move to pull it away. It’s not like the metal can really hurt her or anything. “You hungry, Daisy-girl? How about a banana? You like ‘nanas, right?”

“Bah!” Daisy agrees, tugging away with cheerful enthusiasm.

“She’s missed you,” Michelle says from the kitchen doorway, drying her hands on a dishtowel. She gives him a wobbly sort of smile. “We both have.”

Eggsy’s stomach clenches guiltily as he smiles back at her. It’s only the second time he’s been home since the Valentine Massacre, and although he’s been ringing his Mum pretty much every other day, he can tell how much she’s been struggling these past couple of weeks. There are dark smudges beneath her eyes that tell of sleepless nights and recurring nightmares, and he’d spotted the rectangular prescription Ritinal patch on the inside of her wrist the moment he’d walked through the door. She’s become more and more dependent on the Drop-stop drug in recent years, and he’s grown used to seeing the light blue patches peeking out from underneath her shirtsleeves, but that doesn’t mean he likes the fact that she’s still using it.

“I’m sorry I haven’t been home much,” he tells her, dropping a kiss against Daisy’s blond ringlets as she chews away on his medal. “It’s just that I’ve been so busy lately with the cleanup crews an’ stuff—”

“It’s alright,” Michelle reassures him, moving to perch on the arm of the sofa, running a hand through his hair. “You’re helpin’ people, just like you always wanted to.” She brushes her fingers gently over the healing cut on his forehead, her smile tremulous. “My Eggsy, out there savin’ England. I’m so proud of you, babe.”

Eggsy’s never enjoyed fibbing to his Mum, but now he feels like a total prick about it. Pretending that he’d signed himself up to the nationwide cleanup movement had been the easiest way to explain his absence over the past couple of weeks, but he hadn’t anticipated to be hailed as a hero for doing so. Although it ain’t like he’s completely making it up – technically the Kingsman Service is dedicated to preserving the peace and preventing loss of life and making Britain stronger. It’s just that he hasn’t actually done much saving yet, aside from killing Valentine on V-Day.

“I’ll try to come home more often,” he promises, tugging the metal ‘K’ carefully out of Daisy’s mouth when he hears it clack against her baby teeth. “I’ve made a few new mates while I’ve been away – the good sort, y’know? Respectable an’ all that. Well, one of ‘em owns a tailorin’ business somewhere in London, an’ he says he owes me a favour. So there might be a job comin’ my way soon.”

It’s an excuse he’s practised half a dozen times with his reflection in the bathroom mirror; a cover-story he and Harry had brainstormed over tea and biscuits a couple of days ago. V-Day had robbed a lot of businesses of their skilled workforce (there wouldn’t be much need to claim Job Seeker’s benefits for quite some time), which meant opportunities previously reserved for people in higher circles of society were now available to anyone willing to work hard enough. It was perfectly reasonable that a bloke like Eggsy might suddenly find himself offered the position of a paid apprentice at a tailor shop on Saville Row.

His Mum beams at him, her obvious delight at the barefaced lie cutting his guilty heart a little deeper. “Oh Eggsy, love, that’s fab!”

Eggsy smiles as convincingly as he can, cuddling Daisy a little tighter and reminding himself firmly that this is for them. He ain’t just lying for the sake of it – he’s lying to protect the people he loves. It’d break his Mum’s heart if she knew the truth about where he’s been this past year, especially
considering how she’d reacted to him joining the Marines. It’s just... *easier* this way. Working for Kingsman is something he wants to do, yes, but it’s also a means of providing for his family. By the end of next week they’ll have a new house to move to, with new furniture and new toys and new neighbours who won’t keep his sister up all hours of the night shouting abuse at each other or throwing things at the walls. They’ll be happy and safe and provided for.

And most importantly, as far away from Dean Baker as Eggsy can get them.

“C’mon, Merlin, *please,*” he presses, scooting his chair a little closer to the Dom’s side.

“The answer’s no, lad,” the man replies, unmoved, his gaze focused on the wall-mounted screens as he tracks Bors’ progress.

Eggsy slumps back in his seat with an aggravated huff, spinning his chair listlessly from side to side. “But I’ve been here almost three weeks. Why bother keepin’ me on as a Kingsman agent if you ain’t actually gonna give me a fuckin’ mission?”

The Dom taps at a few controls on his desk. “You’ve been benched from active field duty until Monday, pending the outcome of your next physical assessment. Whining about it won’t improve
your situation.” He reaches out to still the spinning chair. “Stop that.”

“I’m bored out of my fuckin’ mind, guv,” the younger man groans, tilting his head back to frown at the ceiling. “Roxy’s been on four solo missions already; you won’t even let me use the fuckin’ gym or spar with the guys from security.”

It’s something that’s been on his mind all day, perhaps a lingering sense of guilt at his mother’s misplaced pride. He wants to do something; to contribute towards the betterment of society an’ shit. He’s sick and tired of sitting on his arse while the other Kingsman agents are risking life and limb out in the field.

“Roxy didn’t come back from Valentine’s bunker with half a dozen hairline fractures to her ribcage,” Merlin reminds him calmly. “And I’ll allow you to access the training facilities as soon as the medical team can assure me that a misplaced punch won’t result in a punctured lung.”

“Oh, bleedin’ hell, there ain’t nothin’ wrong with my fuckin’ ribs! I feel fi- ah!” Eggsy clutches at his side, where Merlin’s sharp jab has reignited a fierce, bone-deep throbbing. He shoots the Dom an incredulous look. “The fuck you do that for?”

“To prove a point.”

“What, that you’re a dickhead?” Eggsy snaps, his frustration mounting. “Fuck you, bruv. You don’t got the right to treat me any different from Roxy an’ the rest of ‘em just ‘cause I’m a Sub.”

Merlin stills, hands poised above the controls, and for one horrible, silent moment, he doesn’t even seem to breathe. Then he straightens a little in his seat and, moving painfully slowly (reminiscent of a dragon uncurling from its slumber like in one of those cartoons Eggsy used to watch on Sunday mornings), he reaches out to press a button to the right of his desk-mounted microphone.

“Bors, take a left here,” the Dom instructs, deceptively calm. “You’ll want to avoid the motorway. If you put your foot down, you should still be able to make it to the airstrip in time.”

“Right-o. Ta, flower.”

Then Merlin’s swivelling his chair around to face Eggsy, and gone is the calm impassiveness from before. It’s a very subtle change – the man ain’t even frowning or nothing – but Eggsy can tell he’s pissed. He can see it in the Dom’s eyes, in the weight of his gaze and the thin set of his mouth, even though outwardly he still looks perfectly composed. It’s an expression Eggsy remembers all too well from his year of training; one he’d secretly hoped he wouldn’t be confronted with as a Knight, but clearly that was wishful thinking.

“Let me make one thing very clear,” the Dom murmurs, his voice a low, warning rumble. “You may not be a candidate anymore, but I’m still your commanding officer, and you don’t ever talk to me like that. If you have a legitimate complaint, you bring it to me as an adult, and we discuss it with civility. Is that understood?”

Eggsy can only nod, his gaze averted, heart beating a little faster in his chest and stomach all tied in knots, wishing he were anywhere but here. He regrets ever opening his big, stupid mouth.

He hadn’t meant it, of course, not one word of it – he’d been angry and frustrated and he’d lashed out without thinking, because he’s a fucking idiot.

“You know full well that your Dynamic has nothing to do with this,” Merlin continues, still in that same low, firm tone, and Eggsy has to make a conscious effort not to duck his head instinctively. “You’ve been suspended from active field duty on medical grounds in order to give your injuries
time to heal, and that’s the end of it.”

The Dom abruptly spins his chair back towards the wall-mounted screens, a muscle in his jaw ticking and lips set in a thin line as he taps away at his desk controls with perhaps a tad more force than necessary.

“You know where the door is.”

It’s a clear dismissal, one that hurts even more than the scolding.

Eggsy’s always felt welcome in Merlin’s lab, whether just to sit and chat with the Dom about the goings-on of Kingsman HQ, or to watch the man effortlessly guide an agent to safety on an overseas mission, pulling information from a dozen computer screens simultaneously like it’s as easy to him as breathing. And in these past few days, he’s come to consider this place a safe haven of sorts. With Merlin able to switch off the cameras, and an impenetrable magnetic lock on the door, Eggsy has begun to feel at ease kneeling beside the Dom’s chair as he works, cheek resting against Merlin’s thigh and eyes half-closed, soothed to a warm, cosy head-space by a hand in his hair and a few softly murmured endearments.

He ain’t never been sent away before. And it feels fucking awful.

But being here when Merlin is so visibly cross with him is even worse, so he manages to get his numb legs moving, letting them carry him out of the control room and away from the tech floor, fists clenched and shoulders tight with tension as he strides down the (thankfully empty) corridors, half in a daze.

His throat feels tight and sore, a heat building behind his eyes as he walks, and fuck no, he ain’t gonna cry about this. He’s still angry and frustrated, but with himself and his stupid hair-trigger temper, not with Merlin. He wants to reverse time and tell his past-self to keep his trap shut. He wants to turn around and go back to the lab and apologise. He wants…he wants a hug, dammit.

*Pull yourself together.* He gives himself a firm mental shake, and pinches the inside of his arm hard enough to bruise in an effort to distract himself from the aching tightness in his chest. *Don’t be such a fuckin’ Sub about it.*

But he is a Sub, and therein lies the problem. He can pretend to ignore his basic instincts all he wants, but there’s no stopping the sour twist of guilt that’s gnawing at his gut. He’s insulted Merlin (a Dom he actually cares about), basically called him a prejudiced arse right to his face, and then stormed off without even trying to apologise. God, he’s a rubbish Sub.

“Eggsy?”

He blinks, startled out of his internal self-flagellation, and realises that he’s somehow managed to navigate his way to Harry’s private recovery suite on auto-pilot.

The Dom’s seated in the armchair at the bedside, dressed as casually as Eggsy’s ever seen him in a woollen cardigan and dark grey trousers, studying the younger agent over the top of his newspaper with eyes that are narrowed in concern.

“Are you quite alright?”

Eggsy opens his mouth to reply with something offhand and dismissive, but the words get stuck in his throat. Harry’s brow creases anew, and he folds the newspaper in two quick motions and sets it aside, making as though to stand.
“No, don’t,” Eggsy says hurriedly, keenly aware that the Dom’s still a little unsteady on his feet. He steps into the room and closes the door behind him, trying to muster up a convincing smile. “I’m fine.”

“And I’m the Duchess of Cambridge,” Harry agrees flatly. “What’s wrong?”

Eggsy sighs, dragging a hand through his hair as he slumps back against the door. “Look, it’s nothin’ important, okay? I’ll get over it.”

The Dom reaches out to pat the edge of the bed. “Come here.”

He probably doesn’t mean for it to come across as an order, but that’s how it sounds, and Eggsy’s weirdly grateful for it. Questions he can’t handle right now, but orders? Orders are easy enough, especially coming from Harry Hart.

Still, as Eggsy pushes himself away from the periphery of the room and shuffles closer, he can’t keep his insides from squirming. If he’d thought Merlin’s cool, mildly scolding look had been bad enough, Harry’s open concern is even worse. It’s not that he doesn’t appreciate it, he just doesn’t deserve it, because he’s a shitty, shitty Sub who apparently can’t apologise to the people he cares about.

He reaches Harry’s side, gaze flickering from the floor to the bed as the muscles in his knees twitch restlessly, hands curled into fists so tight that his knuckles ache with the strain of it.

“Or you can kneel, if you prefer,” Harry adds quietly, and at Eggsy’s grateful nod the Dom takes the cushion from behind his back and places it carefully to the right of his chair.

“I’m not Dropping,” the Sub hastens to say a moment or two later, once he’s got his face safely hidden in the side of Harry’s knee and an arm curled loosely around the man’s lower leg and he can breathe easy again, the cloying sense of panic in his chest finally receding. Because he’s not.

He feels guilty as fuck, and kneeling seems to be his body’s way of coping with that particular emotion. “I’ll be alright in a bit.”

“Take all the time you need,” Harry tells him, smoothing his fingers through Eggsy’s hair. And it helps, it really does. That sour churning in his gut begins to lessen by increments and the tension finally starts to bleed from his posture as Harry settles a hand over the back of his neck and squeezes gently. The simmering agitation beneath his skin dies down to a faint buzz, and the tightness in his throat eases enough that he doesn’t feel two seconds away from crying all the time, thank fuck.

He exhales shakily, his cheek resting against the soft fabric of the Dom’s trousers. “Ta, Harry.”

“Don’t mention it,” the older man murmurs, and smooths his fringe back with a gentle hand. “Would you like to talk about what brought all this on?”

Eggsy shifts a little on his knees, enough that he can glance up at the Dom briefly. “Me an’ Merlin had a fight.”

Harry’s eyebrows arch in surprise, but his expression remains non-judgemental. “A fight?”

“Well, sort of.” Eggsy lowers his gaze again, studying the patterned fabric of the cushion beneath his knees. “I was angry about stuff an’ said somethin’ really fuckin’ stupid, an’ he got all quiet and serious like he does when he’s pissed off an’ told me I was out of line, which I was, but…” The Sub frowns down at his clenched fist, frustrated with himself. “I didn’t mean any of it. Should’ve stuck around an’ apologised, but he wanted me to leave, so I left.”
Above him, Harry sighs softly. “I’m afraid Merlin can be a tad short-tempered at times.” He tugs lightly on Eggsy’s hair, a gentle reprimand. “It seems the two of you are rather similar in that regard.”

Despite the guilt still gnawing at his stomach, Eggsy’s lips twitch up into a smile at that. Merlin’s a lot of things, but ‘short-tempered’ certainly isn’t one of them. Sure, he can’t quite compete with Harry’s apparently limitless patience, but the Dom’s never so much as raised his voice at Eggsy before, even when he’d done something legitimately stupid during his Lancelot training. A significant *look*, a quietly spoken reprimand, and the matter would be considered dealt with. Hardly someone you’d be referring to an anger management therapist.

“He’ll soon calm down,” Harry reassures. “Then the two of you can apologise to each other and move on, hm?”

Fuck, it all sound so *simple* when the Dom puts it that way.

“Merlin ain’t got nothin’ to apologise for,” he mumbles, posture slumping a little further. “The whole thing was my fault. Should’ve never snapped at him in the first place.”

Harry strokes his hair soothingly. “We all make mistakes, Eggsy. I’m certain Merlin won’t hold it against you.” He breathes a quiet laugh. “God only knows how many heated arguments we’ve had over the years, and he still claims to love me.”

Eggsy tries to come to terms with the concept of either Dom losing their temper enough during a conversation for it to qualify as an ‘argument’, but the best he can manage is the mental image of Harry vigorously stirring his tea and frowning across at Merlin as the man types on his laptop with unnecessary force. It’s ludicrous enough to have him smiling again, and he rubs his cheek against Harry’s knee in silent thanks.

“I’ll go an’ apologise,” he promises quietly.

“I’m glad to hear it.” The Dom cups the back of his neck again, and it almost feels like a reward. “Would you like to stay down a while longer?”

“Mm-hm,” Eggsy murmurs, eyes half-closed as the man’s touch sends his muscles to jelly.

Harry shifts a little, but he’s only retrieving his phone from the nearby table, so the Sub settles down again after a beat. The Dom taps away on the device one-handed, his fingers beginning to card their way through Eggsy’s hair in a soothing, repetitive motion.

“Let me know if your knees start bothering you,” Harry prompts softly.

“Yes, Sir,” Eggsy manages, and shudders pleasantly when the Dom’s thumb brushes lightly against the sensitive patch of skin behind his ear.

“Good boy.”
A couple of hours later, he finds Merlin exactly where he left him.

Eggsy hovers in the open doorway, guilt and nerves at war with one another in his chest as he watches the Dom work. It’s not Bors’ feed playing on the main screen anymore, but instead it seems to be a playback of Roxy and Percival’s recent mission in Istanbul, which the two agents had completed earlier that afternoon. The pair are due to arrive back at headquarters this evening, so at least Eggsy can guarantee a sympathetic shoulder to cry on if things with Merlin go south.

He doesn’t want to interrupt, because the man looks busy, but he also can’t bear to walk away again without at least trying to apologise. The guilt might actually choke him if he leaves it there to fester much longer. But he’s scared, too – terrified, in fact – of fucking things up even more, irrepairably so, and ruining everything they’ve built between them over the past few weeks. But he can’t leave things how they are, either. He has to do something.

“Merlin?”

The Dom’s head comes up quickly, his gaze darting towards the door, and the brief glimmer of surprise and relief quickly settles into the man’s usual expression of calm neutrality. But there’s warmth there too, and Eggsy knows the Dom well enough now that he can see it, hidden in the softness of his eyes and the slight upward tilt to the corner of his mouth.

Eggsy releases the breath he hadn’t realised he’d been holding and steps into the lab, closing the door behind him. Merlin automatically reaches for the button that activates the magnetic lock, and that’s all the reassurance Eggsy needs before he’s crossing the room in a few brisk strides and dropping gracefully to his knees next to the Dom’s chair.

He winces a little, finding the floor a tad harder than he’d anticipated, but decides to plough on before he loses confidence.

“Look, guv, I’m really sorry about all that shit I said earlier,” he blurts, trying to get it out in one breath so his nerves don’t get the better of him. “It was bang out of order, an’ I didn’t really mean any of it, I swear. It won’t happen again, Sir.”

Merlin’s expression softens a little further, even as a fond smile tugs at his mouth. “Oh, I have a feeling it will, lad,” the Dom murmurs, a gentle hand coming up to cup the side of Eggsy’s face. “You’ll get frustrated, and I’ll get cross, and we’ll both end up saying or doing something that we’ll regret.” He brushes his thumb across the younger man’s cheekbone tenderly. “I’m sorry if I upset you.”

Eggsy shakes his head carefully, not wanting to dislodge Merlin’s hand. “Kinda had it comin’ to me, considerin’ what I said.”

“You didn’t deserve to be dismissed like that,” the Dom counters quietly. “Not after standing there and letting me upbraid you without so much as a peep of protest.”

Turning his cheek into the warmth of Merlin’s palm, Eggsy manages to crack a smile. “You’re fuckin’ scary when you’re cross, you know that?”
“I’ve heard rumours,” Merlin agrees, carding the fingers of his other hand through Eggsy’s hair. Then, more gently, he continues, “Are you sure you’re alright? Harry said he’d caught you on the cusp of brewing another Drop.”

The Sub’s eyes narrow a little, although there’s no real anger behind the gesture. “Harry’s a great big snitch.”

Merlin’s lips twitch up into another smile, but his gaze remains concerned. “He was worried about you. And peeved with me for being the root cause of it all.”

“Wasn’t your fault,” the Sub reminds him, head tipping forward a little as Merlin’s hand comes to rest on the back of his neck. “I just felt shitty about what I’d said to you, an’ the more I thought about it, the worse it made me feel. Guess I kinda got stuck in a loop for a bit.”

The Dom sighs softly, fingers gently combing through Eggsy’s hair. “I shouldn’t have sent you away in the first place. I’m sorry, lad.”

“Stop apologising,” Eggsy grumbles, but it lacks conviction. He’s finding it difficult to really concentrate on anything properly with Merlin touching him so tenderly. “S’posed to be my line, innit? You wouldn’t have gotten cross with me if I hadn’t said all that stuff in the first place.”

“Already forgiven and forgotten,” Merlin reassures, like it’s that easy, like he ain’t even offended by all the shit Eggsy had thrown in his face not two hours ago.

“For real?” the Sub queries, tilting his head back up to glance at the man quizzically.

Merlin regards him carefully for a long moment, fingers smoothing his fringe back slowly. “You’ve already apologised. That’s all I need from you to call the matter closed.” Then the Dom tilts his head a little to one side, considering. “Unless there’s something more that you need?”

“Nah.” Eggsy averts his gaze, a fidgety, squirmy sort of feeling settling under his skin. “M’good.”

And he is, he really is...except for the part of him that ain’t.

It’s hard to put it into words. He’s so fucking relieved to have the man’s forgiveness, to know that the temporary rift between them has been mended, to see Merlin smiling at him again and touching him and soothing him the way he has done these past few days during their time together. But then there’s a part of him that’s kinda torn up about it, too. Like, even though everything feels great, there’s a little voice in the back of his mind telling him he doesn’t deserve it; that he’s taking advantage of Merlin’s good nature, because he hasn’t actually done anything to redeem himself yet.

And fuck everything, because he knows what this is all about. He might’ve spent the past six years suppressing his Submissive instincts, but he’s still grown up surrounded by Subs in a predominantly heterodynamic culture, and he’s seen (and occasionally experienced) firsthand what guilt does to Subs. He knows all too well that sometimes a Sub will feel driven to seek out further discipline from their bonded partner or Dominant guardian as a means of coping with lingering emotional turmoil, or to regain the sense of equilibrium that guilt or frustration has robbed them of. It’s totally normal; healthy, even. He just never pegged himself as being one of those ‘needy’ types.

“Alright,” Merlin acquiesces, and Eggsy can tell he doesn’t quite believe him. “But it’s not a problem, lad. If discipline is something you feel that you need, Harry and I will gladly provide you with it.”

Eggsy flushes at the d-word, ducking his head to hide it. Not that he’s embarrassed by the
conversation – quite the opposite, really – it’s just that the first time he’d started to feel a real attraction towards Merlin had been through lingering daydreams about being bent over the handler’s knee for some mild misdemeanour during his training. God, how many hours had he spent in the shower cubicles near the gym with his forehead pressed against the cool tile and his knees turned to jelly, imagining that the heat of the pressurised water was the afterglow of a well-earned spanking? How often had he imagined Merlin crooking a finger at him before pulling Eggsy to stand in the V of his parted thighs, strong hands resting on his hips as he told the Sub exactly what happened to uppity little shits who spoke out of turn? And afterwards, how good it’d feel to have a rough palm stroking over his heated skin, soothing the burn, and a gentle voice in his ear telling him he’s a good boy.

He’s a Sub, so he can’t help craving a firm hand every now and then. And Merlin has such nice hands.

Gentle fingers curl under his chin, tipping his head up enough to allow their eyes to meet. Merlin’s smile is all warmth and affection, and it triggers an eruption of pleasant butterflies in Eggsy’s stomach just looking at it.

“I think perhaps we ought to have a proper discussion about this later on,” the Dom suggests quietly, thumb stroking over Eggsy’s chin, a hairsbreadth from caressing his bottom lip. “Preferably when you aren’t still kneeling on the hard floor. Your knees must be getting sore, lad.”

They are, as a matter of fact. Eggsy shifts his weight a little and shrugs, reluctant to get up when Merlin’s still being all gentle and soothing and Dominant, but also aware that he’ll regret it tomorrow when his knee joints have all seized up.

“Come and sit up here for a wee while,” Merlin coaxes softly, patting his thigh. “If you still feel like going down in ten minutes, we’ll find you a cushion. Alright?”

Well. That certainly sounds like a pretty decent compromise.

An open invitation to cuddle up in Merlin’s lap in order to give his knees a break? Fuck yeah.

Chapter End Notes

We all knew Merlin was a serial snuggler deep down.

Thanks for reading! More coming soon. :)
Sweat drips down his temples as Eggsy delivers a series of rapid-fire punches to the bag, teeth gritted against the ache that’s building up in his muscles, still-healing tissue growing overtired from the sharp, repetitive motions even as the anger and frustration humming through his veins spurs him on further.

He just can’t believe those bastards down in medical. After another torturously long week of reduced physical activity, they’ve gone and fucking benched him from fieldwork, again. So what if he can’t hoist forty kilos over his head without all the muscles in his torso seizing up? Who the fuck decided that weight-lifting was a necessary requirement for undercover espionage, anyway? It’s bullshit, all of it.

“Eggsy. That’s enough.”

There aren’t a lot of things in life that make Gary Unwin jump, but Merlin’s disembodied voice floating down from the ceiling happens to be one of them. So he startles violently, right-jab missing its target and sending him tumbling forwards half a pace into the heavy punch bag as he casts around for the nearest camera. Spotting one in the corner to his left, fixed snugly in shallow a nook above the neat row of fencing sabres, he peers suspiciously into the lens.

“Oi! How long have you been watchin’ me?”

“Long enough,” Merlin replies, his voice echoing a little in the otherwise deserted gym. Which should be creepy as fuck, except for the part where it kinda makes Eggsy feel safe. God, he needs therapy.

“Ooh, stalker. I’m tellin’ Harry.”

“I’m tasked with monitoring any and all restricted areas of the mansion,” Merlin reminds him, amused. “Watching you is literally in my job description. And may I remind you that Harry planted a micro-transmitter on your person the first time you two met?”

“Fair point,” Eggsy concedes, turning back towards the punch bag and raising his fists again. “Somethin’ you wanted, Sir?”

A short pause, then, with a note of what almost sounds like genuine hesitation: “I just received an update from Medical regarding your recent check-up.”

Eggsy hits the bag hard enough that the shock reverberates all the way up his arm and into his shoulder. “Fuckin’ fantastic.”

Merlin sighs audibly. “Don’t lose heart, lad; you won’t be grounded forever. The CMO seems confident that you’ll be fit for fieldwork by the beginning of next week. You’ve already held out for a fortnight; what’s another few days’ rest on top of that? Besides, by the weekend you’ll be too busy settling into your new home to worry about being benched.”

It’s clear the Dom’s trying his best to diffuse the situation, and while Eggsy appreciates his efforts, he
ain’t really looking for the silver lining to his current shit-cloud. He’s pissed off, and hitting stuff seems to be the best way to deal with that level of frustration at the moment.

In fact, he’d deliberately not gone to Merlin or Harry after his check-up for fear of saying something he’d regret later on, as more often than not his brain-to-mouth filter tends to come down with a nasty case of the hiccups when he’s in a bad mood. Ain’t like he’s got anger issues or nothing, but the last time he lost his temper, he and Merlin ended up having a disagreement and it’s something he’s keen to avoid repeating so soon after the last incident. Especially after that ‘wee talk’ he had with Merlin the other day about discipline and boundaries and stuff.

Nah, it’d be best if his Doms just left him alone to stew and sulk until he’s burned all the anger out of his system.

Besides, another hour or so and he’ll be too tired to feel cross about anything anymore. Then he can go and fold to his knees on the cushion near Harry’s armchair and fall asleep leaning against the man’s thigh like last time, with a gentle hand in his hair and the sound of two deep voices murmuring above him. Or maybe Merlin will send him that soft, knowing smile and extend a hand towards him; an open invitation for Eggsy to go and curl up in his lap where those big, strong arms can wrap him up in a proper hug.

Mmm, fuck yeah. That’d be ace. Eggsy’s always been a fairly tactile bloke around his mates and his Mum (and Roxy’s hugs are still a relatively new and wonderful discovery), but nothing compares to the way he feels when Merlin holds him. It’s…it’s only a cuddle, for God’s sake, but it’s the best freaking thing in the whole damn world. There’s a teeny-tiny part of him that feels ridiculous for needing that sort of thing, but when he’s around Merlin those kinda doubts typically last all of two seconds before being swept away by the tidal wave of ‘oh god, yes, hold me tighter’.

Intimate physical contact is something he’s starting to crave more and more as days go by; a hollow sort of bone-deep hunger that’s only fully sated when there are fingers in his hair or a gentle hand gripping the nape of his neck. It isn’t something he’s ready to ask for, not yet (that bloody fake-Dominant part of him is still trying to fight against his Submissive instincts at every turn), but both Merlin and Harry seem to have figured that part out for themselves over the course of the past week. Now, rather than waiting for him to prompt them, there’s always a cushion sitting between the two armchairs at Harry’s bedside, and a matching one hidden beneath Merlin’s desk for ease of access. They know to beckon him closer with easy smiles and casual gestures, the offer of Dominance always suggested but never expected, allowing Eggsy to choose whether he wants to sit or kneel or cuddle, and it’s just so fucking perfect, sometimes he can’t quite believe it’s all real.

“Ignoring me won’t make me go away any faster, lad.”

Snapped out of his pleasant daydream, Eggsy’s brow creases anew as frustration wells up inside him again. Gritting his teeth to keep himself in check, he pulls his arm back and punches the bag with brutal force, feeling the shock of it rattle through his bones. “You mind, guv? Tryin’ to concentrate here.”

“You’ve been whaling the stuffing out of that bag for the past hour,” Merlin reasons calmly, but with an effortless note of command underlying his tone. “It’s time to call it a day, son.”

Eggsy shakes his head, the motion dislodging a few more sweat droplets from his brow, and takes another hefty swing at his target. “I’m fine.”

“That wasn’t a request, Eggsy.”

Hands fisting inside his gloves, he sends another frustrated glower towards the nearby security
camera. “Look, what’s your problem? The docs said I could start workin’ out again, as long as I steered clear of the weight bench,” he says defensively. “An’ my thumbprint works on all the trainin’ rooms, so I ain’t sneakin’ about or nothin’.”

“That’s because I authorised your access,” the Dom tells him flatly. “I can just as easily revoke it again if I think you’re overdoing it. Take off the gloves, Eggsy. You’re done for today.”

“Ugh, fine!” Eggsy throws his hands up in the air, despite the way it sharpens the painful throbbing of his ribs. “Whatever.”

He strips off his gloves crossly and starts unwinding the tape, stomping across the spacious training hall towards the changing rooms with what he deems is a dignified, righteous sort of anger.

“Harry wants to speak to you,” Merlin adds after another lengthy pause. He sounds distinctly not amused, which really ought to be triggering warning bells of some kind, but Eggsy’s too busy debating with himself whether punching in one of the locker doors would be considered too juvenile.

“Eggsy.”

“Whatever,” the Sub mumbles again, because he’s decided that today’s a good day to be childish, pulling his sweat-soaked shirt over his head with a wince.

Merlin leaves him alone after that, apparently satisfied that his message has been received (however unwillingly), but Eggsy finds the silence even more grating than his handler’s unwelcomed interruption. His mood sours further, anger and frustration darkening to a gloomy sort of melancholy that sits high up in his torso like a leaden weight, and although the hot water helps to alleviate the pain in his ribs, it does nothing for the deeper ache in his chest. He feels like shit.

So it’s an uncharacteristically glum and unenthusiastic Eggsy that knocks on the door to Harry’s observation suite fifteen minutes later, with a heavy heart and sore muscles and shower-damp hair. JB trots over from his padded basket in the corner of the room as soon as he opens the door, tail wagging as he looks up at his master in eager expectation. He cocks his head to the side a little, as though sensing that something is off, licking Eggsy’s fingers when the Sub reaches down to pet him.

“Eggsy.” Harry greets pleasantly from one of the armchairs at the bedside, smiling at him over the rim of his teacup. “Close the door, there’s a good lad.”

There’s a cushion waiting for him to the right of Harry’s chair, and it looks so fucking squishy, Eggsy’s knees are already feeling a little wobbly. But there’s still a part of him that’s pissed off, a part of him that stubbornly refuses to let him seek out comfort through Submissive means, which is why he finds himself striding over to the second armchair instead, dropping into it with a quiet huff.

“Tea?” Harry offers, although he’s already lifting the teapot. Clearly Eggsy looks like a bloke in need of a cuppa.

It’s almost calming, in a way; watching the Dom neatly transfer two pearly-white cubes of sugar into the cup, adding a precisely measured trickle of milk and stirring the tea in such a manner that the metal spoon doesn’t clink against the fine china more than once. It’s breathtakingly mesmerising, seeing those gentle, steady hands at work. Seeing them handle the bone china teapot with such delicacy when Eggsy knows the sheer level of violence they’re truly capable of.

And of course, the brew turns out to be bloody perfect. Even after the first sip, Eggsy can feel the tension bleeding from his posture, the fight going out of him as fatigue sets in. His ribs hurt, and his muscles ache, and his joints are all stiff, and suddenly he really regrets not choosing to kneel instead,
because he feels fucking miserable.

“I got benched again,” he confesses, after several minutes of gloomy silence.

Harry’s hand settles lightly on his knee, a warm and familiar weight. “I’m sorry to hear that, Eggsy.”

The Sub’s posture droops a little further, Harry’s sympathy making him feel even more wretched. “It ain’t right,” he mumbles. “Roxy’s runnin’ herself ragged across half of Europe, tryin’ to stop the world from goin’ to shit again, an’ all the while I’m stuck here, sittin’ on my arse. I ain’t no fuckin’ freeloader, Harry. I wanna do somethin’.”

“I know,” Harry says again, his voice low and soothing. “None of us enjoy watching from the sidelines, dear boy, especially when there’s work to be done. It isn’t the first time a Knight has found himself in your shoes, and it certainly won’t be the last. Given the high-risk nature of our role as Kingsman agents, it’s quite possible that you’ll find yourself in this position again before the year is out. Occupational hazard, I’m afraid.”

Eggsy sighs, rubbing his thumb against the hand-painted details on his cup. “It fuckin’ sucks. Ain’t even like I got shot or nothin’, I just bruised up my insides a bit.”

“You sustained twenty-six separate bullet-related injuries,” the Dom reminds him, his tone mildly chiding. “Granted, you were fortunate enough that the bullets never passed through your suit, but the fabric did little to cushion the impact. Hairline fractures and internal contusions shouldn’t be so callously dismissed, Eggsy.”

“They’re bruises,” the younger agent reiterates flatly. “Ain’t nothing I haven’t dealt with before, guv. Y’know, ten years back, I played this five-a-side footy match on a broken ankle ‘cause Jamal’s team needed a goalie; managed just fine. We won an’ all.”

“Mm,” Harry agrees, eyebrow arched. “And I seem to recall you spent a total of nine weeks in a cast rather than six because you managed to aggravate the fracture.”

The Sub winces, the wind gone from his sails. “Alright. Fair point.”

It hadn’t really come as a huge surprise during his training to learn that Harry knew about his childhood in almost alarming detail. Nothing too personal, nothing about his home life, per se, but anything written down on official public-sector documents had apparently found their way to the Dom’s desk over the course of the past fifteen years. Rather than being affronted by the man’s meddling (which, come to think of it, would be the healthy response), he finds it weirdly comforting to know that Harry’s been looking out for him all these years. He wonders if the Dom’s responsible for his smooth transition from sixth-form college into the Marines; he’d always found it weird that the recruitment centre had never once mentioned anything about a criminal record, despite doing thorough background checks. And then there’d been that one incident when he was twelve and he accidentally got on the wrong bus after gymnastics practice and ended up on the far side of London at ten o’clock at night with less than two quid’s worth of loose change in his coat pocket. A black taxi cab had appeared no more than thirty seconds after he’d stepped off the bus, and the surprisingly well-dressed driver had kindly given Eggsy his mobile so that he could phone home before offering him a lift back to the estate, free of charge. His Mum had prattled on about guardian angels and Good Samaritans and the like, but even back then, he’d found the whole thing kinda peculiar.

Eggsy tries not to let himself linger on those sort of anomalies too much, because the more he thinks about it, the more he begins to realise just how fucking indebted he is to the man who gave him that Kingsman medal all those years ago.
“How’s the new house coming along?” Harry asks conversationally, setting down his teacup in its matching saucer.

“Alright, I guess,” Eggsy replies with one-shouldered shrug, biting into a square of shortbread and trying to steadfastly ignore the way that JB’s staring up at him imploringly. “The original safehouse system was kinda OTT for just the three of us; the security team had to gut it and start from scratch so that Mum don’t accidentally trigger a booby-trap an’ get herself locked in or somethin’. Merlin thinks it’ll be ready by the end of the week, though.”

Harry nods, refilling Eggsy’s cup. “Do you plan on redecorating before your family moves in?”

The Sub shakes his head. “Nah, I can always get decorators to come ‘round later on. The wallpaper’s pretty decent, an’ the colour scheme’s nice enough, ain’t like it’s gonna hurt ‘em for a few weeks while they get everythin’ unpacked. Mum can always change it later if she wants to. I just wanna get her the hell away from the old housin’ estate, y’know?”

“Because of Dean?” Harry asks quietly, and when Eggsy nods, he settles a hand on the younger man’s knee again. “If his presence is still an ongoing concern, I could easily have him arrested. You need only ask.”

Despite how fucking tempting that sounds, Eggsy shakes his head. Dean’s an abusive bastard, and a month ago he would’ve jumped at the chance to have the Dom locked up for good, but a lot’s changed since then. He’s changed. And suddenly putting his step-dad in the slammer isn’t such a big priority anymore. Besides, Dean Baker’s a great big nobody now; he had fingers in a lot of dirty pies, but most of his old circle are either dead or seriously injured and ain’t likely to be dealing in hard drugs again any time soon. On top of that, Dean managed to get himself sliced up pretty bad by his own posse during the V-Day Massacre and spent almost two weeks in a coma. From what Merlin tells him, he ain’t likely to be discharged home from hospital for at least another fortnight, and even after that, his internal organs are fucked up enough that he’ll be pissing blood for the rest of his significantly reduced lifespan. And Eggsy’s never been in favour of kicking a man when he’s already down.

“Ain’t worth it, guv,” he replies. “The new place is a helluva long way from Dean’s neighbourhood. Doubt Mum an’ Daisy’ll run into him again. An’ he ain’t likely to go cryin’ to social services to sue for guardianship, neither.” He manages a wry half-smile. “Ta for offerin’, though.”

“And speaking of check-ups: “Hey, what did the neurosurgeons have to say about your scan? Was everythin’ alright?”

The Dom’s smile is warm and pleased. “Better than anyone expected, it seems. The plate seems to be holding and the fracture hasn’t destabilised. If my bloodwork comes back with no glaring concerns, they’re going to release me tomorrow morning.”

“They’re lettin’ you go home?” Eggsy feels his glum mood vanish in an instant. “Harry, mate, that’s brill!”

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“Mm,” Harry agrees, lips twitching upwards. “I must admit, I’m rather looking forward to sleeping in my own bed again. And forgive me for sounding like an old man, but I do miss my armchair.”
“You are an old man, guv,” Eggsy points out, utterly serious.

“Watch your tongue,” the Dom chides, fond and amused, tapping the back of Eggsy’s knuckles lightly.

The younger man grins at him, unrepentant, and reaches for another biscuit. His eyes linger on the tea tray for a moment as munches on a chocolate digestive, and he realises with a sudden, unexpectedly crushing wave of disappointment that this’ll be the last time they sit and have tea together, if Harry truly is due to be discharged home tomorrow morning. Eggsy’s grown accustomed to being able to drop by the Dom’s room whenever he feels like it over the past few weeks, often bringing a meal up from the kitchens for them to share when Roxy isn’t around to drag him down to the dining hall. Sometimes they’ll play cards or board games, and Harry will absolutely slaughter him at Scrabble and Cluedo. More often than not they’ll just sit quietly together, listening to a radio-play (Eggsy’s recently gotten really into Cabin Pressure) or dozing off to ClassicFM when they can’t find anything decent on the other stations. It’s made his field suspension almost bearable.

Not that he isn’t glad that Harry’s condition has improved enough that he no longer needs to be monitored, but fuck, Eggsy’s going to miss the company. He’s been careful not to let himself take the man’s constant presence for granted, but over the past week or so he’s developed something of a routine when it comes to kneeling for his Doms at the end of the day. Merlin always finds a way to clock off after eight unless there’s a real emergency (apparently Morgana usually takes charge of things overnight), and for a couple of hours every evening Eggsy has the undivided attention both senior agents, who’ll effortlessly soothe away the strain of the day with gentle hands and tender words. Falling asleep against Harry’s thigh has become something of a habit.

“Are the biscuits not to your liking?”

Eggsy startles, and realises he’s been staring at the tea tray with unusual intensity. He straightens, shooting Harry another wry half-smile.

“No, they’re good.” He rubs the back of his neck and shrugs. “It’s just… I’m gonna miss this, y’know? Gettin’ to hang out with you all the time.”

Harry’s smile softens into something warmer. “Likewise. But darling, you needn’t stay here for the duration of your medical leave,” he points out quietly. “As a matter of fact, Merlin and I had a little chat earlier this morning, and we both agreed that the guest bedroom back home is unquestionably yours, as often or as seldom as you may desire it. Of course, we’ll understand if you’d rather wait until your new home is ready — but should you ever require a period of respite from family life, our door will always be open to you.”

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“You serious?”

“Quite,” the Dom confirms, his thumb brushing back and forth over Eggsy’s knee, gentle fondness crinkling at the corners of his eyes. “I’m afraid we’ve both grown rather too accustomed to having you all to ourselves during the evening, and it isn’t a habit we’re overly keen on breaking.”

Eggsy flushes hot all over, the little Submissive voice in the back of his mind absolutely preening at the knowledge that his Doms have been actively discussing the idea of him moving in with them. It takes a great deal of effort, but he successfully pulls himself together enough to give a proper verbal answer rather than just sitting there, dumbstruck.
“Yeah, sure, that’d be cool,” he managers, downplaying his internal elation. He cocks an easy grin. “But on one condition, yeah?”

The Dom tilts his head a little to one side, curious. “Mm?”

Eggsy reaches down to pull JB out from behind the man’s legs, brushing the crumbs off his fur. “Stop feeding my dog biscuits, you’ll make ‘im fat.”

Harry’s laugh and soft and warm and genuine, and Eggsy feels a sudden rush of intense desire curl around his gut, liquefying his insides and turning his blood hot. Dear god, he wants this man. Wants him so hard it hurts. And the knowledge that Harry’s already taken by another equally gorgeous, equally unavailable Dom hurts even more.

He knows he’s only setting himself up for a life of heartbreak and self-enforced celibacy, but he can’t help it. How can he stop himself from falling head over heels in love with a man like Harry Hart? It just ain’t possible.

He’ll just have to fall for him. Fall fast and hard, and enjoy the rush of it all, and hope he doesn’t shatter when he hits the bottom.

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“You needn’t feel obligated to earn your keep,” Harry tells him kindly, the first night Eggsy moves in, when the Sub insists on cooking them dinner. “I offered you the spare bedroom because I enjoy your company, not because I’m in need of a valet.”

Eggsy gives an easy shrug, leaning back against the fridge to close it, an assortment of ingredients balanced in his arms. “I know, guv. But you’re s’posed to be takin’ things easy, remember? An’ I don’t mind cookin’. Can’t do anythin’ fancy-like, but I make a decent spag-bol.”

Which, to be fair, is mostly thanks to Roxy’s diligent tuition. As Lancelot candidates, they’d been given access to a small kitchen/dining room/food prep area adjacent to their shared dorm, although the likes of Charlie and Rufus and Digby (who Eggsy assumes had never been compelled to prepare their own food, the rich bastards) had usually opted to eat in the main dining hall on the ground floor with the vast majority of HQ staff members. And yeah, the food there was always amazing, but everything had tasted a little less appealing when he was stuck listening to Charlie’s grating small-talk for half an hour straight three times a day. So he’d inevitably chosen to stay behind with Roxy
and Piers instead, despite the fact that his culinary skills didn’t extend much beyond knowing how to
boil pasta and make a cheese toastie.

A year on, and his repertoire’s a little more expansive, thanks to her cooking lessons.

“Never bought food from Marks’n’Spencer’s before,” he admits, pulling out a chopping board and
knife as Harry sits down at the dining table with glass of juice. “Prices ain’t as bad as what I’d
thought they’d be. Although who the fuck pays nine quid for a box of cherries? An’ why d’you even
need cherries to come all gift-wrapped like that?” He shakes his head, carefully dicing up an onion.
“Bakery section seems nice, though. Got us some fancy-lookin’ fruit scones, the bloke behind the
counter said they’re good. Merlin likes scones, right?”

“He’s never led me to believe otherwise,” Harry confirms, sounding faintly amused. “You really
didn’t have to go to all this trouble, Eggsy.”

“Ain’t exactly a strain on my finances,” the Sub dismisses, scraping the chopped onion into a
saucenpan on the hob. “I’ve got a hundred an’ fifty grand sittin’ in my bank account, an’ I haven’t got
a fuckin’ clue what to spend it on. Was gonna buy a house to start off with, but apparently agents get
‘em for free.”

Harry hums in agreement. “The Kingsman Service prides itself on thoroughly compensating its
employees.”

“Yeah, no shit.” He pokes the contents of the pan with a wooden spoon, watching the onion sizzle in
the olive oil. “Seriously, if that was my ‘welcome-to-Kingsman’ bonus package, do I even wanna
know what my annual income’s gonna be like?”

“Suffice to say, you needn’t shop at Poundland anymore.”

“Well I ain’t switchin’ to Harrods,” Eggsy warns him, dropping a pack of minced beef into the pan
and frowning down at it, trying to remember if he was supposed to brown the meat before or after
adding the onions. “Went there with me Mum once at Christmas, almost got trampled to death by
tourists.”

The decorations had been pretty nice, though. They’d had a whole floor dedicated to Christmas stuff,
and he and his Mum had spent a good hour and a half playing a game of ‘who can find the most
expensive ornament’. Eggsy had won in the end, after discovering a giant hand-crafted glass bauble
the size of his head with real gold plating, on sale for almost five hundred quid. She’d treated him to
a humungous ice cream from the fancy dessert parlour on the upper floor, which they’d shared
because it had been big enough for six people, and he’d spent the rest of the day trying not to throw
up in case they charged his Mum for the cleaning bill.

He turns around to share the memory with Harry, but the words die on his lips when he catches sight
of the pinched look on the man’s face. The Dom’s got an elbow braced on the edge of the table, his
thumb and forefingers kneading at his brow in a way that just screams headache. Eggsy feels a
sickly spike of concern twist in his gut.

“You alright, guv?”

“Mm.” Harry drops his hand, his expression smoothing out into something calm and pleasant and
utterly false. “I’m sorry, what were you saying?”

Eggsy removes the pan from the heat and steps through the archway into the dining room, frowning
a little as he wipes his hands on the dishcloth that’s slung over his shoulder. “Maybe you should go
an’ lie down for a bit.”

Harry shakes his head, but there’s no hiding the way it makes the grooves in his forehead deepen.
“I’m quite alright, Eggsy.”

“No you ain’t,” Eggsy contends, stubborn. “You look like shit, an’ I can tell you’ve got a headache. You’re s’posed to be restin’, guv. The docs told you not to overdo it, remember?”

“I’m sitting down,” Harry points out calmly, but there isn’t a lot of conviction behind the argument. “I’d hardly class that as overdoing it.”

Eggsy perches on the corner of the table, hand moving so that the backs of his fingers are resting against the Dom’s arm, barely touching. “You’ve done a lot of walkin’ around today, though. More than you’ve done in a long while. Hell, you only woke up from invasive brain surgery a few weeks ago, you gotta learn give yourself a break every now an’ then.”

Harry sighs, but it’s clear the fight’s gone out of him.

“Alright,” he relents, and allows Eggsy to help him up. “But only for a short while. You’ll wake me when supper’s ready?”

Eggsy nods. “Course I will.” He can leave the pot simmering on low for a couple of hours. You can’t overcook bolognaise, or so Piers always told him. “Don’t worry about anythin’. Just go an’ get your head down for a bit, yeah?”

The Dom seems steady enough on his feet, but Eggsy escorts him upstairs anyway, never more than a pace behind in case Harry should lose his balance. He stops when he reaches the master bedroom, respecting the man’s need for privacy and not wishing to coddle him (injured though he may be, the bloke’s still a seasoned international spy, and he won’t thank Eggsy for taking away his autonomy).

He turns to go, only to find his wrist captured by strong but gentle fingers.

“Eggsy.” Harry’s gaze lingers on him for a long moment, a hint of something in his expression that the Sub can’t quite read, before the look softens into his usual quiet, affectionate smile. “Thank you. You’re a good lad.”

Feeling an inward thrill of pleasure at the praise, Eggsy cocks another easy grin. “Any time, Sir.”

And if he goes back downstairs with a bit of a bounce in his step, well. Only Mr Pickles is there to witness it.
Eggsy pauses in the doorway to Merlin’s private study, staring into the dimly lit room, transfixed.

“You’ve got a PS4?”

Merlin glances away from his wall-mounted computer monitors, an amused half-smile curling at the corner of his mouth. “Aye, that I do.”

“An’ an X-box? And a Wii?” Eggsy adds, eyeing the row of devices arranged neatly along a shelf near the man’s desk. “An’…what the hell is that thing?”

The Dom’s gaze flickers towards the chrome sphere sitting in the centre of the shelf, and he huffs a quiet laugh. “A prototype. Friend of mine asked me to work out some of the kinks before they begin mass-manufacturing the damn things. You won’t see those on the shelves for another five or so years, mind. There’s just no way to make them affordable, the technology’s not there yet; that thing’s worth its weight in gold. And trust me, it weighs a bloody ton. Still, holographic gaming is a fairly lucrative business endeavour overall. Give it a decade or so, and these holo-spheres will start replacing flatscreen televisions.”

Eggsy turns his gaze towards the man imploringly, and Merlin’s lips twitch up in a wider smile. “Later,” he promises. “Once I’ve fixed the adaptor and stabilised the projector, I’ll let you give it a test-run. Deal?”

Nodding, appeased, the Sub steps further into the study, coming to lean against the side of Merlin’s chair. “What you workin’ on, anyway?”

“Security updates for your new house,” Merlin replies distractedly, typing one-handed as he settles the other against the small of Eggsy’s back. “The system my team installed is adequate, but there’s a five-second trigger delay on the lock in the panic room. The whole thing’s automated, so it’s probably just a technical glitch, but I’d rather reset the program, just in case. A five second delay is four and a half seconds too long in my book.”

Eggsy smiles, touched, and perches precariously on the arm of the chair, squinting at the screen and trying to make sense of the all endless lines of code. He’s forced to give up after a minute or two and instead contents himself with watching Merlin work, leaning further against the man’s side. He hasn’t seen the Dom in a couple of days, not since moving out of Kingsman HQ – according to Roxy, it’s been a pretty intense forty-eight hours for all the Knights, and it makes sense that the service needed its top handler on-site for the duration of the crisis – and he’s missed these quiet moments together.

“You comin’ downstairs in a bit?” he asks, trying to get comfortable in his perch. “Tea’s almost ready. I was gonna help Harry plate up the roast, but I kinda get the feeling he’s gonna wallop me with that spoon of his if I try to taste the gravy again.”

“You’ll get used to that,” Merlin tells him, amused, curling an arm around the Sub’s waist and pulling the younger man down to sit in his lap. “When it comes to cooking, Harry’s a bit of a perfectionist. Best just to steer clear of the kitchen until he’s done.”

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“Right, gotcha.” The Dom’s lap is infinitely more comfortable than the arm of the chair, and Eggsy heaves a contented sigh, leaning back against Merlin’s chest. “So how come you’re back so early? Not that I’m complainin’ or anythin’, you work way too much as it is, but I thought you said you wouldn’t be home until eight?”
“Percival and Gwaine both arrived back at headquarters earlier than expected,” the Dom replies, fingers curling lightly over Eggys’s hip, his arm looped around the Sub’s midriff. “They can hold the fort well enough. Morgana persuaded me to go home on time for once.”

Eggsy grins, tilting his head back to glance up at the handler. “She locked you out of the system again, didn’t she?”

Merlin’s sigh is a warm puff of air against his ear. “Aye. She’s frustratingly good at that.”

“She’s awesome.”

“Mm, I suppose so.” Merlin’s hand slides up, fingers splaying over his ribcage. “How’s the physio going?”

Eggsy gives a slight shrug. “Okay, I guess. It’s just stretches an’ stuff, ain’t exactly challengin’.”

“It isn’t about physically exhausting yourself,” Merlin reminds him. “It’s about maintaining muscle strength and elasticity without inhibiting your body’s natural healing process.”

“I know,” Eggsy gripes, still smiling. “ Doesn’t mean I have to like it. I miss sparrin’ with Roxy an’ the others.”

Merlin hooks his chin over Eggsy’s shoulder. “It’s only for another few days,” he murmurs. “As soon as medical gives the all-clear, I’ll spar with you myself.”

Eggsy grins, pleasantly surprised. “That a promise?”

“Mm.”

He’s only ever seen Merlin fight once, and that was when he tried to take a swing at the Dom a few weeks ago and ended up pinned on the floor of Kingsman’s ITU with his arms wrenched behind his back. To be fair, his injuries had been considerably more troublesome back then, and his range of motion seriously impaired, so it wasn’t like it was a fair fight or anything. He’s keen to see how well he can hold his own against the Dom when he isn’t handicapped. Maybe he’ll surprise himself. Maybe he’ll actually last more than ten seconds this time.

A deep, metallic bong suddenly echoes through the silence of the house, and Eggsy chokes on a startled laugh, glancing towards the doorway with his eyebrows arched.

“Was that a gong?” he asks incredulously. “Did he seriously just summon us downstairs with a fuckin’ gong?”

“Harry dislikes raising his voice,” Merlin explains, his tone amused. “Sometimes I get so wrapped up in my work that I don’t notice what time it is; I bought him the gong as an anniversary present fourteen years ago so he wouldn’t need to keep fetching me for dinner. Never seen him laugh so hard.”

Eggsy smiles at the warmth in the man’s voice. “You’re both crazy.”

“Mm-hm.” Merlin gives him another brief, tight squeeze, then nudges him up from his lap. “Come on, we’ve been summoned. Let’s not leave his Highness waiting.”
The weather’s been pretty decent for most of the week, so Eggsy really shouldn’t have been surprised that when the heaven’s finally opened on Thursday afternoon, the ensuing downpour was torrential.

“Course it couldn’t have waited ‘til we got home,” Eggsy gripes, peering out at the rain from his makeshift shelter beneath a patch of trees near the edge of the park. He’s already soaked through from his mad-dash across the grassy pitch, but at least his clothes aren’t anything fancy that’ll get ruined by a bit of mud and water; he still tends to opt for an old pair of trackies when he takes JB for walks, just in case.

He adjusts his grip on his mobile, the plastic casing slippery against his damp fingers. “Sorry, think I’m gonna have to leg it home in a mo, Rox.”

“That’s okay,” Lancelot reassures him. “We can talk later. Oh, and Merlin’s given me the next couple of days off, so I might swing by your new house sometime on Saturday, if the invitation’s still open?”

“Hell yeah,” Eggsy agrees, scratching at his neck beneath the collar of his jacket where the rainwater’s made his skin itch. “Mum’s gonna love you, babe. An’ if you wanna bring Archie along, it’d make Daisy happy. She loves that poodle.”

“Poodles are better than pugs,” Roxy reminds him, an echo of their longstanding faux-argument about whose dog is superior. “Glad to hear your sister’s starting off on the right foot.”

“She ain’t even two yet,” Eggsy protests. “She only likes him ‘cause he’s big and fluffy.”

“Mm-hm,” she responds, with audible amusement. “Look, I’d better not keep you, I think there’s supposed to be a proper thunderstorm later on. Call me tomorrow once you’ve settled in, alright? Let me know how your Mum takes it.”

He nods, even though she can’t see him, and after promising to text each other tomorrow morning, they hang up. He sighs, shoving his phone back into his pocket as water drips down from his sopping wet hair and into his eyes. He scrubs the dampness away with his equally soaked jacket sleeve, glancing down at his watch briefly.

Shit. If he stays here much longer, he’ll be late for tea – Merlin had promised to try and make it home early tonight, too, since it’ll be their last evening together for quite some time. Eggsy knows he ought to feel proper stoked about moving into a new house with Daisy and his Mum, only he can’t help thinking about how much he’s enjoyed staying over at Harry’s this past week. Being near the two Doms, living under the same roof as them and sharing meals together, it all just feels so right; like he’s finally found someplace he belongs. He isn’t ready to leave that all behind.
“Nothin’ else for it, bruv,” he says to JB, prompting the dog to look up at him, tail wagging. “Can’t miss out on our last night together just ’cause the weather’s shit, can we? C’mon.”

He leans down, scooping the dog up into his arms, getting muddy paw-prints all over his jacket in the process. Doesn’t matter. It’s an old jacket (fifteen quid from Primark at that), ain’t gonna put a dent in his finances if he has to chuck it out and buy a new one.

Rather than easing up on him once he’s out in the open, the rain decides to get even heavier, splattering noisily as it hits the pavement and drumming against the roof of parked cars as he sets off at jog, trying to blink the water out of his eyes. It’s been ages since he got a chance to stretch his legs like this, and after a minute or so he finds himself falling into a familiar pace, cradling JB to his chest like he’d done all those months ago during cross-country stamina training. At least he isn’t carrying thirty kilos of combat gear this time, even if the dog in his arms is significantly heavier than he was last year.

By the time he makes it back to Harry’s house (cutting a the twenty minute walk down to a six-minute jog), he’s drenched to the bone and grinning like a loon, breathless and exhilarated, adrenaline thrumming through his body like an old friend.

Before he has chance to fish the key out of his pocket, the front door opens, Merlin’s broad-shouldered frame filling the entryway. He gives Eggsy a brief look up and down, the corner of his mouth twitching.

“Pleasant walk?”

“Gorgeous,” Eggsy agrees, shifting his grip on JB when the pug tries to wriggle out of his hold, keen to share his muddy paws with the other man. “You should join us next time.”

Merlin shrugs, leaning his shoulder against the doorframe. “I’m not overly fond of cold showers.”

“Oh for Pete’s sake, man, do let the poor boy inside,” Harry chides, appearing behind Merlin. He’s wearing an apron over his day clothes and has a thick towel draped over one arm, which he unfolds as he nudges his partner out of the way. “Here, I’ll take JB.”

The pug seems delighted by the sudden turn of events, practically vibrating with the force of his tail-wagging, and Eggsy doubts Harry’s apron’s gonna stay creamy-white for very long. But the Dom clearly has plenty of experience in wrangling small, wriggly, muddy dogs, because he scoops JB out of Eggsy’s arms and into the towel with ease, turning to head back inside the house.

“You probably don’t want me dripping water all over the place,” Eggsy points out as Merlin tugs him inside and closes the door behind them. The floor of the inner entryway is tiled, so he ain’t so bothered about dumping his kit in here – better that than making the hallway carpets all damp, anyway.

“Harry wouldn’t thank you for it,” Merlin agrees, helping him strip out of his soaked jacket. “Wait here a tic, I’ll go and grab you a towel.”

“Might need two,” the Sub calls after him, toeing off his trainers and nudging them aside with his damp socks.

There are already small puddles forming around his feet from everything that’s sluiced off his trousers, and now that he’s ain’t jogging anymore, he’s starting to feel cold. Grimacing, he peels off his wet t-shirt and shimmies out of his trackies, leaving the sodden clothes in a messy pile near the doormat and bending down to peel off his socks. The hairs on the back of his arms are standing on
end, goosebumps threatening to break out, and he rubs them briskly to try and warm up, shifting from foot to foot, now very much aware that he’s standing by the front door in nothing but his boxers.

“A wee bit chilly, are we?” Merlin asks him, amused, unfurling a big, thick towel and wrapping it snugly around Eggsy’s shoulders. He dumps a second one unceremoniously over the Sub’s head, obscuring his vision, and starts gently scrubbing at his damp hair.

“Oi, I ain’t five,” Eggsy protests, but makes no move to duck away, hugging the warm towel closer about himself.

“Hush.” Merlin lifts the towel enough that they can make eye contact, his eyebrow arched, a smile still playing at his lips. “Boys who stand outside grinning in the rain don’t have a leg to stand on.”

Eggsy sticks his tongue out at the man simply because he can, and he knows it’s ridiculous and childish and immature, but it makes Merlin’s smile twitch an increment wider, so clearly it was the right thing to do.

“You ought to take a bath before you catch cold,” Harry says from the doorway to the lounge, JB swaddled up in his arms like a doggy burrito and looking absolutely thrilled about it, tongue lolling. “There’s time; dinner won’t be ready for another half an hour.”

“M’alright,” Eggsy declines, trying not to let his teeth chatter, flushing a little under their combined coddling. “I was only out in the rain for ten minutes.”

“I’ve already got one running,” Merlin tells him, hooking the towel around the back of Eggsy’s neck and giving a little tug to propel him towards the stairs. “So you might as well use it. Go on up, I’ll put your things on to wash.”

Realising that resistance, on this occasion, is utterly futile, Eggsy feigns a long-suffering sigh and pads upstairs on bare feet. He can hear the water running in the main bathroom and realises that a bath actually sounds pretty fucking great, stepping into the tiled room and dropping the towels as a wall of warm, damp air hits him. He closes the bathroom door and strips out of his boxers, switching off the taps and climbing into the tub, laying back with an appreciative moan. There’s even bubbles. Merlin doesn’t do anything half-arsed, it seems.

He’s almost dozing off when there’s a light tap on the door.

“Mm?” He stirs, glancing down at himself to make sure the bubbles are still preserving his modesty.

“Only me, lad.” Merlin pushes the door open just enough to poke his head inside. “I’ve brought you some dry clothes.”

Eggsy sends him a tired but genuine smile. “Cheers, guv.”

“Don’t go falling asleep in there,” the Dom warns, stepping into the bathroom and moving to set the clothes down on the chair next to the sink. “If you manage to drown yourself in the bath, I’ll personally carve it into your tombstone so that the whole world knows you died an idiot.”

It’s enough to startle a surprised snort of laughter out of Eggsy. “Ain’t that a bit harsh, bruv?”

“Quite possibly.” The Dom strays near enough to flick him lightly between the eyebrows. “But it’s a fairly good incentive not to fall asleep, don’t you think?”

Eggsy wrinkles his nose at him, still grinning, and rests his head back against the lip of the bath as he
closes his eyes again. “Alright, alright. I’ll stay awake.”

Fingers card gently through his damp hair. “Good.”

He sighs, tilting his head back a little further, warmth swelling in his chest as Merlin rubs against his scalp. Fuck, he’s going to miss this. The casual intimacy, the constant touches, the gentle teasing, the easy banter that exists between the three of them. It’s all he’s ever wanted.

God. Why the hell is he throwing all that away?

“I don’t wanna move out,” he confesses, and keeps his eyes closed, ‘cause he hadn’t exactly planned on saying that out loud. It’s just that Merlin’s hand is in his hair, and he feels so fuckin’ cozy right now, all his inhibitions are gone.

“Then don’t,” the Dom says, thumb brushing lightly against his temple. “The bedroom’s yours, lad, you know that.”

Fuck, he makes it sound so simple. But how can it be, when he’s got his Mum and his baby sister depending on him? He can’t just give them a new house and bugger off, can he? He promised his Mum that he’d be more of a constant in her life; the two of them a team again, just like they were before Dean came along – him and her against the world. She’s gonna need all the support she can get once she’s away from that bastard. He may be an abusive arsehole, but he’s still her Dom, and there’s a whole ton of fucked-up emotional attachments involved in a relationship like that; separating them isn’t going to solve all those problems in one go. He’s already got the names of half a dozen decent domestic violence therapists, and he doesn’t care what it takes, he’s gonna find a way to persuade his Mum to talk to someone. She always keeps everything bottled up, never wants to burden other people with her own personal struggles, but that’s gonna have to change if there’s any chance of her moving on from this.

There’s a hot, tight sort of ache in his throat that has nothing to do with him catching a chill, and he keeps his eyes closed now for a very different reason.

“Mum needs me,” he manages after a long pause, and thankfully his voice remains steady. “I can’t just walk away.”

He feels Merlin perch on the edge of the tub, the hand in his hair sliding down to cup his cheek instead.

“Nobody’s asking you to abandon your family, Eggsy,” the Dom murmurs, his voice low and kind, his accent thickening. “You could still spend time with them during the day; take your sister to nursery, go shopping with your Mum, catch up with your friends. But would there be any real harm in coming back here at the end of the day and spending the night with us? Kingsman tailors offer a twenty-four hour fitting service; perhaps you could tell your mother that you help man the shop overnight.”

Eggsy mulls that over for a minute, the ache in his throat easing. Fuck. That might actually work. He’d be there for his Mum all day to get her settled in, to take Daisy to the park and help out with odd jobs around the house. There’d be nobody else around to spoil it; no Dean to sour the mood with his bullying tactics, no Rotty or Poodle to make snide remarks at him about being a Mummy’s boy. They can have dinner together, and he’ll put Daisy to bed before he goes so she won’t even know he’s left the house. Then he’ll come back home, back to Harry and Merlin, where he doesn’t have to pretend to be alright any more. Where he won’t have to be the strong, dependable Dominant son that his Mum needs him to be.
Fuck, that’d be perfect.

“Merlin,” he says, once he’s sure his voice isn’t going to wobble. “You’re a fuckin’ genius.”

The Dom sniffs a quiet grin, and Eggsy feels the soft press of lips against his temple for a brief moment before the man moves to stand, fingers sliding back through Eggsy’s damp hair one last time.

“Dinner’s almost ready, lad. Can you manage to get dressed on your own?”

It’s a genuine query, one that Eggsy doesn’t feel compelled to answer with his usual sarcasm. Instead he nods, opening his eyes and sitting upright slowly. He feels like he’s coming up out of a thick fog, his limbs warm and loose and syrupy, the ache gone from his muscles. He has a feeling it’s going to be even easier than usual, going down for Harry and Merlin tonight.

“Eggsy?”

He nods again. “M’alright. Thank you, Sir.”

The Dom squeezes the back of his neck briefly. “Good lad. I’ll see you downstairs.”

It takes him three attempts to exit the bathtub, given how weak and wobbly his knees have become, but that’s something he intends to keep to himself.

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After much persuasion from my wonderful readers, I now have Tumblr account. Feel free to send me a message so I can follow you all!

I’ll also be taking Kingsman drabble prompts/fic requests via my Ask box. Drabbles will be posted on my Tumblr blog, fic requests will be fulfilled on AO3. :-)
the ridiculous amount of cuddling I've got planned for future chapters.

Super excited about the next update, though! You all remember that scene from the movie credits, where Eggsy goes all 'Manners maketh man' on Dean? Weeeell, let's just say our favourite Dominant handler isn't going to be too pleased about Eggsy using his Kingsman skills in public like that without clearance. ;) *evil chuckling* Silly boy forgot to take off his glasses, after all.

Anywho! I hope to see you all on Tumblr, feel free to demand lots of fluffy drabbles, I'm in a very gooey mood at the moment!

xxxxxxxx
After a year of training at Kingsman HQ (plus all those months he spent as a cadet with the Marines), lazy mornings are practically a physical impossibility, and consequently Eggsy's awake at least forty-five minutes before the alarm on his phone is due to go off.

His brain always takes a good ten minutes to catch up with the rest of him, his body moving on autopilot until he’s finished fighting off the lingering vestiges of sleep, and by that time he’s already dressed in a hoodie and trackies, blinking goggily at himself in the mirror as he brushes his teeth, JB trotting in dizzying circles around his feet, claws clacking against the tiled bathroom floor.

“I’m comin’, calm down,” Eggsy mumbles inarticulately around his toothbrush, huffing a quiet laugh when the pug immediately sits, staring up at him imploringly. Eggsy spits and rinses, rolling his shoulders to loosen the muscles that have stiffened up overnight. “Feel like goin’ for a run, bruv?”

JB sneezes so hard it rocks him backwards a few inches; Eggsy decides to take that as a ‘yes’.

There’s a light on in the hallway downstairs, and a brief investigation of the kitchen reveals a mug and plate drying on the rack beside the sink; Merlin’s already set off for Saville Row, then. It’s not unusual for the Dom to leave as early as five-thirty some days, especially if there’s intel waiting to be analysed or field extractions to be planned. Eggsy doesn’t know how the bloke manages to juggle all that responsibility on such little sleep, but it does explain why Merlin always seems to have an oversized mug of tea to hand.

Harry, he’s discovered, tends to sleep in a little later than his partner – although whether it’s a lifelong habit or just an unavoidable side-effect of all the painkillers and muscle relaxants that Medical’s forcing him to take is unclear. Eggsy tries to keep the noise down regardless, creeping around the house on sock-clad feet and hushing JB when the pug starts grumbling impatiently near the front door. Harry’s still healing, he needs all the sleep he can get.

It’s early enough in the morning that it’s still mostly dark outside, the sky a dull sort of navy that vaguely hints at the possibility of daybreak but mostly just makes Eggsy regret not bringing a coat with him. The fresh morning air is bitingly cold, and does a good job of waking Eggsy the rest of the way up as he sets off at a steady jog, JB scampering along at his heels.

The rain seems to have stopped overnight, but the ground’s still damp underfoot, much to JB’s delight. Eggsy rather wishes the pug didn’t find it necessary to go charging through every puddle they happen to come across, but he can’t find it in himself to put a stop to it. Ain’t like JB’s doing any real harm – nothing a good towelling can’t fix, anyway.

He’s hot and sweaty by the time they’ve done a full circuit of the park and made their way back to the Mews, his muscles burning and his chest heaving as he slows to a walk, swiping at the dampness on his brow.

The front door opens before he can reach for the fingerprint recognition pad on the underside of the handle, revealing Harry standing on the other side, a smile playing at the Dom’s lips as he tightens the belt of his dark maroon dressing gown, the pale blue of his silk pyjamas peeking out from
underneath.

“Good morning, Eggsy.”

The Sub grins at him, cheeks pink from exertion. “Mornin’, Harry.” He quickly reaches down to snag JB by the back of his collar before the pug can dart inside and trample mud all over the carpet. “Sleep well?”

“Wonderfully, thank you.” The Dom hands him a folded towel with a knowing look. “I thought you might need this.”

“Cheers.” Eggsy scoops up his dog and follows Harry into the house, nudging the door closed with his hip as he tries not to drop the wriggling pug. “Oi! Stop it. You didn’t give Harry this much trouble yesterday.”

In the end he’s forced to kneel in the tiled inner entrance hall and quell JB’s protests with a firm “sit”, after which the dog obediently offers his paws one at a time for his master to rub clean – although the poor moppet looks so thoroughly chastised by the whole ordeal that Eggsy’s forced to make a big fuss of him once he’s finished.

“Spoilt, that’s what you are,” he tells the pug, rubbing JB’s belly when the dog rolls over, tongue lolling. “You’re a fuckin’ disgrace.”

JB slobbers all over his hand in enthusiastic agreement.

“How have you eaten?” Harry asks him, gentle fingers sinking into Eggsy’s hair to card through the sweat-damp locks. “I thought I’d poach us some eggs.”

“You don’t have to, guv,” Eggsy insists, glancing up from where he’s been pulling “who’s a good boy?” faces at his dog. “I’ll do it; you should be restin’.”

“I’m quite capable of boiling a few eggs, thank you,” the Dom replies, in a tone that Eggsy can only describe as polite exasperation. “I’m not an invalid.”

You kinda are though, Eggsy thinks but doesn’t say, because dear God, he’s not anywhere near brave enough.

But to be fair, making breakfast ain’t exactly a stretch, and Harry does seem to be regaining his strength. The Dom already looks tons better after spending a few days at home; his skin’s not half as pale as it had been earlier in the week, and that worrying sort of pinched, tired look is all but gone from around his eyes. The wound dressing taped to the side of his head is smaller, too – Merlin’s handiwork, Eggsy assumes – to reveal a jagged line of pink, newly-healed skin that runs from the corner of his regrown eyebrow to his temple. Considering the Dom had been shot point-blank only a few weeks ago, he’s made a remarkable recovery.

“I need to go an’ shower first,” Eggsy tries, letting go of JB so that the pug can scamper off to re-sniff every room in the house (his usual post-walk tradition).

Harry gives the boy’s hair another gentle tug, a smile playing at his lips again. “Which will provide me with ample time to see to breakfast.” He offers Eggsy a hand up and nudges him towards the staircase once he’s standing. “Go on, off with you. I’ll manage.”

The Sub obeys. Not like he’s ever gonna be able to say ‘no’ to Harry Hart, after all.
Eggsy pauses in the doorway to the lounge, tugging at his shirt collar. “Does this tie look alright to you?”

Harry glances up from his newspaper and seems to do a double-take (or the Harry Hart equivalent thereof, which is to blink twice in quick succession), and the newspaper is quickly folded and put to one side. Eggsy feels his pulse begin to quicken as the Dom’s eyes rake over him slowly, appreciatively – and the Sub isn’t usually one to get his hopes up, but he’s pretty sure Harry likes what he sees, if his slowly widening smile is anything to go by.

He fidgets in place a little, feeling butt-naked despite how many layers he’s wearing. “Ain’t too much, is it?”

“Not at all,” the Dom reassures, rising to his feet. He beckons Eggsy closer with a slight gesture, still gazing intently at the Sub’s attire. “You look dashing.”

Dashing. He looks dashing. Who the fuck even uses that word any more outside of Disney films? And stop blushing, you knob, play it cool.

“A perfect fit,” Harry comments, his voice hushed, smoothing his hands over Eggsy’s shoulders and down the length of his arms, the Sub’s skin tingling as it breaks out in goosebumps beneath the fabric. “But not the original cut, I take it?”

Eggsy shakes his head with a wry smile. Turns out getting that much blood out of bulletproof material wasn’t worth all the hassle, and the blokes down at the tailor shop had given him twin apologetic looks and promised they’d have a replacement jacket delivered to him by the end of the week. True to their word, the new suit’s just as good as the last one, and still it fits him like a glove.

“I’m afraid I’ve quite lost count of the number of suits I’ve had to part with over the years,” Harry confesses, adjusting the engraved ‘K’ cufflinks. His gaze flickers up to Eggsy’s tie briefly, his smile a little twitching wider. “Here, allow me…”

The Dom re-ties the length of striped fabric in a perfect Windsor, fingers smoothing it down flat as he tucks it back inside Eggsy’s suit. His hands linger on the Sub’s chest for a moment, brushing away invisible lint and smoothing out the top pocket-handkerchief.

“There.” Harry lets his hands fall away slowly. “Perfect.”

“Ta,” the Sub manages, surprised to find that he’s still got a voice at all; Harry’s standing so close to him, that quiet smile curling at his lips, warmth and affection in his gaze, and for a brief moment
Eggsy can’t breathe.

The sudden blare of a car horn outside startles him into filling his lungs again, and he tears his eyes away from the Dom’s face, glancing towards the clock on the mantelpiece.

“Shit, that’ll be my taxi,” he says, and steps away to grab his phone and his keys from the coffee table, slipping them into the concealed inner pocket of his jacket where his Kingsman glasses are already safely stored.

“I do wish you had allowed me to arrange a chauffeur for you,” Harry tells him.

Eggsy shakes his head as he steps into the hallway. “Don’t wanna freak Mum out with too much glam, you get me? Not that I don’t ‘preciate the offer, guv, but I think maybe it’s better if I keep things simple.”

Harry arches an eyebrow curiously. “Then why your present attire?”

“Two reasons,” the Sub replies, hooking the curved handle of his umbrella over his arm. “One, it’s the only way me mum’s ever gonna believe that a chav like me’s really gone an’ got himself a job at a posh London tailor shop. An’ two,” he flashes Harry a charming smile and winks, opening the front door, “I look fuckin’ ace in a suit. Toodles!”

The flat’s eerily silent when he arrives; not even the buzz of the washing machine or the blurb of Jeremy Kyle playing on the TV in the background. It’s weird. Eggsy can’t ever remember it being so quiet.

“Mum?” he calls, stepping inside, slipping his keys back inside his jacket. “Daisy?”

His sister’s buggy is still there, folded up against the wall near the sofa, so they can’t have gone far. Besides, his mum had been expecting him, why would she have left so suddenly? He’d called her this morning to remind her to have a couple of bags packed for the weekend (as far as she knew, he was just taking her and Daisy away for short holiday somewhere), and she hadn’t mentioned anything about needing to go out.

His feet take him on auto-pilot to his Mum’s bedroom. The bed’s been made neatly (for once), and there’s a pink leopard-print suitcase laid open on top of the duvet, adult and toddler-sized clothes folded neatly inside. And next to it is Daisy’s changing bag, stocked up with bottles and nappies and toys, ready to go.
With a frown tugging at his brow he pulls out his mobile, ready to call her and make sure everything’s okay, but a knock on the front door stops him.

Instead of his mum, it’s old Mrs Banjeet, the elderly Dom who lives next door, adjusting her saree and moving Daisy to her other hip to stop the toddler from tugging at the colourful fabric.

“Hi, Mrs B,” Eggsy greets, relieved. “Is Mum next door with you?”

The elderly lady shakes her head, passing Daisy to him when the little girl immediately begins squirming in Eggsy’s direction. “She asked me to watch your sister for a few minutes while she popped to the co-op. But that was over an hour ago, mishti.”

“An hour?” he echoes, over Daisy’s excited babbling.

Mrs Banjeet tucks a loose lock of dark hair behind her ear, gold bands jangling on her wrist. “I tried to call her, but she must have left her phone behind; I could hear it ringing from the balcony.” She shakes her head and gusts out a sigh. “I hope she hasn’t run into your step-father.”

Eggsy’s stomach rebels at the thought, but he quickly dismisses the notion, reasoning: “Dean’s still in hospital, Mrs B. Got into a fight a few weeks back, didn’t you hear? Won’t be back for a while.”

“No,” the elderly Dom insists. “My Pandi says he saw Dean and his boys only this morning, near that awful drinking house they like so much. Probably up to no good, as always.”

Breath catching in his chest, Eggsy feels the bottom drop out of his stomach, blood running cold as he clutches Daisy more tightly against him. “He can’t ‘ave. Dean…Dean ain’t supposed to be out of hospital for another week at least.”

“Well, he always was a stubborn man,” she reminds him, her brow furrowed a little in concern as she regards him. After a short pause, she holds out her arms out again. “Here, mishti, let me take your sister. You go look for your mother; she’s better off staying far away from that Dom, she’s far too good for a man like Dean Baker. It’s a pity the Rage didn’t kill him.”

“Yeah,” Eggsy agrees numbly, passing Daisy over to her without argument. “Thanks, Mrs B. I…I won’t be long.”

The taxi’s still there at the end of the street, waiting for him as promised. Eggsy manages to climb into the backseat without his legs giving way, his heart hammering a frantic samba in his chest, blood pulsing loudly in his ears as he chokes out the address to the cabbie. The bloke gives him a funny look in the rearview mirror, so he shoves a bunch of twenties through the pay slot to get him driving and slumps back against the seat, clenching his hands into fists on his knees as he tries to even out his breathing.

This was never supposed to happen. Eggsy should’ve taken Daisy and his Mum away from this fucking shithole weeks ago, the day Dean landed himself in hospital. Fuck, why had he waited so long?

He knows why, though. He’d wanted things to be perfect for them; the new house all clean and tidy, cupboards stocked and Sky TV installed, ready for his family to move in. It had only taken an additional twenty-four hours or so to finish things up, but he should never have taken the risk. *Fuck.*

If Dean’s hurt his mum, if he’s so much as laid a hand on her, Eggsy’s gonna rip his fucking head off.

His anger boils over, and a deadly sort of calm descends, same as it had back at Valentine’s bunker
when he’d finally come face-to-face with the man who’d put a bullet in Harry Hart’s head. With a steadying breath, he glances at his reflection in the window, carefully neatening his tie and shirt collar, smoothing his hair down and adjusting his cufflinks.

It’s almost like he’s fastening on his armour in preparation for a battle, and in a way he is, when you take into account the fact that his suit’s bulletproof and there’s a hidden blade in his shoe and half a dozen lethal weapons concealed in the handle of his umbrella.

As the Black Prince looms into sight up ahead, he steels himself, donning his Kingsman glasses and checking his reflection in the window again. Good. He looks fucking badass.

“You mind waitin’, bruv?” he asks, slipping the cabbie another twenty. “Be about ten minutes, yeah?”

“No worries, mate,” the driver agrees, pocketing the cash and turning on the car radio. “Take your time.”

Grabbing his umbrella from the floor of the backseat, Eggsy exits the vehicle, pulse still thumping loudly in his ears, but slower now, steadier. He’s got this. He’s a fucking international spy; just under a month ago, he helped save 95% of the world’s population. Eggsy knows how to kill a man with a toothpick and make it hurt. He knows how to drown a guy in his own pint of Guinness. He ain’t scared of blokes like Dean Baker; not anymore.

The pub’s almost empty, but given that it’s only half past eleven on a weekday morning that doesn’t really come as much of a surprise. His hand tightens around the neck of his umbrella the moment he spots Dean, but his grip loosens again fractionally when he sees him Mum sitting opposite him in the booth. While her posture is tense, she doesn’t seem hurt, and she ain’t crying or anything.

Apparently it’s Dean’s lucky day.

Although the Dom himself is looking a little worse for wear. He’s definitely lost weight, what were once faint wrinkles now sagging a little around his jawline, and his skin is noticeably paler than usual. Still, he seems to be knocking back his booze well enough. Maybe that’s why he left hospital so early – being forced to go without alcohol for several weeks must have been torture for the bastard, borderline dependant that he is.

“Michelle, turn that shit off,” Dean barks, taking another swig of his beer as he glares at the offending Kindle Fire. “It’s doin’ my nut in.”

His Mum flinches imperceptibly and reaches to turn it off, almost spilling her untouched drink in the process, a fine tremor visible in her outstretched hand. Eggsy closes the pub door behind him firmly.

“I rather like that song,” he says calmly, touching the point of his umbrella to the floor and leaning his weight against the handle in a casual slouch. “Leave it on, ‘ey Mum?”

Her gaze flickers towards him, delight and relief quickly giving way to panic as he eyes shift towards Dean, who’s drawn himself up out of his previous slump to square his shoulders, his usual ‘look at me, I’m bigger than you, boy’ tactic.

“Mugsy’s back,” the Dom comments, with a quick grin towards Rotty and Pitbull. His gaze travels over Eggsy’s attire critically, his expression smug and amused. “Finally come to have that word with me, have you, son? Or are you gonna run away again an’ pretend you’re goin’ to court dressed like that?”

Eggsy cocks an eyebrow and spreads his arms so that Dean and his gang can get a proper look at his
suit. “Oh, you mean this?” He sees Rotty’s gaze lingering on his five-hundred quid Oxfords and grins. “No. See, I know this bloke who’s just taken over a tailor shop on Saville Row.”

His grin gentles a little as he turns towards his mother. “He’s given me a job, Mum. Comes with a lot of perks…including a house.” Eggsy’s heart swells in his chest at the look of delighted surprise on her face, and he holds out a hand towards her. “Come an’ live with me there, Mum. C’mon.”

She smiles at him, her excitement evident for only a brief moment as she moves to exit the booth, only for Dean’s hand to shoot out across the table and seize her by the wrist. Eggsy’s grip tightens around his umbrella again.

“Sit down, you,” the Dom grunts, threatening, and Michelle freezes. Dean releases her and slowly pushes himself to his feet, furious gaze fixed on Eggsy. “The only place she’ll be visitin’ is you in fuckin’ hospital, d’you ‘ear? You fuckin’ kneeler, comin’ in here all dressed up like that, actin’ like you can tell me what’s what. By the time I’ve finished with you, you’re gonna wish-”

“Just leave ‘im alone, Dean!” Michelle blurts, voice shaky and tearful, even as she plants herself firmly in front of the Dom to block his path. She sends the younger Sub a pleading look. “Eggsy, go, please. Just go, babe, I’ll be alright.”

He takes a steadying breath in. And out. And turns around.

“Yeah, that’s it, do as Mummy says,” Dean taunts smugly. “Why don’t you ask that tailor friend of yours to knock up a nice collar, it’d suit you, ya mug.”

Eggsy pauses in front of the door and smiles to himself, because of course Dean thinks he’s retreating. After all, ain’t that exactly what he’s done his whole life? Closed his mouth and walked away after taking a beating from the Dom, all because he was scared of Dean turning on his Mum if he pushed back too hard? Well, not anymore.


“Dean,” he hears Pitbull murmur, audibly hesitant.

“Shut the fuck up,” the Dom growls, and in the reflection of the faux-bronze Guinness plaque beside the door, Eggsy sees him take half a step forwards. “Eggsy, I’m gonna shove your manners up your fuckin’ a-”

The empty pint glass shatters upon impact with Dean’s forehead; there’s a two-second pause as the man wavers, before toppling over backwards like a sack of potatoes. Eggsy spares a brief glance towards his Mum’s gobsmacked expression, but his blood’s boiling, and there are still four men standing. He lowers his umbrella slowly and gives each of them a polite, deadly smile.

“So, are we gonna stand around here all day?” he asks mildly, adrenaline thrumming through his veins, muscles poised and ready for action despite his faux-casual stance. “Or are we gonna fight?”

“Don’t. You. Dare.”

He doesn’t startle at the voice buzzing near his ear, but his smile falters a little, confidence wavering. Because fuck, the glasses. They must’ve been recording this whole time. How could he have been so stupid?

“I mean it, lad,” Merlin warns him, low and firm, his Scottish accent thickening. “I’m not about to let you engage in armed combat with four civilians; certainly not in front of your mother. Stand
Eggsy’s grip tightens around his umbrella again, even as he keeps his face carefully neutral. Rotty and Pitbull are shifting uneasily, but they aren’t advancing, and Dean’s other two lackeys have actually backed away a couple of paces. Nice to see they remember how thoroughly Harry had handed their arses to them last time. It’d be so *easy* to give them a refresher lesson; he’d barely even have to break a sweat.

“Eggsy, look at your mother,” his Dom urges. “Look at her. Don’t you think she’s seen enough violence already?”

His gaze shifts to where Michelle is still staring at Dean, wide-eyed, a shaking hand pressed to her mouth. Perhaps feeling Eggsy’s eyes on her, she looks up, and at the damp mascara lines tracking down her cheeks, the fight goes out of him completely.

“Take her home,” Merlin instructs, calmer now. “Leave the clean-up to me. I’ve got a team four minutes from your current location, they’ll deal with Mr Baker and his associates. There’ve been far too many witnesses already.”

Eggsy gives a small, barely perceptible nod, but apparently it’s enough.

“Good lad. We’ll talk about this later.”

He relaxes his grip on the umbrella again and holds out a hand towards Michelle. Dean’s boys visibly flinch at the gesture, but his mum hesitates only a fraction of a second before pushing past Pitbull and moving across the pub towards him, pressing up against his side as soon as she’s close enough.

“C’mon, Mum,” he murmurs, and manages to renew his smile for her. “Daisy’s waitin’ for us.”

He unlocks the doors and urges Michelle out ahead of him, waving to the cabbie in thanks for honouring their agreement instead of scarping with the money. The whisper of fabric behind him has his reflexes on high alert again, and he spins just in time to receive a punch right in the face. It catches him along his cheekbone, snapping his head to the said, stars exploding in his vision for a brief moment as he squares his feet to compensate.

“Now that’s just rude,” he remarks. “Attackin’ a bloke when his back’s turned. If you wanna fight like a Dom, you have to discuss things face to face. Like this.”

His answering punch sends Rotty flying backwards several feet.

“Anyone else wanna have a discussion?” he asks. The three remaining Doms blink at him, too stunned to react, and he nods, smirking. “Didn’t think so. Laters!”
“I fucked up, Rox.”

“You don’t say,” the Dom agrees, and heaves a gusty sigh. “Dear God in heaven, Eggy. What on earth were you thinking, confronting civilians like that in a public place? And mentioning the tailor shop? Jesus. Are you trying to get fired before your first field mission?”

Eggsy tilts his head back against the headboard, gaze moving to linger on his bespoke suit where he’s hung it up neatly on his wardrobe door. “I didn’t mean to take things so far. Me an’ Harry had already agreed to tell me Mum about the tailor shop, an’ I guess in the heat of it all I forgot about the others an’ what conclusions they might come to. I just…I wanted to see Dean’s face, y’know? When he realised he wasn’t a big, scary Alpha Dom anymore. I wanted him to see that he didn’t have control over me, over Mum.”

“I get that, Eggs,” Roxy sympathises, her tone softer. She sighs again, sounding tired now. “Was Merlin upset about it?”

He’s done his best not to think about the man’s stern, authoritative voice too much over the course of the day, because it makes him feel kinda nauseous, and he’s been trying to keep a smile on his face for Daisy and his Mum. They’d both been so happy about the new house (well, his Mum had spent the first hour crying about everything, but they’d been the good sort of tears, so that didn’t count), and Daisy’s spent the whole afternoon toddling around the garden and watching the koi fish in the pond and discovering all the new toys Eggsy’s bought for her, so really he ought to be ecstatic. And he is. He just feels like shit underneath it all.

“Hey, don’t be like that,” Roxy soothes. “It’ll be alright. They care about you, Eggsy – I doubt one mistake is going to change that.”

Eggsy gives a bitter smile, even though there’s nobody there to see it. “Wish you were here, Rox. Could really use a hug ‘round about now.”

“You’re always welcome to crash at my flat for the night.”

“Mm.”

“I’m serious, love,” she insists. “If you don’t feel up to facing Merlin and Harry tonight, my spare bedroom’s ready and waiting. Nobody’s forcing you to go back.”

He rolls over onto his back again to the stare up at the ceiling, raking his fingers through his hair. If he closes his eyes, he can sort of pretend that it’s Harry’s hand, and that kinda helps. Almost. Sorta.

“I feel like shit,” he admits, the guilt skewering deeper in his chest as though roused by the words. “An’ that ain’t gonna go away until I’ve gone home an’ apologised.”
“Fair enough,” Roxy concedes calmly. “But if you need me to come rescue you in the middle of the night, just say the word.”

A genuine smile twitches at his lips despite himself. “Ta, babe. You’re the best.”

“I know,” she agrees. “I love you, stupid.”

“Love you too.”

He stares at the phone for a long time after he’s hung up, finding a small measure of comfort in her easy affection, even if it does very little to lessen the sickly ache inside of him. He wants to go home. He wants to blurt out apologies to his Harry and Merlin, to face the consequences and let them soothe away his internal discomfort with quiet words and gentle touches. He wants his Doms.

“Eggsy!” his mum calls from downstairs, more cheerful than she’s sounded in years. “Tea’s almost ready, babe!”

He ain’t hungry, but that doesn’t mean he can’t chew and swallow and play happy families for a couple more hours to keep his Mum smiling. He’s already fucked this day up enough, he ain’t gonna ruin things for her, too.

“What time did you say you was headin’ off to work?” she asks him, heaping another serving of pasta onto his plate.

“Half seven,” he replies, twirling spaghetti up onto his fork with one hand as he feeds Daisy a chunk of meatball with the other. He’s wisely changed into a shirt that he doesn’t care for; from experience, spag-bol tends to stain stuff pretty bad, and Daisy’s still at the playing-with-her-food stage. “But like I said before, it’ll only be for a few hours; cleaning up, doing stock sheets, answering emails, logging requests – stuff like that. If nobody comes in for an emergency fittin’, I’m allowed to sleep after twelve. There’s a flat upstairs, see, which me an’ the other tailors use on nights.”

His mum nods, using a cloth to wipe Daisy’s sauce-covered cheeks. “Good. Sounds like they won’t be workin’ you too hard. An’ fancy gettin’ a house right off the bat like that. How’d you meet this boss of yours, anyway?”

“She bumped into him when I was volunteerin’ with the clean-up crew,” Eggsy replies easily, because it’s a story he and Harry have rehearsed time and time again this past week. “Nice bloke, good sense of humour. Rich as fuck, but doesn’t rub it in your face, y’know? Anyway, he’d lost a lot of his apprentices durin’ the Rage, an’ his shop was in a bit of a state, so I promised to help him fix things up a bit. By the end of the week he was offerin’ me a full-time job as a Kingsman sales representative. Says he’s gonna teach me the trade, too. Already learned all sorts of stuff about different fabrics an’ the like.”

She smiles at him, leaning down to wrap an arm around his shoulders and press a kiss to his cheek. “Always knew you were gonna do somethin’ special with your life, an’ look at you now; an’ apprentice for a proper business, with a house an’ everythin’. I’m proud of you, babe.”

He leans into her touch, swallowing against the ache in his throat. “Cheers, Mum.”

“Mee-boor!” Daisy interjects, waving her Peppa Pig plastic spoon in the air, splattering her new highchair with red sauce. Eggsy grins at her.

“Oh, I’m sorry, do I gotta feed you by hand now?” he asks, offering her another chunk of meatball. She munches on it happily, whacking at his bare arm with the spoon and leaving behind a pattern of sticky orange-red ovals. “Oi! I ain’t the table.”
She drops the spoon and pats his arm instead, looking unusually grave all of a sudden. “Eggy no?”

“No,” he agrees gently, and puts the spoon back in her bowl, leaning in closer to press a kiss to her forehead. “Spoons are for eatin’ with, not for beatin’ up your brother.”

She nods, utterly serious, even though he’s not sure how much of it she actually understood. “Mebbors?”

He cracks another grin and breaks another meatball in half. “Yeah, lazy Daisy. More meatballs. What do we say?”

She grabs at it with small, sticky fingers. “Ta!”

“Good girl.”

“You’d best finish up, love,” his mum advises, taking her empty plate to the dish washer. “Traffic’s gonna be awful near that shop of yours at this time of night. Wouldn’t want you runnin’ late on account of your sister.”

“They won’t mind,” Eggsy murmurs, but turns his attention back towards his own meal, forcing down a few more bites and sparing half an eye for the wall-mounted clock above the kitchen door.

Merlin won’t even be home from headquarters for another half an hour or so; that’s if he isn’t stuck behind his surveillance desk guiding an agent through a field mission. And wouldn’t that fucking suck? Eggsy’s already been forced to carry this guilt around with him all day long, he can’t bear to live with it for another twelve hours.

“Maybe I should go an’ shower,” he says, pushing his plate away. “Can’t go to work smellin’ like Dolmio.”

It ain’t like he’s procrastinating or anything. It’s just that he’s wearing half of Daisy’s spag-bol, and if he’s about to go grovel for forgiveness, he doesn’t want to do it looking like a slob.

Wearing that nice beige cardigan that Merlin likes won’t hurt him, neither.

……………………………..

“Hey,” he calls, bending down to unlace his Oxfords and slipping them off, carefully placing them on the shoe rack. “I’m home.”
Suit carrier tucked under one arm, he moves further into the house, hooking the garment case over one of the coat pegs temporarily as he follows the sound of classical music, heading down the hallway and into the lounge. He finds Harry in his usual armchair of choice, slippered feet propped up on a footstool, JB curled up in his lap and sleeping soundly. The Dom glances up from his book with a smile, although the expression is there for barely a fraction of a second before a concerned frown creases his brow.

“What happened?” Harry asks, dropping his book and gently nudging JB out of his lap, closing the distance between them in a few brisk strides. His hands come up, one gently cradling the boy’s chin while he ghosts the fingers of the other over the still-tender bruise that’s swelling on Eggsy’s cheekbone.

The Sub blinks at him, surprised. He figured he’d be coming home to two cross Doms, but clearly that isn’t the case. Harry’s touch is tender, his gaze full of quiet concern, and Eggsy kinda wants to drop to his knees right here and now and blurt out the whole sorry story.

“Merlin didn’t tell you?” he hedges, shifting in place as Harry lifts each of his hands in turn to inspect Eggsy’s knuckles.

“That you somehow managed to get yourself into a fistfight? No, he elected to keep that to himself.” The Dom brushes his thumb over the red, swollen third knuckle of Eggsy’s right hand. “I take it he threw the first punch?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“And I trust you saw to it that he regretted doing so afterwards?” Harry’s lips twitch, the barest hint of a smile playing at the corner of his mouth.

Eggsy returns the smile quietly, ducking his head a little. “Yes, Sir.”

“Good.” The Dom slides his hands up from Eggsy’s wrists to loosely cradle his elbows, in such a manner that the Sub’s hands are forced to rest on Harry’s forearms in turn. “Now, I gather there’s a lot more to this tale than meets the eye, otherwise my husband wouldn’t have spent the better part of the evening brooding upstairs in his study. But I won’t push you for details. If he chose to keep this from me, he likely considers this a private matter between the two of you.” He nods towards the door. “You’d best go up and talk to him, poppet.”

The Sub nods glumly, leaning into Harry’s touch a little. “On a scale of one to tell, how mad d’you think he is?”

“Mad as a hatter, I’m afraid,” Harry replies, his smile fond. “But I doubt that’s what you were asking. As I’ve told you before, Merlin never stays cross for very long. I’d wager he’s more worried about you than anything.”

The Dom pulls him close in a brief, tight embrace, squeezing the back of his neck gently before releasing him again, urging him towards the door with a gentle pat to his back.

“Go on. I’m sure everything will be put to rights soon.”

Eggsy heaves a reluctant sigh, but does as he’s told, stopping only briefly to scratch JB behind the ears before telling him to stay. His feet feel like lead as he heads upstairs, palms itching and heartbeat quickening as he nears Merlin’s study. The door’s closed, which is a first, and he hesitates for a long, uncomfortable moment before gathering his courage and rapping his knuckles against the wood.

“Come in, Eggsy.”
With his stomach twisting itself into painful knots, he does so, closing the door behind him. For once, the wall-mounted screens are all on standby and the desk chair is empty; instead, the Dom’s seated in one of the armchairs over on the far side of the study, near the row of bookcases. Merlin’s got one leg crossed elegantly over the other, fingers interlocked and hands resting in his lap, as though he’s been up here waiting for Eggsy all this time. The notion unsettles the clump of nervous butterflies in his chest and he swallows, rubbing his sweaty palms against his sleeves.

“Merlin….Sir, I-”

The Dom holds up a silencing hand, his face unreadable, then crooks a finger at him slowly, beckoning the Sub closer. It’s perhaps the most intimidating thing Eggsy’s ever seen in his life, and Merlin ain’t even trying. On slightly shaky, weak-kneed legs, he closes the distance between them, gaze flickering from Merlin’s impassive face to the comfy-looking cushion placed strategically beside the armchair. At the man’s slight not, he folds gratefully to his knees, some of the tension bleeding from his shoulders as he does so. He leans forwards a little, bracing his forehead against the side of Merlin’s knee.

“Better?” the Scotsman enquires softly, as gentle fingers sink into Eggsy’s hair. The Sub nods against the fabric of Merlin’s trousers, the knots in his stomach slowly beginning to unravel. “Good.” A quiet, tired sigh. “You and I need to have a wee discussion, lad.”

Eggsy’s muscles tense up again, and he tilts his head back just far enough to risk a quick glance at Merlin’s face. “For what it’s worth, I’m really fuckin’ sorry about what happened.”

The Dom studies him calmly, fingers ghosting against Eggsy’s forehead as he brushes the younger man’s fringe back. “You understand why your actions this morning were unacceptable?”

“Yes, Sir.” Eggsy tries not to fidget on his knees, tries not to duck his head instinctively to tear his gaze from the man’s eyes. “I almost compromised the integrity of the service.”

Merlin arches an eyebrow, a flicker of amusement passing over his features. “Have you been talking to Ms Morton, by any chance?”

He feels his cheeks heat up. “Yeah. She wasn’t happy with me, neither.”

The Dom heaves another quiet sigh, his fingers still playing with Eggsy’s hair. “Eggsy…I don’t blame you for wanting to deck your step-father, lad, but you took a few too many risks in doing so. Mentioning the tailor shop was your first mistake – the last thing we need is Mr Baker and his associates loitering about near Saville Row and asking questions about well-dressed men with black belts in karate. And what were you thinking, locking yourself and your mother in there with five thugs? Were you seriously intending to use Kingsman-issued weapons against them? I saw the umbrella, lad.”

Eggsy does duck his head at that, the guilt twisting deeper inside him, a sour sort of taste bubbling at the back of his throat. “I wasn’t thinkin’, guv. I was just pissed, an’ I wanted to show Dean he couldn’t push me around no more.”

“It was bloody foolish,” Merlin tells him, a stern note creeping into his voice again, fingers gently pinching Eggsy’s chin to tilt his head back up. “Combat training or no combat training, you had no business endangering yourself like that. You haven’t even been cleared for field duty yet, and I’ve half a mind to keep you on suspension for another week after that stunt you pulled this morning.”

“No,” Eggsy pleads, alarmed. “Don’t, Sir, please. I was a fuckin’ idiot, alright, I get that, but it won’t happen again, I swear. Please, Merlin.”
The Dom sighs again, cupping the boy’s cheek, thumb tracing the edge of his bruise. “I believe you, lad. And I won’t bench you, not this time. I suppose in a way this whole mess is partly my fault, too; I should’ve kept a closer eye on your step-father’s progress. Seems he opted for a self-discharge first thing this morning and bumped into your mother outside a co-op near your old estate.”

“I wasn’t expectin’ to ever have to see him again,” Eggsy admits, turning his cheek into the Dom’s palm. “I never meant to start a fight with any of ‘em; I was just gonna go in, get my mum, an’ leave. But he always pushes, ’cause he knows I ain’t an Alpha Top like him, an’ it pissed me the fuck off. I figured maybe I’d teach him the same lesson as Harry taught the rest of ‘em last year.”

“Mm.” Merlin’s lips twitch a fraction. “Manners maketh man. I remember it well. Took me six hours to clean up that mess last time, and you can guarantee I gave Harry an earful about it, too.”

Eggsy glances up at him, eyes wide. “You gave ‘im shit about beatin’ up Dean’s gang?”

“Agents aren’t allowed to start fights on a whim, Eggsy,” the Dom tells him patiently. “Obviously mission parameters will always acknowledge the need for violence under certain circumstances, and naturally authorisation is granted for the use of physical combat as a means of self-defence, but Kingsman agents should never be the instigators. Especially when the combatants are civilians. ‘Needin’ to let off a little steam’ is never going to be a decent enough excuse to land four people in the hospital, as Harry’s now all too aware.”

The Dom settles his hand over the back his Eggsy’s neck. “Be that as it may, I suppose your actions this morning weren’t all for nought. Turns out your step-father and his chums were already wanted men; the police found quite an impressive list of felonies when the names were inputted into the station’s computer system. Enough to keep Dean Baker behind bars for, oh, at least a decade or so, I’d say.”

Eggsy stares at the Dom, dumbstruck, lips parted a little. Merlin studies his expression for a brief moment, before a quiet smile curls at the corner of his mouth.

“I don’t approve of starting fights,” he murmurs, fingers tracing lightly over the bruise on Eggsy’s cheek. “But I rather enjoy finishing them.”

A little too overwhelmed to give a verbal reply, Eggsy settles for throwing his arms around Merlin’s waist and mashing his face into the front of the man’s jump, eyes burning even as he grins, a slightly hysterical-sounding laugh bursting from his lips.

Dean’s been arrested. Dean’s in fucking prison. Holy shit. It’s Christmas come early.

He feels the vibration of Merlin quiet chuckle, and a hand smooths over his head gently. “I’m glad you approve.”

Eggsy nods, clinging to him a little harder, blinking back the moisture that’s threatening behind his eyelids. Fuck, what did he ever do to deserve two Doms like Harry and Merlin? Given how badly he screwed up this morning, he’d been expecting disappointment, a lecture, maybe even the cold shoulder. What they’ve given him instead is acceptance and understanding and fucking cuddles. It’s awesome.

And it’s so totally not what he needs right now.

That knot of guilt inside him has twisted up even tighter in the face of Merlin’s kindness. He sighs, grimacing, rubbing his cheek against the soft cashmere of the Dom’s jumper.

“I’m really sorry about this mornin’, guv.”
“I know,” the Scot acknowledges, squeezing the back of his neck again. “You’ve given me your word that it won’t happen again, and I’ll content myself with that. It’s all forgiven, lad.”

“But…” Eggsy trails off, brow furrowed a little. He was about to say but that ain’t fair. Except it is. Because Merlin’s a fair and reasonable guy, and apparently an apology was all he was expecting.

“But?” the Dom echoes quietly, stroking his hair. After a brief pause, he squeezes the back of the younger man’s neck again and asks, his voice a low murmur: “Do you need something else, lad?”

Eggsy gives a single nod, closing his eyes, cheeks heating a touch. He knows it ain’t anything to be ashamed of. He’s a Sub, Merlin’s his Dom, and sometimes he needs something more to help him get rid of the guilty black sludge that’s gotten all bottled up in his chest. And fuck, Eggsy definitely needs more of something. Merlin may have forgiven him, but he still feels guilty as shit, and it’s a miserable space to exist in.

“So you need us to have a physical discussion about this?” the Dom specifies, his voice hushed and gentle.

Another nod, because lifting his face out from the safety of Merlin’s abdomen just isn’t a viable option at the moment.

“I need a verbal answer, boyo.”

Eggsy swallows to clear his throat and manages a jumper-muffled “Yes, Sir.”

“Thank you.” Merlin rubs the sensitive patch of skin behind his ear, fingers still tangled in his hair. “We’ll take this nice and slow, alright, lad? If you need me to stop at any point, just say so.”

Another nod, and then Merlin’s guiding him to kneel back again, a hand braced on his shoulder and the other still curled snugly over the back of Eggsy’s neck. The Sub already feels kinda spacey, everything honed into a one-metre radius that encompasses Merlin and the armchair, as though nothing else in the room exists any more. Nothing else matters, not right now. Just Merlin, and his leather chair, and his warm hands stroking gently down over the curve of his shoulders to hook underneath his arms, half-lifting, half-guiding him over the Dom’s lap.

“That’s it, over we go,” the man murmurs, settling Eggsy facedown over his knees with a disarming lack of effort. He rubs a hand slowly up and down the Sub’s spine, his other resting on the back of Eggsy’s thigh, giving him a moment to grow accustomed to the new position. “There’s a good lad. Deep breaths for me, Eggsy.”

The Sub obeys, closing his eyes, soothed by the rhythm of Merlin’s hand as it glides up and down his back. He ain’t never been spanked by a Dom before, at least not outside of bedroom play, and he’d anticipated feeling nervous or uncomfortable or awkward about the whole thing, but he doesn’t. He…he feels safe. Merlin’s thighs are parted to support his weight more equally, so his head isn’t hanging down low enough to make gravity and bloodflow an issue, and the man’s muscles feel so solid and secure underneath his upper body, it’s actually pretty fucking cosy. He doubts it’ll feel that way for long, but right now? He’s comfortable. It’s nice. He should’ve asked for this weeks ago.

“Good boy,” Merlin praises quietly, and as his hand glides back down the Sub’s spine, he brings it to a halt at the small of Eggy’s back, applying the slightest amount of pressure. Enough to act as a reassurance that the Dom’s still there, and that Eggsy isn’t going anywhere just yet. “You made a few wee mistakes this morning, lad. We’re going to address those here and now, with you over my knee, and then that’ll be the end of it. It’ll all be in the past.”
Eggsy nods in sleepy acknowledgement, the movement a little sluggish, muscles lax and warm from Merlin’s previous ministrations.

Despite the warning pat to his clothed rear, the first swat still takes him by surprise, momentarily stealing the breath from his lungs as his eyes snap open, something hot and bright piecing through his chest and tugging him out of his cosy headspace with a gasp.

The pain doesn’t register for half a second, the loud *thwack* echoing in the otherwise silent study for a brief moment before the sting makes itself known and *holy fuck*, it hurts more than he’d anticipated. Even through his trousers and boxers, Merlin’s hand manages to deliver a hard enough blow that his left cheek tingles with tiny hot bee-stings, and a second blow to the right cheek leaves a burn to match.

Merlin spanks as slowly and methodically as Eggsy had imagined he would, hand striking first one cheek, then the other, then both together at top and bottom. It’s a steady, unfaltering circuit which successfully stokes the fire in his behind to an uncomfortable intensity after several repetitions, and *fuck*, Eggsy wants to squirm. Not so much from the pain, ‘cause he’s been stabbed before and a spanking’s nothing by comparison, but because of the sheer *heat* that seems to be building up in his hind quarters.

“Settle down,” Merlin tells him calmly after a few minutes, adjusting the boy’s position without interrupting his spanking rhythm, forearm pressing more firmly against the small of Eggsy’s back to secure him in place. “Let me take care of it, lad.”

A particularly heavy spank to the undercurve of his cheeks startles a quiet, muffled sound of pain out of him, and all at once his eyes are beginning to burn and his throat’s thickening, lips pressing together as he clutches at Merlin’s leg, willing himself not to give in to the hot, intense *whatever it is* that’s building up inside his chest.

“That’s it,” Merlin coaxes softly, his hand falling over and over again, catching the lower half of that sensitive curve, his rhythm unfaltering. “There’s a good lad.”

It’s the words that do it, more than anything else. Suddenly his nose is all clogged up and he’s sucking in shaky, stuttering breaths through his mouth, eyelashes clumping together with pooling moisture. And it’s such sweet *relief*, crying like this, safe over Merlin’s knee with the Dom holding him steadily in place, keeping him centred and grounded by renewing the heat in his backside every other second with another firm spank. So he clutches onto the Dom’s trouser leg a little tighter and lets himself go, and feels a hundred times better for it.

Except it turns out that crying’s fucking *tiring*, and he’s so warm, and everything’s so fuzzy, he almost wishes he could drift off right here and now. The heat in his rear’s a background buzz, not exactly *painful*, per se, but definitely *there*, and it’s probably the only thing keeping him awake at the moment.

It takes him a few fuzzy minutes to realise that Merlin isn’t actually spanking him anymore, and that the low, comforting rumbling sound is actually the Dom murmuring quietly to him. There’s a hand rubbing firm circles between his shoulderblades, and another stroking slowly up and down the backs of his burning thighs, and it’s…*mmmmm*. Eggsy could just *melt*.

“Shhh,” the Dom’s saying softly, his voice full of warmth and affection. “I’ve got you, lad, I’m here. You were so good for me, poppet. Shhh, you’re alright now.”

It takes a little while longer to fully regain control of his higher motor functions, enough that he can unclamp his hand from around Merlin’s shin to scrub at his damp, tired eyes. Merlin’s hand slides up
from between his shoulders to rub the back of his head, fingers playing with his hair.

“Back with me, lad?”

He nods, breath still catch on a hiccup in his chest every once in a while, but the worst of his tears seems to be in the past.

In a blur of moving and turning and fighting against fatigue-clumsy limbs (in which he assumes Merlin does most of the work by lifting him up under the arms), he finds himself seated in the Dom’s lap rather than stretched out across it, and ohhhh, that’s better. Sure, his backside doesn’t appreciate the added pressure, but it’s worth renewing the sting to have Merlin’s arms wrapped around him like this, snug and secure, the man’s hand cupped over the back of his neck to keep his head tucked down against that soft, sweet-smelling cashmere jumper.

“Feeling better?” the Dom asks, lips moving against his temple.

“Mmmng,” Eggsy replies intelligently, eyes closed, very much on board with the let’s-fall-asleep-right-here plan.

He hears Merlin sniff a quiet grin. “I’ll take that as a yes.”

Eggsy tries to say ‘you do that’, but it comes out just as garbled as his first attempt. His Dom chuckles, warm and fond, and presses another kiss to his hairline, arms squeezing around him a little tighter.

They stay that way for God only knows how long, Merlin always touching and soothing in some way, murmuring quiet words of gentle praise in his ear; stuff that’d make him blush himself purple if he weren’t in such a safe, cozy headspace right now. And bit by bit, the fuzziness recedes, taking the worst of the fatigue with it, leaving him warm and sated and loose-limbed, fingers idly tracing the neat stitching on Merlin’s jumper.

“We should go and find Harry,” the Dom says eventually, tilting Eggsy back far enough that he can smile at the Sub kindly. “In all likelihood, he’ll be downstairs fretting over you. Harry’s the fretting type.”

“I’m tellin’ him you said that,” Eggsy warns with a playful grin, sliding from the Dom’s lap onto slightly shaky legs.

The older man arches an amused eyebrow at him and pats his thighs invitingly. “I think you ought to go back over my knee for a spell, clearly I didn’t succeed in spanking all the attitude out of you the first time around.”

“You ain’t got enough years left in your for that, guv,” the Sub tells him regretfully. “You’ll be pushin’ daisies long before you’ve managed to- no!” He dances out of the way of Merlin’s hands with something that sounds mortifyingly close to a giggle, making a beeline for the exit. “It’s too late, Sir, you had your chance.”

“Is that so?” Merlin asks, deceptively mild, standing from his armchair slowly.

Eggsy wisely flees the room.

He finds Harry still in the lounge, the classical music playing perhaps a tad louder than before, and Eggsy feels a pulse of warmth in his chest when he realises that the Dom probably did it to afford him a little more privacy. Harry’s moved from the armchair to the sofa, and JB’s vacated the Dom’s lap in favour of curling up in his basket near the fireplace, which means that Eggsy’s free to plonk
himself down beside the man and swing his legs up onto the sofa, careening sideways until his head and shoulders are resting in Harry’s lap.

“Good evening,” the Dom murmurs, amused, glancing down from his book with a smile.

Eggsy grins at him, somewhat drunkenly, because everything is awesome right now. “Hey.”

Harry sets his book to one side, fingers sinking into Eggsy’s hair, rubbing gently against his scalp. “Feeling better after your talk with Merlin?”

“Mm.” He pulls a face and shifts, rolling a little more onto his side. “Yes an’ no. Merlin’s a brute.”

“Indeed,” Harry acknowledges, a knowing twinkle in his eye. “Countenance of a honey-badger, that man. Lord only knows why I married him. For his money, I suppose.”

“I’ll just go on back upstairs then, shall I?” the other Dom suggests from the doorway, watching the two of them with a smile playing at his lips, arms folded across his chest.

Eggsy makes a noise of protest, eyes already half-closed, and lifts an arm to make lazy grabby-hand gestures towards the man.

“You’re being summoned,” Harry points out, fingers combing through Eggsy’s fringe.

“I don’t answer to boyish demands,” Merlin insists, but crosses the room towards them anyway, lifting Eggsy’s legs a little so that he can slide in behind, resting the limbs down across his lap.

“No, but you answer to gongs,” Eggsy mumbles, and snickers at his own wit.

There’s a short beat of silence then, audibly amused: “You clearly didn’t spank him hard enough, my dear.”

“The thought had crossed my mind,” Merlin agrees, and Eggsy opens an eye far enough to glower at him, although he has a feeling it comes across as more of sleepy pout than anything else.

“Stop teasin’ me. S’not polite.”

Merlin pats his shin gently. “You’re right, it isn’t. We’re sorry, lad.”

“S’okay.” He closes his eyes again, appeased. “Can I stay down a bit longer? S’nice. Fuzzy.”

Harry’s hand smooths his fringe back tenderly. “Of course you can, darling. Is there anything you need us to do?”

“Stay here?” Eggsy requests, because he’s so fucking cozy right now, he could honestly die happy.

“That’s a given,” the Dom assures, the backs of his fingers brushing against Eggsy’s cheek. “But are you hungry at all? Thirsty?”

Eggsy shakes his head a little, limbs feeling all warm and floaty.

“You’ll need to drink something in a little while,” Merlin tells him, thumb stroking the skin of his ankle above his sock in small, slow circles. “Otherwise you’ll wake up with a bloody awful headache tomorrow morning.”

“Mm,” Eggsy agrees, because right now he’d do anything to make them happy, to make them stay with him just a little while longer. There’s a teeny-tiny part of his fuzzy brain that’s perpetually trying
to remind him that this whole thing is only a temporary high, that Merlin and Harry won’t be his like this forever, that he’ll have to go back to pretending to be a Dom tomorrow the moment he leaves the house.

But that voice is easy enough to ignore. Those are concerns for tomorrow. Right now he’s safe, and contented, and happy. Right now he’s home.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading! This was definitely one of my favourite chapters to write, if only because I'm finally getting to dual-Dom Eggsy to my heart's content. Expect plenty more domestic fluffy scenes to comes. Also! Eggsy finally getting some field-agent action, and the bond between the trio growing stronger and more defined as feelings bubble to the surface.

A big hug and hello to everyone who's joined me on Tumblr! Feel free to message me any time to brainstorm/share headcanons/submit requests for scenes or drabbles. I've loved getting to know some of you these past two weeks!

Let me know if you enjoyed the chapter and, as always, feel free to ask any questions about its content below, I'll be happy to answer them if I can. :)
The Winds of Change

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.


He almost bowls over a pair of technicians as he sprints down the corridor towards central control, flinging a hand out against the wall to regain his balance and throwing a quick, sheepish “sorry” over his shoulder as he stumbles onwards.

“Merlin!” he calls, exploding through the door to the senior agent’s surveillance lab, out of breath and pink-cheeked and grinning fit to burst.

“Close the door, lad,” the Scotsman reminds him calmly, attention still focused on the wall of screens.

Eggsy obliges with an impatient huff, then all but skips across the room to the man’s side, plonking himself down unceremoniously in the Dom’s lap. Merlin arches an eyebrow at him, but doesn’t protest the intrusion; instead he reaches out to tap a button on the control panel, the shnick of the door’s magnetic lock echoing through the room before he settles a hand on Eggsy’s outer thigh, regarding him with a quiet smile.

“I take it your evaluation went well?”

“Clean bill o’health,” the Sub confirms cheerfully, his cheeks beginning to ache from the intensity of his own smile. “They’ve cleared me for fieldwork an’ everythin’.”

Merlin’s other hand strokes up his spine to settle lightly on the back of his neck. “There now, you see? There was no need for all that fuss last night, was there?”

Eggsy ducks his head with sheepish sort of smile, inwardly wincing at the memory of his minor meltdown the previous evening. It’s not that he’d been worried about the check-up, per se – all the staff down in medical were proper decent, you really couldn’t ask for a better team – it’s just that the thought of being stuck on suspension for another full week had been unbearable. He’d been silently stressing over the issue all weekend, and by the time Sunday evening had rolled around, both his Doms had fully cottoned onto the fact that something wasn’t sitting right with him. It hadn’t taken much (a gentle touch to his cheek from Harry and an expectant look from Merlin) before he was spilling the beans and confessing to everything.

“Fretting over it won’t help matters,” Harry had reminded him softly, fingers carding gently through his hair where Eggsy’s head was cradled in his lap as he lay stretched out across the sofa on top of his Doms. “You’ll only work yourself up.”

“Harry’s right, lad,” had been Merlin’s quiet agreement, warm hands expertly massaging Eggsy’s burning calf muscles, still aching from the strain of his recent run (which he’d taken in a fruitless bid to rid himself of the nervous tension that had accumulated over the past forty-eight hours). “Besides, I very much doubt Medical will find any reason to declare you unfit to work; your injuries have shown significant improvement this past week. I’m sure tomorrow’s assessment will be nothing more than a formality.”
Their words had proven comforting (their gentle touches and soothing presence even more so), but there’d still been that niggling sense of doubt and unease lingering at the back of his mind right up until the CMO had finally discharged him from the team’s care twenty minutes ago.

“Yeah, okay,” he admits with a one-shouldered shrug, grinning ruefully. “You was right, I was wrong. What’s new?”

“Mm.” Lips twitching, Merlin tugs him closer to gently press a quick kiss to Eggsy’s temple. “Have you eaten yet, lad?”

“Nah.” Eggsy leans against the Dom’s chest a little more, eyes closing briefly at the touch of lips to his brow. “Harry’s waitin’ for me, I think he’s orderin’ something up from the kitchens. You gonna join us?”

Merlin nods his assent, reaching around Eggsy to tap at a few controls on his desk. “Gwaine seems to have things under control in Dusseldorf, so I don’t see why not.”

Eggsy only gets a brief look at the screen (an aerial view through a rain-spattered second story window of a large black van being loaded with sealed crates) before the feed shuts off, presumably transferred to another surveillance operative. “What’s he doin’ in Germany, anyway?”

“Spying,” Merlin replies cryptically.

“Figured that much for myself, thanks.” Eggsy rolls his eyes, grinning. “But what’s he doin’?”

The Scotsman gently nudges the boy up from his lap. “Trying not to get himself shot by the Tambov gang, I presume.”

“Oh. Cool.” The Sub hops up, shoving his hands into the pocket of his slacks and adopting what he hopes is a casual sort of stance. “So when do I get to go undercover an’ shit?”

“I’m afraid there’s nothing urgent in the books at the moment,” Merlin apologises, draining his mug of tea in a couple of hefty gulps. “It seems all’s well with the world for the first time in over a month.”

“Aw, for real?” the youth complains, pouting. “Fuckin’ typical, that.”

Merlin points a finger at him, amused. “Don’t go tempting fate, boyo. I, for one, am perfectly content with the idea of a few days’ peace and quiet. So hush yer whining.”

“You hush,” Eggsy gripes, and then gives a startled, yelping sort of laugh at the playful swat that connects lightly with his backside. Merlin reaches for him again, presumably to catch him up about the waist, but he dances away from the man’s hands and towards the door with another laugh, one that’s definitely not a giggle. “Jokin’, guv, I was jokin’!”

“Mm,” Merlin hums, amused, and makes as though to follow him. However, a flashing alert on the main screen above the control desk steals his attention before he can advance any further.

“What is it?” Eggsy asks, sobering quickly at the frown that creases the Dom’s brow as he studies the readout.

“Nothing you need to worry about,” the Scotsman reassures, and releases the magnetic lock on the lab door with the flick of a switch. “Go on ahead without me, there’s a good lad. I’ll catch up with you shortly.”
The Sub scuffs the toe of his shoe against the floor, lingering only a split second longer before giving into the still-relatively-new urge to obey orders and \textit{be a good boy}. He leaves the room without so much as a backwards glance.

It should be unsettling, really, just how effortlessly Harry and Merlin can elicit his complete cooperation with little more than a quiet command or a gentle smile. Once upon a time, he’d been so deeply buried beneath artificial protective layers of faux-dominance that it had been instinctive to resist every order, every command, to a point where obedience in any situation was first given careful consideration. He’d always remained hyperaware of how any loss of willpower in the face of a Dom’s order might be interpreted by those around him; and for \textit{years}, keeping up appearances had been the only thing that mattered. It had been so fucking \textit{exhausting}, sometimes. That’s why his stint as a cadet in the Marines had come as such a relief – during training, \textit{everyone} had been expected to follow orders, regardless of dynamic. He could be a good boy without revealing himself as a Sub, and he’d be \textit{commended} for it; told he was an exemplary student, praised for his quick thinking and physical strength.

Moving back home after that – back to the grim, oppressive atmosphere of his old flat where Dean would perpetually try to out-Dom him, challenging his actions at every turn and expecting obedience with no hope of reward or reprieve…God, it had been \textit{awful}. Disobedience and a shitty attitude had been his last line of defence against submitting to that bastard, and he’d clung to the façade like his life depended on it, even if it inevitably resulted in bruises.

Naturally, it’s taking him a little while to unlearn those old self-taught instincts; but he’s getting there, slowly.

He finds Harry back in his old recovery suite, sitting at the small mahogany desk near the window and diligently pouring over a sheaf of documents, fountain pen poised between his fingers, the lid tapping quietly against the corner of the topmost sheet of paper.

“Oi,” Eggsy says, closing the door with his hip before crouching down to give JB a greeting pat as the pug comes scampering over from his basket in the corner. “You ain’t s’posed to be workin’, guv.”

Harry glances up from his paperwork with a quiet smile, but obligingly sets down his pen. “Old habits die hard, I’m afraid.” He cocks his head to the side, turning a little in his chair. “You seem cheerful. Good news, I take it?”

“Fuck yeah.” Standing, he moves over to perch on the edge of the desk beside Harry’s papers, beaming at the Dom. “Finally got cleared for active duty, didn’t I? They said I can do field missions an’ everythin’.”

“Well now.” Harry’s smile widens into something warmer, \textit{prouder}, and Eggsy feels a hot glow begin to swell in his chest. “\textit{That} \textit{is} good news. Allow me to extend my congratulations, Agent Galahad.”

Eggsy’s elation stutters to a halt, a flicker of confusion running through him as he meets the Dom’s gaze uncertainly. “Galahad?” he echoes. “Why would…but you’re…Harry, no, I can’t steal \textit{your} name.”

“Nonsense. I can’t think of a more suitable candidate for my position,” the Dom tells him, quietly but with conviction. “You must understand, Eggsy – the nature of my injury has gravely effected the quality of vision in my left eye. To such an extent, I’m afraid, that it would be unwise to reinstate me as a field operative. I can no longer pilot an aircraft, and at present I would find it very difficult to safely drive a moving vehicle. Such skills are necessary for active Kingsman agents.”
The Sub shakes his head mutely, grief and disappointment wrenching at his heart. “But…but Sir-”

Harry gently presses the pads of his fingers to the boy’s lips, stilling his protests. His smile is tired now, reconciled. “It’s alright, Eggsy. Truth be told, this has been a long time coming. I’m getting on in years, whether I’d like to admit it or not.” He moves his hand to cup the Sub’s cheek tenderly, thumb brushing over his still-healing bruise. “And I couldn’t ask for a better replacement.”

Eggsy’s eyes feel hot and itchy, his head reeling from the suddenness of it all, every fibre of his being utterly in denial of what he’s hearing. It feels like the floor’s been pulled out from underneath him, that previous sense of rightness deserting him in the face of Harry’s confession.

“But…but the only reason I signed on with Kingsman in the first place was ‘cause o’you,” he insists plaintively, his voice hushed as he reaches up to cover Harry’s hand with his own. “You can’t just leave.”

“Leave?” Harry blinks at him, surprised. “Good heavens, no.” He seems to come to some sort of realisation after a moment, because his expression softens again to something infinitely more soothing. “Eggsy, darling, I can assure you I have no intention of deserting the service in its hour of need. Quite the opposite, in fact. The remaining Kingsman agents have chosen, through a unanimous consensus, to elect me as head of the Table. Once I’ve been deemed medically fit for office work, I’ll be assuming my new role as Arthur.”

Eggsy stares at him, struck dumb a second time. Then a wave of overwhelming relief rushes through him, stealing the breath from his lungs for a moment.

“Arthur,” he echoes hoarsely, before ducking his head and pressing a hand over his eyes. He’s so relieved, he could cry. “Fuckin’ hell, guv. You could’ve said somethin’ sooner.”

“Forgive me.” Harry’s hand curls around the nape of his neck, tugging gently so that Eggsy’s bending a little at the waist, enough that the Dom can press a kiss between his eyebrows. “It wasn’t my intention to worry you.”

Eggsy gives a choked, slightly hysterical-sounding laugh. Worried? Nah, he hadn’t been worried. Emotionally devastated, sure, but he’d remember how to breathe again in another minute or so. No biggy.

“What have you done to the boy now, Hart?” Merlin asks from the doorway, and Eggsy peeks through his fingers towards the man, cheeks flushed.

“A minor misunderstanding,” Harry explains, rubbing the Sub’s thigh consolingly. “I was merely trying to congratulate Eggsy on his newly acquired position as Galahad.”

Merlin’s eyebrows twitch upwards, curious. “Oh?”

Eggsy’s eyes narrow imperceptibly, then he straightens a little and points an accusing finger towards his Dom. “Wait a minute – you knew about ‘im being Arthur an’ all, didn’t you?”

“Naturally,” the Scotsman agrees with an easy smile, crossing over to stand behind Harry’s chair and draping an arm loosely about the Dom’s shoulders. “I was the one who insisted upon the promotion.”

“Ugh.” Eggsy drops his head into his hands again, fingers tugging at his fringe. “You’re both wankers.”

“Aye, on occasion.”
“Merlin,” Harry chides softly, and strokes a soothing hand along Eggsy’s thigh. “Do have a heart. Our boy was briefly under the impression that I was handing in my resignation and leaving the service entirely.”

“Leaving?” the Dom asks, and scoffs. “Not bloody likely. I can’t very well keep you in check on my own, can I, lad?”

Eggsy sniffs a grin and glances up at them both, cheeks still flushed. “I’d like to see you try, guv.”

Merlin reaches out to smooth back Eggsy’s fringe, his lips twitching. “Cheeky.” Then he gently clucks the boy beneath the chin, tipping his face up a little, his own expression suddenly a little more serious. “I may have a mission for you after all, Galahad.”

“Yeah?” Eggsy asks, perking up. “What kinda mission?”

“It seems Gwaine has managed to stumble across a rather extensive smuggling ring in central Dusseldorf,” the Dom tells him. “We already have way inside – he’s been posing as an illegal arms dealer, and there’s been a meeting arranged with the cell’s outside contact this evening. But Gwaine has reason to suspect that his alias may have been compromised. Should things turn south, he’ll need an extraction team ready to mobilise, and he can’t delay the transaction much longer without raising alarm bells. The last thing we want is for the smugglers to get a whiff of danger and move on to the next buyer; some of the technology we’ve discovered in their possession is…rather advanced, shall we say.”

“Advanced?” Eggsy tilts his head a little to the side, brow creasing. “In what way?”

“It bears an alarming resemblance to some of Valentine’s more sinister side-projects,” Merlin elaborates grimly. “What’s more, Gwaine believes that the smuggling cell is close to striking a deal with a few high-up members of the Tambov gang. The repercussions for the citizens of Dusseldorf would be…well, to be quite frank, it doesn’t bear thinking about. We need to ensure that no such transactions take place. Your primary role will be artillery support if Gwaine comes under fire, but should he fail in his mission, it’ll be your job to neutralise that threat independently.”

Eggsy gives a single, shallow nod. “Right. Got it.”

“Sprechen Sie Deutsch?” the Dom prompts, his accent flawless. “Können Sie mich verstehen?”

“Ja,” Eggsy replies, a touch offended. “Ich versteche dich gut.”

Merlin knows he speaks German – the bloke had practically forced Deutsch text books down his throat during the latter half of his year’s training. Since he’d already been given foundation-level education in French and German during his GCSE years, they’d been the most logical choices when he and the other candidates (by that point only half a dozen of them left) had been told it was a requirement for all Kingsman knights to be semi-fluent in at least two foreign languages. Charlie had rather vocally protested the decision that Latin would not count as a viable option, until Merlin had pointed out (rather flatly in that dry, unamused tone he’d used an awful lot around the younger Dom) that “if you rely on a dead language to get you out of a deadly situation, ‘dead’ is exactly how you’ll end up”. Charlie had wisely kept his opinions on the subject to himself after that.

“Sehr gut,” Harry says approvingly, a smile curling at his lips. “Your accent is coming along nicely.”

Eggsy grins in return. “Danke.” He glances back up at Merlin. “So, when do I leave?”

“After lunch,” Merlin tells him, with no room for argument. “You’ll need your strength. And it’ll give me adequate time to brief you on everything you’ll need to know about the smuggler’s ring.”
The old industrial district is all but deserted, lit dimly by flickering, poorly-maintained streetlights. The place looks creepy as fuck.

Tucked away in the outer suburbs of the city, hedged in by sparse woodland that peters out into overgrown fields and grassy hills as far as the eye can see, it certainly doesn’t seem the sort of place that arms dealers would flock to for trade. But the numerous derelict red-brick buildings and vast, abandoned warehouses with windows and doors shuttered up tight undoubtedly provide adequate cover for whatever illegal activities go on around here.

That, and there’s so little traffic along the main road that it would be easy to station a couple of lookouts nearby, and to send out a warning ahead of time if any suspicious cars happened to show up. It’s the reason Eggsy and his extraction team had abandoned their own vehicle half a mile back and trekked the rest of the way on foot, following the path of the road but keeping to the shadowed safety of the treeline, weapons drawn and ready. So far they’ve encountered nobody, but that doesn’t mean there aren’t arms dealers lurking nearby, watching and waiting.

Not that he’s paranoid or anything. He just ain’t taking any risks.

The recent rainfall has left a cold, damp, earthy sort of scent clinging to the air, and the ground underfoot is distinctly squishy as he moves through the sparse undergrowth, gaze focused on the lifeless buildings looming ominously in the distance. Despite the many layers he’s wearing, and the thermal insulating properties of his bespoke suit, he can feel the hair on his arms standing on end against the early-evening chill. If it weren’t for the adrenaline steadily thrumming through his veins, Eggsy would be fucking freezing.

He glances down at the tracking device on the inside of his right wrist and slows to a halt, gesturing for his three armed colleagues to do the same. He ain’t used to being in charge of a task force – especially when its members are at least a decade older than him (and with significantly more field experience under their belts) – but things seems to be going okay so far. They’re quick, they’re sharp, and they aren’t trying to undermine his orders at every turn, so he honestly couldn’t ask for better backup. And he’s got a secondary team hidden in an SUV half a mile back, awaiting his signal, and a helicopter sniper that can get here in seven minutes if required, so all in all he’s feeling rather over prepared, if anything. But then he knows how quickly these sort of stealth missions can go south, and if the whole of the Tambov gang suddenly decides to turn up out of the blue, they’re going to need all the bullets they can get their hands on.
“The signal stops here,” he says to the team at large, then reaches up to tap the left arm of his glasses twice to switch to the private channel he shares with headquarters. “Anythin’ look familiar, Sir?”

“When Gwaine made his last transmission, he’d just turned down that lane up ahead,” Merlin tells him, and suddenly the footage is replaying on a tiny screen at the top right-hand corner of Eggsy’s glasses.

He has to squint a little and shut one eye to see it properly, but there’s no mistaking the moment the man’s footsteps falter, the camera making a sharp half-turn before the ground is suddenly rushing up to meet it with dizzying speed, the screen instantly going dark. Eggsy blinks his gaze back into focus and presses his hand against the smooth, cool bark of the tree beside him, grounding himself a little as his gaze settles on the narrow path that cuts between the abandoned factories on the opposite side of the road.

“Well, there’s no sign of a body,” Eggsy murmurs, not that it’s really any consolation considering Gwaine’s still MIA. “I’m gonna go check it out.”

“Be careful, lad. If someone managed to get the jump on Gwaine, they must be bloody good. Stay alert.”

Eggsy nods sharply, tapping his earpiece to re-establish the signal with his team. “I’m goin’ in to take a closer look. Connor, Paul, I want you to stick it out here, yeah? Eyes on me. If I get jumped from behind, I’m comin’ back to haunt both your arses, we clear?”

He hears Connor’s poorly-concealed snort of laughter and feels an answering grin twitch at his own lips, but carries on as though uninterrupted. “Keena, you’re our best marksman, I’m gonna need you to find yourself a better vantage point; someplace high where you can take out moving targets without bein’ exposed.”

“I saw a fire escape on the other side of that warehouse,” the sharpshooter replies from her crouched position behind a nearby tree, hands moving quickly as she checks her rifle gear before zipping her kit back up and slinging strap over her shoulder. “The roof looks fairly flat, I should be able to set things up on the south-east corner nearest the road.”

“Ace. Sounds like a plan.”

The task-force simulations he’d done during his training had been significantly harder than this, given that most of his team had been self-centred arseholes who weren’t prepared to take orders from someone like him. Thank fuck for professionals.

Eggsy adjusts his grip on his umbrella, glancing to each team member in turn to ensure everyone’s on board with the current plan, before stepping out from the safety of the treeline and into the dim yellow glow of the flickering streetlights. He crosses the wide, deserted road slowly, footsteps sounding overly loud in the eerie silence of the industrial estate, even though the soles of his Oxfords are barely making any noise at all. Even his breathing seems deafening compared to the utter stillness of the place.

He heads for the narrow lane that passes between two huge derelict buildings up ahead – a red-bricked monstrosity to the right of him and a multi-story concrete-walled warehouse to the left – ears straining for the slightest whisper of a footfall, the smallest hint that he’s no longer alone out here.

His gaze latches onto a dark, angular object laying facedown on the ground nearby, and he crouches down slowly, eyes flickering left and right to scan his surroundings before carefully picking up the discarded glasses. He taps the arm of his own frames again.
“Are you gettin’ this, Merlin?”

“Aye, lad,” the Dom confirms grimly. “Judging by the bloodstains, Gwaine likely sustained a head injury of some kind when he fell. See if you can reactivate the feed; there should be a sensor pad along the inner bridge of the frames.”

Turning Gwaine’s glasses over, he lines his thumb up against the required pressure point, holding it down for a few seconds and watching as the cracked lenses flicker to life.

“They’re a little worse for wear, but I should be able to bypass the retinal security scan to access the mainframe. Bear with me a moment.”

Eggsy glances up and down the lane uneasily, tightening his grip around the handle of his umbrella. “How’s this s’posed to help us find Gwaine, anyhow?”

“All agents carry a second emergency tracker,” Merlin explains distractedly. “Sometimes a third, depending on the mission. You have one in your wristwatch, and another built into the neck of your umbrella. Gwaine’s always had a dangerous propensity for misplacing his trackers during undercover missions, so he had one surgically implanted in his back molar a few years ago”

The Sub wrinkles his nose at the notion of ever having anything implanted in his body that some psycho evil mastermind might one day attempt to extract, but he doesn’t voice his opinion on the subject. To each their own, an’ all that.

“Right, I’ve got it.” Merlin sounds triumphant. “Good news is, the device seems to be transmitting just fine. Which means Gwaine’s still alive somewhere; the implant runs on thermal energy, so as long as his core body temperature doesn’t drop below thirty-five degrees, the signal…oh. Hold the phone.”

“What is it?” Eggsy asks, hushed, standing slowly to his feet and pocketing the damaged glasses as he scans his surroundings again.

“According to these sensor readouts, the implant’s transmitting from somewhere nearby,” the Dom tells him. “Within a hundred and fifty yards at most.”

Eggsy glances sharply to the buildings on either side of the lane. “They must’ve stowed him inside before they scarpered.”

“Either that or they’re still in there with him, holding him hostage,” Merlin points out. “Proceed with caution, Galahad.”

“Roger that, guv.”

After quickly updating his team on the new plan of action, he moves on until he finds an unguarded side entrance to the red-bricked building a little further down the lane, eying the broken hinges that had apparently held a door once upon a time and gingerly stepping over the mound of splintered wood to head further inside.

The place has clearly been ransacked, every scrap of salvageable metal and electrical cabling ripped from the walls and ceiling. The inner corridor is dark and cold and musty-smelling, scattered bits of crumbling plaster and broken wooden panelling littering the floor underfoot. His Kingsman glasses provide him with additional night-vision, which is a blessing given how fucking dark the place is, but when he spots a rat the size of a small cat scuttling across the hallway up ahead, he rather wishes he couldn’t see anything at all. He fucking hates rats.
“You’re getting close, lad,” Merlin tells him after a few minutes of tense silence. “The signal’s definitely coming from somewhere in this building.”

Eggsy doesn’t answer, aware that in a place this vast and empty and silent, his voice will echo like crazy. It already feels like his heart’s beating loud enough to be heard by half of Dusseldorf.

He turns the corner at a T-junction in the corridor and grinds to a halt, quickly pressing himself back against the moulding wall, finger resting over the trigger of his umbrella. Up ahead, not ten metres away, is a wide set of double doors, and through the narrow gaps between door and frame, he can see the pale yellow glow of a light shining in the room beyond.

“Be careful, Eggsy,” Merlin warns, as the Sub slowly advances forwards. “We don’t know how many blokes you’re up against here.”

Figuring there’s only really one way to find out, Eggsy braces himself, muscles tensed and legs ready to run should the need arise, and slowly pries one of the doors open by half an inch.

It ends up being fairly anticlimactic after all that, because the vast, high-ceilinged room beyond is utterly devoid of life. The light’s coming from a single row of generator-powered spotlights that have been set up in a rough semi-circle in the centre of the room, surrounding a stack of a dozen or so crates, plain save for the row of spray-painted digits on the side of each box.

“That’s the cargo Gwaine was tracking earlier today,” Merlin tells him as the Sub stealthily moves closer, gaze flickering from one exit to another to make sure he’s still alone. “Whatever you do, don’t try to open the crates. They’ve probably been rigged with concussion bombs to ward off any light-fingered visitors from rival cells. If you don’t get the technique right, you’ll end up losing your hands.”

Eggsy nods again to show that he’s heard the warning, reaching out to touch the backs of his fingers to the cone of the nearest light, finding it hot to the touch but not searing. They can’t have been on for more than an hour or so. Whoever rigged them up like this must still be here, somewhere.

“These figures don’t make sense,” Merlin says suddenly, frustration creeping into his tone. “According to the transmitter readouts, Gwaine should be within twenty yards of your current position. You’re practically right on top of him.”

Eggsy pauses at that, and glances down at the concrete floor as a sudden thought occurs to him. “Uh…any chance this place might have a cellar or somethin’?”

“Aye, possibly; old industrial complexes like this often kept the boiler room on a lower floor,” the Dom says contemplatively. “It’s certainly worth looking into. Unfortunately the building is too dated to have any traceable digitalised blueprints, but a general rule of thumb is to look for the biggest pipe and follow it down.”

Glancing around, Eggsy’s gaze zeroes in a knot of thick, rusting pipes that trail along the bottom of the far wall, the largest of which is twice the width as his leg. They certainly seem to be his best bet. And indeed, when he follows them along the full length of the vast room and through a second side-doorway, he comes across another short, dark corridor that ends in a descending staircase. There’s one of those old-fashioned lifts there, too, full of dust and cobwebs and splintered boards, the metal gating so rusted that it’s hanging off the hinges at the top corner.

But more importantly, sitting on a low crate directly in front of that old lift, posture slumped and apparently fast asleep, is one of the smugglers. Eggsy recognises the man’s face from the briefing package Merlin had given him to peruse during his flight over from Kingsman HQ – it’s the ‘outside
contact’ Gwaine was supposed to be meeting later this evening. The man’s clearly more involved with the smuggling cell than he’d initially let on.

It’s the work of a few seconds (and a well-aimed amnesia dart) to render the man unconscious, and then Eggsy’s descending the stairs quickly and quietly, ears attuned to the low murmur of voices that are growing steadily louder the further he progresses.

“Be on your guard, lad,” Merlin cautions, as the Sub ducks into what looks like a large underground storage bunker. There are rows upon rows of metal shelves, stacked with dozens of crates similar to the ones he’d seen upstairs. Some of them have been opened, and he catches quick glimpses of shiny tech and bulky metal amongst the fake-straw packaging.

The voices are loud enough now that he can just about make out the occasional word or two in German, and the dim light’s growing brighter the further he creeps into the room, moving silently between the rows of shelving, keeping himself low to the ground. He stops when he realises that the shelves disappear two rows ahead of him, leaving a wide open space that spans perhaps forty feet in length and breadth. There are a few more spotlights lining the far back wall, a handful of fold-out metal tables set up in front of them, littered with papers and knickknacks, and a smattering of crates dotted around sporadically which are currently being used as seats by the room’s occupants. He counts eleven men in total, and multiple weapons, but also numerous empty beer bottles. Good. Alcohol slows the reflexes, and by the looks of things he’s going to need every advantage he can get.

Because there, tied to a chair in the very centre of the open space with his jacket removed and his shirtsleeves torn and bloodied, is Gwaine. Looking thoroughly unimpressed.

“This was my husband’s favourite shirt,” he says with a sigh, addressing the blond-haired man who’s currently circling him. “I had intended to let you all off with a stern warning and a rap to the knuckles, but you’ve really taken things too far.”

Blondie laughs, twirling a wicked-looking blade between his fingers. “You are a tough man to crack, English. I respect that.” With a flick of his wrist, he presses the point of the blade to the already-weeping gash on Gwaine’s forearm and twizzles it left and right slowly. “But you will give me what I want.”

“Fashion advice?” the agent queries calmly, unflinchingly, and gives the smuggler’s dark attire a critical look. “Because you really ought to experiment a little more with colours, darling.”

Eggsy has to bite his lip to keep from making any sound. He fucking loves this guy.

The smuggler yanks the knife away, before pressing the full length of the blade to Gwaine’s throat, young face twisted in a sneer. “I will not ask you again.”

“Come now, Conrad, I think we both know that’s a lie.” Gwaine’s smile is both pleasant and deadly. “I know too much, that’s true enough, and you certainly can’t risk allowing me to leave here alive. But I also hold information about your rivals that makes me far too valuable to be disposed of so hastily.”

Conrad leans in closer, fingers visibly tightening around the blade’s handle for a moment before he lets out a string of low, gruff German expletives and hurls the weapon across the room. Hands fisting, chest heaving, he glares at the Kingsman agent.

“I will break you, English,” he promises darkly, his accent thickening. Then he straightens, the tension leaving his posture again, and gestures to one of his colleagues – a huge, wide-shouldered bear of a man with hands as big as dinner plates who’s been watching the proceedings with hawk-
like eyes. “Let’s see how generous you feel after Fabian has softened you up a little, yes?”

The burly man grins, pushing himself away from the wall and slowly rolling up his sleeves as he approaches the captive agent.

To the untrained eye, Gwaine remains perfectly calm and impassive, but from his vantage point Eggsy can see how the man tenses his abdominal muscles and steels his jaw fractionally against what he anticipates is going to be one helluva beating.

Well. Not on Eggsy’s watch.

“I’ve found Gwaine,” he whispers, fingers pressed against his earpiece so that the message transmits to his team. “We have eleven targets, all fully armed. I’m gonna need some kinda distraction, guys.” He wracks his brains, gaze still fixed on Fabian as the man rolls his shoulders, readying for the first strike, and shifts in his crouch restlessly. “Connor, Paul – on my mark, I want you to fire off half a dozen air-shots. Keep yourselves out of sight, see if you can’t take out a couple of ‘em from the treeline. I’m hopin’ it’ll buy me the time I need to spring our man out of here. Keena – shoot anythin’ that moves. Unless it’s me an’ Gwaine.”

“Copy that, Sir.”

“On my mark,” he repeats, hushed, heartbeat quickening as he takes a deep, steadying breath and crouches lower, muscles poised for attack. He watches Fabian pull his arm back to land the first blow. “Now.”

The barrage of gunshots are audible even from underground, and Eggsy gets a kick out of seeing a handful off Gwaine’s captors visibly jump at the sound, hands moving to their holstered weapons.

“What was that?” Fabian asks in thick-accented German, glancing towards the ceiling as though hoping that’ll somehow provide him with the answers.

“Trouble,” Conrad replies grimly, his voice such a low rumble that Eggsy can barely make out the word in order to translate it. The leader barks out a string of names and gestures with a sharp jerk of his head towards the exit. “Idiots! What are you waiting for? Go and deal with it!”

Eggsy sucks in a breath and presses himself back into the shadows as five of the men break away from the group and jog past the rows of shelves on their way towards the side-exit that leads to the back corridor, weapons drawn, footsteps echoing loudly as they ascend the concrete stairs.

That leaves him with six armed combatants. Hardly ideal, but certainly better than eleven-against-one.

“Continue,” Conrad orders after half a minute of tense silence, and gestures towards Gwaine with another jerk of his head, moving over to one of the tables at the back to pour himself a drink.

Fabian raises his arm again and backhands Gwaine sharply across the face, the man’s head snapping to one side with the force of the slap. Eggsy winces, feeling bad for allowing the blow to land, but with the all smugglers’ attention focused solely on the agent and his attacker, it gives him the window of opportunity he needs to slip out from behind the shelves unnoticed.

With a sharp crack to the back of the neck from the handle of his umbrella, the first man goes down lack a sack of potatoes, beer bottle shattering on impact with the concrete floor.

The remaining smugglers scramble for their weapons, faces showing varying degrees of surprise and alarm, but Eggsy’s already moving, leaping up onto one of the crates and flinging himself onto his
next victim, using the added height and momentum to smash the thug’s head down against the floor as he lands, flipping himself back upright again with a one-armed handspring.

He’s already expecting the rain of gunfire, and swings his umbrella up and open in front of him as he follows through with the flip’s momentum and rolls forward on his shoulder, into a solid crouch, flinching at the deafening echo of weapons discharging in such an enclosed space. The handle judders in his grip from the force of the bullets connecting with the synthetic shielding, and he quickly shifts the gear from stun to kill and takes aim, shooting the closest attacker straight between the eyes.

A weaponised umbrella clearly comes as a surprise to the other four men, and Eggsy takes full advantage of their split-second hesitation and pulls his own handgun from its concealed holster at the small of his back, lower his umbrella just enough to put a bullet in the eye of the nearest smuggler. Then he’s under fire again, ducking back behind his umbrella as he side-steps around the fallen body of his first victim, trying to put some distance between himself and Gwaine so that the agent doesn’t accidentally get caught in the cross-fire. He discharges his umbrella’s second and final kill-shot, hitting the ginger-haired smuggler in the shoulder, the force of it knocking him back into Conrad, who loses his balance and goes crashing to the floor beneath his fatally injured colleague.

Suddenly Fabian’s rushing at him from the side, and Eggsy manages to bring his arm up just in time to block the knife aimed at his chest, hand clamped around the man’s meaty wrist, steel tip poised mere centimetres from his striped Kingsman tie. He’s all too aware that in his rush to block the attack he’s been forced to surrender his umbrella-shield, leaving him open to Conrad’s gunfire, and he quickly rotates them in a half-pivot to put Fabian’s bulk between himself and the other smuggler before the leader can regain his footing, arm still straining to keep the German’s knife from piercing through his suit.

The sheer size and strength of the Dom is almost overwhelming as he marches Eggsy backwards, and try as he might the Sub can’t shake the man’s grip on his bicep long enough to bring up his own weapon. He grunts through his teeth, pushing against the hold desperately, his breath exploding out of him when his back and shoulders connect solidly with the cold brick wall.

But the thing is, Eggsy learned how to be a street fighter long before he learned military de-escalation techniques and Kingsman’s mixed martial arts. Around his old neighbourhood, you either chose to fight back or you shut up and obeyed, and the latter choice had never been an option for Eggsy. So he’d learnt to fight young. And he’d learnt to fight dirty.

He brings his leg up sharply, kneeing Fabian solidly in the groin: once, twice, three times in quick succession. On the third blow the brute’s grip loosens by a fraction, enough that Eggsy can yank his arm free and shove, sending the man stumbling backwards a pace. A quick spin-kick to the stomach sends him staggering back even further, enough that Eggsy can bring his arm up all the way and shoot that motherfucker in the goddamn throat.

He whirs to train his weapon on Conrad, but finds the blond leader already flat on his back, mouth open in horror and hands clawed, blackened veins twisting in spider-web patterns across his skin as Gwaine carefully uses the concrete floor to reinsert the neurotoxin-coated blade back inside the sole his right shoe.

Eggsy lowers his arm, sore and breathless and buzzing on adrenaline, and cocks an easy grin at the senior agent.

“Guten Abend, herr Gwaine.”

“Good evening,” the Dom returns, lips twitching. “You make quite an entrance, Galahad.” He
glances down at his bound wrists and back up again quickly. “If you’d be so kind as to untie me?”

“Yeah, shit, sorry.” Eggsy pulls his own blade from the hidden inner pocket of his suit and quickly gets to work cutting the man’s bonds. “How bad are you injured, mate?”

Gwaine flexes his fingers with a slight wince as full circulation returns to them. “Nothing a few codeine and a good whiskey won’t put to rights.” He accepts Eggsy’s proffered hand and heaves himself to his feet, leaning on the Sub heavily for a few seconds before regaining his own sense of equilibrium. “Thank you.”

There’s a sizeable eggs swelling near the Dom’s temple, hair matted with blood in a gruesome-looking clump, a reddening mark along his cheekbone from where Fabian had struck him, and the deep gash in his arm is still bleeding sluggishly, but other than that the man seems to be doing alright.

“I take it you have a background in gymnastics?” Gwaine asks curiously, moving around the room to collect his confiscated suit jacket and Kingsman gadgets with a level of speed and efficiency that’s truly remarkable for someone who’s recently been knocked out and tired to a chair in the basement of an abandoned factory for over an hour. “Because that handspring was a thing of beauty.”

“Cheers, guv.” The Sub adopts a casual stance despite his frantically pounding pulse, winking at the older man. “I try.”

“Agent Galahad?” Paul prompts over the still-open line. “What’s your status, Sir?”

Eggsy reaches up to tap his earpiece. “All clear, mate. Multiple targets neutralised. I have Agent Gwaine, we’ll be headin’ back up in a mo. How are things up top with you?”

“You missed quite the party,” the other Sub tells him cheerfully. “We were going to save some of the fun for you, but Keena wasn’t having any of it.”

He grins, moving across the room to fetch his discarded umbrella. “No worries; I think we’re all funned-out down here anyway. I’ll see you in a min, yeah?”

“Roger that, Sir.”

He taps the earpiece again to cut off the transmission, then activates the private line in his glasses. “You still there, Merlin?”

“I never left,” the Dom replies, and immediately some of the tension eases from Eggsy’s shoulders at the man’s warm, calm tones. “Excellent work, Eggsy - you’ve done us all proud. I’ve alerted the secondary extraction team, they’re en route to your position as we speak. I’ll have Morice land the helicopter in the field behind the signal tower; I want both you and Gwaine on it when I call back in ten minutes, understood?”

Eggsy’s lips twitch upwards in a quieter sort of smile. “Understood, Sir.”

“Good lad.”

He rolls his shoulders and takes a deep, steadying breath, pulling himself back into his faux-Dominant mindset as he pivots towards Gwaine and shoots the older agent another cheerful grin.

“Ready to go home, bruv?”
The flight back to headquarters from the private airstrip just south of Dusseldorf shouldn’t take them more than an hour, but for Eggsy that’s fifty-eight minutes too long.

The atmosphere ought to be fairly relaxed – it’s just him and Gwaine really, and the two pilots up in front – but Eggsy can’t seem to get himself comfortable, despite the softness of the posh sofa and squishy armchairs that furnish the passenger cabin. There’s a phantom itch under his skin, a lingering sort of tension that keeps him hyper-alert and antsy, hands clenching and unclenching as he moves about the aircraft restlessly. Gwaine’s gone to lie down on the small cot at the rear of the plane, so Eggsy can’t even pass the time running his mouth off about everything and anything (his usual habit when he feels like he’s getting worked up).

“Try listening to opera,” Gwaine advises, when Eggsy pops into the back cabin to check on him for the third time in as many minutes.

The Sub wrinkles his nose. “Not really my thing, bruv. Here – I thought you might want this for your head.”

“Bless you.” Gwaine takes the cloth-wrapped icepack with a grateful smile, pressing it to his temple. He pats Eggsy’s arm gently with his other hand. “Ask Merlin to patch one of Hart’s old playlists through. The man has a terrible taste in beverages, but his music selection is tolerable.”

Eggsy nods, managing an easy sort of smile despite the feeling of wrongness that’s still clinging to him. “I’ll do that. Get some rest, yeah? We’ll be home before you know it.”

He heads back into the midsection of the jet and closes the sliding partition behind him so that his pacing doesn’t keep Gwaine awake, sighing as he unbuttons his jacket and shrugs it off, draping it over the back of a nearby armchair before dropping down onto the sofa, glasses in hand. He rotates them between his fingers for a moment, torn between the urge to hear his Dom’s voice and the knowledge that Merlin’s probably got his hands full trying to coordinate the clean-up operation back at the industrial plant.

In the end his instincts win out, and he dons the frames quickly, blinking when prompted to activate the retinal scanner.

“Merlin?”

“*I’m here, lad,*” the Scotsman reassures without missing a beat, his voice low and soothing. “*Are you alright?*”
Eggsy closes his eyes and exhales a shaky sigh, fists still clenched tight, pulse pounding loudly in his ears. “Better now,” he answers truthfully, because he is. With his eyes closed and Merlin’s voice in his ears, he can pretend the Dom’s in the same room as him, and that makes things infinitely more bearable.

“Having trouble winding down?” the handler guesses, his tone sympathetic.

The Sub nods, rubbing his sweaty palms against the knees of his trousers. “Gwaine told me to ask you for Harry’s playlist. Said it’d help.”

“It certainly won’t hurt to try.” There’s the quiet ‘tap-tap’ of Merlin’s keyboard, then: “Is your earpiece still in?”

“Mm.”

“Excellent. Now, I want you to lay your head back and close your eyes for me.”

Eggsy obeys almost without thinking, the tension in his muscles easing steadily by increments as he leans his head against the back of the sofa, exhaling another shaky sigh.

“Good boy,” Merlin praises quietly, and Eggsy’s lips twitch up despite himself, a pleasant burst of warmth swelling in his chest.

His earpiece makes a quiet plip sound, and then suddenly the melodic piano intro of David Bowie’s Life On Mars track starts playing. His smile widens into a grin as a short, sharp, surprised burst of laughter escapes his lips.

“You’re kiddin’ me? No way. Harry’s a Bowie fan?”

“From time to time,” Merlin confirms, amused. “You should ask him about the vinyl record collection he keeps down in the panic room. It’s rather extensive.”

Aha. Eggsy just knew Harry had to be secretly nerdy about something other than beetles and butterflies (and he still doesn’t use the downstairs bathroom because bugs, ew), and makes a mental note to coerce the Dom into showing it to him at a later date.

He’s treated to a selection of old classics, most of which had been released years before he was even born, and finds to his surprise that the music really does help to lessen the restless buzzing beneath his skin. It’s not quite enough to enable him to switch off completely, but the familiar lyrics and melodies keep his mind suitably occupied so that he stops replaying the mission over and over in his head, and he’s beyond grateful for that brief hour of mental respite.

Soon enough, Merlin’s dulcet tones are gently coaxing him up out of his stupor, and the pilot’s voice is coming in over the intercom, asking him to fasten his seatbelt for landing. He moves to sit in one of the armchairs, pushing his fingers beneath the rims of his glasses to rub at his eyes, peering groggily at the darkness of the night sky outside the window as the dim blue lights of the mansion’s hidden runway come into view.

“Back over British soil already?” Gwaine asks, emerging from the rear cabin, looking a little green around the gills. “I must’ve dozed off.”

Eggsy winces sympathetically as the man gingerly sinks down into the armchair opposite him. “How’s your head?”

“It’s seen better days,” the agent admits, rubbing the pads of his fingers against his brow, face
pinched in a grimace. After a moment he drops his hand to regard Eggsy seriously. “It occurs to me that I never properly thanked you for your actions back in that cellar. I’d managed to get myself into a bit of a tight spot. I appreciate the assistance, truly.”

Eggsy waves away his gratitude with an easy smile, feeling a little more mellowed-out now after an hour of chill 70’s music. “Don’t mention it, bruv. I’m just glad I could help. An’ I really do mean that; I was goin’ crazy bein’ stuck back at base while the rest of you lot were out riskin’ your lives halfway across Europe.”

Gwaine hums his agreement, fingers tracing the edge of the temporary field-dressing that Eggsy had taped over the gash on his arm. “None of us enjoy mandatory medical leave, but I certainly remember finding it significantly more grating during my earlier years. I’ll admit, at present, I’m rather looking forward to putting my feet up for a few days.”

The Dom shifts, and lightly nudges Eggsy’s foot with the toe of his Oxford. “There’s a bar a few minutes’ walk away from the shop, one that Bors and I often frequent during our downtime. Would you care to join us, perhaps one evening next week? I believe I owe you a drink.”

Eggsy’s answering grin is broad and genuine. “You’re on, guv.”

He sags back against the front door to close it, listening to the low rumble of the private Kingsman taxi’s engine as it drives back down the Mews and turns onto the main road.

Bloody hell, he’s tired.

Merlin had been there to greet them when they’d finally pulled into the underground hangar beneath the grounds of the mansion, but with a whole bunch of technicians and medical personnel in attendance, the Dom hadn’t been at liberty to do much more than give Eggsy’s shoulder a brief, reassuring squeeze.

It had been torturous; to have Merlin standing so close to him without being able to give into his increasingly desperate instincts to wrap his arms around the Dom or sink to his knees. It had taken almost half an hour before they’d found themselves alone again in one of the side-offices near Merlin’s lab (because the handler’s usual workspace was still crawling with mission analysts), but the resulting cuddle had been worth the wait.

The moment the door-lock had clicked shut, Merlin had pulled him close in a warm, tight hug that
had immediately set about turning his knees to jelly.

“You were spectacular, lad,” the Dom had murmured, hand cupped securely over the back of Eggsy’s neck. “I’m so bloody proud of you.”

And dear God in heaven, it had felt so fucking good. He’d wanted them to stay like that forever, but Merlin’s wrist communicator had continued to beep with new messages every thirty seconds or so, until the Dom had finally been forced to pull away and confess, with obvious reluctance, that he still had work to do.

“Go on home, boyo,” the Dom had told him, guiding Eggsy down the empty corridor towards the private subway terminal, a hand lingering warmly at the small of his back. “I’ve arranged for a car to pick you up from the shop, and Harry’s waiting for you back at the house. I’ll be along as soon as I can, alright?”

And so here Eggsy was, bone-weary and fidgety and feeling distinctly unsettled in his own skin after the lonely drive back from Saville row, devoid of the contact his instincts are craving. He bends over to pull off his Oxfords clumsily, contemplating the merits of just dropping back onto his arse and sitting right here on the ‘Welcome’ mat until his body decides to start working properly again.

“Eggsy?”

It’s Harry (thank fuck), robed in Kingsman dressing gown and slippers, descending the staircase quickly to greet him. Eggsy pushes himself upright again with a weak semblance of a smile and falls into Harry’s open arms with a shaky sigh of relief.

1. That’s much better.

“Welcome back,” the Dom murmurs, lips moving against the side of his head as fingers sink into his hair. “And bloody well done.”

Eggsy grins wearily at the familiar phrase, cheek resting against the soft material of Harry’s burgundy dressing gown. “Cheers, guv.”

Harry rubs his back in slow, soothing circles. “Are you hungry?” The boy shakes his head. “Thirsty?” Another shake. “Then it’s into the bath with you, my boy. Believe you me, your muscles will thank you for it tomorrow.”

The Sub knows from experience that a long, hot shower pales in comparison to the effectiveness of a good soak in a warm bath, and after some of the stunts he pulled back in Dusseldorf, he isn’t looking forward to feeling the repercussions in his hamstrings tomorrow morning. So he allows himself to ushered upstairs and into the spacious bathroom, where a steaming bubble bath is already waiting for him, the warm, damp air holding a sweet and faintly spicy aroma that suggests Harry used some of those special salts from the row of jars on the windowsill that Eggsy’s never been brave enough to touch before.

“Would you like me to step outside while you soak?” Harry asks gently.

Eggsy doesn’t even have to think the question over, he’s already shaking his head. It seems like that restless buzzing under his skin is only bearable when one of his Doms is nearby, and he isn’t keen on the idea putting any amount of distance between the two of them right now. Besides, he kinda feels half-under already, and if he’s about to slip off into Subspace unexpectedly, he doesn’t want to do it alone.

“Alright,” Harry acquiesces quietly, helping Eggsy slip his arms out of his bespoke suit jacket.
He ought to feel embarrassed, being undressed like a child or an invalid, but instead it’s nice, and he doesn’t offer so much as a peep of protest when Harry deftly unbuttons his shirt and helps him out of that, too. The Dom turns away to hang up his suit, giving him the illusion of privacy so that Eggsy can strip out of his boxers and step into the tub, sinking down beneath the hot, scented water with a grateful sigh.

“Warm enough?” his Dom asks, resting a hand lightly in his hair.

“Mm,” Eggsy confirms, eyes closed, lips twitching up in another tired smile. “Thank you, Sir.”

Gentle fingers smooth his fringe back for a few minutes, a comfortable sort of silence lingering between them as Eggsy feels the overtired muscle ache begin to fade from his limbs, his heartbeat finally slowing to a more regular rhythm.

“Would you like to tell me about the mission?”

Eggsy pries his eyes open, confusion creasing his brow for a brief moment. “You mean you weren’t watchin’?”

“Of course I was,” Harry reassures with a quiet, tender smile. “From the moment you first donned your glasses. But I often find that recounting one’s experiences during a particularly eventful mission can help one to better process the details and emotions therein.”

It makes sense when the Dom puts it like that. And to be fair, Eggsy’s emotions are pretty fucked up right now. Part of him still feels like he’s in the middle of a gunfight in Dusseldorf, and another part of him feels like the whole thing was just a dream, and it’s as though the two sides are at war with each other. Maybe that’s why he’s so restless.

So he talks. He doesn’t even think about the words, not really – with Harry’s hand in his hair, and a soft sponge gently sluicing warm water over his chest and shoulders, it’s easy to let his mouth run without his brain needing to process anything. Harry doesn’t interrupt him, or ask him to clarify anything, even though he’s pretty sure his description of the industrial plant doesn’t make a whole lot of sense (he skips the part about the rat, because that’s something he really doesn’t want to remember in any sort of detail).

“An’ Gwaine’s pretty badass,” he concludes after he’s almost talked himself hoarse, tilting his head back so that the Dom can rinse out the shampoo from his hair, feeling loose-limbed and floaty from his recent scalp-massage. “He invited me to go for a drink with him an’ Bors. Didn’t expect him to be so cool about me bein’ a pleb an’ all.”

“You aren’t a pleb,” Harry denies immediately, his tone still soft despite the mildly chiding note. “And even if you were, Gwaine wouldn’t judge you for it. He’s a good man.”

“An’ Bors?”

“Is a…singular individual,” the Dom answers after a brief pause, his amusement audible. “I’ll let you judge his character for yourself.”

“Ominous.”

“Quite.” Harry gently pinches his chin, tilting his head a little to the side to rinse the shampoo from behind Eggsy’s ears, before setting the jug aside. “There. Much better.”

He rises from his perch on the stool beside the tub and moves to fetch Eggsy a towel, his smile kind as he unfurls it and holds it open for the boy.
“Come on, poppet. Let’s get you dried and dressed and into bed.”

*Ooh.* Bed sounds fucking *great.* Eggsy pushes himself to his feet on wobbly, weak-kneed legs, grateful for Harry’s steadying grip on his arm as he climbs out of the bath, letting the Dom cocoon him in the warm, fluffy towel.

A sudden *clunk* makes him jump, head coming up quickly and pulse spiking again, but it’s only Harry pulling out the bathplug to drain the water. Feeling slightly ridiculous for his overreaction, he hugs his arms about himself and shuffles from the room, shivering at the comparatively cooler air of the upstairs landing as he heads for the spare bedroom.

He manages to dry himself off and pull on a clean pair of boxers and a loose t-shirt, and finds himself lingering in front of the full-length mirror on the door of his wardrobe, staring at his own reflection dazedly.

There’s a graze above his eyebrow that he doesn’t even remember getting. Perhaps it’d been from his collision with the first smuggler’s shoulder after he’d leapt from that crate to tackle him to the floor. Or perhaps he’d been nicked by a shard of brick during the gunfight, when the deflected bullets had done visible damage to the wall behind him. The ring of darkening bruises around his bicep is less of a mystery – Fabian’s grip on him had been crushing, and it’s a miracle the marks aren’t finger-shaped.

He startles again at the quiet knock on the door, reaching reflexively for the gun that’s no longer holstered at the small of his back, and he swears under his breath as he drags a hand down his face, willing his raging pulse to slow again.

“Yeah?”

It’s Harry, of course, with a glass of water and a couple of paracetamol in hand. Eggsy tries to muster up a grateful smile, but even to him it feels weak, and after a brief pause the Dom moves to set his burdens down on the bedside table.

“Come here,” he prompts quietly, sitting on the edge of the double bed and patting the area of mattress beside him.

Eggsy goes, but lingers uncertainly when he reaches the bed, glancing between the proffered perch and the carpeted floor beside Harry’s feet. He wants to kneel. He wants to go down, to let himself float without care, to shake off this horrible sense of fidgety *wrongness* and internal unease and lose himself in Subspace for a little while.

But before he can muster up the courage to ask, Harry’s reaching for his wrist and tugging gently, guiding him to sit sideways in the Dom’s lap, and *oh,* yes please, this is so much better. Eggsy ducks his head down and curls himself up a bit so that he can tuck his head against Harry’s shoulder, exhaling a shaky sigh against the man’s neck as Harry’s arms close securely around him.

“You’re safe,” the Dom reminds him, the words murmured against his ear. “The mission is over and done, Eggsy. It’s time to let go.”

The Sub closes his eyes and presses his forehead into the warmth of Harry’s throat, willing the tension to leave his muscles. “I’m *tryin’,*” he insists plaintively. “But my brain ain’t fuckin’ listenin’.”

“Deep breaths,” Harry prompts, stroking a firm hand up and down the length of his spine. “Don’t let your thoughts wonder back to the day’s events. Concentrate on filling your lungs.”

Eggsy obeys, his eyes still closed, and for several long minutes the only sound is of his own slow,
steady breathing and the quiet rasp of Harry’s hand as it glides over the material of his t-shirt. But as
the silence lingers on, ringing in his ears, he finds that all he wants to do is drown it out with Harry’s
voice, with Merlin’s laughter, with anything, fuck.

“It’s alright,” the Dom soothes, likely feeling how tense his muscles have become again, and a hand
slides up to cup the back of Eggsy’s neck. Harry sighs quietly, a warm puff of air against the boy’s
ear. “You’ve really gotten yourself worked up, haven’t you, poppet?”

The Sub nods miserably against Harry’s shoulder, hands fisting in his burgundy dressing gown.
“Sorry.”

“There’s nothing to be sorry about,” the older agent insists, rubbing the lad’s back. “Happens to the
best of us. Somewhat of an occupational hazard, I’m afraid.” He brushes his lips against Eggsy’s
hair, squeezing the boy tighter for a moment. “Will you allow me to help you?”

Eggsy nods immediately. Right now he’ll take anything. Something’s gotta be seriously wrong with
him if he can’t even feel happy all curled up and cuddled in Harry’s lap like this – it’s the kinda stuff
he used to daydream about, and now that he’s getting it he’s fucking miserable.

Harry tilts the boy’s head up with a gentle finger beneath his chin. “Do you trust me?”

The Sub nods again without hesitation. Dumb question, really. He’s been Harry’s since day one,
there ain’t nothing he wouldn’t do for the Dom.

“I’m going to spank you,” Harry tells him calmly, and Eggsy’s brain comes screeching to a sudden
halt. His surprise and confusion must register on his face, because the Dom’s expression gentles
further, his hand cupping Eggsy’s cheek. “You haven’t done anything wrong. This isn’t a
punishment, or a way for you to seek atonement. It will merely provide you with an outlet for your
current tension.”

The Dom’s thumb strokes over his cheekbone tenderly. “But only if you want me to.”

Eggsy lowers his gaze to the neat stitching along the collar of Harry’s dressing gown, mulling the
offer over silently for a moment. He’s thought about the Dom spanking him more times than he can
count – steamy fantasies about being disciplined for his sass, or spanked teasingly as part of foreplay
– but he’d never imagined finding himself over Harry’s knee for a therapeutic spanking. Sure,
they’re common enough, considered by most of society to be a healthy way for stressed Subs to vent,
but Eggsy had never previously fancied himself as the type of clingy Sub who’d need those sort of
spankings.

Well, until today, that is. Because right now it sounds like exactly what he needs.

He nods, mustering up the courage to lift his gaze to meet Harry’s again so that the man knows he
means it, and is rewarded with a tender smile and a gentle kiss between his eyebrows. Then all at
once he’s being eased slowly to his feet, and carefully repositioned facedown over Harry’s lap, with
his upper body stretched out comfortably across the mattress, and his midriff supported by the Dom’s
muscular thighs.

His heart’s fluttering nervously in his chest, but he feels contented in spite of it, secure and protected
and safe in the knowledge that Harry will give him what he needs. He turns his head, resting his
cheek again his folded arms, muscles finally relaxing.

“There now,” Harry murmurs, rubbing a hand in slow circles at the small of Eggsy’s back, the other
resting over the curve of his buttocks. “That’s much better. Are you quite comfortable?”
Eggsy hums a sleepy confirmation, blinking slowly against the spaced-out drooping of his eyelids.

There’s a light, prompting swat against his rear. “Use your words, poppet.”

A shudder runs through him, fuzzy warmth swelling in his chest and fanning out to all four limbs, but he manages to unstick his tongue long enough to mumble a low, dazed, “Yes, Sir.”

“Good boy.” The hand rubs over the tingling spot that’s just been struck, soothing it. “Now remember, Eggsy, you aren’t being punished. Your performance today was exemplary, and I’m beyond proud of how you conducted yourself under field pressure. But the mission is over now, and it’s time to let go.”

Eggsy nods again, then sucks in a sharp, shaky breath at the heavy swat that connects solidly with his rump. The immediate heat and sting of it is soothed by that same palm a fraction of a second later as Harry smooths his hand over the curve of his cheek. Then a second swat, as hard and heavy as the first, but soothed again by a cupped hand before the sting can begin set in properly. A third. A fourth. A fifth. And dear God, they doesn’t half do the job.

Eggsy doesn’t know if it’s because he’s already so wound up from the mission, or if it’s because Harry’s method of spanking is so very different from Merlin’s steady, unfaltering, predictable pace, but after half a minute he’s already feeling his defences beginning to crumble. He fights it at first, because holy hell he can’t cry, not yet, they’ve only just started…but Harry’s hand keeps falling and soothing, a firm strike followed by a tender kiss, almost like the Dom’s hushing him after every swat, and fuck, it’s brutally effective.

It isn’t long before his eyes are burning and his throat’s getting all hot and tight and achy, and he turns his face into the concave of his folded arms, sucking in shallow, hitching breaths as the Dom’s hand continues to warm his backside, the sound of his cupped palm filling the silence with a rhythmic, comforting beat.

“That’s it, let it all out,” Harry murmurs, and his free hand slips beneath Eggsy’s t-shirt to rest against the small of his back, thumb brushing against the skin there. “Good boy.”

Eggsy’s face scrunches up, a wave of overwhelming something sweeping through him, pushing a low, guttural sob from his throat almost against his will. The floodgates well and truly opened, he finally stops fighting the emotions bubbling up inside him and cries. Not because he’s sad, or because his backside hurts, but because it feels fucking good to finally let go.

Unlike Merlin, Harry doesn’t wind down the session once he’s finally surrendered to his tears, but instead spanks him through it, steady and relentless (and exactly what Eggsy needs him to be), until his nose is stuffy and his bottom’s sore and his tears have run dry, and he’s left feeling sleepy and satisfied and kinda fuzzy.

It’s fucking awesome.

Harry’s hand comes down to rest on his burning rear, rubbing gently. “There now, poppet. Feeling a little better?”

Eggsy nods against the damp coverlet beneath his cheek, sucking in another shaky, hitching breath and blinking open tired, itching eyes. “Yes, Si-ir.”

The Dom’s fingers move to curl over the nape of his neck, squeezing gently. “Good boy. Come on, treasure, up you come.”

His limbs prove to be even more uncoordinated post-spanking than they had been the other night, but
thankfully he doesn’t have to move far. In a few short moments Harry has him repositioned on the bed on his stomach, with the Dom settling down on the mattress beside him, propped up in a casual recline against the headboard.

Eggsy burrows shamelessly into the man’s side, the need to be close to his Dom overpowering all other senses; thankfully, the older man seems to share the sentiment, if the strength of his hold on Eggsy is any indication. Harry’s arms pull him in close so that he’s lying almost half on top of the Dom, face buried in the soft fabric of his burgundy dressing gown.

“There we are,” Harry murmurs, stroking his hair as Eggsy trembles and clings, utterly overwhelmed by the intensity of his instincts. “Hush now, darling, it’s alright. You’re okay. Deep breaths for me, Eggsy.”

There isn’t much the Sub can do except breathe – his limbs have fully conked out and his brain’s gone caput and all he can focus on is Harry; the warmth in his voice and the strength of his arms where they’re wrapped around Eggsy, the gentle kisses dotted along his hairline as the Dom presses his lips there between soothing words. Eggsy’s pretty sure he’s started crying again at some point, but he can’t stop, it just feels so nice to cry in Harry’s arms like this, and he’s too tired to do anything else. There’s so much he wants to say – ‘thank you’, and ‘I love you’ and ‘please don’t ever leave me’, but he’s a long way off being able to articulate anything quite that complex, so he settles for whining tearfully at the back of his throat and pressing himself a little closer into the man’s side.

“I know,” his Dom soothes, and shifts both their positions so that they’re more horizontal now, Harry’s head and shoulders propped up on the pillows. “It’s alright, treasure. I’m here; I have you.” Lips brush against his temple in a tender, lingering kiss. “Go to sleep.”

Sleep sounds nice. Eggsy’s so fucking tired. And curled up against Harry like this, all warm and fuzzy and spaced-out, it’s kinda inevitable. He curls his fist a little tighter in the Dom’s dressing gown, just in case Harry has any ideas about moving more than a few inches away from him, and allows his drooping eyelids to slide fully closed.

He floats for a while, cosy and contented, until he’s forced back into awareness by movement beneath him; a hand gently prying soft fabric from his loose fingers, and then Harry’s warmth is leaving him. He stirs, making a whining noise of complaint at the back of his throat: no, come back, nononono-

“Shhh, easy now,” another voice hushes softly, and then a second pair of arms are closing around him from the other side, pulling him back against a warm, solid chest. “Settle down, there’s a good lad. He’ll be back in a moment.”

Eggsy relaxes instinctively, panic receding as he melts into Merlin’s arms, hands coming up to cling to the one that’s wrapped securely around his torso. The Dom makes another gentle shushing noise, brushing a kiss behind his ear.

“Go back to sleep, sweetheart.”

Eggsy wants to, exhaustion still clinging to every fibre of his being, but he feels compelled to wait for Harry; to reassure himself that the other Dom hasn’t left him indefinitely. And lo and behold, moments later, he hears the distant flush of a toilet, the sound of running water, and then quiet footsteps slowly approaching them along the upstairs landing.

There’s a quiet click as the bedside lamp is switched off, and then the bed’s dipping and Harry’s there again, a warm rose-scented hand smoothing the fringe back from his forehead as Eggsy blinks up at him sleepily. In the darkness, he can just about make out the gentle curve of the man’s smile.
He knows he’s probably grinning stupidly in return, but he can’t help it, he just feels so happy.

He manages to get his arm working long enough to curl a hand loosely around one of Harry’s wrists.

“Stay?” he slurs.

“Yes,” Harry promises, his voice hushed. Eggsy grunts his satisfaction and hugs Merlin’s arm closer to his chest to make sure the other man doesn’t have any ideas about leaving, either.

“We’re both staying, lad,” the Dom promises, hand splaying over Eggsy’s sternum in a manner that feels wonderfully possessive.

Smiling sleepily, Eggsy closes his eyes again. Love you, he thinks, because he’s too tired to form words anymore. He’s almost certain he hears Merlin return the sentiment before he drifts off, but it’s probably just his imagination, ‘cause the Dom ain’t no mind-reader.

He sleeps.

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Introducing Sir Gwaine to my D/s universe. Because James D’Arcy is hot as hell, and watching him play ‘Jarvis’ in Agent Carter reminded me of the fact.

Also, here’s a lovely clip of Mark Strong speaking German. You’re welcome.

Come chat with me on Tumblr!

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed the chapter. Yes! Romance is brewing. Yes! Harry spanked Eggsy. Yes! I'm running high on FEELS after writing all that fluffy goodness. Yes, I'm due at work in four hours and I need to sleep. Such is life.
Ciao!
Everything changes.

Chapter Notes

Warning - this chapter contains detailed sexy-sexy times between two characters. Continue at your own peril.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

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Everything hurts. Everything.

It feels like he’s gone ten rounds with a brick wall, his muscles aching and his joints stiff, a leaden sort of weight saturating his limbs. Eggsy’s brain ain’t even fully online yet, and it’s already trying to nope the fuck out of consciousness and back into the blissful, pain-free ignorance of sleep. He groans quietly, turning his cheek into the softness of the pillow beneath him.

A hand settles in his hair, fingers combing through the strands, rubbing lightly against his scalp. “Good morning, Eggsy.”

He’s leaning into the contact before the action has even fully registered with his sleep-groggy brain, instincts taking over briefly as the rest of him struggles to catch up. Harry’s touch feels super nice, like it always does, but there’s also something about it that doesn’t quite fit with how things should be. It probably isn’t important, and it can’t be anything bad because his Dom’s here, in bed beside him, stroking his hair and-

Oh.

Eggsy’s brain wakes the rest of the way up pretty fucking fast after that. Because Harry’s here. Harry Hart, in his bed. The same bed as Eggsy. They’re sharing a bed. Him and Harry. The both of ‘em together, in bed. Holy shit.

“How are you feeling?”

The younger man blinks up at him dumbly.

“Sore,” he admits after a beat, deciding that honesty’s probably the best policy at the moment, at least until he figures out what the fuck is going on.

The Dom’s brow creases fractionally in concern. “I hope I wasn’t too hard on you last night?”

The events of the previous evening return to him in a sudden, dizzying rush of hazily remembered sensations. The mission in Germany. Post-adrenaline stress tying knots in his muscles as he fought for composure on the long flight home. Harry giving him a bath, handling him with the utmost care, trying to talk him down with tender words and murmured reassurances before finally turning him
over his knee and spanning him straight into Subspace with a firm, unyielding hand, until all the tension had ebbed from his muscles and everything felt great. Dozing off against the man’s chest, soothed and sated and wrung-out from crying, finding himself wrapped up snugly in Merlin’s arms when movement had startled him awake in the dead of night. Lying there between his two Doms, drunk on that bone-deep feeling of rightness, knowing without a shred of doubt that he was safe and protected and loved.

Warmth swelling in his chest all over again, he shakes his head slightly, and pushes up into the man’s touch. “No, Sir. It was fuckin’ perfect.”

Harry’s expression softens again, his hand moving to cup the boy’s cheek tenderly. “Merlin popped downstairs a short while ago to make a head-start on breakfast. Do you feel up to joining us?”

Eggsy’s nodding before his brain’s had chance to fully consider the practicality of it, and he fights to hide his grimace (wholly unsuccessfully) as he pushes himself upright in bed and carefully flexes overstrained muscles that have grown taught and painful overnight through disuse.

“Perhaps a shower first,” Harry suggests kindly, rubbing a warm, gentle hand up and down his spine as Eggsy bites back another pained groan. “The heat will help to loosen things up a bit.”

Nodding again, the boy slips out from underneath the bedcovers and limps towards the door, smiling down at JB as the pug trots over from his basket in the corner of the room (presumably let in by one of his Doms overnight) and trots after him merrily, following him into the bathroom as Eggsy strips out of his pyjamas and steps into the shower. JB seems rather put-out that ‘walkies’ have not immediately ensued, and sits on the bathmat outside the glass-walled shower cubicle the whole time Eggsy’s in there, staring up at his master with big, sad eyes.

“After breakfast, darlin’,” Eggsy promises, wrapping a towel around his waist as he steps out of the shower, hissing through his teeth when he bends down to dry himself off and pulls what feels like every bloody muscle in his right leg. “Think we’re gonna have to keep it a short one, yeah?”

Harry’s gone by the time he makes it back to the spare bedroom, but there’s a fresh glass of water and a handful of painkillers waiting for him on the bedside table with a note in the Dom’s handwriting that simply reads ‘Take these, please.’, and if Eggsy’d had any intention of refusing meds to begin with, he certainly doesn’t now. It’s a little too close to an order for him to even contemplate resistance, and he feels a sense of satisfaction for having obeyed it; to put it quite plainly, like he’s being a good boy. It’s a nice feeling.

He pulls on a black polo shirt and the loosest pair of trousers he can find, which happen to be his grey Nike jogging bottoms (wrestling himself into anything tighter just doesn’t bear thinking about right now), combing his fingers through his damp hair to neaten it a little as he yawns against the back of his hand, eyes still weighed down with fatigue. Truth be told, he could quite easily go back to sleep for another few hours, but there’s a part of him that wouldn’t feel contented without his Doms nearby. Plus it sounds like Merlin’s indulging in a rare stay-at-home morning, and he intends to enjoy every minute of it.

He finds both his Doms in the kitchen; Harry fixing them a fresh pot of tea while Merlin stands vigil over the hob, transferring something from frying pan to plate with a quick, practised flip of his spatula. After a moment the man seems to sense that he’s being watched, gaze flickering up from his work to settle on Eggsy where the Sub lingers in the doorway.

“Nice of you to join us, lazybones,” the Dom comments, fond and amused, and extends an arm towards him invitingly.
Eggsy crosses the kitchen to tuck himself up against Merlin’s side without hesitation, posture relaxing instinctively as the older man wraps an arm snugly about him and drops a kiss against his hair.

“What you makin’, guv?”

“Scotch pancakes,” the Dom replies, and levers another measured ladleful of batter onto the pan. “Or drop-scones, if you’re feeling particularly arsy.”

“I merely pointed out their dual title,” Harry argues calmly, carrying a tray of tea things through to the dining room. “You needn’t be so dramatic about it.”

“Arsy,” the Dom reiterates, but Eggsy can hear the smile in his voice. Merlin’s arm tightens around Eggsy’s waist a little, and he diverts his gaze from the pan to regard the Sub closely for a moment. “You alright, lad?”

Eggsy nods silently, still leaning his weight against the man.

“Tired?” Merlin guesses, setting his spatula aside for a moment so that he can wrap both arms around the boy, one hand stroking up his spine to rub slow circles between his shoulders. “And sore too, I’d wager.”

“Mn,” Eggsy acknowledges, posture sagging a little more, knees growing weak as he contemplates the benefits of going down right here in the kitchen. He still feels a little spacey, like the slightest nudge of coercion from either of his Doms will have him dropping to his knees in a heartbeat. It probably ought to be disconcerting, but instead it just feels nice.

“You’ve got forty-eight hours of mandatory leave before you’re eligible for field duty again,” Merlin tells him, giving him a brief, tight squeeze before extracting an arm to retrieve his spatula, flipping the scotch pancake over to brown the other side. “Barring any international emergencies, of course.”

“Now you’ve gone an’ jinxed it,” Eggsy points out, lips twitching.

The Dom sniffs a quiet grin. “Aye, quite possibly.” Then he turns his head to press a soft, chaste kiss to Eggsy’s temple. “Go set the table for me, there’s a good lad.”

Nodding, the Sub goes to fetch the butter dish and jam tray (Harry calls them ‘preserves’, but he figures that’s just posh-talk for fancy jam with lumps in), swiping a carton of orange juice from the fridge on his way past and carrying it under his arm to the table, glancing surreptitiously at Merlin’s cooking technique every so often. He’s come to the realisation that when the man cooks (which is a rarity, because Kingsman HQ keeps him so bloody busy all the time), he invariably makes something that Harry happens to be very fond of. Scotch pancakes are, presumably, a favourite breakfast food – thus, Eggsy mentally adds it to the growing list of things that he wants to learn how to make.

Breakfast is a casual, comfortable affair, filled with light conversation and gentle ribbing between the three of them, and it feels so wonderfully domestic that Eggsy can barely restrain himself from answering questions with ‘yes, Sir’ and ‘no, Sir’.

He ain’t under, not exactly – but then he’s not all the way up, either. At present, he feels very much like a collared Sub sharing a meal with his bonded Doms, and it’s a disarmingly normal headspace to find himself in, even if the realisation of the fact comes as a bit of a shock. He hadn’t even been conscious of how far he’d lowered his defences. (Hell, had they even gone back up at all after what happened last night?) He’s had that cosy, slightly-spaced-out haziness wrapped around him ever since he woke up, and it’s hard to say for sure what’s Submissive hormones, and what’s plain and
simple fatigue and early-morning grogginess.

His Doms don’t seem to be acting any different, though. At present, Harry’s trying his best to coax his husband into sending him the newly updated security personnel recruitment files so that he can begin the process of eliminating unsuitable candidates prior to the interviewing process, while Merlin maintains an air of reluctance at the notion of Harry returning to work so early on in his recovery.

“You’ve only been home a week,” the Scotsman argues with an undertone of mild exasperation, sliding a couple more drop-scones onto Eggsy’s plate. “You can’t possibly be that desperate to get back to work.”

“As you’re perfectly aware, I’ve always loathed being idle,” Harry reminds him calmly, refilling the Sub’s glass without averting his gaze from his partner. “And I’ll only be reviewing candidate profiles, I’d hardly call that taxing.”

Merlin absently passes Eggsy the butter and preserves. “I thought you’d been looking forward to a spot of downtime. Why don’t you try and make a start on those antique French novels Bedivere bought you last Christmas?”

Harry takes a delicate sip of tea, eyebrows arched. “I fail to see how skimming through a few personnel files is any different to reading a book.”

“Because you’re not supposed to be working, love.”

It’s perhaps the most civilised and softly-spoken argument that Eggsy has ever witnessed, and he finds himself fighting a smile as he watches the back-and-forth between the pair. He decides it’s probably best if he keeps out of things, so he sits and he listens and he eats (because both Doms keep refilling his cup and plate whenever they begin to empty), and falls a little bit more in love with the both of them for it. In truth, he’s secretly siding with Merlin on this one – he’d rather Harry took a few more days (or weeks, even) to fully recover from his injuries before trying to assume his role as Arthur.

Part of him wishes he had the time to sit at home with the Dom all day and distract him from the temptations of paperwork with board games and bad 70’s music, but he’s promised to take Daisy to nursery today so that his Mum can go to her counselling appointment. Maybe this evening, though. He’s getting pretty good at Scrabble – turns out that while Harry knows a load of big, posh-sounding words, there’s a whole ton of slang and modernised terms he isn’t familiar with, and that often gives Eggsy the upper hand. Although in light of his recent victories, Merlin keeps threatening to make him play the game in German as a way of testing his fluency; Eggsy’s gonna have to ‘accidentally’ misplace the letter pieces if that ever happens.

“So how come you’re not buried under a ton of work back at the mansion?” the Sub asks once a comfortable silence has descended over the table once more. He’s actually managed to clear his plate this time, and apparently his Doms are satisfied that he’s been sufficiently fattened up, because they’ve stopped plying him with extra helpings. “Thought all that tech we confiscated from Dusseldorf would keep you busy for days.”

Merlin gives an easy shrug, pouring himself another cuppa. “I have a team of highly-trained analysts who are paid rather extravagant wages to do the initial itemisation for me. Figured I might as well let them get the paperwork out of the way before I wade in.”

“But don’t you wanna like,” Eggsy makes a wiggling motion with his fingers, “micro-manage the shit out of ‘em, like you normally do?”
Harry coughs to clear his throat, making poor show of hiding his smile behind the rim of his cup. Merlin levels Eggsy with a deceptively mild look.

“Micro-manage?”

Eggsy gives him an innocent smile, mentally scrabbling for a less insulting clarification. “It’s just… you’re usually really thorough about that kinda stuff, yeah? You like to make sure it’s done properly an’ shit.”

“Well saved,” Harry murmurs into his tea.

Merlin’s lips twitch, but his face remains otherwise impassive. “Can a man not have a few hours to himself every once in a while?”

“I didn’t mean it like that,” Eggsy insists with a quiet huff, knowing full well that he’s being teased. “I ain’t used to seein’ you around in the mornin’, that’s all; you’re normally out the door by half-six. Not that I’m complainin’ or anythin’, guv, ‘cause you work harder than anyone I know – it’s just a bit out of sorts.”

The two Doms share a quiet look, and Eggsy worries briefly that he’s somehow managed put his foot in it, especially when Harry sets his teacup down in its saucer with unusual gravity.

“To tell you the truth, Eggsy, there was another motivating factor in his decision to remain behind this morning,” the Dom confesses, suddenly quite serious. “Merlin and I had rather hoped to have a conversation with you about what happened last night.”

The bottom drops out of Eggsy’s stomach, and all at once he wishes he hadn’t eaten quite so many scotch pancakes.

Oh God, this is it. This is the part where they tell him he’s taken things too far; that last night was a one-off situation that can’t be allowed happen again, and that they need to establish clearer boundaries between them so that Eggsy won’t start taking liberties. And he gets it, he really does – Harry and Merlin are bonded, and while they support Eggsy of their own free will, they’re only fulfilling the role of Dominant guardians, nothing more. God, last night’s intimacy must’ve been super awkward for both of them. Eggsy feels like such an idiot.

Merlin’s hand settles comfortingly over his wrist where it’s resting on the table. “You needn’t look so worried, lad,” he reassures. “We’re not about to go pressuring you into changing anything between us. If you don’t like what we have to say, things can stay exactly as they are just now, and we can all pretend this conversation never happened. But we both think it’s important that you understand exactly how we feel about you. About us.”

Eggsy’s brain stutters to a halt again.

“As you know, Merlin and I have been bonded for well over a decade,” Harry continues without missing a beat, his hand resting over Eggsy’s knee beneath the table. “Neither of us had ever given much thought to the possibility of taking a Submissive before we met you, and now the mere notion of being parted from you indefinitely is…” His hand tightens briefly, but his expression remains gentle. “Rather vexing.”

“Last night provided an epiphany of sorts for the both of us,” the Scotsman agrees, his voice a low murmur. “Neither of us had realised just how vastly the nature of our affections had begun to change until we had you between us.”

Harry inclines his head in a shallow nod. “It’s a matter we’ve been discussing a great deal, of late,”
he admits. “We’ve known of each other’s affections right from the beginning, but we felt it would have been inappropriate to voice them without some indication that they would be well-received.”

“Supporting you this past month has been both a pleasure and a privilege,” Merlin adds. “And we’ll gladly continue along that same vein if you don’t want things to change between us. But there’s so much more we’d like to offer you, lad.”

“In short, my dear boy,” Harry murmurs, fond and regretful in equal measure, “I’m afraid we’ve quite fallen for you.”

Oh, is all Eggsy thinks, because his brain’s still struggling to play catch-up and speech has quite failed him. His heart’s fluttering so rapidly in his chest he’s worried it might burst through at any moment.

“But you needn’t feel obliged to alter our current arrangement if you’d rather keep things as they are,” Harry reiterates with complete sincerity. “Your comfort and happiness are paramount, and we’ll certainly understand if you feel that you’re unable to return our affections.”

The words sound alarmingly like the previous offer (of a relationship, of sharing more with his Doms, of becoming a bonded partner) is being carefully retracted in the face of Eggsy’s stunned silence. Fuelled by a momentary sense of panic at such an outcome, the Sub manages to find his voice.

“Return your affections?” he echoes, with a soft, slightly hysterical laugh, heart pulsing hard and fast at the base of his throat. “Bruv, I’ve been half-mad in love with the both of you for fuckin’ months.”

Well… that was perhaps a tad more than he’d intended to say out loud. It seems a little too early to be throwing out big words like ‘love’, but it ain’t like he’s exaggerating or anything – and better than Harry thinking he isn’t interested at all.

All at once, the worried sort of tension is gone from Harry’s posture, and Merlin’s serious expression is softening into something warmer and happier, and fucking hell, Eggsy can scarcely breathe under their dual, relieved gazes. His blood’s running hot and his head’s spinning and this better not be a fucking dream or he’s gonna wake up pissed.

“Then you’d be willing to give it a try?” Merlin seeks to clarify, thumb brushing gently over Eggsy’s knuckles.

“Fuck yeah,” the Sub agrees, feeling almost breathless with the rush of emotions running through him.

Harry’s smile is wide and glad and beautiful, and Eggsy wants to stare at it forever. The Dom lifts a hand to cup his cheek tenderly, thumb stroking along his cheekbone, and the Sub turns into the contact with an answering smile, warmth swelling so hot and bright in his chest that he feels like he might explode from it.

“Thank you,” the Dom murmurs.

Thank you? Thank him for what? Hell and high heavens, it’s Harry and Merlin that are practically offering him the world – all he’s had to do is hastily grab it by both hands before it has a chance to slip away.

As it stands, he’s ready to strip out of his clothes and kneel for his Doms in a heartbeat if that’s what they ask of him, even if sexy-sexy stuff isn’t at the forefront of his mind. He’s too fucking happy to even think about that sorta thing right now; he just wants to please his Doms, to show them that he
can be a good Submissive. He’s gonna be so fucking obedient, he ain’t never gonna need to be disciplined, and disagreements will be a thing of the past. He won’t give them a single reason to regret taking him on as a bonded Sub.

He has to force his fuzzy brain into functionality again, because Harry starts talking to him in that low, serious voice, and Merlin’s nodding in acknowledgement, so it must be something important.

“You don’t have to rush into this,” the Dom’s saying, a warm hand resting comfortably on the side of Eggy’s neck. “We’ll be taking things at a pace of your choosing. If there’s ever anything you feel uncomfortable with, you will tell us, won’t you?”

Eggsy nods immediately, lips curling into a smile. Harry’s essentially telling him that they can take things slow, to give him time to adjust to the changes that have taken place. He suspects the man’s worried that his decision-making skills are still a little skew-whiff after everything that had happened last night, and wants to make sure he’s given adequate time to consider the proposal before doing something that he might later come to regret.

Not that he needs to mull things over for even a fraction of a second. He’s been pining after Harry and Merlin for the better part of a year now, this is quite literally a dream come true. Like, for real – he’s had all kinds of fantasies about this shit. And now it’s really happening; Merlin and Harry really want him, and not just as a Sub but as a partner.

So he ain’t gonna push for intimate stuff if his Doms are keen to take things slow. Even just having them nearby and knowing that his affections are returned is enough to satisfy him for now. And if he stands a little closer to Harry while they’re doing the breakfast dishes at the sink, well, who can blame him? Harry certainly doesn’t seem to mind, if the gentle brush of fingers against his wrist every time a dish is passed is any indication.

By nine-thirty, Merlin’s setting his briefcase down on the dining room table and heading into the kitchen to say his goodbyes. Eggsy moves over to the kettle to fix the Scot his usual thermos mug of hot tea for the journey.

“All being well, I should be home around my usual time,” the Dom says cheerfully as he leans into Harry’s personal space, giving him a chaste but affectionate peck on the lips. “Don’t overwork yourself reading those bloody profiles. Call me if you need me.”

“Yes dear,” Harry sighs, with a pat to his husband’s chest, his expression mildly amused as he slips past to let JB in from the back garden (the pug’s taken to sitting on the doormat once he’s done and whining pitifully, lest he be forgotten, and he has Harry effortlessly wrapped around his little paw).

“And you,” Merlin adds once they’re alone, crossing the kitchen slowly to pull Eggsy into a brief, tight hug, squeezing the back of the boy’s neck gently. “I don’t want to see you involved in any more unexpected pub brawls.”

The Sub grins at him ruefully. “I’ll try my best, Sir.”

Merlin nods, mirroring his smile, and tugs him closer to press a kiss to Eggy’s temple in his usual fashion. But he pauses at the last second before his lips can make contact, and instead uses a gentle finger to tip the boy’s chin upwards. The man regards him closely for a moment, his gaze searching.

“May I?”

Eggsy gives a single, shallow nod, unwilling to dislodge Merlin’s gentle grip on his chin, heartbeat thundering loudly in his ears as the Dom carefully cups his cheek, a firm hand at the small of his
back urging him closer as Merlin slowly leans in to press his lips to the very corner of Eggy’s mouth.

The Sub doesn’t dare move for fear of ruining the moment, and his patience is rewarded a few seconds later when the Dom’s mouth moves to a more central target, warm lips capturing his own in another tender, more lingering kiss that steals the breath from his lungs and the strength from his knees.

After a moment Merlin pulls away a few inches, thumb stroking lightly over Eggy’s bottom lip as he fixes the boy with his usual quiet, fond half-smile.

“Be good,” the Dom murmurs. “And stay out of trouble. I’ll see you tonight, lad.”

And then he’s gone, leaving Eggy to suffer a rather pleasant heart attack all alone in the middle of the kitchen.

“…”

“What on earth’s happened?” Roxy demands, dropping down onto the bench beside him, gloved hands curling around his own as she leans in close, her face the picture of sympathetic concern. “I could barely make out what you were saying over the phone.”

Eggy grins at her, wide and brilliant and bursting with energy. “I’m the luckiest fuckin’ Sub in the world, that’s what.”

Roxy blinks at him, momentarily taken aback by his exuberance. But her stance is relaxing visibly, the concern on her face melting into an answering smile.

“Yeah?”

“Fuck yeah.” His grin, if possible, grows even wider. “They want me, Rox, the both of ‘em. An’ not like as my guardians or anythin’ – they really want me. Said they feel the same as I do an’ asked if I’d be willin’ to take things further.” He gives a short, disbelieving laugh. “Like fuck I was gonna say no to that, you get me? An’ then Merlin went and kissed me, right there in the kitchen, an’…oh my days, Rox, it was the best fuckin’ thing. Thought my knees were gonna give out right underneath me.”

“Merlin kissed you?” the Dom reiterates, eyes widening.

“Yup. Harry too.” Eggy’s grin softens into a sappier sort of smile, and he lifts a hand to rub the back
of it against his mouth, remembering the tingling press of soft lips against his own.

He’d been floating on air for most of the morning after the incident in the kitchen, barely able to concentrate on writing up his brief mission report for Merlin as he sat tucked up beside Harry on the sofa, grinning at the screen of his laptop. He expects the Dom had known about the kiss between him and Merlin all along, but he hadn’t brought it up, other than to save Eggsy from spilling hot tea all over himself when his mind had begun to wander and his mug had started to tilt in his lax grip.

And then, just as he’d been getting ready to head out the door to go pick up Daisy for her afternoon in nursery, Harry had appeared beside him and caught him lightly by the wrist.

“It’s dreadfully cold out there,” the Dom had warned him, coaxing Eggsy into a thicker winter coat (one that Harry himself had bought for the Sub some time ago, when it transpired that Eggsy didn’t own anything warmer than zip-up jackets and hoodies). He’d deftly fastened the buttons and smoothed down the lapels. “Are you sure you won’t let me phone for a taxi?”

“JB’s dyin’ for a decent walk,” Eggsy had declined, letting the Dom wind a scarf snugly around his neck, preening internally at the fussing. “We’ll go through the park an’ down past the shops, there’s always a bunch o’ taxis waitin’ along there. I ain’t plannin’ on walkin’ all the way to Mum’s, if that’s what’s worryin’ you. I just need to stretch my legs a bit, yeah?”

“That’s quite understandable. But don’t walk home later tonight, there’s a good chap – we’re due for a frost, and it won’t do your muscles any good to be caught out in it. That’s assuming you’ll be joining us this evening?”

“You can count on it, guv.” He’d shoved JB’s leash into his pocket and tapped his thigh to get the dog’s attention, signalling that ‘walkies’ were about to commence. “Should be home by seven. I’ve got my phone, in case you need me for anythin’. Get some rest, yeah?”

Harry had smiled at that, all warmth and fondness, a hand coming up to stroke the backs of his fingers down Eggsy’s cheek in a tender caress. “Don’t you start. I get more than enough mothering from Merlin.”

“Alrigh’. But at least promise me you won’t spend the whole day workin’,” Eggsy had insisted, as Harry’s hand moved to pinch his chin gently.

“You have my word,” had been Harry’s quiet promise, and suddenly they were only inches apart, Eggsy’s fingers settling against the fabric of his Dom’s cardigan as he leaned in close, sucking in a shaky breath.

And then Harry had kissed him, right there by the front door with JB nudging impatiently at Eggsy’s shin; a lingering press of soft, warm lips as two hands gently framed his face, keeping his head tilted up at just the right angle. Eggsy had gone hot all over, fingers tingling and toes curling as a pleasurable thrill zinged through him.

Emboldened by the feeling, he’d chased after Harry’s lips when they’d begun to pull away, silently demanding more. One of the Dom’s hands had meandered around to settle on the back of his neck, and at the start of the second kiss it had squeezed just-so, and Eggsy hadn’t quite managed to swallow down the soft, needy peep of noise at the back of his throat as he’d clung to Harry’s cardigan a little tighter, dizzy and breathless and over the fucking moon because he’d just been kissed by Harry Hart, holy fuck.

But like all good things, it had eventually come to an end, Harry gently but resolutely pulling away after that second deeper, lengthier kiss to smile at him, something dark and rather promising.
Fucking tease.

“Well, thank God for that,” Roxy sighs, snapping Eggsy back into the present. She’s sitting cross-legged on the bench now, JB curled up contentedly in her lap as her poodle nuzzles at the pug, trying to get his attention. “It’s about damn time. Uncle Percy owes me a hundred pounds.”

Eggsy blanches. “You think Percival knows about—”

“No that you’re a Sub,” Roxy is quick to reassure, keeping her voice hushed. “Only that Merlin and Arthur are in love with you.”

Hearing it said out loud sets his pulse to pounding again, heat rising into his cheeks as he ducks his head to hide a smile. “Is it really that obvious?”

Roxy gives an easy shrug, scratching JB behind the ears. “No, not really. Uncle Percy joined the agency only a few years after Harry and Merlin, so I suppose he just knows how to read them. He placed a wager that Arthur wouldn’t ‘get his bloody act together’ before the summer holidays, and I decided to bet against him on your behalf. Like either of those Doms could honestly hope to resist a gem like you for another four months.”

Eggsy grins, bumping his knee against hers lightly. “You’re the best.”

“Mm,” she agrees, and sets JB down so that he can scamper off with Archie, the poodle easily dwarfing the smaller dog as they tussle playfully on the grass. Roxy slides closer along the bench until they’re pressed up shoulder to hip, winding an arm around his neck to yank him into a hug. “Betting pool aside – I’m really happy for you, love. Merlin and Harry seem like great Doms; they’ll treat you right. And if they don’t, I’ll kick their arses.”

The Sub laughs at the visual that provokes, hugging her back just as tightly. “I’m countin’ on it.”

After a moment she leans back again, but loops her arm through his and gives it a squeeze, her grin conspiratorial. “Now, tell me everything. Does Arthur kiss like he fights, or is he the unexpectedly-tender type?”

…………………………..

It’s dark and bitterly cold outside by the time he makes it back to the Mews, having chosen to forego
a taxi in favour of taking a bus and letting JB have another long walk through the park. Consequently, when he steps through the door it’s a little later in the evening than he would’ve liked, but Merlin had texted him earlier to let him know that he’d likely be staying the night over at headquarters while his team dealt with some particularly volatile equipment, so it’s not as though he’s been in any particular rush to get back before the man’s return. Still, he’s quite looking forward to a night with just him and Harry. Maybe they can renew their Scrabble tournament.

Needless to say, his cheeks and nose are numb with cold after being exposed to the frosty air, and there’s a definite rosy tinge to his skin. He’s grateful for the soft, warm inner lining of his coat pockets, because at least his hands have been spared the same fate, and his fingers feel burning hot when he pressed them to his wind-chilled cheeks.

“I’m home!” he calls – it’s unnecessary, yeah, but it’d feel impolite to say nothing – as he pushes the front door closed behind him and slips out of his coat and shoes, smiling as JB goes trotting down the hallway to seek out his food bowl (Harry, the sap, always leaves him a few titbits of dinner as a post-walk treat).

He finds his Dom reading in the lounge, as is often his evening routine, seated comfortably in his big armchair with a book open in his lap, cradling a cup of tea in his hands. Harry smiles over at him with open affection, setting both tea and book aside and extending a hand towards the boy invitingly.

“Ah, there you are. I’d begun to wonder if I ought to organise a search party.”

Eggsy rubs the back of his neck and grins apologetically as he crosses the lounge towards him.

“How was your day?” the man asks, lips brushing against his hairline.

“Grabbed lunch with Roxy, did a bit of shoppin’ for Mum. An’ oh my God, Daisy were that excited about goin’ to nursery, it was fuckin’ adorable. Apparently they got some pets in the garden there or somethin’, ‘cause she won’t stop ramblin’ on about rabbits. Thought she was gonna cry when she saw me afterwards an’ knew it was time to leave. Luckily Roxy was there with Archie, and Daisy bloody loves that poodle of hers.” He gives a little shiver and huddles closer to Harry’s warmth.

“You was right about the frost, though. S’like fuckin’ Antarctica out there.”

Eggsy gives a slight shrugged, smiling ruefully. “I decided to walk home, actually, so it’s kinda my own fault.”

“You walked home,” Harry echoes, his note of disapproval quite audible.

“Only for about an hour or so,” Eggsy hurries to clarify. “I took the bus back from Mum’s an’ got off on the far side of the park, near the ponds. Figured JB might ‘preciate another walk, since it wasn’t rainin’ for once.”
“Eggsy,” the Dom says on a sigh, but his tone is half-fond in spite of it. He clucks the boy gently beneath the chin, lips curling into a somewhat reluctant smile. “I’m half tempted to warm you up the old-fashioned way for being so foolish.”

Caught up in the playfulness of Harry’s teasing, and still giddy from the events of the day, Eggsy has enough confidence to waggle his eyebrows suggestively at the Dom, lips twitching.

“That don’t sound too bad, Sir.”

“No?” Harry asks mildly, his own amusement growing. “I doubt you’d maintain that sentiment for long.”

Eggsy’s smile widens into a daring grin. “You wanna bet?”

The Dom chuckles and pats the boy’s thigh. “Oh, believe me, I’d very much like to. But not tonight, poppet. I think you’re rear might appreciate an evening of respite, don’t you?”

“Probably,” Eggsy concedes, and settles back into Harry’s embrace a little more. A spanking ain’t what he’s looking for tonight, anyhow. He’s in a cosy headspace already, and the warmth and security of Harry’s arms is more than enough to satisfy him. Cuddling ain’t never gonna lose its appeal, especially when it comes to his Doms.

He rests his cheek against the man’s shoulder, slouching a bit, and tucks his cold nose into the collar of Harry’s cardigan. “You’re warm,” he says approvingly.

“That’s because I didn’t go traipsing through Hyde Park in sub-zero temperatures,” Harry remarks mildly. “Unlike a certain boy I know.”

Eggsy makes a soft grunt of protest at the teasing, and deliberately prods his cold nose against the Dom’s neck. Harry gives a startled huff of laughter and yanks the Sub back a few inches to fix him with a look, trying to affect an air of disapproval despite the light of humour twinkling in his eyes.

“What?” Eggsy asks, the picture of innocence.

Harry’s lips twitch, his voice sinking to a lower pitch as he gently pinches you boy’s chin. “What have I told you about good manners, Eggsy?” he murmurs, and the warmth of his breath tickles Eggsy’s skin as he leans in closer.

The Sub swallows, an anticipatory flutter stirring in his chest. “Manners maketh man?”

“Quite.” Harry’s lips are so close to his own that Eggsy swears he can feel the air moving between them when he speaks. “You’ll also find they reap their own rewards. Would you like that?”

“Fuck yeah.”

The hand beneath his chin tilts his head up a fraction further, a thumb tracing the lower outline of his bottom lip. “Manners, Eggsy.”

He scarcely manages to draw enough breath to answer with a shaky, “Yes, Sir. Please.”

“Good boy,” Harry whispers, and then the Dom’s kissing him.

It’s slow and gentle at first, the faintest brush of soft lips against his, a barely-there pressure that lights a flame of hunger deep inside Eggsy’s chest. His own hands slide up to settle on Harry’s shoulders, fingers sinking into the soft fabric of the man’s cardigan as he opens his mouth a little to deepen the
kiss, sucking in a shallow lungful of air through his nose when Harry immediately takes that as an invitation to sweep his tongue along Eggsy’s bottom lip.

And it’s heaven after that. Lips and teeth and tongues and hands all exciting a thousand different nerve-endings, sending electricity zinging down his spine enough to make his toes curl and his ears ring and his heart pound a frantic samba. Harry’s kisses are downright dirty, and it’s a million times better than anything Eggsy could ever have imagined.

At some point he’s shifted in his perch to straddle Harry’s lap instead, because a slight roll of his hips has him suddenly very aware of his growing arousal. And ‘growing’ is indeed the right word in this situation, judging by the tent in the front of his trousers and the increasing pressure of restrictive cotton underwear that’s both teasing and torturing him in equal measure. He’d never meant to make this a sexual thing – hell, he ain’t even sure if that’s something that Harry wants – but it just kinda happened on its own.

“Sorry,” he says, blushing hot all over when he realises that Harry must be able to feel his arousal poking against his midriff.

The Dom smiles at him, stroking a hand down from the nape of his neck to the base of his spine and over the curve of his buttocks. “You needn’t apologise, Eggsy.” He pinches the boy’s chin again and presses a soft, lingering kiss to his mouth. “I can help you with that, if you’d like?”

Eggsy flushes even hotter at the words, hips twitching against his will as he nods breathlessly. He sees Harry’s eyes crinkle at the corners as his smile deepens.

“If you need me to stop, just say so,” the Dom tells him, leaning in to kiss him again, and this time Eggsy knows exactly who’s in charge. It’s so fierce and biting that it steals the breath from his lungs all over again, leaving him desperate and wanton and pliant beneath the man’s strong hands.

Fucking hell. Maybe this was what Roxy meant by the Dom kissing like he fights. Against this kind of onslaught, Eggsy doesn’t stand a chance.

“You’re exquisite,” Harry says in a low murmur, his voice deep and syrupy, trickling pleasantly down Eggsy’s spine like warm honey. Hands settle on his hips, then push up beneath his shirt to stroke the skin there. One slips down to cup the curve of his arse, gripping gently to coax him forwards in a slow, deep grind.

Gasping at the sudden stimulation, Eggsy clutches onto the Dom’s shoulders and rocks his hips as directed, a fierce, tantalising heat beginning to coil tight in his belly when he feels an answering hardness beneath him. Even just knowing that Harry’s aroused because of him is enough to make him dizzy on endorphins, and when a hand slides around to the front of his trousers to cup the bulge there, he almost spends himself on the spot.

“You’re so wonderfully responsive,” Harry murmurs, palming him through the fabric, trailing kisses along Eggsy’s jaw as the Sub arches and gasps at the stimulation. “Christ, just look at you.”

His hips twitch again, face aflame and ears ringing. “Oh fuck, Sir, please…”

“Please?” the Dom echoes, his voice slipping half an octave lower as his thumb teases at the button on Eggsy’s trousers. “What do you need, darling? Do you need my hand on you?”

Eggsy has to will himself not to come just from that mental image alone, and nods so vehemently he’s pretty sure he pulls something in his neck. The Sub whimpers, muscles clenching as a renewed wave of arousal slams into him, sucking in quick, shallow breaths through his nose as Harry slowly
unfastens his fly and slips a hand inside, talented fingers wrapping snuggly around the girth of him and stroking with smooth, practised motions made slick with pre-cum.

Eggsy’s an inarticulate mess within seconds.

“Is this what you wanted, treasure?” Harry murmurs, his breath hot against the boy’s ear. “It is, isn’t it? Look at you, so flushed and wanton for me. My handsome boy.”

Forehead dropping down against Harry’s shoulder (he’s so tightly wound with pleasure, he can barely find the strength to keep it up a moment longer), Eggsy manages to gasp out a jumbled assortment of breathless words – mostly “fuck” and “oh” and “please” and “Sir”. The begging seems to spur Harry on further, because his hand quickens after that, and there’s a thumbing brushing over the sensitive head of Eggsy’s cock every other stroke in a manner that renders the Sub near-tears, keening high and desperate at the back of his throat.

The heat in his loins is coiling tighter to the point of agony as he clings to the Dom, held at the precipice of orgasm by the instinctual desire to hold on that little bit longer until he has Harry’s approval. Pinned somewhere between desire and torment, half out of his mind with the turmoil of pleasurable sensations, he’s never been so fucking close to orgasm-induced Subspace in his life. There are tears pricking at his eyes, and his cries of pleasure are now closer to breathless sobs, and he’s so fucking desperate he can barely croak out one last, tormented “pleeease”.

“That’s it, darling,” Harry coaxes, kissing the shell of his ear as his strokes become faster and lightly. “Come for me, Eggsy, let me see you.”

The Sub gives a choked, mewling cry as his muscles all seize up as one, and he clings onto Harry’s shoulders for dear life as the euphoria reaches its peak, stealing the breath from his lungs and momentarily robbing him of all higher brain functions, limbs trembling as the waves of pleasure wash over him in what is quite possibly the best orgasm of his fucking life.

“Ohh, good boy,” Harry praises, sounding almost as wrecked as the Sub feels, stroking the lad through his orgasm until he’s softening and oversensitive. “Such a good boy for me, Eggsy. Shhh now, I have you.”

Eggsy buries his flushed face in the Dom’s neck, his breathing ragged and his limbs weak as he slowly comes down from his high, skin buzzing and blood pulsing loudly in his ears. One of Harry’s hands carefully strokes over the back of his head so settle on the nape of his neck, the other gently wiping him clean with a soft pocket-handkerchief that the Dom’s pulled seemingly out of thin air. Eggsy’s too clapped-out to do anything more than sigh happily against Harry’s neck when the stickiness is finally dealt with, burrowing into the man’s warmth as Harry discards the handkerchief and wraps an arm around him securely.

“Are you alright, darling?”

“Mm,” Eggsy acknowledges with a blissed-out smile, rubbing his cheek against the man’s cardigan. “S’best day o’ my life.”

“I’m glad to hear it,” the Dom murmurs, with fond amusement. He turns his head to press a kiss to the side of Eggsy’s jaw. “Is there anything you need?”

Hunching down a little more, Eggsy tries to make himself small enough to tuck his head underneath Harry’s chin, but is forced to reluctantly acknowledge that it isn’t possible to bend himself in half and stay pressed up against the Dom like this. Fucking physics. He doesn’t like feeling so tall, not when he’s all small on the inside. He wants to be lower down, where Harry can sink his fingers into
Eggsy’s hair and—Oh. Oh.

“Wanna kneel for a bit,” he mumbles, blinking hard to rouse himself from his cozy semi-doze, turning his head just enough to look at the Dom. “Please?”

Harry’s smile is full of quiet affection, and he cups Eggsy’s chin again to capture his lips in a brief, tender kiss. “Of course, poppet. Down you go.”

The cushion’s there waiting for him, and ace, it’s the extra-squishy one from the sofa that feels like a giant fucking marshmallow beneath him. He sighs happily as he sinks to his knees, wrapping both arms around Harry’s nearest leg and resting his cheek against the Dom’s thigh, limbs going lax as fingers come to rest in his hair and begin to stroke.

Mmm, that’s much better.

He floats for a while, settled and contented, soothed by both Harry’s hands and his gently murmured words of praise. Eggsy ain’t never gonna grow tired of being called a “good boy”. Especially when he knows he is one, for real, at least in his Doms’ eyes.

The post-orgasm fuzziness slowly begins to fade as he gradually emerges from the cosy depths of Subspace, and after an undiscernible period of time (could’ve been hours, could’ve been five minutes), he finds himself lifting his head up from the safety of Harry’s thigh to smile at the Dom; a wide, goofy kinda I-just-had-sex grin that has the man smiling in return.

“What is it?” Harry asks quietly, fondly, caressing the boy’s cheek.

“Nothin’,” Eggsy mumbles, still grinning, and turns his face into the contact. “S’just…I never dared to hope that I’d get to do this with a Dom, ‘specially not you. Still half expectin’ to wake up an’ find out this is all just a dream.”

“I’m very real, I assure you,” the Dom replies, fingers carding gently through Eggsy’s hair. “And I’m yours, for as long as you’ll have me.”

Eggsy pushes himself up higher on his knees in order to meet the Dom halfway in a grateful, heated kiss that strokes pleasantly at the sated ball of Submissive instincts pulsing deep inside of him. It’s a good minute or so before he lowers himself back down again, flushed and smiling, to rest his chin on the Dom’s knee comfortably, leaning his weight against his leg. It’s then that he spots the slight tent still visible in the man’s trousers, and realises with a twist of guilt in his gut that he’d completely forgotten about Harry’s pleasure in the wake of his own climax.

Looking at it pointedly, he then flickers his gaze up to meet the Dom’s and grins. “Would you like me to help you with that, Sir?”

Smiling, Harry shakes his head. “That won’t be necessary, poppet. Tonight isn’t about me.”

“But I want to, guv. Please?” the Sub wheedles. Then he realises that perhaps Harry doesn’t want to, and quickly amends, “Only if it’s okay with you, Sir. But…I wouldn’t mind. Honest.”

“You may do with me as you wish,” the Dom assures, stroking his cheek. “But you needn’t feel obliged to do anything at all.”

“I know,” Eggsy murmurs, because he does. Harry’s a fucking gentleman through and through, of course he wasn’t expecting reciprocation. But Eggsy wants this (dear God does he want it), and even just the thought of pleasing his Dom right here, on his knees, has his spent cock making an admirable effort to stiffen inside his trousers.
Reaching up, he loosely clasps Harry’s wrist, turning his head to press a kiss to the man’s palm before moving the arm aside and shuffling forwards on his knees, moving around to settle between the Dom’s feet when Harry parts them obligingly. Eggsy’s no stranger to sucking cock, but it’s been more than a year since he last got a taste of one, and he’s fucking missed it. There’s nothing quite so calming as being on your knees in front of a Dom with a dick in your mouth, and he already knows that what’s about to unfold is going to effortlessly outshine all his previous experiences. This ain’t just some random bloke at a club that he finds sweet and attractive, this is a Dom he loves, a man who cares about him in return – Eggsy ain’t gonna hold himself back like he’s done in the past. He’s ready to give up everything.

It doesn’t take him long to unbuckle Harry’s belt and open the fly of his trousers, carefully peeling back the waistband of the man’s underwear to free his member, and holy fuck, there it is – every bit as thick and long as Eggsy had imagined it. Even more so, perhaps – its girth is seriously impressive, and the Sub finds himself clenching his buttocks in anticipation of what that might entail at some point in the future.

“You needn’t do anything you’re not comfortable with,” Harry reiterates, in a voice that, while half an octave lower than his normal range, is remarkably steady for a man who’s cock is currently being fisted. “If you need me t- Ah. Yes, quite.”

Eggsy, having grown tired of waiting and unable to resist Harry’s cock for another second, has wrapped his lips around the girth of it, the head resting snugly in his mouth, cushioned by his tongue. He glances up at his Dom, his gaze smug and playful as he pushes his tongue against the slit and sucks softly, watching the man’s pupils dilate further.

“Wilful boy,” Harry chides, but he doesn’t seem the least bit put-out by Eggsy’s impatience.

The Dom’s fingers sink into his hair again, and Eggsy’s eyes slip closed briefly as he savours the dual sensations, opening his mouth wider and flattening his tongue as he leans down to take in a couple more inches, sucking hard as he pulls back and feeling an inner thrill at the low hum of pleasure it elicits from Harry’s throat.

Eyes opening again to fix on his Dom (Eggsy can do sultry, he used to practise it in the mirror all the time along with his come hither eyes), bobbing his head in a slow, steady rhythm, letting his mouth go lax as he sinks down and sucking hard as he withdraws in a manner that he knows (from experience) feels fucking amazing.

“There’s a good boy,” Harry encourages, his voice low and husky, hand moving to cup the back of Eggsy’s neck. “Dear god, that’s good. Your mouth is absolutely sinful.”

Spurred on by the praise, Eggsy curls his fingers around the base of Harry’s dick, stroking up and down with the movement of his lips to stimulate the full length of it, humming around the thick member when he feels Harry’s fingers tighten in his hair as a result. He strokes a little faster, gaze flickering up to meet the Dom’s again as he suckles on the head, tonguing at the slit. There’s a definite flush to Harry’s cheeks now, his pupils so dilated that his eyes look dark with lust, his lips parted a little and his chest rising and falling with rapid, slightly uneven breaths.

The man’s slowly coming undone, and it’s beautiful.

Lo and behold, only a short half-minute later, the Dom’s gently tugging at his hair. “Eggsy, darling,” he warns, voice ragged and tight with restraint. “I’m close. You may want t- oh. Oh god, yes.”

Having absolutely no intention of pulling away (Harry’s coming down his throat or not at all), Eggsy sets to bobbing his head again and stroking the shaft with a clever twist of the wrist to stimulate the
underside of his cock, gaze resting unblinkingly on the Dom’s flushed face as Harry’s mouth falls open a little further, head tilted back in pleasure as his breathing becomes audibly more laboured and uneven.

*Come on,* Eggsy mentally coaxes, body pulsing with the instinctive need to see his Dom satisfied. *Come inside me. Pleasepleasepleaseplease…*

Harry’s hand tightens in his hair again, the muscles of his thighs going taught, and Eggsy quickly pulls back so just the head is resting in his mouth, hand stroking the full length of him as he sucks hard. Harry gasps, holding his breath for a long moment, before coming with a low, hoarse “*fuck*” and flooding Eggsy’s mouth with warm spurts of thick ejaculate.

The Sub moans around the Dom’s cock, eyes slamming shut as a wave of arousal and satisfaction washes over him, savouring the taste of Harry’s come for a moment before swallowing it down, suckling at the head until he’s sure he’s taken every last drop.

The hand in his hair loosens its grip, then strokes through the strands to soothe the sore spot. Eggsy opens his eyes as he finally lets the cock slip from his mouth, smiling up at the Dom happily, drunk on endorphins and feeling pretty damn pleased with himself to boot.

“That was incredible,” Harry murmurs, fingers smoothing his fringe back from his sweaty forehead before cupping his cheek. The Dom looks exhausted and sated and fucking wrecked, and it’s the most gorgeous sight Eggsy’s ever beheld. “Thank you. God, you’re perfect.”

Eggsy beams, preening at the praise, and presses one last, reverent kiss to the tip of Harry’s cock before carefully tucking him away back inside his trousers. The Dom regards him silently for a moment, a mixture of emotions flitting across his features before finally they settle into a warm, tender smile and he holds out his arms towards the boy.

“Come here, poppet.”

Eggsy goes willingly.

“Bet Merlin’s gonna be pissed that he decided to stay over at HQ tonight,” the Sub comments a short while later, once he’s been thoroughly kissed and comfortably resettled against the Dom’s chest, safely ensconced in the man’s lap.

“Mm,” Harry agrees, trailing a line of chaste, tickling kisses from the boy’s temple to his jawline. “I’m sure we’ll find a way to make it up to him tomorrow.”

*Ooh.* Eggsy grins to himself, several ideas already springing to mind. *Fuck yeah.*
Chapter End Notes

At long last, the platonic D/s domestic fluff with extra pining is a legitimate threesome romance! It's only taken us what, eleven chapters? ;P

Hope you enjoyed it! The smut wrote itself back there, I hadn't intended to write a Hartwin scene until chapter 12, but le muse insisted. I figured you guys probably wouldn't mind. ;) Let me know what you thought! <3

Until next time, folks. xxx
“Bunny!” Daisy exclaims cheerfully, for perhaps the tenth time in as many minutes, pointing at the little watercolour illustration of Peter Rabbit on the right-hand page of the book.

“That’s right,” Eggsy agrees patiently, settling the little girl more comfortably in his lap as he fumbles a bit to turn the page one-handed. He clears his throat and continues reading. “I’m sorry to say that Peter was not very well during the evening, because he’d eaten too much in Mr McGregor’s garden. His mother made some camomile tea, and gave a dose of it to Peter. But Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-tail had bread and milk and blackberries for supper.”

“Oh.” Daisy pats the illustration carefully, peering up at Eggsy with worried eyes. “Bunny sad?”

“He’s got a tummy ache, flower,” the older Unwin explains with a gentle smile, closing the book. “But he’ll be all better in the mornin’.”

Daisy nods, although Eggsy isn’t sure how much of the explanation she understands. His sister glances down at the closed book and her face scrunches up a bit with the realisation that ‘story time’ is over. She sends her brother a beseeching look.

“More?”

Eggsy shakes his head and sets the book aside, dropping a kiss against her blond curls. “Not tonight, Daisy-girl. It’s bedtime.”

“More…p’ease?” she asks slowly, with the careful addition of the one word that she’s clearly learned to associate with positive reactions from her caretakers. Eggsy grins at her.

“Good girl for askin’ nicely,” he says as he stands, scooping the toddler up in his arms. “But the answer’s still no, flower. S’bedtime, innit? You need to go to sleep.”

She pouts at him fiercely, and it’s fucking adorable.

“Bedtime,” Eggsy reiterates, settling her on his hip so that he can head back downstairs. “Let’s go find Mum, yeah?”

Despite her protests, Daisy’s clearly sleepy as hell already. She rests her head on his shoulder and mumbles a few more pouty protests of ‘bunny’ and ‘no’ into the collar of Eggsy’s shirt as he carries her through into the lounge, but goes willingly into her mother’s arms when Michelle comes to take her.

“Say g’night to Eggsy, babe,” she prompts, rubbing her daughter’s back.

Daisy lifts a hand to give a teeny-tiny wave. “Nigh-nigh, Eggy.”

“Night-night,” he echoes, leaning in to kiss her dimpled little cheek. “See you tomorrow, lazy-Daisy.”

Never one to be left out, JB sits up in his basket in the corner of the room and gives his own short, soft *yip* of a goodnight. Eggsy grins, and Daisy turns her head to wave sleepily at the pug.

“Nigh-nigh, doggy.”

As Michelle heads out of the lounge to take Daisy back upstairs to bed, Eggsy drops down onto the sofa with a quiet, contented sigh, flopping sideways and swinging his legs up to stretch out across the expensive cushions. JB pads over from his basket, the nametag on his collar jingling softly in the quiet of the room, and lifts up on his hind legs to press his front paws against the sofa, wet tongue slobbering all over the back of Eggsy’s hand in a silent plea to be allowed up for a cuddle.

“You’re so fuckin’ spoilt,” Eggsy accuses in his sappiest ‘who’s a good boy?’ voice, lifting the pug up to rest against his chest, scratching behind the dog’s ear and grinning at his snuffling grumble of approval. “Yes you are. A great big whiny baby.”

JB turns in a slow circle on Eggsy’s sternum, then drops down to lay along the Sub’s chest, head tucked beneath his master’s chin. Smiling, Eggsy strokes a hand down the dog’s back and closes his eyes, basking in the rare moment of peace and quiet.

It’s been a busy day; between taking Daisy to nursery and helping his Mum with the gardening and a few odd jobs around the house, he hasn’t had much time to himself. Not that he’s complaining – seeing his Mum so happy is a reward in and of itself, but getting to spend some quality time with her without his sister around had been pretty ace, too. He loves Daisy to bits, but she’s at that energetic-whirlwind stage of her development where you can’t take your eyes off her for more than a few seconds without her managing to get herself into a potentially hazardous situation. It’s been nice to just sit down and have a cuppa and a chat about grownup stuff, just him and his Mum. Even if there’s still a whole side to him that she doesn’t know about; that she can’t ever know about.

He’s given the matter serious thought – him coming clean about his true dynamic and owning up to being a Sub. But whichever way he looks at it, he just can’t see how the outcome can ever be a positive one. Sure, maybe it’d make things easier for him when he’s around her; he wouldn’t have to pretend to be someone he ain’t, or act strong and dependable for her when he’s secretly feeling shaky and unsure on the inside. But he knows exactly how it’ll make *her* feel. She’ll guess (quite correctly), that the only reason he chose to hide his dynamic was to protect the both of them from Dean, and to avoid being forced to submit to the bastard. She’ll blame herself for the decision he’d been forced to make all those years ago; she’ll never be able to look at him the same way again, and it’ll ruin *all* the progress she’s made towards recovering from everything that’s happened.

Eggsy ain’t willing to risk that. Not for his sake. Her mental health matters more than a few deeply
buried secrets; her *happiness* is far more important than his transparency.

Besides, it’s not like he has to pretend to be a Dom twenty-four hours a day. He’s got a safe haven now – a second home where he can shed his faux-Dominant persona and be himself, where he’ll be treated as a Submissive if he needs to be, or as an equal if he doesn’t. Where there aren’t any expectations placed on him, other than the high standards he’s set for himself, and he’s loved regardless of whether or not he manages to achieve them.

“You look happy.”

Opening his eyes, still smiling, Eggsy glances up at his Mum and gives a slight one-shouldered shrug, careful not to disturb his sleeping pooch. “’Cause I *am* happy, Mum.”

Michelle perches on the arm of the sofa near his head, fingers gently playing with his fringe. “This new job o’yours…is that the only reason you’ve been smilin’ all day?” she hedges, her tone curious. “If I didn’t know any better, I’d say you was in love.”

Eggsy feels his cheeks begin to heat up, and averts his gaze quickly. “What, me? Nah, don’t be daft. I’m single as they come.”

“Mm,” his Mum hums doubtfully, with a gentle pat to his cheek. “Well, whenever you *do* meet that special someone, be sure to bring ‘em ‘round for tea. You’re gonna make a brilliant Dom someday.”

Oh god, it’s like his teenage years all over again. He remembers all too vividly the first time he’d invited Jamal over after footy practice when he was fifteen (Jam was as Subby as Subs could be, and proud of it); his Mum had sat him down that evening and given him a far more detailed version of *The Talk* than the one he’d received as a pre-teen, convinced that Eggsy was planning on dating the boy. Like, no. Ew. Don’t get him wrong, Jamal’s a gorgeous bloke, and a proper sweetheart, but he’s always been far too much like a brother for Eggsy to even contemplate the notion of dating him.

Besides, by the time he was fifteen puberty had progressed far enough for him to know, deep down, that he wasn’t ever going to develop into Dom. Keeping that a secret from Dean had been his number one priority, but he’d never been willing to drag some poor Sub into his fucked-up bed of lies for the sake of authenticating that farce.

“Ta, Mum,” he mumbles, stroking JB to distract him from the awkward, guilt-tinged memories.

She pats his cheek again and stands up. “I’ll go make us a cuppa, babe. You got time before you need to leave for work?”

Eggsy glances towards the antique clock on the mantelpiece (a house-warming gift from Roxy – he doesn’t even want to think about how much it must’ve cost her), and nods, sitting up despite JB’s snuffling protests and gently setting the pug down on the floor.

“Need to grab a shower first,” he says. “Gimme ten minutes, yeah?”

Even though he’d taken a bath at Harry’s after his morning run earlier that day, there are certain parts of his anatomy that he wants to make sure are cleaned quite thoroughly. Not that he’s expecting there to be any sort of penetrative action when he gets home, but the potential for intimacy is certainly there. Especially since Merlin’s gonna be home tonight, too.

Him, Harry *and* Merlin, the three of them together. Possibly *sexually*.

So yeah, he definitely needs a shower. Never hurts to be prepared.
Harry’s waiting for him in the lounge when he gets home, his feet propped up on a footstool, elbow braced on the arm of the chair and chin resting in his hand as he sits reading in his usual armchair. But his gaze still flickers up from the antique, leather-bound French novel when Eggsy pauses in the doorway, the boy leaning his hip against the frame as he grins at his Dom.

“Ey up, guv.”

Harry’s smile curls gently at the corner of his mouth. “Good evening,” he returns, pulling off his reading glasses and setting them to one side. “Pleasant day, I take it?”

“Not bad,” Eggsy confirms, crossing the room to perch on the arm of the Dom’s chair. “Thanks for lendin’ me all them books. Daisy fuckin’ loves *Peter Rabbit*.”

“It was no trouble.” Harry sets his own book aside and strokes a hand up the Sub’s arm and over the curve of his shoulder, hooking it carefully around the back of Eggsy’s neck to tug him down into a soft, welcoming kiss.

Eggsy hums against the man’s lips, sliding carefully off the side of the armchair so that he’s sitting in the Dom’s lap instead. Harry’s hand squeezes the back of his neck gently, and the boy heaves a relieved sigh as the day’s tension begins seeping from his muscles, feeling himself shaking off the shroud of faux-dominance he’s been wearing like a shield from the moment he stepped out of the door that morning.

“There now,” Harry murmurs, stroking a hand down the boy’s spine as he ghosts the words against Eggsy’s lips. “Is that better?”

“Mmm,” the Sub agrees, feeling warm and cosy and loose-limbed as he settles himself comfortably against Harry’s chest, fingers trailing idly over the buttons on the Dom’s cardigan. “Oi, where’s Merlin? Thought he said he’d be home by eight.”

The Dom gusts out a quiet sigh. “He’s upstairs, poppet. Working.”

“Workin’?” Eggsy echoes, nose scrunching up. “Didn’t he do enough of that last night?”

“One would be inclined to think so,” Harry agrees mildly.

The Sub glances towards the doorway, at the wooden-banistered staircase he can see beyond. “How long do you think he’s gonna be?”
“Just a wee half hour or so,” the older man tells him, in an impressively accurate imitation of Merlin’s Scottish brogue. When the Sub huffs a quiet laugh, he pats the boy’s hip gently and adds, his tone light, “Or so he told me, two hours ago.”

Eggy’s smile fades, his lips turning down in an exaggerated pout as he glances towards the door again. Not that he’s peeved at Merlin for being so dedicated to his job or anything (honestly, the bloke works harder than anyone Egssy’s ever met), but it’s frustrating to have both is Doms at home and still not have them, so to speak.

“If the wind blows, it’ll freeze that way,” Harry warns, amused, and kisses the faint frown-line between the boy’s eyebrows. “Why don’t you go upstairs and say hello to him, my dear?”

Eggsy cocks his head to one side a little. “Innee busy, though?

Harry smiles, smoothing his fingers gently through Eggsy’s hair. “Merlin has a rather bad habit of losing himself in his latest project. There have been occasions in the past where he might’ve chosen to forgo both food and sleep entirely, had I not elected to pester him at regular intervals.”

“Then…he won’t mind bein’ interrupted?”

“Not at all.” The Dom’s smile widens a fraction, something wonderfully promising suddenly glinting in his eyes as his hand slides down Eggsy’s spine to settle on the curve of his buttocks. “As a matter of fact, I rather think he’d appreciate a distraction. Don’t you?”

Eggsy goes from warm-and-cosy to desperately-horny in the flutter of a heartbeat, heat stirring in his loins as he remembers the conversation he and Harry had shared last night, curled up beside each other in the Dom’s huge king-size bed, both of them sleepy and sated post-orgasm.

“I bet Merlin’s a right beast in bed,” Eggsy had commented, head tucked comfortably beneath Harry’s chin, a faint grin curling at his lips. “A gentlemen on the streets an’ a freak between the sheets, innit?”

The Dom had chuckled as he brushed a kiss against the boy’s hairline. “Mm, something like that. Rest assured you certainly won’t find him lacking.”

And oh, that had definitely been a promise.

It’s the thought of what that promise might entail that has him hardening in his jeans, and clearly the unbridled want must betray itself in his expression, because Harry nips at his bottom lip and winks, the playful bastard, giving his left arse cheek a firm squeeze. The Sub rocks forward with a spasmodic jerk of his hips, and finds his resulting gasp swallowed by the Dom’s hungry, heated kiss, lips parting to grant the demanding tongue free reign of his mouth.

Fuck. For a civilised bloke Harry sure knows how to kiss dirty.

“There. Much better,” the Dom remarks, pulling away to study Eggsy closely for a moment. The Sub assumes he must look pretty fucking debauched, what with his hair sticking up all over the place from Harry’s fingers and his cheeks flushed and his pupils dilated and his lips all kiss-swollen. “Off you go, darling.”

Oooh, he’s such a fucking tease. Eggsy both loves him and hates him for it, but isn’t in a fit state to manage much more than a nod and a low, shaky “yes, Sir” before slipping from the Dom’s lap and heading out into the hallway. JB scampers behind him, keen to follow, but Eggsy stays him with a quiet smile and a quick hand-gesture. The pug snorts in protest, dropping back to sit in the doorway for a moment as he watches Eggsy ascend the stairs, before retreating back into the lounge, likely to...
seek out cuddles from his second-favourite human instead.

The door to Merlin’s office is wide open, but Eggsy still lingers at the threshold out of a sense of propriety, and raps softly on the doorframe with his knuckles. The Dom’s seated at his giant oaken desk, tapping away at his keyboard, gaze fixed on wall-mounted computer screens and brow creased in concentration. But he glances up immediately at Eggsy’s quiet knock, the frown melting into something warmer and more welcoming.

“Home already, lad?”

“It’s almost nine,” Eggsy points out, crossing over to lean against the side of the Dom’s chair, letting Merlin wrap an arm about his waist.

“It never is.” Merlin peers down at his watch and mutters a quiet curse, arm tightening around the boy in a brief sideways hug. “Sorry, hen, I lost track of time. Why don’t you go and join Harry downstairs for a wee while? I won’t be far behind you.”

Deciding to pull out the big guns, Eggsy pouts.

Luckily, it’s as affective with the Scot as it had been with Harry, and he finds himself tugged down to sit in the Dom’s lap, Merlin huffing a quiet, fond laugh as he cups the boy’s cheek and strokes his thumb over the downturned bottom lip.

“Or you could stay here with me,” he concedes, tone amused, and his smile curls wider into something that sets butterflies a-fluttering in Eggsy’s stomach. “Which I expect is what you and Harry were hoping for, isn’t it?”

The Sub tries to look innocent, but the hot flush of arousal flooding his cheeks doesn’t help his case. “Don’t know what you’re talkin’ ‘bout, guv.”

“No?” Merlin asks, his breath a warm puff of air against Eggsy’s parted lips. “Are you sure Harry didn’t send you up here in a deliberate attempt to distract me from my work?” A kiss brushes, feather-light, against the corner of his mouth. “Because that would be very,” another kiss, “very naughty. Don’t you think?”

Fuck. Eggsy can scarcely remember how to form a verbal response, he’s that turned on.

“Yes,” he breathes, hands pressing up against the softness of the man’s jumper, heartbeat stuttering at the solid muscle he can feel beneath the layers of fabric. “Sir, I…fuck.”

“All in good time,” Merlin promises, and promptly steals his lips in kiss.

Welp. There goes his brain.

Thing is, Merlin’s kisses aren’t anything like Harry’s. Instead of the heady rush of fiery passion and dizzying fierceness he’s experienced with the other Dom, Merlin’s lips are gentle and coaxing, but with an underlying simmering sort of heat that softly but resolutely demands Eggsy’s total and complete surrender. It’s both far too much all at once and nowhere near enough, and he’s putty in the man’s hands in the space of about ten seconds.

“Mm, Harry was right,” Merlin comments, pulling back after a torturously long period of time to look at him, heat smouldering in his eyes. “You’re beautifully responsive, lad.” A hand slides down to settle on his hip, then pushes up under his polo shirt, warm fingers skimming lightly over his ribs. “If I may?”
Eggsy nods, and obligingly lifts his arms so that Merlin can divest him of his shirt, feeling his cheeks heat a tad as the garment drops to the floor. And it’s daft, ‘cause it ain’t even like he’s stark-bollocks naked or anything, and Merlin’s seen him without a shirt on loads of times before during check-ups and physical training and shit. But he blushes regardless. It just feels different, somehow, knowing that the Dom’s gaze is sweeping over his torso for a very non-professional reason – the man isn’t assessing his physical condition or getting ready to patch up a cut, he’s staring at Eggsy because he wants to. And that hungry sort of glint in his eye’s making the boy feel hot all over.

“Gorgeous,” the Dom murmurs, hands sliding up from hips to shoulders, fingers trailing over every bump and groove as though memorising the pattern of muscle definition by heart. Eggsy sucks in a sharp breath as his touch ghosts over a pebbled nipple, and he sees Merlin’s smile twitch a little wider a split second before the Dom takes it gently between thumb and forefinger and pinches.

“Aw fuck,” Eggsy whimpers, muscles going taught with the sheer intensity of the renewed wave of arousal that hits him.

Merlin hums approvingly, a low rumbling sound that sends a pleasant shiver down the boy’s spine, and promptly pinches the other nipple for good measure. Eggsy clutches onto the Dom’s shoulders and wills himself not to come on the spot because Jesus Christ, he had no idea those were even erogenous zones that worked for him. Maybe they weren’t up until now. Fuck, Merlin could touch his elbow and it’d probably still be enough to make him throb inside the confines of his jeans. Which, come to think of it, are growing unbearably tight.

“Exquisite, isn’t he?” Harry comments from the doorway, and Eggsy feels a bone-deep pulse of need reverberate right to his core at the sound of the other Dom’s voice.

“Harry,” he moans, panting, head tilted back as Merlin kisses a hot, tingling path down his throat. The Dom’s smile is two parts tenderness, ten parts lust, and the sight of it provides another sucker-punch of arousal to Eggsy’s gut. Coupled with the fact that Merlin decides to close his lips around the boy’s left nipple at that exact moment in time, it’s perhaps understandable that Eggsy’s next verbalisation is a sharp, breathless cry. He clutches tighter onto Merlin’s shoulders, spine arching and mouth falling open, only to shiver pleasantly as gentle fingers sink into his hair, carding through the strands, fingernails trailing teasingly over his scalp.

“Perhaps our boy would like us to reconvene in a more suitable location?” Harry suggests, tugging lightly on Eggsy’s hair and lowering his lips to the Sub’s ear, brushing a kiss against the sensitive skin there. “The bedroom, for example?”

“Oh, fuck yeah,” Eggsy agrees, his voice hoarse.

Merlin stops sucking a bruise into the Sub’s collarbone long enough to arch an eyebrow at him, hands settling over the curve of his arse to urge him forward in a slow, teasing grind. “I think someone’s forgotten how to ask for things politely, Harry.”

The older Dom hums, and even though Eggsy can’t see him he can bloody well hear the teasing smile. “So it seems. Do we need to have another lesson on manners, poppet?”

Eggsy shakes his head as best he can with Harry’s fingers still tangled in his hair, blood pulsing loudly in his ears, breath coming out in stuttering gasps. “No, Sir, I’m good, I’ll be so good for you, I promise. Please.”

“There’s a good lad,” Merlin murmurs approvingly, kissing along his jawline, stilling Eggsy’s desperate squirming with a firm but gentle hand on his hip. “That was very prettily done.”
Well, that’s him fucked. *Prettily*. That ain’t an adjective anyone’s ever associated him with before, but it’s struck a chord deep inside of him somewhere, because he feels so fucking thrilled about it that he’s hard pressed not to *squirm*. Maybe it’s just ‘cause it’s Merlin, and anything the man says in that low, rumbling tone with that gradually thickening Scottish accent is gonna go straight to his cock. Fucking hell.

“Quite,” Harry agrees, the backs of his fingers stroking from temple to chin as Eggsy tilts his head back a little further to look at him, the world around him growing fuzzy and unfocused. “I rather think he’s earned himself a reward for that, don’t you?”

Which is how Eggsy finds himself flat on his back five minutes later, stripped down to his underwear and writhing on the bed as Merlin sucks pinkish-red ovals into the skin of his abdomen. Harry’s stretched out alongside him, propped up on one arm, leisurely kissing the whimpering gasps of pleasure from his lips.

Both men are still wearing *far* too many clothes for Eggsy’s liking, but he hasn’t yet managed to catch his breath long enough to voice his opinion on the subject. He’s working on it. Just as soon as he remembers how to function like a regular human being while he’s having sexy-sexy times with two gorgeous Doms.

Merlin tugs the waistband of his boxers down an inch or two to drag his lips over Eggsy’s hipbone and the Sub jerks, cock pulsing, hands fisting in the bedsheets beneath him as he wills himself to stay still a little longer. He wants to be good for his Doms, *so* fucking good, but it’s almost impossible not to squirm under their duel ministrations.

Harry pulls back a bit to look at him, hand cupping his cheek, thumb stroking over his kiss-swollen lips. “Everything alright, treasure?”

Eggsy nods, lips parting briefly to close around the digit, and he feels a thrill of excitement course through him at the unrestrained look of *want* that his action provokes, something dark and promising glinting in the Dom’s eyes as he lets Eggsy suck on the pad of his thumb.

“Good enough to eat, isn’t he, lad?” Merlin asks, moving back up the bed to prop himself up on Eggsy’s other side, hand resting on the boy’s lower abdomen, teasingly close to the thick bulge that’s straining against the material of his boxers.

“Mmm,” Eggsy agrees, and lets the thumb slide a little deeper, gaze flitting over to lock with Merlin’s. The Scotsman’s smile turns positively *predatory*, sending a thrill of lust and fear through him, but Merlin only lowers his mouth to the boy’s temple, brushing a kiss against the skin there. “Would you like to see a little more?”

The Sub nods, then releases the thumb from his mouth in case a verbal response is required, keen not to let the offer slide. “Oh God, yeah. Please, Sir.”

“Mm, I thought you might,” Merlin comments, amused, and tips the boy’s chin up to press a quick, chaste kiss to his parted lips. “Lie still for us, there’s a good lad.”

And the next moment is like a scene pulled straight out of one of his hottest raunchy fantasies – Harry and Merlin are leaning over him, *kissing*, deep and heated and passionate. Wandering hands and breathy moans, shirts being untucked and buttons undone and belts unfastened, and *fuck*, it’s spectacular. Eggsy watches it all with his mouth agape, heart pounding high in his throat, blood on fire as the pleasure grows, hot and tight and desperate, in his loins. He wants to touch himself so badly, wants to touch *them*. 
Merlin’s torso is all semi-tan skin and defined muscle, and fuck, no wonder he’s so bloody strong, he’s been hiding a fucking six-pack under all them cosy jumpers. Harry’s seriously packing too, although his muscle definition is subtler than his partner’s, and while his hips are as narrow as the cut of his suit had suggested, there’s a gentle swell to his abdomen that looks delightfully soft. Eggsy wants to kiss it. But to be fair, he wants to kiss the both of them, everywhere. And he’s gonna. Just as soon as he remembers how to breathe.

Not much chance of that, though, especially when Merlin and Harry both stretch out on either side of him a moment later and take turns kissing the air from his lungs, barely giving him time to recover between their back-and-forth, until his head’s spinning and his skin’s prickling all over and he’s bucking up into the fingers ghosting over his torso.

“Please,” he manages, with a choked-off whimper as Harry sucks a mark into the curve of his shoulder.

“Please?” Merlin echoes, his voice low and teasing as he finally, finally slides his hand down far enough to cup Eggsy’s throbbing erection. “Please what, sweetheart?”

“Fuck me,” the Sub blurs, surprised that he still has a voice at all given how close he is to shaking out of his own skin. “Oh my god, fuck me, please…”

Harry trails a line of kisses back up the boy’s arched throat to steal one from his lips. “Well,” he concedes pleasantly. “Since you asked us so nicely.”

And then Merlin’s disappearing from his side, but he has little time to mourn the loss of the Dom’s warmth because Harry’s kissing him again, hard and filthy and demanding, finger and thumb pinching at his hardened, sensitive nipples and fuck, he can barely manage to suck in enough air through his nose to keep himself from blacking out. He vaguely realises he’s no longer wearing any underwear – although at what point they were removed is uncertain, the details are becoming a little hazy – and there are hands hooking carefully under his knees, bending his legs up and apart and then, holy fuck holy fuck, the soft ‘shnick’ of a cap being opened.

Harry pulls back just far enough to watch him closely, a hand cupping his jaw, as two of Merlin’s fingers rub back and forth over his entrance, cool and slick with lube. Eggsy sucks in a shaky breath, legs twitching at the sensation, but otherwise remains as still as he can for the Dom (which takes a lot of fucking effort, he might add, because Jesus Christ he’s about to get fucked), and is rewarded a moment later by the tip of a single digit gently working its way inside.

“Oh fuck,” Eggsy moans, closing his eyes and clutching onto the duvet with a death-grip, trying not to push against the finger in an effort to force it a little deeper.

“That’s it, lad,” Merlin coaxes, as the lubed digit slides smoothly inside. “God, you open up so beautifully.”

Eggsy’s mouth falls open again as the finger slowly begins to pump in and out, his moan swallowed by Harry’s lips as they swoop in to steal another kiss, this one just as heated as the last. And for several torturously pleasurable minutes he suffers under both their ministrations, moans turning quickly to wanton whimpers as one finger becomes two, then three, rubbing against that innermost part of him and setting off fireworks behind his eyelids.

Just as he’s beginning to think that he might die from the intensity of it all before he actually gets fucked by a real cock, the fingers retreat, leaving him horribly empty. He gives a whine of protest, lifting his head to shoot a look of silent desperation towards the Dom, but to his relief Merlin’s only rolling on a condom and oh, holy fuck, his cock is glorious.
The Dom leans over him, bracing a hand on the mattress so that he can dip down and bump his nose gently against Eggsy’s, the action so tender that it tugs at something in the boy’s chest, pulling him briefly out of the lustful haziness he’s been floating in for the past several minutes.

“I’d like to fuck you, lad.” he asks, lips hovering a hairsbreadth above Eggsy’s slack mouth. “Is that alright?”

“Hell yes, Sir,” the Sub manages, his voice shaky and uneven.

Merlin smiles and kisses him again, soft and lingering, before leaning back to reposition himself between Eggsy’s legs, warm hands stroking down his thighs to hook gently underneath his knees, pushing them back so that his feet come up off the mattress.

Harry’s moving him as well, lifting him by his shoulders so that he can slide in behind Eggsy, reclining against the cushions at the headboard and resettling the Sub so that his back’s pressed flush against the Dom’s chest, Harry’s legs bent either side of him, ensconcing him snugly in the man’s hold.

“I thought perhaps we might watch him together,” Harry murmurs against the shell of his ear, lips tickling the sensitive skin there. “He’s particularly attractive from this angle, don’t you think?”

And fuck, but he is. A long, tanned, naked vision of sculpted muscle framed by the ‘V’ of Eggsy’s bent legs. That sight alone is enough to stock Eggsy’s wank-bank for the rest of eternity, and the man hasn’t even started fucking him yet.

Except oh, there’s the thick head of Merlin’s cock nudging at his entrance, and ohhh, it’s pushing past the first ring of muscle, and holy shit, it’s been so long since he had a cock in his arse – over a year, what with his Kingsman training keeping him away from the clubs and all – he’s forgotten how incredible it feels to be fucked by a Dom. Just the sensation of being penetrated, of having firm hands grasping him by the hips to help steady him as he’s breached…fuck, he’s in heaven.

“Good boy,” Harry murmurs in his ear, one hand stroking down his torso and over his stomach, fingers curling around the hardened length of him. They stroke him languidly, a loose up-and-down slide made slick with pre-ejaculate, and Eggsy’s head rolls back against the Dom’s shoulder as a low, guttural moan escapes his throat. “That’s it, poppet. Look how well you’re taking it.”

Merlin feels so fucking big inside of him, and that combined with Harry’s teasing stimulation leaves him trembling, sucking in quick, shallow gulps of air as he clutches onto the arm that’s wrapped snugly around his torso. And then the Dom pushes his knees a little higher and starts really thrusting, and that’s it, Eggsy’s done for. He can feel his orgasm approaching, a fierce heat coiling tight deep inside of him, toes curling and muscles clenching as it grows hotter and brighter with ever deep, powerful thrust, punching breathless cries from his throat, cries that are growing increasingly higher in pitch.

Harry’s loose grip on his cock suddenly tightens, his strokes less teasing and more deliberate, and Eggsy feels the gentle scrape of teeth against his ear lobe as he tilts his head back further, lips parted in a silent gasp.

“Are you going to come for us?” Harry asks, and fuck but his voice doesn’t half sound wrecked. It’s got that same dark, gravelly quality to it that Eggsy had heard last night, after he’d spent himself down the Sub’s throat. “You’re close, aren’t you, darling? I can feel it. Don’t hold back, now – Merlin wants to see you coming on his cock, like a good boy ought to.”

It’s a combination of the Dom’s words and Merlin’s quickening thrusts that finally pushes him over
that torturous precipice into weightless bliss, and oh fuck, oh fuck, the waves of pleasure just keep coming, spiralling higher and higher as the hand on his cock milks him dry and that sweet spot deep inside him gets thoroughly pounded.

He’s vaguely aware of being rather vocal about the occasion, although how much of it is actually intelligible is another matter, because his brain’s been turned to mush. He feels Merlin piston his hips in a few more shallow, sporadic thrusts, before the Dom’s stilling, cock pulsing deep inside of him. The teeny-tiny part of him that’s still clinging to awareness experiences a momentary twinge of regret that Merlin had elected to wear a condom before fucking Eggsy’s brains out, because he doesn’t get to feel the Dom’s come leaking out of him when he carefully withdraws. But the thought is gone in a flash because Merlin’s leaning over him all of a sudden, a warm hand cupping his chin and kissing him tenderly, and ohh, that feels super nice.

“You were so good for me, sweetheart,” the Dom murmurs, lips brushing chaste kisses over his cheeks, his brow, his nose, until the warmth in Eggsy’s chest swells so bright and hot that it stings at his eyes.

Merlin’s smile falters a little, his thumb catching the first of the treacherous tears as it streaks a burning path down the boy’s cheek. “Are you alright?”

Eggsy nods and tries for a smile, but apparently his body has other ideas, because the tears just keep coming and he’s crying, what the fuck, no, stop it. He ain’t upset, he’s on fucking cloud nine, what the hell is wrong with his eyes?

Thankfully Merlin seems to understand his dilemma, because the glimmer of concern in his gaze softens to something warmer and fonder, the Dom moving to settle down beside Harry against the pillows and pulling Eggsy into his arms.

“Shhh,” he soothes, fingers combing through the boy’s hair as Harry curls around Eggsy from behind, sandwiching him between the two Doms. “We’ve got you, poppet.”

“Happy tears, I take it?” Harry murmurs, and kisses the back of Eggsy’s neck when the boy nods, a hand caressing the Sub’s hip gently. “Good boy.”

Eggsy shivers pleasantly at the praise, head tucked safely underneath Merlin’s chin, hands pressed palm-downwards against the Dom’s chest as he lets the tears run their course, head fuzzy and limbs weightless and skin tingling all over. He ain’t in Subspace, not fully at least, but he’s skimming pretty near the surface and it’s ace.

He floats for a few minutes (hours, days, centuries – hard to say for sure) before true awareness begins to return to him, enough that he can move his limbs experimentally to make sure they’re all still working after his temporary paralysis. Merlin’s hold on him tightens briefly, then releases again, and a gently finger curls under his chin to tip his head up.

“Back with us, sweetheart?” the Dom asks, his expression warm and full of tender affection.

Eggsy manages to return it this time, although it feels kinda dopey. “Mmhmm.”

Merlin’s lips curl at the corner. “Mmh?” he echoes, and leans down to kiss the drunk-as-fuck smile from the boy’s flushed face.

Eggsy giggles. Fucking hell, is that what really good buttsex does to a bloke?

“Well, perhaps not all the way back,” Harry comments, amused, and brushes another kiss behind his ear.
The Sub tilts his head to the side to give him better access, humming in approval as Harry’s lips trails softly down his throat to tease at the mark they’d left there earlier that evening.

“Don’t wanna come back up,” he mumbles, snuggling closer into Merlin’s embrace and tugging Harry’s arm tighter around him. “M’cosy. S’nice.” He pats Harry’s hand and says, with a drunk sort of smile, “Gimme twenty minutes an’ then you can fuck me too, yeah?”

Harry breathes a quiet laugh against his throat, thumb brushing back and forth over the boy’s abdomen. “That isn’t necessary, poppet. You’re tired, why don’t you close your eyes?”

“M’fine,” he insists, and wriggles his hips back until his arse is pressed flush up against Harry’s hardness. “Mmm, an’ so are you. Hello, Sir.”

They don’t make it to the twenty minute mark, to absolutely nobody’s surprise. Eggsy decides to count it as a personal victory, ‘cause clearly he’s too fucking irresistible (and also because he gets even more buttsex).

The only one who’s the least bit put-out about the turn of events is JB, who isn’t best pleased about being shut out of the master bedroom for over an hour, and chooses to enact his revenge by curling himself possessively around Eggsy’s lower legs beneath the duvet and slobbering all over any unwanted feet that happen to stray within range.

It’s the fucking best night’s sleep Eggsy’s had in years.

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Chapter End Notes

So clearly this was a very plot-heavy chapters. Lots of plot. Soooo much plot. *coughs*

I hope you enjoyed it! Let me know what you thought. :) We’ll get to meet a few more Kingsman agents in the next chapter, and catch a glimpse of how the Merhartwin traid plays out in the workplace. More coming soon!

Also, TUMBLR HAS AN INSTANT MESSAGING SERVICE, WHAAAT?! COME TALK TO ME, MY LOVELIES! :D
Eggsy hits the mat with enough force to knock the breath from his lungs.

“Ow,” he grieves after a beat, making a half-arsed attempt to push himself up onto his elbows, before deciding that it’s really not worth the effort and flopping back down again with a groan. “Nope. You win.”

Roxy relaxes her battle-ready stance, eyebrows arched as she stares down at him. “You can’t be giving up already, we’ve only been at it twenty minutes.” She nudges him carefully in the ribs with her foot. “Come on, where’s your fighting spirit?”

“Takin’ a nap,” Eggsy replies, one arm flung across his eyes to shield them from the glare of the gym’s overhead lights. A sudden weight settles on his chest and he grumbles an unintelligible protest, shoving at Roxy half-heartedly to unseat her even as his lips curl up at the corners. “Ugh. Fuck off.”

“Make me,” the Dom challenges, a grin in her voice, and flicks the tip of his nose teasingly.

Eggsy’s expression scrunches up in a mock-scowl as he bats her hand away. “Noooo. M’tired. You fuckin’ wrecked me.”

“Well, you certainly look wrecked, no arguments there,” she agrees. “But I doubt I had much to do with it. Burning the midnight oil again, were we?”

The Sub feels his cheeks heat a little at the obvious implication, but grins back at her nonetheless. There’s no point in denying it – Roxy knows all too well that he’s been a tad more active this past week – and it’s certainly nothing to be ashamed of. He’s getting it. Booyah.

Last night had been no exception, with the durability of Eggsy’s hamstrings put to the test as he rode Harry’s cock in a low crouch, lips stretched wide around Merlin’s impressive girth to help quieten his wanton vocalisations. The two Doms had driven Eggsy half out of his mind as they’d slowly, carefully and with torturous patience, coaxed no less than three orgasms out of him before Harry had even allowed himself to spend, and by the time Merlin had finally gotten around to fucking Eggsy’s thoroughly-loosened hole, there’d been legitimate tears of desperation in the Sub’s eyes. Hadn’t stopped him from shamelessly begging for more, mind, especially with Merlin pressing all the right buttons.

“You’re wonderfully flexible, lad,” the Scotsman had remarked, balls-deep in Eggsy’s arse and ruthlessly rutting up against the boy’s prostate, one of Eggy’s knees hooked over his left shoulder to keep the Sub turned on his side. “Ah-ah, no – let’s keep those hands up and out of the way, hm? There now, that’s better. Good boy.” A gentle, prompting pinch to his right arse-cheek. “What do you say to Harry, sweetheart?”

It had taken Eggsy at least four attempts to successfully stutter out a garbled “thank you, Sir” to his other Dom, who’d graciously stopped teasing Eggsy’s hard, leaking cock long enough to pin the boy’s hands above his head where they had remained safely ‘up and out of the way’ for the rest of the evening.

Both Doms had discovered Eggsy’s until-then unexplored interest in physical restraint during their
second night together, and had since used it near-constantly in the bedroom, much to the Sub’s delight. Harry in particular seems to have an affinity for it; sometimes, when they’re alone together, with Eggsy seated in the older man’s lap and the two of them sharing slow, tender kisses, the Dom will grasp his wrists and ease them carefully behind his back, holding them there securely with one hand as Eggsy gasps and whimpers against his lips, painfully hard and desperately turned on.

And it ain’t like he’s got a violence kink or nothing, fuck no, just the opposite. The thing is, he’s dating fucking super-spies – experienced field agents who have the power and necessary skillset to kill him a hundred times over in the blink of an eye if they want to. But with Eggsy they’re always unfailingly tender, never pressing hard enough to bruise, never pushing him beyond what he’s willing (and eager) to take. Being restrained by them is like…like being kept safe, somehow. Like that firm, unyielding pressure pinning his wrists to the bed, or that powerful grip around his knees and/or ankles, is the only thing keeping him tethered to reality when the hazy buzz of approaching Subspace has begun to lap enticingly against the shores of his conscious mind.

Still, despite his undeniable restraint kink, the best part always comes afterwards, once the heady rush of a shared orgasm has passed, leaving him warm and sated and aching in all the right places. He lives for the way they’ll press up close on either side of him, sandwiching his trembling body between them, taking turns to kiss the reddened marks that circle his wrists before they have time to fade properly, handling him gently like he’s something precious, something worth protecting. It makes him feel so fucking good.

“Oh god,” Roxy groans. “You’ve got that look on your face again.”

“Oh, you was the one who brought it up,” Eggsy points out, still grinning like a lovesick idiot, and shoves at her again.

The Dom follows through with the momentum this time, canting sideways and tucking into a neat roll before coming up in a crouch. As she straightens, brushing down her workout gear, there’s a soft pip of a message alert from her Kingsman-issued wristwatch. Eggsy props himself up on his elbows to glance towards her, curious.

“You bein’ summoned?”

Roxy hums distractedly, fiddling with the gadget. “It’s not entirely unexpected. Percy’s still on that intel-gathering mission in Bulgaria – Guinevere wanted him to take me along as backup in case the exchange went south, but you know how stubborn he is about these things.” She sighs quietly, and shoots him a brief, apologetic smile that’s just a little pinched around the edges. “Sorry. I should go.”

Climbing to his feet, Eggsy crosses over to pull her into a quick, tight hug. “Be safe, yeah? We’ll grab a beer when you get back, an’ you can rant about your dumb uncle all you want.”

“Sounds perfect,” she agrees, and brushes a kiss against his cheek as she pulls away. “I’ll see you in a couple of days, alright? Don’t do anything stupid while I’m gone.”

He winks at her cheerfully. “No promises.”

She delivers an affectionate punch his shoulder (which seriously kills, ‘cause Roxy’s fucking ripped), but her smile seems more genuine this time around, so hey, mission accomplished.

Eggsy waits until the sliding doors have hissed closed behind her before reaching up to rub the aching joint.

He’s still got a few more hours to kill until he needs to pick Daisy up from nursery, and with Merlin
stuck in meetings for at least another forty-five minutes he decides to put the time to good use. He can work up a good sweat on the treadmill and still have enough time to grab a quick shower before he meets his Dom for lunch.

There isn’t anyone else about for him to talk to, which is kinda to be expected given the time of day – those who do have access to the gym and sparring rooms (namely Kingsman knights, security personnel and combat officers) are probably busy attending to their own duties. Eggsy doesn’t mind the solitude, though. He gets out his Bluetooth headphones and selects one of Harry’s 80’s-classics playlists as he turns up the speed on his treadmill to a brisk jog, and lets his mind wander.

He’s still humming the chorus of ‘Come On Eileen’ under his breath as he sits down on a low bench in the changing room half an hour later, towel slung around his neck to catch any stray droplets from his wet hair as he bends down to pull on his socks. Standing, he does a shimmy-shimmy sort of dance over to his open locker, caught up in the catchy beat playing over in his head, and uses his roll-on deodorant as a makeshift microphone as he ‘duh-duh-duh-dum’ along to the lyrics, spinning around on one foot with a dramatic twist of his hips…

And almost has a heart attack at the sudden realisation that he’s no longer alone.

“Jesus!” he yelps, only just reining in the instinct to lob his deodorant at the intruder’s head. He clutches a hand to his chest and chokes out a self-deprecating laugh. “You scared the shit out of me, bruv.”

The poor bloke’s clearly trying to maintain an expression of polite, professional neutrality, but Eggsy can see the way the corners of his mouth are straining to twitch upwards. He appreciates the effort nonetheless – might not be the most embarrassing thing he’s ever been caught doing, but it certainly ranks somewhere near the top, and Eggsy would rather not dwell on it.

“I’m sorry, Sir, I didn’t mean to startle you,” the man begins. “I can come back later, if this is a bad time?”

“Nah, it’s fine, mate.” Eggsy shakes his head with a friendly sort of grin, gesturing around the spacious area with a broad sweep of his arm. “Plenty o’room for the both of us.”

He gives the man a quick up-and-down, taking in his black cargo slacks and dark, form-fitting polo shirt. Going by the sheer size of him, Eggsy wants to guess security guard (or at least something combat-related), but then he hasn’t actually met all the Kingsman agents in person yet, so he can’t say for sure that this isn’t one. Although the bloke can only be in his early-thirties at the very most; a little too young to be one of the knights, going by what Eggsy’s heard about the rest of his colleagues from Harry and Merlin. And more importantly, his presence isn’t raising any of Eggsy’s instinctive defences, which means he’s likely a Submissive to boot.

Huh. Tall-glass-of-water is growing more intriguing by the second.

“Don’t think we’ve met,” Eggsy comments cheerfully, crossing over in a few brisk strides to offer the stranger his hand, shifting his posture just so to come across as neutral and non-threatening as possible, mindful of his own partial nakedness. “I’m Eggsy.”

“Mark,” the older man replies, his smile warm and genuine (and fuck, if Eggsy weren’t already head over heels for Harry and Merlin, he’d be long gone on this one, dynamic be damned). “It’s a pleasure to meet you, Agent Galahad. I’ve heard a lot about you.”

Eggsy is careful not to let his surprise show. “Yeah?”
Mark nods, still gripping Eggsy’s hand. “I’m fortunate enough to oversee the training and debriefing of our special ops task force. You recently took one of my teams into central Germany to rescue a fellow agent, correct?”

“Can’t really confirm or deny anythin’ without riskin’ my balls,” Eggsy apologises, smiling wryly. “You know how it is.”

The man hums, lips twitching as he drops his hand to stand at military rest. “I won’t beat around the bush then, Sir. I sought you out today in the hope that you might grant me a small favour.”

“Sure,” Eggsy agrees easily, shoving his hands into his trouser pockets and leaning his shoulder against the nearby locker in a casual slouch. “What can I do for you?”

“I’d like to volunteer my services.”

Eggsy’s impressed with how skilfully he hides his own reaction, maintaining an expression of mild curiosity despite his internal flailing and the panicked decidedly-not-Dominant part of his brain that’s frantically slamming a hand down on the ‘abort mission’ button.

“Come again?” he manages.

“Feel free to say no, if you have another extraction coordinator in mind,” Mark continues sincerely. “And I realise it’s rather difficult to fully consider the proposal without first reviewing my qualifications, so I don’t expect an answer straight away. But if it helps, I have almost a decade of experience in the field and over two hundred successful extractions under my belt. I’d be honoured to work alongside you.”

Eggsy nods, suitably impressed (and seriously fucking relieved that Mark’s ‘services’ are of a purely professional nature). “I’ll need to talk to Merlin about switching things around,” he explains. “But I can’t see it being a problem. The more the merrier, yeah?”

Mark grins at him. “Quite.”

When Eggsy offers his hand again, the older man shifts their grip so that his wrist settles snugly in the curve of Eggsy’s fingers, his head tilting to the side just an increment more than necessary. If Eggsy had thought the man was a Dominant before, he certainly doesn’t now; that little show of voluntary submission and respect isn’t something he’s come across much (growing up in the rough, Subs just weren’t instilled with those sort of formal mannerisms), and he hasn’t got a fucking clue how he’s supposed to respond.

So he softens his expression into something a bit friendlier and squeezes the other Sub’s wrist to acknowledge the power shift, and hopes he hasn’t cocked it all up. Mark doesn’t seem alarmed by his response, however, and there’s something looser about his posture when he finally steps back, a quiet smile in place.

“I look forward to working with you,” the older Sub says, and winks. “Sir.”

Oh god. Eggsy needs a drink.
“It’s only midday,” Merlin reminds him, when he laments as much to the Dom a short while later.

Eggsy sighs, perching on the edge of the control desk and pinching the bridge of his nose. “It’s been one helluva weird mornin’, guv.”

He hears the quiet *beep* of the lab’s magnetic lock being engaged, ensuring their privacy, and the low whir of Merlin’s desk-chair being wheeled closer. Hands settle on his knees, running slowly up and down his thighs as Eggsy heaves another sigh and peeks out from behind his hand. The Dom’s regarding him silently, a thread of concern underlying the warmth in his expression.

“Would you like to tell me about it?” the Scotsman asks, reaching up to pinch the boy’s chin gently, keeping their eyes locked.

Eggsy thinks back to his conversation with Mark, to how he’d inadvertently flirted with the undeniably-attractive Sub without realising it, and utterly failed to communicate his lack of interest in any sort of relationship with the man. Maybe he’s looking too much into it. Maybe Mark really *had* sought him out on purely professional grounds after hearing feedback from Eggsy’s extraction team. Maybe he’s just jumping to conclusions here. But then the bloke had *winked* at him; Eggsy ain’t stupid, he knows what flirting looks like. And how the fuck is he supposed to explain all this to Merlin, anyway?

Ugh. Never mind, it’s too much bother. Give it a few days, Mark’s bound to forget all about him and this whole thing will blow over.

“Nah,” he says eventually, averting his gaze. “M’good, ta.”

Merlin hums doubtfully, but releases his chin. Then a moment later his hands settle on Eggsy’s hips and he *heaves*, plucking the boy unceremoniously from his perch on the desk and plopping him down to straddle the Dom’s lap, Eggsy’s hands shooting out to grab onto Merlin’s shoulders for balance as he startles at the suddenness of it all.

“Oi,” he protests, only to find his lips stoppered by a firm index finger.

“Now, let’s try that again,” Merlin suggests patiently, a warm hand settling at the small of Eggsy’s back to keep him anchored in close. “Would you like to tell me what’s going on with you, lad?”

Given their close proximity, it’s damn near impossible to avoid eye contact, and Eggsy finds himself squirming both inwardly and outwardly at the weight of expectation in the man’s unwavering gaze. He feels his defences beginning to crumble at an alarmingly fast rate; secrecy is no longer an option even worth consideration. His Dom has asked him a question, and now Eggsy needs to ‘fess up. Simple as.

“I might’ve accidentally flirted with a Sub down in the changin’ rooms,” he admits, deciding to lay it
all out there in one go. “But I didn’t mean to, I swear. I was only tryin’ to be friendly, you get me – ‘cause he seemed like a nice enough bloke – an’ then all of a sudden he’s offerin’ me his wrist an’ winkin’ at me.”

Merlin regards him silently for another moment, but that vein of concern has ebbed away now, leaving warmth and humour in its wake.

“You’re fretting because you’ve got yourself an admirer?” the Dom asks, audibly amused. He smooths his fingers through the boy’s hair, lips twitching. “Eggsy, love, you’re a handsome lad – you were bound to find yourself followed by a wee flock of unattached Subs at some point.”

Eggsy lets his head drop forwards onto the Dom’s shoulder, muffling his groan into the sweet-smelling cashmere jumper. Merlin’s quiet laugh rumbles through him, a hand stroking soothingly up the Sub’s spine to settle over the back of his neck.

“You’ll have to learn to live with it, I’m afraid,” Merlin sympathises. “On the whole, Kingsman employees are professional to the utmost degree. I don’t see it interfering with your work as an agent.”

“Unless they’re workin’ with me,” Eggsy mumbles.

“Hm?”

“The bloke who cornered me down in the changin’ rooms,” the Sub elaborates. “He was askin’ if I’d consider takin’ him on as my extraction coordinator. Says he’d heard good things about my performance in Dusseldorf an’ wanted to ‘volunteer his services’.”

Merlin’s hand pauses midway through its descent down Eggsy spine.

“Hold on a mo,” he says, easing the boy back a few inches so that they can see each other. “A field coordinator who knew about the extraction in Dusseldorf? Offering you his services?” At the Sub’s nod, he tilts his head a little to one side, eyes narrowing fractionally. “Did he give you his name?”

“Yeah, it’s Mark,” Eggsy replies. “Why?”

“Huh,” is all Merlin says in return, his tone caught somewhere between surprise and contemplation. Then he shakes his head, sniffs a quiet grin, and leans in to press a chaste kiss to the corner of Eggsy’s mouth. “Well, I suppose it’s not entirely unexpected, given the circumstances.”

“Am I missin’ somethin’ here?” the youth asks, a tad baffled, even as he chases the Dom’s lips with his own.

“Nothing of any great significance,” Merlin reassures, kissing him again. He clucks the boy gently beneath the chin, still smiling. “Mark’s a good man, Eggsy. And it’s a rare day indeed that he offers his services to another agent. Trust me, you’ll be glad to have him on your side. And don’t worry about the flirting – that’s just the lad’s default setting. Mark’s happily married and unfailingly loyal to his partner, he won’t give you any trouble.”

Eggsy still feels like there’s some sort of big secret he’s not being told here, but he trusts his Dom’s judgement; if Merlin thinks that the Sub will make a good addition to Eggsy’s extraction team, he isn’t about to argue. And the knowledge that Mark isn’t apparently the single-and-hoping-to-mingle type comes as a huge relief; Eggsy wouldn’t even know where to begin when it came to letting an admirer down gently, so he’s glad to know the flirting hadn’t been done with any genuine romantic intent.
Merlin curls his fingers into Eggy’s hair to angle the boy’s head back a little, pressing his lips against the hollow of his throat. “Crisis averted?”

Eggsy hums, arms looping around the man’s neck. “Yup.”

“Good.” The word is a warm puff of air against his Adam’s apple and the younger man grins, shifting in the Dom’s lap.

“You carry on kissin’ me like that, an’ we ain’t gonna have time for lunch,” he warns, but lifts his chin obligingly so that Merlin can mouth a tingling trail along his jawline.

“Mm,” the Dom agrees mildly, and nips at the boy’s earlobe. “Suppose I’ll have to settle for eating you instead.”

Eggsy shivers pleasantly, goosebumps breaking out over his skin. “Yes please.”

Merlin sniffs another quiet grin, cupping Eggsy’s face between his hands to kiss him properly; a deep, lingering kiss that leaves the Sub flushed and breathless and slack-mouthed by the end. The boy gives a low whine of protest when his Dom resolutely puts a few inches between them.

“Later,” Merlin promises, fond and amused. “If we start anything now, we’ll be at it all afternoon and I’ll never get any work done.”

“An’ that’s supposed to be a bad thing?”

“Bad for my productivity margin,” Merlin amends, and pats the boy’s thigh. “Up you get.”

“But I ain’t gonna be back ‘til late,” Eggsy wheedles, arms still looped around Merlin’s neck as he bumps his nose against the man’s jaw. “I’m headin’ out straight after tea; gonna meet Gwaine an’ Bors for drinks at that pub down the road.”

“Then I suppose it’ll have to wait until tomorrow,” the Dom remarks calmly, pressing a kiss between the boy’s eyebrows. “Come on now, away with you – it’s lunchtime.”

“What if we make it a quickie?”

Merlin sighs, still visibly amused, and lands a light tap to the side of Eggsy’s thigh. “The answer’s no, lad. Up you get.”

“Hn-nn,” the younger man declines, shaking his head, finding a quiet sort of thrill in his own daring.

A beat of silence lingers between them.

“Eggsy,” it’s still softly spoken, but there’s a definite note of warning there now, despite the hand that’s still stroking the back of his neck gently.

The boy tilts his head to the side, innocent as you please. “Sir?”

Merlin arches an eyebrow at him, unimpressed, but Eggsy doesn’t miss the tell-tale twitching of his lips. Or the hand that slides down his spine to settle over the curve of his buttocks.

“Are you going to get up from my lap voluntarily?” the Dom asks patiently. “Or am I going to have to put you over my knee first?”

Eggsy’s mouth snaps shut, cheeks heating at the threat (promise) of genuine disciplinary consequences. He ducks his head, heartbeat quickening to a brisk canter and thrumming loudly in his
ears.

It’s a topic he and his Doms have discussed in detail over the course of the past week. It ain’t exactly a kink, not really, but’s it’s definitely something he’s begun to crave a lot more in recent days, the same way he craves tactile affection; a warm embrace, or a hand in his hair while he’s kneeling at someone’s feet. And it’s a very particular need; it ain’t the pain of the spanking that he wants, so much as the experience of being disciplined itself – the cathartic nature of that heartfelt emotional release, safe and secure and appropriately restrained by his Dom(s).

Merlin and Harry had been willing to offer him that on a daily basis, if he so required it. But Eggsy doesn’t want routine discipline; he wants consequences. He wants to know exactly where the line is on everything, so that he can choose to either stand behind it like a good boy (and be praised for doing so), or saunter across it whenever he feels the impulse to check that those safety nets are still in place, as promised.

Just like now, and bless Merlin for being so fucking perceptive.

He hadn’t broken any actual relationship rules by accidentally flirting with Mark down in the gym, so it ain’t, like, legitimate punishment he’s looking for or nothing. But being forced to switch so quickly from a relaxed Sub mindset to his confident-and-flirtatious Dominant persona has left him feeling a tad off-kilter. He needs a firm, lasting reminder of exactly where he stands (or kneels, rather), and what better way than over Merlin’s knee? He wants this, needs it so intensely that even the thought of what’s about to transpire has set a hollow, hungry ache deep inside of him.

“Eggsy?” the Dom prompts, fingers stroking against the back of the boy’s neck, teasing at the short hairs there. After another beat of silence, the hand squeezes gently, as does the arm around his waist. “Right then. I think somebody needs a wee lesson in manners, don’t you?”

A shudder runs through him even as he nods, stomach clenching as butterflies begin to flutter in nervous anticipation, bottom lip caught between his teeth as he glances up to meet his Dom’s searching gaze.

Merlin reaches between them to unfasten the Sub’s fly, his eyes never shifting from Eggsy’s, and oh fuck, this bit’s new. The Sub’s been spanked by both Harry and Merlin on a number occasions, but never without a protective layer between hand and buttocks. The thought of being bared beforehand sends a thrill of fearful anticipation through him and he swallows, his throat dry, cheeks heating anew.

“That’s it, over we go,” Merlin coaxes, his voice a low murmur as he helps turn the Sub facedown over his lap, large hands adjusting his position just-so to settle him more comfortably. Eggsy grips onto the Dom’s leg for balance, pressing his cheek against the fabric of the man’s trousers as he feels one of Merlin’s hands push up under his shirt to stroke along his back, soothing the tension-wrought muscles. “Shhh. Settle down now, there’s a good lad. Let’s get these trousers out of the way, hm?”

Fingers curl in the waistband of his slacks, slowly and carefully tugging them over the curve of his buttocks and down his thighs. Eggsy shivers as the cool air of the room hits his warm skin, biting back a whimper at the feeling of being left so exposed, so vulnerable to attack. And yet he feels so inexplicably safe in the Dom’s lap, anchored in close by the firm hand on his hip, weight supported by Merlin’s strong, muscular thighs.

He’s been spanked in his boxers before, but somehow it seems totally different with his trousers bunched up round his knees. Plus they aren’t at home; here, in Merlin’s office, it feels like he’s about to be disciplined for a some sort of professional work-related infraction, and fuck, the whole thing seems a whole lot more real somehow. He can already feel his mind going fuzzy.
“Alright, wee brat,” Merlin murmurs, warmth and fondness in his tone even as pats the boy’s rear in warning. “Since you’ve forgotten how to behave properly, let’s see if I can’t help jog your memory.”

Eggsy hides his smile against the Dom’s leg, feeling a pulse of affection for the man despite his current position. He doesn’t know how Merlin manages to read him so effortlessly – how he somehow always knows what kind of domination the Sub needs. Eggsy wants a spanking, sure, and a firm guiding hand to keep him down where it’s cosy and safe…but he also wants it to be a gentle push. He wants it teasing and playful and light-hearted, because it ain’t like he’s really done anything bad, so there’s no lingering guilt to make him crave something harsher.

And Merlin seems to know all this before Eggsy’s even finished realising it himself, because the hand that connects with his boxer-clad rear has been cupped to reduce the sting of the impact. That being said, it still startles a soft gasp out of the boy, lips parted and eyes scrunched closed as he clutches onto Merlin’s leg, letting the sensation of that first blow sink in, muscles tensing in anticipation for the next one.

No matter how many times he ends up over Merlin’s knee, he always seems to forget how slowly the Dom spanks. Eggsy has to give credit where credit’s due, ‘cause it’s a bloody effective method. The seconds between strikes are impossible to predict – sometimes the blow falls half a beat later than expected, sometimes two beats earlier, so that each spank is a sudden shock of tingling, burning heat. It means Eggy’s never sure when he’ll find himself toppling over that crumbling edge into the abyss, where emotional control and everything else besides goes straight out the fucking window. (It might take him another few minutes before the tears come, or they might turn up out of the blue with the very next spank. Who knows? Not Eggsy.) Whereas with Harry, who spanks to a singular, unchanging rhythm without varying the strength of his blows, it’s far easier for the Sub to anticipate where his breaking point will be. He can’t say for sure that he prefers one method over the other, only that they’re distinctly different. Not a bad kinda different, though.

“You’re being so good for me, Eggsy,” the Dom murmurs after a few minutes of steady spanking, rubbing the paddled cheeks even as he tugs the boy closer into him, bracing a little more weight against the Sub’s back. “Do you think you’ve learnt your lesson?”

Eggsy stirs groggily, drawn from the cosy warmth of Subspace. “Mm…mm-hmm.”

“Mm-hmm?” Merlin echoes, that soft note of amusement there again. “Are you sure, sweetheart? We wouldn’t want those naughty wee urges to come back, now would we?”

The Sub shakes his head in agreement, eyes slipping closed again and lips parting in a shaky inhale as Merlin’s fingers tug at the waistband of his boxers, easing them down to mid-thigh. He clutches onto the Dom’s leg a little tighter, a fine tremor running through him as a warm, gentle hand strokes over the curve of his bared cheeks, caressing the flushed, sensitive skin.

“No, we wouldn’t want that,” Merlin echoes, his voice dropping by another half-octave until the words seem to rumble through Eggsy’s very bones. The Sub squirms as an electric zing of pleasure ripples through him, and finds himself tucked a little more firmly beneath Merlin’s restraining arm for all his fussing. “Shhh, easy now. It’s hard to stay still when your backside’s already such a pretty colour, isn’t it? But we’re not quite done yet. You’re behaving so well for me, lad.”

Eggsy preens at the praise, rubbing his cheek against the fabric of Merlin’s trousers and mumbling out a slurred but sincere, “Thank you, Sir.”

“You’re welcome.”

The hand stroking over his tingling arse is gone all of a sudden, but Eggsy’s too loose-limbed and
fuzzy-headed to tense up in time for the sudden, stinging thwack of a firm, flattened palm. The blow’s a good deal harder than any of its predecessors, and against Eggsy’s bare skin it absolutely burns. The Sub’s head snaps up, spine arching a little beneath the weight of Merlin’s restraining arm, mouth falling open in a silent ‘o’ of surprise.

It hurts so good.

Another blow lands on the opposite cheek, pushing a low, startled ‘uhn’ of noise from his lips, and his head spins as he tries to suck in a steadying breath, tingling heat engulfing his hindquarters. A third spank lands dead-centre before he can recover from the last one, the force of it jerking him forward an inch or so in Merlin’s lap. A hot flush blooms in his face, and all at once his nose is clogging up and moisture’s brimming in his eyes, and the breath explodes out of him in a harsh, stuttering half-sob when the next blow catches the sensitive undercurve of his bared cheeks.

“That’s the way,” Merlin praises softly, setting fire to his skin with another searing spank. “Look how well you’re taking it for me, poppet. Your bottom is a pretty sight indeed. No, no, no – you’re not going anywhere, wee lamb.” He tucks the Sub more securely against him, his words having prompted another fit of fidgety squirming. “It’s alright, lad. You can let go.”

Eggsy decides to do just that; the damn bursts, fat tears tumbling over his lashes and falling to the floor. Overwhelmed, he scrunches his eyes closed and just lets himself feel.

“Good boy,” his Dom murmurs, stoking the fire in Eggsy’s arse a little hotter with another sharp smack. “Well done, sweetheart.”

The Sub, having buried his face in Merlin’s trouser-leg again, sniffles and hiccups his way through perhaps another dozen or so firm, slow spanks, his focus narrowed down to the pulsing heat in his backside and the secure weight of Merlin’s restraining arm pressing down against the small of his back; to the way the rest of his body seems to float, numb and weightless, suspended mid-air with only the solidity of Merlin’s thighs reassuring him that he isn’t in free-fall.

Then suddenly that firm touch gentles, a warm palm smoothing over Eggsy’s heated skin as the boy’s muscles go lax all at once. He moans softly, exhausted beyond measure (certainly too tired to even think about moving), but surfing on cloud nine. His whole body’s on fire, and it feels amazing.

“Easy now, lad,” Merlin soothes, as he tugs the Sub’s boxers carefully back into place and manhandles the unresisting boy into an upright position in his lap, tucking Eggsy’s head down against his shoulder. “I’ve got you.”

Eggsy buries his nose in the collar of Merlin’s jumper, hands fisted in the soft material as he comes down from his endorphin high, body trembling and lungs stuttering on half-formed sobs, blood pulsing loudly in his ears.

“There we are,” his Dom murmurs as Eggsy’s breathing begins to settle, one hand cupped over the back of the boy’s neck, the other stroking soothingly up and down his spine. “There’s my good lad. Shhh. Deep breaths now.”

It takes a little while, but eventually Eggsy feels in control of his faculties enough to release his death-grip on Merlin’s jumper, lifting a hand to knuckle the moisture from his eyes. The Dom gently eases him back an inch or so, hand sliding around from the boy’s nape to carefully tilt his chin up.

The open warmth and affection in Merlin’s gaze gives Eggsy hot-and-wobbly feelings all over, and of course all that succeeds in doing is prompting another wave of happy-sad-tired tears and…bleugh. He’s a mess.
Merlin makes a soft, soothing noise in the back of his throat, thumbing away the tear-trails as he leans in to brush tender kisses over Eggsy’s sweaty brow and flushed cheeks.

“You’re okay,” the Dom echoes, his voice hushed, and kisses the boy’s parted lips tenderly. “Och, come here, sweetheart.”

His head’s tucked back down against Merlin’s shoulder, gentle fingers combing through his hair as Eggsy sniffs his way through the last of his tears, pulse slowing as the endorphin rush fades, full sensation finally beginning to return to his buzzing extremities.

It’s a good few minutes before he finds himself capable of speech, but when his tongue’s finally unstuck itself and the tightness in his throat has receded, he turns his head just enough to press a soft, grateful kiss to the side of Merlin’s throat.

“Thanks, guv,” he croaks, his voice thoroughly wrecked but sincere nonetheless.

Merlin hums, fingers carding through the boy’s hair. “I wasn’t too hard on you, was I, lad?”

Eggsy shakes his head, cheek rubbing against the softness of Merlin’s jumper. “No, Sir. M’good. M’awesome.”

His arse is still burning, but it’s a constant, vibrant sort of heat – not painful, per se, more of a persistent reminder of what’s just happened. Eggsy secretly hopes it’ll stay that way for a while. And he hopes his skin’s as rosy-red as that uncomfortable heat suggests; he wants to admire Merlin’s handywork for himself. As soon as he gets the chance to go for a loo break, he’s gonna check out his arse in the mirror. Maybe he’ll take a selfie and send it to Harry.

_Oooh_, now there’s an idea.

“We still need to go for lunch,” Merlin reminds him, after several more minutes of comfortable silence.

“Mm,” Eggsy acknowledges sleepily, lulled by the warmth and security of his Dom’s embrace.

The older man gives a soft, breathy laugh, pressing his lips against the boy’s temple in a lingering kiss. “I’ll put a call through to the kitchens,” he relents. “Have them send something up for the both of us.”

Eggsy hides his grin against the Dom’s shoulder. He knows he’s being spoilt. It’s fucking _ace._

“Oh, and lad?” Merlin adds after a pause.

“Mm?”

“You might want to pull your trousers up.”

Meh. In a minute.
The pub’s reasonably busy for a weekday night, but it’s a spacious joint so there’s still a smattering of empty tables when Eggsy arrives shortly after nine o’clock.

He recognises a handful of familiar faces from HQ – a few blokes he’s seen wandering in and out of Merlin’s lab from time to time, a couple of women from the IT department – and nods politely in greeting when one or two of them catch his eye as he passes by.

He’s relieved to see he’s not the only person who’s come dressed in casual civvies; Harry had told him that the pub was partially owned by the Kingsman service (whose employees made up a significant bulk of their regular customers), but Eggsy had figured a place off the main street wouldn’t have any kinda posh dress code, regardless of its snobby affiliations. So he’d changed into jeans and boots and a polo shirt and thrown his favourite cardigan over the top, and hoped for the best. Seems like he’d made the right call after all.

He finds Gwaine seated towards the back of the pub (at a table placed strategically close to the rear fire exit, Eggsy can’t help but note). The Dom’s wearing another fine tailored suit, pocket-square and waistcoat and everything, but somehow manages to make the outfit look casual despite being the most well-dressed person in the room. To be fair, Eggsy genuinely can’t picture the man wearing anything but a suit, the same way he can’t imagine Merlin with hair or Harry with curls.

“Ah, Eggsy,” the agent greets pleasantly, gesturing to one of the empty seats at the small table. “Glad you could join us. Alec’s just ordering the first round, he’ll be back in a moment.”

Before Eggsy has a chance to ponder over who the hell’s Alec and whether or not it’s someone he ought to know, a full pint of beer thunks down in front of him.

“That was quick,” Gwaine comments, accepting his own noticeably smaller glass (gin and tonic, if Eggsy had to guess) and arching an eyebrow at his friend. “Kept the flirting to a minimum this time, I take it?”

“I’m playing hard to get,” the other man comments, dropping down into the chair opposite Eggsy and taking a swig from his own pint. Then he seems to fully acknowledge the newcomer and flashes a handsome, thoroughly disarming grin across the small table, extending a hand. “Sorry, where are my manners? Alec Trevelyan.”

“Eggsy Unwin,” the Sub replies, returning the smile with a friendly one of his own.

Alec’s grip is firm and sure, the callouses on his palm even more pronounced than Harry’s, and Eggsy realises in a sudden flash of clarity that this is Bors he’s talking to. He thought he’d recognised the man’s face from somewhere; must’ve been from those briefing files Merlin had made him read back when he’d still been on medical suspension post V-Day.

“Haven’t seen you around much,” he says conversationally, taking a sip from his own beer.

“I’ve been out of the country on business for the past few weeks,” Alec explains. The ‘on a covert
mission’ remains unspoken but glaringly obvious. “I work part-time for another company, so I’m afraid you won’t see much of me at the shop. Seems I missed out on an exciting trip to Dusseldorf, or so I’ve been led to believe.”

Eggsy gives a one-shouldered shrug, wondering exactly how many Kingsman operatives are aware of the finer details of his mission last week. He’d been under the impression that most missions were classified for security purposes, but that makes two people in one day who’ve brought it up unawares.

“A few unsatisfied customers,” the Sub answers vaguely, taking a bolstering gulp of his pint. “Had to use a bit o’ gentle persuasion to smooth things over.”

“I hear you take a leaf out of Hart’s book when it comes to negotiation,” Bors comments, regarding him closely. “The ‘sew first, take measurements later’ kind of tailor.”

Eggsy’s not sure if he’s meant to take that as a compliment or an insult. Alec certainly doesn’t seem to be looking to get a rise out of him, his expression one of genuine interest rather than mockery. So the boy opts for another shrug and a bigger gulp of his beer.

“Wasn’t a lot of time for talkin’,” he admits, and tips his head towards Gwaine. “They’d already made a mess of his shirt.”

Gwaine hums in agreement, lips twitching, and glances down at the arm that’s resting on the tabletop. His suit sleeve conceals everything below the wrist, but Eggsy assumes there’ll probably still be a bandage taped over the injury beneath, and a dozen or more sutures still in situ. That gash had been nasty.

He spots the fourth, untouched glass sitting near Gwaine’s elbow and arches an eyebrow curiously.

“We expectin’ someone else?”

“My husband,” Gwaine replies. “I’m afraid he was detained at work a little longer than anticipated, but he should be arriving shortly. Ah! Speak of the devil.”

“Don’t call me that, dear, you’ll give me delusions of grandeur,” a familiar voice pipes up as a burly figure brushes past Eggsy’s shoulder, dropping into the chair closest to Gwaine. “Sorry I’m late. Busy day at the office.” He sketches a quick wave at Alec, pecks a kiss against his husband’s temple, and winks at Eggsy. “Evening, Boss.”

The Sub blinks at Mark, startled. Then a slow smile begins to pull at his lips as things finally fall into place. Submissive, happily married, unfailingly loyal; a man who rarely offers his services to other agents. Unless, it seems, said agent happens to have rescued his husband from certain death just over a week ago.

Eggsy salutes the other Sub with his drink. “Alright, bruv?”

“Never better,” the older man agrees, clinking their glasses together carefully before taking a swig. “Left a few personnel files on your desk, Sir, if you wouldn’t mind giving them a once-over next time you’re in the office.”

Eggsy cocks his head to one side, curious. “Tryin’ to expand the team already?”

“What was it you said?” Mark asks mildly. “The more the merrier?”

“Mm, s’pose I did at that,” Eggsy acknowledges, taking another swig of beer. He catches Alec
staring at the two of them, narrow-eyed, and tilts his head curiously again. “Somethin’ wrong, guv?”

“Nine and a half years,” the Dom says, shifting his gaze to Mark, his brow creased. “You’ve known me nine and a half years, and you’ve never once offered to be my coordinator. Unwin goes on one business trip and suddenly you’re calling him ‘Boss’? I’m tempted to take it personally.”

Mark’s lips twitch upwards, apparently unaffected by Bors’ exaggerated discontent. His gaze flickers sideways towards his husband for a fraction of a second before refocusing on Alec again. “Eggsy came highly recommended from very a reliable source.”

Bors arches an eyebrow at him. “And I don’t?”

“You’re a borderline pyromaniac who has a tendency to blow things up when he’s bored,” the Sub reminds him flatly. “I wouldn’t touch your missions with a ten-foot barge pole. No offence.”

“None taken,” Alec replies, and he seems to mean it, too. Eggsy’s past the point of being baffled by any of this. Harry had described Bors as being a ‘singular individual’, and he can see for himself just how aptly the description fits.

Mark’s knee nudges against his under the table.

“Drink up, Boss,” the older Sub prompts cheerfully, having downed his own beer in several impressively large gulps. “Next round’s on me.”

Eggsy tips his head back and drains his glass quickly, grinning when Mark delivers a friendly thump to his shoulder and heads back over to the bar to place their orders.

“Fair warning,” Gwaine murmurs out of the corner of his mouth, still nursing his mostly-full beverage. “Mark can drink a seasoned sailor under the table without breaking a sweat. Don’t try to match him.”

“Wasn’t plannin’ on it,” Eggsy reassures. “I’m workin’ tomorrow. An’ besides, I’m a fuckin’ lightweight. Three’s my limit.”

It’s a lie, of course – he can count on one hand the number of occasions when he’s drunk enough alcohol to be proper pissed, his tolerance has always been pretty high.

But he’s a Sub pretending to be a Dom in a pub full of Kingsman employees; he can’t afford any slip-ups. He needs to stay sober tonight.

……………………
“You didn’t have to wait up for me,” Eggsy whispers, crawling up from the foot of the bed to worm his way in between the two Doms.

“It was no trouble,” Harry replies, his voice hushed, holding the blankets back for him so that the boy can wriggle down underneath. He leans over to press a kiss to Eggsy’s temple. “Pleasant evening?”

Eggsy nods, yawning against the back of his hand as he leans into Harry’s side. His belly’s still sloshing uncomfortably from the half-litre bottle of water he’d downed on his way home from the pub, having been determined to flush the alcohol out of his system as soon as possible. Hangovers are never much fun, and there’s always a chance that he’ll be called into HQ for a mission later today. He wants to sit through his pre-mission briefing without a pounding headache, thank you very much. Even if it means he’s gonna need to get out of bed in three hours’ time to empty his bladder. Again.

“Sorry I’m back so late,” the Sub mumbles, eyelids already drooping as Harry switches off the bedside lamp and lays down beside him, arm sliding loosely over the boy’s midriff. “Alec wanted to play Poker. Couldn’t leave without fleecin’ them all at least once.”

He can feel Harry’s answering smile where the man’s lips are resting against his hairline. “That’s my boy.” The Dom’s hand settles on his hip and squeezes gently. “Thank you for the photograph, by the way.”

“Knew you’d like it,” Eggsy murmurs smugly.

It had taken him half a dozen failed attempts in order to achieve the perfect selfie, directed at an angle that would truly do justice to the impressive glow of his backside. The marks have faded now, unfortunately, but the skin there still feels a tad more sensitive than usual. Eggsy keeps wanting to touch it, to remember the pulsing heat and fierce sting that had been there twelve hours ago.

He yawns again, snuggling down a little further under the duvet, smiling in the darkness of the bedroom when he feels Merlin shift closer on his other side to toss an arm over his waist, just above Harry’s.

“Sorry, guv,” he whispers. “ Didn’t mean to wake you.”

Merlin grunts tiredly, a low rumble in his chest, and presses a kiss to Eggsy’s bared shoulder, scratchy stubble tickling the skin there. “S’fine, lad. Go t’sleep.”

The soft pap-pap-pap of tiny paws sounds loud in the silence of the room, but Eggsy’s still awake enough to brace himself for the moment when JB jumps up onto the foot of the bed and wriggles beneath the bedcovers, slobbering enthusiastically all over the Sub’s toes as he settles himself down.

Very much accustomed to this nightly tradition after more than a year as the dog’s master, Eggsy just sighs in fond exasperation, hugs his Doms’ arms a little closer about him, and closes his eyes.
I now have a NEW TUMBLR ACCOUNT, as I managed to lock myself out of the old one when I lost my laptop. *sigh*

If you could remind me of your blog names, that'd be great! I was following a whole heap of you, but my memory is terrible and I've only been able to find half of you this second time around. Also feel free to hit me up with a message or an ask, I'd love to chat to you! And if any of you have a request for a Christmas one-shot/drabble, now is the time to ask. :)  

For visual reference - this is Mark, this is Gwaine, and this is Alec (yes, the Bond-verse agent, I'm a sucker for crossover universes).

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed the chapter! Let me know your thoughts. :)
Thirty-nine hours.

That’s how long Eggsy’s been stuck out here in the middle of nowhere, hunkered down on his stomach beneath the bushes near the edge of the cliff’s overhang, sniper rifle in one hand and mud-splattered binoculars in the other.

It hadn’t been so bad at first – his combat gear has top notch thermal insulating properties and the surrounding woodland had sheltered him from the worst of the bitterly cold northern wind, and with Merlin chatting away in his ear it had almost been pleasant. But then, only a few hours into his watchful solitude, the skies had opened up in a torrential downpour of truly biblical proportions.

It hasn’t fucking stopped since then.

Eggsy’s never seen so much rain in his life – and this coming from a bloke who hadn’t set foot on foreign soil until he joined the Kingsman Service and is therefore intimately familiar with everyday British weather. Although to be fair, he ain’t usually stuck outside in the middle of it all – usually he’s watching it through a window with a nice cuppa and a packet of jammy dodgers.

The raindrops are big and heavy and cold, and even Kingsman’s good-quality waterproof combat gear doesn’t stand a chance against the veritable pool of ice-cold sludge that’s formed underneath him. Ground that had once been soft and accommodating (you could go so far as to call it comfortable, the way his weight had been cushioned by a deep layer of soil and soft foliage), has now turned damp and boggy, and even though he’s tried to keep movement to a minimum, he’s still managed to churn up the dirt into thick, dark mud. The stuff’s gotten everywhere; on his skin, on his clothes, under his clothes, in his hair, in his shoes. Ugh.

He’s cold, he’s wet, and he wants to go home.

“Agent Galahad, what’s your status?”

The sudden voice through his earpiece startles him, achy-numb fingers tightening around the butt of his rifle before he forces them to relax again, reaching up to tap his communicator.

“Nothin’ to report,” he replies dutifully, his voice hoarse from lack of use and rough weather combined. “No visible activity near the compound. An’ it’s still fuckin’ rainin’.”

Every inch of him’s bone-tired and achy, his throat included, and he’s already eaten his way through the bag of Rowntrees fruit pastilles that Merlin had seemingly snuck into his survival kit, so he’s got nothing except water to moisten his throat with. The dry ration-bars from his dwindling food supply certainly aren’t providing any relief.

And it doesn’t help that Merlin’s not in his ear anymore, either. Not that he can blame the Dom – there’s been some sort of major international incident that’s required the man’s undivided attention for the past eighteen hours or so. Kay and Elyan had apparently stumbled across a mad scientist trying to set off seismic wave generators along major fault-lines in an attempt to trigger earthquakes, or something barmy like that. Whatever the deal is, it’s definitely more urgent than Eggsy’s eye-spy
mission in the middle of a forest in Poland.

And besides, it’s not that he doesn’t like Mordred. Despite the man’s unfortunate title, he actually seems like a pretty decent bloke; calm and pleasant and easy to talk to, and a fairly competent handler on top of all that.

No, the only real problem Eggsy’s got with him is that he isn’t Dominant, Scottish and called Merlin. 

God, he misses his Doms.

“I imagine current weather conditions have delayed things a little,” Mordred comments cheerfully, and Eggsy can here the tap-tapping of the man’s keyboard in the background. “Lancelot’s confident that the intel we received on the scheduled shipment is sound, but local news stations are reporting multiple road closures due to landslides. It’s likely our smuggler friends have been forced to take an unexpected detour.”

“Great,” Eggsy mumbles, dragging a muddy hand down his damp face, eyes itching with fatigue. “An’ lookin’ at the sky, I don’t think this rain’s gonna be stoppin’ any time soon.”

“Young extraction team is on standby at the safehouse, Galahad,” Mordred reminds him calmly. “If there’s still no sign of the shipment by mid-afternoon, I think we’ll have to pull the plug on this one.”

Eggsy grimaces. The thought of abandoning his mission halfway through doesn’t sit well with him – he’s never returned home unsuccessful before – but the notion of staying out here another night is far more abhorrent. Not only that, it’s unsafe. He hasn’t slept in two days, and the cold and the rain have sunk so deep into his joints that his reflexes are bound to be abysmal. If someone were to come along and attack him unawares right now, he isn’t sure he’d come out on top.

“Roger that,” he relents, and glances down at his mud-smeared watch. It’s only just gone ten o’clock, which still leaves him to suffer through another five or six hours of cold, miserable solitude before he’ll be allowed to make his way to the extraction point.

He closes his eyes, teeth gritted against the urge to let them chatter, and exhales carefully through his nose. Truth be told, he’d rather not stay here for another minute.

This was supposed to be a short mission. Roxy had uncovered intel about a planned shipment of black market, ex-Valentine corporation goods to a remote storage facility in forest of Narewka, and due to the very narrow window of time before the trade-off, Eggsy had been the only agent readily available to be briefed and kitted out and put on a jet to Poland within the hour. His mission parameters had been a fairly simple; scope out the area, plant a bunch of audio bugs and micro-surveillance cameras around the facility so that HQ could gather intel about the shipment, and then find a safe vantage point to await further instructions. That first part had been easy, and the four-hour wait before the shipment was due had passed quickly enough, even with the dreadful weather conditions.

But after an additional thirty-five hours of waiting, with no indication that the bloody goods are actually going to be delivered at all, Eggsy’s willingness to see the mission through to the bitter end is waning fast.

“Merlin wanted me to remind you to eat something,” Mordred tells him, and the Sub startles again, having gotten lost in his own thoughts. “I’m afraid he’s still a bit swamped at the moment, but things do appear to be settling down. You won’t have to bear with me much longer.”

Eggsy assumes that ‘a bit swamped’ means that Merlin’s still painstakingly walking Kay and Elyan
through the process of manually disabling all the seismic generators before they can fully come online and trigger another quake. His own dreary mission suddenly doesn’t seem quite so bad – at least the fate of several vastly populated cities isn’t resting solely in his hands.

“Nah, you ain’t so bad,” he comments, lifting his binoculars again to do one last sweep of the facility down below. “An’ I appreciate the company, s’boring as fuck out here.”

Unsurprisingly, there’s still no signs of life from the compound, so he carefully pushes himself up onto his knees, grimacing when the displaced weight makes him sink down another inch or so in the mud, and reaches for his kit.

Initially, he’d attempted to pack for himself, optimistically assuming that twenty-four hours’ worth of food and water would suffice, given that the shipment had been expected at a scheduled time. Fortunately Mark had come along to give him a hand before he could set off for the hangar – the extraction coordinator had taken one look at Eggsy’s pack and shaken his head, amused and exasperated in equal measure, and promptly upended the contents back out onto the table to start from scratch. He’d insisted that Eggsy take at least three days’ worth of rations – enough that the supplies could be stretched to last him five days at a pinch. Initially the younger Sub had balked at what he felt was an unnecessary level of precaution, but he’s sure as hell grateful for the man’s advice now.

The tarp-sheet alone had spared him from the worst of the initial downpour, before the wind had picked up and swirled the rain at him sideways, underneath the protective cover he’d erected over his head. Now it’s nothing more than a decoration for all the good it’s doing; Eggsy’s wet through regardless, and no amount of tarp’s going to change that now.

“Don’t s’pose there’s any chance of gettin’ some background music or somethin’?” he asks, munching on a ration bar as he rummages around in his kit for the strip of caffeine pills Mark had insisted he take. He ain’t usually all that keen on using stimulants to keep himself awake (in his experience, they tend to hinder rather than help), but after two days without sleep, he’s flagging. It’s either he takes the pills or he falls asleep on the job and runs the risk of drowning himself in mud.

“Classic FM or Radio One, Sir?” Mordred asks, and Eggsy cracks a small grin.

“Radio One, ta.”

He methodically works his way through the rest of the nutrition bar, feeling it scrape against his dry and scratchy throat on the way down. The too-sweet, calorie-packed rectangles are fast losing their appeal; dear God, he misses Harry’s cooking something fierce. It’ll be Sunday tomorrow, though, so if Eggsy’s back home that’ll mean a proper roast dinner with gravy and Yorkshire puddings and everything. At least that’s something to look forward to.

And maybe if he smiles sweetly and says please, his Doms will let him stay in his pyjamas all day. Perhaps he’ll steal Harry’s dressing gown while he’s at it; sit curled up between the two of them on the sofa, warm and snug, and watch boring daytime telly all afternoon. He’ll probably fall asleep there, but they won’t mind. They never do.

Fuck. His misses them both so much it hurts.

The sudden, fierce wave of longing that hits him is like a punch to the gut, and he has to brace a hand against the trunk of a nearby tree for a moment to ground himself, taking a few slow, steadying breaths without being too obvious about it, conscious of the fact that Mordred’s still listening in his ear.
He pinches the outside of his thigh hard enough to bruise, and while the pain takes a little longer to register because everything’s been numbed a little by the cold, the sting of it’s sharp enough to pull him out of his stupor. He shakes his head, zipping up his kit again and moving back into position, teeth gritted.

Just six more hours. He can do this.

“You look like shit, Sir,” Mark says by way of greeting, as Eggsy clambers up into the front passenger seat of the Jeep and slams the door shut behind him.

He shoots the other Sub a tired grin, but even to him it feels forced. “Ta, bruv.” He wrinkles his nose in disgust as he shifts gingerly in the seat, feeling the sodden weight of water and mud clinging to his trousers. “Please tell me this hideout of ours has a decent shower.”

Mark’s smile is easy and warm, but there’s still a slight crease of concern between his brows. “We popped the boiler on before we left to fetch you. The water should be plenty hot by now.”

“Thank fuck.” Eggsy rolls his head to the side to glance over his shoulder at Keana who’s occupying the backseat, rifle cradled in her lap, gaze trained on their surroundings as they whiz down the dirt track out of the forest. “Everythin’ been alright with you guys?”

“Not so much as a peep of trouble,” the Dom reassures. “Been an uneventful couple of days all-round, by the sounds of it.”

“Mn,” Eggsy hums, rubbing at the ache in his temples and leaning back against the headrest. He decides not to mention anything about mad scientists and seismic generators – certain details are bound to be deemed classified, he’s not willing to put his foot in it by revealing too much.

“Why don’t you close your eyes for a bit?” Mark suggests, reaching across the gap between their seats to squeeze Eggsy’s knee, regardless of the mud caked to his trousers. “It’ll take us a couple of hours to reach the safehouse, roads being as they are.”

Sleep sounds like a brilliant idea.

It feels like he only closes his eyes for a few minutes, but next thing he knows someone is shaking him awake gently by the shoulder. He jerks away from the contact automatically, heart lurching, but the movement is slower and more sluggish that it ought to be. Everything feels heavier, even his eyelids, and his vision blurs for a second before refocusing on Mark’s worried face.
“We’re here,” the Sub tells him, hands raised palm-outwards in a calming gesture. He studies Eggsy closely for a moment. “Are you alright, Sir?”

“Yeah. Sorry.” Eggsy gives himself a mental shake, trying to rid himself of the lethargic fog that’s clinging to him. “It’s been a long day. I’ll be fine after a hot shower an’ a cuppa.”

He hopes so, anyway.

The house is nicer than he’d been expecting, positioned at the top of a gently sloping hill a safe distance from the nearby village, surrounded on all sides by green, grassy fields. If anyone were to try sneaking up on the place, you’d literally be able to see them coming a mile off. The building itself is a semi-modern two-story affair that looks average enough from the outside, but requires both a six-digit keycode and fingerprint recognition scans in order to gain entry. Inside it’s simply and sparsely furnished; the sofas and leather armchairs in the lounge off to one side look like they could even be from *Ikea*. He recognises both Paul and Connor from previous missions, seated on one of the sofas opposite a wall of screens that seem to be displaying CCTV footage of the property and its surroundings. Eggsy sketches a casual salute when they raise their hands in greeting.

“Bathroom’s upstairs, Boss,” Paul tells him with a brief, knowing smile. “Bunks are in the bedroom opposite. I took the liberty of laying out your suit for you; figured you might appreciate a fresh set of clothes.”

“You’re amazin’, mate,” Eggsy says, audibly grateful, already trudging his way upstairs. His legs are so fucking heavy, he must be carrying an extra twenty kilos in mud alone. “Might be in there a while. Give me a shout if you need me.”

It’s a relief to lock the bathroom door and shut out the rest of the world for a bit, safe in the knowledge that his team are competent enough to handle any potential complications without his input. He finally pulls out his earpiece, dropping it onto the shelf by the sink, and begins the arduous task of stripping out of his sodden, sludge-caked combat gear. His fingers are still cold and slightly uncoordinated, and he fumbles trying to slip his weapons out of their concealed holsters, very nearly slicing his palm open on a switchblade. He forces himself to slow down a bit after that, taking a few extra minutes to lay everything down on the shelf with care.

They’re all in need of a good clean, that’s for sure. But first things first.

Side-stepping the scattered clumps of mud that have flaked off during the de-robing process, he makes a beeline for the shower, cranking up the temperature as high as he can stand it before stepping under the powerful jets, letting the pressure of the water do the cleaning for him.

And holy hell, it’s divine.

Gradually, the throbbing ache in his joints eases to a background hum as the heat of the shower begins to thaw out his frozen limbs, skin tingling as full sensation finally returns to it. He moans softly, letting his head fall forwards, hands braced against the tiled wall for balance, and watches the dirt get sluiced off and washed away down the drain in dark, muddy swirls.

He’s tired, though. *Fuck*. He could practically fall asleep standing up. Two days without sleep is rough all by itself, but standing guard for the duration of that period had meant that he’d remained in a constant state of hypervigilance without rest or relief, and the end result is that he’s both physically and mentally shattered.

He needs a good eight hours of sleep, yeah, but more importantly he needs to go down.
Not much chance of that right now, though. As far as his team are concerned, he’s a young, confident Dom who’s just a bit tuckered out from a long stint on guard duty out in the rain. Dominants don’t need tactile reassurance the same way Subs do, at least not from an intrinsic psychological standpoint. Nobody downstairs is going to wrap an arm around his shoulders in a sideways hug and tell him he’s done a good job – it’d be considered patronising. Even though it’s exactly what Eggsy’s craving right now.

*Stop it. Just stop thinkin’ about it. Hurry up and get clean, you’ll be back on British soil in a few hours.*

It takes almost an entire bottle of shower gel (fancy stuff too, by the looks of it – but what the hell, ain’t like Kingsman’s tight on cash), and several generous dollops of shampoo before he finally begins to feel remotely clean again. He rinses off a couple more times just to be sure, but the heat of the water’s only worsening his fatigue and he’s worried he really will fall asleep if he tarries much longer, so eventually (reluctantly), he steps out of the shower and wraps himself up in a couple of towels. Kingsman’s clearly spared no expense, because the towels are big and fluffy and thick – he might spend a few more seconds than strictly necessary rubbing the soft material against his cheeks.

By the time he steps out into the comparatively cool air of the upstairs hallway, he’s mostly dry, but the sudden change in temperature is still an unpleasant shock to his shower-warmed skin. Teeth chattering, he slips into the bedroom across the hall, locating his suit on one of the nearby beds and making quick work of pulling on his shirt and trousers. He leaves the jacket where it is for now, and doesn’t button up the shirt all the way because, meh, there’s no need to dress up all proper and shit for his extraction team. They’ve worked a handful of missions together by now, they know he ain’t no posh twat. Besides, they’ve literally just seen him trudge upstairs all caked in mud, their expectations aren’t gonna be particularly high.

Secretly, what he really wants to do is steal a certain Dom’s burgundy dressing gown and curl up on the sofa in his pyjamas, but that’s not really an option at the moment. So shirt and trousers it is.

The bathroom floor’s seen better days, but Eggsy does his best to sweep the larger chunks of mud into the bin when he goes back to collect his weapons. His trousers are pretty much beyond redemption, but he shoves them into his empty suit carrier anyway (waste not want not, or whatever) and does his best to clean up after himself a bit. He knows the Service employs maintenance staff to keep the safehouses in a liveable condition – restocking the pantry and dusting cobwebs and shit – but he doesn’t want to leave the place in a mess, not if he can help it.

He makes another brief stop in the bedroom to grab his glasses (and double-check that his umbrella’s still safely stowed away with the rest of Mark’s gear), before heading back downstairs.

Eggsy’s significantly cleaner and less achy than before, but with the weight of fatigue now saturating into every pore, movement in any form has become far more taxing than it had been previously. Even breathing’s an effort – it almost feels like he’s still wearing the restrictive, bulletproof material of his combat jacket. He rolls his shoulders, trying to ease the tightness in his muscles, and runs his fingers through his still-damp hair to neaten it a little as he steps into the lounge.

“Any update on the jet situation?” he asks the room at large, and has to clear his throat when the words come out hoarse and uneven.

“I checked in with Oliver a few minutes ago,” Mark replies, glancing up from his laptop over by the fake-fireplace. “There’s another storm front heading our way. He doesn’t want to risk take-off unless it’s absolutely necessary.”

“Local weather reports are saying the winds should die down quickly, though,” Keana adds, shifting
in her cross-legged position on the floor in front of the CCTV feed, her eyes trained on the various screens. “If we aim to get to the airstrip before ten, we should be home by midnight, weather conditions permitting.”

Eggsy nods, sinking down into an armchair with a barely-concealed sigh. He drags a hand down his face, blinking hard to keep his eyelids from drooping. “Sounds good to me. Make it so, Number One.”

Discovering that both Gwaine and his husband are massive sci-fi nerds had been a pleasant and wholly unexpected surprise, and Eggsy’s made it his mission to sneak geeky catchphrases into their conversations ever since. Always works a treat, too.

Mark’s lips twitch in amusement, but he obligingly reaches up to tap his earpiece and relay the planned departure time to their pilot.

“Looking a bit tired there, Galahad,” a quiet voice remarks, and a mug suddenly appears in Eggsy’s line of sight. The youth wraps both hands around the warm ceramic, cradling it close, and sends the Dom a grateful smile.

“You need any painkillers, Sir?” Connor hedges casually, setting a steaming plate of linguine down on the coffee table within arms’ reach. “Caffeine tabs?”

Eggsy shoots him a quick glance before looking away again, unsure whether he should feel pleased or concerned by the man’s attentiveness. Is he letting his Dom-mask slip? It’s possible that Connor’s picking up on something that the Submissive part of Eggsy is projecting subconsciously, and coddling him on instinct…

But no, that’s daft. Connor’s a Dom, yeah, but he fusses over everybody. He’s one of those super-nurturing types who always seems to be in his nesting phase, and as the team’s field medic it’s only logical that he’s a little more upfront about his concern when it comes to the health and wellbeing of his colleagues.

“Nah, m’alright,” Eggsy reassures, as the initial spike of uneasiness begins fade. “Just tired. An’ cold.”

Connor nods, and claps a hand down on the younger man’s shoulder in a friendly manner. “I’ll crank up the central heating, see if we can’t thaw you out a bit before we head for the airstrip.”

Unfortunately, despite the Dom’s best efforts, turning up the heat doesn’t seem to make a whole lot of difference. The rest of the team all strip out of their jumpers and jackets over the course of the next hour or so, but Eggsy still finds himself hard-pressed not to shiver and curl in on himself. He’s freezing. Aside from his head, which throbs and pulses with a dull, achy sort of heat behind his eyes and in his cheeks.

Ugh. He wants to go home.

A teeny-tiny flashing icon in the right-hand corner of his glasses signals an incoming call from HQ, jarring him from his stupor. He pushes himself to his feet with an alarming amount of effort and mumbles a croaky ‘be right back’ to the team as he hurries (or at least a close approximation to that
Taking a moment to clear his throat, he taps the frames of his glasses twice and waits for the quiet *blip* to confirm the connection.

“Galahad here.”

“Eggsy,” murmurs a wonderfully familiar voice, and the Sub feels some of the tension ease from his posture immediately.

“Hi, Harry.” He drops down into a chair at the small dining table, resting his chin in his hands, lips curling up slightly. “S’good to hear your voice, guv.”

“You sound tired, poppet,” the Dom comments, and Eggsy sags a little more at the familiar endearment. “Have you managed to sleep at all?”

Eggsy grunts, pushing his fingers beneath the lenses of his glasses to scrub at his eyes. “Couple of hours. Dozed off on the way back from the extraction point.”

“Mordred informed me that your team aims to be back over British soil by midnight, is that correct?” He waits for the boy’s quiet hum of agreement before continuing. “I’m glad to hear it. Your performance has been exemplary, my dear, but it’s time for you to come home.”

Eggsy snorts derisively, folding his arms on the table and pillowing his cheek there. “Don’t know if you noticed, guv, but this wasn’t exactly a successful mission.”

“I disagree. The surveillance devices you planted at the compound will allow us to continue monitoring the area for further smuggling activity. If it’s being used regularly as a storage facility for black market weaponry, we’ll be able to keep an eye on who and what passes through those doors twenty-four hours a day.”

His spirits lifting a little, Eggsy huffs a quiet laugh against the crook of his elbow. “Still. Can’t believe I sat in a bog for two days for nothin’. Ended up with mud in places it ain’t never supposed to be. An’ just to warn you, the water bill for this joint might be a bit higher than normal after we’ve gone.”

“I won’t charge you this time,” Harry reassures, audibly amused.

“Ta.” Yawning against the back of his hand, Eggsy blinks hard to keep his eyelids from drooping. “How’s Merlin doin’? Said he was almost done with those fuckin’ earthquake machines, but then he got called away last minute an’ Mordred had to take over again.”

“There was an unexpected complication with one of the devices,” the Dom explains, his tone a little graver. “It reactivated during transit, almost forced Kay and Elyan off the road. Merlin managed to talk them through dissembling the secondary power source – the machines are harmless now.”

“An’ Merlin? He still runnin’ on empty, or has he finally agreed to close his eyes for a bit?”

“I managed to persuade him to take a short nap on the sofa in my office,” Harry reassures him. “Stubborn man point-blank refused to use one of the bedrooms upstairs, but I suppose the location itself is of little consequence, provided he sleeps.”

Eggsy heaves a sigh of relief. The last time he’d spoken to the Dom, shortly before leaving for the extraction point, Merlin had sounded even more drained than Eggsy felt, and the boy had wanted
nothing more than to curl up in his Dom’s lap and kiss those tired frown-lines from the man’s face. Which hadn’t made things any easier when Merlin was suddenly called away again and Mordred had been placed back on the line. Eggsy hadn’t *wanted* Mordred.

“I miss you,” he admits quietly, because apparently his defences have lowered themselves *that* far without him knowing it. He closes his eyes, heaving another sigh. “An’ I’m fuckin’ knackered.”

“I know you are,” is Harry’s murmured reply, full of warmth and sympathy. “But you’ll be home soon, darling. Try to close your eyes for a bit on the plane, if you can. We’ll be waiting for you in the hangar when you arrive.”

Eggsy’s never been quite so grateful that Harry’s been cleared for office duty. Now, post-mission, he gets to have *both* his Doms on-site and readily available for cuddles in the privacy of Harry’s spacious office before they head home together. Sometimes Merlin will disable the underground shuttle’s camera feed so that Eggsy can kneel on the carpeted floor in front of them, their hands touching his neck and shoulders or carding through his hair, allowing him to shake off the stress of the day before he’s even crossed the threshold of their shared home in the Mews. It’s *ace.*

“Can we keep the debrief short?” he requests, his tone wheedling.

“We might even be able to postpone it until tomorrow, if you’d like,” Harry concedes softly. “It’s been a difficult forty-eight hours for all of us. We’ll head home as soon as you touch down.”

Eggsy hums gratefully, lips curling into another tired smile. “Sounds brill.”

There’s a sudden, sharp knock on the kitchen door, and Eggsy straightens up instantly, shoulders squaring and spine going rigid.

“Yeah?”

The door opens a few inches, enough for Paul to poke his head into the room. “Sorry to interrupt, Sir, but we’d best be going if we want to make it to the airstrip on time. With all the road closures, traffic’s bound to be a nightmare.”

Eggsy nods, jumping up to his feet with a forced sort of energy that he really doesn’t feel and flashing the Sub a cheerful grin. “Good idea. You guys start packing up, I’ll be with you in a min.”

“Very good, Sir.”

The moment the door closes he sags again, bracing his hands against the back of the chair and heaving a tired sigh.

“Only a few more hours to go, Eggsy,” Harry reassures him gently. “You’re doing splendidly. Keep your chin up for me, there’s a good boy.”

And oh, *bless him,* that’s exactly the right thing to say. Eggsy takes a deep, deliberate breath and lifts his head a little higher, posture straightening out with it, and instantly feels ten times more awake than he was a moment ago.

He can follow orders. He’s ace at that.

Harry hums approvingly. “*Well done. I’m going to disconnect the audio, darling, but I’ll be keeping a close eye on your camera feed until you reach headquarters. If you need me, just say so.* Understood?”
Eggsy nods. “Yes, Sir.”

“Good boy.”

There’s a thumb stroking his cheek, gently urging him awake.

“Eggsy. We’re home, poppet.”

He inhales sharply, eyes snapping open, and jerks his head up from its comfortable resting place, alarmed and disorientated. A hand immediately smooths down his side, a pair of lips brushing against his temple.

“Easy, lad,” another voice murmurs, low and rumbling. “You’re alright.”

Squinting around at the internal décor of the Kingsman taxi, Eggsy blinks hard to bring his fuzzy gaze back into focus, snippets of the evening returning to him short, hazy bursts. It feels like he only just stepped off the plane from Poland a few moments ago, but he vaguely recalls being led away down the long, winding corridors of Kingsman HQ towards the underground shuttle, and a dull ache echoing up from his knees when they’d hit the floor suddenly and unexpectedly the moment he was safely in the capsule. He remembers hands on his cheeks, in his hair, and softly murmured words of praise and reassurance, urging him to close his eyes and rest. Then there’d been a short, fatigue-clumsy walk through the tailor shop, guided by a gentle hand at the small of his back, and he recalls being bundled into the private taxi, Harry’s hands moving him gently so that the Dom could secure the seatbelt around him, and then…

Well, nothing more until now. He must’ve fallen asleep again.

“Sorry,” he mumbles, the word hoarse and a little slurred, and rubs at his eyes, sliding across the leather seats to follow Harry out of the car. He’s grateful when Dom reaches back to help him out, because Jesus, his legs just don’t wanna work for him right now.

“I’ve got you,” Harry tells him quietly, looping a secure arm around his waist, steering him towards the front door. “We’re almost there.”

It’s a little frightening to find himself already down so far, especially when he’s still outside where people might see him. The Kingsman driver’s the same bloke who always shuttles Harry around, and Eggsy’s grown to trust the other Sub with his secret, but he ain’t so keen on showing all neighbours while he’s at it. A bigger part of him’s too tired to care, though. Besides, it’s gone midnight, he
doubts anyone’s going to be peeking through the curtains to watch them. And even if they do, he probably just looks a bit drunk.

JB scampers around them in dizzying circles, happy to be out and about with all three of his favourite humans at once. But he’s well-trained enough not to yap and bark, keeping his vocalised excitement limited to a few enthusiastic snorts. He scampers inside the moment Merlin opens the front door, likely in search of a squeaky-toy to show Eggsy, keen to make up for lost time after two days without a proper game of fetch. Eggsy’s gonna have to let him down tonight, though. He can barely lift his head own, let alone find the strength to toss a ball.

“Mmf,” he groans, when he glances up and notices the intimidating obstacle that lies between himself and the bedroom. “Stairs. Why’s there always stairs?”

“I could carry you,” Merlin suggests, sounding only half-teasing as he locks the front door behind them and resets the security system.

Eggsy’s nose wrinkles in a half-frown, half-smile. “Sod off.”

Ascending the stairs is a slow and excruciating process, but eventually he reaches the top, and after that it’s only a handful of strides before he’s stepping across the threshold of the master bedroom and faceplanting unceremoniously onto the bed.

“M’just gonna stay here for a bit,” he slurs, eyes already closed, limbs melting into the accommodating softness of the mattress.

Harry breaths a quiet, fond laugh, and the bed dips a little as the Dom sits down beside him, stroking a hand down the boy’s spine though his bespoke suit. “Not just yet, treasure.”

Strong arms slide beneath him. “Up you come. There’s a good lad.”

He ends up sitting half-slumped against Merlin’s chest, eyelids drooping, pouting a bit simply because he can, and because the smile it coaxes from Harry makes him feel warm and squirmy all over. The Scotsman keeps him propped up, unbuttoning Eggsy’s jacket and shirt from behind with deft fingers as Harry works on the Sub’s shoes and trousers. Within the blink of an eye, he’s down to his underwear, and Merlin’s helping him slide a soft cotton t-shirt over his head.

“Bedtime,” the Dom murmurs, pressing a kiss to the crown of his head before all but lifting him up the bed to settle him in the middle of the mattress.

Eggsy clings to consciousness long enough to ensure that his Doms have both settled down on either side of him, fingers curling into Harry’s pyjama top and hand resting over Merlin’s where it’s splayed possessively across his sternum. With a sleepy, satisfied sigh, he nuzzles his face closer against Harry’s chest, closes his eyes, and falls fast asleep within seconds.

……………………
Ow. Fucking ow.

He grimaces, fingers clenching tightly into the duvet as he tries to swallow again. His throat feels like he’s been gargling glass all night, and his head, fuck, his head’s pounding something fierce. He wants to go back to sleep. Nothing’s going to hurt if he’s asleep.

But new aches are cropping up with each passing second, pulling him further from the warmth and comfort of his recent slumber. The arm that’s resting on top of the duvet feels half-frozen, and he quickly pulls it back underneath, tucking his knees up and hugging the blankets around himself, goosebumps breaking out across his skin as he shivers, teeth chattering. It’s bloody freezing in here.

The cold is enough of a shock to the system to yank him fully from the land of nod, and he opens his eyes to a squint, peering blearily towards the digital clock on the bedside table. Two things immediately become apparent. One, that despite his lingering exhaustion, he’s actually been asleep for a good eight or so hours. And two, that Harry is no longer in bed beside him.

He shoots a hand out behind him to check, but the sheets on that side feel cold too, and the sudden pulse of disappointment that flares in his chest at finding himself so very alone in the huge king-sized bed is jarring in its intensity. His eyes, already hot and achy, sting in a rather familiarly threatening manner and he blinks hard, alarmed by his own emotional volatility.

Why the fuck is he crying over something so daft?

He grinds the heels of his palms against his eyes, trying to banish the brimming moisture through brutal force, and takes a deep, steadying breath. It catches sharply in his chest, a phlegmy gurgle that crackles up from his lungs, and his coughs reflexively, curling in on himself a little more at the sharp burn it ignites behind his sternum. Fucking ow.

There’s a glass of water on the bedside table, and Eggsy reaches for it gratefully, muscles tensed as he tries not to cough again. His fingers feel clumsy and uncoordinated, his arm muscles weak as he gulps down the cool liquid, draining the glass quickly. Even the act of drinking is enough to exhaust him, leaving him breathless and fatigued as he fumbles to set the glass back down again. It misses the edge of the table, wobbling precariously for half a heart-stopping second before falling, hitting the carpeted floor with a loud, echoing thud. Eggsy’s eyes start to sting again.

Fucking hell, it’s only a glass, what does it matter? Why’s he so bloody sensitive all of a sudden?

He’s so wrapped up in his own misery that he doesn’t hear JB’s scampering approach until the pug comes dashing through the bedroom door excitedly, tongue lolling, running over to the bed and lifting up on his hind legs to rest his paws on the edge of the mattress, head tilted a little to one side as he studies Eggsy.

The Sub gives a tired, shaky sort of smile. “Hey,” he croaks, in a voice that’s barely above a whisper. He scratches JB behind the ears. “Just you an’ me, huh?”

JB sneezes, butting his head up to lick Eggsy’s palm. He sneezes again, then backtracks a few paces to do a running jump, hopping up onto the bed and sticking his cold, wet nose right in his master’s face.
Eggsy knows he ought to nudge the pug further down the bed – he’s trained the dog to know better than to scamper all over the pillows – but JB’s eager affections are exactly what he needs right now. Heaving JB into his arms, he cradles the dog close to his chest and snuggles further down beneath the duvet, renewing his efforts to try and thaw out his frozen limbs.

“M’ alright, darlin’,” he reassures the pug, when JB butts his head against Eggsy’s chin and whines softly.

But his shivering only seems to be getting worse, not better. He tries to tuck his cold fingers under the hem of his t-shirt, where the skin of his abdomen is toasty-warm, but that only makes his muscles tense up uncomfortably, worsening the full-body ache that’s crept over him. He moans softly, grimacing when even that small vocalisation grates at his sore throat. There’s a ton of painkillers in the bathroom cabinet that he knows he’s welcome to help himself to, but the thought of getting out of bed, of leaving the relative warmth and comfort of his duvet-cocoon to go in search of them, is a pretty persuasive deterrent. He’ll get up in a few minutes. Just as soon as he’s stopped shaking.

JB whines again, squirming a bit in the loose circle of his arms, and Eggsy releases him obligingly, that aching pulse of disappointment and loneliness flaring in his chest again as the dog wriggles away and hops off the bed, scampering out of the bedroom. Eggsy sighs miserably, hugging his arms against his chest and curling into a tighter ball, closing his eyes again.

Maybe if he tries really, really hard, he’ll be able to drift back off to sleep. Perhaps he’ll feel better after he’s rested a while longer.

“Eggsy?”

Startling a little, eyes opening and head coming up with a rapidity that makes his vision swim for a moment, the Sub peers towards the doorway groggily, tension easing from his shoulders when he spots a familiar figure lingering in the doorway, JB fidgeting restlessly at his heels.

Merlin’s gaze settles on him, and apparently Eggsy must look as shitty as he feels, because the Dom’s crossing over to him in a few easy strides to perch on the edge of the mattress.

“Feeling rough, lad?” the Scotsman asks, his tone sympathetic, stroking the backs of his fingers down Eggsy’s cheek. Then his forehead creases a little, and he presses the flat of his hand to the boy’s brow. “You’re a wee bit hot.”

“Hot damn,” the Sub quips hoarsely, eyes closing again at Merlin’s touch, feeling that achy hollowness in his chest begin to dissipate. His Dom’s here now. Everything’s fine.

Merlin sighs – but it’s a fond, amused sound – and smooths back Eggsy’s fringe gently, leaning down to press a kiss to the fevered skin. “And a sore throat too, I’ll bet.”

“Mm,” Eggsy agrees, shuffling closer to the man beneath the covers.

“Anything else?”

“Head hurts,” the boy admits, voice a strangled croak. “Everythin’ hurts. Feel like shit.”

Merlin hums, a low noise of sympathy, and strokes a hand up Eggsy’s spine through the duvet. “I’ll get you some painkillers.”

“No,” Eggsy blurts, hand shooting out from beneath the covers to latch onto Merlin’s wrist when the Dom starts to pull away. The sudden movement makes his joints scream in protest and a throbbing heat pulse in his temples, but the pain’s easily outweighed by the thickening panic cloying at his

The Dom’s expression softens anew, and he leans down again to brush another kiss between Eggsy’s eyebrows, lips lingering there a few seconds. “I’ll only be gone a moment,” he promises, the words a warm puff against the boy’s heated skin. “Close your eyes for me and count to thirty. I’ll be back before you know it.”

The order calms him a little, gives him something to focus on, something to cling to when Merlin’s touch suddenly vanishes. He can be good for his Dom, and the task ain’t exactly difficult, so he allows his too-heavy eyelids to sink closed and starts counting.

There’s a couple of quiet thunks as something gets set down on the bedside table, and then the mattress is dipping again. Fingers card gently through his hair.

“Good boy,” his Dom murmurs. “Do you think you can sit up for me a minute?”

Can he? Eggsy ain’t so sure. Even lifting his head had been an effort, and he’s so fucking tired now that he’s closed his eyes again.

Clearly he tarries in silence a few seconds too long, because Merlin decides to do the shifting for him. The Dom moves to sit against the headboard with his legs stretched out along the mattress, and carefully hauls Eggsy upright beside him.

“Ta,” the Sub rasps, slumped against Merlin’s side, head seeking out the Dom’s shoulder instinctively. And ooh, it’s his favourite jumper today, the one with the soft leather patches. He rests his cheek there with a contented sigh.

“Not just yet,” the Dom murmurs apologetically, and nudges him upright again. “Take these for me first, there’s a good lad.”

Eggsy isn’t in any position to argue, holding out his hand so that Merlin can tumble a few pills into his palm. He knocks them back with a quick gulp of fresh, ice-cold water from the glass Merlin’s brought with him, and promptly snuggles back down against his Dom again.

The older man shifts a little so that he’s reclining against the pillows a little more, arms closing around the boy in a tight embrace even as he throws the duvet off, leaving the Sub uncovered.

Eggsy flinches as the frigid air prickles at his heated skin, whining a wordless protest and burying himself closer into the Dom’s side.

“I know, I’m sorry,” Merlin sympathises, rubbing his back. “But we need to get your fever down, sweetheart.”

The boy shivers, jaw aching with the restraint needed to keep his teeth from chattering. “S’too cold.”

“I know,” Merlin echoes, brushing a kiss against his hairline. “Close your eyes, lad; try to sleep for a wee while.”

Eggsy tries – he really does – but everything’s sore, his limbs all achy and shivery, and he just wants his bloody duvet back. His fingers curl tighter into Merlin’s jumper, eyes burning a little more insistently than before, and shit, he’s gonna cry. He’s gonna cry over a fucking duvet.

Face scrunching up, he tries to push the brimming turmoil of emotions back down again, but his resistance is just as weak and pathetic as the rest of him, and despite his best efforts, his next breath shudders and hitches audibly.
Merlin freezes beneath him for a moment, then tightens his arms around the Sub, hand sliding up to settle over the nape of the boy’s neck as he makes a low, soothing noise at the back of his throat, lips pressed against Eggsy’s hairline.

“Shh. You’re alright,” the Dom murmurs. “I’m sorry you woke up alone like that, sweetheart. If I’d known you were dropping…” Merlin’s embrace tightens around him anew, and a fiercer kiss is pressed lingeringly to his brow. “I’m here now, lad. I’ve got you.”

Dropping? He ain’t…oh. Oh.

His unusual emotional volatility and hair-trigger tears suddenly make a lot more sense. He hasn’t had a Drop in months, not since his meltdown post V-Day when Merlin had first learned of his true dynamic. He knows that sickness-induced Drops are common enough among Subs not to be much of a concern, but it ain’t something he’s ever experience first-hand. Not that he’s been ill very often – a handful of colds here and there, a couple of vomiting bugs that went round his unit during his time as a Marine cadet, nothing particularly significant.

Maybe it’s because he’s been embracing his Submissive identity so freely these past couple of months. He’s noticed that certain instincts and urges are far stronger now than they used to be – he feels the pull of temptation whenever he spots a kneeler pad near a chair, and there’s always a niggling little ache of longing in his chest whenever he’s away from his Doms too long. It’s grown so easy to slip under for Harry and Merlin, sometimes all it takes is a few words and a gentle touch. He’s always been a Sub biologically, but these days he really feels like one, both inside and out. That’s bound to have changed him physically, too.

It should probably worry him that he’s so far down over a little cold. Drops used to panic him in the past, set his heart pounding and his hands shaking, coil his muscles so tight that it’d take hours for the tension to settle.

But right now, he really ain’t bothered. Because he’s home, and he’s safe, and he’s not alone.

……………………..

There are fingers carding through his hair, but even without opening his eyes he can tell they aren’t Merlin’s. There isn’t the same weight to it, and every so often there’ll be the gentle, barely-there scratch of fingernails against the sensitive parts of his scalp, teasing at nerve endings, sending pleasant little sparks down the back of his neck.

“’arry,” he rasps, pleased, and pushes up into the contact, curling closer into the solid wall of warmth
pressed up alongside him.

“I’m here,” the Dom reassures, his voice hushed, and sweeps his fingernails lightly across the boy’s scalp again. “Would you like something to drink, poppet?”

Eggsy hums the affirmative, opening his eyelids a crack to peer at his surroundings, watching sleepily as Harry leans away from him briefly to retrieve a glass from the bedside table. He finds he has the strength to push himself upright this time, but still leans gratefully into the Dom’s side as he swallows down another handful of painkillers and sips at the cool water, blinking sleep from his eyes.

Harry takes the glass from him when he’s done, his expression full of tender concern. “How are you feeling?”

“Better, thanks,” Eggsy croaks, dragging a hand down his face. “What time is it?”

“Almost three o’clock.”

Eggsy balks. “In the afternoon?”

Harry’s lips twitch, and he leans in to press his lips against the Sub’s temple. “You’ve slept the day away, my boy. But your fever seems to have come down, so it’s clearly done you the world of good.” He gently pinches Eggsy’s chin, tilting it up so that their eyes can meet. “I’m sorry I wasn’t here this morning. Urgent matters called me away to the office, and I didn’t have the heart to wake you before I left.”

“S’okay,” Eggsy reassures, because he can’t stand the look of guilt on Harry’s face. “Wasn’t your fault I started Dropping. Been a while since I’ve felt this ill, guess it came as bit of a shock.”

Harry’s thumb brushes gently over his bottom lip. “Merlin was worried about you.”

“Merlin’s a fusspot.”

That finally coaxes a small, genuine smile out of the Dom, and Harry leans in to press a kiss to the tip of his nose. “Mm. Quite right.”

“Where’s he at, anyway?”

“In his study,” Harry replies, tucking the Sub closer against his side as Eggsy snuggles back down beneath the covers, grateful to have been allowed his duvet again. “They wanted him at headquarters to oversee a technicality, but he persuaded his department to manage the situation without his physical presence. So he’s monitoring their progress from his laptop; it shouldn’t take longer than an hour or so.”

Eggsy nods, clearing his throat carefully and trying not to trigger another cough. He needs to hack up a load of gunk, he can feel it catching in his chest whenever he breathes too deeply, but that ain’t something he’s keen on doing until the painkillers have kicked in properly because he knows it’s going to hurt.

His stomach growls suddenly, which is when he realises he hasn’t eaten anything since that plate of linguine at the safehouse in Poland yesterday evening. Harry sends him a fondly amused smile, arm tightening around his shoulders briefly.

“I made some soup while you were sleeping. Would you like some?”
Eggsy agrees readily, and pops to the bathroom to empty his bladder and freshen up a bit while Harry heads downstairs to heat up the soup. He eyes himself in the mirror, surprised at his own colouring – there’s a definite pallor around his lips and nose, which makes the two fever-pink ovals that sit high up in his cheekbones all the more noticeable. His hair’s sticking up all over the place, and there are deep circles beneath his eyes that echo the bone-deep fatigue that’s still clinging to him stubbornly. He ain’t winning any beauty competitions today, that’s for sure.

By the time he makes it back to bed, he’s super tired all over again, body aching from walking even that short distance. But he manages to muster up a grateful smile when Harry returns with a laden tray and sets it down across his lap. There’s a bowl of red-orange soup that smells *divine*, a soft bread roll, a sliced apple and a plate of biscuits. It all looks great.

“It’s sweet potato and butternut squash,” Harry tells him, when Eggsy hums approvingly around the first spoonful, eyes closed. “I recall you being rather fond of it during your training.”

“You’re the best,” Eggsy insists croakily, and eagerly tears off a piece of roll to dunk in his soup. Despite his initial hunger, he only makes it halfway through the bowl before the nausea and abdominal cramps begin to set in, and he’s forced to set down his spoon reluctantly. He eyes the apple and biscuits, both of which he’s only managed to nibble on, and shoots Harry a guiltily apologetic look.

“Sorry, guv. It tastes amazin’, I just ain’t all that hungry.”

“That’s quite alright,” the Dom reassures, lifting the napkin from the tray to dab at the corner of Eggsy’s mouth, his smile gentle. “There’s plenty more in the fridge if you feel up to it later. Why don’t you close your eyes for a short while?”

The Sub nods, eyelids already drooping, and waits for Harry to remove the tray before scooting back down the bed a bit, curling up underneath the covers. He reaches out to catch the Dom’s sleeve before he can move away.

“Can you stay?”

Harry sets the tray down on the bedside table and smooths a hand over Eggsy’s hair. “For a short while,” he promises. “I’m afraid I’ll need to dash back to the office eventually. But I won’t be gone long, and Merlin will be here to keep you company.”

“M’kay,” Eggsy agrees, sighing softly as Harry’s fingernails trail across his scalp again. “Love you.”

Eggsy senses Harry leaning over him, feels the gentle brush of lips against his hairline. “And I you, poppet.”

The smile on his face lingers there long after he’s fallen asleep.
“You need to eat something, sweetheart.”

Eggsy heaves a sulky sigh, wincing when it turns into a painful, rattling cough. He curls into a tighter ball, face squished against Merlin’s chest.

“Nn-nn.”

“I know you don’t feel like it,” the Dom sympathises, stroking the boy’s back in slow, soothing circles. “But you cannae get any better if you’re constantly running on empty, lad. Half a bowl of soup’s not enough to keep you going.”

The Sub pouts, because he’s sick and miserable and he *can*, and shakes his head again. “M’not hungry.”

“Just a few wee bites,” Merlin coaxes. “You don’t have to finish it if you don’t want to.”

Despite the boy’s whine of protest, he eases Eggsy away from his chest and heaves him into a more upright position, tugging the lad closer until he’s practically sitting in the Dom’s lap. It’s hard for Eggsy to keep pouting after that, because Merlin’s lap is one of his favourite places in the universe.

The Dom reaches towards the plate on the bedside table, and there’s the soft clack-scritch of a knife against ceramic as he cuts up the sandwich. When his hand returns, there’s a tiny bite-sized piece pinched between thumb and forefinger, which he raises to Eggsy’s lips.

“Open,” he prompts quietly.

The Sub obliges, because he ain’t stubborn enough to resist Merlin hand-feeding him, tummy ache or no tummy ache. The bite of sandwich slides past his lips and he closes his mouth again, chewing slowly, savouring the flavours of bread and cheese and ham and the sharp tang of chutney, and finds that maybe he *is* kinda hungry after all.

“Good boy,” Merlin praises, his voice a low murmur, and offers him another bite. He gives an approving hum when the Sub takes it without argument, turning his head to press a brief kiss to Eggsy’s hair. “That’s the way. Not even a peep of fuss; I knew my sweet lad was in there somewhere.”

Feeling all warm and squirmy, Eggsy ducks his head to hide his quiet smile, cheeks heating a little. Merlin breathes a soft, fond laugh and kisses him again, tucking him closer against his chest, before lifting another bite of sandwich.

“And again...that’s it. You’re doing well, boyo.”

And on it goes. Eggsy finds himself finishing the whole sandwich despite the curl of nausea in his stomach, simply because he wants to be a *good boy* for Merlin a little while longer. He holds still when the Dom lifts the glass of juice to his lips, sipping carefully, and lets Merlin wipe away the stray droplet from his chin with a gentle swipe of his thumb.
“There now, wee lamb,” the Dom murmurs, scooting down to recline again against the pillows, Eggsy settled comfortably against his chest. “You were so good for me, sweetheart. And it wasn’t so hard in the end, was it?”

Eggsy shakes his head, feeling fuzzy-limbed and pleasantly spaced out. “No, Sir.”

“No,” Merlin echoes, soft and amused, cupping a hand over the back of Eggsy’s head. “But I’m proud of you all the same.”

He grins sleepily into Merlin’s jumper. What a weird and wonderful world he lives in, where he gets praised for eating a fucking sandwich. He ain’t complaining, though. All that praise has left him with a happy sort of buzz thrumming beneath his skin, and he’s pain-free and contented in a way he hasn’t been since he left for Poland three days ago.

“Are you drifting, lad?” Merlin asks knowingly, thumb rubbing at that sensitive point just behind Eggy’s left ear as his fingers stay curled over the boy’s nape.

“Mmm….mmhmm.”

“Mmhmm,” the Dom echoes, and brushes a kiss against his temple. “You just take your time, sweetheart. I’ll still be here when you’re ready to come up.”

And the best part is, he ain’t even lying. Sometimes life is fucking awesome like that.

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Chapter End Notes

Merry Christmas to you all! :) Hope you enjoyed the chapter. Consider the fluffy
overdose an early gift from me to you. <3 xxxx
Target in sight.

It’s only a couple of meters away, but Eggsy still hesitates to take those final few steps, at war with his own indecision. He’s so close he can practically taste his success, but that doesn’t mean he’s about to let his guard down at the last hurdle. He ain’t stupid – he knows he’s being watched.

Venturing down here in the first place had been a dangerous move on his part, but the promise of what he might gain if he succeeded had far outweighed the risk of being caught. Eggsy doubts Merlin would agree – the Dom had cautioned him against proceeding with the mission, even going so far as to call it a ‘suicide run’, insisting it would only end in tears. But Eggsy knows what he’s doing, and he’s confident in his own skillset. He can do this. Look at him, he’s so fucking close.

Heart in his throat, adrenaline thrumming through his veins, he carefully closes the distance between himself and his target, hand outstretched towards it, fingertips brushing up against the cool metal rim and-

“No, Eggsy,” Harry chides, and delivers another gentle smack to the back of the boy’s hand – the third in as many minutes.

The Sub pulls the appendage back and cradles it to his chest as though burnt, his lips turning down in an exaggerated pout.

“Aw, c’mon, guv,” he wheedles. “Ain’t like I’m gonna nick all of it.”

Harry moves the bowl of buttercream icing further away from his light-fingered Sub, and resumes slicing up strawberries to top the sponge cake that’s cooling on the metal rack nearby.

“You can’t possibly be hungry,” the Dom reasons with calm patience, knife moving quickly as he expertly cuts and de-stems the fruit. “We’ve only just had lunch.”

“M’not hungry,” Eggsy agrees, scooting closer to press up against Harry from behind, tugging on the ties of his apron. “But it’s icin’, guv. You don’t have to be peckish to eat icin’.”

His Dom sighs, but it’s a fondly exasperated sound; Eggsy hides his smile against the man’s shoulder and decides to count it as a victory.

“Here,” Harry relents, and lifts a strawberry to shoulder-height. Eggsy leans around him to take it delicately between his teeth, resisting the urge to suck the sweet red juice off the man’s stained fingers while he’s at it. He’s certain it would lead to…other pleasantries, but truth be told he really wants Harry to finish the cake sooner rather than later. It’s gonna be amazing, and Eggsy will be the first to admit that his major sweet-tooth occasionally supersedes his sex drive.

“Ta,” he mumbles around the juicy mouthful

Harry heaves another quiet sigh. “Manners, Eggsy,”

The Sub presses a strawberry-sticky kiss to the back of the man’s neck by way of an apology, grinning at the soft noise of protest it elicits from his Dom.
“Young man, if I find juice stains on my shirt collar, you’ll be over my knee faster than you can say ‘dry cleaning’.”

Eggsy obligingly licks the sticky mark from the man’s skin, and jumps back with a laugh when Harry tries to swat him on the hip for his cheek.

“Away with you,” the Dom orders, firm but fond, and nudges him gently aside with his elbow. “Why don’t you take JB for another walk?”

“Already did,” Eggsy replies, shuffling further away but keeping his target in sight. “Merlin was workin’ an’ you was busy bakin’, so I went for a run. Took a shower an’ all – nice of you to notice.”

“I’m sorry, poppet. I suppose I have been a tad distracted.” Harry glances up from the chopping board, his apologetic expression morphing into a look of firm admonishment when he catches sight of the boy. “Eggsy!”

The Sub slowly extracts his hand from the bowl, a thick blob of buttercream icing poised on the tip of his index finger. With Harry watching his every move, he makes a show of lifting it to his mouth, wrapping his lips around the digit and humming with exaggerated approval as he slowly slides it out again.

“You little shit,” Harry accuses, with such ungentlemanly frankness that it startles a delighted laugh out of the Sub. The Dom reaches for a nearby dish towel to clean his juice-stained fingers and turns towards the younger man. “I’ll give you something to laugh about. Come here.”

Eggsy wisely scarpers, legging it out of the kitchen (almost losing his footing when his sock-clad feet sleep on the smooth tiles) and down the hallway. At a noise from behind him, he glances over his shoulder and discovers that he’s being pursued – and not only that, Harry’s even wielding a fucking wooden spoon while he’s at it. Another startled laugh bubbles up out of him at the sight and he turns to thunder up the stairs, taking them two at a time, barrelling along the upper hallway and straight into Merlin’s office, breathless and grinning.

The Scotsman glances up from his seat at the large oaken desk, tapping at a control on his keyboard to switch all his screens to standby, hiding whatever super-secret-spy thing he’d presumably been working on. Can’t be anything too urgent, though, because he pushes his chair back a few inches and extends an arm towards the Sub invitingly.

“What did you do now, lad?”

“Me?” Eggsy asks, plastering on an innocent expression even as he hurries over to the relative safety of Merlin’s lap, sitting in it sideways so that he’s facing the doorway. Never a good idea to turn your back on the enemy. “What makes you think I’ve done anythin’, guv?”

Merlin cocks his head to the side, eyebrow arched judgementally, and in the momentary silence that lingers between them Eggsy can hear the slow, rhythmic tread of Harry’s approaching footsteps as he ascends the stairs.

He caves.

“Okay, so I might’ve done somethin’ stupid,” he admits, wide-eyed for added effect, and tries to make himself smaller in the Scotsman’s lap. “Harry’s pissed.”

“Och, come on,” the Dom cajoles, a teasing sort of smile curling at the corner of his mouth as he runs his fingers through Eggsy’s still-drying hair. “You only stepped out of the shower ten minutes ago. You can’t have been all that naughty since then.”
Eggsy fidgets in the man’s lap – there’s something about the word ‘naughty’ that just makes him feel hot and squirmy all over – and opens his mouth to reply, but immediately swallows the words with a quiet ‘ulp’ when Harry suddenly appears in the doorway. The Dom’s still wearing his striped kitchen apron, shirtsleeves rolled up to his elbows to reveal muscular and slightly scarred forearms, which are crossed imposingly over his chest, a heavy-looking wooden spoon poised carefully in one hand.

Merlin takes one look at his husband and barks out a laugh.

“This is no laughing matter, my dear,” Harry informs him gravely, but despite his attempt at stoicism Eggsy can see the light of humour in his eyes, the crow’s-feet crinkles of warmth and laughter deepening as he regards Eggsy steadily. “Our boy here decided to liberate something from me after I specifically told him not to.”

The Scotsman glances down at his Sub knowingly. “You went after the icing, didn’t you, lad?”

“I only wanted a taste!” Eggsy protests, hunkering down a little further in the Dom’s hold.

“I tried to warn you,” Merlin sighs, patting the boy’s hip. “Harry’s very particular about his baking; the kitchen’s a no-go zone until he’s finished. I told you it would only end in tears.”

“Aw, c’mon,” the Sub whines pitifully, as Harry advances with the dreaded Spoon. He bites his bottom lip to keep from smiling, gives the Dom his best puppy-dog eyes. “I won’t do it again, Sir, honest.”

Harry plants his hands on his hips. With the apron, and the wooden spoon, and the smudge of icing sugar on his cheek, the whole look really shouldn’t work for him. But it does, ‘cause he’s bloody gorgeous, and a pulse of arousal flares to life in Eggsy’s groin.

Welp. Hello there, unexpected kink.

“It’s a little late for apologies, young man,” Harry tells him, in a tone that brooks no argument. His gaze shifts to meet Merlin’s and he gives a casual gesture with his free hand. “If you’d be so kind?”

“Aye, if I must,” the Scot relents, and reaches around Eggsy. With a quick flick of a switch on the underside of his desk, the keyboard and other controls flip over in a one-eighty, disappearing into the desk, leaving nothing but smooth wood behind.

“Nice,” Eggsy comments, impressed, then gives a startled, giggling sort of yelp when the Dom’s hands settle on his hips and abruptly tip him forwards over the edge of said desk. “Oi! I thought you was on my side?”

“Don’t be ridiculous,” Merlin huffs, amused, hands sliding down to put gentle pressure on the back of his thighs. “I know better than to cross Harry when there’s a cream tea at stake.”

“Quite right,” the Dom in question confirms, and Eggsy can hear his smile despite the sternness of his tone.

A hand settles firmly at the small of his back and he squirms a bit just because he can, turning his head to the side to glance behind him. Harry’s watching him closely, clearly looking for something in Eggsy’s expression. Whatever it is, he apparently finds it, because the next moment there’s a loud thwack, and a burning sting ignites in Eggsy’s right arse-cheek.

Choking on a laugh, Eggsy nods emphatically, wriggling a bit beneath the playful onslaught. “Yes! Yes, Sir! I won’t do it again.”

“I’m glad to hear it.”

Harry lands one more spank, a tad harder than its predecessors, and then Eggsy’s being hauled backwards again, up off the desk and into Merlin’s lap, flushed and breathless and grinning and more than a little aroused. Harry leans down in front of him, pinching his chin gently and bringing their mouths together in a soft, lingering kiss.

“Behave,” the Dom warns, a faux-stern growl. He kisses the answering giggle from Eggsy’s lips, before standing and addressing Merlin. “Be a dear and keep him out from underfoot, won’t you?”

“Oh, I think I can manage that,” Merlin acquiesces, a hand sliding down to settle possessively on Eggsy’s lower abdomen. “Are you sure you don’t want to join us?”

For a brief moment, Harry’s eyes darken in a very promising manner, but after a beat the man draws himself away from temptation with a quiet smile.

“I have a cake to finish,” he insists, and heads for the door. “But do save some of him for me, won’t you?”

Merlin hums a distracted confirmation, already busy pushing his hand up beneath Eggsy’s shirt, fingers skimming over his muscular torso to pinch at a pebbled nipple. His other hand slides a few inches lower to cup the bulge tenting the front of Eggsy’s trousers.

“Somebody enjoyed their spanking, I see,” he murmurs approvingly, stroking slowly.

Eggsy groans, but shifts his arse in Merlin’s lap to show the Dom that there’s no hiding the hardness he feels there, either. “Looks like I wasn’t the only one, Sir.”

“Aye,” Merlin agrees casually, popping the button on Eggsy’s trousers and slowly lowering the zip before pushing his hand inside to cup him through his underwear. “He looks damn good in that apron, doesn’t he, lad?”

The Sub nods, head tipped back against Merlin’s shoulder, breath stuttering in his chest at the teasing stimulation. “Fuck yeah.”

“The spoon was a nice touch,” the Dom continues, pinching the opposite nipple hard enough to make the Sub squirm in his lap, right over Merlin’s erection. He moans, a low rumble from his chest that sends pleasant shivers down Eggsy’s spine. “And you, lad, bent over my desk and taking your spanking from Harry like such a good boy. Christ. I wanted to-” He cuts himself off, presses a firm kiss to the boy’s temple, grips the Sub’s cock a little tighter. “Hell, I still do.”

“Anythin’,” Eggsy promises breathlessly, rocking his hips up into the man’s grip, then back against the hardness nudging at his buttocks. “I’m yours, Sir. Anythin’ you want.”

Merlin angles him around a little, enough that he can seal their mouths together in firm, biting kiss. Eggsy moans into it, clutching at the man’s arm where it’s still looped around his torso, surrendering his mouth to the Dom’s pillaging tongue and trying to draw in enough air through his nose so that he doesn’t pass out from the sudden, overwhelming wave of arousal that hits him like a freight train.

Hands nudge his arms up and he lifts them obligingly, breaking away from the kiss with a gasp so that Merlin can pull his polo shirt up and over his head. Eggsy dives back in for another kiss the second the garment’s free, shifting sideways in Merlin’s lap to ease the crick in his neck, fingers
curling into the fabric of the Dom’s jumper as a hand slides down the front of his trousers again, this
time slipping inside his boxers to wrap around his erection, the careful strokes slow and firm and
torturous.

“Fuck,” Eggsy gasps after a few minutes of teasing stimulation, breaking away from the kiss as his
hips jerk, heat pulsing fiercely in his loins. “Oh shit, Sir, please…”

Merlin hums approvingly, strokes him a little faster for his pains. “You always beg so beautifully.”
He brushes another kiss against the boy’s parted lips. “What is it, sweetheart? Need a cock in that
pretty arse of yours?”

Oh. Oh fuck, he’s being vulgar. Eggsy loves it when he does that.

He nods, gasping out another moan when Merlin’s fingers twist around the head of his cock just-so,
his own fingers tightening their grip in the Dom’s jumper as another rush of breathless pleas tumble
from his babbling lips.

Thankfully, the man’s in a merciful mood today (either that, or he’s as eager to get on with the
fucking as Eggsy is), because he withdraws his hand from the boy’s trousers and abruptly hauls him
up by the waist, lifting him effortlessly to sit on the edge of the desk. Eggsy braces his hands on the
wooden surface for balance, still trying to catch his breath, but has enough wherewithal to raise his
hips at the gentle tap to his thigh, allowing Merlin to divest him of both trousers and boxers in one
go.

And, well, there he is. Butt-naked on a ridiculously high-tech desk, about to partake in enthusiastic
office sex. That’s another item to check off his bucket-list.

Merlin rolls his chair closer to the desk, resting his hands either side of Eggsy’s hips, bracketing him
in. The Sub watches the promising half-smile curl at the corner of the Dom’s mouth, feels his own
breathing quicken because of it.

“Put your hands on my shoulders,” the Dom instructs, a low, calm command, and Eggsy hurries to
comply. “Good lad. Keep them there for me, alright?”

Eggsy nods, sucking in a shaky breath when Merlin reaches up to remove his own glasses, folding
them and setting them to one side safely. Fuck. Oh shit. The glasses are off, the glasses are
off, that
means Merlin’s gonna-

“Fuck!” the Sub gasps, and clutches at Merlin’s shoulders as the man ducks his head and swallows
Eggsy down smoothly.

The Dom hums, sending vibrations tingling pleasantly through his groin, and glances up at him as he
bobs his head, eyes crinkling in laughter at the look of lust-drunk awe that Eggsy imagines he’s
probably wearing at the moment. He hardly dares to blink, unwilling to miss a second of the stunning
visual that Merlin provides, eagerly committing the sight to memory. It ain’t like the Dom’s never
sucked him off before, because he has, but usually Eggsy’s flat on his back with Harry kissing the
breathless pleas from his lips, so he rarely gets to see the act from such a flattering angle.

And shit, the bloke’s good at it. Merlin’s mouth is wonderfully hot and wet around his cock, the
suction providing a tight fit to match the hand stroking beneath the seal of his lips, and every so often
the Dom will swipe his tongue over the slit as he pulls back, a sharp flash of pleasure that makes
Eggsy’s hips twitch.

He clutches his fingers tighter in the fabric of Merlin’s jumper, desperate not to move, to be a good
boy for the Dom and do as he’s told, but Eggsy fucking loves the man’s head. Weird as it sounds, it’s one of his favourite parts – he loves how smooth and soft the skin is, how Merlin invariably smiles whenever Eggsy or Harry presses a kiss there, how Eggsy’s come to know every little scar and dimple dotted over the dome by heart.

Before his brain’s really registered the action, he’s lifting a hand from Merlin’s shoulder to stroke it over the man’s bald head reverently.

Merlin doesn’t even pause in his ministrations. He simply glances up and gives Eggsy a look, eyebrow arched. A look that says ‘what did I just ask you to do, boyo?’, accent and all. It’s an effective tactic; Eggsy’s removed the hand and replaced it on Merlin’s shoulder all within the blink of an eye, a breathless “sorry” passing his lips as the Dom resumes sucking, teeth scrape teasingly along the underside of his shaft.

“Ah!” he gasps, and bends forward a little over Merlin’s head, toes curling.

The Dom does it again, the scrape of his teeth sharper this time, followed by a particularly hard suck and a firm thumb pressed against the sensitive spot behind his balls. Eggsy cries out again, hunching over a little more and clutching onto the man’s shoulders for dear life as – ohhh shit, shit, fuck, fuck, ohgodyes – he’s shoved unexpectedly into his first orgasm.

He pants out a few garbled words, none of which make any sense even to him, and trembles a bit as Merlin sucks him through it, licks and nips at him until he’s so oversensitive it’s making him writhe in place, before the Dom finally pulls back to grin at him.

“Mm, just look at you,” Merlin rumbles, and fuck, the man’s voice is that much deeper and rougher after sucking him off. Eggsy might come again just from hearing it. The Dom pinches his jaw, angling his face down, and smooths a thumb over his bottom lip.

“So flushed already. Beautiful boy.” He breathes out a soft laugh, leans up for a kiss. “That was only to take the edge off, sweetheart. I’ll have you begging again before long, don’t you worry.”

Merlin’s a man of his word, and a short while later Eggsy’s facedown over the desk, panting for breath, whimpering out desperate pleas for something, anything, more, as lubed fingers prod at his prostate mercilessly.

“There’s my good lad,” Merlin hums, still stroking that bundle of nerves back and forth slowly, torturously, his forearm braced along Eggsy’s lower back to keep him in place.

Merlin’s perched on the desk too, seated on it sideways, one muscular thigh settled beneath the boy’s hips to keep them raised. And Eggsy ain’t sure how he’s ever supposed to take a spanking in here after this without thinking of the Dom’s fingers and what they’re doing to him, the pleasurable heat they’re stoking higher and higher with each careful prod, the way Eggsy’s cock has been steadily leaking since Merlin first hauled him up over his thigh and dribbled lube over his hole.

“Th-thank you,” he manages to slur, the words ending in a whimpering sort of whine when Merlin’s fingers pick up their pace again. He feels his cock throb in response, feels the dribble of fluid that forces itself from the tip. “Hnnnn! Oh fuck, Sir, please!”

“Shhh, I know,” Merlin soothes, but keeps right on stroking. “A little more for me, sweetheart.”

Eggsy would drum his toes against the floor, but the height of the desk (and how far he’s been hauled across Merlin’s thigh) has kept his feet dangling a few inches above the carpet. That, and his limbs have all fucked off to nerveless-goo land. Even his arms, which Merlin has kindly bound in
front of him at the wrists using the belt from his trousers, have long since lost the ability to function as productive appendages.

He’s surprised that Harry hasn’t come to check on them, given the racket he’s been making. He’d tried to stifle it at first, but the moment Merlin’s talented fingers had found his prostate, his attempts had been doomed to failure. He’s glad the walls are so well soundproofed, otherwise they’d probably have the police knocking on the front door by now.

By the time Merlin finally (mercifully) removes his fingers, Eggsy’s a flushed, sweaty mess of uncoordinated, trembling limbs, every nerve ending alight. He needs to come so fucking bad, feels like he might explode if that white-hot pressure doesn’t find its release.

“Shh, shh, easy now,” the Dom murmurs when Eggsy choke out a desperate, breathless “no, no, please” at the loss of Merlin’s fingers, carefully turning the boy over.

He cups the back of Eggsy’s head to keep it from thunking down too hard against the surface of the desk, peels off his own jumper and wads it up to use as a makeshift pillow, settling the Sub’s restless squirming with a few gentle, lingering kisses as he stretches Eggsy’s bound hands above his head, pinning them to the desk.

“Keep those here for me,” Merlin instructs, his voice low and rough, and then he’s pressing his hands up underneath Eggsy’s knees, pushing his legs up and apart, holding them there as the blunt head of his rock-hard cock nudges up against the boy’s lube-slick hole.

And, well, if Eggsy had been trying to stay quiet before, he’s not got so much as a snowball’s chance in hell.

Merlin’s always been an enthusiastic bed partner, but their previous fucks all pale in comparison to the way he ploughs into Eggsy now. Maybe it’s because his prostate’s already been stimulated the point of being oversensitive, maybe it’s because he’s being fucked on his back over a posh-as-shit desk in Merlin’s office with his wrists bound and it’s like all of his hottest fantasies coming true at once, but sex has never felt so bloody good in his life.

Eggsy’s vaguely aware of being rather vocal about the occasion, but fuck if he can help it. He’s barely managing to draw in enough air to facilitate his enthusiastic verbalisations, let alone work out how to keep from wailing every time Merlin’s thick cock slams up right against his prostate. And it’s perfect, and too much, and not enough, and any minute now he’s gonna pass out, if the silver stars in his vision are any indication.

His climax, when it hits him, seems to start in his toes and fingers and at the back of his neck, rippling through him like a slow, white-hot wave of tingling pleasure, skin prickling with heat as he spasms in Merlin’s hold, the breath snatched from his lungs.

It seems to last for hours, and he’s floating, almost like an out-of-body experience, seeing Merlin’s hips stutter mid-thrust, then push deeper inside him the man comes. The Dom leans over him, catching himself on his hands either side of Eggsy’s head before his weight can fully drop, lips hot and orgasm-clumsy against the boy’s mouth as he kisses him between murmured words of praise that Eggsy’s fried brain completely fails to process. But the kisses are nice, and he feels so good, weightless and warm and humming pleasantly all over.

“Shhhh,” Merlin hushes, and he can understand that much at least. The Dom brushes something from Eggsy’s cheek, then reaches up to unfasten the leather belt from around his wrists – not that it’ll make much difference, the boy can’t move his arms regardless.
But then he’s been scooped up off the desk, cradled in Merlin’s strong arms like he’s something precious, and they’re moving somewhere. He can feel the movement of air against his heated skin as Merlin walks, but working out where they’re going would require him to open his eyes, and that ain’t happening. It’ll shatter whatever bubble of serenity he’s managed to stumble into, and he doesn’t want that. He wants to stay here forever.

Time passes, not that he can hazard a guess as to the exact span of minutes or hours, and slowly awareness begins to nudge at the fuzzy edges of his conscious mind. He’s lying down somewhere, semi-horizontally, still naked as the day he was born but comfortable nonetheless, pressed up against something warm and solid that smells wonderfully like Merlin.

The pillow beneath his cheek moves, and he registers the quiet pulsing of a steady heartbeat beneath his ear, the brush of gentle fingers stroking through his hair. He smiles, rubbing his cheek against the fabric beneath it contentedly, and feels a tightening squeeze around his lower back from the arm that’s keeping him cradled in close.

“Back with us, lad?” a voice rumbles close to his ear, the audible affection there a tingling, liquid warmth trickling down his spine.

“Mm,” he acknowledges sleepily.

A gentle touch strokes slowly down his back, and Eggsy’s brain is momentarily befuddled by the caress because there are still fingers combing through his hair, and an arm wrapped snugly around his waist, and Merlin appears to have one too many hands.

“You were gone for quite a while there,” Harry murmurs, the words warm against the back of his neck moments before a kiss is pressed there, soft and lingering. “Pleasant journey?”

The boy hums again, smiling wider as Harry’s lips trail gentle kisses beneath his ear and across his jawline, turning his head a little and cracking his eyelids open to capture the Dom’s mouth with his own. Harry cups his chin, deepening the kiss, and Eggsy sighs happily, his limbs feeling as though they’re melting all over again.

They stay that way for a blissfully long time, limbs intertwined as they recline together against the pillows, sharing slow, tender kisses. Sandwiched snugly between his two Doms, Eggsy doubts that life could possibly get any better.

“I’ll go and fetch us some tea,” Harry says after a while, and presses a chaste kiss to the underside of Eggsy’s jaw. “I think someone’s earnt themselves a rather large slice of cake, don’t you?”

Well. Apparently it can.

…………………………….
Harry’s hair may have grown back to partially cover the sizable scar that runs along the left side of his head, but that doesn’t mean his recovery period is over and done with.

Despite the Dom’s casually dismissive nature when it comes to the extent of his fatigue at the end of a long day, it’s obvious the injury still bothers him on occasion. Given that a bullet had partially shattered his skull a few months back, that’s only to be expected. Eggys knows the man’s bloody lucky to be alive and cognitively functional, let alone strong enough to assume his position as the head of a top-secret organisation. The raised, discoloured line of pink tissue that runs from the corner of Harry’s eyebrow to the hairline at his temple reminds him of the fact on a daily basis, regardless of how skilfully the Dom hides the evidence beneath expensive makeup products.

Even so, it still scares the shit out of Eggys when he comes downstairs to breakfast one morning and finds Harry half-slumped over the kitchen counter, grey-faced and shaking, holding onto the edge of the countertop with a white-knuckled grip.

“I’m alright, darling,” the Dom insists faintly, as Eggys rushes to his side with a shout of alarm. Harry’s head remains bowed, his eyes closed, lines of pain etched into his pale, perspiring brow. “It’s only a headache.”

“Bullshit,” Eggys answers, because swearing’s a good safety net to fall back on when the only other alternative is to freak the fuck out.

He leaves the man’s side only long enough to drag over a chair from the dining room, guiding Harry into it when it becomes clear that the man’s sense of balance has been seriously compromised. Eggys berates himself for leaving his phone upstairs – Merlin would know what to do; he’s always been around before when Harry’s had one of his Bad Days, but he’d been called into work during the early hours of the morning to respond to some sort of technical crisis, and hasn’t been home since.

Eggys’s very much on his own this time, and the thought terrifies him.

“I’ll nip upstairs an’ get your meds,” he says decisively, with a quiet sort of confidence that he doesn’t really feel, but hopes the Dom finds reassuring. “Sit tight for a sec, yeah? I’ll be right back.”

At least this part he’s sure about. Merlin had talked him through the various painkillers and mild sedatives that HQ had sent Harry home with, and he knows what’s what, more or less. It helps that the Dom’s labelled them with clear, concise instructions, and separated the various packages into two neatly packed Tupperware boxes. The first box, Step One, holds the milder painkillers and muscle relaxants, the ones that won’t necessitate the need to keep an eye on Harry’s breathing in case it decides to slow down too much or, God forbid, stop altogether. If they don’t work and he’s forced to use the Step Two box, he’ll have to speed-dial the medical team back at HQ, and he doubts Harry will want things to escalate quite that far.

Touch wood, they’ve never needed to open that second box before.

While Harry may have earned himself a certain reputation at Kingsman headquarters for being a rather difficult patient, Eggys’s relieved to find that he takes the pills without argument, slowly draining the glass of water at the Sub’s gentle prompting and allowing himself to be heaved up out of the chair, an arm slung over the younger man’s shoulders for support.

“Probably a good idea to avoid the stairs for a bit,” Eggys advises as he steers them towards the lounge, trying not to let it show in his voice just how alarmed he is by Harry’s lack of balance. The agent’s usually so poised and composed, with a calm, confident sort of air about him that suggests
he’s fully at ease in his own skin. In his current state of incoordination, the Dom would likely walk into the doormframe without Eggsy guiding him.

“Here we are, guv.” He eases Harry down onto the sofa, leaving his hand on the man’s shoulder for a moment to reassure himself that his Dom’s not going to suddenly keel over sideways. “I’m gonna go grab some pillows an’ shit, alright? Don’t go anywhere.”

That coaxes a smile out of him, however brief and shaky-looking it may be, and Eggsy counts it as a win.

He leans in on impulse, pressing a kiss to Harry’s creased brow before darting away again. The next part’s pretty simple, at least. Get him as comfortable as you can, lad, let him sleep it off, that’s what Merlin had told him. The painkillers should play their part in making him tired as fuck, and as long as Eggsy can get him cosy, the Dom should be able to kip for a few hours and hopefully wake up feeling a little less like death warmed over.

By the time he gets back downstairs, a spare duvet and several pillows piled up in his arms, JB’s up and out of his basket, pawing at Harry’s shin and whining pitifully. It’s not his usual ‘pick me up and cuddle me, please’ whine, but the one he reserves for special occasions when something’s not quite right with one of his humans. He ain’t exactly a quiet pup, though, and Eggsy winces in sympathy for his Dom’s headache.

“No, JB,” he says, gently but firmly, and the pug’s gaze snaps towards him. “Go sit in your bed, yeah? Go on.”

The dog cocks his head to one side, questioning, but at a firm repetition of the word “bed”, he obediently slinks over to his padded basket near the fireplace, laying down there with his head resting on his paws, eyes big and round and guilty like he’s blaming himself for being reprimanded. Eggsy feels like a fucking bastard for it, but he can’t give into the urge to go fuss over the pup; he’s got more pressing issues to worry about.

He arranges the pillows carefully to pad out the arm of the sofa, then settles his hands on Harry’s shoulders. The Dom stirs from whatever medicated fog he’s clearly already drifted into, squinting at Eggsy blearily.

“Let’s get you lyin’ down, yeah?” the Sub suggests quietly, and Harry complies, letting Eggsy guide him down against the pillows.

He lifts Harry’s legs up to stretch out along the length of the sofa, carefully removes his slippers, and covers him with the duvet. He’s tucked his little sister into bed plenty of times, so he assumes the principles are the same, just without three bedtime stories or the need to hum ‘In The Night Garden’ until his throat is raw.

The sun’s already starting to peak through the clouds outside, so he closes the curtains and turns off the lights, plunging the room into semi-darkness. Harry’s sigh of relief is a small, quiet thing, but audible nonetheless.

“Get some sleep, guv,” he murmurs, carefully removing Harry’s glasses and setting them aside on the nearby coffee table. “I’ll be right here if you need me.”

Harry lifts a hand, the backs of his fingers ghosting down Eggsy’s cheek in a brief caress, eyes opened to thin slits and the corner of his mouth curling up ever so slightly. The Sub smiles in return, as genuine as he can manage it, what with the concern that’s still gnawing at his stomach, and clasps the Dom’s hand in his own, turning his cheek into the tender touch and pressing a kiss to the man’s
knuckles.

He waits until Harry’s breathing has finally evened out, until the pulse beneath Eggy’s fingertips has slowed to within normal parameters and the lines of pain on the Dom’s brow have begun to soften. Then he climbs quietly to his feet and crosses the room to JB’s basket, scooping the pug up into his arms for an apologetic cuddle before heading out of the room.

“Sorry, darlin’,” he whispers once they’re safely in the hallway, turning to trudge up the stairs with the dog still in his grasp. “We’ve got to keep it down, yeah? Harry ain’t feelin’ so good.”

JB wriggles delightedly at the fussing and conveys his forgiveness in the form of slobbery kisses all over Eggy’s neck.

The Sub makes a brief stop in the master bedroom, long enough to grab his phone from the bedside table and change out of his jimjams, sending a quick one-handed text to Merlin as he attempts to pull on his socks. His Dom’s going to hate the fact that he’s stuck at work when Harry’s having a Bad Day, but he needs to know. They’re not in the habit of keeping secrets from one another, not anymore.

“You can stay with me an’ Harry for a bit,” Eggy tells the pug in his arms as he heads back downstairs, his voice hushed. “But you need to keep quiet, alright? Oi, JB.” He waits until the pup’s gaze snaps up to look at him again, responding to his training-tone, before lifting a finger to his lips. “Shhh.”

The dog bumps his head against Eggy’s chest but stays quiet, and obediently pads over to his basket when the Sub sets him down at the threshold to the lounge. It’s been months since they last did any proper stealth training, but it’s good to see the lessons have stuck. It ain’t quite the same as hiding under a bush in camouflage gear and trying to keep the pug silent and obedient as Merlin strolls by shaking a bucket of dog treats, but the principles are the same. Eggy needs JB to keep quiet, and until he gives the all-clear, the pug won’t utter so much as a peep. He’s ace like that.

Eggy’s phone buzzes, and he glances down at the screen to see an answering text from Merlin.

Just finishing up in the office, the message reads. Be with you as soon as I can. Let me know if anything changes. – M

Shoulders sagging with the weight of his relief, Eggy crosses over to the sofa, pulling out his kneeler-pad from beneath the coffee table and settling down there comfortably, cheek pressed against Harry’s arm where it rests on top of the duvet. The Dom’s wearing his burgundy dressing gown this morning – Eggy’s favourite – and it smells like tea and Harry and home, and he inhales the scent gratefully, drawing comfort from it, feeling his frayed nerves finally beginning to settle. Merlin will be home soon. Everything will be fine.

He must fall into a semi-doze at some point, because the sound of the front door opening startles him awake, muscles tensing and mind immediately alert as his head comes up sharply. He relaxes again when he hears Merlin’s familiar tread, the sound of a jacket being unzipped and hung up on the stand in the hallway.

Eggy settles his cheek back down against Harry’s arm, sparing the sleeping Dom a quick glance. The man hasn’t so much as stirred, which is indication enough of how sedated he is by the painkillers – as a seasoned field agent, the man’s naturally a light sleeper. Regardless of how late it is, Harry will invariably curl himself like a protective shield around Eggy when the Sub’s trying to carefully wriggle his way out of bed in the middle of the night to use the loo. He’d squawked in surprise the first time it had happened, and accidentally elbowed Merlin in the sternum hard enough
To make the Dom shoot upright in bed with a shout, but he’s grown to expect it now.

To see Harry so still and undisturbed by the bustle of Merlin’s arrival is…unsettling.

“How’s he been?” Merlin asks softly, crouching down beside Egggy’s kneeler-pad, one hand settling on the back of the boy’s neck as he feels for Harry’s radial pulse with the other.

“Asleep,” the Sub answers truthfully, posture easing further at his Dom’s gentle touch. “His colour looks better; he was white as a sheet when I found him in the kitchen earlier.”

Merlin moves his Hand from Harry’s wrist to lay it over the man’s brow, stroking his hair back a little. The Dom stirs fractionally, inhaling deeply, the muscles in his face twitching, but he settles again almost instantly at the Scot’s quiet “shhh”, his expression going lax.

“Let’s leave him to rest,” Merlin suggests quietly, and leans over the sofa for a brief moment to press a soft, lingering kiss to the sleeping Dom’s forehead. Then he reaches down to offer Egggy’s a hand up. “Come on.”

Unbeknown to Egggy, more than an hour and a half has passed since he elected to hold a kneeling vigil by Harry’s side, and the weight distribution has quite extensively limited the blood supply to his legs during that time. Consequently, his first attempt to stand results in both knees buckling, sending him crashing back down again onto his arse.

“Shit,” he hisses under his breath, and tries to manipulate his legs out in front of him. The lower limbs feel completely numb and leaden, buzzing faintly, pulsing with the sudden rush of renewed circulation.

Merlin sends him a worried look, but after a quick glance at the kneeler-pad he seems to come to the right conclusion. Reaching down again, he hauls the Sub upright beneath the arms and keeps a firm hold on him as Egggy fights to get his legs to cooperate. It takes a few moments, but after a bit of a struggle he’s able to hobble out of the lounge of his own accord, Merlin’s guiding hand settled at the small of his back, JB scampering at their heels.

“How long were you kneeling for?” Merlin asks once they’re in the kitchen and safely out of eashot, easing him down into the dining room chair that’s still sitting where Egggy left it.

“Dunno.” The youth grimaces, trying to flex his toes, the buzzing turning sharper and more uncomfortable with each passing second. “From just after I texted you, I guess.”

The Dom winces in sympathy and crouches down in front of the chair, warm hands stroking slowly up and down the backs of Egggy’s legs as the pins-and-needles worsen to the point of being painful. The Sub bites his lips and breathes through it until the limbs finally begin to regain some semblance of normal sensation, sending his Dom a grateful look.

“I’m glad you came home,” he confesses.

Merlin’s lips twitch up in a tender smile as he stands, leaning over Egggy to cup the boy’s cheek and brush their lips together in a gentle kiss.

“You did good, boyo,” the Dom murmurs, and kisses him again.

He’d been unaware of the tight coil of something sitting solidly behind his sternum until Merlin’s quiet reassurance begins to loosen it. He exhales a shaky sigh against the Dom’s mouth, hand coming up to grip Merlin’s wrist as he closes his eyes for a moment and embraces the Subby instincts he’s been trying to ignore, allowing himself to finally feel all the fear and stress and brimming
concern that he’d forcefully squashed back down earlier that morning in favour of getting shit done. There hadn’t been time to freak out before; that isn’t the case now.

“He looked so fuckin’ awful, guv,” he admits, his voice hushed. “An’ I know he’s had his fair share o’ bad days before, but I thought-” He cuts himself off, takes another steadying breath, which turns shaky towards the end when Merlin presses their foreheads together. “He’s been doin’ so well these past few weeks. I didn’t expect it to hit him so hard again.”

Merlin’s other hand strokes over the back of his head to cup his neck gently. “It’s just a wee bump in the road, lad,” the Dom reassures softly. “Shakes him up a bit, knocks him flat for a few hours, that’s all. He’ll be back on his feet again by tomorrow morning, don’t you worry.”

He nods, a shallow dip of his head, and Merlin guides his chin back up again to press a light, chaste kiss to the tip of his nose, making Eggsy wrinkle it in feigned protest. The boy’s stomach chooses that moment to growl noisily, and Merlin’s smile twitches wider into a fond grin.

“Skipped out on breakfast, did we?” he asks and, at Eggsy’s sheepish shrug, he ruffles the lad’s hair. “Why don’t I fix us some scotch pancakes? We’ll keep some back for Harry in case he wakes up hungry.”

The Sub nods again, his mood brightening considerably, and reaches down to scoop JB up off the floor and into his lap, scratching him behind his ears as the pug gnaws merrily on the thumb of Eggsy’s other hand.

Eggsy’s usually very strict when it comes to JB’s diet, firmly prohibiting the liberal distribution of biscuits beneath the coffee table during afternoon tea (it had taken him several weeks to get this point across to Harry, and he still suspects the Dom sneaks JB the occasional digestive when Eggsy’s not looking), and keeping his portion sizes carefully measured and regulated. Pug’s lifespans are short enough as it is, and he fully intends to ensure that JB’s around for the full duration of his ascribed expectancy.

But, occasionally, exceptions have to be made. After all, JB’s been so good, sitting in his basket all that time and hardly made a sound, waiting for Eggsy to give him the all-clear. Surely such obedience should be suitably rewarded? Half a scotch pancake won’t hurt him.

And if Merlin slips the pug an additional two or three under the table, well. Eggsy’ll just pretend not to notice.
Come join me on Tumblr!

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading, hope you enjoyed the chapter! :) As always, I'd love to hear your thoughts. <3

I'm hoping to have another Kingsman fic posted sometime within the next month or so, hopefully by the beginning of Feb. It's a Little Mermaid AU I've been working on for a good while now, and it's eating up a lot of my free time. :P But I'll do my best to get the next chapter of Fallout posted in a fortnight, as per my usual schedule. <3

Happy New Year, folks! xxx
“I come bearing gifts,” Eggsy announces, holding up the overstuffed *Tesco* bag by way of a peace offering.

Percival glances up from his tablet to fix the younger agent with a wary look. “Lancelot needs her rest, Galahad.”

“Yeah, an’ Roxy needs her sweets,” the Sub counters diplomatically, the thin plastic bag rustling as he brandishes it aloft again. “An’ I know she ain’t sleepin’, guv, ‘cause I just got a text from her a minute ago.”

He’s trying to be as calm and reasonable as he can be about the situation, because he understands that Percival’s sudden overprotectiveness is mostly instinctual, and that at the heart of it all his chief concern is Roxy’s welfare – something he and Eggsy have in common, as it so happens. But the Dom’s been playing Grumpy Gatekeeper outside Lancelot’s recovery suite for almost twenty-four hours now, and Eggsy’s patience is starting to wear a little thin.

“I’ll leave if she starts to get tired,” he placates after a long pause, raising a hand in surrender. “Promise.”

Percival regards him closely for another moment or two, then obligingly scoots his chair a few inches to the left to free up the doorway. “Half an hour.”

He only just manages to keep himself from rolling his eyes – Percival’s umbrella is leaning against the wall nearby, and he doesn’t fancy becoming intimately acquainted with the pointy end of it for sassing the Dom to his face.

Eggsy knocks lightly on the door and waits a short beat before stepping inside.

Roxy’s sitting up in bed, supported by a veritable mountain of pillows, pale and a little worse for wear, but looking a hundred times better than she had done last night. The swelling’s gone down around her temple, but the neat row of stitches along her hairline are almost lost in the dark bluish-black bruise that’s developed since Eggsy last saw her. She’s got a gorgeous shiner blooming around her left eye, too, and the graze on her cheek is a stark ruby-red against her pale skin.

“Mornin’, beautiful,” he greets cheerfully, and gets a plastic drinking-cup chucked at his head for his flattery. He ducks it with a laugh, holding up the bag of goodies and using it to shield his face from further attack. “Feelin’ better, are we?”

“They gave me *decaf* tea,” is Roxy’s sullen reply, wincing as she shifts against her mound of pillows. “Bastards.”

“You only came out of surgery last night, babe,” Eggsy reminds her gently, perching on the edge of the bed as carefully as he can, trying not to make the mattress dip too much, and leans across to press a kiss to her uninjured cheek. “How’s the leg?”

“Sore,” the Dom gripes, pulling him closer by the belt-loop of his trousers until Eggsy’s reclining
against the pillows beside her, half-slumped over her torso, the Dom’s arms closing like a vice around him.

Eggsy blinks, a little surprised at (although by no means protesting) his sudden change in position. “Hi.”

“Sorry.” She rubs her cheek against his hair, then heaves a quiet sigh and loosens her grip a little. “I’m feeling a bit…”

“Clingy?” Eggsy prompts, tilting his head back to smile up at her. “I can see that.”

It’s nothing new, mind. Roxy’s always been a bit handsy when she’s tired or injured, or after a shit run of missions. Same way he craves a calm headspace on his knees, or a hand in his hair, whenever he’s feeling a bit low – except in reverse, as it were. And hell, Eggsy ain’t complaining, he’s totally down for a good snuggle.

“You want me to buzz someone for you?” he asks, squeezing the hand that’s splayed possessively over his midriff. “I’m sure they could up your morphine dose if your leg’s still botherin’ you.”

Roxy shakes her head. “I stopped the infusion hours ago.”

“You what?” Eggsy leans forwards a little, enough that he can peer around her and over at the syringe-driver at the bedside.

There’s a paperclip sitting halfway along the thin, transparent IV line, neatly clamping it off, and the pump itself has clearly had its alarms silenced, if the flashing **OCCLUSION** warning is any indication. He arches an incredulous eyebrow at her handiwork.

“The fuck you do that for, mate?”

“It kept putting me to sleep,” the Dom replies, and shoots the morphine drip an accusatory, narrow-eyed look. “This is the first time my mind’s been clear since I woke up from surgery; I have no intention of losing my wits like that again.”

Eggsy hums sympathetically, eyes half-closing as Roxy combs her fingers through his hair. It feels fucking awesome, and he knows it’ll go a long way in helping her calm down when she’s in this particular headspace, so it’s a win-win for the both of ‘em.

“It’s good to see you properly awake,” he acknowledges, tilting his head back against her shoulder. “You was talkin’ some right shit last night. I think between your concussion an’ all them painkillers, you went a bit loopy – Amelia was in stitches, an’ I’m pretty sure she filmed you on her phone, in case you wanna watch it. Where’s she run off to, anyway?”

Roxy’s arms tighten around him a little. “Your boyfriend called her away twenty minutes ago. Do me a favour? Next time you see Merlin, tell him ‘fuck you’ from me.”

“Will do.” He pats her arm again until she loosens her hold with a murmured apology, and leans quickly over the side of the bed to retrieve his bag of goodies. “I wasn’t sure what you wanted, so I just grabbed one of everything decent.”

She gives him a weary, grateful sort of smile and makes grabby-hands towards the family-sized packet of *Maltesers*. “You’re a lifesaver, Eggsy.”

“Yep,” the Sub agrees cheerfully, opening the bag for her and passing it over.
Roxy stuffs a handful into her mouth without preamble, eyes narrowed as she chews, and Eggsy doesn’t think he’s ever seen anyone eating chocolate quite so moodily before, but he can hardly blame her. Having a six-inch steel rod sticking out of her thigh for the four and half hours it took for her extraction team to get her evac’d back to HQ can’t have been fun. And Eggsy’s been through surgery before, he knows what anaesthesia can do to you – it’s the worst kind of hangover, and tends to screw with your emotional volatility to boot. Roxy’s entitled to glower at the wall all she wants.

Eventually the Dom sighs again, stirring from whatever glum thoughts she’d presumably been dwelling on, and drags a hand halfway down her bruised face. Then she winces and seems to think better of it, settling for pinching the bridge of her nose instead.

“Is my uncle still standing guard outside the door?”

Eggsy nods, grimacing sympathetically at her answering eye-roll. “I’m sure he means well. He’s just worried about you.”

“We’re Kingsmen, Eggsy,” Roxy says, but there’s no heat behind her words. “We put our lives on the line every day; this was bound to happen eventually. At least the rod didn’t hit anything vital. The surgeons seem fairly confident that I’ll be back on my feet in a couple of weeks, and back out in the field after a month or so of physio.”

She’s taking it all rather well considering the expected length of her recovery time, but then he shouldn’t have anticipated anything less coming from Lancelot. She’s always taken thing head-on, with her chin raised and her shoulders squared, and apparently debilitating injuries are nothing to write home about. Eggsy had gone half-mad after just two and a half weeks of field suspension, and he can’t imagine how torturous it’s going to be for her, spending a couple of months sitting idle and waiting for the all-clear from Medical.

Then again, Roxy’s been itching to take an extended leave of absence and whisk Amelia away on a belated honeymoon cruise – the couple had been forced to cancel their first reservation after someone had kidnapped the new British prime minister during his second day in office, and the Kingsman Service had dispatched every available agent on home soil to retrieve him. But that was weeks ago, and they still haven’t had the time to get away. Maybe he’ll ask Merlin to pull a few strings and get Roxy a really nice honeymoon package, somewhere sunny and remote – a “sorry you got impaled on a steel spike” present. She’s definitely earnt it after all the shit she’s been through.

The door to the recovery suite opens suddenly without warning, and Eggsy pulls himself away from Roxy’s side quickly, swinging his legs over the edge of the bed and adopting a far less Submissive pose.

It’s only Amelia, though, with Archie the poodle trotting at her heels. Still, he’s glad of the instinctive act of self-preservation because Percival looms in doorway only a moment later. The Dom’s eyes narrow as he spots the mountain of sweets piled up at the foot of Roxy’s bed, and his gaze shifts to pin Eggsy with a look of mild disapproval, before softening when it settles on his niece.

“Everything alright, sweetpea?”

Roxy shoots her guardian a wincing sort of smile, and Eggsy can tell she’s embarrassed at the nickname. It’s glorious to behold – he hadn’t even realised she was capable of that particular emotion, everything up until now has always seemed like water off a duck’s back. Ohh, he’s gonna tease her about this for months. Because that’s what best mates do, obviously.

“Yes, thank you,” Roxy replies, lifting her arm so that Amelia can scoot across the bed and tuck herself up against her Dom’s side.
Percival’s gaze flickers back towards Eggsy briefly. “Are you sure you wouldn’t rather keep visitors to a minimum?”

“I’m fine, Uncle Percy,” she insists quietly, but with a hint of her usual stubbornness in her tone. The other Dom wisely drops the argument and leaves after another disapproving glance towards the younger man.

“I don’t think he likes me,” Eggsy murmurs once the door has clicked shut.

“Only because he thinks you’re a Dom.” Amelia reaches out to snag him by the back of his polo shirt, hauling him closer into an impromptu snuggle pile of three. “Percival knows Roxy could kick your arse and serve it to me as an entrée, but he tends to be a tad overprotective all the same. Don’t take it personally, love.”

Eggsy relaxes into the three-way hug, a smile curling at his lips when Roxy pinches Amelia’s chin and turns her head to the side to kiss her softly. They’re adorable together, truly, and Eggsy’s thrilled to have found another friend and close confidant in Amelia. Telling her about his true dynamic had been a no-brainer – he wasn’t willing to maintain his Dominant persona around Roxy after so many months spent being himself in her company; the constant play-acting would’ve driven him bonkers.

True to form, the other Sub had taken the news of his true biological roots in her stride, dropping the ‘Sir’ and promptly dragging him out to go shopping with her for a traditional outfit for her Bonding ceremony. They’ve been bezzies ever since.

Still, he can’t help but feel a little envious of the gorgeous collar that sits snugly around the other Sub’s throat. It’s dark leather, with a swirling silver pattern decorating its surface in graceful interlocking loops. Simple, but beautiful. Since the ceremony a few weeks back, Amelia’s made a point of wearing low-necked blouses and dresses and keeping her hair pinned up in a neat bun to show off the contrast of the dark collar on her pale, elegant neck, and Eggsy can’t stop looking at it and wishing and wishing and internally kicking himself for being too chicken to ever display his Submission so openly to the world.

A pulse of fierce longing wells up in his chest, and suddenly he yearns for his Doms. It’s only been a few hours since they parted ways in the underground shuttle, but seeing Roxy and Amelia so content in each other’s arms, he feels the urge to go seek out his own partners.

“I think my half hour’s up,” he says apologetically, pressing a kiss to Roxy’s cheek and another to her Sub’s temple, and extricating himself from the snuggle-pile. “I’d better leave before your uncle decides to make use of that umbrella. Text me if you need anythin’, yeah?”

He makes his way to Harry’s office as quick as he can, knowing that the Dom’s role as Arthur means the man is far more likely to have a few moments to spare than Merlin, who’s probably busy coordinating three or four undercover operations simultaneously. He raps his knuckles lightly against the door, receiving a muffled but cheerful “enter” in reply.

“So sorry to bother you, guv,” he says, slipping inside once he sees that Harry’s alone, closing the door behind him. “You mind if I hang around here for a bit?”

“Not at all.” Harry sets his pen down and closes the filed he’d been perusing, pushing his chair back a few inches and holding out a hand towards the boy. “Percival didn’t send you packing, did he? The man can be a tad overbearing when he’s worried.”

Eggsy shakes his head, moving to sit in the Dom’s lap. “Nah, I managed to talk ‘im down from it. Just thought I’d stop by an’ check on you, that’s all. Everythin’ alright?”
“Mm,” the Dom confirms with a soft, fond smile, one hand stroking up Eggsy’s spine as the other settles on his knee. He eventually cups his fingers over the boy’s nape, gently tugging him down into a kiss.

Eggsy loops his arms around the man’s neck, lips parting willingly when Harry gives a teasing hint of tongue, humming as warmth and arousal stir deep in his belly at the way his mouth is promptly plundered. By the time they part for air, Eggsy’s cheeks are flushed, his lips kiss-swollen, his eyes bright and pupils dilated, and his trousers have become a little too tight at the front.

“Yo ain’t got no big important meetin’ to go to in the next twenty minutes or so, right?” he asks, his voice hoarse and lust-drunk.

Harry cocks his head a little to the side, amused and suspicious. “No, not to my knowledge. Why?”

The Sub grins at him and promptly slides down from Harry’s lap, slipping between the man’s parted thighs and under the desk. He pulls the kneeler-pad from its hidden location and settles himself comfortably on his knees, stroking his hands up the Dom’s inner thighs. There’s only a faint hint of a growing bulge in Harry’s trousers, but Eggsy fairly confident that won’t be the case a few minutes from now.

“Eggsy.” Harry’s fingers settle in his hair, tugging lightly to bring the boy’s gaze up. He still looks vaguely amused by the proceedings, but his eyes have darkened a little too. “We’re not going to have sex in my office.”

“Alright,” the Sub concedes, rubbing his cheek against the growing erection as he holds the man’s gaze steadily. “Whose office would you like to have sex in?”

Harry’s lips twitch, but the hand in his hair tightens by a fraction. “It’s unprofessional, darling. What if someone were to walk in and catch us in the act?”

“Ain’t nobody gonna catch us doin’ nothin’ without your say-so.”

A thumb strokes over his bottom lip, and Eggsy opens his mouth to suck on the digit, watching the look of hunger and arousal grow in his Dom’s eyes. Still, it ain’t exactly the sort of ‘yes’ he’s looking for, so after a minute or so he releases the thumb with a wet pop and turns his head to press a kiss to Harry’s palm.

“But seriously, guv, if you don’t wanna do the dirty in your nice clean office, it ain’t a problem.” He rubs his cheek against the hand cupping his face and smiles up at the man, content to just be on his knees in the Dom’s presence, with or without a cock in his mouth. “I can wait.”

Harry’s expression softens into something warmer and fonder, even as his thumb gently pushes its way past Eggsy’s lips again. “That’s very gracious of you, poppet. But the prospect of making a mess on the carpet is no longer sufficient to dissuade me from the notion of fucking your pretty arse over my desk.”

Eggsy’s eyes widen and he makes a choked, wanton sound around the digit in his mouth. Fuck. Fucking hell. The mouth on that man.

His eyes flicker back down between Harry’s legs, where the bulge has almost tripled in size, expensive dark fabric tented by the Dom’s straining erection. He feels his own hard-on pulse in lustful anticipation within the confines of his trousers. Releasing the man’s thumb from his lips, his slides his hands up Harry’s thighs again with a grin, and leans in to press open-mouthed kisses along
the outline of the Dom’s hard cock.

Harry hums appreciatively, fingers combing through the boy’s hair. “If Merlin could see you now, darling…”

“Call ‘im,” the boy suggests, muffled by the fabric of Harry’s trousers. “Bet he’d like to watch.”

He feels Harry’s cock twitch beneath his lips.

“Oh, you naughty boy,” the Dom purrs approvingly, and Eggsy glances up in time to see the man lift his chin to align his gaze straight ahead at the opposite wall, tapping the side of his frames twice.

“Merlin, do you have a moment?” he asks pleasantly. “No, dear, nothing’s – hmm,” Harry gives Eggsy’s hair a sharp tug when the boy scrapes his teeth over the fabric, “nothing’s the matter. Are you alone? Excellent. Tap into the visual feed from my glasses, there’s a good chap.”

The Dom lowers his gaze again, and Eggsy deliberately gives the man’s clothed erection a long, slow lick, staring straight into his eyes. Harry’s breathing hitches, his hand shooting down to curl into Eggsy’s hair again, even as a smile curls wider at the corner of his mouth.

“Delightful, isn’t he?” The Dom presses Eggsy’s face a little closer to his crotch. “Our boy thought you might like to observe. Hm? Yes, I should think so. Wait a moment.”

There’s the sound of a desk drawer opening and closing, but Eggsy’s a little too busy trying to tug Harry’s zipper down with his teeth. He makes a surprised little noise when fingers are suddenly fumbling at his ear, pushing something inside, and he tilts his head up to peer at his Dom questioningly.

“Can you hear me, lad?”

Eggsy shudders at the Scottish brogue suddenly purring from the earpiece, and rubs his cheek against Harry’s erection by way of thanks, reaching down to unfasten his own trousers and relieve the strain there.

Harry’s fingers cup his chin, dragging his head back up again. “Manners, Eggsy,” he reminds the lad, quiet and amused. “Merlin asked you a question.”

The Sub swallows, his gaze snapping back to Harry’s glasses. “Yes, Sir, I can hear you.”

“Good boy. Now let’s see those pretty lips of yours put to good use, hm?”

Oh fuck.

Eggsy ain’t ever done anything quite like this before – they’ve played in Merlin’s study back home, and he’s been fucked over the kitchen table more times than he can count (Harry doing domestic stuff in that apron just does something for him), but somehow this feels a thousand times kinkier than any of those experiences. He’s at Kingsman HQ, in a posh-as-fuck office, kneeling between the legs of one of the most powerful men in Britain, about to get his face fucked. Please and thank you, Sir.

He wonders what he must look like from Harry’s vantage point, cheeks flushed in arousal, mouth open and waiting as the Dom takes himself in hand, tapping the hardened length of his cock against Eggsy’s cheek. The boy holds as still as he can, lips parted, his breathing erratic as lust coils hot and tight in his loins.

“You’re exquisite,” Harry murmurs, a nanosecond before Merlin’s low, rumbling “very good,
Eggsy”, and it’s all the boy can do not to come in his trousers right there and then. With the voice in
his ear, he can imagine Merlin’s right there with them, kneeling behind him, holding his arms in
place as he so often does when Eggsy’s got a cock in his mouth.

“Eyes open, lad,” Merlin tells him, and the boy obeys immediately – he hadn’t even realised they’d
fluttered closed, too busy getting lost in a plethora of pleasurable sensations as Harry guides his cock
past Eggsy’s lips.

Harry’s own lips are parted ever so slightly, the faintest hint of a flush tinting his cheeks as he uses
his grip on Eggsy’s hair to guide the boy’s head forward in a slow, shallow bobbing motion. The
Sub moans, fighting not to let his eyes close again – he loves being taken like this, being moved and
manhandled and used for his Dom’s pleasure, whether by Harry’s gentle guiding hand or Merlin’s
slightly rougher one.

Eggsy could kneel here quite happily for the rest of the day, if Harry (and his knees) permitted it,
keeping the man’s cock warm as he worked, sucking him to climax when the Dom felt so inclined,
resting his head against the man’s thigh and drifting on a pleasant cloud of subspace until his oral
talents were required again. Fuck, it’d be amazing. And he wouldn’t need anything in return –
wouldn’t even be bothered about his own orgasm unless Harry wanted to tease it out of him, as he
often enjoyed doing. Eggsy would be happy to just kneel there quietly like a good boy and take what
was graciously given to him.

He moans again at his own fantasy, louder this time, and the vibrations must do something for Harry,
because the man sucks in a quiet gasp, hips stuttering as his hand tightens in Eggsy’s hair.

“Oh, that’s lovely,” Merlin says, a low rumble of audibly-aroused approval. “Make him take it a
wee bit deeper, Harry, our boy’s gagging for it. Aren’t you, Eggsy?”

The Sub nods as best he can with his mouth full of cock, eyes flickering up to lock with Harry’s
again. God, the man looks so fucking debauched. It’s beautiful to behold, almost as good as the face
Merlin makes when he’s about to come.

Harry gives a soft, breathless huff of laughter at the boy’s eagerness, before obligingly guiding
Eggsy’s mouth down onto his erection in deeper thrusts, until the head of the man’s cock is nudging
up against the back of the Sub’s throat with every stroke.

Eggsy’s so hard it’s almost painful, but he keeps his hands tucked away behind his back, determined
not to surrender to his own arousal and stroke himself without one of his Doms telling him to first.
There’s no rule in place regarding it, save the one that Eggsy’s put there himself – after months of
discovering his own body through Harry’s hands and Merlin’s tongue, he’s learned that some things
are worth the wait. His Doms have never once denied him pleasure, but the reward for abstaining
from orgasm until one or both of them has reached their own fulfilment is always significantly better
than if he comes without their prompting.

His Doms’ running commentary makes it very hard to resist temptation, though.

“You’re taking it so well, lad. Pity I’m not there. I’d be kneeling behind you, buttering up that tight
hole of yours, finding that sweet spot deep inside – Harry loves it when you squeal around his cock.”

“There’s - hmm good god – still plenty of time to make him squeal, my dear.”

“Aye, that’s true enough. When you’re done with him, be a dove and send him my way. I’ve always
been a wee bit partial to sloppy seconds.”
Eggsy promptly chokes around Harry’s cock, cheeks flushed bright red. The Dom above him chuckles, pulling him off until just the tip is sitting in his mouth to ensure that the boy has chance to catch his breath, before guiding his cock to the back of Eggsy’s throat once again.

“Merlin, I do believe our boy rather likes that idea.”

Another low, rumbling chuckle. “So it seems. Greedy lad, aren’t you? Don’t worry, sweetheart, you’ll be plenty satisfied by the time we’re through with you.”

On and on it goes, a verbal tennis match that stokes the flame of arousal in his blood to a burning, pulsing fire that has him trembling, sucking in quick, shallow breaths through his nose as his eyes begin to water.

Harry finally pulls him off his cock with a wet pop, and the Sub sucks in a few deep, ragged breaths, head spinning, staring up at the Dom through misty eyes.

“Lovely,” Harry compliments, thumb smoothing over his wet bottom lip.

Then the Dom’s pushing his chair back a few inches and guiding Eggsy up from the floor as he stands, pulling the lad to him for a fierce, hungry kiss. Just as quickly, the Sub finds himself spun around and pushed facedown over the man’s desk – which, he notes absently, has magically become devoid of its previous clutter; clearly Harry had elected to get things ready while Eggsy still had his mouth full of cock.

“Put your wrists behind your back,” Merlin instructs, quiet and firm, and Eggsy obeys immediately, cheek pressed against the cool, polished wood. “Aye, that’s the way, lad. Hold still a moment, Harry’s going to help you keep them there.”

And indeed, there’s already the skin-warmed leather of Harry’s belt winding around his wrists, and oh fuck, Eggsy ain’t gonna last long if they keep working in tandem like this, it’s lethal.

“There we are,” Harry murmurs, pushing his polo shirt up to press a kiss to the small of his back. “Good boy, Eggsy.”

His trousers and underwear are tugged down to his knees without preamble, Harry’s hands smoothing over his bared buttocks, squeezing and spreading them, likely to give Merlin a nice view more than anything. Eggsy feels a tantalising thrill at the thought of putting on a show for his Dom – of Merlin watching him being fucked over Harry’s desk via that big wall-mounted screen down in his lab. Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck. He won’t last long at all, not at this rate, and Harry ain’t even inside him yet.

“Harry,” he whines, pushing his arse into the man’s fondling touch, wiggling it a bit. “C’mon, Sir, please. Need you inside me so fuckin’ bad.”

The hand swats down against his cheeks – a few light, teasing spanks that have his toes curling inside his trainers as he whines again, kicking a bit.

“Patience, poppet,” Harry chides, fond and amused, and Eggsy whimpers - he hates that word. Well, loves to hate it, to be more precise. Because it tends to mean that things are about to get torturously good, and that never bodes well for his composure.

Still, despite the warning, it isn’t long before the Dom’s slicked up a couple of fingers (for a man who was initially hesitant about office-sex, his desk drawer is surprisingly well-equipped), and has begun slowly working him open. Slowly being the operative word here. Eggsy writhes on the desk as best he can with his hands bound and Harry’s hand braced against the small of his back to keep
him pinned, gasping out breathless little moans and whimpers, aching erection leaking against the polished wood.

“Look how well you’re taking it,” Merlin praises. “Good boy. You open up so nicely, sweetheart. Give him another finger, Harry, make him squirm a wee bit.”

His voice is like warm honey, and Eggsy moans louder as a shiver runs through him, clenching around the pleasant burn of the long, slender fingers in his hole. His left leg spasms briefly when the sudden clench presses the digits up against that sensitive spot inside of him, breath exploding out of him in a high-pitched grunt of surprise.

Harry hums appreciatively, matching the low pitch of Merlin’s rumbling, “Fuck, there it is. Good lad, Eggsy. Don’t clench now, let Harry stroke you.”

Eggsy sucks in a few ragged breaths, trembling all over, his erection so hard he feels ready to explode. “Sir, please,” he whines, high and desperate, as Harry’s fingers begin pumping back and forth across that sensitive bundle of nerves at a fast, merciless pace. “Please, please, ohhh, please! Sir, I can’t…I nee- ahhhh! Oh please…”

“Och, Harry, let’s not tease the wee bairn,” Merlin says humorously after a few minutes of exquisite torture. “He’ll be getting enough of that from me in a short while.”

Eggsy feels the urge to burst into tears, but he’s not sure if it’s from sexual frustration or unrestrained delight at the promise of more torture. Perhaps a combination of the two – it’s hard to tell, his emotions are a bit wonky at the moment.

But then – oh, oh, thank fuck – there’s the blunt, slippery head of Harry’s cock nudging up against his spasming hole to replace the fingers that have vanished, and the Dom’s pushing inside with one slow, smooth thrust and ohhhhh shit, he’s done for, he’s a goner, this is how he dies.

“Yes. Fuck,” Harry breathes, strong hands gripping Eggsy’s hips firmly as he begins to rock, slowly at first, but quickly gaining speed. “That’s it, boy. Take it.”

Eggsy can scarcely draw in enough air to facilitate the high, keening “uhn, uhn” vocalisations that Harry’s firm thrusts are punching out of him. His mouth hangs open, cheek smushed against the desk as he’s fucked halfway to heaven and back. Eggsy’s glad Harry had the forethought to clear the desk of most of its clutter, because the only items remaining – a small pen-tidy and a tray of blank notepaper – have both been knocked to the floor by the vibration of Harry’s deep, pounding thrusts.

“He’s about to come, Eggsy,” Merlin tells him – Eggsy knows this already, he can hear it in the pitch of the man’s grunts, feel it in the way his steady rhythm has begun to falter. “You want that, don’t you? Want him to mark you up inside, make you all messy for him. Go on then, lad. Ask him for it.”

Although Harry and Merlin have been sharing a three-way conversation with him since the start, he has a feeling these words were somehow directed only at him on a different com-channel, a quiet command meant only for his ears. Merlin knows him well, and Merlin knows how much Harry likes to hear Eggsy beg towards the end. Clever man, that Merlin.

Still, given the state of him, it’s a miracle that he manages to get his tongue and vocal chords to work in tandem, but he eventually stutters out a pleading, strangled:

“I…I…fuck, Sir, I wanna feel you come inside me. Please, I need it, need your come so fuckin’ bad. Please, Sir.”
Harry groans, low and loud, and thrusts deeply one more time before holding himself still, weight pressed over Eggsy’s back as he pants against the nape of the lad’s neck, cock pulsing deep inside of him. The boy whines, clenching around him at the sensation, crying out a moment later when Harry’s teeth close over his nape in a sharp bite. The mark is immediately soothed by lips and tongue, and Eggsy whimpers, trembling beneath the Dom, knowing that he’ll have one helluva hickey beneath the collar of his shirt for the next few days.

“Mm, very nice,” is Merlin’s appreciative assessment when Harry’s mouth leaves his nape, and Eggsy has a suspicious feeling the love-bite had been for the other Dom’s visual pleasure more than anything else. “I think our boy deserves a wee reward, don’t you?”

The belt around Eggsy’s wrists is loosened and carefully unwound as Harry straightens up slowly, still buried inside the lad, and heaves Eggsy with him once the boy’s arms are free. The Sub’s legs are shaky and weak, unwilling to bear his weight, but Harry’s arm across his chest is sufficient for the task, and Eggsy sags back against him gratefully. The Dom’s free hand closes around the lad’s cock and begins to stroke, slowly and firmly.

“Are you going to come for me, darling?” Harry asks, the words murmured against one ear as Merlin’s hum of approval rumbles through the other. The man kisses his neck, stroking a little faster. “You’ve already left such a lovely stain on my desk, haven’t you? Messy boy.”

Eggsy glances at the sticky, glistening pool that’s collected on the surface of the dark wood where his cock had been steadily leaking during his fucking. He kinda does want to mess it up a little more, if only to make sure that Harry won’t ever be able to work at his desk again without thinking of those splatter-marks.

He can feel his orgasm building, a buzzing tidal wave of pleasure creeping in from his extremities, gaining momentum and intensity as it blooms hot and bright deep inside of him. He stiffens in Harry’s hold, and the Dom quickens his hand in response, arm clamping around him more firmly to keep him upright as the Sub cries out, muscles clenching as he shoots his load all over the desk.

“There’s a good lad,” Merlin purrs in one ear, as Harry kisses his throat and tells him he’s a good boy in the other. Eggsy can’t do very much at all for a few minutes, except gasp and whimper and tremble, staring through hazy vision at the mess he’s made.

Harry slips out of him at last, and the sudden loss of his cock has Eggsy whimpering again, clenching around the emptiness as gravity tries to steal the Dom’s ejaculate from him. He leans against the desk for balance as Harry helps him pull his trousers and pants up from where they’ve bunched themselves around his ankles, and then he’s being tugged down to sit in a comfortable lap, cradled against Harry’s chest as the man settles into his desk chair.

Eggsy sags against him, boneless and contented, trying to restart his brain after its automatic shutdown.

“Messy boy,” the Dom murmurs again, pressing chaste, tickling kisses along his jawline and over his bottom lip.

He manages an orgasm-drunk grin, snuggling closer into Harry’s hold. “Thank you, Sir. I’d offer t’clean it up, but…” he nuzzles his face into the Dom’s neck and sighs contentedly. “My arms ain’t workin’ just yet.”

Harry strokes a hand between his shoulders soothingly, kissing the shell of his ear, and squeezes one arm around him in a tight hug. “There’s no rush, poppet. Rest a while.”
“Hn-nn.” Eggsy shakes his head, still grinning drunkenly. “I heard someone mention sloppy seconds. You promised, right, Merlin?”

“That I did, boyo.”

“Ace.” He flexes his fingers and toes, and finds that his body’s a lot quicker to respond this time. His grin broadens into a smirk. “Gimme five minutes, yeah?”

Merlin’s warm, fond laugh is echoed by Harry’s, and the Sub squirms pleasantly at the sound, curling closer into the Dom’s hold, warm and cosy and content.

Life is good.

Come join me on Tumblr!

Chapter End Notes

My apologies for the belated update! Between a crazy work schedule, new story commitments and the recent Hartwin Secret Santa thing, I’ve been a tad busier than I would have liked. But I hope the smut in this chapter made up for it. I call it 'the calm before the storm', because life can’t stay good forever, even if Eggsy deserves such a carefree existence after all the shit he’s been through.
Let me know what you thought of the chapter! More coming in a couple of weeks. :) 

xxx
Jumping off the speedboat hadn’t exactly been part of their initial plan, but Eggsy’s always been fond of improvisation; especially when the only other alternative is being blown to pieces.

“Galahad!” Merlin’s voice crackles to life through his backup communicator, and the note of urgency in his tone suggests that he’s been calling out for some time without answer. “Eggsy! What the hell is going on?”

Coughing to clear his lungs of seawater, Eggsy glances about frantically for his teammates. Keana and Mark have surfaced only a few metres away, and are watching as the burning, smoking remains of their boat sink slowly beneath the waves in the distance. Reassured that that everyone is present and accounted for, he taps his earpiece.

“Sorry, Merlin,” he croaks, throat hoarse from coughing. “Must’ve lost my glasses when I hit the water.”

“Eggsy.” The weight of Merlin’s relief is audible in his voice. “Thank God. Are you alright, lad?”

The Sub nods, even though Merlin can’t see him. “I’m fine, guv. We’re all fine. Well, maybe a bit wetter than we’d intended, an’ we ain’t got a boat anymore, but we’ve been in worse scrapes than this.”
He reaches beneath the water to check that his weapons are still secure, and is glad (not for the first time today) that he’d opted for wearing standard combat gear rather than his bespoke suit; the salt water would’ve done murder to the fabric, and he’s already on his third jacket this month.

“I’ve sent Philip your coordinates,” Merlin tells him, his tone calm and professional once more. “He’s almost at the dock, he’ll be with you as soon as he can.”

Eggsy relaxes a bit at the news. Philip is the team’s driver, pilot, and all-round vehicle expert, and although his adherence to an unwavering professional persona means that it can be difficult to get to know him on the job (which Eggsy understands, and respects, but can’t bring himself to emulate), the Dom’s bloody good at what he does. The man’s skills behind a wheel are insane, and even if they aren’t best chums, Eggsy can always be certain that Philip will get them where they need to be, and fast.

Mark swims closer until he’s almost bumping elbows with Eggsy, treading water beside him. “Is that Merlin?” At the younger man’s nod, he reaches up to tap his own earpiece. “Sir? I take it you saw the bomb?”

“Aye,” Merlin confirms grimly. “Good reflexes, Thompson – a few seconds later and you wouldn’t have made it clear of the blast radius.”

“We need to alert the others,” Mark says, glancing down at his wristwatch. “Paul and Connor are due to meet Vasenko at the rendezvous point in half an hour; I have a feeling the bastard won’t be alone.”

Merlin hums his agreement. “With your team out of the picture, I suspect he was hoping to pocket the cash and sell the intel to the next highest bidder,” the handler muses, and heaves an audible sigh. “Leave it to me, lad. You three concentrate on staying afloat – Philip’s on his way to your location as we speak, ETA fifteen minutes. I’ll contact you again as soon as you’re on dry land.”

Mark nods. “Roger that, Sir.”

“Tell ‘im to put his foot down, guv,” Eggsy pipes up. “Connor promised to take us all out for a pint if we managed not to damage anything – an’ the boat doesn’t count, so the first round’s on him tonight.”

“I’ll be sure to pass along the message. Merlin out.”

Mark shoots him an amused sideways glance. “You’re rather cheerful, considering the circumstances.”

“Well…could be worse, couldn’t it?” the younger Sub reminds him, flicking water in his direction. “Could’ve been blown to bits. Thanks for the save, by the way.”

Eggsy hadn’t even noticed anything amiss, too busy trying to patch a signal through to their underground contact, who had failed to meet them at the arranged coordinates a mile east of the shoreline. One moment he’d been perched on his seat, fiddling with his transmitter, and then in a sudden flash of movement Mark had hauled him up by the back of his combat vest and bodily flung him over the side of the still-moving vessel, diving in after him. And before Eggsy’d had the chance to demand an explanation from him, the older Sub had pulled him underwater again, just as the boat exploded and sent flaming debris hurtling overhead.

“That’s another pint you owe me, mate,” Mark reminds him, but it lacks his usual good humour, and his expression is still troubled as he surveys their surroundings.
“Hey, look on the bright side,” Eggsy says cheerfully, blinking the droplets out of his eyes as they trickle down from his soaked fringe. “At least the water’s warm.”

Mark, treading water beside him, peers down into the fathomless depths with a growing frown. “It’d be far better for us if it were cold, actually.”


“Fewer sharks.”

The youth automatically tucks his legs in close, gaze darting around them for any sign of protruding fins. On his other side, Keana throws her head back and laughs at him, arms resting on top of her floating rifle case as she bobs closer.

“Don’t look so scared, Boss,” the Dom teases. “Sharks kill far fewer people than we do.”

“That ain’t particularly reassuring, Kee,” Eggsy mumbles, squinting at a suspiciously-triangular shape in the distance – although upon closer inspection, it appears to be a piece of the wreckage rather than a giant hammerhead with a case of the munchies.

Keana swipes her arm across the surface of the water to splash Mark in the face. “Now look what you’ve done, you numpty – you’ve gone and made him paranoid.”

The team coordinator makes a spluttering noise of protest, wiping the salt-water out of his eyes. He shoots the Dom a faux-disgruntled look, but reaches out to shove gently at Eggsy’s shoulder.

“I wouldn’t worry about it too much if I were you,” he placates. “If any sharks show up, we’ll just let Keana scare them off with her charming personality.”

The sharpshooter begins reaching for her firearm, and Mark wisely ducks underwater to escape her wrath – but Eggsy’s laughing again, his tensed muscles relaxing, so everything’s as it should be.

Post-mission sex: hands down the best kind of sex there is. It’s also, depending on Eggsy’s emotional needs at the time, often the kinkiest.

Nine times out of ten, he’ll come home from an overseas op horny as a rabbit on steroids, eager for a long, passionate, pin-me-against-the-bathroom-wall kind of fucking session rather than the slow, gentle lovemaking they tend to reserve for those rare nights when the mission’s taken its toll on
Eggsy and he needs to be pampered a bit. Harry and Merlin can usually tell what sort of headspace he’s in the moment he steps off the jet at HQ, which often means that by the time he gets home and has soaked the ache from his muscles with a nice hot bath, the two Doms have already made plans.

Four months into their relationship, and they still never fail to surprise him.

“The fuck is this?” Eggsy demands thickly around his mouthful, chewing slowly.

Somewhere above him, Merlin chuckles. “Well, it wouldn’t be much of a challenge if I told you the answer now, would it, lad?”

The Sub gives a wordless grumble in protest, shifting on his knees to settle more comfortably on the pillow, stilling only when fingers begin to comb through his hair. He hums, leaning up into the gentle contact, knowing from the teasing scrape of nails against his scalp that it’s Harry’s hand.

“What’s your answer, poppet?” the Dom asks, tugging lightly on his locks.

Eggsy gnaws on his bottom lip, pondering. It ain’t like anything he’s ever tasted before – subtly sweet, but with a sharp tang that’s lingering in his mouth now that he’s swallowed it. The fruit’s soft, almost like an overripe pear or a squishy kiwi, but then there’s also this overwhelming taste of banana and he knows that can’t be right; the texture was nothing like a banana.

“What options have I got left?”

“Papaya, dragon fruit and persimmon,” Merlin answers. “Would you like another bite before you guess?”

Eggsy nods, waits a moment as he hears the soft clack of a knife against the tray, and then Merlin’s hand is cupping his chin gently, a cool piece of fruit held to his mouth. He parts his lips to accept it, sucks the sweet juice from Merlin’s thumb just because he can (and because he knows the Dom enjoys hand-feeding him for that very reason), even though the mixture of different juices on Merlin’s skin makes it almost impossible for him to guess with any sort of accuracy. Turning the soft piece of fruit over on his tongue, he bites into it, savouring the sudden burst of subtle-sweetness and the not-quite-citrus tang.

It tastes good, the flavours enhanced a hundred times over with his eyes still blindfolded. But fuck if he knows what kind of fruit it’s supposed to be.

“Not gonna lie,” he says, once he’s swallowed the morsel. “I haven’t tried any of those before, so I ain’t got a clue which is which.”

“Oh dear,” Harry murmurs, not sounding in the least bit sorry at the news. “That is a pity.”

Eggsy pulls a face at him (as best he can when he has to approximate where he thinks the Dom’s head is), but doesn’t quite manage to hide his smile.

The rules of the game are pretty simple – for every right answer, Eggsy earns himself a reward, and for every wrong answer there are unspecified consequences. But he’s pretty sure said consequences will turn out to be of a teasingly sexual nature, given their previous track record, and he’s also absolutely certain that his Doms have deliberately rigged the game so that it’s impossible for him to guess all of the answers correctly. They know he ain’t ever eaten half these weird, exotic fruits. The fuck does a persimmon even look like?

“Um…papaya, maybe?”
Merlin’s answering chuckle isn’t very reassuring, nor is the way Harry’s fingers leave his hair, followed soon after by the sound of a pen scratching against paper.

“I’m afraid not, lad,” the Scotsman sympathises, thumb stroking over his bottom lip. “What does that tally up to, Harry?”

“One correct answers,” the other Dom replies without missing a beat. “And five incorrect.”

Eggsy sucks in a shallow, shuddering breath as Merlin’s hand strokes down to settle across the front of his throat, applying the slightest hint of pressure against his windpipe. *Fuck.* He’s already painfully hard just from being on his knees, naked and blindfolded, teased with gentle words and touches, and he doubts it’ll take much to tip him over the edge.

“You can call it quits, boyo,” Merlin offers temptingly. “Accept your losses. Or you can play one more round and try to win yourself another reward. What’ll it be?”

Eggsy pushes forwards just a little, enough that the pressure on his throat increases by a fraction, and tips his chin up higher. “Think I’ll get while the goin’s good, Sir.”

“A wise decision,” Harry commiserates, and pats his cheek.

He hears the Dom moving, air shifting against his skin as Harry steps around him, the soft *thunk* of the tray being set down on the chest of draws across the room, a closer *thud* of something being placed on the nearby bedside table. Eggsy shifts on his knees a little, anticipation curling in his gut, and gives a soft *meep* of surprise when Merlin’s hands are suddenly hooking beneath his arms to haul him upright.

“Onto the bed with you, lad,” the Dom directs, hands guiding him forwards and then up to kneel on the mattress, coaxing him to crawl up the bed a little.

He’s turned over, head and shoulders settling against the soft mound of pillows at the headboard, and within seconds he has two pairs of hands on him, stroking over his skin. With the blindfold on, it’s impossible to tell where their touch will move next, and Eggsy’s left to gasp and moan his surprise and delight when skilful fingers suddenly slide down to cup his balls or stroke over his erection teasingly.

“Five incorrect answers, Eggsy,” Merlin reminds him, mouthing kisses along the boy’s throat. “We did try to warn you.”

In all fairness, they had. Harry had offered to let him call it quits after only *two* incorrect guesses (how the fuck was he was supposed to know a cantaloupe from a honeydew, anyway?), but Eggsy has always been of a somewhat competitive nature when it comes to games of any sort, and the temptation of gaining further rewards had proven to be too much.

“And now I’m afraid you must face the consequences,” Harry adds with false gravity, his hand rubbing slow circles against Eggsy’s lower abdomen, right above the heat that’s just starting to reach its boiling point in his loins.

“Mm,” Merlin agrees, teeth scraping lightly against the Sub’s earlobe. “You know, Harry, I’m not sure our boy’s going to be able to keep his hands out of the way once we get started.”

“An excellent point. Perhaps we ought to take such liberties from him, before he can get himself into further mischief.”

Eggsy trembles between them, lust pulsing hotter and more urgently in his blood with every
heartbeat. He’s always helplessly overwhelmed when they do this – discuss what they might perhaps
do to him over the course of the evening, as though he has no say in the matter. They always give
him a choice, regardless of the fact that Eggsy is invariably willing to submit to anything and
everything they’ve planned for him, but in the few moments of silence before they ask his consent,
he likes to pretend to himself that they won’t; that they’ll use him as they so desire and do with him
as they wish simply because they own him, and they want to.

It’s a fantasy that never fails to get him all riled up, provided he isn’t about to bust his load already.

“What do you think, lad?” Merlin asks, hand stroking along his arm, fingers curling around his wrist
to raise the limb, high enough that the Dom can press a kiss to the centre of his palm. “Shall we tie
you up? Keep these naughty wee hands safe and out of the way, where they can’t cause any
trouble?”

Eggsy nods without hesitation. “Fuck yeah,” he agrees, breathless in his arousal. “Yes, Sir, yes
please.”

Harry kisses his other palm. “As you wish. Hold still, poppet.”

Soft, padded leather cuffs are fitted carefully around each wrist, and Eggsy experiences an inner thrill
at the realisation that his Doms must have fastened the restraints to the headboard long before their
play even started, clearly having intended to tie him up right from the start. Realistically, there isn’t a
situation where he wouldn’t say yes to a bit of bondage – ropes and cuffs and straps and the like had
never been something he’d fantasised about in the past (given his occupation as a spy, he perhaps
shouldn’t be quite so into it), but it’s a kink he’s readily warmed up to, and it now sits pretty near the
top on his mental list of ‘Things Guaranteed to Make Eggsy Unwin Helplessly Aroused’.

He waits until the buckles have been secured in place before tugging against them a little, testing the
snug embrace of each cuff against his skin, finding the bonds satisfactorily unbreakable.

Harry breathes a soft laugh at his antics. “Tight enough, poppet?”

“Mmm,” Eggsy confirms with a lustful smile, and pushes up into the hand that smooths his fringe
back. “So what happens now? I know I’ve got to pay my dues, but I still get rewarded for all the
ones I got right, yeah?”

“Of course you do, sweetheart,” Merlin agrees pleasantly, and then suddenly there are fingers curling
around his hard, aching cock, stroking the length of it excruciatingly slowly. “For every answer you
guessed correctly, we’re going to make you come for us.”

Eggsy sees stars behind his blindfold, hips arching up at the teasing stimulation as he moans, low and
desperate. Four correct answers. That means four orgasms. Oh god, oh fucking hell, between the two
of ‘em they’re gonna kill him.

“Fuck me.”

Harry chuckles. “All in good time. Now, in regards to every incorrect answer you gave us...”

A sudden, sharp, cold sort of throbbing sensation pulses to life just above his navel and the Sub
sucks in a startled gasp, jerking against his restraints.

“Gah, shit! Harry!” He jerks again, and squirms, because there’s a large ice cube sliding its way
between his pecs, pursued by a warm, probing tongue that laps up the trail of cold liquid it leaves
behind.
“That one’s dragon fruit juice, lad,” Merlin informs him cheerfully after a minute or so, still stroking his cock with a loose fist. “Give him a taste, Harry, then he’ll remember it for next time.”

Next time. Next time? Fuck.

The ice cube remains pressed to his skin, moving back and forth from sternum to navel slowly, but Harry’s mouth is suddenly on his, lips wet with melted juice, kissing him hungrily as Eggsy moans beneath him, toes curling at the sensation. It’s that same subtle-sweetness from before, mild but with a hint of tang that settles tartly at the back of his throat, leaving an overwhelming banana-like aftertaste. Eggsy decides it’s gonna be his new favourite fruit, so long as it stays away from his more delicate erogenous zones.

“Ahh!”

Well, so much for that plan.

“Perfect,” Harry murmurs, swirling the ice cube around Eggsy’s left nipple in a slow circle as the Sub gasps, squirming beneath the onslaught of pleasure-pain-cold. “It’s a good thing we secured his hands, my love. He’s beautifully responsive.”

“That he is,” the other Dom concurs, kissing the inside of Eggsy’s thigh. “Save his right side for me, won’t you? I’d like to make sure he remembers what a passion fruit tastes like.”

Harry hums his agreement, and Eggsy gives a choked-off yelp when the man’s warm lips suddenly close around the half-numbed bud to chase away the chill, sucking hard enough to make Eggsy arch up off the bed and writhe beneath him.

Merlin’s low, fond laugh rumbles straight through him, sending a pulse of heat directly into his loins. “Those nipples of yours are wee bit sensitive, aren’t they, sweetheart?”

Nodding, Eggsy whines wordlessly, cheeks heating and sweat gathering beneath the soft fabric of his blindfold. It feels so good; the most exquisite kind of torture, every nerve alight with sensation as he bucks up into Merlin’s pumping fist, fiery pressure swelling rapidly within him.

“Fuck!” he gasps, choking on the word as Harry’s teeth tease at his over-sensitised nipple, leather cuffs creaking as he strains against their firm hold. “Ohhh, Sir, please! I can’t...I’m gonna-”

“Aye, lad, that’s it,” Merlin encourages, grip tightening around the boy’s cock as skilful fingers slide behind Eggsy’s balls to rub firmly against his perineum. “Come for us.”

Harry’s lips move upwards to seal themselves against his throat, just below his jawline, the remaining shard of frozen juice held between the Dom’s teeth; and between that juxtaposition of hard, cold ice and velvet-soft lips, and the magic Merlin’s working with his hands in Eggsy’s nether regions, the Sub doesn’t stand a chance against his impending orgasm.

He jerks against his restraints as he comes, legs trembling with the force of it, his enthusiastic vocalisations echoing around the bedroom.

“Good boy,” Harry purrs, brushing tender kisses along Eggsy’s jaw from the tip of his ear to the corner of his mouth, which hangs open as he gasps for breath, still coming down from his high. “Here, take this for me.”

The thin sliver of dragon fruit ice is slipped past his lips with another gentle kiss, and Eggsy sucks on the sweet, melting shard obediently, savouring the taste. One thing’s for sure – he ain’t ever gonna be able to eat the damn fruit in public without getting an erection. His Doms are bastards. But God, he
doesn’t half love them.

“Thank you,” he breathes, and means it. He feels amazing.

“You’re welcome.” Harry kisses him again, strokes gentle fingers down his flushed cheek. “Would you like to keep the blindfold on a little while longer?”

Eggsy hesitates for a moment, then nods, turning his cheek into Harry’s touch. “I like it.”

“We thought you might,” is Merlin’s low, rumbling remark, affection audible in his voice as he strokes his hands up and down Eggsy’s thighs. “Now, my pretty lad – you still have three rewards to claim before the night is done. And I spy another four ice cubes waiting for you there in the bowl. We wouldn’t want them to go to waste now, would we?”

The boy shudders pleasantly. “No, Sir.”

“No,” Merlin agrees, and then he’s moving up the bed, the mattress dipping beneath his weight on Eggsy’s other side. Soft lips brush against his temple, a warm hand curling over his throat to squeeze ever so gently. “Would you like to learn what passion fruit tastes like?”

The skin around his left nipple is still buzzing, probably as pink as Eggsy’s cheeks, and his cock is still so oversensitive that even the thought of coming again in the near future has him trembling, toes curling. But that doesn’t stop him from tipping his head back a little, pushing up into the weight of Merlin’s hand, a grin curling at the corner of his mouth.

“Fuck yeah.”

The mission had been a complete and utter success.

That is, right up until the moment that Eggsy had put his foot through some rotten wooden beams on his way out of the old industrial complex, gashing his leg open in the process.

“This is the third time this month, Galahad,” Connor remarks an hour or so later, once they’re back at the safehouse. But there’s no heat to his words and his nitrile-gloved hands are gentle as they work to remove the splinters from Eggsy’s leg. “You’re beginning to make a habit out of this. You’re almost as bad as Myers.”

“Now that was uncalled for, Sir,” Paul objects from his cross-legged perch on the coffee table
nearby, laptop open and balanced in the concave of his lap. He stops typing long enough to press a hand to his chest, feigning offence. “You wound me. Truly.”

“Not half as often as you wound yourself,” Connor mutters, setting his tweezers aside and reaching back inside the open medkit at his feet.

Eggsy hides his laugh behind a well-timed cough, Keana doing the same from where she’s leaning against the wall on the far side of the room. Fighting a grin when their eyes meet, he lifts his mug to his lips to sip at the hot, sweet tea. Philip sure knows how to make a decent brew.

“Fuck!” he yelps, startling in the armchair as a searing pain ignites in his calf. He jerks his leg back automatically, tea spilling over the rim of his mug and onto his shirt as his foot falls from its cushioned perch in Mark’s lap, and he swears up a blue storm when the throbbing ache in his wound flares back to life again at the sudden movement.

“Careful,” Connor cautions, his voice low and urgent, catching the limb by the ankle before Eggsy’s foot can connect with the floor and jar the injury further. “Take it easy, man. It’s not quite deep enough to need stitches, but if you keep flinging your leg about like that, it will be.”

“Ain’t like I did it on purpose,” Eggsy protests, handing off his mug of tea to a hovering Paul before any further spillages can occur – the last thing he wants to do is upend its contents down his chest and add first degree burns to his growing list of problems.

“I’ll grab you another shirt, Boss,” Paul offers, setting the tea aside and patting him on the shoulder. Eggsy manages a strained, wincing sort of smile. “Cheers, mate.”

His leg jerks again when the painful sting returns to his calf. “Shit!”

“Eggsy,” Connor sighs, and the Sub stills, concentrating a bit harder on not-moving; when the Dom starts dropping codenames, you know he means business.

“Sorry,” he says through gritted teeth, hands clenched into fists on the arms of the chair as Mark resettles his foot on the pillow in his lap. “Fuck. Connor, bruv, that stuff burns.”

“Would you rather I let it turn septic?” the medic queries lightly, arching his usual “please don’t make this difficult for the both of us” eyebrow towards the Sub. “No? I didn’t think so.”

Eggsy gives him the middle finger, suppressing a grimace as Connor diligently works his way along the length of the wound. Mark pats his ankle, wincing in sympathy, and Eggsy appreciates the sentiment – he’d appreciate it a whole lot more if Mark wasn’t holding onto his foot quite so firmly, but he understands that the other Sub wants to avoid the threat of stitches every bit as much as Eggsy does. The bloke’s ace like that.

It’s not the worst injury Connor’s had to treat him for – over the course of the past three months, there have been at least six incidents that would probably rank higher on the list (the scorpion sting he’d suffered during that shitty mission in Peru chief among them), and given that the wound’s not bad enough to need stitches and shouldn’t impact his mobility beyond a very mild limp for a couple of days, chances are he won’t even be benched on medical grounds for this one.

Roxy, bless her cotton socks, is now on week seven of her enforced medical suspension, and her frustration is beginning to show. Having once been the most active field agent in the service (accepting literally every mission that cropped up, and never taking off more time between ops than the forty-eight hours that protocol had dictated as necessary), being benched has long since lost the appeal it had first held when she and Amelia had taken their belated three-week honeymoon to the
tropics. Now she’s back on British soil and stuck in a repetitive cycle of slow-going physiotherapy and prescription painkillers.

“I love Santaro, I really do,” she’d told him just the other day, combing her fingers through his hair as he and Amelia knelt at her feet, locked in a never-ending checkers tournament (Ame’s competitive streak puts his to shame). “But if he says the phrase ‘baby steps’ one more time…”

“He’s only doing his job, love,” Amelia had argued softly, reaching up to capture Roxy’s other hand and press a soft kiss to her knuckles. “You’d say the same thing to him if your roles were reversed.”

Roxy’s frown had melted slowly, and she’d huffed out a quiet sigh. “Damn you. Why do you have to be so bloody reasonable about everything?”

“Because if she was as hot-headed as you, the rest of mankind would be doomed,” Eggsy had piped up cheerfully, and laughed when she tugged on his hair sharply in retribution.

Still, he sympathises with her situation – he remembers all too well the frustration of sitting around and waiting for the all-clear from Medical, only to be informed at every check-up that he wasn’t yet fit for fieldwork. He’d only been on suspension for a few weeks; Roxy, poor love, has already been informed that she still has another month to go before the CMO will even consider putting her through the fitness tests.

With her grim situation in mind, he elects not to gripe too much about his own injury, and manages to keep his leg still long enough for Connor to finish patching him up.

“I’ll put a call through to headquarters,” Mark says, sliding out from underneath Eggsy’s foot and lowering the limb carefully to rest on the cushioned seat. He flashes the younger Sub a grin and a wink. “Best let Merlin know you’ll live to see another day.”

Eggsy flips him the middle finger, but he’s grinning too.

Connor strips off his gloves, gels his hands with antibac, and starts packing up his medkit. “Try not to get the bandages wet for a couple of days, alright? It should’ve started to heal nicely by then.”

Moving his ankle experimentally and finding that the muscle flexion doesn’t hurt half as much as it had done before, Eggsy shoots the man a grateful smile.

“Thanks, mate.”

“Anytime.” Connor stands, slinging the strap from his kit over one shoulder, and pauses to assess him for a moment. “You need any more painkillers?”

Eggsy shakes his head. “Nah, bruv, I’m good. Ta.”

Connor’s lips twitch, mirroring his smile, and he reaches out in an aborted movement towards Eggsy’s hair. He blinks, seeming to catch himself, and settles the hand on Eggsy’s shoulder instead, squeezing firmly.

“You’ll let me know if you change your mind?”

The Sub nods, smile growing more cocky to compensate for sudden rush of oh, god, I want a cuddle that hits him in response to the man’s aborted caress.

“It was only a scratch, mate,” he reminds the Dom. “Think I’ll manage without the morphine this time.”
“Galahad? Philip’s on his way with the chopper,” Paul interrupts from the doorway, pausing at the threshold to the room, a bunch of their kit tucked under his arms. “Says he can meet us at the rendezvous point in twenty minutes. We good to go?”

“Yep,” Eggsy confirms, and accepts Keana’s proffered hand and Connor’s supportive arm as he heaves himself to his feet, hopping on his good leg for a few paces before carefully putting a little weight on the ball of his other foot. “Let’s go. I need a pint.”

“It’s 3am, Boss,” Keana reminds him. “GMT, that is.”

Eggsy waves away the comment – truth be told, he’d forgotten about the whole time difference thing.

“Tonight, then,” he amends. “First round’s on me.”

Drinks at the Burlington Arms has become a weekly, if not twice-weekly event, and his company has long since expanded beyond Mark and Gwaine and Bors to include the rest of his team. It’s not uncommon on a weekday evening to find that the pub owner has already pushed two tables together at the back of the room to accommodate them; and after a couple of months as regular patrons there, the barmen knows their usual drink orders without even needing to ask.

“Another round?” he’ll suggest, moving past their tables every so often to collect the numerous empty glasses. He’s invariably met with a resounding ‘yes’ from all sides, with Bors as the occasional exception.

Alec likes his pints. Guinness, typically, but he doesn’t seem overly fussed as long as it’s a decent brand with a fair alcohol content; and if he isn’t the one paying the bill then he’ll drink it down without comment. Bors a slow drinker, though – holds his liquor well, to be sure, but he tends to savour the same pint for hours at a time while the rest of them are already on their third round; he’s the sort of bloke who clearly doesn’t trust the rest of the world enough to let himself become inebriated in public. Eggsy can relate – although it isn’t so much other people he doesn’t trust, it’s himself. He knows his own limits, and never goes beyond what he’d class as ‘borderline tipsy’, even if the buzz is only a background hum. There’s too much at stake, and he hasn’t spent years perfecting his Dominant act for it to all come crashing down over one too many beers.

Keana’s tastes vary depending on the night, but she usually dabs between ciders and largers, with the occasional whiskey thrown in for good measure. Like Eggsy, she seems to stick to a strict limit of three beverages before switching to soft drinks, but to be quite frank none of them can really picture her ever getting properly drunk; she seems far too calm and collected to allow alcohol to get the better of her.
Connor, much to everyone’s surprise, is an avid cocktail lover – the more sparkly and extravagant, the better. Like Mark, he can hold his liquor without a problem (although given the sheer size of him, that’s not such a shocker), but he tends to switch between cocktails and mocktails, working his way through the Specials menu on their table over the course of the evening. He ain’t the sort of bloke that Eggsy would’ve pinned as someone who’d enjoy a Cherry Sex Bomb over a good pint, but hell, the man still looks fucking badass even with a little paper umbrella tucked behind his ear.

Gwaine’s as fussy about his spirits as he is about his immaculate appearance – he’s a whiskey drinker primarily, but will take a glass of wine every now and then, at a pinch. Any other beverage will be promptly nudged in the direction of his husband, where it’s inevitably consumed without question. Mark downs just about anything like it’s water, and can out-drink the lot of them without so much as blinking an eye. He doesn’t tend to mix his spirits much – he mostly sticks to pints, with the occasional shot thrown in if someone plonks one down in front of him – but Eggsy doubts it’d make much of a difference even if they ordered one of everything that the pub has to offer. Alcohol just doesn’t seem to affect him.

Paul, by contrast, is a total lightweight, and generally has to be plied with fizzy drinks between pints to keep him from ending up on the floor within the first hour. Although he inevitably ends up more than a little unsteady on his feet by the end of a long night, especially if it’s been a celebratory post-mission sort of evening; the standard forty-eight hours between one mission and the next is often seen as a good enough excuse to get a bit sloshed.

To be fair, the man’s an adorable drunk.

“You’re so small,” Paul enthuses, arm draped around Eggsy’s shoulders as the younger man steers him from the pub at the end of the evening.

“I know,” Eggsy replies, leading him over to a nearby lamppost so that he can lean the taller Sub against it. “Comes in handy, mate, let me tell you.”

It’s gone midnight, but the summer air’s still warm enough that Eggsy doesn’t mind being out in just a polo shirt and jeans. Having only arrived home from their latest overseas mission at the crack of dawn earlier that day, he probably ought to be tired, but he’d spent most of the afternoon dozing on the sofa in Merlin’s lab, and later on the squishy armchair in Harry’s office, and consequently feels fairly well-rested. That, and his body’s still ticking from another time-zone. He’s gonna be knackered tomorrow, that’s for certain.

“Bet you’re the little spoon,” Paul remarks with a grin, hugging the lamppost like it’s his new best friend. “That’s hot, mate. Merlin’s fit as fuck, and Arthur’s got that whole daddy-Dom thing going on. You’re a lucky bastard.”

Eggsy almost chokes on his saliva. “Sorry?”

“No that I’m planning on stealing them from you,” the other Sub reassures, reaching out with an uncoordinated arm to pat his shoulder – only to miss and smush his hand against the side of Eggsy’s face instead. “Just saying, I’d totally tap that if the offer was made, you know?”

Heart beating faster than it ought to, Eggsy works to maintain an indifferent demeanour. “Is there anyone in the service who doesn’t think I’m fuckin’ the Boss?”


“Nah, serious question,” the Sub insists, reaching out to catch Paul by the shoulders when he lists a
“Sure.” The Sub grins at him, then pulls him into a hug, leaning most of his weight on the shorter bloke. “You, Merlin, Arthur: the ultimate Dominant Triad. Your three are, like, every Sub’s wet dream. Of course there’s gossip.”

Eggsy relaxes again at the man’s reply. Dominant Triad. He can work with that. It’s not as though they’ve been working particularly hard to keep their relationship a secret – hell, he tries his best to get fucked in either Merlin’s or Harry’s office on a weekly basis, work permitting - but the truth about how their dynamic roles pan out has remained a closely guarded secret from the start. A handful of people know, of course – Roxy, Amelia, Kingsman’s CMO, one of the on-site counsellors who he’d been forced into going to see post V-Day to clear him for duty. But that’s about it. He’s fairly sure Mark has his suspicions; the man’s far too observant for his own good, and there are times when Eggsy catches the other Sub studying him from across the room, as though trying to puzzle him out. Still, on the whole, he’s managed to keep his Submissive nature under wraps – fingers crossed, it’ll stay that way.

“Calling it quits already?”

Eggsy turns to flash a grin towards Connor, arms still wrapped around Paul to keep him from sliding to the floor. “Figured someone should probably call him a taxi.”

“I’m not a taxi,” Paul answers promptly, and sniggers into Eggsy’s collarbone.

Connor’s smile twitches wider. “He can share a cab with me, we go the same way. Come on, Myers, let’s get you home.”

“Mmm, doctor,” the Sub slurs, letting go of Eggsy willingly when Connor winds a supporting arm around him. “I’m flattered, Sir, but I’m afraid I’m already taken.”

The medic heaves a put-upon sigh, but even to Eggsy’s ears it sounds fond. “Shut up, Paul.”

“Shhh.” Paul smushes his index finger against the taller man’s lips. “No tears.”

Connor gives the man a look, but the Sub’s too busy melting against the medic’s broad chest to notice much, so the Dom swings his gaze towards Eggsy instead. “I’ve changed my mind. Take him back.”


Eggsy laughs, stepping closer to the edge of the pavement to flag down a taxi as it turns at the corner of the road up ahead. “Sorry, bruv, but it looks like you’re on drop-off duty tonight. I’ll see you at the office in a couple of days, yeah?”

“Mm.” Connor bundles his charge into the taxi as it pulls up beside them, then turns to clasp hands with Eggsy and reel him in for a brief, one-armed hug, slapping him on the back. “Keep off that leg, if you can. And text me if the swelling gets any worse; I’m not averse to making house calls, if you need a check-up.”

“Thanks, bruv,” Eggsy says, and means it, even as he thumps the Dom lightly on the shoulder. “But I ain’t that needy, I promise.”

Laughing, Connor follows Paul into the taxi, throwing one last wave toward the pavement as it pulls away from the curb. Eggsy watches it go, grinning wide enough that his cheeks ache from it, and doesn’t go back inside the pub until it’s turned the corner and disappeared out of sight.
“I can’t believe you ain’t never seen Firefly.”

It’s his turn to pick a film tonight, and even though it’s barely gone seven and there’s plenty of time for other activities if he chooses a short one, he’ll gladly forego sexy-sexy times in favour of marathoning one of his favourite TV shows.

“It never struck me as something that might appeal to my tastes,” Harry comments, setting a bowl of freshly-made popcorn down on the coffee table before taking a seat at one end of the sofa. “Those American shows so rarely do. Their situational comedy is terrible.”

“Well, this one appeals to everybody,” Eggsy insists, selecting the first episode on the menu. “It’s kinda like an old western film, but a good, non-racist one. And it’s in space.”

“Why are we watching Space Cowboys?” Merlin asks from the doorway, looking less than enthusiastic about the idea.

“You’re home!” Eggsy jumps up from his kneeler cushion to greet the Dom, smiling as he’s pulled into a tight hug, bumping his nose against the man’s jaw until Merlin obligingly angles his head for a proper kiss. He grabs the Dom’s hand and tugs him further into the lounge. “An’ fuck no, that film’s shit. We’re watchin’ Firefly.”

Merlin leans down to kiss Harry in greeting, then takes a seat on the sofa beside him, tugging Eggsy down into his lap. “Good choice. I haven’t seen that in years.”

Gratified that at least one of his Doms has a decent taste in sci-fi, Eggsy hits the play button and reaches for the popcorn.
As an active field agent, Eggsy’s been given his own study at Kingsman HQ.

It’s modest, at least by the service’s standards – at least half the size of Harry’s spacious, antique-furnished office – but large enough to squeeze in a couple of sofas and a flatscreen television, and that’s about as big as Eggsy needs it to be.

Technically, extraction operatives have their own common rooms and shared offices in the lower levels of headquarters, near the dorms, but it’s been a long while since Eggsy’s team chose to frequent those areas. Paul had tapped into the primary database months ago (entirely without Merlin’s blessing) and altered the team’s security status so that the access panel outside Eggsy’s office would recognise their thumbprints and grant them access.

Merlin, when he’d traced the source of the hack and come in search of the culprit, had been suitably impressed.

“If you ever get tired of working for Galahad, there’s a spot reserved for you downstairs,” Merlin had offered, leaning against the doorframe to the study in a casual slouch, arms crossed over his chest. “You’re a decent hacker, lad.”

Paul had politely declined, cheeks flushing the faintest tinge of pink at the compliment.

“Are you sure?” the Dom pressed, gaze flickering briefly to his partner, lips kicking up at one corner and eyes twinkling. “I know Eggsy’s not the easiest agent to work with-”

“Fuck off, guv,” Eggsy had laughed, jumping up from the sofa to tug Paul back from the door and give his Dom a light shove backwards. “He’s ours.”

They’ve been on dozens of missions together since then – his team as a unit, infiltrating sleeper cells and drug cartels, tracking down the last remnants of Valentine’s festering organisation before another psychopath gets it into their head that mass genocide is the only viable options. Their success rate is high, and their kill count is low (Eggsy ain’t afraid to pull the trigger, but if he can knock someone out with a dart rather than blow their brains out, he will), and those are the sort of statistics that keep Merlin and Arthur very, very happy. And it’s always in Eggsy’s best interests to have a very-happy Doms. It means they tend to turn a blind eye to whatever the hell he decides to do at HQ on his days off.

Over the past couple of months, his Kingsman office has gained a Wii with an assortment of games (Mark’s contribution), an Xbox (a birthday present from Keana), and a bright pink mini-fridge with Micky Mouse heads stuck all over it (because Paul got tired of running down to the kitchens for snacks all the time). There’s also a small spherical glass tank on the bookshelf at the back of the room containing a single, fat goldfish named Sir Bubbles; Connor had won him in an arm-wrestling competition with the head of Kingsman security, or so the rumour went – nobody has yet asked for further clarification.

And although he seldom joins them during working hours (loveable workaholic that he is), every so often Philip will stop by the office and drop off a potted cacti of some fancy species or other; the team has named the largest cactus among them ‘Philip’ in his honour, and given him a miniature top-hat, much to the man’s distress.
On Eggsy’s days off, between taking his sister to and from nursery and spoiling his mum with trips to nice restaurants for brunch, his free hours are usually split between pestering his Doms for sexy-sexy times (to varying degrees of success) and challenging his teammates to epic, ultra-competitive *Mario Kart* tournaments.

Some of his colleagues are more enthusiastic about the challenge than others. Keana, in particular, tends to get riled up rather easily, and it’s not uncommon for those passing along the corridor outside to occasionally hear one of the following:

“Eat *shit*, you Italian bastard!”

“Don’t you *fucking* dare, Myers.”

“Unwin, I will *end* you, I swear to God.”

It has the added benefit of ensuring that they’re rarely disturbed once the door is closed. Keana tends to have that effect on people when she’s cross.

Eggsy’s pretty decent at *Mario Kart*, with the exception of that nightmarish track with all them rainbows in outer space, and manages to win, on average, perhaps one out of three races. Despite Keana’s vicious enthusiasm, it’s actually Connor who tends to end up the victor at the end of each tournament; he’s the silent-and-deadly type of player who’ll creep up behind you and sit patiently in third place until the final lap, when he’ll zap everyone with lightening and zoom into first place. Eggsy has to hand it to him, it’s a fairly lucrative strategy.

Paul, on the other hand, doesn’t have a competitive bone in his body, and also doesn’t seem to give a shit about where he ranks on the score board at the end of a round. He dedicates his time to sabotaging everyone else with sneakily-placed banana peels, and will occasionally drive around the course *backwards* just because it annoys the rest of his teammates.

Philip, on the rare occasions that Eggsy manages to drag him in through the door and shove a controller into his hands, is absolutely *abyssmal* at *Mario Kart*. Given that he drives for a living, the team dutifully give him shit about it.

The only person who actually uses the office for its intended purpose (i.e. paperwork) is Mark, who habitually declines participating in the tournament in favour of sitting at the small desk near the window and filling out reports, adding the occasional sarcastic comment from the sidelines whenever Keana starts to regain her composure. He seems to enjoy himself well enough, so Eggsy leaves him to it, and doesn’t badger him into playing too often.

Then every once in a while, they’ll have someone from security knocking on the door.

“I was contacted about a noise complaint,” is the usual cheerful introduction. Typically followed by a glance in Eggsy’s direction and, “Agent Lamorak was concerned for your wellbeing, Sir.”

*Agent Lamorak is a grumpy old codger who’s ten years late for his retirement party*, Eggsy wants to say, but doesn’t. Hell, he’ll throw the man a party himself when he finally decides to throw in the towel.

Instead he gives an apologetic smile and promises to keep the noise down. The next few hours will involve all of them elbowing Keana and frantically hissing ‘*shhhh!*’, before they’ll inevitably give up any pretence of keeping quiet and return to their usual rowdiness.

“You’ve got an amazing team,” Roxy comments one afternoon, when he’s taking a break from *Mario Kart* to walk around the grounds with her. She’s off her crutches, and there’s only the slightest
limp to her gait every now and then, and she seems a thousand times happier for it. “I won’t pretend that I’m not a little bit envious of you all. Almost makes me regret taking on so many solo missions.”

“Why don’t you ask Merlin for a change, once you’re back out in the field?” Eggsy suggests, crouching down to accept the ball that JB drops at his feet and tossing it back across the open, grassy field, smiling as both pug and poodle charge after it eagerly. “I’m sure there’s a ton of people just itchin’ for a chance to work with you.”

Roxy shakes her head with a wry smile. “I’m a perfectionist, Eggsy. I’d nit-pick and micromanage them to death, and they’d hate me for it.”

“Rubbish,” the Sub scoffs, throwing an arm around her shoulders to press a noisy smooch against her cheek. “Ain’t nobody who could hate a bruv like you, Rox.”

She hums noncommittally, a smile playing at her mouth, and bumps their shoulders together lightly as they walk. Eggsy counts it as a win.

“So,” he says, reaching down to retrieve the ball again, turning it over in his hands. “How’s Amelia settling into life as a handler?”

“She’s been assigned to Bors while I’m on leave,” Roxy replies, which is all the explanation he needs. The Sub winces.

“That’s a tough break.”

“Mm.” She kicks at a stray twig in her path. “Actually, the two of them seem to get along surprisingly well. Nothing blew up unexpectedly during Alec’s last mission. He bought her flowers. Nice flowers.”

Eggsy gives her a sideways look, lips twitching. “Rox…are you jealous?”

“No.” She elbows him non-too-gently in the ribs. “Shut up.”

“She’ll be assigned to you just as soon as you’re back out in the field,” he reassures, rubbing his side and giving her a wide birth as he tosses the ball again. “Then you can buy her all the flowers you want, yeah?”

Roxy gives him a look, and he wisely turns tail and chases after the ball himself.
Nine minutes left until the bloody alarm clock’s due to go off.

Eggsy’s half-tempted to carefully wriggle out from his cosy cocoon beneath the sheets and switch the damn thing off – lazy mornings are such a rarity, after all – but there’s no way he’ll be able to manage it without waking one (or both) of his Doms, given the way their arms are draped over him. Besides, he’s comfortable right where he is, and he knows that moving himself around is going to awaken a whole world of pain in his overused muscles.

That being said, there’s a far more pleasant ache in his arse that he’s all too happy to revive – a lasting reminder of the way his Doms had worked in tandem last night to strip him and bathe him and then thoroughly fuck his brains out.

Post-mission “congratulations on a job well done” sex still remains his favourite kind.

Grinning to himself, buttocks clenching at the memory of being penetrated by two cocks at once, he squirms pleasantly at the hot ache that reignites itself between his cheeks, burrowing closer into Harry’s side. The Dom stirs at the touch, arm tightening around him briefly.

“Good morning,” the man murmurs, soft and sleep-slurred, hand stroking lazily up Eggsy’s side.

“Hi,” Eggsy whispers back, not wanting to wake Merlin, and nuzzles at Harry’s bare chest – best thing about being fucked so thoroughly post-mission is that his Doms are inevitably coerced by his sleepy, pouty self into spooning him sans-clothing. “Can you switch off the alarm?”

“Mm,” Harry concedes, still half asleep, and rolls over to fumble for the bedside clock. Failing to find the switch, he elects instead to pull the charge cord out of its socket with a firm tug, before rolling back over to curl his arm around Eggsy again.

The boy tries to muffle his sniggering against Harry’s chest, but clearly doesn’t succeed, because Merlin scoots closer to press himself up along the Sub’s back with a sleepy grumble, stubble tickling Eggsy’s skin as the Dom hooks his chin over the lad’s shoulder.

“What’s so funny?” he asks, voice thick with fatigue.

“Shhh,” Eggsy replies, finally clamping down on his laughter. “Go back to sleep. I want a lie-in.”

“Don’t you ‘shush’ me,” Merlin gripes, more amused than anything, and gently pinches the boy’s side to make him squeak and jump. “It’s never too early to turn you over my knee, lad.”

“Nooo,” the Sub whines, pulling a face to keep from laughing again as he squirms himself further into the protection of Harry’s arms. “Tell ‘im he can’t, Harry, we ain’t even had breakfast yet. No spankin’ before breakfast, you said.”

The Dom strokes his hair, eyes still closed, and curls his arm more possessively around the Sub’s waist.

“I won’t let the grumpy Scotsman hurt you, pet,” is Harry’s mumbled reassurance. “At least not until he’s had a cup of tea.”

“After that, you’re fair game,” Merlin adds, his tone low and promising as he presses a kiss just behind Eggsy’s ear. His hand, though, is gentle as it slides down the back of the Sub’s thigh. “How do you feel, lad?”

Eggsy sighs sleepily, eyes closing at both the kiss and the caress. “Sore,” he admits.
It’s to be expected, really, given the number of missions he’s been on over the past couple of months; with Roxy still recovering, a lot of her fieldwork has fallen to him. And while Merlin’s been careful to ensure that Eggsy is awarded his full two days of allotted recuperation time between assignments, the last three missions have kept him out of the country for almost half a week at a time, and his body’s beginning to feel the strain.

Not that he’d elect to stay at home if he was given the option – infiltrating drug cartels and rescuing hostages is exactly what he’d imagined life as an agent would be like when he first signed on as a trainee, and he’s having the time of his life. The legwork just tends to be a little hard on the old hamstrings at times.

“Roxy’s due to be reinstated as of next week,” Merlin tells him, trailing soft, chaste kisses along the back of his neck and down his shoulder. “Once she’s back out in the field, I think it’d be best if you took a wee bit of vacation time yourself, lad. You’ve certainly earnt your pay these past few weeks.”

Eggsy usually bristles at the very notion of taking a break from fieldwork – the last time Harry had suggested a few days’ rest after a rough run of missions, Eggsy had promptly found himself over the Dom’s knee for having blown up in his face about it. But truth be told, he really is knackered, body and soul. A few days without the threat of a new mission hanging over him will be greatly appreciated.

Besides, he feels like he’s been neglecting his mum in recent weeks – between missions and debriefs and team planning and keeping up with his linguistics training, he’s barely had time to pop over for a cuppa between undercover ops. He misses driving Daisy to nursery, misses hearing her excited babble from the backseat as she tries to tell him about her day with her limited (but quickly broadening) vocabulary. He still texts his mum every day – Merlin’s been doing it for him, in his absence, with Eggsy dictating what to type over the audio feed from his glasses – and the Dom’s even updated the official Kingsman Tailor’s website with snapshots from the staged European fashion tour, promoting their new ‘autumn range’ – it’s helped to add a little authenticity to Eggsy’s ongoing “I was away on business” excuse, which Ryan and Jamal had begun to question.

“An’ what about you?” the Sub asks, reaching down with a fumbling hand to grab onto the Dom’s forearm and tug it up and around himself, hugging the limb to his chest with a contented sigh. “If I’m due some holiday time, god knows how many hours you’ve clocked up.”

Harry gives a derisive snort, eyes still closed. “That’s a lovely thought, Eggsy, but I wouldn’t waste your breath. The man hasn’t taken a proper holiday in fifteen years.”

Eggsy pulls a face. “Ain’t that illegal?”

“You’re a secret agent working for an unsanctioned British espionage society, pet,” Merlin reminds him, fingers tapping gently where they rest against the lad’s sternum. “We do a lot of things ‘illegally’.”

“Yeah, but still.” Eggsy wriggles around to face him, a crease in his brow. “No harm in takin’ a couple of days off every once in a while, is there? You’ve got Amelia workin’ for you now; between her an’ Mordred an’ Guinevere, I’m sure they could manage without you for a bit.”

Merlin’s lips twitch a little, and he reaches up to brush Eggsy’s fringe from his forehead with gentle fingers. “Aye. Perhaps you’re right.” He leans in to brush a kiss between the Sub’s eyebrows. “I’ll see what I can do.”

Eggsy grins and snuggles down between his Doms, appeased.
Predictably, another overseas mission crops up before the week is out.

“I’d rather not send you,” Harry tells him, even as he hands over the necessary files. “But unfortunately Lancelot won’t be cleared for active duty until Monday, and we need someone who can leave within the hour. I’m afraid the situation is a little time-sensitive; waiting for another agent to return to headquarters isn’t a viable option at present.”

“S’alright,” Eggsy reassures cheerfully, perching on the edge of the desk as he flips open the manila folder and peruses the mission details. His gaze flickers back up to Harry briefly. “You’re sendin’ me back to that storage hold in Narewka?”

He hasn’t been there in months, but he remembers all too well how desperately he’d wanted to come home again after two days hunkered down in the mud during a torrential downpour that left him soaked to the bone. He’d been laid up in bed for a week after that with a chest infection, hacking up half a lung every time he coughed, tossing and turning when his temperature spiked every night. He doesn’t exactly have fond memories associated with that particular part of Poland.

“You may recall that, during your visit, you were tasked with planting a number of micro-surveillance cameras around the warehouse.” At Eggsy’s nod, Harry continues, “Earlier this morning, those visual feeds all cut off simultaneously, and Merlin has since been unable to revive them. The last twenty seconds of footage broadcasted from the camera nearest the entrance to the facility suggests that at least three individuals were present when the signal was lost.”

“You think it’s the same group I was trackin’ last time?” Eggsy asks, flicking through printed images of the still-shots from the camera feed. The individuals in the photographs are wearing masks, so that doesn’t help him much.

“It’s a possibility,” Harry agrees, lacing his fingers together, elbows braced on the edge of his desk. “If they still have possession of Valentine’s technology, they may have used it to block the signal from the surveillance devices. Regardless of who they may be, we need to scope out the facility and reactivate the cameras as soon as feasibly possible. Take a strike force with you; we don’t know who or what you may come up against, and I’d rather err on the side of caution.”

Eggsy nods again, closes the file, and flashes the Dom an easy grin. “No sweat, bruv. Me an’ my team’ll handle it an’ be home in time for tea.” He leans across the desk to peck a quick, chaste kiss against the man’s lips. “Keep the kettle on for me, yeah?”

Just under three hours later, he’s trekking back up the mud track through the forest that borders Narewka, his team near-silent behind him as they approach the vast clearing that houses the remote
storage facility. The dirt road beneath his feet has been baked hard and firm beneath the summer sun, and the whole place seems a lot more favourable now he’s in dry clothes, and with a warm wind blowing.

They’d driven straight up from the airstrip, and had left Philip with the car about half a mile east of the facility so that the rumble of the engine wouldn’t signal their approach. Eggsy had rather been dreading the walk, remembering shin-deep puddles and clay-like mud, but in truth it’s been a rather pleasant stroll. Pity they’re here on a mission and not to admire the scenery, because the forest is beautiful.

They eventually reach the edge of the clearing, crouching down to allow the undergrowth to shield them from any prying eyes, surveying the warehouse ahead of them in silence for a long moment.

“I’ve got a signal,” Paul murmurs, his voice coming softly through Eggsy’s earpiece, and the agent glances across to where the other Sub has pulled out a handheld tracer. “Something in that building’s emitting a continuous low-level EMP. Not strong enough to disrupt our own tech, but I’m sure close-range it’d probably be capable of knocking out a few cameras.”

“Think you can disable it?”

Paul shrugs, then nods. “I don’t see why not. And even if I can’t switch it off manually, removing it from the area should resolve the problem.”

“Ace. So, me an’ you, we go in an’ turn it off,” Eggsy suggests, careful to keep his voice hushed, switching his gaze back to the facility. “Connor, if you scope out the exit on the left, Mark can do the one on the right. Kee, you stay here an’ give us cover-fire in case we need to skedaddle. Sound alright?”

He receives four quick nods in reply and stands slowly, gun cradled in both hands as he steps out from the treeline, Paul half a pace behind him.

“Good plan, Galahad,” Merlin says via his glasses. “I’m standing by if you need me.”

The man’s voice is a reassurance, but it doesn’t settle the funny feeling in the pit of Eggsy’s stomach. The place is eerily silent – even the birds seem to have realised the seriousness of the situation and have stopped singing to one another – and the Sub can feel his muscles tensing the closer they get to the facility.

Although in all honesty, it’s rather anti-climactic once they get inside.

The warehouse is deserted, no evidence of smuggled cargo (or angry smugglers) anywhere, and within minutes Paul has swept through the vast building twice and managed to locate and disable both tiny EMP generators.

“Excellent work, lads,” Merlin commends over the team audio feed, as Paul shoves the inactive devices into his pocket and accepts Eggsy’s helping hand up from the floor. “The cameras are back online, and now that I know the electromagnetic frequency of that disruptor, this shouldn’t happen again. Good job. Time to come home.”

“Well, you heard the man.” Eggsy leads the way back out into the sunshine, posture finally relaxing again as he soaks up the warmth gratefully. “Connor, Mark, you alright?”

“All quiet on my side.”

“Same here. Be with you in a sec.”
The Sub smiles, holstering his gun. “Awesome. Keana, we good?”

“Nothing to report,” the Dom replies. “Exit’s clear, Boss. Looks like drinks are on Connor tonight.”

The medic huffs a quiet laugh. “Don’t jinx it, Kee - there’s still plenty of time for Galahad to fall in a ditch and break his ankle.”

Eggsy wrinkles his nose at the playful jab, but he’s still grinning. “Fuck off, Con.”

He realises that Paul isn’t at his elbow anymore and pauses, turning to glance over his shoulder. The other Sub is a good ten metres behind, glancing down at his handheld tracer with a visible frown creasing his brow.

“Yo bruv, what’s the hold-up?” Eggsy calls.

Paul doesn’t glance up from his screen. “I could’ve swore I saw another...” he says, trailing off. Then he shakes his head. “It’s gone now, anyway.”

“Seeing things again, Myers?” Keana quips, audibly amused.

The Sub laughs self-deprecatingly. “Probably.”

Eggsy grins. “Wouldn’t be the first time.”

“Shut up, Sir.”

Paul takes another few paces forwards, then stops again, bringing his tracer up sharply. His gun clatters to the floor and his hand shoots to his pocket, fumbling with it for a moment; even from a distance Eggsy can see the raw look of fear in his eyes, and his heart shoots up into his throat.

“No,” Eggsy breathes, a sickening chill curling around his lungs as he tries to push himself to his feet. His numb legs give out underneath him and he hits the ground hard, head spinning, before pushing up onto his arms again. “No. No! Paul!”

His legs refuse to obey him, so he crawls closer towards the smoking remains on his hands and knees. He can hear muffled voices calling out, but the words don’t make it past the pulsing whine still ringing in his ears. He needs...he needs to check...he can’t let himself believe...

Strong arms suddenly circle around his torso, yanking him back.

“Galahad!” It’s Connor’s voice, clearer now that the fog has receded a bit. “Sir, he’s gone. He’s gone. We have to get out of here.”

Eggsy wants to fight him, wants to pull away. They can’t go, not yet, not without...they were supposed to be returning home as a team, they can’t leave him behind like...like that.

But then a second pair of hands latch onto him, dragging him backwards and away from the warehouse, away from Paul, back behind the safety of the treeline, and Eggsy has no choice but to force his stumbling legs to aid them.
The warm, gentle wind blows through the forest, teasing at his fringe, and the acrid stench of burning it carries with it clings cruelly to the back of his throat.

Chapter End Notes

(Chapter warnings: minor character death, grief.)

I'm sorry, Paul. I'm so sorry.

The next chapter is pretty heavy-going, folks, with Eggsy grieving and struggling with a drop, and his true dynamic finally being discovered by individuals he would rather have kept it from. Fair warning, tissues may be needed.
“Bring your team home, Galahad,” Merlin tells him. The Dom’s voice is low and calm, but carries with it the faintest edge of command.

Eggsy clings to that order like a lifeline. How he makes it from Narewka forest to the remote airfield that houses the Kingsman jet without losing his composure is beyond him, but the fact that he still feels numb on the inside probably has a lot to do with it.

His ears have stopped ringing, but he almost wishes they hadn’t because the silence that lingers between them on the drive back to the airstrip is almost unbearable, their shared grief palpable, saturated in the air around them like a thick, dank fog. Eggsy spends the entire journey staring out of the window, watching the picturesque countryside go whizzing by, and trying desperately not to throw up.

He manages to keep it together long enough to see his team (or, fuck, what’s left of them) safely onto the plane and into the air, before sequestering himself away in the small private cabin at the rear of the aircraft.

The moment the door clicks shut behind him, he sags back against it, pressing the knuckles of his clenched fist against his mouth, lungs burning as grief swells, hot and cloying, at the back of his aching throat.

“I’m sorry, lad,” Merlin murmurs through the tinny speaker in his glasses, the man’s usual detached, professional tone giving way to the softer, more sympathetic lilt of Eggsy’s beloved Dom. “The emitters must have been rigged with micro-detonators; it’s likely they were remotely activated when you exited to the compound. There was nothing more you could’ve done to prevent it, son, none of this is your fault-”

Overcome by the sudden surge of grief and guilt that rushes up to punch him in the stomach, Eggsy wrenches his glasses off and forcefully slams them lens-side down on the nearby shelf, the sound echoing around the small cabin, resonating in the silence that lingers afterwards.

He drags both hands through his hair, breathing unevenly, his eyes burning. Stop. Stop it.

Merlin’s only trying to reassure him, he knows that, but the Dom’s wrong. He’s so wrong. Eggsy was the one in charge of the mission; he was the one giving the orders back there, he was the one who’d told the other Sub to pocket the EMP devices, hoping to please Merlin by presenting him with a new piece of shiny tech to study. God, he’d been so stupid. Stupid, stupid, stupid.
And now Paul’s gone. He’s dead. And it’s all Eggsy’s fault.

His knees tremble beneath his weight and he sinks down unsteadily to sit on the edge of the small bed, silver dots swimming in front his eyes as he struggles to calm his breathing. His skin feels hot and prickly all over, buzzing with the promise of an impending drop, and the muscles in his neck and shoulders have become achingly tense.

“Eggsy.”

Shit. He’d forgotten about his earpiece.

The Sub sucks in a startled, hitching breath at the voice, before slapping a hand over his mouth to stifle the sound, tears clumping together on his lashes as he closes his eyes. His throat’s almost too sore to swallow, but he manages to force the lump back down again, gritting his teeth as he tries desperately to keep from shattering into a thousand jagged pieces.

“It’s going to be alright, darling,” Harry soothes. “You’re not alone. Merlin and I, we’re both right here with you.”

And it hurts, it physically hurts to hear his Dom’s voice – to hear him, to feel the reaction his body has to the Harry’s comforting words, and yet to be so very far away from him in person. God, he can hardly stand it. The ache in his neck worsens as he tenses further, the vice around his lungs cinching tighter with every wet, gulping breath of air, and he shakes his head, fingers pulling at his hair again.

Oh fuck. He can’t drop. Not now, not here – not with his team right next door, not when there’s nobody on-board who knows his secret, nobody to ground him. After months and months of finding continual support and emotional stability in the bond he shares with Harry and Merlin, the thought of being trapped in this tiny cabin when he inevitably drops, utterly alone and devoid of physical comfort, absolutely terrifies him.

“You need to calm down, sweetheart,” Merlin urges quietly, and the Sub realises he’s close to hyperventilating again. “Breathe with me, lad, come on.”

Eggsy tries – he really, really tries – but hearing their voices in his ear is only making things a hundred times worse, and he feels closer to dropping than ever. He needs his Doms, aches for their touch, for a hand cupping the back of his neck or stroking through his hair; but listening to them trying to comfort him, knowing full well that it’ll be at least another two hours before they’ll be able to hold him and soothe the pain of the drop with physical contact...

Shit. He can’t do this. He can’t, he can’t, he can’t.

The earpiece bounces off the cabin wall opposite him and skitters a few feet across the carpeted floor. Eggsy stares at it for a long moment, breathing hard, arm lowering from where he’d wrenched it back to hurl the communicator away. His hands tremble in his lap and he clenches them into fists, vision blurring with tears.

“Stop it,” he pleads into the echoing silence of the small cabin, his voice a hoarse whisper. “Don’t do this. Not now.”

He swipes the sleeve of his suit across his eyes, and winces at the scrape of grit against his skin, peering down at the fabric – it’s definitely seen better days. He’s probably smudged the dirt all over his face now, and it shouldn’t make him more upset (it’s just a bit of mud, for fuck’s sake), but it does.

Angry at himself, at his muddy sleeve, at the grit in his eyes, he yanks the garment off roughly and
tosses it aside in a crumpled heap. The tie goes next, then the braces, and the shoes – there are too many things clinging to his tingling, sensitive skin, and he can’t stand it, he just wants them off. At last, stripped down to his undershirt and boxers and socks, clothes and weapons strewn about the small cabin haphazardly, it feels like he can breathe a bit easier.

Grateful for even the smallest measure of relief, he drags his fingers through his hair, hand trembling again, and concentrates on slowing his pulse down a little. He forces himself to fill his lungs more deeply, holding it in as long as the pain in his chest allows before exhaling again, and repeats the cycle over and over until the phantom pins-and-needles have faded from his fingertips, until the panic pulsing through his veins has receded to a background hum rather than a frantic clamouring of bells.

He can do this. He can do this. Just as long as he concentrates on breathing and forgets about everything else. There’ll be time to think about other things later on, when his Doms are close enough to cling to and aren’t stuck waiting for him half a continent away.

Fuck. Fuck. Stop it.

A light knock on the cabin door startles him. “Galahad?”

Eggsy’s breathing hitches at the disturbance, but he forces it to calm again, straightening up a little from his slumped perch on the edge of the bed. There isn’t much he can do about his attire – stripping out of his suit had been the work of mere seconds; getting dressed again would take time and patience. At least he ain’t kneeling or nothing, and his eyes are still dry.

“Yeah?”

The door opens a few inches and Mark peers through the gap, studying him for a moment before stepping fully into the room and closing the door securely behind him. The man’s gaze flickers from the earpiece on the floor to the discarded glasses on the shelf, and then to the various items of clothing strewn about the place. Apparently choosing not to comment on the younger man’s appearance, he steps closer to the bed to stand before Eggsy at military rest – unusually formal for Mark, but perhaps professionalism is the man’s coping mechanism in situations such as these. He certainly seems far more put-together than Eggsy could ever hope to be, given the circumstances.

“Headquarters have been trying to contact you, Sir,” the Sub tells him quietly, and although his voice is a little hoarser than usual, it remains sure and unwavering. “You didn’t report in.”

The ‘Sir’ grates on him in a way it seldom does – he wants to grind his teeth together, to clench his hands into fists, to shake off that immediate feeling of wrongness that washes over him in an uncomfortable, tingling wave.

“It can wait until we’re home,” Eggsy replies, his own voice grief-roughed and hollow-sounding. He swallows, his throat aching anew, and decides that not-talking is probably his best course of action.

“Arthur contacted me,” Mark continues, tilting his head to the side a little, eyeing Eggsy closely. “He asked me to check on you.”

The younger Sub keeps his gaze averted, staring at the smudge of dirt on Mark’s trouser-leg. He wonders absently if the man’s been kneeling for Connor or Keana – it ain’t uncommon for a Sub to turn to a close Dominant friend or colleague for emotional stability if their partner’s not around, and Mark’s never been ashamed about his Submissive inclinations. Sometimes he’ll come to kneel by the sofa in Eggsy’s office when he tires of doing paperwork, settling down with a contented sigh beneath an affectionate caress from one of his teammates, perfectly at ease in his own skin. Eggsy’s always felt a pulse of envy at how easily and openly the older Sub expresses his needs; how Mark
can doze off with his head cushioned on Connor’s thigh one day, and then be out in the field giving orders the next.

Eggsy rarely regrets his decision to keep his dynamic a secret - but now? Now would be one of those times. His whole body’s wound tight with tension, aching with the need for physical contact, for comfort, and he’s still too fucking chicken to admit it to his friends.

“He and Merlin are worried about you, Sir,” the older Sub hedges after a moment. “As am I.”

Eggsy almost flinches at the address this time, hands fisting where they rest on his knees. He swallows to get his throat working again.

“I’m fine, bruv.”

“No, you’re not,” Mark counters calmly. “None of us are.” After a beat of silence, he heaves a short, sharp sigh, lifting a hand to tap a finger near Eggsy’s temple. “Connor wants to take a look at that cut, when you’re ready; you got knocked back a good two metres by the blast. Why don’t you come and sit with us for a spell, let him give you a once-over?”

The youth shakes his head, gaze still lowered. He can’t go back there. He can’t bear to face the rest of the team when he feels so splintered, as though a misplaced word or look might shatter him and send all his secrets spilling out into the open. And if he sees them, if he puts himself in an enclosed space with two Dominants he trusts with his life (three, if he counts Philip up in the cockpit)...then fuck. He ain’t gonna be able to keep it together more than a few seconds.

“Eggsy.” Mark kneels down in front of him suddenly, making it impossible for him to avoid eye contact. The older Sub’s frowning a little, but up close Eggsy can see that his eyes are red-rimmed and a little overbright, like he’s been crying recently. “Listen, mate, I know you’re grieving – god knows the rest of us are – but you can’t lock yourself away in here and pretend you don’t still have a team waiting for you next door.”

The youth does wrench his gaze away then, because the truth in the words hurt. Eggsy’s chest aches all the more. How the fuck is he supposed to explain his need for isolation without giving something away? It’s all too much, his brain’s switched off; he can’t even begin to think of a suitable excuse. He can see his world beginning to unravel at the seams – this is it, this is where everything he’s worked so hard to build comes crashing down around him.

Eggsy’s throat burns fiercely and his eyes are hot and stinging, and no, stop it, not now, not when Mark’s here...

“You’re a Kingsman agent,” the other Sub reminds him, low and calm, but with an underlying note of censure. “You’re the Dominant in charge of this team, Eggsy, not me, and we need you to-”

“No I’m not.”

Mark pauses, a flicker of confusion passing over his features. “Not what?”

“I ain’t a Dom,” Eggsy manages, his voice strained, panic cloying in his throat again. “I ain’t any sort of Dom, never have been, an’ I don’t know what the fuck I’m doin’.”

His breathing is ragged now, coming in shallow little gulps – he can feel himself teetering over that deadly precipice, on the brink of a Sub-drop, and he’s never been so terrified of falling before. He wants Harry, he wants Merlin...he wants it all just to stop.

“You’re...” Realisation dawns in Mark’s eyes, and his hands come up to steady the younger Sub by
the shoulders as the lad hunches forwards, heart pounding, ears ringing.

“I can’t do this anymore,” Eggsy grits out, tears brimming in his eyes. “Fuck, I just…I can’t…”

Mark’s hand closes over the back of his neck, tucking his head down between his knees before he can hyperventilate.

“Alright. Okay.” The man’s grip tightens, becomes something more grounding. “It’s going to be alright, Eggsy. Deep breaths now, come on. I know it hurts, but you need to push past it - fill your lungs all the way. There were go, that’s the ticket.”

His head’s spinning something awful and there are flashing silver dots behind his eyelids now…but the hand on his neck feels nice, grounding enough that he’s able to concentrate on the man’s words, on the note authority they carry, and he forces himself to do as instructed.

“Hold it in for me. Good. That’s brilliant, mate.” Mark shifts closer on his knees, rubbing Eggsy’s back all the while. “Easy now, not so fast.”

It takes a few minutes, but eventually Eggsy manages to regulate his breathing to something a little closer to normal parameters – although his pulse continues to pound loudly in his ears and his muscles are still clenched tight. He braces his elbows on his knees and swipes at his eyes with the back of his hand.

“Sorry,” he mumbles, and hates how wretched his voice sounds.

Mark shakes his head, his brow still creased in concern, and slides his hands down from Eggsy’s shoulders to rest on his forearms instead. “Don’t be. Happens to the best of us, chuck.”

His thumbs brush back and forth against Eggsy’s skin, and even though Mark ain’t a Dom and it won’t do much for his hormonal balance, the caress goes a long way towards easing the tension in his muscles.

He’s okay. They’re okay. Mark knows the truth about his dynamic and the world hasn’t come to an end. Maybe he’ll make it through this after all.

“When was the last time you dropped?” Mark asks him quietly.

Eggsy gives a one-shouldered shrug, clenching and unclenching his hands to relieve the pressure of that phantom buzzing beneath his skin. “S’been a while. Haven’t had a proper one since V-Day.”

The Sub covers Eggsy’s clenched hands with his own, squeezing gently. “You need to call headquarters, love; let Merlin and Arthur help you through the worst of it.”

“No.” Eggsy jerks back, pain lancing through him like a twisting knife even at hearing their names. His breathing quickens again, eyes burning as he shakes his head. “No, please, I can’t, it…it makes it worse. Hearin’ ‘em but not bein’ able to see ‘em, I can’t.”

Mark’s hands slide up to grip his shoulders again. “Hey, hey, shh. It’s alright. I understand.” He leans in to rest their foreheads together and exhales a soft, worried-sounding sigh. “Just breathe, mate, come on. Nice and easy.”

The younger Sub fights to fill his lungs again, keeping his eyes screwed tight shut, endeavouring to hold the tears at bay through sheer physical force since willpower seems to have failed him.

“I’m not a Dom, Eggsy,” Mark murmurs, after a few moments of silence have passed. “There’s only
so much I can do to help you through this. But Connor, he’s right next door – Keana and Philip, too. None of them would hold it against you if they found out the truth.”

Eggsy shakes his head immediately; he can’t tell them his secret, he just can’t – he’s spent the past six months lying to them about who he really is, of course they’re gonna treat him differently when they find out he’s a Sub. And everything’s been so perfect, he doesn’t want to ruin it all so abruptly.

Mark sighs again, hands squeezing Eggsy’s shoulders a little tighter. “There should be an emergency supply of Dropstop patches in the medkit.”

Stomach almost rebelling at the thought of drugging himself up with that shit, Eggsy shakes his head again. “No. Not that. Please not that.”

“Alright. No Dropstop.” Mark leans back a little to gently pinch the boy’s chin, bringing the lad’s gaze up. “Eggsy, love, it’s only going to get worse the longer you fight it,” he murmurs. “I’d put you on your knees myself, if I thought it’d help, but we both know you need a Dom’s guidance right now. So either you put a call through to headquarters, or I need to go next door and ask Connor to come and look and your head. Yeah?”

Eggsy blinks wetly, chest stuttering on hitching breaths every other second. Even the thought of speaking to his absent Doms physically pains him, and he knows hearing their voices will only push him over the edge that much quicker. With Dropstop entirely out of the question, there seems to be only one viable option left to choose from.

“You won’t tell anyone else?” he asks tentatively, peering up at the Sub. “Just Con?”

Mark squeezes his shoulder again. “I’ll be discreet, I promise.”

Eggsy tries not to shiver too visibly when the other Sub’s hands leave him as Mark straightens up and steps away. The buzzing panic that had previously settled to a background hum immediately ratchets back up to an unbearable level. He exhales shakily, bracing his elbows on his knees as he drags a trembling hand down his face.

He’s probably only alone for a couple of minutes at most, but it feels like an eternity, and by the time the cabin door clicks open again Eggsy’s damn near ready to slap on half a dozen patches of Dropstop just to make it all go away.

A hand settles lightly on his shoulder, startling him, but he’s so grateful for the touch that he jerks into the contact rather than away from it.

“Easy, Boss,” Connor soothes, and the bed dips as the Dom settles down beside him. There’s a good few inches between them – other than the hand on Eggsy’s shoulder, there’s no other point of contact, and the Sub aches with how much he wants to close that distance right now.

“Mark explained the situation,” the Dom tells him quietly, thumb rubbing against the collar of Eggsy’s undershirt. “You don’t have to worry about your secret getting out; doctor-patient confidentiality aside, I consider you a friend. Anything that happens between us stays between us. You have my word.”

Eggst nods, face still buried in his hands, throat too tight to speak. He’s more grateful than he could possibly hope to put into words, but that doesn’t stop him from being terrified. Of letting go, of allowing himself to properly feel the turmoil of emotions that have been brewing up behind his sternum. But he needs that release, knows he’ll crash and burn if he keeps fighting it like this, that the adrenaline high and hormonal imbalance will escalate to a point where he really will need rescue
drop-meds to keep him stable. He can’t risk that.

“And as your friend,” Connor continues softly, “I’d like to help you go down for a little while. Is that alright?”

Eggsy nods again, and exhales another shaky sigh when Connor’s hand slides across to the opposite shoulder, the weight of his arm a comforting pressure as it circles around him, drawing him in close. Connor’s stripped out of his combat gear, leaving him in just a t-shirt and slacks, and the fabric of his shirt is soft against Eggsy’s cheek when his head’s tucked down against the Dom’s chest.

“I’ve got you.” Connor’s fingers curve over the back of his neck, strong and sure as they squeezes his nape, and Eggsy could almost cry at the way the gesture instantly quietens his screaming senses. “I’ve got you, mate. Everything’s going to be fine.”

Keeping his eyes closed, Eggsy rests his forehead against a solid pectoral, head spinning, slightly overwhelmed by the sudden rush of relief that sweeps through him. He didn’t think it’d be so easy, going down for another Dom like this after so long…but he trusts Connor, and everything else after that seems to be instinctual.

It ain’t Harry’s hand, or Merlin’s, but it’s enough to keep him from drowning, and he’ll cling to it as long as he has to.

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“Tilt your chin up, love. There we go.”

The antiseptic stings, but it’s a distant sort of burn, numbed by the hazy blanket of contentment Eggsy’s managed to bury himself in. Being on his knees helps – he can’t say for sure how long he’s been down here, but it’s long enough that he can’t really feel his feet anymore. Doesn’t care either way, as long as he stays like this forever; stays down here where it’s safe and quiet, where that horrible sense of despair and panic can’t hope to reach him.

Connor dabs at a deeper cut near his temple, and the burn of the antiseptic is enough to make him stir a little from his daze, slow, deep breathing stuttering on a quiet gasp.

“Sorry.” The Dom’s ungloved hand shifts to settle on the side of his neck, thumb stroking against his pulse-point. “I’m almost done. You okay for me to finish up?”

Eggsy nods, cheek resting against Connor’s knee, blinking sluggishly as the man’s gentle touch threatens to tug him back under again. He’s so tired. And not the pleasant tiredness of deep Subspace, but something else, something thick and grey and miserable that’s lingering just beyond what his mind can access, something that makes his chest feel tight and heavy even this far down.
“Shhh.” Connor’s thumb shifts again, this time to brush away a tear as it tumbles over the boy’s lashes to streak a hot, scalding path down his cheek. “I know, mate. It’s alright.”

Eggsy doesn’t even know why he’s crying… but he doesn’t want to dwell on it, either. Whatever’s got him so upset must be something awful, if it’s making him hurt so bad even when he’s spaced out like this, even when everything else in his body feels floaty and peaceful. He’s not… he’s not sad, not really – or at least not inside his foggy head – but his eyes seem to disagree. They just keep leaking.

Not much he can do to stop ’em, though, so he focuses on Connor’s hands instead, on staying still for the Dom as he finishes cleaning up Eggsy’s cuts and carefully glues a couple of steri-strips over the deepest one near the Sub’s temple.

“There.” Connor snaps off the glove, tossing it into his medkit, and carefully cups Eggsy’s chin to get a proper look at his face. “Good as new.”

Eggsy gives a tired, weak smile, still too far down to think about forming words, and leans into the contact with a quiet sigh. Connor returns the smile, although the Dom still looks sad about something, and in his current state of fuzzy-headedness, Eggsy can’t begin to work out why for the life of him.

“Seatbelts on, folks - I’ll be taking us down in a few minutes,” a voice says distantly from somewhere above Eggsy – he knows he recognises the speaker, but all the names he tries to pull from his foggy memory come up blank.

Connor’s fingers brush his fringe back carefully. “We’ll be landing soon. Do you think you can come up here and sit with me for a spell?”

Eggsy’s gaze flickers to the requested area of mattress as Connor lightly taps the bedsheets with his free hand. He ain’t really sure why they’re landing, or what they’re landing, but sitting next to the Dom sounds nice. He nods slowly.

“Yeah? Good man.” Connor’s smile is warmer now, and he keeps his movements slow as he carefully hooks both hands beneath Eggsy’s arms to heave him upright. “Here, let me help you…”

With his lower legs still numb (perhaps even gone entirely, he honestly can’t tell), Connor does most of the weight-bearing for him, guiding him up to sit on the edge of the bed, where he promptly lists against the Dom’s chest bonelessly. Connor wraps his arms around the Sub, giving him a brief, tight squeeze.

“I know you’re tired,” he sympathises. “But we need to get strapped in. Here, tell you what… lay down for me. There we go, good boy.”

Eggsy ain’t sure what the game plan is, but lying down is an awesome idea. He’s so fucking tired. The moment his head hits the pillow his eyes are closing, and he sleepily hums his acquiescence when Connor asks him to roll over, although can’t summon the oomph to get his limbs to obey him

“Let me, dove,” the Dom says after a few beats of silence, and gently nudges him over onto his back. “I’m going to fasten you in for the landing, alright? Stay still for me.”

The youth hums again, already drifting. He’s vaguely aware of a blanket being tucked around him, of a faint tightening sensations across his chest and abdomen and just above his knees, but fatigue weighs so heavily on him that he lacks even the strength to open his eyes. The world around him rumbles, the bed beneath him vibrating faintly, but Connor’s hand stays in his hair the whole time,
fingers gently rubbing at his scalp, and the soothing touch is enough to block out everything else.

Eggsy doesn’t dream. In fact, there’s nothing at all to mark the passage of time other than how dry his mouth feels when he next comes to.

His throat’s dry too, and his body aches like he’s gone one too many rounds with a brick wall, head throbbing with every pulse of his heartbeat. He groans softly, a hoarse sound that rasps in his throat and reverberates through his pounding skull, and curls in on himself a little more.


Eggsy stirs at the familiar voice, leaning back into the welcoming warmth of a solid body spooning him from behind. “Mm…Harry?”

“I’m here,” the Dom murmurs. “We’re both here, poppet. How are you feeling?”

“Sore.” He blinks at the unfamiliar surroundings, brow furrowing sleepily. “Wha’s goin’ on?”

“You’re still aboard the Kingsman jet,” Merlin explains, suddenly appearing in the Sub’s line of vision as he perches on the edge of the small bed, hand closing over one of Eggsy’s. “Don’t worry about your team – I sent them all home a few hours ago. Connor thought it might be best if we let you sleep off the worst of it before trying to move you.”

There’s a concerned crease in the Scotsman’s brow, and Eggsy wants to smooth it flat with his fingers, or say something funny to make the Dom smile – but all he can manage is a confused sort of frown in the man’s direction.

“Worst o’what?” he slurs, probing at his aching face with tentative fingers, feeling the tenderness of fresh bruises along his jawline.

Harry’s thumb rubs back and forth where his hand is resting on Eggsy’s midriff. “You had a drop, darling. Don’t you remember?”

All at once, the events of the past few hours come hurtling back to greet him in an overwhelming rush of brutal clarity. The mission, the EMP devices, the explosion. Paul. Oh god, Paul.

Eggsy takes a few shallow, shaky breaths, his chest suddenly tight again. “Yeah. No, I remember. I...” He rubs a hand over his mouth, eyes burning with the threat of tears. “I remember.”

Harry’s arm tightens around him anew, and Merlin leans down to press his lips to the boy’s hairline in a lingering kiss, fingers stroking through his hair. They remain that way for a long moment, Eggsy with his eyes squeezed tight shut, wishing quite selfishly to forget the day’s events all over again – to go down on his knees and find that peaceful plain of existence where he cares about nothing and nobody, where he can just exist without this crushing burden of grief and guilt threatening to choke him.

Merlin’s lips move to press a kiss between his eyebrows. “Let’s get you home.”

Home. Yeah. Maybe that’s the better option.
They hold a funeral for Paul later that same week.

The skies open in the heaviest downpour London’s seen in months, and consequently the gathering at the cemetery is a small cluster of black-clad mourners huddled beneath black umbrellas.

It’s probably supposed to be poetic or something – symbolic of the world grieving Paul’s loss, or some shit like that - but as Eggsy peers around at the grim-faced, dark-clad pallbearers and listens to the kindly, elderly vicar droning on about new paths and better pastures, he can’t help but think about how much Paul would hate the solemnity of it all, if he were here.

The coffin they lower into the ground is empty, because there hadn’t been enough of a body left to bury. The whole thing feels like play-acting; like a mockery of how it’s supposed to be done. Eggsy doesn’t understand the purpose of any of it. Paul’s dead, how is burying an empty wooden box in his name supposed to make things better for anybody involved?

He spends every second of the service wishing he were someplace else.

“We were thinking of getting a drink at the Burlington Arms.” Mark tells him afterwards, his shoulder brushing against Eggsy’s as they walk slowly back towards where the funeral cars are parked and waiting for them at the cemetery gates. “For old time’s sake.”

The older Sub’s eyes are still red from crying – he’d spent most of the funeral leaning against Gwaine and swiping surreptitiously at his cheeks. The youth envies how easily Mark (and the rest of his team, for that matter) have able to grieve for their fallen comrade; there hadn’t been a dry eye among his unit.

Eggsy, on the other hand, hasn’t shed a tear in three days. He’d wept that first night, sandwiched between his Doms, aching and miserable and heartbroken in the wake of his drop. But he hasn’t been able to cry since – no matter how guilty he feels over what happened, no matter how agonising the weight of grief and loss in his chest has become. It’s as though his misery has barricaded itself behind a transparent wall within him – he knows it’s there, clear as day, but he can’t get to it, nor it to him. It just sits there, growing larger and more frightening by the day. He doesn’t know how to make it stop.

“Eggsy?”

He stirs from his melancholy, returning Mark’s grip as the older Sub slips his hand briefly into Eggsy’s.

“Sorry. I was…” He shakes his head, giving Mark’s fingers another squeeze. “Maybe some other time, yeah? You guys go ahead.”

The Sub eyes him closely for a moment. “Alright, mate,” he relents after a beat. “If you’re sure.”
Mark turns, pulling him to a sudden, tight hug that makes their umbrellas bounce off each other, pressing a kiss to his hair. “I’ll be in touch, alright? Text me if you need anything.”

“Yeah,” the youth agrees, leaning into the embrace gratefully, the weight in his chest easing for the briefest of moments, before forcing himself to pull away. “You too, bruv.”

He watches the Sub move on ahead up the path to join the rest of his team. Eggsy stays where he is, umbrella going lax in his hand, letting the cold rainwater soak into his suit jacket as he watches them pile into the funeral cars, water trickling down from his damp fringe. He can’t really feel it. It’s like he’s watching himself getting drenched, but the sensation itself has been removed, spliced from his consciousness and tucked behind that invisible wall right along with the rest of his emotions.

“You’re going to catch cold if you’re not careful,” Harry chides softly, appearing at his side, holding up a large umbrella to cover the both of them.

The Dom’s arm winds securely around his lower back, and Eggsy sags against him, dragging his blurred gaze away from the departing cars.

“Sorry,” he mumbles.

Harry brushes a kiss against his temple, holding him close for a long moment. “Shall we go home?”

Eggsy doesn’t answer at first, head tucked beneath Harry’s chin, nausea curling cold and leaden in the pit of his stomach. What he wants most of all is to be safely sandwiched between both his Doms, but that ain’t possible right now. It would’ve been too great a security risk to have both Harry and Merlin here together, so the Scotsman had volunteered to stay behind at HQ to make sure the world didn’t go to shit in Harry’s absence. Eggsy wishes he hadn’t come here in the first place – getting out of bed that morning had been a big mistake.

“Darling?”

The Sub stirs again, blinking hard to clear his vision. “Mm?”

Harry tips his chin up gently to study his features for a moment, before pressing another gentle kiss to his brow. “Come on. I think someone needs their bed.”

Ain’t that the truth.

Once they’re home and dry, he manages to persuade Harry to let him kip on the sofa instead. He’s bone-tired, that’s true enough, but the thought of sleeping upstairs on his own without both his Doms there to hold him just seems wrong somehow, and he knows instinctively that he’d never be able to settle if he tried.

Head pillowed on a cushion in Harry’s lap, woollen blanket draw up over his shoulders, he feels safe enough to sink down into a more contented headspace. Eyes blinking sluggishly as fingers card through his hair, he watches the steady rise and fall of JB’s chest as the dog snoozes in his basket on the far side of the lounge.

“Harry?” he murmurs eventually, into the cozy silence of the room.

“Mm?”

“When Merlin lets me go back to work,” Eggsy says, words a little slurred, “I wanna switch to doin’ solo missions like Rox.”
The fingers in his hair pause, and the Sub can sense Harry’s confusion even without seeing his expression. “That isn’t a choice one makes lightly, my dear.”

“I know,” Eggsy agrees softly. “But I’ve thought about it. An’ the team thing ain’t workin’ out for me.”

Harry sighs quietly, and resumes stroking his hair. “We’ll talk about this at a later date, poppet. Now isn’t the best time to be making rash decisions.”

The boy nods, even though he has no intention of altering his decision. He’s already made up his mind.

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Roxy’s brow furrows when he tells her the news a week or so later.

“But they’re your team, Eggsy,” she says, sitting down on the bench beside him. “You can’t just give them to me.”

“Merlin’s makin’ me take another week off,” he replies, watching JB and Archie as they sniff around the trees nearby. “It ain’t fair to make ‘em sit an’ wait on my account, especially when you need a unit for your own mission.”

She still seems unhappy about the suggestion. “But it’s deep-cover,” she argues. “We could be gone for up to a fortnight. What if you get assigned another mission before they’re back?”

Eggsy shrugs dismissively. “Ain’t a big deal. About time I tried my hand at a solo gig, anyway.”

Roxy eyes him closely for a moment, letting the silence linger between them, before reaching across to rest a hand over his, squeezing gently. “Is this about Paul?”

He doesn’t flinch at the name, but it’s a near thing, and the Dom’s expression softens a little in understanding.

“What happened to him wasn’t your fault, Eggsy,” she tells him, low and firm. “You can’t go on blaming yourself like this. And pushing your team away isn’t going to fix anything.”

Eggsy looks away, swallowing past the ache that’s suddenly in his throat. “That ain’t it,” he insists, once he’s certain his voice won’t waver, and turns back to face her. “I just…I don’t want anythin’ to happen to you, bruv. An’ my team, they’re good – they’re amazin’, yeah? An’ they’re the only
people I can trust to bring you home safe. Let ‘em help you, just this once. Please? For me?”

Roxy studies him a moment longer, then tugs him closer into a tight hug. Resting her cheek against his hair, she sighs heavily. “Alright,” she concedes. “But just this once. They’re still your team. And you better not do anything stupid while we’re gone, you hear me?”

Smiling against her shoulder, Eggsy nods and squeezes her back. “I’ll try my best.”

Eggsy’s running so fast, the corridor’s a blur of coloured wallpaper and darkened doorways. He’s almost out of time. Every second counts, and if he slows down even for the briefest fraction of a second, he won’t make it in time to save them.

He bursts through a set of double doors at the far end of the corridor, and skids to a halt in the sterile-white chamber he finds beyond. The lights are so bright he can barely see, his eyelids aching as he strains to keep them open, and he stumbles blindly for a few paces, arms flailing in front of him.

He collides with something solid, bouncing off and stumbling backwards, losing his footing on the blood-slicked tile floor.

“Come on, mate,” Connor urges, and Eggsy glances up sharply from where he’s fallen to see the medic standing not two metres away from him, hands pressed flat against the transparent wall of his cell. “Quickly, you’re running out of time. Keana’s almost out of air.”

Eggsy’s gaze cuts across to the neighbouring cell, where the Dom in question sits slumped against the glass, eyes open to half-mast, lips blue as she sucks in raspy, wheezing breaths.

“Where are the controls?” Eggsy glances between the two cells frantically, his breathing growing shallower and more rapid as panic swells in his chest. “I can’t see ‘em. Shit. Okay, don’t worry, just…just gimme a minute to think.”

“Think faster,” Keana croaks, breath frosting in the air of her cell. “He can’t swim forever.”

The frantic splashing from the giant tank in the corner grows louder, and Eggsy turns to see Mark cutting rapidly through the water, pursued by a shark three times his size.

“Hurry!” the Sub shouts, choking on seawater, trying to scale the side of the tank as the shark closes in on him. “Eggsy, don’t just stand there! Break the glass!”
Suddenly the tank is inches away from him, and without pausing to think it through he pulls his fist back, punching a hole clean through the glass. It splinters, cracks appearing around the puncture-mark, fanning out in a huge spider web before the whole thing shatters, sending a tidal-wave of warm water washing over him. He lets it carry him across the room, holding his breath until the tide has receded, the sand beneath his cheek soft and cushioning.

There’s a clump of seaweed inches from his face, and perched on top is rectangular remote control with a single red button in the centre. It must be the release for the cells – he’s not too late after all, there’s still time to save them. He can do this!

He scrambles upright, control in hand, and hits the button without further hesitation.

“Oh god. What did you do, Sir?”

Eggsy looks up, startled. Paul stares back at him in horror, arm outstretched in front of him, three little black chips held in the palm of his hand. Fear begins to creep down Eggy’s spine and he shakes his head, taking a few stumbling steps closer.

“Paul-”

“No, stay back!” the Sub warns. “You’ve activated the detonators. It’s too late, I…I’m going to die, Eggy. Oh god. I’m going to die.”

“I’m sorry,” Eggsy blurs, tears burning in his eyes, in his throat. “I didn’t know. I didn’t realise-”

“You did this,” Paul insists raggedly, and as Eggsy watches his skin begins to flake away, disintegrating into ash piece by piece. The Sub screams, but remains standing, hand outstretched. “Please! Please, Eggy! Eggy!”

“Eggsy!”

He lurches awake with a gasp, twisting away from the hand on his shoulder, breathless and disorientated. He whacks his arm against the headboard in his quest to escape and yelps in pain, but the sharp throbbing serves to yank him quickly back to reality, even as strong arms close around him to stop him from injuring himself further.

“Easy, easy,” Merlin soothes, his tone low but urgent as he drags the boy back against his chest to keep him from thrashing. “It’s alright, lad. You’re safe, it was just a dream.”

Eggsy’s heart is pounding a mile a minute, adrenaline thrumming through his veins as he slowly sags against the Dom’s chest, trembling in the wake of his nightmare. He feels so fucking raw – like he’s been peeled from the inside out, leaving all his senses weeping and exposed to the elements. The grief’s so intense he could drown in it.

He doesn’t even realise he’s crying until the sound of his own loud, guttural sobs echo back to him in the silence of the room.

And once he starts, he just can’t stop. A week and a half since he lost Paul, and he’s finally feeling it, really feeling it, for the first time. All that guilt and pain and self-loathing, all that misery, it’s welling up inside of him like one big, cataclysmic eruption, and fuck, he ain’t ever been so glad to get it all out.

He cries until his eyes are red and tear-swollen, until his throat is so raw he can barely give sound to his weeping, and feels a thousand times lighter for it.
“Shh,” Harry soothes, rubbing his back as the Sub hiccups the last of his tears into Merlin’s damp shoulder, cradled snugly between the two of them. “It’s alright, darling. You’re going to be alright.”

Yeah. Maybe he will be, after all.

Chapter End Notes

So this chapter totally killed me to write, but Eggsy needed that release after all the shit he's been through. He's still got a few more bumps to get over before he can put this whole mess behind him and be at peace with Paul's loss, but it's mostly up from here.

Don't worry, Eggsy will reunite and reconcile with his team soon enough. Mark and Connor aren't ready to give up on him just yet. And solo-Eggsy, as it turns out, takes a few too many stupid risks for his Doms’ liking, so that particular career will be short and not so sweet.

As always, I love hearing what you thought of the chapter! <3
Eggsy hasn’t set foot in his office in over a week.

It’s fucking cowardly of him, really, avoiding the guys like this. But he ain’t ready to face them just yet. He’s still dealing with his own grief, and the thought of seeing it reflected in the eyes of his friends…God, he gets phantom guilt-aches just thinking about it. The team should be leaving for Russia with Roxy any minute now, so he’d figured it’d be safe enough to venture down here without running the risk of bumping into anyone.

But to see the room so *empty* is unsettling. These past few months, he’s grown accustomed to their company during everyday activities – meals, paperwork, sparring, *Wii* marathons – with his office acting as their central hub. And *fuck*, he’s gonna miss having them around.

As though sensing his mood’s sudden shift to melancholy, JB whines at his feet and butts his head against the Sub’s shin. Eggsy glances down, the corner of his mouth straining to twitch upwards despite the thickness of grief in his throat.

“I’m alright,” he promises. “S’just a bit quiet, innit?”

JB sneezes his agreement and abruptly waddles across the room to sniff around the furniture, nose pressed to the carpet as he circles the sofa, perhaps attempting to track down the missing team members by scent. Eggsy sighs softly as he watches him, guilt gnawing at his gut all over again. Paul had been particularly fond of JB – a sentiment the pug returned with eager, slobbery enthusiasm – always carrying a treat (or four) in his pocket, much to JB’s delight. And it just about breaks Eggsy’s heart now, watching the dog snuffle at the beanbag that Paul had tended to favour during their *Mario Kart* tournaments, knowing that he’ll never get another chance to yell at the Sub for sneakily feeding JB biscuits when he thought Eggsy wasn’t watching.

The ache in his throat worsens to such an extent that he has to turn away. He crosses over to the window to peer out at the vast, expansive grounds of Kingsman HQ, his breathing carefully measured, his fists clenched. *This* is why he’s going solo. He can’t do this again, he…he can’t go through it a second time.

“Galahad.”

Eggsy startles at the voice, eyes darting over towards the doorway. Mark gazes back at him impassively, but there’s a line in his brow that Eggsy can read as disapproval, even from a distance. The man’s kitted out in combat gear, which leads Eggsy to assume he’s probably come straight from the team’s pre-mission briefing – and come to think of it, that might also explain Mark’s current semi-frown of disapproval.
“Arthur told me I might find you here,” the older Sub remarks, stepping into the office and closing the door behind him with a soft click, the sound like a judge’s gavel in the silence of the room. “We haven’t seen much of you these past few days.”

Eggsy turns back towards the window, swallowing past the lump in his throat. There’s no point making up excuses; for one, he can’t think of any that would adequately justify his absence, and saying “I can’t bear to face the team after I got Paul killed” just isn’t a viable option.

“We were given a briefing package on Monday,” Mark continues, his tread quiet as he crosses the room slowly. “Infiltration op, deep cover; anywhere from a week to a month, holed up in some dingy safehouse in the arse-end of Russia. And then I go and find out this afternoon that the agent we’ve been assigned to is Lancelot.” A hand lands on the youth’s shoulder, squeezes firmly, gives him an ever-so-gentle shake. “Were you even going to say goodbye?”

No, Eggsy thinks but doesn’t say. He doesn’t need to. They both know the truth already.

Mark sighs quietly, and a short beat of silence lingers before a solid chest is pressed against Eggsy’s back, strong arms winding around him in a backwards hug.

“You’re an idiot,” the Sub mutters against his hair, the words lacking any real heat. “I understand what you’re trying to do, you plonker – but trust me, it isn’t going to work. Once you’ve got your head screwed back on straight, we’ll be waiting for you, yeah?”

Eggsy nods, his throat almost too tight to speak, one hand coming up to grip the man’s forearm where it rests across his midriff.

“Thanks.”

“Mm. Oh, and just so we’re clear.” Mark’s hold on him tightens briefly. “If I find out that you’ve landed yourself in Medical while we’re away over some stupid, hare-brained stunt, I won’t half smack you one.”

The younger man’s lips twitch up in a quiet smile. “I’ll be careful, bruv. I promise.”

“You’d better.”

At their feet, JB’s clearly had enough of being ignored and yips softly, rear end wiggling in excitement when they turn their attention towards him. Mark laughs, stepping back from the embrace to crouch down in front of the pug, letting JB butt up against the palm of his hand, demanding affection. Eggsy takes advantage of the Sub’s momentary distraction and scrubs the tell-tale dampness from his eyes with the sleeve of his jacket.

“Look after him for me, won’t you?” Mark asks, gesturing towards Eggsy with a jerk of his head as he scratches the pug behind the ears. “He’s a bit thick sometimes, but I happen to be rather fond of him. I’m afraid he’s liable to break something without adult supervision.”

“Fuck off,” Eggsy grunts, and aims a half-hearted kick at the man’s side, which Mark blocks without glancing up from JB. “An’…be safe, yeah? You still owe me a pint, you tight bastard.”

“Duly noted.” Mark shoots him a cheerful grin as he stands, then snaps a quick, sharp salute. “See you in a couple of weeks, Sir.”

Eggsy watches him leave silently and, for the first time since the incident in Poland, feels a sliver of doubt take hold regarding his decision to go solo.
He knows it’ll benefit Roxy, having such a skilled team at her back, and he’s confident enough in Lancelot’s ability as an agent to know that she won’t drag any of them into danger unnecessarily; but then if he’s so sure about it all, why does he desperately want to run after Mark and call the whole thing off? This was Eggsy’s choice, after all. He’s doing this for them. Roxy and the guys, they’ll get along great, and after a couple of missions together they won’t care that he’s switched to flying solo. They’ll forget about him and move on.

Which is fine. It’s fine.

Fuck.

“...”

“You said a week, guv,” Eggsy whines, leg swinging as he sits perched on the edge of Harry’s desk, heel bumping against the wood rhythmically. “An’ it’s been way more than that already. When are you gonna let me back out in the field?”

“When a suitable mission presents itself,” Harry replies calmly without glancing up from his paperwork. “Don’t mark the furniture, poppet.”

The Sub thinks that’s pretty rich, considering the number of times Harry’s buggered him across said furniture with invariably messy results, and shoots him a look that says so. Only the Dom still isn’t watching him, he’s busy making an illegible notation with his fountain pen in the margin of – what, stock reports? Seriously? He’s here pouring his heart out and Harry’s more interested in fucking stocktaking?

Eggsy huffs out a gusty sigh and tilts his head back to glare at the ceiling, heel thunking down a little harder. “What’s with the mission-shortage all of a sudden? It’s a fuckin’ conspiracy, if you ask me. Kay left for Beijing last night, an’ I know Bors is due to head off on that undercover op in Novi Sad sometime today. How come the older geezers get to have all the fun?”

A faint crease appears in Harry’s brow, but he still doesn’t look up from his documents, so it could just be at the discovery of excessive expenditure on biscuits, or something.

“You aren’t supposed to know about that; it’s confidential,” the Dom tells him, although he doesn’t sound particularly bothered by the youth’s knowledge. A short pause, then, “Eggsy, darling, I’ve asked you not to kick the desk.”

Harry’s still not paying attention to his plight, and that pisses him off probably more than it ought to.
The rational voice at the back of Eggsy’s mind knows it ain’t Harry’s fault that there aren’t any suitable solo missions going spare at the moment, but he’s been benched for a week and a half now, and he’s missing his team like a fucking hole in his heart, so that rational part’s been whittled down to something teeny-tiny and fairly insignificant. Restlessness and frustration have rendered him short-tempered and sullen, and that really ain’t the best combination for him. He’d initially sought out Harry in an effort to garner some sympathy (and yeah, okay, with the hope that maybe the Dom would have a secret mission or three hidden up his sleeve), but ten minutes of whining hasn’t made a lick of difference, and it sucks.

“C’mon, guv, there’s gotta be somethin’ I can do,” Eggsy gripes, and the thunk of his heel against the wood is hard enough to rattle the stationary in the pen-tidy.

Harry’s sigh is soft and resigned in the beat of silence that follows; he carefully caps his pen and lays it down to rest beside his paperwork with a sense of finality.

“You’re right,” the Dom acknowledges with a quiet sort of calm that never bodes well for Eggsy. “There is something you can do.” Harry finally gives him his full attention and, coincidentally, the youth has an immediate and overwhelming urge to duck his head and avert his gaze. “You can go and stand with your nose in the corner until you’re ready to listen to me.”

The ‘you mouthy little shit’ isn’t tacked on at the end there, but Eggsy hears it anyway.

“What? Nooo.” Eggsy’s previous frustration-fuelled confidence has turned tail and fled, leaving him with nothing but a growing sense of regret over his actions and dread for his imminent future. “Harry, that ain’t fair.”

“Yes, isn’t life tragic.” Harry tugs on his wrist until he’s standing, then gets him moving with a prompting swat to the back of his thigh. “The corner, Eggsy, if you please.”

Eggsy could tell him that he ain’t pleased, tell him exactly where he can shove his bloody corners and a lot more besides, maybe even stamp his foot for the sake of it – but nah, he ain’t that brave. Or that needy. Pushing Harry would be a sure-fire way to earn himself a trip over the Dom’s knee, and while he can certainly see the appeal in getting rid of a heap of his pent-up frustrations that way, it’d also leave him kinda spacey and sleepy for the rest of the day, and he needs to be on top of his game in case a mission pops up out of the blue.

So instead, he lets out a particularly expressive huff (on a scale of ‘meh’ to ‘fuck you’, it definitely slots into the ‘ugh, whatever’ category), and stomps over to the far corner of the office, leaning with his shoulder braced against the wall and his arms crossed over his chest, glaring at the wallpaper moodily.

“Eggsy.”

The Sub huffs again. “What? I’m in the fuckin’ corner, ain’t I?”

There’s the sound of the chair creaking as Harry stands up. “Perhaps you need my assistance in remembering how to stand properly?”

“No!” Eggsy straightens his posture immediately, arms moving behind his back, right hand clasping his left wrist in a loose hold. “S’fine, I remember. Ta.”

“Mm.” Harry’s hum sounds distinctly amused as he retakes his seat, and it makes Eggsy’s cheeks flush a little. “We’ll see. Fifteen minutes, poppet.”

The Sub doesn’t bother tamping down on his wordless whine of protest, briefly tempted to slump
forwards and rest his brow against the wall for dramatic effect – but shifting his posture might lead to penalty time getting added on to his current total, and it ain’t worth the risk. He fucking hates corner-time (which is probably why it’s so bloody effective), but at least it doesn’t put him under the way spankings do. It’s just so bloody boring.

Immobility has never suited him well (even as an unemployed Navy dropout living with his mum, he’d still been out and about all the time, exploring the abandoned industrial sites on the edge of the city with his free-running mates, doing parkour and shit), and while time in the corner might be a bit more dignified than ending up pink-arsed and crying over his Dom’s knee, it lacks that comforting physical closeness he tends to associate with discipline. And sure, he knows Harry’s gonna hug him straight after – that’s a given – but ‘after’ is still ages away and his skin’s already starting to feel itchy.

Ugh. He shouldn’t have kicked the fucking desk.

“Halfway there, Eggsy,” Harry tells him, several centuries later. “You’re doing well.”

The reassurance helps, even though a part of Eggy despairs that he’s only been here for eight or so minutes when he swears it’s been half a lifetime. Still, the tension in his shoulders eases a little at the words, the buzz in his skin fading. Soon he’ll be out and he can apologise and wheedle some sympathetic kisses out of his Dom, and everything’ll be fine.

A sudden knock on the door has him tensing again, but it’s a sign of how far he’s come these past six months that he doesn’t automatically jerk out of his place the corner. He knows the door’s locked, and that Harry won’t grant entrance to anyone without Eggsy’s permission, especially if he’s in a place of Submission.

“It’s only Merlin, poppet,” the Dom reassures. “Shall I let him in?

Eggsy nods, muscles relaxing again, and listens out for the familiar bzzt of the magnetic lock disengaging, the click of the handle turning, and the quiet tread of another set of feet on the office’s carpeted floor.

“Oh dear,” Merlin comments cheerfully, as the lock activates again behind him. “Had a bit of a disagreement, did we?”

“Mm,” Harry confirms, and there’s the soft chink of a cup being set back down in its saucer. “But he’s serving his time without a fuss.”

“Is he now?” the Scotsman asks, with a note of approval in his voice that Eggsy knows is for his benefit. “Good lad. Is he almost done?”

“Another four minutes.” There’s the sound of a drawer closing, the creak of Harry’s desk-chair as he stands up again. “I take it you have news on the trade situation?”

Merlin gives a grave hum of confirmation. “My team intercepted another transmission from the south dock; Yassoff’s cargo appears to have arrived safely, it’ll be en route to the rendezvous point later this afternoon.”

Eggsy listens, curiosity piqued, and tries to resist the urge to turn around and lean in closer when their voices immediately lower to a murmuring too quiet for him to make out the individual words. Sneaky bastards. They probably got him interested on purpose; if it was totally classified they wouldn’t have started talking about it in front of him to begin with.

He fidgets a little, shifting from foot to foot restlessly. Ugh. Come on, surely his time must be up by
now? It feels like he’s been staring at this bloody awful wallpaper for hours, when are they gonna let him-

“Alright, darling,” Harry calls across the room. “Time’s up. You can come out now.”

Eggsy sighs in relief and beats a hasty retreat from the dreaded corner. Harry’s vacated his desk in favour of taking up residence in one of the comfortable armchairs opposite Merlin over by the ornate marble fireplace (a purely decorative piece, since having an actual functioning chimney would be a security risk, or something – because apparently enemy operatives parachuting down unlit fireplaces was a thing that had happened to the founding members of the Kingsman Service all those decades ago, poor sods). Eggsy moves close enough that Harry can reach for him, and allows himself to be tugged down to sit in the Dom’s lap for a cuddle.

“Sorry,” he mumbles into the man’s shirt collar. The Dom always smells so nice, particularly in his suit – that pleasant blend of cologne and professional dry cleaning and something uniquely Harry.

The Dom gives him a comforting squeeze and kisses his brow. “Apology accepted. Now, since you’ve been so good, would you like to see what Merlin’s brought for you?”

Eggsy sits up a little straighter to glance across at the Scotsman, who raises his electronic clipboard temptingly, patting his thigh with the other hand.

“A mission?” Eggsy asks hopefully.

Harry breathes a quiet laugh, brushing another kiss against the shell of his ear. “Why don’t you go and find out?”

Eggsy pauses long enough to turn his head and steal a proper (albeit chaste) kiss from Harry’s lips before hopping up and crossing over to Merlin, plonking himself down in the Dom’s lap unceremoniously and grinning at the man’s resultant oomph.

“There’s a trading company in Bristol that we’ve been monitoring for quite some time now,” Merlin tells him once he’s recovered, passing over the clipboard, free arm looping around the lad’s waist to give him a squeeze. “A few hours ago, we were able to confirm that a shipment of unregistered cargo from Bulgaria is due to be transferred to one of their storage facilities. No clues as to what the shipment might be, but both parties have gone to a lot of trouble to keep things below the table, so I doubt it’s decorative tea-cosies. And this particular company’s had dealings with the Black Market before, so I’m inclined to expect the worst.”

Eggsy nods, scrolling through the database eagerly, already feeling a background buzz of adrenaline at the prospect of getting back out in the field again.

Just him, on his own, flying by the seat of his trousers. He’s gonna be ace.
Ten hours later and he’s back in Harry’s office again, dressed in his bespoke suit and smelling of smoke, standing on one side of the desk as Harry and Merlin remain seated on the other.

“I don’t get what you’re both so upset about,” Eggsy protests honestly, hands shoved in his pockets as he rocks back on his heels, still buzzing from the mission.

Harry looks tired, a faint crease between his eyebrows, his left eye slightly bloodshot. His sigh, when he heaves it, sounds weary and resigned.

“You set fire to the shipment, Eggsy,” the Dom reiterates carefully. “All forty crates.”

“Well…yeah.” The Sub rubs at the smudge of soot on his cheek, but only succeeds in smearing the mark further across his skin. “Those bastard’s were smugglin’ fuckin’ dog furs. Ain’t no way I was lettin’ em get sold to make coats an’ shit.”

Merlin’s got an elbow braced on the edge of the desk, his glasses held in one hand as he pinches the bridge of his nose with the other. At Eggsy’s explanation he makes a soft, almost pained-sounding noise at the back of his throat.

“Did it not occur to you,” he mutters, with audible restraint, “that we needed to keep the cargo for evidence in a legal case against the company?”

Eggsy shifts from foot to foot, averting his gaze to where JB is sniffing warily at the cuff of his trouser-leg. The dog can probably smell his fallen brethren, poor soul.

_Bleugh._ Eggsy needs a shower.

“Haven’t you got enough footage an’ shit to convict ‘em already?” he asks, reaching down to scoop the pug up into his arms. “I mean…_dog furs_, guv. That’s fuckin’ sick. You would’ve been as pissed as I was if you’d found all them crates.”

“We’re not questioning your emotional response, Eggsy,” Harry reassures, after rubbing at his temple briefly as though to stave off a headache. “You have every right to be upset. However, utilising your emergency hand-grenade upon discovering the contents of the crates wasn’t quite how you ought to have handled the situation.”

“You’re cross ‘cause I used a gadget?” Eggsy infers, confused. “Look, I’m sorry, but it ain’t like I had a lighter on me. I won’t go for somethin’ so flashy next time, alright?”

Merlin makes another pained sound. “This isn’t about…” He heaves a short, sharp sigh and finally straightens up, slipping his glasses back on. “The point is, lad, there wasn’t any pressing need to set fire to _anything_. Nobody asked you to destroy the cargo, did they?”

Eggsy would’ve crossed his arms over his chest defensively, but there’s a pug currently occupying that space, so he settles for narrowing his eyes a little instead.

“Well…no, not in so many words,” he admits, begrudgingly. Then he lifts his chin a little higher. “But nobody told me _not_ to, neither.”
Merlin opens his mouth. Closes it again. Presses his fingers to the centre of his forehead and rubs the skin there, eyes closed.

“For future reference,” the Scotsman seeks to clarify after he’s recovered his composure. “Please try to refrain from incinerating criminal evidence, even if you find it distasteful. I have enough trouble keeping Bors in check; one borderline pyromaniac is already more than enough, I don’t need you following in his footsteps. Understood?”

Eggsy nods, losing a little of the wind from his sails. “Yeah. Alright.”

“Good.” Merlin stands and moves around the table to gently pluck JB from Eggsy’s grip, leaning in to peck a quick, chaste kiss against the corner of his mouth, nose wrinkling as he leans back again. “Now, for the love of God, please go and take a shower. You smell terrible.”

“Okay, so I know you’re cross, yeah?” Eggsy says the moment the door to his recovery suite opens, speaking quickly so as to get the words out before the inevitable happens. “An’ I get that things didn’t really go to plan, but in my defence-”

“Didn’t go to plan?” Merlin echoes, in a tone that Eggsy hasn’t heard since his training days, (“As far as I’m concerned, every single one of you has failed”) and the Sub winces internally, bracing himself for the scolding he knows is coming. “I think we can all agree that the ‘plan’ got tossed out of the window the second you decided to ditch the van in the bloody Thames.”

“You’re fortunate not to have broken your neck on impact,” Harry adds, crossing the room to perch on the edge of the bed, gently tipping Eggsy’s chin up to peer at his split lip and darkening bruises. “What on earth were you playing at?”

“There was a fuckin’ bomb, guv,” Eggsy protests, even as he lets the Dom turn his head this way and that, surveying his injuries. “Figured it was better off explodin’ at the bottom of the Thames instead of, y’know, right outside Parliament.”

“You were en route to a safe location,” Harry reminds him tersely, fingers gently adjusting the collar of Eggsy’s pyjama top, smoothing the fabric down. “MI6 had dispatched a bomb disposal unit to meet you there, and you still had thirteen minutes left on the timer. There was absolutely no need to act so impulsively.”

The Sub fidgets under their dual stares. He knows it had been a dumb move – a brief moment of
adrenaline-induced panic where he’d convinced himself that a combination of bad London traffic and really shitty luck would put him slap-bang in the middle of densely populated area when that timer finally ticked down to zero. Then the sun had glinted off the water, and he’d noticed the empty space of pavement and the already-bent railings (likely still waiting to be mended after a previous traffic collision), and he’d just acted. He doesn’t even remember slamming his foot down on the accelerator – just the rush of cool air blasting his face as he wound down the window with one hand and jerked the steering wheel with the other, Merlin’s voice yelling out a frantic warning in his ear, the murky surface of the Thames rushing up to greet him...

Fuck. He really hadn’t thought that one through at all.

“It turned out fine in the end, though,” he tries, but even to his own ears he sound unconvincingly by his argument. “Nobody got hurt. So no harm done, yeah?”

“No harm…?” Merlin cuts himself off abruptly and turns on his heel, crossing over to the window to stare out at the grounds, his hands braced on the windowsill, posture tensed.

“Eggsy.” Harry’s softer, graver tone draws the Sub’s attention away from the irate Scot, and he finds his face cupped gently between the Dom’s hands. “I realise you acted with the intention of protecting the general populace, and as such the sentiment is to be commended. But the extreme measures you took to achieve that goal were entirely unnecessary, given that we already had the situation well in hand. You needlessly endangered yourself this afternoon, and that is completely unacceptable. What if you’d been rendered unconscious when the airbag deployed? You could have drowned, Eggsy.”

The thought had crossed his mind (albeit briefly) during the span of seconds it had taken him to wrestle his way out of his seatbelt and exit the vehicle through the open window, lungs already seizing up as the frigid, murky water of the Thames flooded the compartment. There hadn’t been time to panic, though – everything had happened in a rush of adrenaline, his body moving on autopilot to get him out of danger and back to the safety of the riverbank, where the IEDD team had been waiting to fish him out and cordon off the area. The only casualties of the underwater explosion several minutes later had been a pair of unfortunate mallard ducks.

Eggsy hadn’t realised he’d lost both his glasses and his earpiece in all the excitement until a member of the bomb disposal unit had tapped him on the shoulder, wincing sympathetically, and held out a mobile phone towards him; an understandably pissed-off Merlin had been waiting on the other end of the line.

“Of all the crazy, reckless, idiotic stunts,” the Scotsman had seethed, his accent thickened in his ire. “What in God’s name were you thinking, lad? What part of ‘stay in this lane until you hit the diversion’ did your brain misinterpret as ‘drive headlong into the bloody river’?"’

Eggsy had promptly turned to one side and vomited all over the pavement, narrowly avoiding decorating the shoes of the kind-faced copper who’d stayed behind to help keep the public at bay, and any plausible excuse that Eggsy might have been able to come up with had subsequently been delayed. Thankfully, he’d managed to escape the ordeal without a concussion – apparently his unexpected upchuck had either been secondary to the bruising caused by his seatbelt or, more likely, as a result of swallowing what felt like half the Thames during his brief struggle to exit the sinking vehicle.

Fuck. The more he lets himself think about it, the more he begins to realise just how fucking lucky he’d been to walk away with only a few cuts and bruises.

“I’m sorry,” he murmurs, reaching up to close a hand over one of Harry’s wrists, tilting his unbruised cheek into the man’s touch. “I s’pose I didn’t really think it through.”
Merlin gives a quiet, unamused scoff from his position near the window, and Eggsy winces at the sound, guilt and shame gnawing at his insides. He gets why the Dom’s pissed – compared to his previous fuck-ups, this one definitely takes the biscuit – but that doesn’t make the man’s disapproval any easier to bear. The adrenaline’s starting to wear off now, the aches in his body and the weight of regret in his chest becoming more and more apparent with every passing second, and what Eggsy really wants is a goddamn cuddle.

It must show in his face somehow, because Harry’s expression shifts from stern and grim to something softer and more understanding, and in the next moment he’s drawing Eggsy in close for a tight embrace, one hand settling on the back of his head to tuck his face down against the Dom’s shoulder.

“We’d best get you home,” Harry murmurs, fingers stroking his hair gently. “Merlin has managed to persuade Medical to release you into our care, provided that you return for a check-up tomorrow morning. A nice hot bath and a cup of tea ought to put you to rights, don’t you think?”

Eggsy nods his agreement without hesitation, clinging onto Harry fiercely. Home sounds nice. A bath sounds perfect. And he’ll drink whatever his Dom puts in front of him, so long as Harry keeps stroking his hair like that.

“I’ll join you in a wee while,” Merlin says, his voice still clipped, and Eggsy lifts his head from Harry’s shoulder in time to see the Dom cross over to the door. “I’ve got to clean things up in the lab. See you later.”

Then he’s gone, door closing behind him with a little more force than strictly necessary, and Eggsy flinches at the sound, feeling it jolt through him. Merlin’s still pissed – fuck, he’s really buggered things up this time, hasn’t he? The ache in his chest worsens, swelling up to make his throat tight, and his eyes burn with a traitorous heat, entirely against his will. Merlin’s cross with him. The Dom’s, like, proper angry. Eggsy’s never felt so rubbish about himself in his life.

He fucking hate solo missions.

The warm water helps to leech the ache from his bruised body, but it does little to ease the tightness in his chest. Eggsy stares up at the bathroom ceiling, bottom lip caught between his teeth, barely noticing when Harry finishes rinsing the shampoo from his hair.

“Don’t,” the Dom chides softly, thumb gently rescuing his injured lip before his teeth can reopen the cut. “You’ll make it bleed again, poppet.”

Eggsy turns his cheek towards the contact, hand coming up out of the water to grip onto Harry’s
fingers and keep them there, his gaze caught in the middle-distance as his brewing turmoil of emotions bubble up to the surface.

“Do you think Merlin’s still mad at me?” he asks quietly.

Harry’s expression softens anew, and he shifts the stool around so that Eggsy can see him better, hand cupping the Sub’s cheek tenderly. “He was never mad at you in the first place,” the Dom promises. “Upset, certainly, and frustrated over just how readily you disregarded your own safety this afternoon – granted, those feelings may have manifested themselves as anger, but it was never directed towards you. In truth, darling, you frightened him rather badly today. Frightened us both, as a matter of fact.”

Eggsy’s eyes burn all over again, and he leans against the side of the tub to drop his forehead down against Harry’s forearm where it rests along the edge. “I didn’t mean to worry you,” he insists, voice thick with emotion. “Neither of you. I’m so fuckin’ sorry, guv.”

Fingers card gently through his damp hair. “I know you are. And we’ll need to have a proper talk about things later on, but I think it’s best if we wait until Merlin comes home.”

Eggsy doesn’t need to ask for clarification as to what Harry means by ‘a proper talk’; he’d been expecting it, after all – hoping for it, even – and the only thing he’s particularly upset about is the notion of waiting around until Merlin gets back before they can start. The crushing weight of guilt and shame and internal self-flagellation is hard enough to bear already, he ain’t keen on carrying that shit around much longer. But he gets why this is something Harry wants them to address as a partnership; it’s the first time Eggsy’s seriously fucked something up, he’s going to need more than a few love-taps and some corner-time to put all this behind him.

By the time evening rolls around, he’s miserable.

He feels so tense and restless, he’s about ready to pace a hole through the bedroom floor. Harry’s tried to tempt him with a bite to eat, but he ain’t hungry (even the thought of food turns his stomach at the moment), and the more the Dom gently fusses over him, the more Eggsy kinda wants to knock all of Harry’s expensive hair products off the vanity and curse up a blue storm and demand to be spanked. He doesn’t deserve all this mollycoddling shit; he’s fucked up, he’s upset not one but both of his Doms, and he hasn’t even answered for it yet – no way in hell does he deserve Harry’s quiet reassurances.

“Eggsy. Come here.” Harry drops a pillow down beside his feet and beckons the lad closer. “You’ll wear yourself out at this rate. Come and kneel for me.”

The Sub shuffles closer, shamefaced, and sinks to his knees stiffly, posture tensed. But then Harry’s hand cups over the back of his neck and guides his head down so that his cheek is pillowed on the Dom’s thigh and oh, thank fuck, that’s much better. Some of the tightness in his chest recedes, and he can breathe easy again, eyes slipping closed as Harry strokes a hand over his hair.

“There now. Good boy.”

Eggsy makes a soft, choked sort of noise at the back of his throat as he tenses again, all those horrible feelings suddenly rushing back to clog up his windpipe and burn wetly in his eyes, because Harry’s wrong, he’s wrong. Eggsy’s the furthest thing from ‘good’ a Sub could ever be, he’s fucking shit.
Above him, Harry sighs softly, and the hand on the back of his neck squeezes a little tighter. “You may not feel inclined to believe it at present, Eggsy, but that doesn’t make it any less true.” His fingers smooth the Sub’s fringe back gently. “We’ll help you remember that soon enough.”

It’s a promise as much as it is a reassurance, and Eggsy finds it settles him even more than the man’s comforting touch. He closes his eyes again and lets the soft petting keep him centred and grounded a while longer, until at long last he hears the distant sound of the front door opening, a soft yipping as JB greets one of his humans in the downstairs hallway. Then there are footsteps on the stairs, and Eggsy’s heart is beating a little faster in his chest as he turns his gaze towards the door, cheek still pillowed on Harry’s thigh, holding his breath as the bedroom door swings open.

Merlin pauses at the threshold, regarding the pair of them silently for a moment. The Dom looks… calmer. More composed. And that tension from before seems to have dissipated, his movements slow and easy as he crosses over to the bed to perch on the edge of the mattress beside Harry.

“There’s my lad,” he greets softly, fondly, reaching out to drag his fingers through Eggsy’s hair. “Feeling any better, sweetheart?”

Eggsy’s as incapable of handling Merlin’s unwarranted kindness and affection as he was with Harry, and feels his eyes well up traitorously in response, lips pressing together tightly to keep his chin from wobbling. God, he’s pathetic.

“Hey now,” the Scotsman murmurs, concern pinching at the corners of his eyes as he gently drags the backs of his knuckles down Eggsy’s unbruised cheek. “It’s alright. You’ve had a rough day, haven’t you, lad?”

Eggsy nods, cheek moving against Harry’s thigh with the motion, hand wrapped around the Dom’s ankle and blurry gaze fixed on Merlin as the Dom carefully traces the outline of a darkening bruise with his fingertips.

“I think the three of us need to have a wee discussion about the choices you made today,” the Dom tells him, and waits for Eggsy to nod again before continuing. “I can see you’ve already had time to think about where things went wrong, so I won’t drag this out longer than I have to. Do you understand why Harry and I were upset with your actions this afternoon?”

The Sub nods again, but realises after a beat of silence that his Doms are waiting for a verbal response. He has to swallow a few times to force down the hard, painful lump in his throat enough that he can speak, and his hoarse, uneven voice reflects that effort when he finally finds his tongue.

“Made a stupid decision,” he answers, averting his gaze as guilt bubbles up to the surface again. “Didn’t listen to you. Didn’t think things through before I acted. Put my life in danger when I didn’t need to, an’ got hurt in the process.”

“Aye, that’s right.” Merlin gently grips his chin to bring his gaze back up. “We work in a dangerous profession, Eggsy, and there’ll be times when life-threatening situations are unavoidable. But putting yourself deliberately in harm’s way when there are safer alternatives is never going to be an acceptable course of action. If you’re unsure about something, you talk to me, you don’t just act first and wait for the fallout. What you did today was reckless and foolish, and it can’t happen again. Do you understand?”

Eggsy nods again, eyes brimming. “Yes, Sir.”

“Good.” Merlin pets his hair a moment longer, then straightens up a little, all business again. “You know what happens when you needlessly put yourself in danger. You’ll be going over Harry’s knee
for a spanking first, and then you’ll be going straight over mine.”

Despite how much he wants (and needs) that feeling of absolution that comes with this form of discipline, he can’t quite suppress the nervous little shudder that runs through him at the prospect of going over both their laps. He’s been spanked by both Doms on numerous occasions in the past, but never one right after the other, and he doesn’t hold out much hope that he’ll be able to maintain any sort of pretence at stoicism. Which, in a certain manner of speaking, comes as a relief – he’s got so much pent-up emotion bottled up inside of him, he’ll need a good cry to get it all out.

Thankfully, they don’t let him fret over things for long. No sooner has Merlin announced his fate than Harry is reaching for him, his movements slow and measured, guiding Eggsy up and over his lap with firm, strong hands. His pyjama trousers are swept down and out of the way without ceremony, and the Dom gives his right arsecheek a single, warning little squeeze before raising his hand back and landing the first stinging swat.

After several hours spent torturing himself with his own guilt and self-reproach, it’s a relief to finally have the issue addressed properly, although that feeling of gratitude is rather short-lived. Soon enough, Harry’s sharp, rapid-fire spanks have lit a widespread, uncomfortable heat in his rear, a fierce stinging that worsens with every strike until Eggsy is gasping wetly into the crook of his elbow, arms pillowed on the mattress and legs twitching with the urge to kick as the Dom’s hand keeps on falling.

“I don’t want to see you needlessly endangering yourself like that again,” Harry scolds quietly, one of the many chiding remarks that he’s voiced during the past two minutes. “You are far too precious to me.”

Eggsy’s leg jerks at a particularly sharp spank to the back of his thigh, and when a matching one lands on the opposite leg, it finally forces the first choked, tearful little sob from his throat. This apparently acts as an open invitation for the floodgates to fling themselves wide open, and although he tries to smother the sound of his crying in the crook of his arm, he isn’t overly successful. Harry carries on spanking him through it, until the Sub’s given up all hope of ever sitting down again and his face is a hot, flushed mess of sweat and tears. And fuck, Merlin hasn’t even started on him yet; he ain’t gonna be able to wear trousers for a whole month after this.

He doesn’t half feel better for it, though. That ache in his chest is fading fast, easing with every burning smack to his backside, and Eggsy is more than happy with the trade-off. He’ll take a tanned hide over a guilty conscience any day.

“There now,” Harry murmurs after what feels like half an eternity (but what, realistically, is probably only a few minutes of steady spanking). “You took that very well, Eggsy. Good boy.” His hand strokes gently over the Sub’s hot, stinging skin, soothing the burn there a little. “That’s it, poppet. Shhh.”

And ohhh, that feels nice. Hiccupping quietly on a hitching little sob, he swipes at his damp cheeks with his forearm, going limp over Harry’s lap as the Dom soothes him. He’s tired from crying, and from the spanking, and he can feel the tempting siren-call of Subspace beckoning to him with every gentle pass of Harry’s hand over his heated skin. But there’s a nigglng little voice at the back of his mind telling him nope, he hasn’t earned it yet. He still has to answer to Merlin first. The slate’s only half-clean, and he can’t hope to settle properly until the rest of it’s been dealt with.

His posture must somehow reflect this internal battle, because Harry sighs softly and gives Eggsy’s bottom one final, affectionate pet before taking his hand away. The Sub misses it immediately and shifts in the Dom’s lap with a soft noise of protest, but then firmer hands are settling on his hips – longer fingers, broader palms, tighter grip – and hauling him backwards a couple of feet.
Eggsy gives a startled little *meep* at the sudden movement, clutching onto Harry’s arm when it suddenly enters his line of sight, and the Sub realises (after taking a moment to gather his wits) that his upper body is still cushioned comfortably in Harry’s lap while his lower half is now draped over Merlin’s.

“Next time you feel the urge to do something a wee bit dangerous,” the Scotsman says, arm tightening over the small of Eggsy’s back as the Sub stills beneath him, “remember that there are people who love you; people who’ll be very upset to see you hurt unnecessarily.”

If the words hadn’t already brought a fresh sheen of tears to his eyes, the heavy-handed smack that connects with his rump certainly would’ve. As it is, Eggsy sucks in a sharp breath at the immediate explosion of stinging heat, holding it in for the span of a few seconds until a second, harder swath forces it out of him again in an explosive, tearful sob. He always forgets how slowly and *intensely* Merlin spanks, and it’s usually bad enough in its own right, but delivered onto already-sensitive skin following what had been a proper-good walloping from Harry?

Eggsy reaches the point of full and honest repentance pretty fucking fast.

He can tell his Doms intend to make this a lesson that sticks with him for a while, because it’s long since passed the point where they’d usually have him up in their laps for a cuddle and a kiss. Or maybe it just feels that way because the discipline’s been split in half and shared between them, and experiencing two polar-opposite methods of spanking in such a short space of time is so thoroughly overwhelming.

Still, it’s kinda nice, in a way, to be able to hug one of Harry’s arms tightly as Merlin imparts a very, very memorable lesson on his poor, done-for arse. Harry’s free hand switches between petting his hair and rubbing his back, and although it doesn’t do anything to lessen the jarring, burning impact of Merlin’s slow, steady spans, it doesn’t half make him feel loved. And yeah, so maybe he’s crying his sorry little heart out and drumming his toes against the carpet and wondering what life’s going to be like for him now, given that he’ll have to spend the rest of it standing up, but on the *inside* he feels pretty fucking great.

“Alright, lad.” Merlin’s gentle palm glides down the back of Eggsy’s thigh, lightly caressing the burning, pulsing skin there. “Shhh. We’re all done now. You’re okay.”

They give him a few moments to settle, hands stroking his hair and back and smarting bottom with the utmost tenderness, until Eggsy’s guttural sobs have quietened to his regular, post-spanking, feeling-sorry-for-himself weeping. Then he’s being swept up into their arms, cradled between them like something precious, head tucked down against Harry’s shoulder so that he can finish crying into the soft fabric of the man’s woollen cardigan.

His inner demons utterly defeated, he’s free to float for a while, growing steadily sleepier and more fuzzy-headed as the sting in his behind fades to a humming background heat. Eggsy isn’t sure how long they sit like that, him cuddled up in both his Doms’ laps as he’s petted and kissed and quietened, but by the time Harry shifts out from underneath him, he’s groggy enough that he only manages a soft, wordless whine of protest at the loss of contact.

“Shh,” Merlin soothes, gathering him close in his lap (and *ohh, that’s okay, that’s nice, yes please*) for a cuddle, arms wrapping around him snugly. “He’ll be back in a moment, boyo.”

Eggsy burrows closer into the Dom’s hold, hands fistling in the man’s jumper. “Thanks,” he croaks, because he hasn’t really *said so* yet, and that ain’t on. “An’…an’ m’n’sorry. For scarin’ you.”

Merlin gently tilts his chin up, and the open warmth and affection in his gaze makes something
pleasant flutter in Eggsy’s chest. The Scotsman leans in to brush their lips together in a soft, lingering kiss.

“Good lad,” he whispers, and brushes their lips together again. He trails a path of tender, chaste kisses along the Sub’s jawline and up to his temple, arms tightening around him. “There’s my good lad.”

Eggsy preens internally, nose tucked into the collar of Merlin’s jumper, warmth swelling in his chest at the praise. It’s almost enough to distract him from the way his Dom’s trousers are chafing against his sensitive arse. Almost.

“Ughn…that really hurt,” he mumbles, a whine in his voice, grimacing as he shifts in place, trying to find a way of sitting that won’t put so much weight on his rear.

“I know, sweetheart.” Merlin tone is one of fond sympathy as he shifts them further back onto the bed, arranging himself against the pillows at the headboard so that Eggsy can lay draped along his chest to relieve his blistered arse. “There now. Is that better?”

Rolling fully onto his front so that nothing is touching the heated skin, Eggsy nods against the man’s chest. His eyes feel tired and itchy after so much crying, and he closes them with a sigh, fingers curled loosely in the fabric of Merlin’s jumper as one of the Dom’s hands rubs slowly up and down his spine, the other cupped securely over Eggsy’s nape.

He must’ve drifted off for a minute or two, because the next moment he’s jolting awake with an aggrieved whine at the presence of something cold and wet on his burning rump.

“Shhh, it’s alright,” Merlin murmurs, the words a warm puff of air against his hairline, the hand on the back of his neck squeezing in gentle reassurance. “It’s only a wee bit of a lotion.”

“It’ll ease the sting, darling,” is Harry’s quiet promise, and a kiss is pressed to the small of his back as the Dom gently begins to massage the lotion into his skin. “There now. Good boy.”

Oooh, that’s nice. Eggsy could definitely get used to this. He has a feeling he’s being a little bit spoilt on account of this being such a thorough spanking compared to the norm, but he ain’t about to complain. The lotion feels amazing, Harry’s hands even more so, and he’d happily bottle up this moment and live in it forever, if he could.

His solo career may be over, but Eggsy finds he doesn’t really give a shit. Life is awesome.
Mark and Connor manage to corner him the next morning while he’s waiting for his check-up in one of the recovery suites.

Eggsy’s torn between grinning in relief at seeing them both alive and well (the mission in Russia had lasted almost a fortnight, and he’s fucking missed them), and cringing at their twin expressions of disapproval. Connor closes the door to the suite behind him and stands in front of it with his arms crossed, brow furrowed, as though daring Eggsy to try and slip past him before Mark is done reaming him out.

“Two weeks, Eggsy,” the Sub lectures. “I’m gone two bloody weeks, and I get back to find you’ve almost drowned yourself driving a van headlong into the fucking Thames. What the hell were you thinking?”

Eggsy isn’t entirely sure how his team coordinator found out so fast, but he suspects Merlin has a lot to do with it. Mark and his Dom have known each other for years, after all, and they’d both been equally disapproving of his decision to go solo.

“I wasn’t thinkin’,” he admits awkwardly, rubbing the back of his neck as he shifts from foot to foot. “It was a fuckin’ stupid plan, an’ I’m lucky it all turned out so good in the end. If it makes you feel any better, my career as a solo-agent is officially over. You guys are stuck with me.”

Mark takes that in for a moment, then gives a quick, sharp nod and loses the crease in his brow. “Good.” He reaches out to thump Eggsy in the shoulder non-too-gently. “Idiot.”

The youth ducks his head, a smile tugging at the corner of his mouth, unbidden. “Yeah.”

“Lovely. Now that you two have kissed and made up,” Connor interrupts, stepping closer to the pair and pulling a pen-torch from his back pocket. “I hear you’re due for a check-up, Sir. Have a seat.”

Eggsy glances towards the bed briefly, then thinks better of it. “I’m alright standin’, ta.”

“Oh?” Mark’s gaze is knowingly smug as he arches an eyebrow. “Having trouble sitting down, are we?”

“No.” The Sub’s cheeks heat a touch, but his glare isn’t particularly convincing. “Maybe. Shut up.”

“Tough shit, Galahad.” Connor gestures towards the bed again with an utter lack of sympathy. “Sit down.”

Reluctantly, Eggsy complies, trying not to make his grimace too obvious as he puts weight on his still-sensitive behind. Ain’t like it still hurts, not really, but it hasn’t even been twelve hours yet since his Doms lit a fire back there, and things aren’t entirely back to normal. Sitting just feels… uncomfortable.

“So, how was Russia?” he asks in order to distract himself, following Connor’s finger when prompted, and letting the Dom turn his head gently from side to side.

“Uneventful.” Mark perches on the bed beside him and knocks their shoulders together lightly. “Lancelot lacks your propensity for finding trouble, so it took a little while for the smugglers ring to
emerge from the woodwork. Nothing dramatic to report, I’m afraid.”

“Oh, I don’t know about that.” Connor gently feels along Eggsy’s bruised cheekbone with the pads of his fingers. “Keana almost eviscerated Phil when he made her drop Paddington out of a helicopter. That was pretty exciting.”

Eggsy blinks, bemused. “What?”

“Mm, Paddington was one of her favourites,” Mark agrees, amused, and nudges Eggsy in the side again. “You might want to find her a new M25 before the next op, or you’ll never hear the end of it.”

Oh, they’re talking about a gun. Kee’s anger makes a little more sense now – she’s a tad possessive when it comes to her arsenal.

“I’m sure Merlin’s got something tucked away,” he answers, and shifts a little in his seat, nose wrinkling. “Connor, are you done yet, bruv?”

The Dom seems tempted to let him suffer for a few moments longer, but after a brief pause, he drops his hands and steps away. “Well, you’ll pull through. But I wouldn’t recommend taking another dip in the Thames any time soon.”

“Ta.” Eggsy hops up off the bed with a relieved groan, only to find himself pulled against the medic’s chest in a sudden, tight hug.

“Don’t do that again, Boss,” Connor grunts against the top of his head. “Okay?”

Eggsy nods, leaning into the contact for a brief moment, shoulders relaxing a bit. “Yeah. Sorry.”

Connor heaves a sigh, squeezes him tighter for a second, then slaps him firmly on the back and pulls away. Mark steps up without missing a beat to sling an arm around the younger Sub’s shoulders, steering him towards the door.

“Come on,” he says cheerfully, urging him forwards. “The rest of the team’s waiting for us. You and I have a date with Rainbow Road.”

Eggsy answering grin is warm and wide and genuine.
Our dear smol egg is a fantastic agent, but he does need someone to reel him back in every now and then - he's much better off working on a team.

Hope you enjoyed the chapter! :) As always, I love hearing your thoughts, and feel free to come chat to me on Tumblr!
Eggsy’s been mopping the corridors for almost two straight hours now. Two. Hours. And he’s pretty sure he’s fucked up on the bleach-to-water ratio, because the smell’s gone so far up his nose that it’s made his eyes sting and his throat sore.

He huffs out a short, sharp sigh, using the sleeve of his blue janitor overalls to swipe the sweat from his brow.

His left earphone crackles to life.

"Getting a little toasty, are we, lad?"

The Sub hums, lips pressed together as he dunks the mop back inside the bucket on his cleaning cart. The snippy ‘I wonder why that might be’ is right on the tip of his tongue, but given that there are security cameras tracking his every move, he keeps it to himself – he hasn’t just scrubbed half a mile’s worth of corridors only to give the game away right before the final whistle. They only have one shot at this, and his team are counting on him to play his part. Besides, he’s almost at the end of the corridor; his intended destination – the service lift not ten feet away – is a welcoming sight.

“Well, I’m afraid things are about to get a wee bit toastier,” his Dom tells him frankly. “Thompson, are the rest of your team in position?”

“Affirmative,” comes Mark’s reply through Eggsy’s right earphone. “Two minutes until we cut the power. Galahad, if you’re almost at the doors, you might want to stall a little while longer; if this is going to work, you’ll need the lift to be as close to the ground floor as possible."

Eggsy hums again, pulling out his Kingsman-modified ipod and making a show of unhurriedly scrolling through his playlist to select another song, hyperaware of the camera mounted in the top corner of the corridor above the lift doors, the one that’s got him squarely in its sights. He’s only got another couple of metre’s worth of floor to mop, he doesn’t want to raise any suspicions by being unusually thorough in cleaning them.

“Sixty,” Mark counts off, as Eggsy dunks his mop back inside the bucket one last time and resumes scrubbing the area of floor right outside the lift doors. “Fifty. Initiating security override. Forty-five…"

He clips the mop handle into the little plastic clasping hook on his cleaning cart and pulls his stolen security lanyard from around his neck to swipe against the access panel to the lift. The doors slide open slowly and he pushes the trolley inside, executing a little shimmy-shimmy sort of dance as though he’s listening to actual music rather than Mark’s quiet, level voice steadily counting down. He can’t hit the button just yet, has to make sure that the lift doesn’t start moving upwards until the very last moment – this whole operation depends on his ability to descend to the lower basement level quickly and efficiently, and he only has a limited supply of abseiling cable.
“Twenty,” Mark continues. “Con, Keana, standby to cut the backups. Ten…”

“Now, Eggy,” Merlin urges, and the Sub reaches out to tap the button for the first floor before resuming his solo dance as the doors slide closed. The lift gives a slight judder, preparing to ascend.

“- six, five, four-”

“Scrambling cameras,” Merlin announces, and Eggsy quickly moves to brace himself against the handrail on the wall.

“-two, one. Now!”

All at once, the overhead lights go off and the lift comes to a sudden, jolting stop. Eggsy staggers forwards half a pace, then rights himself, hands still gripping the railing, holding his breath for a long moment as he waits to see if their plan has proven successful, if Mark and the others have actually managed to short out both the main power generator the two backup systems in one fell swoop.

“Merlin?” he asks after a beat, blinking in the darkness as his eyes adjust to his glasses’ green-tinted night vision setting. “We good?”

“As far as I can tell,” the Scotsman replies distractedly, which means he’s probably busy hacking into half a dozen different systems at once. “Excellent work; we’ve got just under seven minutes before the primary system cycles through an emergency reboot. Thompson, take your team and head over to the perimeter rendezvous point. Phillip’s on his way.”

“Roger that,” the coordinator acknowledges.

“It’s over to you now, Galahad – watch your back down there.”

“Will do, bruv,” Eggsy replies cheerfully, as he twists the handle off the top of his mop and pulls out the long, thin laser-cutter from within.

“Oi, Merlin?” he asks pushing the cleaning cart over to one side of the lift and dropping to his knees, fumbling with the device for a moment to activate it. “You sure this thing’s gonna cut deep enough to make a hole?”

“Positive. Keep it an inch or so above the floor, it’ll cut faster that way. And for God’s sake, try not to slice off your own hand.”

The Sub huffs a quiet laugh, but his eyes go wide at the deep, molten groove that the cutter’s beam leaves in its wake.

“Holy…that is sick, guv,” he enthuses, but keeps his hand steady as he moves the device in a large, slightly wonky oval that’ll just about fit the width of his shoulders. Job done, he carefully deactivates the laser and drops it through the newly-formed hole, listening out for the metallic clang as it hits the basement level below. The shaft’s not as deep as they’d initially thought – maybe twenty, twenty-five feet at most. He’s got more than enough rope for that.

“Six minutes, lad,” Merlin reminds him calmly, as Eggsy pulls out the belay hook that’s fitted to the harness beneath his overalls.

“Yeah, yeah, I know. S’cool.”

Unhurried, Eggsy fastens it to the lift’s handrail and walks back a few paces, testing the strength of the compact abseiling device that’s strapped to his midriff – a long, thin line of metallic rope slowly emerges the harder he pulls backwards. Satisfied that the rope isn’t going to be released all at once
and send him plummeting to his death, he takes a seat on the edge of the hole in the floor, legs dangling in the air above the darkness below.

“Six minutes,” he reminds himself, heart pulsing loudly against his breastbone.

“Five and a half, actually,” Merlin corrects.

“Not helpin’, guv.”

But he takes a deep, steadying breath all the same, holding it in for a long moment as he peers down into the green-tinted gloom. Then he pushes off sharply, slipping through the rough-cut hole and descending into the abyss below.

………………………….

“No hard feelin’s, mate,” Eggsy says, as an amnesia dart in each of the unconscious guards’ necks ensures their silence.

The cameras may be currently out of action, but the men had seen his face during their brief tussle, and Eggsy can’t risk that. For a Kingsman agent, anonymity is paramount.

He crosses over to the slumped trio, confiscating their weapons and patting down their pockets in the hope of finding some form of swipe-access card that’ll aid his escape. His search proving unsuccessful, Eggsy straightens up, a little out of breath from the brief scuffle, wiping the sweat from his brow as he glances around.

“Fuckin’ ‘ell, Merlin,” he groans. “You wasn’t kiddin’, it’s hotter than Satan’s arsehole down here. Ain’t they never heard of air conditionin’?”

“I imagine they thought air vents would pose a security risk,” the Dom answers. “Unsurprising, really, in the grand scheme of things; the proprietor of this building went to impressive lengths to keep the existence of his little underground tech-hub a secret, even from his own employees.”

“So how comes you knew where it was?” Eggsy advances further into the massive basement, peering along the numerous isles lined with shelves upon shelves of whirring servers that twinkle with bright, winking lights in the semi-darkness.

“We aren’t the only intelligence service who’ve been keeping tabs on Marcus Flint,” is Merlin’s cryptic reply. “Every once in a while, when the outcome of a mission is thought to be mutually beneficial, a decision is made to pool our resources.”

“Makes sense, I s’pose.” The Sub carefully steps over a bundle of thick, black wires that have been secured to the floor with steel rings. “What exactly am I looking for here?”
“A central access point,” Merlin replies. “I daren’t try to worm my way in from an external server, it’d lock me out. Flint may be a megalomaniac, but he’s no fool. It seems his computer system was designed to be self-sufficient; it’s running on its own unique power source while the rest of the complex is still in the midst of a blackout. Flint probably designed it that way as a safeguard, to protect his servers from suffering data loss during potential outages. I’m willing to bet he’ll have a dozen or more hoops for me to jump through before I can slip inside his database – I’ll need to convince the main server that it’s the administrator gaining access, which may take some time. Likely more time than we have at the moment.”

“That don’t exactly inspire confidence, guv,” Eggsy mutters.

“Mm. Keep going, lad - I’ll know what I’m looking for when I see it.”

It takes Eggsy another two and a half minutes to track down the access point, by which time the main power’s already come back online, bright florescent lights flickering to life above him. He squints beneath their harsh glare, his eyes having grown used to the dark.

“I’m guessin’ things are gonna get pretty messy in a bit?” he says, as he fumbles to pull out his ‘ipod’, pressing his thumb against the screen so it can run a print recognition scan.

The screen flashes twice, then the fake-playlist vanishes and small USB attachment slowly emerges from the charger slot at the end; he quickly inserts it into the access port.

“MI6 planted an agent in Flint’s workforce a few weeks ago,” Merlin answers distractedly. “It’s how we were able to get you inside the building in the first place. If all’s going to plan, they should have enough evidence to convince the security team that the blackout was the result of a simple power surge. And if not...well, they should at least be able to buy us a few more minutes.”

The Sub nods and stays silent for a while, allowing Merlin to focus his full attention on hacking into Flint’s computer network. He keeps his gaze centred on the currently-sealed exit, confidant that the lift is definitely out of action (using the laser-cutter to slice up the electrical cabling along the wall of the shaft had been the work of mere seconds) and given the hefty twenty-foot drop between the ground floor and the basement, he doubts any security detail will risk attacking him from that direction. The only other escape route is the single metal door on the far side of the vast room, although he’s already checked it twice, and it’s definitely magnetically sealed – there’s no lock or handle in sight. He’s banking on Merlin being able to access the security system and open it for him, otherwise his only remaining option is to go back out the way he came in.

Eggsy peers around at the forest of tech curiously. “This Marcus Flint guy?” he pipes up after a few minutes. “If he’s so fuckin’ clever an’ all, wouldn’t he figure out a way to leave a trip-wire in the system or somethin’? Y’know, like when I try an’ access the gym after I’ve been benched, an’ it gets flagged up to you straight away?”

Merlin hums softly. “You’re not wrong, lad. But I wouldn’t worry about it too much if I were you. Marcus Flint won’t be hunting you down anytime soon.”

“An’ why’s that?”

“Because he was assassinated by the Mafia in his Los Angeles hotel room just over ten hours ago,” the Dom replies calmly. “It’s why you had so little time to prepare before we dispatched your team – when the secret service learned of his death, they realised we only had a very brief window of opportunity in which to extract intelligence from his network before someone else got there first. Flint had his fingers in a lot of dirty pies – in the wrong hands, that sort of information could give a man enough power and resources to become another Richmond Valentine.”
“Aw fuck.”

“Mm,” Merlin agrees grimly. “Which is why I’m purging the system in its entirety. MI6 have already confiscated Flint’s laptop and conducted raids on his various domestic properties, but they had been unable to tap into his intelligence network without direct access to the main server.”

“But it’s workin’ now, right?” Eggsy prompts, with a quick glance down at his watch, aware that with every minute that passes by, the chances of him running into a wave of security guards on the other side of that door increases.

“Aye, the transfer’s almost complete. Another few minutes and it’ll be done.”

Those minutes are perhaps among the longest Eggsy has endured in his entire life – he’s never been good at waiting, but standing around as his Dom hacks into some psycho’s super-computer while the opposition presumably gathers forces upstairs is a whole new level of frustrating. He doesn’t waste a second when Merlin gives him the all-clear, tugging the USB-ipod thingummy from the port and shoving it into the secure inside pocket of his Kingsman-tailored overalls (he still misses his suit, but at least the fabric’s bulletproof…even if it does make him look like a twat).

However, the moment he takes a step towards the exit, alarms start blaring overhead; an ear-ringing klaxon that pulses off and on in a steady beat.

“Fuck.” Eggsy glances around frantically for something he might’ve stepped on. “Was that me, guv?”

“No, I think that may have been our friend from MI6. I’ll reactivate the security cameras, see if I can find out what’s happening.” The red light above the sealed door suddenly turns green and the metal panel hisses open half an inch. “Galahad, take that exit and follow the corridor around to your left. Keep going as far as it’ll let you, there should be a set of stairs at the end there that’ll lead you back up to ground level. There’ll be another door nearer the surface, but I’m afraid I won’t be able to open it, not from here. You’ll need to cut your way out.”

“Copy that.” Eggsy pulls his gun from his ankle-holster and sets off at a run, ears ringing with the repetitive blare of the alarm, heart pounding in his chest as adrenaline zings through his veins.

Much to his surprise (and relief), he doesn’t encounter any further security reinforcements along that lower corridor, not until he reaches the stairs. And the two guards waiting at the top seem so genuinely startled by his sudden appearance that he’s able to utilise their moment of stunned inertia to his advantage, shooting one in the hand to disarm him as he pushes off the wall, using the momentum to deliver a powerful kick to the second guard’s throat, decking him instantly. A quick, sharp punch and the first injured guard is out cold beside his colleague, and an amnesia dart apiece ensures they’ll stay that way for the time being.

The access panel to the second door at the end of the short corridor seems to be another biometric scanner, and Eggsy figures performing the scan will probably be a quicker option than trying to cut his way through the clearly-reinforced metal with the handheld laser-gadget in his pocket. With that in mind, he starts dragging the smaller of the two guards over to the door, bracing his weight on his heels as he heaves and pulls, until finally he can raise the unconscious man’s unresisting arm and press his hand against the panel.

“Oh, Christ,” Merlin suddenly groans. “You’ve got to be joking.”

“What?” Eggsy asks, perplexed, as the door unlocks and he exits the corridor, only to find himself suddenly standing outside in the open air beside a large metal carrier-crate, in what appears to be the
complex’s rear carpark. He’s gotta hand it to that Marcus Flint bloke – the hiding-in-plain-site thing is pretty ballsy.

“Of all the bloody agents,” his Dom continues to mutter, seemingly more to himself than to Eggsy. “Him and his fucking cars”

There’s the low rumble of an engine revving somewhere nearby, making Eggsy jump, and his grip on his gun tightens. “You mind sharin’ it with the class, bruv?”

Merlin grunts. “Well, I’ve found the source of all the hassle,” the Scotsman states flatly. “It seems our comrade from the secret service couldn’t resist pickpocketing a shiny new toy for himself on his way out.” Another long, resigned sigh, then, “Look sharp, lad – he’s coming up on your left. Given the security situation, you’d best hitch a ride with him; I’ll send your team on ahead to a safer rendezvous point.”

Eggsy agrees easily enough, his curiosity peaked by Merlin’s grumblings, and more than happy to get out of the open (where he’s basically a sitting duck) and as far away from the complex as he can. He might be dressed in bulletproof clothing, but being shot still hurts like shit, and he ain’t keen on getting himself benched again anytime soon.

Within moments, a sleek, silver car comes whizzing around the corner to his left and skids to a halt beside him, engine still purring. Without waiting for further confirmation from his Dom, Eggsy throws open the door and dives inside, shutting it behind him quickly as the car immediately speeds off.

The Sub glances over at his driver, taking in the man’s strong build and bearing, his sharp blue eyes and an angular jaw, the flash of white teeth as he shoots Eggsy an easy smile.

“You might want to put your seatbelt on,” his rescuer advises calmly. “I’ll admit I’m not entirely sure what half of these controls are meant to do, but I’m tempted to find out.”

“Oh, I bet he is. Bloody show-off.”

Ignoring his Dom’s grumbled commentary, Eggsy obligingly puts on his seatbelt, studying his companion’s profile not-so-subtly. He cocks his head a little to one side.

“Have we met before, bruv?”

The older man’s lips twitch up at one corner, but he doesn’t shift his eyes from the darkened road ahead. “I believe so. V-Day, if I’m not mistaken? Beneath the grounds of Buckingham Palace.”

Eggsy snaps his fingers and points at him. “You’re the corgi bloke! Knew you was familiar.”

“I doubt I’ve ever been referred to as a ‘corgi bloke’ before,” the other agent comments, audibly amused. “But I suppose there’s a first time for everything.” He takes his right hand off the steering wheel and offers it to Eggsy. “The name’s Bond. James Bond.”

“Every fucking time,” Merlin mutters bitterly in Eggsy’s ear, and the Sub can’t quite help the slow grin that tugs at his own lips. He’s not sure what sort of history his Dom and this MI6 agent share between them, but he makes a mental note to badger Merlin for details later on.

“I’m Galahad,” Eggsy says in turn, clapping James’ hand in his own for a brief, firm shake.

The agent does glance towards him at that, albeit only for a fraction of a second before focusing his attention on the road again. “Galahad,” he echoes, and some of the wind seems to have gone from
his sails in the blink of an eye. “I hadn’t realised he’d…”

Bond’s fingers flex as they tighten around the steering wheel briefly, before going lax again. “Your predecessor – did you ever get the chance to meet him before you inherited the title?”

“Mm, once or twice,” Eggsy answers vaguely, although beneath the unaffected act his mind’s reeling with a million different questions. “Nice bloke.”

James gives quiet snort of laughter, lips twitching. Eggsy feels an immediate, instinctive pulse of anger, defensive on behalf of his Dom, but he quashes it using every last ounce of willpower he can muster.

“You disagree, bruv?” he asks, his tone deceptively mild.

The agent shakes his head. “Not at all. I’m sure he was a charming fellow, off the clock. But I had the misfortune of interrupting a few of his more sensitive missions back in the early 90’s; I’m afraid his opinion of my younger self was rather poor.” James’ lips twitch upwards again. “He shot me once, you know.”

Eggsy balks at him. “He did what?”

“With a stun-gun,” Bond elaborates, clearly amused by Eggsy’s extreme reaction. But his grin softens a little as he recollects. “We’re talking twelve or so years ago now. My orders were to hunt down someone called The Catcher, a particularly dangerous assassin who’d been targeting some of our deep-cover intelligence operatives in Bulgaria. After endless, exhausting weeks of following breadcrumbs and running into dead-ends, I thought I’d finally managed to trace his whereabouts to this run-down industrial complex on the outskirts of the main city. And that’s where I ran into Galahad.”

Eggsy leans in closer, hanging on the man’s every word.

“He told me it was all a trap,” the agent continues, eyes still fixed on the road. “I was so bloody convinced that I’d found the assassin’s hideout, I wasn’t about to give up on the whole mission just because a handsome bloke in a pretty suit told me to.”

“So he shot you?” Eggsy surmises, still in shock.

“Mm.” James’ lips twitch again. “Polite bastard even apologised before he pulled the trigger.”

Eggsy vividly recalls a time not so long ago when that same handsome bloke in a pretty suit had rescued him from the police station, beaten the shit out of Dean’s boys and then threatened to shoot him with an amnesia dart in the politest way possible. “Saved my life, though,” James adds after a beat of silence. “He was right, it was a trap; the whole building had been rigged to explode. I came to just in time to see the fireworks. Never did get a chance to thank him properly.” The agent shoots Eggsy a tired sort of smile, and suddenly looks ten years older than he had done a moment ago. “You’ve got some hefty shoes to fill.”

Merlin heaves another gusty sigh in Eggsy’s ear. “Och, hell. Just tell him the truth, lad, I can’t stand it when he mopes.”
Suppressing a smile, the Sub props his foot up on the dashboard and tugs up his trouser-leg so that he can slip his gun back inside its ankle-holster. “He ain’t dead, y’know. Galahad.”

“No?” James arches a doubtful eyebrow, but there’s a hopeful sort of look in his eyes that betrays the casual expression. “He doesn’t strike me as the type to go willingly into retirement.”

Eggsy huffs out a quiet laugh, because that just about describes Harry to a T. “Nah, bruv, he ain’t retired neither. Got himself promoted to Arthur after V-Day.”

“Ah.” Bond’s expression barely changes, but Eggsy has a feeling the man’s pleased at the news. “That does explain M’s newfound acceptance of collaborative missions – I don’t believe he was overly fond of your previous head-of-table.”

“Makes two of us,” Eggsy mutters.

“Careful, lad,” Merlin cautions. “Don’t go digging yourself into a hole. As far as MI6 are aware, Chester King met an untimely end outside our walls as a result of the public V-Day massacre; if they were to find out that the man at the head of our organisation had chosen to side with Richmond Valentine against the rest of humanity, they may not be so keen to trust us with sensitive intel the next time a mass-murdering megalomaniac comes along.”

Eggsy wisely decides to change the subject.

“Bruv, not that I ain’t grateful for the pick-up.” he says, studying the various unlabelled buttons on the dashboard, wondering if it’s worth ejecting himself from the car in his quest to find the radio controls. “But why’d you risk settin’ off the security alarm just to steal a car?”

“I appreciate things of quality. And this isn’t just any ordinary car; this is Flint’s latest prototype. There’s an associate of mine back at headquarters who’ll be more than a little keen to take a peek under the hood.” Bond strokes a reverent hand over the steering wheel. “Gorgeous, isn’t she?”

“…You want me to leave the two of you alone?”

Another quiet laugh. “Not at all.” James flashes him a disarming grin. “I don’t mind you cutting in. Like I said, I appreciate things of quality.”

“I’m sending you the new rendezvous coordinates,” Merlin announces suddenly, in a tone that’s just a little too casually cheerful to ring true.

And Eggsy’s mouth curls up at the corners in a slow grin, because oh. It seems the man is fallible, after all.

“Take a right here,” he says to James, when the corresponding directions pop up on the inner lens of his glasses. “There’s a building site two miles east, just off the main road. My team’s waitin’ for me there.”

Bond obliges, but when he glances across at Eggsy a moment later, his gaze lingers. “It seems a shame to end the day so quickly,” the man comments, returning his attention to the road at last. “We’ve only just begun to get to know each other. Are you sure I can’t tempt you stay a little longer?”

“No,” Merlin grunts in his ear. Eggsy wonders if his Dom even realises he’s said it aloud.

And Eggsy ain’t exactly a stranger to flirting – it’s practically his mother tongue, he’s been sweet-talking just as long as he’s been bad-mouthing his way through life – but it’s been almost a year since
he last considered himself ‘single’, and turning on the old the old allure is no longer his go-to defence mechanism whenever he encounters a particularly flirtatious Dom. He doesn’t need to flirt, not anymore, not when he’s got two incredible Doms waiting for him back at HQ; that sense of longing (for support, for stability, for love) was something he’d learned to live with as a teenager, but it’s little more than a memory now.

Still, he’s faced with a rare opportunity here: a chance to tease Merlin a little, to rile him up a bit, pay him back for that time last week when he’d made Eggsy kneel at the end of the bed with his hands behind his back while his Doms made out passionately in front of him. It had been absolute torture, and Merlin had grinned at him the whole way through, the bastard. Eggsy’s not about to pass up the chance to get his own back.

“I don’t know,” he answers noncommittally, shifting his posture a little, cocking his head to one side as he observes the older agent. “I’m not sure my handler would want me staying out so late.”

“Come on, Galahad, live a little,” James urges, with an easy sort of charm. “You, me, the open road…and all these bloody gizmos.” He gestures to the controls on the dashboard. “Aren’t you the least bit curious to find out what they do?”

“Mm.” Eggsy’s smile curls wider into a quiet grin. “It’s a temptin’ offer, bruv.”

James arches an eyebrow at him expectantly. “But…”

The Sub shrugs. “Got a mission to finish, don’t I?” He pats the left side of his chest, where the weight of the ipod sits within the inner-pocket of his overalls. “Some of us are still on the clock.”

“True,” Bond concedes, slowing down as they approach the building site. “The mission should always take priority.”

They pull into the open grounds of the construction area, and Eggsy grins when he spots the shadow of a dark SUV over on the far side of the clearing.

“Flash your headlights three times,” he tells James, who obliges without question. When the SUV mimics them a half-second later, his grin widens and he quickly unfastens his seatbelt. “Ta for the lift, mate.”

“My pleasure.” James waits until he’s exited the vehicle and shut the door before rolling down the window to call after him. “You know, London isn’t such a big place – I imagine we’ll run into each other again before long.”

Eggsy ducks down to lean his folded arms on the frame of the open window. “I hope so,” he agrees, and winks at the man. “Drive safe, yeah?”

“Now where would be the fun in that?”

Eggsy’s still laughing when the car peels away again, engine roaring as it speeds off down the road and out of sight.

“I’m glad you’ve made a new friend, Eggsy,” Merlin says mildly, snapping him back to reality. “But you really shouldn’t keep your team waiting.”

The Sub sobered a little, but there’s still a smile twitching at the corner of his mouth. “You mad at me, guv?”

“Mm. Positively seething,” the Dom answers, but he sounds amused more than anything. “You and
“Fuck! Merlin, please!”

The Dom stops sucking on his nipple long enough to fix him with a pleasant, innocent smile.

“What’s the matter, boyo? I thought you liked a wee bit of teasing?” He pecks a soft, chaste kiss against the corner of the Sub’s mouth. “You seemed to enjoy it readily enough earlier on this evening.”

The vibrating toy in his arse ratchets up another notch, buzzing fiercely just shy of his prostate, and Eggsy whines, straining against the soft leather cuffs that bind his hands to the headboard above him.

“You really ought to have known better, my lad,” the Scotsman continues, rubbing one hand against Eggsy’s trembling thighs as the other works the toy deeper inside him. “If you push me, I’ll push right back. And I’ll push harder.”

He drives the toy in to its full capacity and Eggsy cries out, nerve endings alight with pleasure, body taught with it, limbs quaking with his need for release. But that bloody ring around his cock is keeping his climax at bay, and Merlin seems determined to drive him half-mad before he’ll take it off.

“Harry,” he tries instead, the name a pleading, drawn-out whine as he turns his head towards where the other Dom is seated in a chair at the bedside, watching the proceedings with an appreciative eye. The man’s still fully clothed, one leg crossed elegantly over the other, and if it weren’t for the obvious hunger in his eyes, he could be watching a game of cricket for how unaffected he seems to be by Eggsy’s plight.

“You rather brought this upon yourself, my boy,” Harry tells him patiently. “Merlin’s always been prone to bouts of jealousy – I really ought to have warned you about it beforehand, darling, but I had quite forgotten. Never mind; at least you’ll remember for next time, won’t you?”

Eggsy nods quickly, panting for breath as the toy is slowly pumped in and out of him, pleasure rising
to a peak and falling away abruptly with every almost-drag against his prostate.

“I’ll remember,” he insists. “I’ll remember, I’ll remember, I promise, I’ll- ah! Merlin, please!”

“Shhh,” the Dom soothes, sliding the toy back inside to the hilt and taking his hand away again, moving it to rub Eggsy’s abdomen instead. “I know you will, lad. But I think I ought to make it a good, long lesson all the same, don’t you?”

“Please,” Eggsy whimpers, and they both know it isn’t a request to stop. He may be ready to shake his way out of his own skin, but he feels fucking amazing, and Merlin’s never been hotter than he is right now.

The Dom leans down to kiss him again, and Eggsy whimpers and gasps against his lips as fingers pinch his sensitive, swollen nipples. It feels like he’s been here for hours now; seems like an age since Merlin tumbled him back onto the bed and into Harry’s waiting hands, since they stripped him and bound him so that Merlin could begin systematically taking him apart. And fuck, he wants it, wants more, wants the Dom to pull the toy free and fuck him properly, to mark him up both inside and out.

Through his breathless, half-mad babbling, he must somehow manage to communicate this desire to Merlin, because suddenly the torturous vibrations are gone and he’s horribly empty, but he knows not to complain about it because his Dom is shifting, hitching Eggsy’s legs up, hands hooked beneath the Sub’s knees as Merlin lines himself up and finally, finally gives him what he wants.

Eggsy doesn’t quite manage anything more coherent than “fuck” and “yes” and “please” after that. It’s ace.

Merlin doesn’t hold back, that’s for damn sure; the bed shakes with the force of his thrusts, and the sound of the creaking bedframe is almost drowned out by Eggsy’s bellowing, enthusiastic vocalisations. He’s so lost in pleasure that he barely feels the pain of Merlin’s teeth sinking into the meat of his shoulder, only the resultant spike in yespleasemore that zings through him like electricity, making his toes curl. A hot, wet heat pulses deep inside of him and he hears Merlin swear hoarsely, feels his hips stutter and go still, feels the warmth of the man’s ragged breathing against his open mouth as the Dom presses their brows together briefly.

Then gentle fingers are deftly relieving the tight band around his cock, pumping it once, twice, three times as rumbling voice in his ear calls him a “good lad” and tells him to come.

And so Eggsy does.

“Fuck,” he whimpers several minutes later, still trembling and twitching in Merlin’s arms, his whole body awash with hold-cold prickling sensations. “That was…fuck.”

“Mmm,” Merlin agrees, brushing feather-light kisses against his flushed cheeks as he finishes unfastening the cuffs from around Eggsy’s wrists. “You were so good for me, sweetheart.”

The Sub moves his arms as soon as he’s able, wrapping them around Merlin’s neck as the Dom pulls him up and into his lap for a proper cuddle. He reclines against the man’s chest with a contented hum, but it doesn’t feel quite right with only one pair of arms around him. He lifts his head just enough to peer towards the chair at the bedside, brow creasing in a faint frown when he finds it empty.

“Where’s Harry?”
Merlin drops a kiss against his hairline. “He’s running you a bath, love. He agreed to allow me to change the order of things a bit, but he wasn’t willing to forego tradition entirely.”

Eggsy smiles and settles back down against Merlin’s torso to wait. He ought to have known Harry would insist on sticking to Eggsy’s usual post-mission routine: a hot bath and a bite to eat, invariably followed by sex in one form or another – be it the rough and hard against-the-bathroom-wall kind, or the gentler, slower fucking they tended to share when Eggsy was curled between them beneath the sheets, craving the reassurance of their touch.


Merlin chuckles, tipping his chin up gently to kiss him. “Lesson learned?”

“Fuck no.” Eggsy grins sleepily against the Dom’s lips. “You just gave me an incentive to flirt with every agent I bump into.”

The Dom heaves an aggrieved sigh, but he ain’t fooling nobody; Eggsy can see his smile, the laughter in his eyes. Fuck, he doesn’t half love the man.

“Come on, wee devil,” Merlin murmurs, shifting to move from the bed, Eggsy hoisted up in his arms in a bridal-carry. “Bath time.”

They find Harry leaning over the huge bathtub, dipping his hand beneath the fluffy mountain of white bubbles to test the temperature of the water, switching off the taps when he apparently finds it satisfactory. The Dom straightens again, and Eggsy realises with a flutter of excitement that Harry’s dressed only in his dressing gown now, his clothes folded neatly on the chair near the sink.

“Special delivery,” Merlin quips cheerfully, and Harry’s smile softens into something warm and fond.

“You’re right on time. Just a moment, let me…”

The Dom removes his dressing gown, letting the fabric slide to the floor, and Eggsy feels his spent cock make an admirable effort to show some interest as he stares at the man’s gorgeous, naked self – almost a year since he first laid eyes on him like this, and Eggsy’s breath still catches in his chest every time he sees it. He’s come to know every inch of that body; every dimple, every roughened scar, every plane of sculpted muscle – and all the wonderfully soft parts in between that Eggsy likes best.

He watches as Harry climbs into the large bathtub and gets himself comfortable, before raising his arms towards the pair. “Alright, poppet, in you come.”

Shared baths happen to be pretty high up on Eggsy list of favourite activities, so he goes willingly, sighing as the warm water envelops his body and letting Harry gently guide him back to rest his head against the man’s shoulder, his back to the Dom’s chest.

“Comfortable?”

Eggsy nods, or at least tries to, but his body’s so relaxed that the muscles don’t seem to want to expend the effort. “Mm-hmm.”

“Mm-hmm,” Merlin echoes, a teasing note in his voice, as he pulls a stool to the side of the bath and sits down, arms folded on the ledge.

“Shuddup,” the Sub slurs, and lazily flicks some bubbles at the Scot. “S’your fault I’m like this.”
“Our boy makes a valid point, my love.” Harry’s lips brush against the shell of Eggsy’s ear, then trail a tingling path down his throat. Then he pauses, and after a moment the Dom lifts a hand from beneath the water, damp fingertips gently brushing at an aching area of skin. “Look at what you did to his poor shoulder, you brute.”

Merlin eyes his handiwork with a satisfied smirk, but after a moment he pushes himself to his feet. “Alright, alright. I’ll get some arnica.”

“No,” Eggsy murmurs, before Merlin can take more than a step towards the medicine cabinet. Harry stops rubbing the bite mark, the arm that’s looped around Eggsy’s waist squeezing ever so gently. “No?” he probes softly. “No to what, darling?”

“Don’t want any arnica,” the youth elaborates, managing to enunciate the words a little better this time. “M’fine. Ta, though.”

“It’ll bruise,” Harry warns, kissing the shell of his ear again.

“Mm-hmm.” Eggsy’s lips twitch up in a sleepy grin. “Tha’s what I’m hopin’ for.”

Merlin sits back down again, reaching out to brush his own fingers against the mark, making the dull ache flare deliciously back to life, curling Eggsy’s toes beneath the water. He fucking loves it when his Doms leave fingerprint-bruises and love-bites and scratch-marks behind after a particularly enthusiastic round of sex. They’re like little lasting reminders of the bond they share, hidden affirmations of their ongoing relationship that’ll stay with Eggsy for the next few days, maybe even up to a week if he’s lucky. They never last long enough for his liking, but both his Doms (particularly Merlin) are always happy to mark his skin again whenever he asks them to.

“Can you…?” he asks, turning his head just enough to meet Harry’s gaze, his expression hopeful. “Please? Wanna feel you both on my skin tomorrow.”

The Dom hums his acquiescence and kisses him again. “Of course. Where would you like it?”

Eggsy thinks on that for a moment, half tempted to say “everywhere”, but aware that such an endeavour wouldn’t really be feasible. Finally, after several minutes of deliberation, he tilts his head to the left to give Harry access to his right shoulder.

“Wanna matchin’ one on this side,” he answers. “Please?”

Harry’s arm tightens around his midriff, the Dom shifting behind him, and soft lips press against the curve of his right shoulder in preparation. “Are you sure, poppet?”

The Sub nods, and a moment later he’s rewarded by the sudden, deep ache of blunt teeth pinching at his skin. He sucks in a sharp gasp, head thrown back, eyes closed as he savours the sensation, hands clinging to the arm that’s wrapped around him beneath the water.

“Beautiful,” Merlin purrs, gun-calloused hand cupping his jaw, lips brushing against his temple as Harry sucks on the bite mark to coax it up into a deep bruise. “Good lad, Eggsy.”

He whimper, cock twitching to semi-hardness beneath the water, and sags back to rest against Harry’s chest when the man finally removes his mouth. Turning his head just enough to glance at his shoulder, he moans at the reddish-purple mark that now stands out vividly against his pale skin.

“Thank you, Sir,” he breathes, head feeling pleasantly fuzzy, body beginning to get that floaty feeling.
Harry kisses his neck gently. “I imagine you’ll be feeling that one for a few days.”

“Mmm.” Eggsy gives a happy little squirm, eyes still closed. “Hope so. Love wearin’ your mark; feels like I’m properly yours, y’know? Reminds me I belong to both of you.”

He feels Harry’s hand pause where it’s been stroking his stomach, Merlin’s fingers go still where they’ve been combing through his hair, and he opens his eyes in time to catch the Doms sharing a significant, lingering look.

“What?” he asks softly, faintly amused by their sudden seriousness.

“Eggsy. Sweetheart, you…” Merlin stares at him for a long moment, then reaches for the youth’s damp, bath-warmed hand, holding it between both his own and pressing a kiss to the lad’s knuckles. “If you want a collar, you only have to ask for one. You know that, don’t you?”

The Sub drops his gaze to the bubbles floating lazily in the bathwater, a sudden pulse of longing flaring up in his chest at the words.

It’s true, in recent months he’s begun to think about being collared more often than not. There are times when the bruises aren’t enough, when he wants a more lasting physical reminder of the bond they share; times when he’ll stand in front of the bathroom mirror, staring at his pale, bare throat and imagining how much better it’ll look with a band of leather fastened around it. He feels stupid sometimes, too – like he’s thirteen again and getting those cravings for the first time, wrapping a belt around his neck in the quiet of the night and pretending it’s some rich, handsome Dom staking his ownership. That illusion had been shattered pretty quickly when Dean came along, but it hadn’t banished that longing completely – he’d just quashed it back down again as far as he could and sat on it for the next ten years.

Thing is, he’d fucking love to be collared. To have the self-confidence to wear a dynamic marker in public, to stride into Kingsman HQ with his neck on display for all to see. And even though it’s getting easier to share his secret with the people he trusts – even though his whole team knows of his true dynamic and they respect him all the same – the thought of wearing his collar to a Table meeting still scares the shit out of him.

It shouldn’t, he knows it shouldn’t – if the knights can’t accept him for who he is, then fuck them – but sometimes the worst type of fears are the irrational ones. He can blame it on Dean, on being forced to hide his true self for so many long years, on the pressure put on him to act as a Dom right from the start; but it doesn’t change the fact that he’s still too chicken to allow himself to be openly Submissive. And he hates it.

“Hey.” Merlin’s fingers gently cup his chin, guiding it back up again, and his gaze along with it. The Dom’s expression is full of warmth and understanding. “We’re not asking you to make a decision now. We just want you to know that the option is there, whenever you feel you’re ready.”

Eggsy swallows past the lump in his throat, wets his dry lips. “An’ what if I never feel ready?”

Harry kisses the shell of his ear again. “Then we’ll love you just the same. The lack of a collar doesn’t mean anything; you’re ours, with or without a marker.”

“Aye,” Merlin agrees, thumb brushing against Eggsy’s bottom lip. “And we’re yours, lad.”

The Sub stars at him a moment, then surges forward to kiss him, one hand clutching onto Harry’s tightly beneath the water, the other circled around Merlin’s wrist where it still cups his chin.

“M’sorry,” he murmurs as they break apart, leaning his forehead against the Dom’s. “I want one, I
do, it’s just…the thought of wearin’ it to work still fuckin’ terrifies me.”

“Shhh.” Merlin cups his face between both hands, pressing a lingering kiss between his eyebrows. “You don’t have to explain anything, sweetheart. If you’re not ready, then you’re not ready.” He kisses him again, softer this time. “And even if you do say yes someday, you’re allowed to change your mind. Your collar doesn’t have to be a permanent fixture.”

The Sub thinks on that for a moment, then pulls back to look at his Dom.

“You mean, like, I could have one just for evenin’s an’ stuff?” he hedges.

Harry gives him another gentle squeeze. “If that’s what you wanted, darling, then yes – absolutely.”

“What did you think, lad?” Merlin asks softly, faintly amused. “That we’d make you wear it all the time? It’d be your collar, to wear as and when you fancied it – we’d never expect you to keep it on at work.”

Eggsy tries to picture what that might be like; having a collar to slip into when he comes home after a long mission; wearing it around the house, a constant pressure against his throat to remind him of the bond he shares with his Doms. He could wear it at night, too, and then take it off before he showered in the morning; he’d find comfort in the knowledge that it’d still be there waiting for him at the end of the day, no matter what happened while he was at work. He could come home, kneel for his Doms and...

Fuck. Fuck. He wants one.

He swallows again, heart fluttering against his ribcage. “I think…I think I’d like that,” he murmurs. “Havin’ a collar jus’ for home, I mean. If that’s okay?”

Merlin’s smile is wide and warm and proud, and it makes Eggsy feel tingly all over.

“More than okay,” the Dom reassures, and leans in to kiss him again.

Harry gently angles his chin around after a moment to bestow his own kiss, tender and lingering in a way his previous ones hadn’t been. “I’ll fetch a catalogue from the jewellers tomorrow,” he promises. “The three of us can go through it together, if you like.”

Eggsy turns a little more in the Dom’s lap to throw his arms around Harry’s neck, grinning from ear to. Merlin laughs and leans away, having been splashed by a wave of bathwater in the process, but that only makes the Sub’s grin widen, feeling Harry’s quiet laughter reverberate through him as the Dom’s arms tighten around his waist.

He’s never felt so fucking happy.
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Chapter End Notes

Happy Birthday to this fic! Can't believe it's been a whole year since I first took a dive into this fandom. <3

Our story is finally approaching it's end - just a couple more chapters to go, folks! But I already have about 6 other WIPs ready to post, and a couple of one-shots related to this 'verse that I'll put up once we've reached the epilogue.

I hope you enjoyed the chapter. As always, I adore hearing your feedback, thank you so much for your ongoing support. <3

xxx
Eggsy knows he should be paying closer attention to his surroundings, given the somewhat precarious situation that he’s in, but he can’t. He just can’t.

Because it’s finally going to happen; tonight’s the night. In just under eight hours, he’ll be receiving his very first collar.

It’s been over a week since Harry brought home a selection of catalogues from a bunch of fancy jewellers around London. Five days since Eggsy had settled on the design he wanted and let Merlin do his measurements so that it could be tailored to fit properly. And the jeweller had promised it would be ready for collection by this afternoon. Eggsy’s managed to keep his cool up until now, but the knowledge that it’ll be there waiting for him when he gets home later today is proving to be really fucking distracting.

“Galahad?” Mark prompts via his earpiece, and judging by the tone of his voice it probably isn’t the first time the Sub’s tried to get his attention. “Galahad, do you copy?”

“I copy,” he replies, adjusting his stance, thighs beginning to ache from how long he’s been crouching down in the undergrowth.

It’s difficult to stay still when his whole body feels alight with nervous anticipation in regards to his pending collaring; it would’ve been a good day to spar, or maybe push himself on the treadmill, but hunkered down in the middle of the woods in camouflage gear? Not so helpful. He’s more than ready for a little bit of action.

“What’s your status?”

“Hm?” Eggsy blinks, once again drawn out of thoughts by Mark’s voice. “Oh, good. I’m good.”

There’s a brief pause. Then, his tone caught somewhere between amused and exasperated, Mark says, “While that comes as a relief, Sir, I was hoping for a little more information about your position in relation to the target?”

Oh, right, the mission. The target. Concentrate, Eggsy.

He peers around from behind the burnt-out shell of the Jeep he’s been using for cover (the vehicle’s covered in enough foliage and garden creepers that it’s practically part of the forest anyway) and squints through the branches of the trees in the distance, to where a smudge of metallic-grey marks his intended destination some thirty yards ahead.

“The tower’s in sight,” he reports quietly, and carefully crouches back down again to retrieve his rifle from its resting place by his feet, cradling it confidently in both hands. “I’ve got a clear path ahead of me. Think I’m gonna just leg it while the goin’s good, bruv.”
“I’m in position just east of the target,” Mark tells him. “Remember, there’s a sizeable clearing up ahead, you’re going to be short on cover for those last fifteen yards.”

Eggsy shrugs, even though the older Sub can’t see him. “Got you for that, don’t I?” he counters cheerfully, checking his weapon briefly before setting off at a brisk pace. “Piece o’ cake.”

“My vantage point isn’t ideal,” the team coordinator warns him. “I can only offer you limited cover-fire. Eggsy, I really think you ought to-”

But Eggsy’s already past the treeline, the tall watch-tower looming up in front of him, positioned in the centre of the clearing. Eyes scanning left and right, he quickens his pace to a jog as he closes the distance between himself and his target, face splitting into a grin. The sooner he gets this done, the sooner he can go back to daydreaming about-

“Galahad, look out!” Mark’s voice shouts over the line. “At your five o’clock!”

There’s the sound of rifle discharging from somewhere high up and to his left – presumably Mark’s cover fire – and he bites out a curse, adrenaline zinging through him as he veers in that direction at a run, glancing around frantically for something to duck down behind. But the coordinator hadn’t been lying – other than the tower itself, the clearing is utterly barren. He’s a sitting duck out here.

“Two o’clock!” comes Mark’s next warning, and Eggsy swings his rifle around to fire off a blind shot in that direction as he continues to sprint towards the treeline. “Galahad, wait, you’re heading straight into my blind spot!”

He’s well aware of the fact, but at least the forest will provide him with some small measure of protection until they can regroup and come up with another plan of attack. So he quickens his pace to a flat-out sprint, panic receding as the treeline approaches…

Until, that is, a broad-shouldered figure suddenly emerges from behind the bough of a gnarly old oak, rifle aimed squarely at him.

“Eggsy, get down!”

Too late. Too slow. Eggsy comes to terms with that fact even as he skids to a halt and swings his own weapon up to return fire; he knows in his gut that this is it, this is game over – that the others have got him pinned and no amount of strategy is going to shift the outcome in his favour.

Oh shit.

Pain blooms in his shoulder, hot and fierce and sudden, and he cries out as the force of it sends him stumbling back a pace. But it doesn’t topple him, and he tightens his grip on his own rifle, taking aim, finger twitching against the trigger.

“Ah!” Another searing swell of pain, this time on the back of his right thigh, spreading along his hamstring and down his calf. “Fuck!”

The leg buckles beneath his weight, sending him crumpling painfully to the floor. He lays there in a heap, heart pounding, breathing coming out in short, ragged gasps, face twisted in discomfort as he presses a hand to his shoulder, to the damp, sticky patch collecting on the fabric there, staring up numbly at the cloudy sky for several long seconds.

Going out today had been a bad idea. This whole operation had been doomed to failure from the start. He should’ve waited until tomorrow before suggesting it; waited until he wasn’t so fucking distracted, until he was able to focus on things properly.
“Idiot,” Mark grunts in his ear. “That was your own bloody fault.”

The Sub groans loudly as he pushes his protective goggles up onto his forehead, and decides he’s never, ever going to move again. Ever. Ow, ow, ow.

“Nice shot, Phillip,” Keana congratulates from somewhere nearby.

“Thanks,” the younger Dom replies, sounding suitably pleased with himself. But at least he has the decency to remember his fallen leader. “Are you alright there, Sir?”

“Nng,” Eggsy replies, grimacing. “I hate you both.”

His teammates grin down at him unapologetically, and with another pained groan, Eggsy pushes himself up into a sitting position, one hand still grasping his bruised, throbbing shoulder. The side of his face feels damp, and he scrubs at it with the sleeve of his camouflage shirt, wiping away the lime-green paint.

“Fuck.” He rotates his shoulder carefully, wincing all the while. “Those things bloody hurt close-range. I’m gonna bruise like a fuckin’ peach.”

“Better bruised than dead,” Connor comments, coming up on Eggsy’s other side, crossing his arms over his chest as he peers down at him, amused. The medic’s got a large yellow paint-splat in the centre of his Kevlar vest, although whether it came from Mark’s cover-fire or Eggsy’s blind shooting, it’s impossible to say. “Interesting strategy you had back there; pity it didn’t work out for you. Just out of curiosity, what was your plan of attack?”

“Something along the lines of ‘let’s ignore my coordinator and hope for the best’, ” Mark replies flatly, as he moves to stand beside Connor, mirroring his posture. The Sub’s expression, however, looks decidedly less amused than the medic’s.

Eggsy winces anew, although it has little to do with his injuries this time. “Sorry, bruv. My bad.”

Mark peers down at him critically for a moment, a crease appearing between his eyebrows, before the expression smooths other and he turns to the rest of his team.

“Tea break?” he suggests, and is met with enthusiastic consensus from all parties. “You lot go on ahead back to the mansion, we’ll catch up in a few minutes.”

Phillip shoots the Sub a commiserating wince, which Keana mirrors as she drags her gloved fingers lightly through Eggsy’s hair, before moving past him, paint rifle slung over her shoulder. Connor reaches down to help the agent to his feet, clucks him under the chin with a sympathetic sort of smile, and gives him a reassuring pat on the shoulder before leaving him to Mark’s tender mercies. The Sub watches the trio depart wistfully, knowing from prior experience that he’d be much better off legging it after them and avoiding the coming interrogation/mega telling-off he’s about to endure, curtesy of his team coordinator.

Eggsy reluctantly turns towards Mark. “Okay. So just for reference, on a scale of scorpion-sting to Thames-bombing, how pissed are you?”

“I’m not cross,” the older Sub replies quietly, regarding him closely as Eggsy wincingly puts weight on his paint-splattered leg. “His thigh’s killin’ him. ‘But I am concerned. You haven’t quite been yourself these past few days, and then this morning it’s like talking to a brick wall. What’s going on with you?”

Massaging his bruised leg, Eggsy averts his gaze. “Nothin’. Just havin’ an off-day, that’s all.”
After a brief pause, fingers pinch his chin gently, tilting his head back up and bringing his eyes up with it. “Eggsy, love. If you’re dropping again, I need know.”

“Droppin’?” the younger man echoes, surprised by the suggestion. But at the glimmer of genuine concern in his companion’s eyes, his incredulity softens, and with a smile he reaches up to briefly squeeze the elder Sub’s wrist. “I’m fine, mate. Promise.”

Mark regards him steadily, clearly unconvinced, a faint crease still present in his brow. “You’ve always taken training exercises so seriously. I haven’t seen you this distracted since that mission in Belarus.”

“C’mon, bruv, I ain’t ill neither,” Eggsy insists. He doesn’t need to ponder much over which mission the other Sub is referring too – being stuck halfway up a mountain with Scarlet Fever had been a rather unforgettable experience for them all.

“Then what’s wrong with you?” Mark pursues, only to raise a hand to still Eggsy’s immediate answer. “And don’t say “nothing”, because we both know that’s not true. Something’s got you all wound up, and until you’ve dealt with it, you’re in no fit state to be carrying around a weapon – paint gun or otherwise.”

Damn the man for being so bloody perceptive. Eggsy sighs, rubbing the back of his neck and glancing quickly towards the treeline where the rest of his team have disappeared.

“Promise me you won’t tell the others?”

“Cross my heart,” Mark answers without hesitation.

He shifts from foot to foot. “It ain’t even that big of a deal, y’know-”

“Eggsy.”

“Alright, alright.” The Sub heaves another sigh, the butterflies in his stomach fluttering with renewed enthusiasm. “Fine.” He takes a deep, steadying breath. “Harry an’ Merlin are gonna collar me tonight.”

Mark’s expression flits from concerned to surprised to pleased all at once, and in a matter of seconds a wide, warm smile is curling at the corner of his mouth as he seizes Eggsy by the shoulders.

“Are you serious?”

The man’s enthusiasm is contagious, and Eggsy’s own excitement comes bubbling back up to the surface as he returns the smile with a wide grin of his own, nodding. Mark lets out a delighted laugh and yanks the younger Sub into a tight embrace.

“God, congratulations,” the coordinator enthuses. “No wonder you’re so bloody distracted, Eggsy, Christ. What’s the collar like, have you see it? Do you have a photo?”

It strikes Eggsy in that very moment just how very lucky he is. He never imagined life would lead him down this path; gift him with two incredible Dominant partners who love him, and a close-knit team of trained professionals who treat him with respect and dignity despite his dynamic status. He never could have guessed a year ago that he’d be destined to have a Submissive confidant like Mark; someone who thoroughly embraced his own dynamic, who could prop Eggsy up when he needed a helping hand or give him a good smack when he needed a reality check. There’s no way in hell Eggsy would’ve made it this far without the older Sub’s guidance. He’s so fucking blessed.
“I’ll send you a photo later,” he promises, as Mark tugs the youth’s arm across his shoulders to help him hobble back towards the treeline.

It’s the least he can do for the Sub. Plus he’s already had to swear on pain of death that he’ll take one for Roxy and Amelia’s benefit, so it’s not like he has to go an extra mile or anythin’. Besides, there’s a deep-down part of him that feels a secret thrill at the prospect of getting to share his excitement with the people he trusts the most. He may not feel confident enough openly display his marker at work, or out in public, but that doesn’t mean he’s opposed to showing it off to a few friends.

“I think the lad likes his present, Harry.”

The other Dom hums his agreement, unable at present to give a verbal response, largely due to fact that Eggsy’s snogging him hard enough to threaten asphyxiation. Merlin’s laugh is warm and affectionate, the hand that glides up Eggsy’s spine even more so, and the Sub settles a little at the touch, calming enough to sit back a bit in Harry’s lap and allow the Dom to catch his breath.

“You do like it, don’t you, boyo?” Merlin checks, fingers ghosting over the latch on the back of the youth’s new collar.

“It’s fuckin’ gorgeous,” Eggsy gushes, and leans over to steal another passionate kiss from Merlin. “An’ the matchin’ cuffs, oh my days, whose idea was that?”

“Well, you always seem to enjoy yourself whenever Merlin binds you,” Harry remarks, utterly composed save for the way his hair’s standing on end, mussed by the Sub’s fingers. “And the style of the collar suited you so well, I couldn’t resist having a full set made for you.”

Grinning hard enough to make his cheeks ache, Eggsy throws his arms around Harry’s neck in a grateful hug, his new bonding collar snugly encircling his throat. The soft leather band fits him like a dream, and with his Doms’ initials engraved in beautiful cursive on the slim silver plate at the front to mark him as theirs, he’s never felt so in tune with his true dynamic.

“Can I try ‘em on?” he badgers, leaning back far enough to glance between his Doms, wide-eyed and hopeful. “Please? Jus’ for a minute?”

“Hmm,” Merlin ponders, feigning hesitation as he pulls Eggsy from Harry’s lap and into his own, lips warm against the sensitive dip behind the youth’s ear. “Aye, go on then.”

Eggsy’s hands settle on the arm that’s looped around his waist, and he watches eagerly as Harry
reaches for one of the fancy boxes on the coffee table (his Doms have seriously spoiled him this time, he doesn’t even want to hazard a guess as to what the final cost must’ve come to, because that jeweller’s catalogue had been fucking fancy).

The dark leather cuffs are beautiful, and bear the same cursive engravings as his collar, albeit in larger font and etched into the leather itself rather than on a silver plate. Holding his wrists out in front of him, Eggsy manages to remain still long enough for Harry to fasten the cuffs in place snugly and check his circulation, before he pulls arms back towards him for a closer inspection.

Merlin’s lips brush against his ear again. “Will they do, lad?”

“Fuck yeah,” the Sub enthuses, and cranes his neck around to kiss the Scot clumsily before jumping to his feet, almost tripping over JB, who had settled on the floor by the sofa some time ago for his after-dinner snooze.

Harry reaches out to steady him, looking both amused and puzzled by the youth’s sudden movement. “Where’s the fire, poppet?”

Eggsy grins at him as he carefully steps over the sleeping pooch. “Need to find a mirror, don’t I?” He heads out of the lounge and makes a beeline for the staircase, calling over his shoulder, “Wouldn’t say no to good fuck, neither!”

He’s already pulling his t-shirt over his head as he jogs along the upstairs landing, tossing the garment aside without a second thought, and by the time he skids to a halt in front of the full-length mirror in the master bedroom, he’s got his trousers halfway down his legs and one sock half-off. But he stops his hurried disrobing when he catches sight of himself in the mirror, because fuck, he doesn’t half look good in his new bonding markers.

Beaming at his reflection, he tilts his head this way and that admiringly.

“Clothes belong in the linen basket, darling,” Harry’s amused voice comments from the doorway. “Not on the- Good heavens, what happened to your shoulder? And good Lord, your thigh.”

“Hm?” Eggsy stops admiring his collar long enough to glance back at the Dom. Following his gaze, he does a half-turn to check on his injured leg, wincing at the bluish palm-sized bruise standing out against the pale skin there. “Oh, that. I got shot, no biggy.”

“You got shot?” Harry echoes, alarmed, already crossing the room towards him.

“S’fine, guv, it- ow! It was a paint gun, m’alright, s’only a couple o’ bruises.”

He winces, flinching away from Harry’s carefully probing fingers. Amidst the excitement of getting collared, he’d quite forgotten about his injuries, but his thigh’s gone back to throbbing something awful now, especially bent forward like this over Harry’s forearm while the Dom surveys the damage.

“Starting without me?” Merlin queries lightly as he strolls into the bedroom, closing the door behind him (they’d learned early on to keep JB shut out, unless they wanted their sexy-sexy times interspersed with excessive dog slobber). Eggsy sees the Dom pause, a faint crease appearing between his eyes as he stares at the Sub intently. “What the hell did you do to your shoulder, lad?”

“He got shot,” Harry answers, finally allowing Eggsy upright, palm still caressing his thigh gently.

“With a paint gun,” the Sub hastens to reiterate.
“Ah.” Merlin appears visibly calmed by the news. “Tactical training didn’t end well for you, I take it?”

“Yeah, not so much.” He gives the Dom a rueful sort of smile and shrugs. “Had a lot on my mind this mornin’, wasn’t payin’ enough attention to my surroundin’s. And my team’s fuckin’ vicious when they see an openin’. S’why I love ‘em.”

“Still.” Harry skims his fingers lightly over the sizeable bruise still blossoming on Eggsy’s shoulder. “They didn’t have to shoot you at close range. You’ll be aching for days.”

Eggsy can’t help but smile at the man’s visible displeasure. Harry’s the sort of Dom who’ll gladly leave his boy covered in hickeys and bite-marks and handprints, aching from head to toe (in the best sort of way) if the Sub asks for it, but he also has a tendency to fuss and coddle like there’s no tomorrow if the youth happens to come home with so much as a papercut. It’s one of the many things about the man that Eggsy finds utterly endearing.

“Guess you’ll just have to make me ache someplace better,” he suggests, leaning up to kiss the Dom as he kicks his trousers off from around his ankles. “An’ maybe give me a few more marks of your own, yeah?”

Merlin presses up behind him, sandwiching him between the two Dominants, his large hands encircling Eggsy’s cuffed wrists and guiding them behind his back to hook the little metal ring-clasps together.

“That sounds like a fair plan to me, lad,” the Scotsman agrees, warm breath tickling the hairs on the back of Eggsy’s neck as he kisses the skin there, just above his collar. A second later his teeth graze over that same patch of skin in a barely-there lovebite, sending pleasant shivers down the boy’s spine.

It’s almost like a button’s been punished, the way his knees begin tremble weakly, ready to buckle beneath his weight, and he shudders all over, suddenly hyper-aware of the consistent pressure of the collar against his throat, of two sets of hands and lips caressing his skin, and fuck, he’s gone. Slipping to his knees is second nature to him now, effortless and graceful even when he’s half-drunk with lust, that immediate rush of rightness and belonging as familiar a friend to him now as it had been a stranger almost a year ago when they’d first started their journey together. Merlin’s hand settles in his hair, Harry’s warm fingers cupping the side of his jaw, and he lets his eyes close to half-mast as he leans in to nuzzle at a clothed hip. Two warm digits brush up against his lips, and he opens his mouth without hesitation, sucking on them eagerly to indicate in his usual manner that yes, he does want what Harry thinks he wants. Please and thank you.

The fingers disappear, but his nonverbal prompt is rewarded a moment later by the sound of a zipper being unfastened. He leans in eagerly, eyes still closed, only to get tugged back gently by the hand in his hair.

“Patience, Eggsy,” Merlin tells him, soft and amused. “You’ll get what you need, my lad, don’t you worry.”

The Sub gives a wordless sort of whine, but holds still for his Dom, watching through hooded eyes as Harry strips out of his clothes, breathing quickening in anticipation as each garment is removed and folded and set to one side with care. It’s something akin to torture, watching the man strip, and Eggsy’s hands are securely cuffed behind him so he can’t even help. One might think that after a year of shared intimacies, his body wouldn’t still be so hair-trigger responsive to the sight of his Doms sans clothing, but all it takes is a peak at Harry’s broad shoulders and muscular torso and
wonderfully soft tummy, and he’s putty in the man’s hands. Not that he ain’t putty for his Doms when they’re fully clothed, too, but that’s beside the point.

Eventually the final item of clothing has been appropriately discarded, and Harry’s standing there in front of him, butt-naked and gorgeous. The Dom gives his hardening erection a few slow, lazy strokes and Eggsy whimpers, tugging against the hand in his hair – Harry’s cock’s right there in front of him, he just needs another inch…

“Eager lad,” Merlin chuckles, but eases up his grip enough that Eggsy can close the distance and wrap his lips around his intended target. “You got him, Harry?”

The other Dom nods, his gaze fixed on Eggsy as his own fingers sink into the Sub’s hair, free hand settling on the side of the boy’s neck over the new collar to steady him.

Closing his eyes with a moan, Eggsy opens his mouth further, lets his muscles go lax as he tilts the weight of his head into Harry’s touch, prompting the Dom to guide his movements forward and back as the thick cock slips further past his lips. It ain’t quite as unique an experience as getting to blow the man from beneath his desk back at HQ (Eggsy ain’t no exhibitionist, but there’s something about office sex that just gets him all riled up like nothing else), but the presence of his new collar and cuffs makes it ten times more exhilarating than any old spur-of-the-moment blowjob. And even those are pretty damn awesome, so this one’s officially off the scale.

“I’m going to open you up, sweetheart,” Merlin tells him, the words a warm tickle against his ear, and Eggsy assumes the Dom must be kneeling down behind him now. “You remember what to do if you need me to stop?”

Eggsy clenches both fists tightly in answer, and gets a slow, gentle caress down his spine by way of a reward.

“Good lad. Let’s get rid of these now, shall we?” His boxers are tugged down out of the way without preamble, and he hums around Harry’s cock, pushing back into the hand that caresses his cheeks. “Ah-ah, no.” A gentle smack the centre of his buttocks. “Keep still for me, boyo. You want to be good for Harry, don’t you?”

The Sub nods as best he can, gaze flitting back up to meet his Dom’s eyes, lust brewing hot and restless within him at the man’s lust-blown pupils and slackened mouth. Pleasure always looks so fucking good on Harry.

He sucks in a sharp breath through his nose at the first gentle touch of cool lube against his entrance, mouth tightening a little around Harry, enough that it forces a low, breathless curse out of the Dom as Harry’s eyes close for a moment, head tilted back in pleasure, hands holding Eggsy’s head still as his hips buck. But a few seconds later the man seems to have himself back under control again, and resumes gently guiding the Sub to bob back and forth on his cock as Merlin’s fingers begin to probe him carefully.

And it’s overwhelming, the both of them at once, with him collared and cuffed – he can barely think straight, the blood’s pulsing so loudly in his ears. And while his cock’s rock-hard, the thought of his own release is far less of a priority compared to his urgent, impulsive need to be good and to please his Doms with his body. He wants to be marked and mated and claimed, fuck, he’s never been so desperate for anything in his life.

Thankfully his Doms seem to share his sentiment, because it isn’t long before they’re moving him (he whines at the loss of both fingers and cock, even though he knows it’s only temporary), and settling him on his front on the bed, bent over a stack of pillows in the middle of the mattress. And
there he’s left for a moment, almost trembling out of his skin with want and need, turning his head to watch through hazy eyes as Harry yanks Merlin into a passionate kiss at the bedside, hands working to relieve the Scotsman of his cumbersome clothing. Eggsy bites his lip, hips rocking at the sight, suddenly hyperaware of his hard, throbbing, untouched cock.

There’s nothing in the world quite as arousing as watching his partners make love to one another; two such powerful men, moving together in a seamless rhythm, a well-practised dance of passion that turns Eggsy’s blood to boiling. It’s so fucking hot. Whenever Merlin and Harry are feeling particularly vindictive, they have a tendency to kneel Eggsy in the corner of the room facing the bed, or tie him securely to a chair, and make him watch for what feels like hours on end as they find pleasure in each other’s bodies. It’s a brutally effective torture technique, that’s for sure – Eggsy’s invariably reduced to a begging pile of lust and desperation by the time they cut him loose and take him into their fold once again.

“Shh, I’m here, lad,” Merlin says, voice low and accent thickening in his arousal as he presses up behind Eggsy on the bed, erection nudging up between the Sub’s cheeks. “I know what ye need.”

Eggsy’s vocalised gratitude is muffled by Harry’s cock shortly thereafter, and between the barrage of exhilarating sensations – Merlin fucking his arse, Harry claiming his mouth, fingers tugging at his hair, a strong hand clamped over his nape, another pinning his cuffed hands in place at the small of his back, his collar clinging tightly to his throat all the while – it isn’t long before the building euphoria transitions to a distant buzzing in his limbs and a faint ringing in his ears and ooooh, this is nice, he hasn’t been this far down in a long while.

Everything’s warm and cosy and floaty, comfortably so, and although he’s dimly aware of his body being moves and gently manipulated, of a cool cloth wiping over his heated skin, the actual sensations are pleasantly muted. Content to drift for a while, he snuggles into the safe embrace of the Dom who’s currently cradling him (Harry? Merlin? Maybe both?) and allows awareness to ebb back into his consciousness at its own pace.

When he finally comes back to himself enough to acknowledge his surroundings, he’s sandwiched snugly between his Doms, propped up against their chests as they converse quietly above him. He stirs enough to draw their attention, and settles again with a contented sigh when he’s immediately petted. Good. That’s better.

“Hello, poppet,” Harry murmurs, fingers combing through his hair. “Back with us?”

“Mm,” Eggsy manages to hum after a lengthy pause, and burrows his face into the Dom’s chest. Harry has, at some point, changed into his pyjamas, and regrettably the surface beneath Eggsy’s cheek is silk, not skin. He pouts momentarily, then nuzzles against it anyway. Still cosy, even if it isn’t as squishy as he’d like.

“You were down for almost an hour,” Merlin tells him softly, hand stroking lightly down his side. “How are you feeling, sweetheart?”

Eggsy pulls a face against Harry’s chest. Talking feels like such a huge effort, and he ain’t quite ready to banish the last vestiges of the pleasant fuzziness in his brain. Not just yet. So he hums again and snuggles closer to the Doms in the hope that a non-verbal answer will suffice.

Merlin sniffs a quiet grin, fingers ghosting against his nape before settling over his collar, cupping the leather to his skin in a way that makes Eggsy heave another contented sigh.

“You don’t have to come back up just yet, boyo,” the Dom reassures, his tone soft and fond, wrapping Eggsy up in another blanket of warm floatiness. “Stay down a wee while longer, there’s a
good lad.”

Now *that*, he can do. Ace.

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Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading! A slightly shorter instalment than usual, but I wanted to get something posted now rather than making you wait another fortnight. Let me know your thoughts! <3 x
“Meelia!” Daisy squeals delightedly, jumping up from the picnic blanket and dashing across the garden towards her new visitors. “Woxy!”

Roxy smiles down at their petite hostess, while Amelia steps forward to catch the toddler beneath the arms and swing her up into a spinning embrace. Eggsy watches from his appointed cushion on the multi-coloured picnic blanket beneath the shade of the ash tree, heart swelling as wide as his smile at the sound of his sister’s happy giggling.

“You come sit wif me,” Daisy insists confidentially, small hands clenching in the fabric of Amelia’s infinity scarf as the Sub carries her back across the garden.

“Oi,” Eggsy chides, but there’s a smile in his voice. “What’s the magic word, Daisy?”

She glances at him quickly, then tacks on a hopeful, “Please? You’s gonna be a princess, ‘meelia. Woxy an’ me is knights.”

“What about Eggsy?” Roxy asks with all seriousness, glancing across at him, although Eggsy can see the smile threatening to bloom at the corner of her mouth. “Isn’t he a knight too?”

Daisy shakes her head and points to the plastic, overly bejewelled tiara adorning her brother’s head. “No, Eggy’s a princess. You sit there, Woxy.” At Eggsy’s arched brow and expectant look, she belatedly amends: “You sit wif Eggy please?”

Smiling fondly, Roxy moves to occupy the cushion beside him, elbowing the Sub playfully in the ribs as their tiny hostess settles on her own cushion and starts passing out the themed paper plates. Roxy studies the bearded character on her own plate with some amusement.

“Pirates?” she murmurs under her breath, as Amelia helps Daisy pour the ‘tea’ (cold apple juice) into the little hand-painted cups.

Eggsy grins and shrugs, murmuring back, “Never a dull moment round ‘ere, mate. Last week’s Transformers phase is well over. I’m a pirate princess, you’re a pirate knight - try an’ keep up, yeah?”

She elbows him again, and Eggsy prepares to retaliate, but quickly switches to an easy smile when
his mother emerges from the house, heels clacking against the patio, rummaging around in her handbag distractedly.

“**I love your dress, Michelle,**” Roxy calls across the garden. “**Going somewhere special?**”

The older woman finally glances up to smile towards the group, smoothing a hand down the flattering cut of dark blue fabric. “**Just out for lunch with a friend,**” she answers. “**It’s not too much is it?**

“**You look beautiful, Mum,**” Eggsy insists, getting up from his cushion to cross over to her. “**Drop-dead gorgeous.**”

And it ain’t one word of a lie. In these past eighteen months, he’s seen her transform from the shell of a woman she once was under Dean’s control to someone confident and outgoing and full of life. It’s like Eggsy’s got his old Mum back – the Mum he remembers from his early childhood, before depression and patch-addiction had set in. It’s not been an easy road by any means; it’s taken twice-weekly counselling appointments and a hell of a lot of recovery time for the last vestiges of Dean’s hold on her to finally fade away. But she’s been patch-free for almost six months now, her mood safely stabilised without drop-med for the first time since Eggsy was eight years old, and she’s never looked healthier. They’ve all come a heck of a long way since V-Day.

He reaches out to carefully adjust the pendant on her necklace. “**There. Perfect.**”

Michelle looks at him, her gaze soft and full of affection. “**Are you sure you’ll be alright with Daisy until I get back?**” she asks quietly, cupping his cheek. “**I’ll only be gone a few hours, but you’ll call me if you need anythin’, yeah?**”

Eggsy tilts his cheek into her touch, closing his eyes briefly. It’s still fairly new ground for them, this one-eighty shift in their power dynamic, but it’s getting easier with every interaction.

Still, he can’t believe that more than a month has passed since he finally summed up the courage to come out as a Sub to his mother. The ordeal had been as emotionally fraught an experience as he’d expected it to be; to see her initial surprise transition into dawning horror had been bad enough, but to have her break down in tears shortly thereafter had just about torn his heart in two.

“I’m so sorry, Eggsy,” she’d told him over and over, her voice weak from crying, a trembling hand stroking through his hair where she’d tucked his head down against her shoulder. “**Oh god, babe, I’m so sorry. If I’d known...if I’d thought even for a second that you wasn’t a Dom, I never would’ve let things with Dean carry on for so long.**”

“**None of that was your fault,**” Eggsy had tried to insist, his own eyes brimming, the ache in his chest overwhelming. “**I was the one who decided to lie to everyone about who I was, ain’t much you could’ve done to stop me. I just wanted to be strong for you – to keep you safe.**”

She’d held him to her even more fiercely at that. “**I’m your Mum, Eggsy. I should’ve been the one protectin’ you, not the other way around.**”

But Eggsy had vividly recalled every occasion when his mother had stepped between him and Dean to try and diffuse an argument, or direct his anger away from Eggsy and towards herself. The times when she’d slipped a couple of twenties into his back pocket without Dean knowing so that he could buy the new shoes he wanted or take a trip to Blackpool with his mates. She’d been there all his life, loving him and protecting him at the expense of her own happiness, and he’s never be able to pay her back for that.
It had taken a full two weeks for the matter to blow over – to talk his Mum out of feeling guilty over
what had ultimately been a choice he’d made of his own volition more than six years ago – and
finally they’d begun to bridge that invisible gap between them, the one that Eggsy’s always felt so
acutely ever since he began embracing his Submission.

Things aren’t quite perfect, not yet, but he’s now at liberty to wear his collar wherever he pleases
(with the exception of Kingsman HQ – he’s yet to summon up the courage to walk into the shop
with his bonding marker proudly on display). But simply having the freedom to be himself when he’s
at home with his family is a significant improvement on how things used to be.

“I’ll be fine,” he promises after a beat. “An’ look – I’ve got backup, just in case.”

Michelle glances over his shoulder towards where Roxy and Amelia are indulgently allowing their
god-daughter to serve them finger sandwiches and vegetable sticks, and her expression softens
further.

“I know you do.” She smiles warmly as she watches the female trio. “I’m glad you have such good
friends.”

Eggsy grins. “Me too. Couldn’t manage life without ‘em.” He gives her a gentle nudge. “Now get
goin’, Mum, or you’ll be late. Don’t want to keep your new friend waitin’, do you?”

It takes another half-dozen reassurances from both himself and Roxy before she concedes defeat and
departs, by which time Daisy’s already finished her sandwiches and is trying to convince Amelia that
they need to go and “check on the fishies” in the pond. The female Sub obligingly lets her little
pirate-knight pull her up and lead her by the hand further down the garden, past the flower beds and
vegetable patch, towards the safety-netted fish pond near the rear fence.

“Michelle’s left Daisy with us before,” Roxy points out quietly, refilling Eggy’s teacup of juice and
passing him the plate of sandwiches as he settles back down beside her. “It’s not like her to fret so
much. Did something happen?”

Eggsy shakes his head. “Nah. She’s just nervous.”

“Nervous?” the Dom echoes, carrot stick halfway to her mouth. “About what?”

“Goin’ out with Tom.” He inserts a whole finger-sandwich into his mouth, chewing thoughtfully
before continuing. “S’pose it’s been a while since she last dated someone. Scary stuff, innit?”

Roxy puts her plate down and shifts on the picnic blanket to face him more fully. “She’s on a date?
With a Dom?”

“Mm.” Eggsy reaches for the plastic bowl of cherry tomatoes and pops a couple in his mouth.
“Bloke called Thomas. Mum met ‘im at the community hall down the road when she was helpin’ run
a charity bake sale a few months back. They kept in touch. He asked her out, she said yes. No
biggie.”

The Dom regards him closely, then narrows her eyes in suspicion. “Not that your maturity isn’t to be
commended, but you do seem unusually calm about all this.”

The Sub shrugs again as he finishes chewing and swallows his mouthful. “Well. Always knew it’d
happen someday, didn’t I? No use in tryin’ to stop it.”

At Roxy’s expectant look, he gives in. “Alright, so I ran a superficial background check on ‘im first.
Criminal past, phone records, bank statements, browser history. Just the basics, y’know?”
“Mm.” The Dom’s hiding a smile behind her teacup as she takes a sip. “And? Find out anything interesting?”

“Only that he spends more money on orchids for his greenhouse than he does on food an’ clothes for himself. And he’s marathoned all seven series of Great British Bake-Off this past month.”

“Same,” Roxy admits, reaching for a fairy cake. “At least he has good taste. But what’s he like as a person, any idea?”

Eggsy shrugs again. “Seems like a decent enough bloke. Works as the head of the music department at the Academy down the road; been teaching there for fifteen years, got himself proper glowin’ reports from all his students on that rate-my-teacher website. Means he’ll be good with kids, yeah? An’ Mum seems to really like him.”

Roxy’s quiet for a long moment, cake untouched on her paper pirate-plate. Then she leans over suddenly to yank him into a one-armed hug, pressing a firm kiss to his cheek as Eggsy grunts out a surprised laugh and fakes an attempt to squirm away.

“Ge’roff,” he grouches, but there’s a smile in his voice as he pulls back to rub the lipstick mark from his cheek. “What was that for?”

“Being too cute for this world,” she answers cheerfully, shifting to lean against his side. “And speaking of ‘cute’, where’s JB? He’s usually out here trying to pinch the leftovers.”

Eggsy settles his arm around her shoulders, his back braced against the bough of the ash tree. “He’s at home, keepin’ Harry company while I’m out.”

“Oh? I’d heard it through the grapevine that our esteemed leader had finally conceded to take a week’s leave from headquarters, but I wasn’t sure if the rumours were true.” Roxy flicks the side of his leg. “How long’s it been, six months?”

“Probably closer to eight.” He thinks on it a moment more. “Or maybe nine. Dunno, long enough.”

“How did you manage to convince him to go?”

The Sub gives a quiet, derisive snort. “I didn’t. Merlin put his foot down; threatened to drag Medical into it an’ make it mandatory. An’ Harry doesn’t like a fuss, so he gave in. Plus I think he knows he’s overdue for some downtime – his headaches have been gettin’ worse these past couple o’ months, me an’ Merlin’s been worried about him. He never lets it show, but he’s been strugglin’.”

Were it not for the fact that Eggsy’s been bonded to the Dom this past year and a half, he might’ve overlooked the signs as well. Harry rarely voiced a complaint about his own wellbeing, tending to plough on through migraines and bouts of vertigo despite warnings from Medical that doing so might lead to more serious problems. But Harry’s always been stubborn. And Eggsy loves him to pieces, but he finds the Dom’s lack of self-preservation seriously frustrating.

Clearly it’s Karma getting back at him for all those times he’s stressed his Doms out by being a tad reckless during overseas missions, but still. Karma needs to suck it.

Daisy’s high-pitched, infectious laughter floats back across the garden towards them, and they both turn their heads to watch as Amelia chases the three-year-old around and around the little wooden Wendy-house, her pace purposefully slowed, her steps exaggerated as she growls. Eggsy grins at the sight, watching his sister’s golden ringlets bouncing as she runs away from her godmother’s outstretched arms, shrieking in delight.
“Amelia’s a natural with kids,” he remarks. “You two ever talked about having some of your own?”

When Roxy allows the silence to stretch on for several beats, he tears his gaze away from his sister to look at her, grin fading quickly at his best friend’s downtrodden expression.

“What’s wrong?” he asks concernedly, circling his arm further around her shoulders. “Was it somethin’ I said?”

She shakes her head, eyes still following her wife’s steps as she pursues their young charge. “No, it’s not your fault. I just…” She gusts out a sigh, lifting a hand to drag her fingers through her fringe. “You’re right, Amelia’s great with kids. She’d be a fantastic mother.”

“Oi, so would you, bruv,” Eggsy insists quietly, giving her a squeeze. “Daisy’s bloody gaga over the both of you.”

Her smile is small and strained and doesn’t quite reach her eyes. “Thanks Eggsy.” She sighs again and glances back towards her Sub. “Amelia wants to start a family. She’s always been keyed towards that goal, and both her parents and mine are expecting us to ‘settle down’ soon.”

Eggsy waits a moment to see if she’ll go on independently, before gently hedging, “But that’s not what you want.”

“Don’t get me wrong, I love children,” Roxy insists. “But the thought of taking on that sort of responsibility on top of everything going on at Kingsman…” She presses a hand to her forehead, frowning down into her lap. “I’m not ready to be a mother, Eggsy. I never saw myself as the sort of person who’d get married, let alone start a family. But that’s all Amelia’s ever wanted, I can’t deny her that.”

He takes her hand, lacing her fingers with his own. “Ain’t like you need to make any big decisions straight away,” he reasons. “You’ve only just turned twenty-five, Rox, there’s still plenty of time to think things through first.”

“But look at her,” Roxy murmurs, aggrieved, as Amelia sweeps Daisy up into her arms and tumbles back onto the grass, laughing. “Look how happy she is. I’d do anything to keep her that way. I should want this just as much as she does.”

“Amelia’s happy with you,” Eggsy reminds her. “She loves you, mate. An’ speakin’ as a Sub, I know she’d do anythin’ to keep you happy, too. If you ain’t ready to settle down an’ start havin’ kids, she’ll be willin’ to wait. I know she will.”

When Roxy stays silent, he gives her another one-armed squeeze. “Talk to her, Rox. There’s no harm in talkin’ things over.”

She sighs again, nodding, and shifts to wrap both arms around him in a proper hug, cheek pressed against the side of his head.

“How did you get to be so grown up?” she murmurs. “Usually I’m the one propping you up, not the other way around.”

Eggsy smiles, savouring the warm embrace. “Dunno. Guess I’ve been livin’ with Harry and Merlin so long, I’ve just gained wisdom by osmosis or somethin’.”

“Pity the same can’t be said for your taste in fashion.”

“Oi!”
Roxy laughs into his shoulder, the sound as carefree and unrestrained as it usually is, and Eggsy feels a pulse of inner satisfaction that her brief spell of despondency seems to have passed. It ain’t often that he’s called upon to give relationship advice, and hell, if someone would’ve asked him for it two years ago he’d have laughed in their face. But he’s been in a stable, long-term relationship for a significant length of time now. And while JB’s not exactly the same as a human child, Eggsy’s still raised him from a pup, and by all accounts Merlin and Harry are the pug’s co-parents. For all intents and purposes, they are a family.

Roxy’s right. He really has grown up.

He’s still breathless, body thrumming with pleasant warmth, when Harry leans over to tap the base of the bedside lamp, plunging the bedroom into darkness.

“Fuckin’ ‘ell,” he mumbles, limbs reduced to weightless goo by his most recent orgasm. “Nice to see you back on form, guv.”

Merlin hums his agreement as he slides back into bed beside him, gently brushing the damp cloth over Eggsy’s heated skin to clean him up. “Aye, you’ve certainly got your spark back, Harry,” he acknowledges, a smile in his voice. “You were near enough ready to pound our lad straight through the mattress.”

“Fuck yeah,” Eggsy groans approvingly.

“Happy to oblige,” Harry replies, audibly amused. He gently cups Eggsy’s cheek in one hand, tilting his head up for a soft, lingering kiss that sets the youth’s nerve endings alight all over again. There’s no way in hell he can get it up again after three consecutive orgasms, but that don’t mean he can’t enjoy a bit of snogging.

Which is precisely how they occupy themselves for several pleasurable minutes, Eggsy laid bare between them, boneless and sated, pliantly letting them turn his head this way and that as they take turns kissing him deeply, their hands stroking over his torso.

But it’s been a long, physically exhausting (albeit wonderfully pleasant) evening, and eventually the dim lighting takes its toll, Eggsy’s eyelids beginning to droop as his Dom’s kisses soften and grow more chaste, tickling over his cheeks and neck as the bedsheet is drawn up over the three of them.
He’s almost asleep when a sudden weight on his ankles makes him start, but it’s only JB, the pug having padded in from his basket in the hallway. The dog’s smart enough to know when things have settled down and he’ll therefore be granted access to the bed rather than nudged back out the door by one of his carers.

“Hey. I’ve been thinkin’,” he murmurs into the silence of the room, managing not to flinch as JB wriggles under the blankets to settle over his feet (years of endurance having given Eggsy a certain tolerance to cold, wet noses).

“Mm?” Harry’s lips brush lightly against his temple.

Eggsy sighs contentedly at the touch, then forces himself to focus again. He’s got something important to discuss, after all.

“How would you two feel about gettin’ another dog?”

He feels Harry go still beside him, then sees the shadowy outline of his head as he lifts it from the pillow to glance across at his Dominant partner. There’s a brief, pregnant pause, broken only by JB’s quiet snuffling as he nudges at Eggsy’s ankles to get himself more comfortable. Then Merlin gusts out a short, tellingly resigned sigh against Eggsy’s neck.

“Alright, fine. But under no circumstances are we naming this one after a food group.”

Chapter End Notes

Only the epilogue to go, folks! I'm both heartbroken and relieved that this fic is coming to an end - I've loved writing it, but *boy* has it taken some doing. Thank you to everyone for their continuing support, I really can't put into words how much I appreciate it. You're all amazing. <3

Also, due to a number of requests for POV changes/universe expansion/mission-centric chapters, this story is now part of an ongoing universe. Once this story’s written, I'll be starting on all the requests I've kept logged away over this past year. If anyone has any specific requests they want to add, feel free to leave a comment and let me know! :)}
Not being bigheaded or nothing, but Eggsy likes to think of himself as a fairly likeable sort of bloke.

Eighteen months as an active field agent and he’s still managing to maintain healthy working relationships with the staff here at Kingsman HQ. Granted, some of them he sees to a lesser extent than others, and there are those who are maybe a teensy bit more trying than he'd like, but with most people he can at least summon the inner patience to appear friendly enough, regardless of any bitter internal monologues he might be drafting. And in turn, the vast majority of Kingsman employees speak to him with pleasant professionalism, rather than looking down their noses at him because of his accent like he’d once feared they might.

The one and only exception to this rule, or so it seems, is Agent Lamorak.

“It’s hardly an unreasonable request, Galahad,” the elderly gentlemen reminds him flatly, elbows resting on the dark oak of his desk, fingers steepled as he peers over them at Eggsy, bushy eyebrows drawn together ever so slightly in a dour look. “All I’m asking is that you encourage your team to curb their persistent…enthusiasm.”

Eggsy has to fight not to shift impatiently, keeping his expression serious and attentive despite the urge to roll his eyes at the unnecessary gravity of it all. Lamorak’s always been like this with him; the agent seems to have eyes and ears everywhere, and manages to find little faults to nit-pick on a weekly basis. First it had been about Eggsy and his team making a ruckus during Wii marathons, then after they’d piped down it had been the fucking music on the Wii games, and when Eggsy had finally had enough of getting ticked off, he’d put in a request to have the study better soundproofed, only for Lamorak to summon him the next day to complain about the noise caused by the soundproofing installation.

There was just no pleasing that bloke.

“I understand what you’re sayin’, guv,” Eggsy attempts to placate, and is relieved that his very-much-forced politeness sounds convincingly genuine. “But it isn’t just us makin’ a racket; Elyan had a birthday party in his office yesterday, an’ Caradoc-”

“Sir Caradoc apologised in advance for any disturbances caused by the maintenance work to his study,” the elder man interrupts. “And Elyan afforded his neighbours the curtesy of closing his door so that the rest of the corridor were spared his poor taste in modern music. Your team, on the other hand,” here Lamorak opens the leather-bound notebook in front of him and takes up his fountain pen, skimming down a neat table of itemised accounts, “have been responsible for nine isolated noise disturbances during this past month alone.”

Eggsy opens his mouth to protest against the accusation – he’d spent two days overseas on a mission in Venice, and a further three housebound on enforced medical leave after a near-fall over the edge of a rooftop caused tendon damage to his shoulder, so it’s unlikely that he can personally be responsible for causing that much trouble in the week-and-a-half he’s been back at headquarters.
– but Lamorak cuts him off before he can voice the first syllable.

“I’m not as young as I used to be, Galahad – and when you’ve been in the service as long as I have, you come to appreciate a little peace and quiet when it can feasibly be afforded to you.” Lamorak begins to make a new entry in his notebook. “Perhaps being loud and intrusive comes naturally to a young Dom like yourself, but I’d hoped after our last discussion that you understood my position a little better.”

Eggsy takes a slow, calming breath and tries not to let his hands curl into fists.

“Like I said last week, Sir – I’ve already spoken to Arthur about gettin’ you a proper soundproofed study in the east wing, if you want it.” The Sub forces a smile, and prays it doesn’t look as hopeful as it feels. “Nice an’ airy, lovely view of the grounds, an’ just down the corridor from Percival an’ Kay. Things are bound to be a whole lot quieter up there with just the two of them, yeah?”

Lamorak puts down his pen in the crease of his notebook and fixes Eggsy with a look which is disturbingly similar to the one that Harry gives him whenever he’s said or done something particularly daft.

“Young man, I have occupied this room for more than thirty years without incident. I’m sorry to quash your hopes, but have no intention of relocating anytime soon.” With that said, he picks up his pen again and resumes taking notes. “Good day, Galahad. I’m sure you’ll give me cause to speak to you again before the week is out.”

Eggsy manages to refrain from throwing his hands up in frustration, mostly because his left shoulder still twinges whenever he uses that arm.

“I look forward to it, guv.”

_Sour old codger._

He waits until the door is closed (shut with exaggerated care, because it’s about as close to giving Lamorak the middle finger as he can get) before pulling a face and indulging himself in an exasperated eye roll and full-body sigh. _Ugh._ It’s far too early in the morning to be dealing with Kingsman’s resident Scrooge.

He needs tea.

Activating the thumbprint scanner on the door to his study and letting himself in, he heads for the kettle and tray of tea things beside the mini-fridge near the far wall, yawning around a quiet “hey, Mr Bubbles” to the lone, fat goldfish in the large tank on the bookshelf nearby. He squints at the mini whiteboard stuck to one corner of the aquarium, double-checking that it isn’t his turn to feed the team’s pet; they’d established a set rota six months ago when it had become apparent that they were all feeding the rotund Mr Bubbles at various points during the day, and thus inadvertently shortening his lifespan. Although judging by his continuing weight gain, Eggsy suspects that someone is sneaking the fish additional ‘snacks’ when nobody’s looking.

The kettle’s just coming up to the boil when he hears the soft, electronic _beep_ of the door lock disengaging, and half-turns to send the newcomer a cheerful grin.

“Mornin’, bruv,” he greets. “Fancy a brew?”

“Please.” Mark shrugs out of his drenched waterproof jacket and toes off his combat boots, setting both near the radiator to dry before grabbing a towel from one of the cabinets, scrubbing at his damp hair.
“Lovely weather for the ducks, innit?” Eggsy says with a smile, stirring a dash of milk and half a sugar into the man’s tea.

“Mm,” the older Sub agrees. “And perfect for putting wee ducklings through their paces, too.”

Eggsy glances up sharply. “The assault course in the woods?” At Mark’s answering grin, he smirks. “Ooh, you bastard. Glad you wasn’t my instructor back when I was a recruit.”

Mark laughs at that. “I doubt Merlin went much easier on you and Lancelot,” he says, crossing over to accept the mug Eggsy passes to him. “Ta, love.”

He takes a sip, eyeing Eggsy closely for a long moment, and the younger Sub arches an eyebrow at him in return, a smile tugging at the corner of his mouth.

“What?”

Mark gestures towards the lad’s shoulder with a nod of his head. “Aren’t you supposed to be wearing a sling?”

“Nah.” Eggsy shoots the man an easy, confident smile, reaching for his own mug of tea with his injured arm just to prove his point before heading over to one of the sofas, kicking his feet up onto the coffee table as he sits down. “Fit as a fiddle, me.”

“I see.” Mark moves to perch on the back of the sofa, peering down at Eggsy neutrally. “And I’m assuming the decision to ditch the sling was made by a medical professional during your scheduled check-up this morning?”

“Mm,” is the Sub’s non-answer as he buries his face in his mug, tempted to fidget under the older man’s scrutiny.

Mark flicks the back of his earlobe lightly. “You were supposed to report to Medical first thing this morning. You know follow-up assessments are non-negotiable.”

Wincing at the quiet rebuke, Eggsy heaves a reluctant sigh. “Yeah, yeah, alright,” he mumbles. “I had planned on goin’, honest. But then old Lamorak cornered me in the corridor.”

“Again?” Mark’s expression is both amused and mildly exasperated. “What have we been accused of this time?”

“Talkin’ in the hallway? Leavin’ the window open?” Eggsy shakes his head. “Dunno mate, I kinda zoned out after a couple of minutes. An’ I don’t think it matters what we do, he’ll find somethin’ obscure to complain about all the same.”

Mark hums thoughtfully over the rim of his mug. “I get the feeling he isn’t overly fond of us as a team.”

The younger Sub snorts. “Well, he ain’t a big fan of me, that’s for sure.”

And Eggsy can’t for the life of him think why, other than the obvious – that he’s a little rough around the edges, and clearly wasn’t born into wealth. He ain’t saying Lamorak’s as bad as Chester King, but if prejudice is the reason for his sour mood towards Eggsy and his team, the situation certainly feels uncomfortably familiar.

Except Harry and Merlin speak very highly of Lamorak – very, very highly, in fact. From what he’s gleaned from snippets of conversation where the man’s name was mentioned, the elderly knight
played a key role in their initial Kingsman training twenty odd years ago, and was once a field agent of some renown, spending many years as an undercover agent in Russia. Which, okay, is pretty badass. But it doesn’t detract from the fact that the man’s a grumpy old cunt nowadays. Not that either of his Doms will show him much sympathy when he bemoans as much. Whenever he goes to Harry’s study to sulk after an altercation with the agent, he’s invariably met with an amused smile, a pat on the shoulder and a fondly murmured “our dear Lamorak has always been that way; don’t let it bother you, poppet.”

But it does bother him. He doesn’t like being at odds with people, and Lamorak definitely seems to have something against him.

Eggsy recalls with a slight frown the way the elderly agent had quashed his protests with a dismissive “perhaps being loud and intrusive comes naturally to a young Dom like yourself”, and he takes a too-big gulp of hot tea to force the brimming annoyance back down again.

“Have you heard anything from Keana?” Mark asks after several minutes of silence, and Eggsy glances back at him to find the Sub tapping away on his phone.

“Couple of snapchats from Disneyworld,” he answers. “Been chattin’ on an’ off with Phillip, though – sounds like him an’ Kee are havin’ the time of their lives. Lucky sods.”

“They did invite you along.” Mark reminds him. “You could’ve joined them.”

“An’ be stuck watchin’ them flirt with each other the whole time?” Eggsy pulls a face down at his empty mug. “Not on your life. A couple o’ weeks on their own an’ they might finally fuck it out an’ start actin’ normal again.”

The older Sub hums his agreement distractedly, and Eggsy glances back at him again. “Who you textin’?”

“Connor,” the man answers. “Since you missed your appointment with Medical, you might as well let him give you a full check-up when he gets here.”

“Oi,” Eggsy protests, reaching out with his good arm to try and swipe the phone. “Don’t go tellin’ on me to the big guy, I thought we was mates.”

“I’m your team coordinator,” Mark reminds him blandly, holding the phone out of reach with ease. “It’s my job to grass you up whenever you make poor decisions about your health.”

Being the mature, professional secret agent that he is, Eggsy sticks his tongue out at the Sub. “Snitch,” he gripes, slumping back against the sofa cushions. Then a thought occurs to him and he adds, with smug confidence, “Besides, ain’t like Con’s gonna be able to do much about it until he’s back from paternity leave, right?”

It hadn’t come as much of a surprise to any of them when the medic had fallen in love with an expecting Dom and her bonded Sub, swept up in a whirlwind romance that lasted all of two months before man finally proposed. His Bonding ceremony had been sickeningly adorable, and Eggsy absolutely hadn’t cried when they’d exchanged vows.

But Connor has always been inclined to nest at the best of times (being the big, overprotective, cuddlebug of a man that he is), and before he’d gone off on paternity leave, when the baby had been nearing its due date, his incessant fussing had almost driven Eggsy to thump him on a couple of occasions.

Still, the bloke’s gonna make an awesome dad. And Eggsy’s new godson is fucking adorable.
“He’s already on his way in.”

Eggsy fumbles with his mug as he moves to set it down on the coffee table. “Come again?”

“You didn’t know?” There’s a glimmer of amusement in Mark’s eyes as he takes another sip of his tea. “Connor’s paternity leave is over, he’s due back at work today.”

“Oh.” The younger Sub winces. “Bugger.”

“Mm.” Mark pats his uninjured shoulder. “You might want to find that sling of yours before he gets here.”

Knowing when he’s beaten, but stupidly stubborn enough to keep fighting anyway, Eggsy pushes himself to his feet and flashes the older Sub a cheerful smile.

“You know what, I just remembered I left somethin’ in Arthur’s office,” he says, making a beeline towards the exit. “Say hi to Connor for me!”

“Eggsy,” Mark calls after him, amused, “there’s no use in hiding. You know he’ll find you.”

With a cocky grin and a wink, he shuts the door behind him and sets off at a brisk pace down the corridor. At least with Harry, he’s sure to find a sympathetic ear.

… … … … … … … … …

“I see you’ve managed to misplace your sling again.”

Eggsy momentarily regrets seeking out Harry’s company (because of course the Dom would hone in on that minor detail the moment he steps over the threshold), but the thought is quickly forgotten as a tiny ball of white fluff speeds across the office from its padded basket near the unlit hearth.

Closing the door behind him and dropping down to sit cross-legged on the ground, Eggsy scoops up the tiny West Highland terrier puppy, cradling it in the concave of his lap and laughing as it wriggles in his grasp to lick excitedly at his hands. JB waddles over to sit beside them, ever the doting guardian to his new canine compatriot, and Eggsy frees a hand to pet the older pooch, smiling when JB gives him a happy, tongue-lolling grin in return.

“Eggsy,” Harry attempts to persist, his tone chiding. When that fails to distract the youth from his four-legged companions, the Dom sighs, reaching down to retrieve the jingling dog toy from beneath his chair and giving it a shake. “Teddy! Teddy, darling, come and see what I’ve got.”
The fluffy Westie immediately twists around in Eggsy’s hold, going still for a split second before leaping down (somewhat clumsily) from the Sub’s lap and padding over to his favourite human, tail wagging. Eggsy absolutely does not pout at the betrayal. Much.

JB slobbers all over his wrist in apparent sympathy.

“Alright, I’m listenin’,” he relents, pushing himself to his feet and crossing over to the desk to perch on the edge of it, attempting to read the contents of the open report upside-down while his Dom is busy puppy-wrangling.

The manila folder is closed abruptly and the Sub huffs, moving to cross his arms over his chest before his shoulder reminds him why that isn’t a good idea

“Oi, I can keep a secret,” he protests.

Harry doesn’t deign to validate that statement with a reply, simply opening the bottom drawer on his desk and slipping the folder inside.

“You missed your scheduled appointment in the Infirmary this morning,” Harry continues calmly, sitting back in his chair fixing Eggsy with an assessing look. “Would you care to explain why?”

“If I say ‘no’, can we talk about somethin’ else?” the youth asks hopefully.

Harry doesn’t so much as blink. Eggsy heaves a reluctant sigh.

“Okay – but first of all, it’s Lamorak’s fault.”

The Dom tilts his head a little to one side. “Agent Lamorak prevented you from attending your check-up?”

“Yes!” Eggsy throws his hands up in emphasis, unable to hide a wince when his shoulder twinges at the movement. “He cornered me outside my office, wanted to complain about me an’ my team bein’ noisy again.”

“And why, pray tell, were you outside your office in the first place?” Harry asks coolly. “I distinctly remember escorting you directly from the shuttle to the medical wing.”

Rats. Eggsy had forgotten that minor detail.

“Well, alright,” he mumbles grudgingly. “So maybe I was procrastinatin’ a bit. I was gonna get a cuppa before lettin’ ‘em poke an’ prod at me for hours on end. But then Agent Lamorak got into one of his rants, an’ I was stuck in his office for ages, an’ I kinda…forgot?”

Harry regards him a moment longer, then sighs softly and crooks a finger at the Sub. “Luckily for you, I have a spare. Come here.”

Eggsy moves closer to perch on the lip of the desk directly in front of his Dom, arching his brows in surprise when the man produces the promised sling from one of the drawers.

“Fuckin’ ‘ell, Mary Poppins,” he says, suitably impressed, and doesn’t put up any resistance as Harry carefully fixes the sling in place. “Does this desk of yours have a coat stand an’ all?”

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“It’s hardly the first time you’ve chosen to ignore sound medical advice,” Harry reminds him, with a look that’s somehow both affectionate and chiding. “I simply elected to take a few precautionary measures. Now. Do you need me to escort you downstairs to the infirmary, or can I trust you to
make it there on your own?”

“Don’t need to,” the Sub replies, and ploughs on before Harry can take it the wrong way. “Connor’s comin’ back from paternity leave today. He’ll handle it.”

It’s not that Eggsy dislikes the team down in the Infirmary – they’re nice, professional, highly skilled people and all – it’s just that he prefers getting checked over by someone he knows, and who knows him well enough that he can have a right good whinge about the inevitable outcome of his pending physical. Given how tender his shoulder still feels every time he goes to lift anything or put any strain on the joint, he doubts he’s going to be cleared for field duty just yet.

Harry knows that just as well as he does, but as Arthur he needs it put down in writing by a medical professional before he can officially bench Eggsy for another week. Harry’s very by-the-book like that.

And the bottom line is, Eggsy would rather have the freedom to throw a hissy fit if he wants to without marring his reputation with the Infirmary staff. Going by previous experiences with the Dom, Connor will just sit there quietly and let him get it all off his chest, make him a cup of tea once he’s ranted himself hoarse, and hug the resulting sulk out of him. Connor gives fucking amazing hugs.

Still, it doesn’t mean he’s ecstatic about the prospect of being benched for another week, though.

“Don’t look so put-out, darling,” Harry says comfortingly, hand settling on Eggsy’s knee. “You’ll be back out there in the thick of it soon enough.” He opens another drawer in his desk. “Would you like a chocolate?”

_Fuck yeah._ With an eager hum, he waits for the Dom to select him a fancy-pants French chocolate from the ornate box (Eggsy ain’t got a clue what half the flavours are anyway, and usually ends up just picking at random – Harry’s expertise in this area guarantee him far better results).

“Comin’ here was worthwhile after all,” he teases, an opens his mouth for the smooth oval sweet as Harry raised it to his lips, groaning in unexaggerated bliss as he bites into it and some sort of rich, fruity caramel-syrup explodes across his tongue. “Ohmuhguh, s’amazin’.”

Harry taps his chin with a chiding finger, but he’s smiling. “Manners, Eggsy.”

The Sub grins, but obligingly chews and swallows before trying to talk again.

“Don’t suppose you can try an’ persuade Merlin to keep some o’ these down in his lab?” he asks hopefully. Then he sober a little, propping his feet up on the edge of Harry’s chair, either side of the man’s legs. “How’s he doin’, anyway? He ain’t answerin’ my texts this mornin’.”

Harry heaves a quiet sigh at that. “He’s working himself into an early grave, as always. I managed to convince him to pause long enough to eat a little breakfast, so I suppose I ought to content myself with that for the time being, difficult man that he is.”

Eggsy hums, absently smoothing his fingers over the perfect knot off Harry’s tie. It isn’t the first time Merlin’s forgone a good night’s sleep in favour of holing himself up in his lab to finish some project or other, and it probably won’t be the last, but Eggsy dislikes the whole thing on principle. For one, it really can’t be doing Melin’s health any favours, even if the man does seem to be virtually indestructible. And secondly, their bed has felt unnervingly empty these past two nights without a second pillar of heat to cuddle up against.

“Maybe I should go pay him a visit,” he suggests. “See if I can get him to take a tea break or
Harry’s smile is soft and relieved, and he cups Eggsy’s chin with a warm hand, drawing him down into a tender kiss. “Thank you,” the Dom murmurs, and kisses him again. “You’re the only one he might actually listen to.”

Eggsy sure hopes so.

Merlin looks fucking awful.

Eggsy seen him tired before, wrung out after navigating an agent through a lengthy, perilous mission or squinting over the rim of his mug at the breakfast table after a night spent working in his office at home. But this…this is a whole new level of exhaustion.

The bruises under his eyes alone are horrific, made all the more prominent by the unusual pallor of his skin. His laugh-lines are deeper, looking more pained then anything, and there’s a faint crease of a permanent frown in his brow as the man glares down at the assorted pieces of machinery scattered across his worktable. And if all of that weren’t enough cause for concern, the Dom doesn’t even appear to have noticed his arrival. Which, like, never happens.

“Merlin?” he prompts, as the door closes behind him. “You alright, guv?”

The Scotsman’s head comes up sharply, tired, bespectacled eyes blinking at him in surprise for a moment before Merlin’s lips slowly curl into a faint smile.

“Well now, this is a pleasant surprise.”

Eggsy makes his way over to the man’s side, smiling when the Dom pushes his chair back a few inches to tug him down into his lap for a proper cuddle.

Merlin brushes his fringe back gently to press a lingering kiss to his brow. “It’s late, boyo. Shouldn’t you be at home?”

“Um. It’s ten o’clock, guv,” he answers delicately.
Merlin blinks at him again, bemused. “In the morning?”

Nodding, Eggsy fiddles with the collar of the man’s shirt to neaten it. He’s glad to see that the Dom’s at least taking care of himself to a certain extent – this jumper’s different from the one he’d been wearing yesterday evening when Eggsy had come to kiss him goodnight, and the Dom smells like home in the way he usually does, a faint hint of expensive shower gel and aftershave and that unique Merlin scent that makes Eggsy want to nuzzle into the man’s shoulder and go to sleep there.

“You’ve been workin’ on this thing for three days now,” he continues softly. “An’ Harry says you ain’t slept more than a couple of hours since Monday. You’re gonna burn yourself out if you’re not careful.”

Merlin sniffs a quiet grin against his hairline, lips pressed to the skin there, hand settling over Eggsy’s nape as he draws the Sub closer to him, fingers warm against the youth’s too-bare skin. It’s times like these that Eggsy really misses his collar; in recent week’s he’s taken to clock-watching most of the day, counting down the hours until he gets home and can wrap the length of soft leather around his throat again and feel whole.

“That’s usually my line,” the Dom tells him, amused.

“Well, you might wanna think about takin’ your own advice on this one,” Eggsy murmurs, uninjured arm curled loosely around Merlin’s neck as he kisses the man’s throat. “No offense, babe, but you look like shit.”

The Dom heaves a tired sigh, his whole upper body moving with the force of it. “Aye, maybe so,” he acknowledges, his fatigue audible. “But I’m so close, lad. I can see it all coming together, I just need a wee bit more time.”

Eggsy pulls back far enough to lock gazes with him. “That’s what you said yesterday.”

And yesterday, the machine had been a fully assembled masterpiece, not broken up into individual pieces. Eggsy still doesn’t really understand what it is that Merlin’s trying to make – the Dom had tried to explain it to him a few days ago; something about a cloaking device, a highly advanced form of camouflage using light refraction technology to aid field agents during dangerous stealth missions – but it all sounds pretty fucking sci-fi, to the point where Eggsy has begun to wonder if a machine like that could even be feasibly created within the limitations of modern technology. Trust Merlin to set himself an impossible task.

He leans in to kiss the Dom again, the man’s lips tasting faintly of tea and those peppermint humbugs he tends to favour whenever he’s problem-solving.

“Take a break,” he encourages softly, hand caressing over the man’s smooth scalp. “Come have a kip with me in your bunk. Your work’ll still be here waitin’ for you in a few hours’ time.”

Merlin sighs again, hands gently stroking up the Sub’s back as they share another slow, tender kiss, and for a moment Eggsy thinks that maybe he’s succeeded. But then the Dom pulls away an inch or so, his gaze returning to the contents of the worktable.

“In a wee while,” the man promises. “I just need another quick look at the reactor specs before I call it a day. I know I can solve this.”

Eggsy thunks his forehead down against Merlin’s shoulder with a quiet sigh of his own, feeling the Dom reach around him from the tablet on his worktable. Dammit. He’d been so sure he was going to win this one.
“You mind if I stay here for a bit?” he asks, because if he can’t persuade the man to rest, the least he can do is keep him company while he works himself to death.

“Not at all,” Merlin answers distractedly, pressing a brief kiss to his temple. “The kneeler’s under my desk, if you want it.”

Now that sounds like a fair trade. Maybe not quite as good as snuggling in bed with his Dom, but nice enough all the same.

Slipping from the man’s lap, he goes to fetch the cushioned kneeler-pad from its place beneath the central control desk, setting it directly beside Merlin’s chair and kicking off his shoes before lowering himself to his knees. Taking a moment to fidget himself into a more comfortable position, he pillows his cheek against Merlin’s thigh and sighs quietly, contentedly, as the Dom’s fingers sink into his hair. The man probably doesn’t even realise he’s doing it (a quick glance upwards confirms that Merlin’s still thoroughly invested in the data on his tablet), but it feels fucking amazing all the same.

He can’t say for certain how long he kneels there. At some point his eyes have slipped closed, and he may even have dozed off briefly (he really hasn’t slept well these past two nights with Merlin missing from their bed), lulled into a warm and cosy headspace by the Dom’s skilful fingers.

The buzz of the door’s intercom forces him to stir from that safe place, and he blinks groggily, glancing sideways across the lab towards the main door that sits parallel to Merlin’s workbench.

“Yes?” comes Merlin’s low, tired voice from above him.

“It’s David, Sir. I’ve got those converters you asked for.”

“About time,” Merlin mutters. Then, a little louder. “Come in, lad.”

While Eggsy had only been half-awake before, he’s fully conscious now, stomach giving a fluttering lurch inside of him as his eyes widen because hold the phone, he’s still on his knees, why is Merlin letting someone in, he’s going to be seen…

But the rest of his body’s still too warm and fuzzy to respond to the sudden surge of oh-shit-wait adrenaline that zings down his spine, and he can only watch, semi-paralysed as the door swings open and the young technician walks in with a cheerful smile, clipboard tucked under one arm and a box of parts cradled against his chest.

“Sorry to interrupt,” the young Sub says, his gaze flickering for only the briefest moment towards Eggsy before returning its focus to Merlin as he strides forwards. “Are these the ones you wanted, Boss?”

Merlin seems to have realised his error, if the sudden tautness of the leg muscles beneath Eggsy’s cheek are anything to go by, and the man’s fingers twitch ever so slightly where they rest in the youth’s hair.

“Aye, lad, thank you,” the Scotsman answers, the fatigue gone from his voice, his tone calm and utterly devoid of emotion in a way it seldom is outside of a mission crisis. “If you find any L-4 modems left over from last month’s salvage sweep, I’d appreciate it if you set them aside for me.”

“Oh course, Sir.”

Eggsy just kneels there and listens to them silently, waiting for that first wave of panic to well up inside him as it always used to do whenever his dynamic was shoved out in the open like this; waiting for his chest to grow tight and his throat to close up, for everything he’s built this past year to
come crashing down around him…

Except it doesn’t.

His stomach settles, his breathing calms, and he finds himself compelled to tilt his head into Merlin’s touch rather than shy away from it, suddenly entirely unbothered by the whole affair.

After all, why should he panic? Being seen as a Sub ain’t gonna change anything around here – the people he cares about, the people who might potentially serve under him out in the field, none of them are gonna give a rat’s arse about his dynamic after everything they’ve been through together. He’s already established himself as one of Kingsman’s best agents, and his team’s success rate ain’t exactly a well-kept secret. Nobody’s going to suddenly take all that away from him because he sometimes likes to kneel for his partners.

He’s got a team of professionals who already know him better than any of his previous Marine buddies ever had, and a best friend who’ll gut a man for so much as looking at him the wrong way, and two amazing Doms who love him just as he is. Those are the only people whose opinions really matters to him. He ain’t in danger of losing their respect and affection anytime soon, so why should he give a fuck what the rest of the service thinks?

In conclusion: he doesn’t.

So when the technician’s gaze flickers down to his kneeling form a second time, he smiles up at him, cheerful and confident.

“Alright there, bruv? How’s Donna doin’?”

David returns the smile easily enough, crossing his arms to tuck the clipboard against his chest in an endearingly nervous gesture. “Much better, thank you. Medical thinks she’ll be out of the neck brace by the end of the week and back at work in a fortnight.”

“Glad to hear it, mate.” Eggsy tilts his head a little further into Merlin’s touch when the Dom’s fingers move as though to withdraw. “Give her my love, yeah? An’ tell her to take the lift next time she wants to carry all them boxes by herself; the stairs near the archive are dodgy at the best of times.”

“I’ll be sure to pass along the message, Sir,” the other Sub promises, cheeks a little flushed as his gaze flits away from where Merlin’s hand has now shifted to settle on his nape (and oh, Eggsy thinks, someone’s got a crush). “If…if that’s everything?”

“Aye, lad,” Merlin confirms, his voice low. “Run along now.”

The technician glances back towards the Scotsman briefly, Adam’s apple bobbing as he swallows, and excuses himself with a low murmur, cheeks tinged pink. Eggsy lifts his uninjured arm to waggle his fingers in farewell, smiling.

“He’s proper into you,” Eggsy tells his Dom once the door has closed. “Pretty sure we’ve just fuelled his fantasies for the next month or so.” He turns his head to glance up at Merlin, the smile fading quickly at the look of pained disbelief on the man’s face. “Guv?”

Merlin braces his elbow on the edge of the table and drops his head into his hand. “Christ, Eggsy. I’m so sorry. I didn’t think, lad, I…I’d forgotten you were-”

“Hey.” Eggsy pushes himself up on slightly numb legs (yep, he’s definitely been down there for a while), climbing back into the Dom’s lap to cup his smooth-shaven jaw, stoppering his mouth with a
gentle kiss. “It’s fine, babe.”

“No it isn’t.” Merlin argues, his voice strained. “I let him waltz in here just like that, when you were right there. I didn’t even...” He pulls off his glasses and tosses them onto the workbench, pinching the bridge of his nose, eyes closing as he heaves a ragged sigh. “You don’t have to forgive me so easily, lad. Not for this.”

“Tough shit.” Eggsy gently pulls the hand away, and waits until Merlin peers towards him before smiling softly. “I’ve already forgiven you.” At the man’s doubtful look, he sighs and kisses the Dom’s palm, cradling the hand against his face. “Merlin, love, I really ain’t bothered by it. Granted, there was a time not so long ago when I would’ve thought the world was endin’ if someone caught me on my knees like that, but I’m not the same bloke I was back then. So what if half the mansion knows my real dynamic by the end of the day? Ain’t gonna kill me, bruv. An’ it saves me the bother of summonin’ up the courage to do it myself.”

It’s pretty much guaranteed that most departments will have caught wind of the rumour by the time he leaves for home this evening. David’s an awesome Sub, sweet as they come really, but he’s got a reputation for being the biggest fucking gossip on site. Eggsy knows for a fact that Merlin often uses him to spread false rumours deliberately, whenever the Dom gets bored between missions.

“So maybe it wasn’t how I planned on comin’ out to everyone,” he admits, his voice softer now. “But that’s okay. This way involves zero effort on my part, so I’m down with it.”

There’s a brief pause, the silence in the room broken only by the occasional, electrical hum from one of the lab’s many viewscreens.

“You’re really not upset?” Merlin seeks to ascertain, both hands coming up to cradle Eggsy’s face gently, eyes searching his expression for any indication of distress.

Eggsy smiles, laying his hand over one of Merlin’s and leaning in to kiss the corner of his mouth. “I really ain’t,” he confirms quietly. “Although I’m definitely holdin’ this incident against you as proof that your judgement’s impaired. You need to take a fuckin’ nap, babe.”

The Dom breathes a soft laugh against his lips, eyes crinkling at the corners as he tilts Eggsy’s head down a little further to press their foreheads together. “Aye, that’s only fair. You’re staying?”

“Like to see you try an’ get rid of me,” the youth huffs.

It isn’t until they’re curled up together in the small bedroom at the rear of the lab, Merlin’s arms wrapped around him snugly as the Dom spoons him from behind, that Eggsy remembers the one perk to his coming-out that he’s failed to acknowledge. He grins to himself in the darkness of the room, hugging Merlin’s arm closer to his chest.

Tomorrow, he’s going to wear his collar to work.
“You don’t have to do this, darling,” Harry murmurs to him. *Again.*

Merlin leans across from the opposite seat to squeeze his knee. “Aye, lad. Not if you aren’t ready.”

And Eggsy appreciates their concern, he really does, but if his Doms mistake his excited fidgeting for nervousness one more time, he’s gonna have to lose his temper with them.

“I know,” he answers, with deliberate patience, turning his hand over in Harry’s grasp to link their fingers together and smiling across at Merlin as the underground pod rumbles around them, speeding them along the track towards the mansion. “But I want to. An’ I’m about as ready as I’m ever gonna be.”

Merlin regards him a moment longer, then squeezes his knee again, nodding in apparent acceptance. “Alright then. If you’re sure.”

The pod begins to slow, indicating that they’re nearing their destination, and Eggsy reaches down to scoop Teddy up from where he’s been happily chewing on the Sub’s shoelaces. The puppy’s still small enough that there’s a risk of it falling down the gap between the pod door and the terminal’s edge, and while JB’s well-trained enough not to go sniffing around near the tracks, the Westie’s barely twelve weeks old and liable to allow its curiosity to lead it into dangerous situations.

He and Merlin hadn’t actually *intended* to come home with a puppy when they’d visited the local dog shelter in the run-up to Harry’s birthday last month. But Teddy’s had been the first kennel they’d come across, the last remaining pup from an abandoned litter, and the noise that had come out of Eggsy’s mouth at the sight of the tiny ball of fluff butting up against the glass in excitement had been several octaves higher than he’d thought himself capable of. Five minutes spent cuddling with the Westie and he’d been thoroughly smitten. And while Merlin had heaved a sigh of faux-reluctance as the puppy peed on his shoe in excitant, Eggsy hadn’t been fooled – the Dom was just as in love as he was.

“We’re not letting Harry name it,” had been Merlin’s final word on the matter as he signed the appropriate paperwork.

They’d both decided on *Winston* during the drive home from the shelter, the puppy sleeping curled up inside a towel in Eggsy’s arms. And ‘Winston’ he had remained, for all of thirty-five minutes, right up until they’d stopped off at the Unwin residence on their way back (because of course Eggsy couldn’t resist showing the new pup to his sister) and Daisy had pointed at the fluffy bundle of sleeping pooch and screeched an excited “*Teddy!*”.

The name had stuck, much to Merlin’s chagrin.

“You mind keepin’ JB with you for a bit?” he asks Harry, as the pug hops down from the pod confidently and waddles after them. “Gonna take a stroll around the mansion.”
“Not at all,” the Dom reassures as they head into the corridor, reaching across to gently pluck the Westie pup from Eggsy’s arms once the door to the terminal is closed, setting him down at their feet. Teddy sets about sniffing at his new surroundings, JB keeping to his side dutifully.

Merlin lays a hand on his shoulder, turning Eggsy towards him. “You’ll call us if you need anything, won’t you, lad?” the Dom asks quietly. “Anything at all.”

Eggsy smiles and leans in to peck a quick kiss against the man’s cheek.

“I’ll be fine,” he promises, tugging Harry closer by the lapel of his suit to kiss him too. “Honest. This is somethin’ I need to do on my own, alright?”

Harry sighs, but his smile his soft and affectionate as he pinches Eggsy’s chin long enough to bestow a brief, tender kiss to the corner of his mouth.

“As you wish.” The Dom gives his cheek a parting caress, then sets off down the corridor at a casual pace, his movements flawlessly graceful, hand patting the side of his thigh lightly. “Come along, Teddy. JB, do keep up, dear.”

Watching enviously as the man effortlessly summons the pups to heel (like the fucking dog-whisperer he is), Eggsy leans back against Merlin’s strong frame as the Dom loops an arm around his midriff from behind.

“Take it easy today, yeah?” he murmurs, closing a hand over the man’s forearm and squeezing gently. “You still look knackered. An’ you’ll meet us for lunch in Harry’s office, won’t you?”

“Mm,” Merlin agrees, kissing the shell of his ear. “Enjoy your stroll, pet.”

Eggsy’s lips twitch up in a grin at that, and he pulls his Kingsman glasses from the pocket of his bespoke suit (because wearing regular clothes the first day he shows off his collar to the world just seemed like an understatement), slipping them on one-handed and turning his head to peer back at his Dom.

“Wanna watch?”

Merlin stares at him expressionlessly for a moment, before a glimmer of amusement comes to life in his eyes. “Now there’s an idea.” The Dom squeezes his hip, tilting his chin up for a brief kiss, then nudges him the opposite way down the empty corridor with a tap to his backside. “Give ‘em hell, lad.”

Eggsy laughs, runs his fingers through his hair to rumple it attractively, and is sure to walk with a deliberate sway to his hips as he leaves. Because he can.

The first people he passes in the corridor are on-site security personnel, two hulking blokes that he remembers sparring with during his downtime, although he can’t quite remember their names. The men pause in their conversation to stand to one side and let him pass, nodding to him with a polite “Sir”.

“What is. God, that’s beautiful.

He’s glad, now, that he elected to forego his Kingsman tie and leave his shirt unbuttoned at the top – when he’d looked in the mirror this morning, the dark leather of his collar had stood out starkly
above the white fabric, making Eggsy’s throat look slimmer and more attractive. But it had taken Merlin almost dribbling tea down himself for him to accept that yes, he looked fucking sexy.

Keeping his pace slow and casual, he makes his way meticulously through every accessible part of the mansion, working to keep his expression pleasantly neutral and fighting back laughter at every turn as he gleefully watches people fumble with boxes and miss door-handles and trip over their own feet, necks craning to watch him as he passes by. One unfortunate bloke down in HR actually walks into a door in his distraction, staring wide-eyed at Eggsy the whole while.

He just about manages to make it ‘round the bend in the corridor before cracking up.

All in all, it’s a very pleasant stroll, made all the more entertaining by the knowledge that his glasses are recording the whole thing. His Doms are going to piss themselves laughing when they play it back later.

Still, he’s saved the best ‘til last.

Eggsy deliberately detours along the upper corridors of the east wing, a route that takes him directly passed the larger studies belonging to the senior Kingsman agents. He makes a point of whistling loudly, just to make sure his presence won’t go unnoticed.

And as expected, several doors open along his travels as the occupants call out greetings to him, and he savours the moment their eyes flicker downwards to his collar then back up to his calm, neutral expression. And it’s glorious. God, Eggsy should’ve done this months ago.

Of course, some reactions are better than others.

When he reaches Percival’s office, he knocks, knowing the man well enough that he has an excuse to speak to him directly, practically bouncing on his toes as he waits for the door to open.

“Galahad.”

“Mornin’,” he greets cheerfully, and flashes Percy his best, most innocent smile. “Just wondered if you’d heard anythin’ from Roxy lately; she hasn’t texted me in a while.” It’s a blatant lie – he’d been awake half the night catching her up on everything that had happened yesterday, and the Big Reveal he’d planned for today – but Percival doesn’t need to know that. “She an’ Amelia are due back from Malta on Sunday, right?”

Percival stares at him in silence for a beat too long, blinking several times behind his glasses, and Eggsy’s desperate to blurt “computer error, file not recognised” because he’s never seen the sober, unflappable agent rendered so thoroughly speechless and it’s a thing of beauty.

“Tuesday,” the Dom corrects after a long pause, voice hushed, as though he’s barely capable of answering beyond that one word.

Eggsy nods, smile widening. “Right, Tuesday, I remember now. Ta, guv.”

The Dom blinks at him again. “Anytime, Eggsy.”

Success! Fucking hell. He’s been trying to get the man to call him by his preferred nickname for over a year now, but Percival had seemed determined to stick with ‘Galahad’ or ‘Unwin’ for the rest of Eggsy’s Kingsman career. It’s a small victory, but a significant one nonetheless. He can’t wait ‘til Roxy hears about this, she’s never gonna let her uncle live it down…
The reactions after that kinda pale in comparison, until he reaches Bors’ study at the end of the long corridor. He’s come to consider Alec one of his closer friends among the Kingsman knights, alongside Gwaine and Elyan, but he’s never really felt the compulsion to reveal his true dynamic to the Dom, not like he had with his team. Partly because there was just never a good time for it (whenever he and Bors socialise, it tends to either be over a pint down at the Burlington Arms, or when he’s pinned underneath the Dom during a sparring session down in the gym). But mostly because he already knows that the man’s not going to care either way. Bors is cool like that.

The door opens a few moments after his knock, and the broad-shouldered Dom stares at him for all two seconds before his face splits into a broad grin.

“I knew it!” he crows, and slaps Eggsy on his uninjured shoulder. “Thanks, gorgeous.”

Startled into a laugh, the Sub smiles back at him. “What for?”

“Elyan owes me a hundred quid,” the man says smugly.

Grinning now, Eggsy gives him the middle finger, much to Alec’s amusement, and walks away towards the lift at the end of the corridor.

“Suits you, by the way!” the Dom calls after him, and Eggsy preens internally. 

As the lift moves down from the floor above, he waits until he hears the door to Bors’ office clicking shut before reaching up towards his glasses.

“That,” he says aloud, for the sake of the recording, “was fuckin’ ace.”

Tapping the left arm of the frames twice to terminate the stream, he takes the glasses off to stow them carefully in his suit pocket, grinning to himself at a job well done. The lift doors ding softly and he steps forward as they open to reveal…

Fucking Lamorak.

Of course it had to be him. Eggsy’s morning was going too well, there had to be a cloud waiting to blot out his silver lining.

“Sir,” he greets pleasantly as he steps into the lift, because he ain’t gonna be the one to hold a grudge, he’ll be sweetly pleasant even if it kills him.

The older man nods in greeting after only a brief glance at him, the newspapers under his arm crinkling as he leans over to press the button for the ground floor. Eggsy casts a sideways peek at the man, but Lamorak’s looking straight ahead now, apparently content to ignore him for the most part. Which is fine with Eggsy. Beats a lecture any day. Although he’s just itching to ask how the man managed to get hold of both a French and German newspaper with today’s date. It ain’t even half-nine yet.

“Asprey, if I’m not mistaken?”

Eggsy very nearly startles at the question (very nearly), glancing across at the older knight. But Lamorak’s gaze is still centred on the lift doors and fucking hell, why aren’t they downstairs yet?

“Come again?”

“Your collar,” the man elaborates, and finally shifts his gaze to meet Eggsy’s. His expression seem softer than usual. “It’s from the Asprey jewellers on New Bond Street, is it not?”
“I…yeah, I think so.” Eggsy vaguely recalls the sweeping golden cursive etched onto the fancy jewellery boxes that his collar and cuffs had come in.

Lamorak nods knowingly, and an actual smile curls at the corner of his mouth, transforming his whole expression.

“I thought as much,” the man acknowledges. “They have a talent for combining the elegance of simplicity with undeniable quality and comfort. Although,” here he hooks a finger beneath his own shirt collar, pulling both it and his tie down just far enough to reveal the band of dark brown leather hidden underneath, “I myself prefer a lighter cut. You’re fortunate with your complexion; I doubt there’s much in their recent Spring collection that wouldn’t suit your colouring.”

The lift doors open and Lamorak steps out into the corridor, leaving Eggsy standing there, mouth slightly agape, more than a little lost for words as he watches the elderly Sub walk away.

“Close your window,” Lamorak reminds him without turning. “There’s a good chap.”

Eggsy isn’t sure how long he stands there for, staring after the man, but eventually he’s stirred from his temporary state of catatonia when two figures round the corner of the adjoining corridor a little ways up ahead. He forces his feet to unstick themselves from the floor and moves to meet them halfway.

“Morning,” Connor says, pausing outside the door to their study to press his thumb against the scanner. His gaze lingers briefly on Eggsy’s throat as he opens the door, a smile tugging at his lips. “Looking good, Boss.”

Eggsy returns it, cheeks finally heating a tad at the compliment because he knows Connor means it. “Ta, mate.”

As the medic heads over to pop the kettle on, Mark’s hand comes to rest between his shoulders, guiding him a short distance away towards the window for a little privacy. Eggsy reaches out automatically to close it, then turns his gaze towards the older Sub in time to be pinned by a quietly assessing look.

“What?” he asks, lips twitching.

“Nothing,” Mark murmurs, hand sliding down to squeeze Eggsy’s bicep. “You just…seemed a little out of sorts back there in the corridor. Is everything’s alright?”

Looking away briefly, Eggsy reaches up to touch his collar with the pads of his fingers, warmth swelling in his chest at the reminder of the Doms who gave it to him, and the people who’ll accept him for who he is regardless of it. His gaze shifts back up to meet the other Sub’s, a quiet, happy smile curling slowly at the corner of his mouth.

“Yeah, bruv,” he reassures. “It’s all good.”
Chapter End Notes

And so it ends.

A HUGE thank you to everyone who has liked, commented or subscribed over the course of this fic's production, and to all the awesome readers who hit me up on Tumblr and offered moral support whenever my muse was being particularly stubborn. I've enjoyed the hell out of writing this, and finishing the story is very much a bittersweet success. But I hope to provide you all with further stories in this 'verse in answer to several requests. 'Teddy' will also be getting his own fic, because Harry-gets-a-puppy-for-his-birthday is just too cute an opportunity to pass up.

For those of you who follow my new Kingsman Dragon!AU, I'm hoping to get the second instalment posted this coming weekend.

Thank you all again for being such an awesome audience. I hope the ending was to your satisfaction. <3
All my love, and a bottle of rum,

Whispers xxxx

Works inspired by this one

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