The Pain Game

by hummerhouse

Summary

Disclaimer: The TMNT are not mine. No money being made.
Word Count: 67,000+ (ongoing) multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Ratings vary per part: R to NC-17
Pairing: Raph/Mikey
Some of the Fan Art for this story is EXPLICIT - NSFW

!!~~Winner in the 2014/15 TMNT Mature Fanfiction Competition: (Mature Section) Best Canon Ally 1st Place (Nobody); Best Battle Sequences 2nd Place; (Erotica Section) Sexiest Raphael 1st Place; Sexiest Michelangelo 1st Place; Spiciest Kink or Fetish 1st Place; Best TCest 1st Place~~!!
Aggravating Raphael was absolutely Michelangelo’s number one favorite past-time.

Ever since they were small, when Mikey needed entertainment he would find a way to push Raph’s buttons. The resulting explosion was so much more rewarding than the annoyed sigh he’d earn from Donatello when he interrupted that particular brother, or the lack of reaction he received from Leonardo whenever Mikey tried to – always unsuccessfully – break his concentration.

That was not to say that Raph was completely easy. Mikey had to work to earn himself an outburst of temper and planning what to do was almost as much fun as watching Raph pop a cork. Trying to dodge Raph afterwards was to Mikey’s mind something akin to the running of the bulls in Spain. The adrenaline rush he got from it made it easy for Mikey to understand why people tested their bravery that way.

Mikey rarely got away without receiving some kind of beating for his troubles but to his mind that was a small price to pay. Other than the one time that Raph had nearly beaned him with a pipe, the hot head was fairly good at stopping before he inflicted any real damage.

As they grew older Mikey worried that Master Splinter’s tutelage would help Raph overcome his anger issues. When Raph’s passions proved to be too much for even their father’s
teachings to assuage, Mikey was actually glad. He liked the hot head to be as predictable as he’d always been.

It was during a particularly acute bout of boredom that Mikey discovered something new about himself.

Mikey had been wandering around the lair for over an hour trying to find something to occupy his attention. He’d already done a little sewer skating, he’d finished a jigsaw puzzle, and he’d re-read his latest comic book acquisitions three times each.

Due to increased Foot activity near their home Mikey couldn’t look forward to going topside anytime soon. There was absolutely nothing for him to do for the rest of the evening unless he made his own entertainment.

Said source of entertainment was currently seated on the couch, a cold can of beer in one hand and the remote in the other. Raph had called dibs on the television the previous day so that he could watch a wrestling match that he’d been looking forward to. No one argued the point because a Raphael who wasn’t allowed to go out was like a caged tiger in more ways than one.

The scenario was promising; Mikey could piss Raph off quickly because his brother was already hyped up. That was coupled with the fact that the chances were good that any beat down Mikey received wouldn’t last long because Raph wouldn’t want to miss the televised bout. The temptation was too great to pass up.

Quickly racing upstairs to his room, Mikey pulled a loose brick from his wall behind which he’d hidden his secret ‘stash’. Taking out a small wooden box, Mikey opened it and selected a life-like rubber cockroach from the large collection housed inside. Chuckling to himself, Mike concealed the box once again, knowing that if Raph ever got his hands on it the box and contents would be instant goners.

Over the years Mikey had probably promised Raph at least a million times that he would never again torment his older brother with fake bugs. He’d probably promised the rest of his family about a half million times that he wouldn’t poke Raph’s phobia. Of course Mikey never intended to keep those promises, he just gave them lip service because it was expected of him. Mikey was pretty sure his family knew he wasn’t being truthful.

Stopping simply wasn’t possible. It was like an addiction, Mikey couldn’t help himself. Raph was just too rich a target.

Mikey made no effort at stealth as he headed downstairs. Sneaking around would have alerted Raph that something was up so Mikey bounced down the steps two at a time, whistling to himself. As he headed towards the kitchen, Mikey was gratified to see that Raph hadn’t even glanced at him.

In the kitchen Mikey banged a few pots and pans, adding to the illusion that he was occupied with some culinary experiment. After a couple of minutes he crept to the door and peeked at Raph, seeing that his brother’s eyes were glued to the television.

Slingshot in hand, Mikey loaded the fake roach onto the leather pad and with the precision born of many hours of practice, sent it sailing through the air straight towards Raph. As soon as he released it, Mikey darted out of the kitchen and hid behind one of the lair’s support posts.

The rubber roach landed with unerring accuracy right onto Raphael’s shoulder.
Because it was rubber and not plastic, the fake bug had enough weight to it that Raph felt it hit. The unconcerned expression on his face as he glanced at his shoulder quickly changed to one of panic.

Eyes wide, Raph shouted and leaped off the couch, splashing beer all over himself as he batted at his shoulder with the hand holding the can. When the bug fell onto the floor, Raph launched the crumpled, now empty can at it and yanked one of his sai free from his belt.

Mikey’s face was contorted in mirth, hands over his mouth to contain the sound as he watched Raph stab the roach. It was at that moment that Raph realized the bug wasn’t real.

“Mikey!” Raph yelled, head swiveling as he tried to locate his brother.

Parts of Mikey’s body were showing from behind the pillar because he was doubled over with laughter and Raph immediately spotted him. Leaping over the couch, Raph rushed towards the prankster, his fists doubled and sections of his face as crimson as his mask.

“You are so dead!” Raph promised, completely enraged.

The next part of their dance involved Mikey attempting to escape his brother’s wrath. With a loud shriek, Mikey took off at a dead run, thinking to evade Raph by dashing into the tunnels outside their home.

Raph had however anticipated the move and jumped into position between Mikey and that route. Swiftly changing course, Mikey tried for the elevator door but when he felt Raph practically stepping on his heels, he knew he’d never get the door open in time.

Mikey’s last hope was the dojo. If he could get far enough ahead of Raph then he could duck just inside the doorway and flatten himself against the wall. When Raph raced past, Mikey would fly back out and hit the sewers for a couple of hours as he waited for the hot head to settle down.

The plan seemed to be working as Mikey kicked it into high gear and got a few feet ahead of Raph. As Mikey cleared the dojo entrance, he reached out to grab onto the doorsill to slow his momentum, letting go as his body spun around and his carapace hit the wall.

Mikey was grinning from anticipatory glee, his adrenaline pumping as he envisioned pulling another fast one on his brother. He only forgot one thing; Raph could be damn flexible when he was mad.

As Raph went barreling past him, Mikey shifted away from the wall and turned towards the opening, sure that Raph hadn’t seen him. The movement caught the corner of Raph’s eye and though he couldn’t come to a full stop fast enough, his long muscular arm snaked out lightning quick and caught Mikey across his chest.

Unable to resist the force of Raph’s forward motion, Mikey was swept along with his brother and literally yanked off his feet. Slamming carapace down on the floor, Mikey had no chance to roll away as Raph came down on top of him.

“Not the face, not the face!” Mikey yelped, his forearms coming up to take the blows raining down on him. Raph punched him in the side hard enough to take his breath away and caught him a glancing blow on the side of the head that set off sparks behind Mikey’s eyes.

Mikey tried to dig his heels into the floor so he could slide away from Raph but discovered that Raph was straddling him, his knees pressed into Mikey’s hips so hard that the younger turtle
couldn't move.

“How many times . . . have I said . . . not to pull . . . that crap on me!” Raph raged, pausing between words to punch his brother.

“Sorry, sorry, sorry!” Mikey replied in a sing-song voice, rocking his upper body side to side to dodge the blows. “Last time, I promise!”

“You always promise!” Raph yelled, grabbing Mikey’s arms and pulling them away from his face. “It ain’t funny no more and if ya’ do it again I’m gonna take your entire comic book collection and fling them off the top of the Chrysler building!”

It wasn’t the first time he’d threatened to do that but Mikey strove to look dutifully horrified. “Dude! I swear I’ll never do it again, just leave my babies alone.”

“Dipstick,” Raph snarled, smacking his brother again. “Ya’ better start taking me seriously.”

The more Mikey apologized, the more the blows tapered off, a good indication that Raph’s fury had lessened. When Mikey dared to peek at his brother through an opening between his own arms, Raph grabbed his shoulders, lifted him slightly and then slammed him down again.

“I think you’re missing your show,” Mikey said hastily, running the words together.

Raph’s eyes narrowed and it was obvious that he’d realized why Mikey had picked that particular time to pull his prank. Releasing his younger brother, Raph sat back on his heels, letting his full weight press down on Mikey as he glared at him.

“You’re gonna get me a wet towel so I can clean myself off,” Raph stated, “and then you’re gonna clean up the couch and floor. Ya’ better get the smell of beer out of there ’cause ya’ know Master Splinter doesn’t like it and I sure as shell ain’t taking the blame for your mess.”


For a second it looked like Raph might pop him again so Mikey closed the gap between his arms, keeping them over his face. Instead of hitting him, Raph flattened his palms on Mikey’s stomach and roughly pushed off as he rose to his feet. Something wet slapped Mikey’s forearms, dangling over them to touch his cheek, and he realized it was Raph’s belt. Looking up he saw Raph removing his wet pads before tossing them onto Mikey as well.

“Make sure ya’ scrub this stuff; I don’t want them smelling like stale beer. Before ya’ do that ya need ta go up ta my room and fetch my spares but ya’ better not touch anything else,” Raph told him before picking up his weapons and stomping out of the dojo.

Mikey lay there for a moment, enjoying the rush he got from tormenting his hot headed brother. He’d anticipated the clean-up detail and was actually pretty excited with having another opportunity to annoy Raph while he tried to watch TV.

Inhaling deeply, Mikey started to get up. It was then that he noticed a particular tightness in his lower regions. Looking down in surprise, Mikey saw the tell-tale signs of a budding erection.

Mikey froze as he stared at himself and then it sunk in that he was almost fully aroused. What the shell could have happened to turn him on to such an extent? Surely it wasn’t having Raph on top of him, face contorted and muscles bulging as he delivered blow after painful blow.
The memory had barely entered Mikey’s mind when his hidden member twitched and throbbed. Alarmed, Mikey jumped to his feet and made a beeline for the bathroom. He had to get Raph a towel before his brother came looking for him but more importantly, Mikey had to deal with his erection first, before anyone in his family noticed.

Most especially before Raphael noticed. If Raph saw the state that Mikey was in he’d not only beat him silly for being a perv, but he’d insist on knowing why his younger brother was sporting a woody right after their altercation.

Since Mikey himself couldn’t answer that question he certainly wasn’t going to be able to give Raph any kind of an answer.

TBC……………….
BEST PORTRAYAL OF A CANON ALLEY
(Nobody)
THE PAIN GAME
BY
HUMMERHOUSE

2014-2015 TMNT MATURE
FANFICTION COMPETITION

SEXIEST
MICHELANGELO

"the pain game"
BY
humerhouse

2014-2015
TMNT MATURE
FANFICTION COMPETITION

turtle-sketches
SEXIEST RAPHAEL

"the pain game"
BY humminghouse

2014-2015
TMNT MATURE FANFICTION COMPETITION

SPIICIEST KINK OR FETISH
THE PAIN GAME
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TMNT MATURE FANFICTION COMPETITION
BEST TCEST
THE PAIN GAME
BY
HUMMERHOUSE

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TMNT MATURE
FANFIC COMETITION
For exactly two and a half days after the incident in the dojo Michelangelo managed to avoid Raphael. Since everyone knew by now that they’d had a row, Mikey’s dodging Raph seemed quite natural.

On the third day Master Splinter made Mikey spar with Raph. Their father had always accepted that his sons would periodically be at odds with one another, but he never allowed their squabbles to last long. If they were unable to resolve their issues themselves, he would step in and
Mikey absolutely did not want to spar with Raph. The mere idea of touching his brother or having Raph’s perfect body pressed against his or on top of him, pinning Mikey to the mat again, was enough to make the youngest feel dizzy.

There was no way out of it though, not that Mikey could see. Maybe he could do as Leo was always trying to teach him and focus on the fighting and not Raphael. Concentrating on the mechanics of his technique might take his mind off of his own nether regions.

It was going to be hard though, especially since he’d just found himself thinking about the way Raph’s body looked. That sure as shell wasn’t something that had ever crossed his mind before.

Facing his brother, Mikey kept his eyes on Raph’s, willing himself not to look downwards. That put Mikey at a distinct disadvantage because Raph had certain tells; certain ways that he moved his shoulders and feet that helped Mikey know what his brother planned to do. At the moment, Mikey was less concerned with losing than he was with maintaining his dignity.

Master Splinter surveyed the pair and then said, “Begin.”

Raph’s charge was not unexpected. That was the way Raph fought; straight forward and hard core. It was immediately obvious that the best defense was to hit the floor and try for a sweep, but if Raph anticipated the maneuver, Mikey would have to move ultra-fast to avoid being pinned.

Normally Mikey would have taken the chance, sure that he could move quicker than Raph. That wasn’t what he did though, instead Mikey spun aside and dodged Raph, avoiding him completely.

Since taunting his older brother was Mikey’s stock-in-trade, he couldn’t resist doing so now. “Maybe you shouldn’t have eaten so much at lunch Raphie. You’re really slow.”

“I’ll show ya’ slow,” Raph growled, closing the distance between them quickly. His first swing was at Mikey’s head, which the youngest ducked. As Mikey was straightening up, Raph’s other fist clipped his unprotected side.

It wasn’t a hard blow but it stung. Raph tried to follow it up with another body blow, but Mikey caught his arm, pulling his brother in and hip checking him.

Raph rolled as he hit the ground, coming up to his feet and rushing Mikey in one smooth motion. Moving swiftly, Mikey bobbed and weaved, avoiding Raph’s attempts to hit or grapple with him. Mikey’s hip was tingling from where it had connected with Raph’s body and warning bells were going off in the younger turtle’s brain, telling him not to do that again.

Though he kept up a constant barrage of jibes, Mikey continued to avoid touching Raph. He knew that his jeers would anger his brother and throw him off his stride and Mikey usually took advantage of that fact, but today it wasn’t just Mikey’s mouth that was running. Mikey could be very quick when he was motivated and the need to stay out of Raph’s reach was extremely incentivizing.

Mikey didn’t know how long they’d been sparring before Master Splinter finally called out, “Enough!”

Stopping where he was, a good ten feet away from Raph, Mikey turned towards his father.
He kept a wary watch on Raph as he did so, knowing that his brother was riled up enough to try for a final blow despite having been told to cease.

“Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said in a stern tone, “sparring involves attack and defense as part of your training. Would you kindly explain what it was that you were doing?”

“Um, defense?” Mikey answered.

“If that is a question then you obviously do not know,” Master Splinter told him.

“I was practicing the art of retreat,” Mikey said quickly. “For those times when we have to make a strategic withdrawal.”

“It looked to me as though you were practicing the art of avoidance,” Master Splinter said dryly. “Since your brothers should not have to spend additional time in training to pay for your lack of focus, they are dismissed. You will remain here and perform katas until I feel you have gained sufficient respect for the concept of ‘practice’.”

“Yes sensei,” Mikey said meekly. Normally he would have whined about the punishment, but all he wanted at the moment was not to be in the same room as a rampaging Raphael.

Mikey walked over to stand before his father as his brothers were formally dismissed. On his way out, Raph suddenly veered towards Mikey, leaning in to whisper, “This ain’t over.”

As if to emphasize his words, Raph slammed his shoulder into Mikey’s, rocking the younger ninja back on his heels. Without a backward glance, Raph left the dojo before Master Splinter could admonish him.

The shoulder that Raph had touched felt like it had been doused in liquid heat, the warmth radiating straight into Mikey’s groin. Breathing deeply to try and calm himself, Mikey caught a whiff of the scent Raph had left behind from his sweat. The smell was intoxicating and Mikey almost didn’t hear Master Splinter tell him to begin his kata.

Two hours later Mikey’s own perspiration had wiped out the scent Raph’s skin had left behind and the youngest turtle managed to concentrate enough to perform his kata without flaw. Satisfied, Master Splinter dismissed him and Mikey made a beeline for the showers.

“What the shell is happening to me?” Mikey asked himself as he scrubbed and re-scrubbed the two places on his skin that had come into contact with Raph.

Raph’s three whispered words should be filling Mikey with dread but instead the memory of the sharp blow from his hot headed brother had the opposite effect.

Mikey had felt pain before, plenty of it in fact. Growing up in the sewers, trying to survive underground, scavenging in places even the most hardy wouldn’t venture had left marks that would never fade. Fighting every new enemy added to the scars and Mikey wouldn’t wish for a repeat of any of them.

Somehow though every painful contact with Raph was different now. Maybe it always had been and that was why Mikey felt driven to tease his brother mercilessly. Donatello had once told him that no one in their right mind poked at someone with a temper, but Mikey had just grinned at him and said it was fun.

Fun. Mikey snorted water from his nostrils and laughed shortly. Just the memory of all those times Raph had thrown him to the ground and the sat on him had Mikey hardening quickly.
Reaching down, Mikey turned the shower to cold, shivering as the frigid water shriveled his burgeoning erection. Whatever was happening to him, Mikey knew he was one sick puppy. He also knew that until he came to grips with whatever demon was possessing him, he couldn’t aggravate Raph to the point of physical contact anymore. If only for his own sanity, Mikey had to maintain a safe distance from his red banded brother.

When he came downstairs after his shower, Mikey glanced around the lair, trying to locate his family members. Leo was on the couch watching the evening newscast and Don walked past him, carrying some random machine part and muttering to himself.

A banging sound came from the kitchen and Mikey figured that’s where Raph was. Scooping up his skateboard, Mikey followed Don to his lab, stopping in the doorway.

“Hey bro’, I’m gonna do some sewer skating,” Mikey said. “I’ll try to be back for dinner.”

Don looked up, his mouth curving into a knowing smile. “I suppose you’re telling me because you’re afraid Master Splinter or Leo would ground you?”

Mikey shrugged and grinned impishly. “At least I’m letting someone know where I’ll be.”

Don waved Mikey away, his mind already turning back to whatever problem currently had his interest. That was the nice thing about good old Donny; he didn’t jump into the middle of anyone else’s business unless or until it got to the point of being dangerous.

Master Splinter’s shoji was shut and Mikey high tailed it out of the lair before his father came out of the room and spotted him. Since he didn’t want the sound of his skateboard wheels attracting Leo’s attention, Mikey jogged towards an intersecting branch of tunnels before setting his board down.

He’d just pushed off when out of nowhere a thickly muscular arm wrapped around his throat and yanked Mikey off the skateboard. The momentum carried him backwards until his carapace slammed into the tunnel wall.

Gasping for air, Mikey looked up into Raph’s eyes. His brother’s forearm pressed against his neck, pinning Mikey in place. When Mikey tried to shove Raph away, his brother caught his wrist and pushed his hand against the wall, grinding Mikey’s arm into the bricks until Mikey stopped struggling.

“Told ya’ this wasn’t over,” Raph hissed.

His tone was ominous but more frightening to Mikey was Raph’s nearness. Panicking, Mikey tried kicking off from the wall, hoping to dislodge Raph’s hold. The movement only made Raph push in closer to Mikey, using his legs to trap his younger brother’s.

“Ohkay goofball, start explaining,” Raph said.

Mikey stared at his brother, seeing the determined look in Raph’s eyes. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Don’t try ta pull that crap on me,” Raph said as he jammed his arm against Mikey’s throat, making the younger turtle’s head tap the bricks behind him. “Ya’ threw a fake bug on me, I pounded your ass for it, over and done with like a million times before that. Only now all of a sudden ya’ act like I’m some kinda poison ya’ can’t stay far enough away from. I want ta know why.”
“I was just giving you some space,” Mikey said, striving to put a hint of humor in his voice. “You know, stay away and hope you’d forget the prank.”

“Hope ya’ could find an opportunity ta prank me again?” Raph asked suspiciously.

“No, nope, nothing like that,” Mikey said quickly.

“Giving me space and trying ta avoid me when we’re supposed ta be sparring are two different things,” Raph said. “Were ya’ trying ta make me look like a fool in front of sensei? That’s bullshit and so is your explanation. I want the real answer now or I’m gonna add a few lumps to that thick skull of yours.”

Mikey was trying to think fast; to come up with some lie that would satisfy Raph and get him to back off. His usually agile mind refused to cooperate though because it was slowly clouding over with lust.

The more things Raph threatened to do to him, the more aroused Mikey became. He couldn’t stop the process; it didn’t matter that he’d even conjured up an image of his father to try and calm his urges. Everything Mikey tried failed, his focus shredding each time Raph shifted and rubbed against him.

“Answer me!” Raph shouted into his face, pushing against Mikey until their plastrons scraped together.

Mikey’s eyelids drooped, his mouth opening as he began to pant with need. The desire to wiggle his hips and rub himself against Raph’s leg was nearly overwhelming. He’d never in his life been so inflamed and he was absolutely caught in a hell of not knowing what to do about it.

Some of the anger was starting to slip from Raph’s face, replaced by puzzlement. He was beginning to notice that something about Mikey was off and in a tiny moment of clarity, Mikey hoped Raph would get careless and loosen his grip enough so that Mikey could make a break for it.

“What’s wrong with ya’ bro’?” Raph asked, his brow furrowed. “Is something the matter with ya’?”

“Yes!” Mikey screamed inside his own head. For once in his life he couldn’t find his tongue, couldn’t form a coherent sentence. All he could do was shudder as Raph once more moved against him.

Then Raph’s thigh brushed against the bulge between Mikey’s legs and the younger turtle churred. The sound froze Raph, who stared at Mikey with eyes that seemed to have become twice as large as normal.

It was in that moment that realization dawned on Raph and his eyes flicked downwards, coming back up to Mikey’s as his expression melted into one of horror. Raph jumped back from his brother as though he’d been scalded, leaving Mikey clutching at his own throat as he drew in a gasping breath.

“What the bloody hell?” Raph rasped, staring at Mikey as if he’d never seen him before.

“I can explain . . . .” Mikey began, reaching a hand towards his brother.

Raph danced away from it, his face going nearly as crimson as his mask. “Tell me ya’ ain’t getting a boner ‘cause of me. Tell me that right the fuck now.”
“I don’t know!” Mikey screamed, hating the sound of disgust he heard in Raph’s voice.

“You’re sick,” Raph said, backing away from him. “Ya’ need ta stay away from me, got that? Stay the hell away from me until ya’ get some help.”

“Please don’t tell,” Mikey begged, watching Raph move back towards the lair.

“You’re fucked up,” Raph responded, breaking into a jog and quickly disappearing.

When he was gone, Mikey sank to his hands and knees, his entire body shaking in reaction. After a couple of minutes, his stomach rebelled against the sudden influx of adrenaline and Mikey vomited.

It was a little while before the tremors began to fade and Mikey crawled away from his mess, sitting back against the tunnel wall with a thud. He knew he needed to think about what had happened but his mind was blank. All he could do was stare at his feet, time passing without his awareness of it.

If some menace had come out of the dark to attack him, Mikey was pretty sure he wouldn’t bother to fight back. In fact, he was pretty sure he’d welcome such a quick release from his problems.

TBC………………
Mikey sat alone in the sewer tunnel for an indeterminate period of time. After a while he recalled a conversation he’d once had with Don about the concepts of heaven, hell, and purgatory. He hadn’t fully wrapped his head around the theology as Don had explained it and had a feeling that Don didn’t completely grasp it either.

What Mikey did comprehend was that purgatory was supposedly a stopping point for unpurified souls on their way to heaven. Maybe it wasn’t exactly a ‘place’ in a colloquial sense,
but Mikey pictured it as such. In his imagination it was like the inside of a cloud; all white and containing nothing.

Though it was better than hell as Mikey understood the region, purgatory didn’t seem all that great either. It was a perpetual limbo filled with an eternity of boredom, broken by the occasional cleansing by fire as your unpurified soul is made ready for heaven.

Michelangelo felt as though he’d entered purgatory. It wasn’t even gradual; he was thrust into it full force by his own uncontrolled lust. A lust that manifested itself whenever his brother Raphael was near him.

There had never been a time in Mikey’s young life when he’d thought of any of his brothers in a sexual way. It was only in the last couple of years that certain parts of his body woke up before he did and Mikey learned how to take care of that problem with his hand.

He didn’t actually think about anything when he masturbated; he didn’t need to. By the time Mikey woke up, if he hadn’t already reached orgasm he was damn close. Those times when he needed an extra push, he discovered that playing with his own tail – pulling it roughly or pinching it – would send him over the edge.

As night followed day, if Mikey was going to start having sexual fantasies, it should have been about girls. He’d certainly met quite a few attractive ones, both human and alien. He appreciated their appearance and their form, but now that he thought about it, never with an eye to acquisition. The thought of being with one in an intimate setting never crossed his mind.

With a long suffering sigh, Mikey pushed himself to his feet and looked around. If Raph had gone back home and told anyone what had transpired between them, Mikey expected that he’d have had company before now. Since no one had come looking for him, the odds were that Raph had kept things to himself.

Either that, or his brothers were hastily bricking up the entrance to the lair.

“Haven’t lost my sense of humor,” Mikey thought to himself. It wasn’t always the best coping mechanism, but it sure as shell beat going nuts.

Mikey slowly made his way over to his skateboard and picked it up, tucking it under his arm. There was a moment of indecision before he took a deep breath, expelled it, and turned towards the lair.

Not going home wasn’t an alternative, though it had crossed his mind. His fear that Raph would tell anyone who would listen that the youngest turtle was a perverted freak didn’t appear to have happened. Maybe Raph was just as embarrassed by the incident as Mikey was.

Staying away would only raise questions and then worry his family. They’d come looking for him and then demand explanations. Even if Mikey sought sanctuary for a time at April’s, his family would still want to know why he wasn’t coming home.

Bluffing it through was Mikey’s best option. If Mikey encountered Raph, he’d do his best to pretend that nothing had happened. He was pretty sure that’s what his red banded brother would prefer.

Mikey needn’t have worried. There was no sign of Raph when he walked through the door and the atmosphere in the lair had a sense of normalcy to it.

Dropping his skateboard into the spot where he usually kept it, Mikey glanced around and
spied Master Splinter in his favorite chair, eyes glued to the television. Leo was on the couch, a book open on his lap, and neither of them even looked in Mikey’s direction.

Movement caught the corner of his eye and drew Mikey’s attention to the kitchen just as Don stepped out of it.

“Home before dinner, huh?” Don asked, eyes twinkling with good humor as he referred to Mikey’s earlier promise. “You’re lucky it was spaghetti night and that there are plenty of leftovers. By the way, you get to clean the dishes because you weren’t home on time.”

Mikey’s heart had started thumping before he’d even walked into his home and it was still beating a rough rhythm inside his chest. Maybe Raph had only waited for him to show up before telling his family of Mikey’s deviant behavior. Since Mikey didn’t see Raph anywhere, he really needed to know where he was. He just didn’t want to ask outright.

“Everyone ate already?” Mikey asked, putting what he thought was just the slightest hint of a whine in his voice.

The sound always had his brothers volunteering more information than necessary in the hopes they’d stave off Mikey’s full-blown descent into petulance.

“Do you see anyone else in the kitchen?” Don waved in that direction to illustrate his point. “Master Splinter and Leo are settled in for the evening, Raph said he was eating with Casey, and I have an appointment to play on-line chess with someone. Sorry bro’, you’re stuck with this chore. You know the rules.”

Of course Raph made a bee-line straight over to Casey’s place. Mikey should have realized that’s where he’d go in order to avoid his younger brother.

“Fine, I’ll do the dishes,” Mikey said in a huff, “but I don’t have to like it.”

Don was moving away from him with a bit more speed than was necessary. “Such is life. What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger,” he called back to Mikey before disappearing into his lab.

Mikey had absolutely no appetite and didn’t attempt to eat. Instead, he swiftly put away the leftover food before washing up the dinner things. Normally he hated cleaning chores, but tonight the mundane task proved to be soothing.

His hot tempered brother hadn’t returned by the time Mikey finished up in the kitchen and he wasn’t sure if he should feel relieved or worried. Whenever Raph was confused or upset about something involving a family member, he tended to camp out at Casey’s.

If Raph didn’t show up for practice the next day, the rest of the family would want to know what had set him off. They’d remember his odd sparring match with Mikey and turn to the youngest for an explanation.

Mikey’s hope of forgetting the incident in the tunnels and pretending nothing had happened wasn’t going to work. Even if Raph hadn’t verbally told anyone about their encounter and didn’t intend to, his actions were going to lead to questions that would eventually have to be answered.

As much as he hated to do it, Mikey was going to have to go after Raph and get him to come home.

Upon taking a quick look around, Mikey was happy to see that his father had retired for the
evening and that the watchdog-in-training Leonardo had taken his book up to his room. Although Donatello’s lab door was open, Mikey heard him say, “You’re going with the Morphy Defense, huh?”

Mikey had no idea what that meant other than Don was on his microphone talking to whoever he was playing chess against. When Don was on-line with someone, Mikey could walk past beating a bass drum and his brother would ignore him.

Slipping out of the lair, Mikey kept to the tunnels until he was near Casey’s apartment. After checking that the coast was clear, Mikey exited the sewers and scrambled to the top of a nearby building.

He half expected to see the pair of vigilantes somewhere around, but Raph and Casey were nowhere in sight. Mikey leaped across to the next roof top and then crossed over two more buildings before finally landing on Casey’s roof.

By then Mikey had prepared himself to wait, figuring that it was probably too early to expect his brother to be finished beating up bad guys. When they were done and headed back they’d see Mikey waiting. Mikey guessed that Raph, rather than letting Casey know what had happened between them, would bluff it out and send Casey down to the apartment thus giving Mikey a chance to talk to him.

Thinking through that scenario gave Mikey a mental image of Raph’s bruised knuckles, causing Mikey’s toes to curl as a delicious shiver ran up his spine. Frustrated, Mikey shook his head to clear it and stepped over to the building’s ledge, looking down at the fire escape platform outside of Casey’s window.

He hadn’t expected to see anything and frowned when he noticed light flickering off the metal framework. Casey didn’t leave any lights on when he and Raph went out because he didn’t want to be seen by anyone in the surrounding buildings when he came home.

Biting his lip, Mikey had a moment of indecision. He didn’t want to be invited into Casey’s apartment by their friend because Mikey couldn’t talk to Raph there. If he went inside, Raph would most likely storm out and go off to parts unknown.

Being a ninja meant that Mikey didn’t have to be seen though. Flipping down onto the fire escape, Mikey made his way silently to Casey’s window and peeked in through a small opening in the curtains.

The television was on but either the sound was down low or muted completely because Mikey couldn’t hear it. None of the other lights were on but the television’s glow was enough to show Mikey that Raph was sprawled on the couch.

Of course Raph was lying where he could see the windows, although his eyes were closed. Mikey didn’t think he was sleeping; Raph’s brow was furrowed and he was obviously not comfortable on the lumpy, too narrow cushions.

Looking around the room as best he could through the small gap, Mikey assured himself that Casey was not there. By carefully pressing his face to the glass, Mikey could just make out Casey’s bedroom door, which was shut.

They had either not gone out or had come in early and decided to hit the sack. Mikey dug a small tool out of his belt and used it to slide open the latch on Casey’s window, lifting the sash enough to be heard without having to resort to yelling.
“Raph,” Mikey hissed softly.

His brother’s eyes immediately snapped open and Raph sat up with a jerk. A scowl appeared on Raph’s face as he stared at Mikey, obviously displeased at seeing the brother he was trying to avoid.

Keeping his voice low, Mikey said, “Please Raph, meet me up on the roof. Let me apologize to you so you’ll come back home. You can ignore me there just as easily but at least you’ll be comfortable.”

Rather than waiting for an answer that might lead to further argument, Mikey backed away from the window and hastily climbed up to the roof. The odds were fifty-fifty as to whether Raph would join him. Mikey was banking on Raph believing his brother would return if he didn’t meet him and that their voices might wake Casey.

After about five minutes Mikey started to think that Raph was willing to take that chance rather than having to look at him again. He was pacing when he heard a light thud and turned to see Raph standing there.

Raph looked both sullen and distrustful, his arms crossed over his plastron and his legs spread in a firm stance. Mikey was careful to stay several feet away from him, knowing that any movement towards Raph could send the hot head running again.

“Ya’ lucked out that I was here. Casey got a bruised rib while we were smacking some Dragons around and we had ta call it an early night. Say your piece and then go home,” Raph told him.

At least Raph was speaking to him and that was a good sign. “Look dude, I’m sorry about what happened in the tunnel,” Mikey said.

Before he could continue, Raph lifted a hand and seemingly swatted Mikey’s words away. “Forget the excuses nut ball, I figured this out. Ya’ found a new way ta screw with me when we spar. It’s bad enough ya’ talk the entire time, but this is a new low. Ya’ figure that if I think ya’ get off on being hit, then I’ll hold my punches, ain’t that right? Admit it.”

Taken by surprise, Mikey blinked rapidly as he processed what Raph had said. He could see from the expression on Raph’s face that his brother didn’t fully believe his own words; that he was grasping at straws because he wanted to go home. Raph had obviously spent the entire night thinking about their dilemma.

Even if it wasn’t the truth, Mikey could work with that. Laughing lightly, he said, “Yeah, you’re onto me. I had a feeling that con wasn’t going to work for long. I just didn’t think it’d send you running to Casey’s.”

“No now ya’ know that two can play that game,” Raph said, as though going to Casey’s wasn’t to get away from Mikey but to teach his brother a lesson.

Conjuring up his best cheeky grin, Mikey said, “Okay, I’ll stop screwing with you. No more faking, no more bugs. Good enough?”

Raph rolled his eyes. “Right. Like ya’ haven’t made that promise a thousand times before. Go on home, I’ll be there as soon as I lock up Casey’s place.”

Mikey took that to mean that Raph would rather not head back to the lair in his company. Feeling a little relieved about that, Mikey said, “On my way. Um, thanks for accepting my
“Don’t get mushy. I’m still pissed that you’d try something like that,” Raph said. “Someday you’re gonna admit I’m a better fighter, trophy or no trophy, and stop messing with me.”

“The Battle Nexus Champion will never make such an admission,” Mikey said boisterously, bounding away from his brother before Raph could call out a rejoinder.

Once out of Raph’s sight Mikey grew more subdued. He’d found a way, or at least Raph had, to allow the hot head to save face and come home.

The underlying problem still remained. Mikey had to find a way to fix things before he permanently damaged his relationship with Raph and the rest of the family. He was just hard pressed to figure out how he was going to do that.

TBC…………….
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,527 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 4 Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey

The morning after his roof top talk with Raph, Michelangelo awoke with a massive erection.

Clinging to the edges of his mind were the residual impressions of an extremely erotic dream. Mikey could still feel rough hands bruising his thighs, the pinch of strong teeth against his tail, the scratch of course rope digging into his ankles. If he closed his eyes, Mikey could see Raphael hovering over him, the wicked grin on his brother’s face promising more such exquisite torture.

With a groan, Mikey lifted his hand to his cock and dragged a single finger along its underside. That was all it took to bring him to climax, his body shaking against the bedding and his heels denting the mattress.

In the aftermath of such an intense orgasm, Mikey lay on his bed, breathing heavily and staring with unseeing eyes at his ceiling.

It was then he finally acknowledged that he was; one, sexually aware; two, for some reason - either instinctive or genetic - attracted to his own brother; and three, that pain was the trigger for his urges.

That Raph happened to be the brother he desired also made perfect sense. Mikey associated Raphael with pain – for obvious reasons. He wasn’t sure if he could say that Raph was the most dominant of his brothers but the red banded turtle was certainly the most aggressive. Somehow that aggression was ultimately alluring to Michelangelo.

Mikey continued to think it through, going into an almost semi-meditative state as both his mental and physical aspects merged. At that level he understood something about himself; experiencing pain was his signal to submit and the act of submission, due perhaps to his reptilian nature, was the greatest sexual turn on of them all.

None of his brothers appeared to be affected by this biological change; that much Mikey could tell. Mikey wasn’t sure why he was the only one, but maybe that had to do with the way each of them had mutated. Whatever the reason, Mikey was going to have to deal with this on his own. It was absolutely not something he wanted to discuss with his father or any of his brothers.

His thoughts drifted to his dream and how he’d taken care of himself afterwards and Mikey suddenly had an epiphany. He would take a proactive approach to his new need and develop a daily routine that quenched his internal fire before he even stepped out of his room.

Every morning Mikey would masturbate in order to relieve any chance of sexual tension during practice. Also, rather than behave differently around the brother he desired, Mikey would
train himself to tuck away the memory of each of their physical encounters so that he could relish replaying them in his mind later, in private.

Mikey would in effect compartmentalize his life. Every contact with Raph would be stored in a little cell in his mind rather than reacted upon and when Mikey was ready to use that memory, he’d extract it and pleasure himself while re-playing it.

Thus determined, Mikey rolled out of bed and went to wash up. At breakfast, Raphael eyed him a little more than usual, but Mikey behaved exactly as he normally did in the mornings, cracking jokes and focusing his attention on his food.

Mikey knew that Master Splinter would pair him up with Raph again during practice. After his poor showing from the previous day, Mikey was going to have to prove that there was nothing wrong between him and his brother.

This time when they sparred Mikey gave as good as he got. There was no holding back and no dodging; in fact, Mikey was more focused than usual because of the mental challenge he’d issued himself. Just as he’d resolved to do, Mikey stored away every one of Raph’s touches, not allowing himself to dwell on it as it occurred.

Because it was working, Mikey grew even bolder. Now he wanted Raph to touch him as much as possible, to be as rough with him as he could. To that end Mikey initiated contact more often than was usual in a bout against his hot headed brother. The change in his technique worked in his favor because it threw Raph off his stride.

When Master Splinter called an end to their sparring session, Mikey had taken Raph down three out of four times. While Master Splinter critiqued their performance, Mikey caught Raph glancing at him, his brow furrowed. Mikey simply grinned back.

While showering after practice, Mikey indulged himself and masturbated to that morning’s collection of experiences. He even had a nice set of bruises on one arm from where a frustrated Raph had gripped him when trying to wrestle Mikey to the ground. Mikey used his free hand to jab at the bruises, the added pain making him orgasm quickly.

Afterwards he set out to make himself some lunch, his mood relaxed and jovial. Two orgasms in one morning left him feeling pretty sated and he even tipped a wink at Donny who was exiting the kitchen with a cup of coffee in his hand. The genius almost tripped on his own feet while doing a double take and Mikey could almost see the thought whirling in Don’s head that the youngest was up to no good.

That made Mikey chuckle. Don’s reaction was almost as good as one he’d have if Mikey actually had pranked him.

Just as he was taking the first bite of his sandwich, Mikey realized that with things back to ‘normal’ and practice over for the day, there wouldn’t be further opportunities to interact with Raph, at least not physically. Mikey had used his memories from practice to bring himself off in the shower and wasn’t going to have any new ones to satisfy his need the following morning.

Slowly setting the sandwich on his plate, Mikey contemplated the situation. He was fairly sure that a replay of past events would provide him with the necessary stimulation, but he had a feeling they wouldn’t evoke the same level of excitement. That was going to be a problem since Mikey couldn’t afford to be any later for practice than he normally was.

Picking up the sandwich, Mikey began to eat again as the wheels in his head started...
spinning. There was really only one option open to him and Mikey practically inhaled his lunch as he recognized it. He was going to have to play his favorite game of ‘poke the Raphie’.

It wasn’t a chore to figure out where his brother was either; both Raph and Leo had routines they liked to adhere to. While Don would grab some lunch, shower, and go to his lab after morning practice, the other two turtles remained in the dojo and continued with their workouts. They were certainly a lot more driven about their skills than either Don or Mikey.

Mikey had discovered long ago that was partly due to their competitive natures, but it was also just how their personalities were. Don’s special talent was his genius and Mikey was gifted with a natural athleticism that gave him a distinct advantage over his brothers. Leo and Raph were the true warriors in the family

Sauntering into the dojo, Mikey leaned against the wall, arms crossed over his plastron, and eyed his brothers. Raph was doing shoulder presses with the free weights and Leo was on the floor doing push-ups, as though the hundred they’d done to warm up for practice wasn’t enough.

The timing couldn’t have been more perfect. Raph’s routine was very predictable and he’d be moving on to the weight bench next. Usually he and Leo took turns and spotted for each other, but if someone else was available Leo would take the opportunity to run through some of the more advanced katas.

There was a mirror on the wall in the place where Raph lifted weights, something that Don had salvaged from a gym that was closing down. Raph and Mikey’s eyes met in the glass and the younger turtle saw his brother’s lips press into a thin line. Having Raph already suspicious of him was going to make things a lot more fun.

As soon as Raph set the dumbbells aside and turned to the bench, Mikey shoved off the wall and walked over.

“What?” Raph barked, trying to freeze Mikey with a glare.

Undaunted by the ferocious look, Mikey said, ‘Chill bro’. I thought I’d give my muscles a work out and figured we could spot for each other.”

Raph started to say something but swallowed it upon glancing over at Leo. From the corner of his eye, Mikey saw that their big brother was coming towards them.

“Did you need me to spot you Raph, or has Mikey got you covered?” Leo asked.

There was a second of silence and then Raph said, “Mikey’s gonna lift with me. Go ahead and play with your swords, Leo.”

Leo nodded and moved to the farthest side of the room away from them, putting a safe distance between his brothers and his razor sharp katanas. Raph dried his hands on a towel and lay back on the bench, lifting and lowering the forty-five pound bar effortlessly.

While Raph warmed up, Mikey let his eyes drift over his brother’s body. He made no effort to conceal his perusal and Raph didn’t notice until he set the bar on the rack. Rather than make a point of it, Raph jumped up from the bench, silently turning it over to his younger brother.

It wasn’t hard to see that Raph was restraining himself, apparently determined to ignore anything Mikey said or did. This was probably the way Raph had decided to deal with Mikey in case his younger brother brought up anything containing a sexual connotation. Whether or not Raph actually believed that Mikey’s previous behavior was an elaborate gag didn’t matter, the way
Raph handled it was all that counted to the red banded turtle.

Exaggerating his own real desires for Raph served a double purpose; it would solidify the belief that Mikey was just messing with him and it would hack Raph off. The angrier Raph got, the more opportunities there were for Mikey to get smacked around.

Whereas before Mikey had been fearful of the fallout from Raph’s reaction to any hint of a sexual attraction, that agitation was nearly gone. Mikey knew Raph was determined to excuse everything he did as just another of his younger brother’s pranks, so the chances of Raph calling the family’s attention to it was miniscule. Mikey now relished the chance to torment Raph with something that apparently squicked him almost as much as bugs.

When Mikey finished warming up his muscles, he gave the bench over to Raph with a flourish, waving his hand at it and executing a bow. Without a word, Raph added a twenty-five pound weight plate to each end of the bar, locking them in place.

While Raph was adding the weight, Mikey walked around to the head of the bench and stood ready in case his brother needed assistance. The additional fifty pounds wouldn’t even make Raph break a sweat, but Mike’s position afforded him a nice view of his brother’s muscles.

It was clear that Mikey was going to have to break the silence if he wanted to goad Raph into losing his temper to some degree. Otherwise Raph would go through the entire exercise sequence without saying a word.

“I’m surprised you start out so light,” Mikey commented as Raph began his reps.

Raph’s jaw muscles worked, as though he was trying to refrain from talking, but his brother’s comment was innocuous enough to be taken as honest curiosity. “It ain’t like I’m in a big hurry ta get this done,” Raph said evenly. “I found out I can adjust ta heavier weights if I move up ta them gradually.”

As he racked the bar, Mikey said, “It’s exciting that you know your own body so well.”

Though Raph was sitting up and Mikey couldn’t see his face, he did see Raph’s shoulder’s tense. After a second they relaxed and Raph spun off the bench, looked Mikey in the eye and said, “This works better if ya’ don’t talk so much.”

Mikey grinned as he lay back and began to lift. “Actually, talking helps me when I work out. You don’t have to though; I get that you’re more brawn than anything else.”

When he settled the bar into place Mikey added, “That’s one of the things I like about you.”

He could see Raph’s hands clench into fists. Mikey made sure to keep a taunting expression on his face, knowing that would drive his brother up the wall as much as words did. Raph looked dour as he practically slammed the next set of weight plates into position.

Neither turtle said anything as Raph lifted nearly a hundred and fifty pounds of metal. Mikey studied his arms, noting that the veins weren’t even showing yet. As Raph finished, Mikey murmured, “I wonder if the Foot have ever realized just how strong you really are.”

Raph wiped his hands on a towel as he replied, “Only the ones I’ve hit.” It was a natural response and Raph didn’t realize it might not have been the best thing to say only after it came out of his mouth.

Mikey chuckled. “Yeah, I can attest to how painful that can be.”
They traded again without Raph following up on Mikey’s comment, thought normally he would have said something like “ya’ get what ya’ deserve”. It was telling that Raph didn’t offer a comeback.

As Mikey lifted the weights he looked up at Raph’s face. His brother’s eyes seemed to be focused on Mikey’s chest, though they did move to sweep across the younger turtle’s neck and arms. Raph’s expression was enigmatic and Mikey wondered if he was concentrating on not making eye contact.

When he finished his reps, Mikey sat up and asked, “When you’re fighting the Foot do you ever have the urge to wrap your arms around one of them and crush him?”

That snapped Raph’s attention back to Mikey’s face. “What the hell kind of question is that?” he snarled. “That would be a damn stupid ass move now wouldn’t it?”

Without waiting for an answer, Raph angrily yanked a pair of twenty five pound plates off the bar and replaced them with fifty pounders. After a second’s hesitation, he added another pair of fifty pound plates.

Mikey eyed the added hundred and fifty pounds with trepidation. His outside limit was around five hundred pounds but Raph could lift infinitely more. If Raph kept adding weight at this rate, Mikey wouldn’t be able to keep up with him.

Glancing at Raph, who was now seated on the bench, Mikey realized that his brother was quite aware of that fact. Apparently Raph had decided that the best way to shut Mikey up was to scare him away from the bench. Maybe he thought Mikey would get bored if he couldn’t lift too and would turn the job of spotter back over to Leo.

Fat chance. Mikey was going to stick with it because even if all he could do was spot for Raph, he could still enjoy the view and verbally annoy his brother at the same time.

“Do you usually adjust to heavier weights a hundred and fifty pounds at a time?” Mikey asked.

Raph lifted the bar from the rack, lowering and lifting it easily. “If this is too much for ya’, you’re welcome ta take off.”

“I wouldn’t dream of leaving you without any support,” Mikey murmured, watching the veins start to rise along Raph’s etched muscle. “Besides, you’re never too much for me.”

The weight bar clanged as Raph roughly dropped it onto the rack and came off the bench in one swift movement. For a moment Mikey thought Raph was going to punch him and from the glint that appeared in the larger turtle’s eyes it was clear that Raph contemplated doing exactly that.

Then the glint disappeared as Raph fought the temptation, though his expression was grim. “I seem ta remember ya’ promised ta stop screwing with me,” he said outright.

Mikey strolled past his brother in order to take his position on the bench, fixing Raph with an innocent look. “I have no idea what you’re hinting at. I just came in here for a little exercise.”

Raph stared at him as Mikey carefully lifted the nearly three hundred pound weight so as not to strain himself. “Were ya’ looking ta exercise those flabby muscles or your mouth?” Raph asked in an ugly tone. “I got news for ya’, that mouth of yours don’t need any more exercising.”

Ignoring the verbal jab at his musculature, Mikey completed his reps and said, “You seem
to be really fixated on my mouth bro’. Something you want to tell me?”

“Yeah,” Raph said, bumping against Mikey to get him out of the way of the bench. “Shut up.”

Mikey hid his thrill at achieving first contact. The bump was barely felt, but it indicated a break in Raph’s steadfast determination to avoid touching his brother.

As Raph added another fifty pounds to the bar, Mikey moved back into position at the head of the bench. He placed his hands at the ready as Raph hoisted the bar, but his assistance wasn’t needed.

“You know Raph, I always wondered why you spend so much time building these impressive muscles of yours,” Mikey said musingly. “Is it so that when you get someone down they can’t get away from you? Do you like exerting that kind of control over people?”

“That’s about as stupid a question as the one ya’ asked me earlier,” Raph said, lowering the bar nearly to his chest and then raising it again. “Keep talking and I’m gonna exert some control over your big mouth.”

“Sounds like fun,” Mikey said, grinning at his brother when Raph completed his reps and got up from the bench.

Raph didn’t respond to that, instead getting into his position as spotter while Mikey took his turn with the weights. Mikey was starting to feel the burn in his arms and chest from the heavy lifting, enjoying the ache because he associated it with his brother.

Mikey half expected Raph to leave him to his own devices as he finished lifting, but Raph dutifully readied himself in case his brother needed help. As soon as the bar was firmly seated though, Raph was sliding another fifty pounds on to it.

After drying his hands on the towel, Raph lay back on the bench, took a breath, and began another set of repetitions.

Mesmerized by how the light sheen of perspiration on his brother’s finely chiseled muscles helped to define them, Mikey had to remind himself to breathe. Once more Mikey let his eyes drift down Raph’s body, noting with a private thrill how the muscles on those emerald thighs flexed with each of the large turtle’s movements.

Licking his lips, Mikey said, “I should make this part of my routine every day.”

Raph’s grunt brought Mikey’s eyes back up to his brother’s face and he saw that Raph was looking up at him, his lip curled with disdain. Racking the weights, Raph got up, going around the opposite side of the bench to avoid Mikey as the younger turtle prepared for his turn.

Mikey curved his hands around the bar and breathed deeply several times before lifting practically four hundred pounds of dead weight.

“Ya’ ain’t got the staying power ta do this every day,” Raph told him with a touch of scorn, watching Mikey work to complete his reps. “I say you’d give up in a week.”

“Oh I don’t know,” Mikey said, his breath puffing out with the effort, “if I like something enough I can stick with it.”

He made sure to deliver the last line in as suggestive a manner as he could muster, even
waggling his eye ridges at Raph. The low growl that issued from deep in his older brother’s throat was highly rewarding.

As Mikey lifted the bar a final time and set it on the rack, Raph suddenly wrapped his hands around Mikey’s and squeezed, hard. “This is some new game of yours, ain’t it Mike? Ya’ decided ta jack with me ta get your jollies and ta see how far I can be pushed. Here’s a suggestion for ya’, stop it now ‘cause I can guarantee ya’ don’t want ta know exactly what I’m capable of doing in retaliation.”

Grinding his hands into Mikey’s one last time, Raph spun around and strode out of the dojo without a backward glance. Leo didn’t even look up, his focus entirely on the katas he was doing.

Mikey sat up to stare at the doorway that Raph had just gone through, a pleased smile stretching his lips.

“Actually Raphie,” Mikey said under his breath, “I do want to know what you’re capable of doing.”

TBC…………………..
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 4,267 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 5 Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Michelangelo’s hands tingled for the rest of the day. He knew that it was all in his head; Raphael hadn’t squeezed hard enough to do any damage, but the delicious echo of pain stayed with the younger turtle.

Mikey was walking a thin line and he knew it. He was depending almost entirely on his guile and quick wits to get what he wanted from Raph without scaring his brother into bolting again.

For the moment Raph was very skittish, eyeing Mikey whenever they were in a room together, his body tensing any time Mikey was near. Satisfied for now with his earlier coup, Mikey ignored Raph’s glare, behaving as though nothing untoward had happened between them.

The ghostly sensation in his hands was present in everything Mikey did. He was aware of it as he held his game controller, almost feeling a vibration from the device that amplified the tingling sensation. Mikey felt it when he touched his comics, when he lifted his fork, even as he held his toothbrush.

By the time he was ready to crawl into bed Mikey was hard beneath his shell. No one spoke of his earlier than normal bedtime, though Raph’s eyes did follow his little brother as Mikey climbed the stairs.

Once in his bed, Mikey dropped down almost without conscious thought. His cock expanded quickly and when he touched himself, the tingling in his hands seemed to transmit itself to his shaft.

Moaning with unbridled lust, Mikey jerked himself, simultaneously thrusting into his own hand. Gone was his determination to save the experience for morning, he couldn’t have slept with a raging hard-on anyway, and it certainly wasn’t going away without some help.

Mikey had the forethought to cover his face with a pillow and he bit into it as he climaxed. He was a vocal fellow and without the muffling effect of the pillow he would have announced to the lair what it was he was doing, not to mention who it was that had brought him the pleasure.

As he lay panting to catch his breath, Mikey imagined that the pillow on his face was a gag placed there by Raph. It was something his brother would do too, if he was into Mikey the way that Mikey wanted him to be. Raph would love the idea of shutting his brother up in such a forceful manner.
Mikey’s eyes drifted shut as he held onto that daydream and he was soon fast asleep.

It wasn’t Mikey’s alarm that woke him the next morning, it was a powerful orgasm. Startled from his sleep, Mikey returned to consciousness just as he released, his cum spraying in a high arc to drench his plastron and the arm that was draped over his stomach.

The alarm clock started to buzz just as he reached completion and with a sigh, Mikey extended his free hand in order to snap it off. He could not remember what he’d been dreaming about but it didn’t matter, Mikey could guess. It was probably Raph doing things to him; things that both hurt and felt incredible at the same time.

His pillow was still half on his face and Mikey stripped the case from it in order to wipe himself off. There was nothing he’d rather do than stay in bed and enjoy the afterglow from such a fine climax, but he didn’t need for Leo to come barging into his room to get him and discover the state Mikey’s bed was in. Or encounter the scent of Mikey’s sexual release.

Climbing out of bed, Mikey pulled his door open slightly and surveyed the corridor. Leo and Don would already be downstairs; Leo the early riser made coffee as he was brewing his tea and the scent of java always got Donny to the kitchen.

Raph and Mikey were the ones who liked to sleep in, which meant that on numerous occasions they left their rooms at almost the same time and then raced each other for the bathroom. This was one morning where Mikey would concede the bathroom to Raph so as not to be seen in his current state, covered in drying cum and reeking of it.

His brother was nowhere in sight and Mikey made a beeline for the bathroom, finding it empty and locking himself in. A quick rinse in the shower removed the tell-tale signs from Mikey’s skin and he hopped back to his bedroom to strip the bedding and roll it into a ball for deposit in the washing machine.

Mikey stopped at the laundry room on his way to the kitchen and tossed some towels in with his sheets so it wouldn’t look as obvious as to why he’d needed to do the wash.

He was tying a fresh mask onto his face when he stepped into the kitchen. As predicted, Leo and Don were at the table, both with cups of their chosen morning brew and slices of toast on their plates. Raph was already there as well, attacking a large bowl of cereal with gusto.

His two oldest brothers greeted Mikey with a ‘good morning’ but Raph merely grunted around a mouthful of food. Since that was completely normal, Mikey grinned at all of them and helped himself to a large glass of orange juice.

“You’re running late, Mikey,” Leo told him. “You haven’t time to cook anything.”

“That’s okay,” Mikey said. “I was kinda in the mood for cereal anyway.”

Grabbing a bowl, Mikey started to reach for his preferred cereal and then paused. His morning had started off with such a bang that he couldn’t resist a bit of deviltry and switched targets to go for Raph’s favorite box of cereal instead.

Mikey made a great show of bringing the box to the table and pouring cereal into his bowl. At the first rustle of cereal Raph glanced up, a drop of milk sliding off his bottom lip as he caught sight of the box.

“That’s mine,” Raph growled, his eyes narrowing dangerously.
“Aw come on, it won’t hurt you to share,” Mikey said with an impish smile. The flow of cereal slowed and Mikey upended the box, shaking out the remainder of its contents into his bowl. “Oops, guess that’s the last of it. Looks like I finished it off.”

Dropping his spoon with a clang, Raph straightened. “I’m gonna finish you off too, punk.”

That response was pure instinct and a thrill ran along Mikey’s spine as he stared at his brother. Maybe he could still goad Raph into doing something rash despite his brother’s efforts to control himself.

Raph was half out of his chair when Master Splinter walked into the kitchen carrying his tea things. “Good morning my sons.”

At the sound of his father’s voice, Raph slowly sank back down, the fire behind his eyes receding. Mikey retained his roguish expression, though inside he was highly disappointed.

“’Morning sensei,” Mikey said, greeting his father brightly as he sat down to pour milk on top of his cereal.

Master Splinter came to stand next to the table. “Practice begins promptly in ten minutes. Michelangelo, you should begin your mornings earlier so that you do not have to wolf down your breakfast.”

It was a repeat of the same admonition Master Splinter delivered nearly every other morning to the youngest and Mikey grinned as he stuffed his mouth. “I’ll work on that Master Splinter,” Mikey promised, his words muffled by cereal.

“You’re gonna replace that cereal before tomorrow,” Raph stated in a menacing tone.

Mikey desperately wanted to say no just to further annoy Raph, but their father was still standing right by him.

Shrugging nonchalantly, Mike said, “We need a few other things so I guess I’ll add that to the list.”

“Leonardo, if you have finished please join me so that we may discuss this morning’s exercises,” Master Splinter requested, moving towards the door.

“Of course, father,” Leo responded, nodding to Don as acknowledgement for his brother’s silent offer to pick up his breakfast things and then followed Master Splinter from the kitchen.

Don rose from the table and deposited the dirty dishes in the sink, retaining his cup in order to get a coffee refill. He leaned back against the counter and watched as Raph drained the milk from his bowl and then spun from his chair to toss the bowl in the sink before stalking out of the room.

“What’s up with you two?” Don asked, turning his attention to Mikey.

The younger turtle slowly chewed cereal, taking his time in order to formulate an answer. Swallowing, he said, “Nothing at all. What makes you ask?”

“Oh really, Mikey,” Don said, his tone lightly sarcastic. “You are baiting him way more than normal. What happened, did he flush your favorite comic?”

“Perish the thought,” Mikey said in mock dismay. “He’s been having a mood the last few
“By getting him to kill you?” Don asked, his eye ridges rising. “Have you ever thought of just talking to the big guy?”

“What fun is that?” Mikey shot back.

“So his bad mood is sport to you? Way to be altruistic,” Don said, setting his cup aside.

“Why can’t I have some fun with him while I’m helping him?” Mikey asked. “That is what that word means, right?”

Don sighed. “Yes Mikey, that’s what that word means. It also means helping others unselfishly.”

“I’m unselfish,” Mikey protested as he got up to place his breakfast things in the sink. “I just so happen to be a multitasker too. I help Raph and entertain myself at the same time.”

“Your funeral,” Don said, walking towards the dojo with his brother. “I’m not even going to bother saying ‘I told you so’ when he pulverizes you.”

“If I’m dead I wouldn’t hear it anyway,” Mikey said, chuckling as they went in to morning practice.

Master Splinter did not have them spar that morning, instead spending the entire session on flexibility exercises and katas. Mikey toyed with the idea of accidentally on purpose losing his balance and falling against Raph, just so his brother would shove him away, but their sensei had placed them on opposite ends of the line from each other and he couldn’t pull that off.

As they stretched Mikey noticed that each time he glanced up, Raph was looking at him. When their eyes met, Raph would jerk his gaze away, returning his focus to his own workout. It made a corner of Mikey’s mouth lift to think that he’d gotten under Raph’s skin enough so that his brother was watching him to try and figure out what he’d do next.

Mikey’s mind wandered during his workout, the flexibility training as easy for him as most physical exertions were. He mused on how much he enjoyed the fact that Raph was getting aggravated with him. Almost gone were the confused and frightened feelings of that evening in the tunnel when Raph had looked at him with repugnance.

Raph couldn’t be disgusted with Mikey if he thought that his younger brother was screwing with him. Wallowing in hurt feelings or being morose wasn’t part of Mikey’s temperament, he was too resilient to ever succumb to angst. He’d found a way to satisfy not only his new found sexuality but also his own particular kink and he was exuberant at how freeing that felt.

Maybe the vast enjoyment he was getting from the little world he was creating for himself was messed up; both unhealthy and abnormal by human standards, but then they weren’t human, were they?

Right now though Mikey had to think of a way to crack Raph’s control just enough today in order to get his ‘fix’. He chuckled to himself, thinking about ‘crack’ and ‘fix’. Mikey really was starting to feel like a junkie, only he was hooked on pain and Raph was his unknowing supplier.

This new game was made more fun by the fact that Raph was wary and on his guard. The episode at breakfast had only occurred because Raph was still half asleep and operating on auto pilot; he was not going to be as quick to lose his temper when fully awake. Mikey wondered if
Raph was holding back because of the possibility that he didn’t really believe what he’d told Mikey, that Mikey wasn’t actually getting turned on by his brother but had been trying out another way to pick on Raph.

The complexity of Mikey’s undertaking added to its allure. If he could get Raph to hit him then Mikey won. If he couldn’t, then the point went to Raph.

Mikey loved to win.

Master Splinter ran them through a series of kicking and striking techniques towards the end of practice. Mikey lost count of how many times their father barked ‘again!’ at them, making them go over the same movement numerous times before he was satisfied with their performance.

His call for an end to practice was greeted by low groans of relief, followed by his sons dropping to the ground. This wasn’t the first, nor would it be the last, time that their sensei had wrung them out with a vigorous training session. Mikey always wondered if it was because Master Splinter was so invested in their learning through repetition, or that he secretly hoped to wear out four rambunctious boys in order to make them more manageable. Maybe it was both.

“I have things to do but I don’t think I can stand up,” Don said.

“Ya’ could crawl,” Raph told him laughingly.

Don didn’t bother with a retort, which was a good indication of how worn out he was. Master Splinter left the dojo with a satisfied smile as his sons lay panting and sweating on the floor.

“A shower would be nice,” Leo said although he didn’t move.

Raph turned his head to look at him. “It ain’t gonna come to you.”

“I don’t see you moving any faster than the rest of us,” Leo shot back.

Mikey snorted in amusement. No matter how tired they might be, Leo would never let Raph have the last word.

A quick inhalation brought the scent of his brother’s perspiration to his nostrils. Mikey’s beak wrinkled in revulsion at the smell coming off of Leo and Donny, who were closest to him. Trying to get away from them, he lurched to his feet, taking a few steps forward to reach the wall and propping himself up against it. That maneuver put him closer to Raph and he realized he hadn’t moved far enough to escape the odor of sweat coming off that particular brother.

At that same moment Mikey discovered that Raph’s scent wasn’t at all off-putting. In fact, it was rather enticing and Mikey was suddenly overwhelmed by the urge to drop to his hands and knees, lift his tail, and offer himself to Raph.

Eyes wide, Mikey jerked upright and bolted for the door, calling back over his shoulder, “I’ve got the shower first!”

A half hour later he emerged squeaky clean and sated enough to ignore his brother’s grumbles at his hogging the bathroom. There were plenty of shower stalls and Mikey could have left the door unlocked for them, but he didn’t want to be caught in the act of jerking off.

Just to be on the safe side Mikey held his breath as he passed Raph. With a light step,
Mikey went downstairs and invaded Don’s lab, helping himself to a computer in order to place his grocery order, making sure to include a box of Raph’s cereal on the list. He paid for the items with the credit card that Don had gotten for them under the pseudonym of Don A Tello, something that never failed to amuse Mikey.

When the order was complete, Mikey called April to let her know to expect a delivery and that he’d come by after dark to pick it up. Having a human friend who was more like a sister came in very handy and Mikey thanked their lucky stars for the millionth time that they’d met her.

Mikey exited the lab after he was done, a little surprised that Don hadn’t interrupted him to make sure the younger turtle wasn’t destroying anything. He heard sounds coming from the dojo and figured that Leo and Raph had found the energy to return to training. Mikey toyed for a second with the idea of spotting Raph as he lifted weights again but quickly tossed the thought aside. He didn’t want to be quite so obvious.

Since Don wasn’t anywhere around Mikey decided to check the garage to see if the genius was there. Mikey had time to kill and after grabbing a cold piece of chicken from the fridge, he headed up in the elevator.

As he stepped out of the elevator Mikey heard the low hum of conversation and then saw that the van was a couple of feet off the floor on a lift. Don was leaning over the front bumper, his upper body under the hood and one arm somewhere inside the engine.

Drawing closer, Mikey saw that Raph was lying on the mechanics creeper underneath the van. Only the lower parts of his legs were visible and the sight of those muscular calves had Mikey licking his lips.

Tossing the chicken bone in the garbage, Mikey grabbed a shop towel to wipe the grease from his fingers and approached the van in time to hear Don exclaim in frustration.

“Hurry up and drop the damn thing,” Raph cursed.

“Don’t you think I’m trying?” Don snapped. “This last nut won’t budge. It’s rusted in place.”

“Did ya’ spray it with the WD 40?” Raph asked.

“Yes I sprayed it,” Don answered temperamentally. “It still won’t turn.”

With an annoyed expletive, Don banged on the offending nut with his wrench and then tried turning it again.

“What the hell, is it welded on?” Raph asked impatiently.

“I should have replaced the damn thing months ago,” Don replied.

Mikey knew the genius was annoyed when he started to swear. “Let me try,” he said, looking under the hood to catch Don’s eye.

“Be my guest, my arm is going numb. It’s that nut there,” Don said, pointing at the nut before sliding out of the way and handing the wrench to Mikey.

Don was plenty strong and his wrists were like steel cable, but he’d been going at it long enough for his hands to become fatigued. Mikey got a good grip on the nut, leaning in farther than Don could because he was taller. With the added leverage Mikey was sure he could turn the nut.
He was wrong. Straining with all his might Mikey couldn’t get the thing to give even a little.

“Shoot Donny,” Mikey said, grunting with his efforts. “I think it is welded in place.”

“I’m going to have to take the torch to it Raph,” Don announced lugubriously.

The sound of the creeper’s wheels reached Mikey and through a gap he saw a flash of red zip past. He was still trying to turn the nut when a warm body pressed against his backside.

Freezing in place, Mikey watched as a brawny pair of arms surrounded him. The scent of motor oil and Raph’s musk hit him at the same time.

“Damn it Mikey, give me the wrench and move,” Raph ordered, his hot breath blowing across the side of Mikey’s neck. He must have decided that his brother wasn’t moving fast enough, because he shoved a knee into the back of Mikey’s leg for emphasis.

There was barely enough functioning brain mass to tell Mikey to relinquish his hold on the wrench as Raph’s hand closed on top of his. Raph’s grip was powerful and Mikey had to wriggle his hand to slide it out from under his brother’s.

Maneuvering out from between the van and Raph required some squirming as well. The more he tried to twist his body out of the way, the more it seemed that Raph pressed harder against him.

“What the shell are ya’ doing? Move,” Raph said, his deep voice cutting through Mikey like a knife.

Mikey finally pushed his rear against Raph’s plastron to gain enough space to duck under one arm and pop out like a squished grape. He spun on his heel and looked back in time to see the van rock as Raph’s hips slammed into it.

From the angle where he was standing, Mikey had a good view of the side of Raph’s face and saw that his teeth were clenched as he struggled with the unwieldy nut. The muscles in his bicep expanded, the veins springing up as Raph pitted his enormous strength against the stubborn machine part.

Suddenly there was a high pitched screeching sound and the nut came loose, propelling Raph forward. “Crap!” he yelled, jerking his hand back, the knuckle bleeding.

“Are you okay?” Don asked, jumping forward to grab Raph’s hand.

“I busted the skin on my knuckle, no big deal. I got that damn nut loose though,” Raph announced with a grin, looking infinitely pleased with himself.

“Mikey, your hands are the cleanest. Go get the first aid kit off the shelf and take care of this before Raph gets dirt in the wound,” Don said.

As Mikey fetched the kit, Don led a mildly protesting Raph to the sink and helped him rinse his knuckles. Mikey took a clean towel and patted the skin dry before applying an antiseptic cream and bandaging Raph’s hand.

“Are ya’ ladies done clucking over me? Can we finish what we were doing?” Raph asked, a touch of humor in his voice.
“Mikey and I will finish,” Don said in a tone that brooked no argument. “The hard part is done and I don’t want to risk you getting bits of metal in that wound.”

“It’s a friggin’ scraped knuckle Donny, not a gaping hole in the back of my hand,” Raph said.

“Nevertheless, you are going to do what I say,” Don told him, pushing Mikey towards the van.

Mikey heard Raph chuckle and wondered, not for the first time, how Don could talk that way to the hot head and succeed in amusing him, when if Leo or Mikey did it Raph would blow a cork.

“What do I do?” Mikey asked, standing as directed in front of the van again.

“Finish removing that nut, take the bolt out, and then jiggle the starter motor until it loosens enough for me to get it out of there,” Don directed, crawling onto the creeper and sliding under the van in Raph’s place.

Once more Mikey leaned into the engine compartment, wrench in hand. Now that Raph had loosened it, the nut came off easily enough and it was a matter of a few minutes for Don to remove the part he was after.

Mikey felt a touch of accomplishment at having helped with the auto repairs and wondered if that’s what it was like to fix things. There had to be more to Don’s constant tinkering than just a need to keep the lair running because the genius’ hands were more battered than Raph’s. Surely no one would willingly do something that they knew would hurt if it didn’t come with some reward.

Deciding he’d best shy away from that train of thought, Mikey slid out from under the hood and turned around with a triumphant grin. Right away he noticed that Raph was only a little ways behind him and that his brother was gazing at a spot about three feet below Mikey’s face.

Raph blinked rapidly and glanced up. “Don’t start crowing, ya’ barely did anything and ya’ don’t know a damn thing about engines.”

“Maybe I’ll learn so I can help Don in the garage too,” Mikey said teasingly.

“There’s a manual over there on the shelf you can read,” Don said as he lugged the starter to the workbench. “That is if you’re serious about wanting to learn.”

Mikey glanced at the book in question, noting that it was several inches thick. “Maybe another time,” he said quickly. “I’ve got a few errands to do before I run over to April’s later to pick up our groceries.”

He was moving towards the elevator as he spoke, afraid that Don would get it into his head that Mikey should take the manual with him.

Raph’s expression was knowing, a corner of his mouth lifted to give him that cocky look that pierced straight into Mikey’s groin. “Ya’ better have gotten my cereal,” he called after his youngest brother. “Or else.”

The elevator closed, cutting off any further threats Raph might have made. The ‘or else’ was enough to have Mikey’s toes curling into the floor. That and their close encounter under the hood of the van.
Mikey was still thinking about that after dinner when he was on his way to April’s apartment. He hadn’t figured that Raph would voluntarily get that close to him, unless he was so focused on repairing the van that he’d forgotten how Mikey had been baiting him.

Even under normal conditions though, Raph would have merely shoved Mikey aside. No way would he pin the youngest against the front of the van, pushing against him in a manner that made it difficult for Mikey to escape.

And was it his imagination, or had Raph been staring at his ass?

TBC………………

Chapter End Notes

This little comic, based on a scene from this chapter, was created by the super imaginative Nei-Ning from DeviantArt.
Hurry up and drop the
damn thing.

Did ya spray it with
WD 40?

Yes I sprayed it.
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Let me try.

What the hell is it
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Don’t you think I’m
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just won’t budge. It’s
crusted in place.
Shout, Donnie. I think it is welded in place.

I'm going to have to take the torch to it, Raph.

...!

Damn it, Mikey. Give me the wrench and move.

Ne-Dine 293.16
What the shell are ya doing? Move.
Screech!
Crap!

Are you okay?
I busted the skin of my knuckle; no big deal.

I got that damn nut loose though.

The End!
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,798 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 6 Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey

Mikey was determined not to read too much into his interactions with Raph in the garage but the problem was that he couldn’t stop thinking about it.

Even April noticed that he seemed preoccupied when he picked up their groceries from her place. Fortunately, being known as the turtle with a penchant for video games had its advantages and he easily assuaged her curiosity by telling her he was trying to figure out how to beat a new one.

Raph was well known for his mercurial temperament and it wasn’t unusual for him to switch from angry to devious. There was a very real possibility that the hot head had decided to beat Mikey at his own game and turn the perverted behavior back on his younger brother.

That was assuming of course that Raph really did believe that Mikey was messing with him. Somehow Mikey didn’t think that was the case. He’d seen Raph’s face in the tunnel when his older brother had realized that Mikey was sporting a boner. Raph was extremely perceptive and his instincts were incredible. He’d known in a flash that Mikey’s woody was due entirely to his close proximity.

Then there was their conversation at Casey’s later that night. Raph hadn’t let Mikey speak more than a couple of words before jumping in to say he’d figured out that Mikey was scheming; trying to do things that would give him an advantage when they sparred.

The desperation for that to be the explanation for Mikey’s actions was in Raph’s eyes and Mikey had been more than relieved to accept that premise.

They had been raised together, had lived in tight quarters, had survived on the most meagre of things and had learned bushido at each other’s sides. That kind of closeness engendered an almost spiritual connection and Mikey knew on a gut level that Raph was fully aware that his younger brother was not pulling a prank.

By the time Mikey came to that conclusion, he was back at the lair. The light was on in Don’s lab and the clack-clack sound of computer keys being hit told Mikey where the genius was spending his evening.

The smell of burning incense wafted from Master Splinter’s room and along with it Mikey caught the sound of Leo’s voice. He now knew where ‘fearless’ and his father were.

Mikey didn’t see Raph anywhere as he carried his purchases into the kitchen. As he put the groceries away, his thoughts drifted to that brother, from whom they were never far. He could be upstairs in his room, or in the garage, possibly going for a ride on his motorcycle, maybe over at Casey’s . . . .
Or he could be standing in the kitchen doorway staring at Mikey, which the youngest discovered to be the case when he closed the refrigerator door.

“Did ya’ get my cereal?” Raph asked, his voice low.

“Yep,” Mikey replied.

He wanted to say more, to sound jaunty and carefree, but he didn’t trust his voice at the moment. How Raph had snuck up on him he didn’t know; Mikey was a ninja after all. He might have been lost in thought but Raph wasn’t normally all that quiet. Unless his brother had purposely tried to creep up on Mikey.

“Where is it?” Raph asked, coming into the kitchen.

His brother’s movement snapped Mikey out of it and his bravado came back. “In the cabinet where it belongs. Don’t worry, I didn’t touch the toy inside ‘cause I know how much you love them.”

That didn’t get much of a rise out of Raph, though he did shoot a look in Mikey’s direction that would have scalded someone with thinner skin. Going to the cabinet, he opened it and checked to see that Mikey had told him the truth, clicking his tongue against his teeth in satisfaction before closing the door.

“Has anyone ever told you that you have trust issues?” Mikey asked, leaning back against the refrigerator.

Raph was suddenly in front of him, having moved so fast that Mikey hadn’t time to blink. His breath caught in his throat as his brother stepped right into his personal space, their plastrons nearly touching.

“Only with regards to you,” Raph answered, poking a thick finger into Mikey’s skin, just above his plastron. “There are three other boxes of cereal up there, ya’ better pick one of them in the morning.”

With a last hard shove of his finger, Raph curled it slightly and dragged his nail across Mikey’s scutes before spinning away from his younger brother and exiting the kitchen.

Mikey stood frozen in place after Raph left him. He could still feel a dull ache in his chest from Raph’s finger and though the scratch on his hard plates didn’t hurt, the erotic sound echoed in Mikey’s head.

“Are you holding the door closed for a reason, Mikey?” Don asked, his voice cutting through Mikey’s stupor.

Glancing up, Mikey saw Don staring at him, a quizzical expression on his face and his coffee mug in one hand.

“Nope,” Mikey said with a laugh, moving away from the door. “Just trying to think if I remembered everything.”

“The most important thing you’d better have remembered is to replace Raph’s cereal,” Don said as he approached the coffee maker. “Morning will be a lot better if we’re not trying to keep Raph from mutilating you.”

“I’ve managed to hold my own with the hot head all these years,” Mikey retorted, “I think I
can handle him now too.”

Don cocked an eye ridge at him, coffee pot in one hand and cup in the other. “With the notable exception of the time he nearly beaned you with a pipe.”

“Shh,” Mikey said hastily, holding a finger against his lips. “We don’t talk about that Donny. He deserves to have us forget that one slip up because he doesn’t lose it like that anymore.”

Don poured his coffee, a slight smile on his face. “He can’t hear us; he was headed upstairs as I was coming out of the lab. I was curious about what’s going on in that skull of yours and I’m glad to know you still have his basic welfare at heart.”

The last thing Mikey needed was to have Donatello probing around inside his head. It was better to have Don tinkering with some new invention than to have him playing psychotherapist.

“You know I only mess with him when I’m bored,” Mikey said. “That fun only lasts just so long and then he’s on to me and I have to look for something else to do. Speaking of which, are you still working on the van? I had this idea for adding a jet propulsion unit . . . .”

“I think I hear my computer calling me,” Don interrupted hastily, making a fast break for the door. “It’s getting late and I need to finish a couple of things so I can go to bed.”

He was gone before Mikey could say anything else, making the youngest chuckle. There were a great many advantages to being the family pest.

Don’s mention of time made Mikey glance up at the clock. It was approaching ten, which wasn’t all that late by their standards and especially not by Don’s, but the genius had to say something to escape him.

Mikey automatically glanced towards the television array as he left the kitchen and spotted Leo, just as he’d expected to. Of the four of them, big brother had the most uniform habits and watching the evening news broadcast was a staple in Leo’s routine.

With nothing better to do, Mikey decided to join his brother. He knew Leo paid such close attention to everything that went on locally because of how it might affect them or impact their patrols. Leo watched the world news because so many of their enemies were involved in politics, high finance, and influence peddling.

Staying informed was one of the things a leader did. As Mikey quietly took a seat on the end of the couch, he caught a glimpse of Leo’s face and noted his intense concentration. Leo’s ability to focus in such a forceful manner made him damn good at his job but it also kept him from being as spontaneous as Raph tended to be.

Mikey knew that Leo had a temper but he held it in check, exerting control over his emotions in a way that Raph would never manage. Leo didn’t display the same type of outward aggression as his hot headed brother and that no doubt accounted for Mikey’s lack of physical interest in the clan leader.

The younger turtle did wonder though how Leo would react to finding out that Mikey was having those types of feelings about any of them. Would his first instinct be one of revulsion or would he start to lecture about ‘ramifications’?

Or would he accept it as a normal part of their turtle heritage and carry on with business as usual, reminding Mikey that he still had team obligations to fulfill?
Mikey snorted a laugh at that and Leo looked over at him, a frown on his face. They were no doubt talking about something serious on TV and of course Mikey wasn’t actually paying any attention to it.

“Sorry, I was thinking about something,” Mikey said softly, so as not to disturb his brother.

The look Leo gave him was skeptical, but he didn’t ask any questions before turning his attention back to the news. Raph would have told Mikey to ‘zip it’ or planted a couch cushion in his face or any of a half dozen other things that would have made Mikey feel alive.

That was really it though, wasn’t it? Everything Raph did was vibrantly passionate and Mikey was completely hooked on that feeling. He wanted to wallow in it, roll in its richness, experience every nerve ending in his body coming to life under Raph’s fervor. The pain his brother provided was glorious in how alive it made Mikey feel and the anticipation of how rough Raph could get made Mikey’s entire being sing.

The weatherman was just calling for a chance of showers when Leo asked, “Were you waiting for the TV to be free so you could play a game?”

“Huh?” Mikey looked at him, working his way out of the deep haze of thought he’d been in. “Nah. I was gonna go to bed but I wasn’t sleepy enough. I figured watching this stuff would be as good as a sedative. That politician who was just talking should hire himself out to an insomniac’s convention. He’d make a fortune.”

“You know, some of the things he was saying were actually important,” Leo said with amused tolerance.

“I’m sure his mirror would agree with you,” Mikey countered with a grin.

Leo got up to stretch and patted a yawn with the back of his hand. Mikey expected him to say good-night and was surprised when Leo fixed him with a look that was enigmatic enough to make the younger turtle nervous.

“Are you okay, Mikey?” Leo asked suddenly.

Taken aback by the abruptness of the question, Mikey answered, “Sure I am. Why wouldn’t I be?”

Leo’s expression turned thoughtful, colored with a touch of concern. “You’ve seemed more . . . reticent lately. Like something’s on your mind.”

First Don, now Leo. Mikey really needed to learn to hide things better.

“Where’d that idea even come from? I’m the same worry-free Mikester I’ve always been,” Mikey said cheekily.

“Is it something to do with Raph? Are the two of you not getting along? I know he was annoyed with the way you treated your practice bout the other morning, but that was entirely your fault. You should have known that he’d take it as an insult and try to pay you back,” Leo said.

“What’s the matter, Leo? You think I can’t take it?” Mikey asked, sounding slightly offended.

“I suppose if you couldn’t take it you wouldn’t poke Raph,” Leo said in an attempt at appeasement. “I’ve taken his hits and I certainly wouldn’t invite them unnecessarily.”
“I guess I don’t see it that way,” Mikey told him.

“You aren’t going to tell me it doesn’t hurt, are you?” Leo asked.

Mikey shifted on the couch. “Heck yeah it hurts,” he acknowledged. “It just doesn’t bother me. It’s hard to explain. I know I’m annoying when I’m bored and Raph’s my favorite target ’cause I know I’ll get a rise out of him. But I wouldn’t do it if I thought he hated it. Raph and I are kind of alike; we have a lot of energy and sometimes that makes us jumpy. I know when I need to help him blow off steam, even if that means I get pummeled for my troubles.”

“So you’re what, Raph’s punching bag?” Leo asked incredulously.

“I wouldn’t call it that,” Mikey said with a grin. “He still has to catch me first. If you think about it, I’m better exercise than a punching bag ’cause I punch back.”

“I’m not exactly thrilled with the idea of two of my brothers having a free for all,” Leo said dryly.

“What’s suddenly different?” Mikey asked. “We’ve been this way our whole lives.”

Leo looked at him without saying anything. Mikey hated when he did that because as the silence dragged on the younger turtle always felt like he should fill it and usually he did, spilling way more information than he’d meant to.

This time he had a secret that was imperative he keep. Mikey was sure he’d been doing a fine job of hiding his changed feelings towards Raph, but Don and Leo both seemed to be picking up on something.

Of course it was possible that they weren’t getting the strange vibe from Mikey. It might be Raph’s behavior that was setting off their radar and instead of directing their questions at the volatile hot head they chose instead to interrogate the affable younger brother.

Not this time. No one was going to be playing Jedi mind games on Mikey to get him talking.

Finally Leo shook his head. “I don’t know. Something seems off with you two but if you say it’s nothing I have to take that at face value. If you do decide you need to talk about something you know where to find me.”

“Appreciate the offer bro’,” Mikey said, “but I don’t start things I can’t finish and I don’t bite off more than I can chew. Well, I did once ’cause the pizza was really good and I didn’t want Raph to get the last slice. I wound up swallowing chunks whole and man were they painful going down.”

Leo was laughing by then. “Are you done with the clichés now? I’m going up to bed. If you choose to stay up all night don’t whine when Master Splinter decides to make an example of you.”

Mikey grabbed the remote off the couch and said, “I’ll let the TV decide. If nothing’s on then I’ll go to bed early.”

His brother waved at him in an indulgent manner and jogged upstairs. Mikey flipped through channels without really noting what was on and after about ten minutes of that he sighed and hit the master control button, shutting off all of the televisions.
Slumping against the couch cushions, Mikey let his hands flop down on either side of him and stared at the blank screens. Realizing they weren’t going to provide any answers he stood up and immediately felt a twinge in his chest from the spot where Raph had jabbed him earlier.

Touching the spot tentatively with his fingers made his legs and tail stiffen. Mikey’s eyes clouded over as he recalled how Raph had trapped him against the refrigerator, combatively displaying his dominance.

The old Mikey would have slapped that hand away or cried ‘Uncle’ while laughing in Raph’s face. Try as he might, Mikey couldn’t hang onto his normal behavior when he was around Raphael. Every interaction turned into a series of instinctive responses, all of them keyed to whatever magical pull Raph suddenly had over him.

Just thinking about how rough his brother had been with him in the kitchen had Mikey’s cock filling. Finding that his shell was becoming too tight, Mikey made straight for the stairs, intent on reaching his room in order to take care of his growing problem.

To get there he had to pass Raph’s door. Mikey was thankful that it was closed so that he wouldn’t have to face his brother.

Though he told himself to pass by quickly, Mikey found that his feet insisted on disobeying commands. The next thing he knew, Mikey was staring at Raph’s door, his feet firmly planted in front of it.

Sliding a tongue along his bottom lip, Mikey leaned forward, turning his head slightly as he did so. After a second he caught the unmistakable sound of Raph’s snoring, deep and sonorous it was one of the reasons they all now had doors.

Mikey remembered a time when he’d been forced to share Raph’s room because April was homeless and required his. That snoring had kept him awake and driven him so crazy that he’d spent more time roaming the lair than actually in the room.

Now that sound seemed to call to him, to echo somewhere deep in the primal recesses of his brain. Without conscious thought, Mikey grasped the door knob and turned it.

The door wasn’t locked and it opened easily, with just the faintest squeak. Raph snorted at the sound and Mikey froze, but then his brother shifted in his sleep and the snoring began again.

Mikey used every ounce of his ninja stealth in tiptoeing over to the hammock Raph now preferred to sleep in. He still had his old mattress, it was propped against the wall for those times when the hammock had to be re-strung. Raph hated to waste space so when he wasn’t using it to sleep on, he threw darts at a target he had taped to it.

Thinking about the beat up mattress and ropes made Mikey’s dick throb. He drew a shuddering breath as he attempted to control his arousal and then he looked down into Raph’s slumbering face.

Raph would so pulverize him into tiny ash if he caught Mikey staring at him as he slept. Mikey liked the way his face looked without the mask; Raph’s profile was strong and virile, his eyes an exotic almond shape that really accentuated Raph’s unusual golden colored irises when his eyes were open.

His older brother had been snoring on as Mikey stood next to him and the sound wrapped around Mikey’s body, enveloping him in what the younger turtle fancifully thought of as Raph’s
aggressive masculinity. It fogged his brain, taking with it another chunk of Mikey’s common sense and he leaned in until his face was almost touching Raph’s neck.

Closing his eyes, Mikey’s inhaled deeply. Raph’s musk filled his nostrils and then his lungs, the scent sending signals that practically shouted ‘submit, submit!’ in his ears.

Mikey’s legs spread as his tail straightened and lifted. His cock desperately wanted to drop down and Mikey clapped a hand over the bulge in his plastron in the hopes of keeping it contained.

Raph’s chest suddenly expanded and he released a particularly loud snore, one with the faintest touch of a rumble to it. The sound reverberated through Mikey’s core and he unwittingly churred in response.

Panicked, Mikey slapped his hand over his mouth, his eyes wide as he lifted his upper body away from Raph. His brother’s snores had stopped but his eyes didn’t open and Mikey stayed completely still, not even daring to breathe.

As he watched, Raph’s lips curved up at the edges and then Mikey heard him groan. It wasn’t loud but it was immediately followed by a churr. Mikey saw Raph’s nostrils expand before hearing him take a deep breath and realized that he was near enough for Raph to catch the scent of his desire.

Mikey’s heart was pounding hard enough to leap right out of his chest. He knew he should try to make a run for it, but running with a barely contained woody was tricky business. Instead he held his ground, hoping against hope that Raph wouldn’t discover him standing there, though some tiny rebellious part of his mind wanted to know what Raph would do to him if he did bust Mikey in the act.

Time began to spin again when Raph once more started snoring. The sound had a fuller resonance to it now, its pull even stronger than before, and Mikey had to pinch his own neck to keep from being hypnotized by it.

Then Raph’s hips shifted, drawing Mikey’s gaze downwards. The softer cartilage between Raph’s legs began to part and Mikey could just see his brother’s shaft peeping through as it started to fill.

That was too much an invasion of privacy even for Mikey and he spun on his heel to creep awkwardly from the room. His dick hurt so badly that he barely managed to take the time to carefully close the door, lifting it minutely to avoid the tell-tale squeak.

Mikey was never in his life so glad that his own room was just next door. His cock popped out even before he’d fully closed his door and it took will power to lock it before making a mad dash for his bed.

Raph’s scent still clung to the soft tissue inside his nostrils and Mikey savored it as he thrust upwards into his own hand. His pillow was once again pressed into service as a gag, stifling the churrs and gasps of pleasure as he stroked himself, and then drowning out the sound of his brother’s name as Mikey climaxed.

Panting and shivering through his release, Mikey caught the sound of Raph’s snores coming through the wall, along with the fainter sound of his churrs. Mikey hadn’t really noticed before that he could hear Raph, perhaps inured to the sound over time.

Now hyperaware of Raph and everything he did, Mikey could clearly make out the noises
that indicated his brother was having a wet dream. A dream that Mikey had set in motion by invading Raph’s privacy.

Mikey wondered if Raph was dreaming about him. He knew that was wishful thinking but lately everything for him revolved around wishes and daydreams.

At the moment he sort of wished Raph would soon reach a satisfactory end to that wet dream because Mikey was starting to get hard again.

TBC…………….
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Two things were evident the next morning; Mikey was a little weak in the knees because he’d over stimulated himself the night before and Raphael was careful to avoid looking directly into his younger brother’s eyes.

Mikey had only suspected Raph of having a wet dream about him but the fact that he wouldn’t meet Mikey’s gaze was as good as a firm confirmation.

The younger turtle found that he was very conflicted about that. While he lay on his bed pleasuring himself to the sounds of Raph’s churrs he’d wished that his brother’s dreams were about him. A fantasy about Raph discovering a deep seated desire for Mikey was only satisfying if there wasn’t a lot of guilt surrounding that revelation.

It wasn’t worth it if Raph was going to wallow in a pit of shame over his feelings. Mikey knew where that would lead; straight down a path of avoidance and possibly to the point where Raph started spending his nights on Casey’s couch.

Mikey’s twisted sexual desires and warped pain kink weren’t supposed to go beyond the interior of his own head. He certainly didn’t mean to telegraph any of his true feelings but it seemed as if he was giving off signals without realizing it. Even Leo and Don had started to question him.

Satisfying his needs by getting a daily dose of Raph’s retribution had seemed like a marvelous idea at the time, but Mikey hadn’t known there would be ramifications. He surely hadn’t expected that his common sense would succumb to some deeper instinct and send him to do foolhardy things like invading his brother’s bedroom.

He was starting to understand how junkies felt. He didn’t want his fetish to grow into a dangerous obsession, but Mikey wasn’t exactly in a position to quit his addiction cold turkey. Not only was Raph his brother, but they were mutated turtles living a secret existence underground. It wasn’t like Mikey could pack up and move to Jersey.

Fortunately Master Splinter did not pit them against each other during practice. Mikey drew Donatello as a sparring partner and silently thanked whoever was handing out luck that day. Don was wickedly brutal with his bo staff but he wasn’t as vicious as Leo, especially when the eldest brother sensed that one of his siblings wasn’t fighting up to par.

It was bad enough though because Donny could tell that something was wrong. He didn’t let up on Mikey, setting him on his rump several times, but he was frowning during their match.

At the end of practice Mikey was nearly on Master Splinter’s heels in his rush to leave the dojo. He didn’t know where he wanted to go, but removing himself from Raph’s view seemed like
a prudent step.

As it turned out, his dodging Raph meant he wasn’t paying attention to his other two brothers. He should have known Donatello wouldn’t leave things alone.

“Hold up, Mikey,” Don said, stepping quickly to catch up to his brother.

Mikey grimaced but quickly hid it as he turned around, producing a grin meant to disarm the brainiac. If Mikey had been a couple of minutes faster, he’d have made it out of the lair.

“What’s up bro’?” Mikey asked.

“That’s what I was going to ask you,” Don said, his expression reminding Mikey of a storm cloud about to burst.

Having an angry genius after him was absolutely on Mikey’s top five list of things to avoid in life.

“Uh, just going out to take the skateboard for a spin,” Mikey said in his most innocent voice.

Normally he might have asked ‘why’ or ‘did you need me for something’ but Mikey’s only focus today was to escape the lair so he could think.

“Do you know why I go to practice every day?” Don asked, staring hard at his brother.

Mikey blinked, the unexpected question catching him off guard. He started to open his mouth to produce an answer but Donatello saved him the bother.

“I practice to work on my skills and to keep them honed,” Don told him, “not to spend my time knocking you on your tail bone every five minutes. First you pulled that stunt with Raph and now with me. I don’t appreciate it one bit.”

“Dude, I wasn’t doing it on purpose,” Mikey protested swiftly. “Can’t a turtle have an off-day?”

Don’s eyes narrowed, a sure sign he was thinking hard. “Have you been sneaking out at night again and not getting enough sleep? You haven’t been running around playing at being the Turtle Titan have you?”

“What’s that mean, ‘playing’ at being the Turtle Titan?” Mikey asked, his pride pricked by Don’s tone. “Silver Sentry appreciates me even if you guys don’t. And no, I haven’t worn the costume in months. I’m going stir crazy and I’ve got too much excess energy, okay?”

“One would think that would be all the more reason for you to move faster when we spar,” Don said, clearly not buying Mikey’s excuses.

“That just shows how much you don’t know about me,” Mikey said quickly, before his brother could continue. “Master Splinter requires focus and discipline when we spar and that’s your thing, not mine. When I fight I like to go off instinct and follow my gut. I’m so busy trying to hold back so sensei doesn’t fuss at me again I can’t be me.”

“He fussed at you because you were running away from Raph, not sparring with him,” Don said.
“I wasn’t running away,” Mikey said, practically stepping on Don’s words. “I was baiting him. Getting under his skin is part of my strategy for beating Raph. Even he knows that, not that it helps him control himself.”

Don’s expression turned calculating and Mikey wondered what he’d latched onto. Having a brother who remembered everything put one at a distinct disadvantage.

“On at least three different occasions during that match Raph let his guard down enough so that you could have finished him,” Don said. “Yet you took advantage of none of them.”

Mikey thought fast, recognizing that a delay in answering would make Don even more suspicious.

“So? The next day I waxed his butt,” Mikey said, making sure to look pleased with himself. “It was all part of my master plan. You’d better strap on some pillows tomorrow.”

Don seemed just as peeved as when he’d stopped Mikey. “That’s the worst strategy ever. You can’t fight well one day and be off the next or Master Splinter will never let you go topside again. You need to fix whatever is going on with you and do it fast, and don’t feed me that stuff about having an ‘off’ day or a ‘master plan’. If this is some new convoluted prank you’ve decided to play, leave me out of it unless you want to accidently drink something that makes bubbles come out of your mouth every time you open it for the next month.”

“Bro’, you can do that?” Mikey asked, perking up. “Seriously, I can think of a rad trick we could play on Casey with that stuff. Where is it, in your lab? Can I see it?”

“No you can’t see it,” Don said, switching from annoyed to wary. “My experiments are not your toys. Weren’t you about to do something to get rid of all this excess energy you seem to have?”

“Yeah, I was heading out to the tunnels to hit my board,” Mikey said.

Don frowned. “You can’t.”

There was a noticeable sinking feeling in Mikey’s belly at Don’s abrupt words. Mikey needed to get his head straight and burn off the jittery feeling he had, and skateboarding was his best option for both. Plus, making himself scarce would give Raph time to settle down and stop equating Mikey’s presence with whatever he’d dreamt about last night.

“Why not?” Mikey asked, trying not to sound whiny.

“Don’t you pay attention to the weather?” Don asked. “It’s been pouring rain since around midnight. I checked the cameras and almost all the tunnels have water running through them; some are even flooded already. If you want to skate, you’ll have to use the half pipe ramp we built in the garage.”

It wasn’t as far away as Mikey wanted to be but at least it was out of the lair. He shrugged and said, “Why not? A workout’s a workout. I can catch some air and practice this sick new trick I’ve been working on.”

“Try not to break anything,” Don said as Mikey started walking towards his skateboard.

“Don’t be insulting, dude,” Mikey said, tucking his board under one arm. “I’ve never broken a single bone while skating.”
“I wasn’t talking about your bones,” Don said, shooting his brother a saucy look.

“Har-de-har-har,” Mikey responded, heading for the elevator. “Don’t you have some experiment to blow up?”

Don didn’t bother with a come-back, no doubt happy to have distracted Mikey from all thoughts of invading his lab. Really, sometimes the genius was just too easy. All of Mikey’s brothers were, when it came right down to it. In some ways, Michelangelo knew them all better than they knew themselves.

Having side-tracked Don’s irritation with him, Mikey took the elevator to the garage, happy to have the cavernous space to himself. Far from the vehicles and equipment that occupied the garage sat the twenty-five foot long half pipe that Mikey had finagled Don into helping him build.

Standing on the high end of the platform deck, Mikey experienced the familiar exhilaration that came with starting a run. Hitting the play button on the nearby boom box immediately filled the garage with music and taking a quick breath, Mikey kicked off.

Mikey always lost track of time while skating. He did not think about the tricks he performed; his talent was based on physical dexterity and intuitive feeling. The air whipping past his face, the board beneath his feet, the stretching muscles in his legs combined to place Mikey into an almost euphoric state.

Whizzing up and down on the half pipe left Mikey’s mind free to wander and of course it drifted to the subject at the uppermost of his thoughts. He’d come to grips with his sudden lustful urges easily enough; he was a young male after all and there was nothing abnormal about being horny.

What was off the scale was being turned on by pain; not just pain in and of itself, but as administered by his own brother. He didn’t know much about that particular subject and made a mental note to commit a little breaking and entering at the local library branch so he could borrow their computers and look that up. Using either Don or April’s laptops was out of the question; he didn’t have the necessary skill to hide what he’d been searching for and if either of them wanted to, they could find out.

In the meantime, Mikey would have to limit his interactions with the hot head to things that were innocuous and wouldn’t get him into trouble. Things that wouldn’t cause Raph to hit him and thereby feed Mikey’s addiction.

Since his other plan hadn’t worked so well, Mikey hoped that this one would return the way his brothers viewed him back to something resembling normal. Mikey doubted that Raph would miss having pranks played on him and to keep Don or Leo from noticing that something was amiss, Mikey would continue verbally teasing Raph in ways that wouldn’t call for a physical response.

As much as he loved being a turtle, there were some situations where it was really awkward. Being one of only four of his kind didn’t leave Mikey with a lot of options when the mating instinct hit him. He felt kind of envious that his brothers appeared to have escaped that trial. It was hard though; Mikey had no one he could talk to about this and he’d always depended on family to help him through tough times.

Mikey had no idea what suddenly distracted him, but he was jogged out of deep thought just as he completed an Indy and started into a three sixty rotation. The momentary lapse made him bring his back foot down wrong and the next thing Mikey knew, his butt was hitting the
ground and his skateboard was landing on his stomach.

“Oof!” Mikey huffed as the air was knocked out of him. Sitting up quickly, Mikey first checked that his skateboard was undamaged before standing.

The hard wooden surface made his rear sting and Mikey started rubbing at it, deciding that a break for a cold drink was in order. As he turned toward the section of the garage where their second refrigerator was located, Mikey saw Raphael.

The red banded turtle was leaning against the van, arms crossed over his plastron as he stared at his younger brother. There was no telling how long he’d been there and the idea that he’d been silently observing Mikey sent a shiver down the smaller turtle’s spine.

Caught so unawares, Mikey didn’t have a chance to adjust to the presence of the brother he desired so rapaciously. He knew he should make some quip or ask if Raph needed something, or do anything other than just standing there wearing a vapid expression as they locked eyes.

It absolutely did not help that Raph wore the faintest hint of a cocky grin, appearing as though he’d just won a point in a game of one-upmanship.

The tableau was broken by the sound of the elevator signaling someone’s arrival. Raph turned, breaking off eye contact with Mikey, who stood there blinking rapidly as if just awakened from a hypnotic spell.

“I found the spare rings,” Don said, looking at the motorcycle parts he was carrying before glancing up.

“Are they the new ones?” Raph asked loudly so that Don would hear him over the sound of the music.

Don looked over at Mikey, who hadn’t moved yet. “Could you turn it down?” Don asked, nodding towards the boom box.

Turning away from his brothers, Mikey jumped up to the deck and cut the music off. As soon as they could hear each other without having to shout, his brothers returned to their mechanical discussion.

“They’re the newer ones,” Don said, preferring precision in his words. “Are you sure the ones on your bike need to be replaced?”

“Yeah, I’m sure,” Raph said. “Wouldn’t have asked ya’ to find those if I wasn’t.”

Mikey walked over to the refrigerator and retrieved a cold bottle of water, downing half of it as he listened to his brothers. He had no idea what they were talking about other than it had something to do with Raph’s motorcycle, the motorcycle that Don had built for him.

The language they were speaking was unique to the two of them and Mikey found himself envious of the ease with which Don conversed with Raph. This love of mechanics was something they shared, a commonality that Mikey did not have with the hot head.

Suppose the same itch that was torturing Mikey were to hit Donatello? The genius probably wouldn’t have any trouble finding a way to make sure that Raph became just as attracted to him, leaving Mikey out in the cold.

Shaking his head to clear it of those thoughts, Mikey watched Don spread the engine parts
out on a work table. Raph stood across from him as the two bent over to look at what Don had
brought, their heads close together.

“It wasn’t that long ago that we put a set in your bike,” Don said. “Maybe you’d better
check to see if the cylinders need to be re-bored.”

“Ya’ in the middle of something or can ya’ give me a hand with that?” Raph asked.

Mikey almost snorted. As if Don would said no.

“Of course I can,” Don said, offering Raph a smile.

It was too much for Mikey and he made a quick exit, tapping his foot in frustration as he
rode the elevator down to the lair. Stomping into the kitchen he decided to start preparing dinner
early, hoping that activity would allay some of the perturbation he was feeling.

Donny. Good old Donatello. The brother who didn’t hack Raph off no matter what he said
or did. The helpful brother. The smart brother. The brother who practically bent over backwards
whenever Raph needed anything. Like swiping Mikey’s game controllers and hiding them so that
just he and Raph could play. Or parking his ass on the couch next to Raph when a football game
was on. Or building that bright red motorcycle for Raph, not once but three times as a replacement
for those times it got smashed.

Somewhere deep in the back of Mikey’s mind was a little voice reminding him that Don
was the one who always fixed the game and the controllers whenever they got broken, that Don
helped him build the half pipe Mikey enjoyed so much, that Don used Mikey’s suggestion for
turning an armored car into the battle shell, and that Don was forever humoring Mikey’s crazy
invention ideas.

Mikey shoved that voice down and stomped on it. Whatever Don did for him or Leo, it
wasn’t the same as when Don was with Raph. Don treated Raph differently.

All of those questions Don had been probing him with the last couple of days took on a
whole new meaning if Mikey looked at them from another point of view. Maybe Don was less
worried about two of his brothers beings at odds with each other than he was with finding out if
Mikey was encroaching on his territory.

With an aggravated growl, Mikey took the pot he was holding and slammed it down on the
stove hard enough to make the handle pop off.

“Michelangelo!”

Spinning around, Mikey saw Leo standing in kitchen doorway, his eyes wide with surprise.

“Leo!” Mikey exclaimed, trying to regroup his temper. “I . . . uh . . . .”

The sudden ringing of his shell cell cut off Mikey’s stammered explanation, offering him a
reprieve which he accepted with alacrity.

“Talk to the turtle,” Mikey chirped in his best devil-may-care tone of voice.

Leo walked towards him, slightly distracting Mikey as he listened to the familiar voice on
the other end of the line.

“Sure we can do that,” Mikey responded, his eyes glued to Leo who was now standing

“Mikey . . .” Leo began as Mikey disconnected from the call.

“No time to talk,” Mikey interrupted. “We’ve just been given a mission.”

“Who was that?” Leo asked, his brow furrowed in puzzlement.

“Nobody,” Mikey said, his good humor returning.

TBC………………
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 4,447 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 8 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Riding up to the garage together to fetch their brothers, Mikey could tell that Leo was of two minds about going out to meet the dark vigilante Justice Force member known as Nobody.

Mikey knew that Leo would have liked to have time to find out what was bothering his younger brother enough to cause him to have such an unusual angry outburst. However, a thirty minute window didn’t afford him the luxury of questioning Mikey, so Leo was forced to table their discussion for later.

With any luck, their mission for Nobody would be exciting enough to make Leo forget all about Mikey’s mini-fit.

Mikey’s testiness was secondary in the leader’s mind though, the primary thing that was causing Leo to have misgivings about answering Nobody’s request was verbalized as soon as he told Don and Raph that the vigilante had called.

“What about the Foot?” Don asked, squirting grease cleanser onto his hands and passing the bottle to Raph.

“I’m not happy with the idea of making an appearance while they’re on the war path,” Leo said with a frown, “but I’m also not willing to allow them to dictate whether or not we help our friends. Nobody wouldn’t have asked if he didn’t need us.”

“Suppose our being there attracts the Foot and causes Nobody even more problems?” Raph asked, his eyes glued to Leo.

“We should be able to meet Nobody without the Foot seeing us,” Leo said. “I’ll make sure he understands the secondary danger our presence might draw. We’ll leave it up to him as to whether our help is worth taking an extra risk.”

“Okay bro’, it’s your call,” Raph said, draping his shop towel over the handlebars of his motorcycle. “I ain’t gonna complain about getting out of here for a while.”

“Me either,” Mikey said with feeling, his first contribution to the conversation since telling Leo where Nobody had asked to meet them.

Leo glanced at him speculatively but said nothing as he led the way out of the garage through a side door. Rather than gain the roof tops, the brothers dropped into the sewers from the nearest access point. Following Don’s directions, they took an obscure and little traveled series of tunnels, avoiding areas below ground that the Foot had used in their search for them in the past.

Only by jogging most of the way were the turtles able to reach the designated meeting point in the allotted half hour. After Leo had cautiously surveyed the street from his position atop a
tunnel maintenance ladder, he pushed the manhole cover aside and made a quick exit, followed by his brothers.

Nobody had asked them to meet him at an abandoned parking garage destined for demolition. The entrances were barricaded by metal gates so the brothers gained access by scaling a wall and entering through a ramp opening on the second level.

Since they had no idea what kind of a situation Nobody needed their help with, the group of ninjas spread out, keeping to the shadows.

“I’m down here,” Nobody called out from the ground floor.

Peering over the edge of the parking ramp, the turtle quartet saw Nobody standing out in the open looking up towards them.

“Nobody my man!” Mikey called out excitedly, leaping down to the floor below. “Long time no see.”

“Michelangelo,” Nobody said, acknowledging his young friend’s greeting. “I trust you’ve been staying out of trouble?”

“You’re talking about Mikey here,” Raph said with a grin, clasping hands with the vigilante.

“Indeed, what was I thinking?” Nobody said, lifting his mask so that he could smile at his friends.

“It’s good to see you, Nobody,” Leo said, shaking the man’s offered hand.

“I’ve been keeping a low profile since putting Jencko away,” Nobody said, grasping Don’s hand next.

“Doing some information gathering?” Don asked.

“Astute as always, Donatello,” Nobody acknowledged. “First we had Ruffington shipping illegal Triceraton weapons for the man you called Hun and then I discover that the same Hun is the one who supplied the Turks with their weapons.”

“So ya’ turned your attention to Hun and the Purple Dragons,” Raph said. “’Bout time someone decided to gum up his game.”

“Is that what you needed our help with, to go after Hun?” Leo asked.

“I’m not quite ready for that yet,” Nobody said. “Since learning about Hun from you four I’ve discovered that he’s got more friends in city government than Ruffington did, so I’ve got to tread lightly. I’ve been working hard to get someone to infiltrate the Purple Dragons. I finally managed to get not one but two informers into their ranks. One of them works as a lower level muscle, hauling shipments of goods from one place to another. My second informant got herself promoted to a bookkeeping position.”

Don let out a low whistle. “That could come in handy.”

“It has,” Nobody confirmed. “She told me that the Purple Dragons are selling a large cache of weapons, some of them Triceraton, tonight and that it’s a bidding situation involving several up and coming gangs.
“She doesn’t know where the cache is warehoused and neither does my other informant. What they do know are which gangs were invited to send representatives to the meeting. They were all told to bring cash because whoever has the top bid will drive off with the shipment, so that means they know where the cache is tonight.”

“That’s a set up that’s just begging for violence,” Leo said with a grimace.

Nobody nodded. “As soon as someone takes delivery and attempts to leave with the shipment, all bets are off. The Purple Dragons are under no obligation to protect the weapons once they’ve been sold.”

“Who wants to bet those representatives don’t come alone?” Mikey asked.

Nobody gave Mikey an approving look. “You’ve found the major flaw in this setup. By telling the gangs in advance where to meet, they’ll all be sure to have members hiding nearby in force. It’s like the Purple Dragons are asking for a massive gang war to blow up.”

“Hun may be a lot of things, but he isn’t that dumb,” Don said. “He has to know what will happen.”

“Oh he knows,” Mikey said. “He wants it to happen.”

“Michelangelo?” Nobody shot a puzzled look towards the youngest turtle.

“Look at it from Hun’s point of view,” Mikey said. “He comes off looking like he’s acting in good faith, going through with the sale just like he promised. Then when all shell breaks loose, his guys can steal the shipment back and make it look like one of the other gangs did it. Not only that, but everyone will be carrying wads of cash and you can bet he’s figured out a way to separate all of the gang representatives from it.”

Nobody looked thoughtful. “I’ll bet you’re right.” He cast an appreciative glance in Mikey’s direction. “You would have made a great profiler.”

“Mikey’s always had really good insight,” Don said, recognizing his brother’s gift.

“So how do we break up this little party?” Raph asked.

“By finding that cache of weapons and taking it away from all of them,” Nobody said. “My concern now is that we’re going to be greatly outnumbered.”

“You need to know that the Foot clan is out for our blood at the moment,” Leo said. “We’ve been laying low because they’ve been making an extra effort to find us. Our presence might cause more difficulties.”

“Perhaps I should rethink this plan,” Nobody said. “I don’t want you four to take any undue risks.”

“To hell with that,” Raph said abruptly. “If we can’t help a friend get some weapons away from criminals, then we ain’t got any point to our existence.”

“This is what we were raised to do,” Don said in agreement.

All three of the younger brothers stared expectantly at Leo, who was exchanging contemplative looks with Nobody.
“There’s no love lost between Hun and Karai,” Mikey offered. “It’s not like he’s going to do anything where she might get a whiff of it.”

“True,” Leo said. “Hun was loyal to Oroku Saki but absolutely jealous of Karai. He’s trying to build his own dynasty that doesn’t include the Foot clan.”

“She still thinks he’s beneath her,” Mikey said. “Karai won’t be paying attention to anything he’s doing and he’ll be sure to transact business far from where the Foot are likely to be.”

“So that takes ‘em out of the equation,” Raph said.

“There is still the question of our going against overwhelming odds,” Nobody pointed out.

“Then we won’t go against them,” Leo said. Raph started to say something but Leo continued before he could speak. “The best time to strike will be before the weapons are sold. The bidders will want to inspect the shipment first and then after that the only people left near the truck or trucks will be Hun’s guards.”

“We can take them out easy enough,” Raph said, settling his hands on his sai.

“We’ll have to be silent about removing them while the bidding is taking place,” Leo continued. “Everyone’s attention will be focused on that so a couple of us can drive the trucks out of there.”

“But as soon as the engines start they’ll be all over us,” Don said. “The bidders and the guys hiding outside.”

“Not if they’ve already started fighting each other,” Nobody said.

Leo crossed his arms over his plastron. “It’ll take split second timing. We get rid of the guards and have our own drivers in place before we do anything else. Don and Mikey, you two will drive the trucks after you get rid of the guards.”

“Suppose there are more than two trucks?” Mikey asked.

“I can’t imagine they’d be selling that large a cache,” Leo said, “but if they are, then I’ll drive the third truck.”

“I’ll need a few minutes to scan the trucks to make sure they don’t have tracking devices attached to them or the shipment,” Don said.

“Will five minutes be enough?” Leo asked.

“Yeah, just,” Don answered.

“Be fast, bro’,” Leo said. “As soon as you’ve got control of the trucks, the rest of us are going to start a little gang war outside.”

“If this is going down in a populated area, I don’t want there to be a shootout,” Nobody warned.

“I think we can make them aware of each other to the point that they’ll see the downside to everyone all shooting at once,” Leo said. “Once the bickering starts Don and Mike can drive those trucks right out of there.”

“What’s to stop them from following us?” Mikey asked. “I’ve been in that situation before.”
Raph drew his sai, spinning the weapons effortlessly. “How’s about I puncture a few tires? Quickest way I know to put a car out of commission.”

“Speaking of cars,” Nobody said, “the only way we’ll know where everyone is meeting is by following the gang leaders. Since I don’t know which of them is actually going to accept the offer to bid on those weapons, I’ve brought a few nondescript vehicles from the impound yard for us to use.”

He led the way to one end of the parking garage where the turtles saw several cars had been parked. All were dark in color, slightly beat up, and all had tinted windows. They were exactly the type of cars that would fit into almost any neighborhood without anyone paying any interest in them.

Nobody reached into one of the cars and withdrew three oversized hoodies and a large duster. He tossed the duster to Raph and the hoodies to the other three brothers.

“Disguises for you to wear while you’re driving,” Nobody said in explanation. “Leonardo and Donatello, I cut holes in the backs of yours so you’ll have access to your weapons. We’ll each take a different gang representative to follow and with any luck, one of them will lead us to this meeting.”

“There’s only four cars here,” Raph said. “You riding with one of us?”

“No. I worried that they might go somewhere that’ll be hard for a car to follow without being noticed and I know how much you like motorcycles,” Nobody said, waving a hand towards a black motorcycle parked near one of the garage’s support beams.

Raph let out a long, low whistle as he approached the bike. In outward appearance it was just as unremarkable as the cars, but Raph wasn’t looking at the paint job, he was looking at the engine.

“Is this a 1000 cc four stroke?” Raph asked, squatting next to the bike. “I’ll bet I can really crank this betty up.”

“You could, but it would draw too much attention,” Nobody told him. “It’d be best if you didn’t push the envelope unless you need to.”

Raph stood up, a big grin on his face. “You the man, Nobody.”

“How are we going to communicate with each other?” Don asked. “I didn’t bring an extra shell cell.”

“We’ll use these mikes,” Nobody said, pulling the small devices from a hidden pocket in his cape. He handed them to the turtles, then said, “Here, I’ll show you how to attach them.”

He tipped his head at Raph who pulled on the duster. Once he was wearing the long coat, Nobody stepped in close to turn back the collar and pin the microphone in place.

Mikey had started to feel a small niggling sensation in his gut as soon as Nobody presented Raph with the motorcycle. Now it grew to a low burn and Mikey could feel it heating his neck as Nobody touched Raph, their faces altogether too near each other’s for Mikey’s liking.

If Nobody didn’t step back pretty quick they were going to have words. Mikey started forward, his brain having clicked into the off position as his instincts took over. He’d covered half the distance towards the pair when Nobody pulled away from Raph to retrieve the motorcycle
helmet from the bike’s seat and then he tossed it to the red banded turtle.

“The duster will hide your body, but you still need one of these,” Nobody said.

Mikey snapped out of his jealousy induced trance and quickly pulled his hoodie on, placing his mini-microphone as Nobody had demonstrated. A glance around showed him that no one had paid any mind to his movements and for that he was heartily thankful.

He started to wonder just how far this newly formed desire for Raphael was going to take him. Was he going to imagine that everyone who got within a couple of feet of Raph was after his dick? There was no way Mikey would survive having to constantly fight with his emotions like that. It made him ponder how Raph managed to live with his.

“I taped an address to the dashboard of each of your cars and to the inside of your helmet, Raphael,” Nobody said. “Those are the places where you can pick up your assigned gang rep. According to my source, the meet is set for eleven so if none of your assigned guys has stirred by ten-thirty, leave and follow the trail of one of your brothers.”

“What happens after we disappear with the weapons?” Don asked.

“As soon as you’re clear, I’ll call the police,” Nobody said. “They’ll arrive in time to see a small gang war raging and arrest everyone in sight. We’ll meet back here and I’ll drive the trucks back to the police impound lot, not as Nobody but as Officer Longer.”

“Are we done talking?” Raph asked, already seated on the bike. “Can we go now?”

“I suppose we’d better,” Nobody said.

After everyone had chosen a car and started their engines, Nobody did a quick mike check. Satisfied that everything was in working order, they waited as Nobody opened one of the gates and then all pulled out into the street, turning in different directions.

Raph trailed Mikey for a few blocks before turning right and leaving him. Mikey felt the loss of his presence keenly. Splitting up during a mission was never one of his favorite things to do and he was going to count the minutes until he was back with his brothers again.

It wasn’t hard to find the building that housed the gang Mikey had been charged to watch. Since it wasn’t a heavily residential street, he had no problem finding a parking spot that was near enough for him to see everyone who went in and out of the place.

Leaning back against the seat cushion, Mikey allowed himself a good wide stretch and a yawn to match. Looking down at the console, Mikey saw that Nobody had supplied him with a bottle of water and one of iced coffee. The guy sure tried to think of everything.

The earlier heavy rain had settled into a soft drizzle and Mikey watched as droplets formed on the windshield and slid down, picking up momentum and then merging with other droplets. It was almost hypnotic and Mikey found that it was soothing the emotions that had been stirred up earlier in the garage.

Nobody wasn’t trying to get with Raph and Donny probably wasn’t either. All of that was in Michangelono’s head and he darn well knew it. The drinks inside the car were a good indication that Nobody simply wanted to take care of his troops, just as his making sure that Raph had transportation that he was comfortable with.

Demonstrating on Raph how to attach the mike was more than likely a subtle way to wire
up the hot head without letting him get his own impatient hands on the delicate device. Heck even Don could attest to the number of gadgets Raph had broken because he didn’t have enough self-restraint to take the time to learn how to use them.

Mikey sighed. Lately he couldn’t seem to get Raphael out of his head. Even sitting here on a stake-out that he should have been enjoying, all he could do was ruminate on his feelings for his brother.

A door opened on the building that Mikey was watching and he straightened in his seat. Two men came out, one of whom was carrying a large briefcase. The one without the briefcase moved around to the driver’s side of a car that was parked directly in front of the building, opening the door before glancing up and down the street.

Sliding down to avoid being seen, Mikey saw the man pull a pistol from the back of his waistband before slipping in behind the wheel. His companion stood by the passenger door but didn’t enter the car, instead staring at the door of the building through which he’d just exited.

A couple of minutes later the door opened again and a half dozen men streamed out. They were all armed and none of them made any attempts to hide their arsenal. The group formed a semi-circle around the man with the briefcase and Mikey could see that he was telling them something, no doubt some last minute instructions.

Receiving affirmative nods from the group, the briefcase holder climbed into the car and it pulled away from the curb. His subordinates turned away from the receding car and piled into three others that were parked farther down the street.

Mikey faced a dilemma. If he pulled out now to follow the first car, the other guys would see him and know what he was up to. If he waited too long, he’d take a chance on losing the lead car.

Turtle luck, such as it was, turned in his favor for once. The three cars started down the street in the opposite direction from the lead car, moving away from Mikey. He turned the ignition key and swung his car onto the street, giving it a little extra speed so that he could catch sight of the lead car.

There were just enough other cars on the road to keep Mikey’s from appearing suspicious. That coupled with the drizzle and the fact that he held back as far as he could from the lead car allowed Mikey to follow them without fearing that he’d be seen.

Mikey turned his mouth down towards the mike and said, “It looks like my guys are headed to the meet. Either that or they carry their dirty laundry in a briefcase.”

“Yes, mine keeps theirs in a duffel bag,” Raph’s responded. “They sent a little convoy ahead before they left.”

“Same here,” Leo said, his voice low. “I doubt if any of them are going to the meeting without backup. How are you doing, Donny?”

“Just watched my marks drive off,” Don said. “I have to hang back a couple of blocks because their backup is following them.”

“No doubt they’ll cut off to look for a hiding place before they reach their destination,” Nobody said. “We may have to make a quick change of plans if all of the unwanted guests run into
“Be ready for anything guys,” Leo instructed.

“Aren’t we always?” Mikey asked, chuckling.

Mikey tailed his targets for another quarter of an hour before it became obvious they were headed for the docks. His brothers and Nobody all reported that they were converging on the same location and in another ten minutes their final destination became obvious.

Nobody gave instructions as to where they should meet so as not to be seen by the Purple Dragons or the various gangs who were no doubt hiding near the meeting place. Mikey found a spot to park his car, locking it up before scaling the side of a building to reach the roof top.

As he ran along the roof tops to meet his brothers, Mikey wondered where Raph was going to park his motorcycle and if he’d have a hard time giving it up. He loved the bike that Don had built for him, but he sure seemed to have taken a shine to the one Nobody had lent him for the night.

Mikey liked the way Raph had looked while seated on that slick black bike too, especially wearing that black duster. It made Raph appear even more dangerous than he already was. Despite the gravity of the mission Mikey was on, he couldn’t help feeling a shiver of excitement at the mental image of Raph on that bike. Maybe he could find a way to trick Raph into letting Mikey take a picture of him on the motorcycle before he had to return it.

It would be even better if Mikey got to ride on it with him. Mikey could totally imagine pulling the duster aside and straddling Raph’s lap as the bike roared down the road. How great it would feel to have the pulsing thrrob of the engine under him while at the same time having Raph’s hard . . . .

Mikey realized at the last second that he was coming up on his jump and shook his head to clear it. This was so not the time or place for his brain to be headed in a southerly direction.

His contemplations must have made Mikey slow because everyone else was waiting on him. Leo frowned slightly but Mikey quickly said, “Hey, I had to dodge some people after I parked the car.”

“It’s all right, Michelangelo,” Nobody said. “I did a quick reconnoiter while we were waiting. There are six different gangs represented here and it appears they’ve all brought backup. Fortunately, they’ve each taken up different hiding spots along the docks and pier.”

“I’m sure each of the gangs is quite aware the others have people hidden nearby too,” Leo said.

“If this bidding is supposed to start at eleven, we’d better get a move on,” Raph urged.

“Don, you and Mikey make your way onto the roof of that warehouse,” Leo said, pointing out a building standing on the pier near the water. Cars were parked next to it, their headlights on, but no one had gotten out of the vehicles because the warehouse doors were all closed. “Assess the situation inside and give us a sit rep.”

“Raphael, Leonardo and I will split up and silently disable the cars the other gang members are driving,” Nobody said. “If there’s a third truck then Leonardo will join you two in the warehouse, otherwise he’ll take care of the cars the gang leaders drove so they can’t chase you.”
“When the bidding begins, take the guards out of the equation,” Leo said. “Tell me when you’re about to make your move and that’s when I’ll attack the cars. I’ll give you eight minutes; five to do the scan for tracking devices and three to take out the guards. After that I’ll be in position to stop anyone from firing at you once you’ve started the truck engines. Don’t be late because I might have to break cover to distract them and I don’t want to be seen too soon.”

“As soon as the trucks clear the warehouse I’ll phone the state police gang unit,” Nobody said. “I’ve already alerted them through an anonymous tip that something might go down tonight, so they’ll be here fast and they’ve got helicopters. Whatever you do, don’t stop because we don’t want the police focused on you.”

“Okay we’ve got it,” Mikey said. “Beat up the guards, steal the trucks, and drive really, really fast.”

From far below them, the group saw the warehouse’s large overhead door slowly begin to roll upwards, a good indication that the sale was about to start.

“Time to split up,” Nobody said. “Good luck.”

His cape waved in the air as he leaped over the edge of the building and disappeared from sight. Leo took a last quick look around at his brothers and then followed the vigilante.

As Mikey prepared to leave with Don, Raph caught his arm. “Don’t do nothing foolish nut ball,” Raph admonished him, squeezing his arm tightly.

The move took Mikey by surprise and he stammered, “D . . . don’t worry about . . . .”

He didn’t get to finish the sentence as Raph released him and sped away, leaving Mikey feeling flustered. Don had to tap his shell to get his attention. “Let’s go, Mikey.”

Regaining his senses, Mikey grinned at his brother and said, “Onward Donny-boy!”

TBC……………..
With Raphael out of his sight, Mikey was better able to concentrate on the task at hand. It helped that he was paired up with Donatello, who wasn’t as hard core as Leonardo or as rash as a certain hot headed brother tended to be.

Since neither Mikey nor Don were as stealthy as their leader, they took a little longer in getting to the warehouse than he would have. Being the perfectionist that Leo was, the younger turtles knew he would have accounted for that.

There were no buildings near the warehouse that would have made their accessing the roof a much simpler proposition, so the brothers approached the structure from the water side of the pier. This process involved lowering themselves off of the edge of the pier in order to grasp the planks and pull themselves hand over hand until they were past the parked cars and guards.

Mikey lifted his body just enough so that he could see over the planks and then raked the area with his eyes. Verifying that all of the activity was centered at the entrance to the warehouse, he boosted himself onto the pier. Don did likewise, landing right next to him.

Neither wasted any time in crossing the open space and flattening themselves against the side of the warehouse. A deep male voice coming from that direction droned on, the speaker barely taking a breath, as though the speech he delivered was well-rehearsed.

“That’s not Hun,” Mikey whispered.

“No doubt one of his underlings,” Don said, his voice low as well. “He might not even be here.”

“Yeah, now that he’s building his own empire, he’s learning not to take chances,” Mikey responded. “Roof?”

“Roof,” Don acknowledged.

Mikey held the handles of one of his nunchucks, spreading the chain between them so that Don could use it as a springboard. Once Don was on the roof, he lowered his Bo staff down to Mikey and then pulled the younger turtle up.

The roof top was flat, but there were several skylights built into it, spaced at even intervals. Don and Mikey split up in order to peer down through each of them, looking for one that would give them the best view of the merchandise being sold.

“Psst!” Don hissed, catching Mikey’s attention and waving him over to a skylight near the back of the warehouse.
Mikey ran to join him, kneeling down so that he could get a better look inside. The glass was a little foggy, but they didn’t have difficulty seeing a large man wearing a jacket with the Purple Dragon logo stitched onto it leading the six bidding gang members around to the back of a semi-trailer truck.

“Where are their drivers?” Mikey asked.

Don leaned his head down close to the glass, almost touching it as he looked back towards the warehouse entrance. “They’re standing at the opening,” he answered. “Either they were told to stay put or they don’t trust their backs to each other.”

“I only see two guards with the truck,” Mikey said. “Looks like they’re packing AK-47’s.”

Heaving a sigh of relief, Don said, “Only the one truck. That will make things much easier for us.”

“You drive,” Mikey said. “It might have to be hot wired and you’re faster at it than I am.”

“Right,” Don said, his eyes on the gang members below. One by one they were entering the back of the trailer to inspect the merchandise being sold, each of them wearing their best poker face as they exited.

“They’re all gonna bid,” Mikey said, observing their lack of expression. “Whatever’s in there must be good. That’s exactly the same look those poker guys on TV get on their faces when they have an awesome hand.”

“I’ll have to yield to your expertise on that one,” Don said. “I’m more worried about where the bidding is going to take place. If they stay where they are, we’re going to have a heck of a time stealing that truck.”

“Keep your eyes on them,” Mikey said. “I’ll give Leo his sit rep.”

Tipping his head down towards the mini-microphone that was attached to his hoodie, Mikey gave the members of his task force a detailed account of what he and Don were seeing. Before he was finished, Don lifted a hand to get his attention.

“Hang on,” Mikey told the others and then looked up at Don. “What?”

“Everyone but the two guards are walking back to the entrance,” Don said excitedly. “I’d say give them five minutes to get into the bidding and then we can make our move.”

Mikey relayed that information to the team, receiving an affirmative reply from Leo. He turned back to see Don extracting a glass cutting implement from his bag of tricks.

“The skylight is locked,” Don explained, cutting a hole in the glass large enough for him to get his hand through. The hasp snapped back with only a small sound and then Don proceeded to tilt the panel open, doing so very slowly to make sure it didn’t squeak.

Together the pair dropped through the opening, landing silently on the beams directly above the trailer. They could hear the Purple Dragon representative talking again as he relayed the rules for the bidding process and then giving the gang leaders the amount that would make for an acceptable first bid.

Don’s head was swiveling as his eyes surveyed every inch of the warehouse’s interior.

“Yes,” Don answered shortly.

“I’ll bet Hun stuffed everything into one truck to make it easier for him to steal it back, don’t you think so?” Mikey asked.

“Probably,” Don said as he contemplated the guards.

Mikey frowned at Don’s monosyllabic answers. “If I was Hun I’d have a tracking device on the truck, just in case my guys lost sight of it. Where do you think it is?”

“Cargo area,” Don murmured.

“How are you gonna deal with it?” Mikey asked.

“Jammer,” Don told him, digging into his bag and extracting a small scanning device.

“You’re a great conversationalist, Donny,” Mikey said sarcastically.

“I’m trying to focus, Mikey,” Don replied.

“Talking helps me focus,” Mikey muttered.

“That explains a lot,” Don said as he zipped his duffel bag closed.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Mikey asked in a huff.

Don came up from his crouch, preparing to jump. “Let’s save that talk for another time.”

The pair leaped lightly to the top of the trailer and then Don crept towards the back, which was still open. Mikey kept his eyes on the two guards, who were both facing the warehouse entrance, oblivious to the activity on the truck behind them.

It took Don a little over three minutes to locate the tracking device, isolate the frequency it was transmitting on, and to jam it. As soon as he was done, Don silently closed the trailer doors and slid around to the end where the guards were stationed. Placing his bag on the ground, he caught Mikey’s attention and raised his thumb.

Mikey acknowledged Don’s signal with a nod and then pointed to the guard who was almost directly beneath him. Lifting a hand in the air, he lowered his fingers in a noiseless countdown.

As soon as his third finger came down, so did Mikey, knocking the guard out with one well-placed blow. At the exact same moment Don launched himself at the second guard, taking him out just as effectively.

By the time Don snatched up his bag, Mikey had the door to the truck’s cab open. Mikey scooted over to the passenger side after first making a quick check for keys in the sun visors. As Don climbed in beside him, Mikey grabbed his brother’s duffel to move it out of the way.

With his eyes on the entrance to make sure that no one had noticed their activity, Mikey reported in to the rest of his team. While he did that, Don yanked the ignition cover off the steering wheel and located the starter and power wires.

“Leo says they’ve taken out any possible pursuit cars, including the ones around the door,” Mikey relayed in a whisper. “He says Nobody has already started a ruckus between two of the
waiting gangs that’s about to spill over to the rest of them. Time to get moving Donny.”

Don stripped the plastic from the ends of the wires, glanced up at Mikey, and then touched them together.

The ignition turned over with a loud rumble and Don swiftly tucked the wires out of the way so they wouldn’t touch him while he drove. There was a loud shout from the warehouse entrance and then Don put the truck into gear and hit the accelerator.

As the truck barreled towards the entrance, each of the gang members dove aside. The Purple Dragon auctioneer did just the opposite, jumping out in front of the approaching truck.

“Donny . . . !” Mikey exclaimed, grabbing the dashboard to brace himself.

Rather than applying the brakes, Don hit the horn. The auctioneer’s eyes widened when he saw that one of the hated turtles was behind the wheel and that he was obviously not going to stop. Screaming at the top of his lungs, the auctioneer leaped out of the way, tumbling head over heels as the truck’s bumper grazed his foot.

Just then Mikey heard the sound of motorcycle engines coming to life from somewhere inside the warehouse. Sticking his head out of the window, he saw four bikes pull out from a partitioned area far to one side.

“The Dragons had an ambush ready!” Mikey yelled.

“We can’t outrun them,” Don warned.

The front of the truck was almost to the warehouse entrance. Mikey’s eyes darted up and an idea hit him.

“Stay on course!” Mikey called back to Don and then opened the door, clambering out of the cab, onto the roof of the truck, and then up onto the trailer.

Running towards the back end of the trailer, Mikey saw that the motorcycles were closing in on them. The cab of the truck cleared the warehouse entrance and Mikey sprang upwards, grabbing the bottom of the overhead door.

Mikey’s body weight started the door rolling down. He held on until the back end of the trailer was almost outside of the warehouse and then swung his legs forward before jerking back again and releasing his hold on the door.

Following the momentum of his swing, Mikey curled in on himself and flipped through the air, landing on top of the moving trailer. The warehouse door slammed to the ground within inches of the trailer’s bumper and all four of the motorcyclists crashed into the door.

“What does he do that?”

From his mini-microphone Mikey heard Nobody ask incredulously, “How does he do that?”

Mikey was about to respond with ‘because I’m the best’ when he heard Raph’s voice.

“We have no idea,” Raph said. There was a touch of pride in his tone that didn’t go unnoticed by Mikey, along with a note of something that sounded very much like possessiveness. But then, Mikey acknowledged to himself, it could be him daydreaming again.
From his spot atop the speeding trailer truck, Mikey saw gang members streaming onto the docks behind them, all engaged in hand to hand brawling. He chuckled as he wondered what his brothers and Nobody had done to get that fight started.

There was still a light mist falling and Mikey turned to make his way back to the dry warmth of the truck’s cab. The truck was passing a small group of outbuildings scattered along the pier and Mikey had taken about four steps when the roar of motorcycles caught his attention.

Jerking his head around, Mikey saw two more motorcycles pull out from one of the small buildings, the riders both wearing Purple Dragon jackets.

“We’ve got more company Donny!” Mikey shouted.

Anticipating some evasive maneuvering from Donatello, Mikey decided being on top of the damp and slippery trailer wasn’t advantageous. Before he could continue on to the cab though, something whizzed past his face and then Mikey heard the sharp report of a gun.

Spinning into a crouch, Mikey saw that it wasn’t the motorcycle riders who were shooting at him, but a passenger inside a high speed boat that was keeping pace with them alongside the pier.

The side of the boat sported a distinctive dragon emblem, which told Mikey they were in collusion with the motorcyclists. Another shot rang out, this one smashing into the wind deflector on the cab.

“Mike, get in here!” Don yelled into his microphone.

“Without getting shot?” Mikey responded before flattening himself on the roof as more shots were fired.

Mikey heard the motorcycles pull up alongside the truck and the shooting stopped. Crawling to the edge of the trailer, Mikey looked over and saw that one of the bikers was trying to catch hold of the grab handle so that he could pull himself onto the truck.

Don saw it too. Jerking the steering wheel to the right he forced the biker away but as soon as the truck straightened, the Dragon tried again.

Even though he couldn’t see what was happening on the other side of the truck, Mikey guessed that the second rider was trying the same thing. Don began whipping the truck from side to side, trying to shake the bikers off of him. Unfortunately, the maneuver was making it hard for Mikey to maintain his grip.

As he clung to the roof, Mikey caught a glimpse of Don’s reflection in the side mirror. His brother looked grim, his eyes darting from the path in front of him to the biker trying to climb on board. Once more the driver side biker crept close, reaching out for the grab handle.

Don and Mikey’s eyes met in the mirror. Tightening his grip on the roof’s edge, Mikey said, “Get him Donny.”

As the biker’s fingers started to close on the handle, Don yanked the steering wheel to the left. The cab slammed into the motorcycle and the biker made a frantic grab for the handlebars, but the machine was already wobbling out of control.

The motorcycle careened away from the truck and crashed into a maintenance shed. Then Don forced the truck back on course with a sharp twist to the right to avoid hitting a parked
forklift.

It was that move that caused Mikey to lose his grip. With a shout, he slid along the trailer’s roof and over the back end.

Mikey’s scrabbling fingers caught hold of the metal lip above the trailer’s doors and that’s when he saw that the bar lock had shimmied loose and the doors were both flapping open.

Dangling over the back end of the trailer, Mikey stuck out a foot to stop one of the doors from smacking into him. Holding on one handed, Mikey grabbed the closest swinging door and pulled it closed, using his body to keep it in position. The truck twisted to one side again and Mikey was nearly thrown loose, but he dug his toes into the door lock to brace himself.

As soon as the truck began to straighten, Mikey heard the second motorcycle coming closer. Peering over his shoulder, he saw the biker pulling in behind him. Dissuaded from his attempt to climb into the cab, the biker had decided on a different course of action and come in from the back. The only problem was that Mikey was already there.

Once more the occupants of the speed boat started firing at the cab of the truck. Ignoring the biker for the moment, Mikey concentrated on getting his hand on the trailer’s other door, knowing he had to close it before any of the trailer’s contents began to slide out.

“Mikey where are you?” Don’s voice was edged with anxiety and Mikey knew it was because his brother could no longer see him.

Before Mikey could answer, another voice cut in. “Keep it straight Brainiac, I’ve got the goofball.”

Daring a glance back, Mikey’s heart jumped into his throat at the sight of Raphael bearing down on them. The hot head looked magnificent; his muscular frame bent over the bike, the black duster whipping out behind him to uncover taut green thighs.

With a gasping breath, Mikey managed to catch the second door before it smacked into his head. Securing it in place, Mikey grasped the bar lock and shoved it into the lugs, making sure that the handle was in the locked position this time.

As he was doing that, the biker made a grab for Mikey’s leg. The young turtle felt the man’s fingers graze the back of his thigh and automatically kicked at the groping hand. The man pulled his hand away and then tried again as Mikey struggled to hang onto the truck.

Mikey could feel his fingers slipping as rivulets of rain water began to collect inside the metal lip he was clinging to. Looking back, Mikey saw Raph put on a sudden burst of speed to zoom up right behind the Purple Dragon.

The Dragon saw Raph coming and lunged frantically at Mikey just as Raph clipped the back tire on his motorcycle. The bike immediately hurtled sideways but the Dragon managed to snag Mikey’s ankle first.

Mikey was violently pulled loose from the trailer and sent flying into the air. The Dragon lost his hold on Mikey as his bike began to flip over, screeching loudly when it sailed off the pier and collided with the speed boat.

The boat’s engine burst into flame upon contact with the heavy bike and then both the bike and boat exploded.
From the corner of his eye Mikey saw the explosion and then his body hit the pier, carapace first. Unable to control his momentum, Mikey bounced once, his head connecting with a wooden stanchion before he was catapulted into the water.

Michelangelo lost consciousness as he began to sink.

TBC……………..
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,474 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 10 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Cold water rushing into his nostrils snapped Mikey back to a semi-conscious state. He opened his mouth to spit the water out only to have more rush into that opening.

Dazed from the blow to his head, Mikey was barely cognizant of the fact that he’d fallen into the river. Even stunned, he had the natural instinct to close his mouth and hold his breath, but he’d already swallowed enough water that his body was fighting him to expel it by coughing.

Mikey managed to resist the tight feeling in his chest for about thirty seconds before the need overwhelmed him and air exploded from his mouth. Panicked by the cough and then the following inhalation which pulled another torrent of water against his larynx, Mikey began to flail, going nowhere.

A dark green shape broke through the surface of the water directly in front of him and came towards Mikey fast. Mikey mindlessly clawed at it but was grasped by his carapace and spun around so he could no longer grab at the figure.

Mikey felt something tighten around his chest and then he shot upwards, pulled by an incredibly strong force.

After what felt like hours but was probably less than a second, Mikey's face cleared the water. Somewhere in the back of his mind he recognized that his savior was his brother Raphael, but basic survival impulses were still at the forefront. Mikey continued to thrash and slap at the water, twisting vigorously to try and escape the liquid that had already started to choke him.

Raph lost his grip on Mikey, who immediately began to sink. The feeling set off another wave of panic and Mikey began to kick and fling his arms every which way.

Then he was once more wrenched upwards and Mikey found himself face to face with Raph.

“Stop fighting me!” Raph yelled as their plastrons slapped together.

The harsh words had an instantaneous effect on Mikey, who blinked rapidly and stopped moving. His violent coughing didn’t stop however and it proved a difficulty for Raph as the larger turtle dragged Mikey through the water.

After a minute Raph stopped and spun in the water. As his grip on Mikey changed, the younger brother began to sink.

“Damn clothes!” Raph exclaimed, reaching out and grasping a double handful of the hoodie Mikey was wearing. A couple of hard tugs wrenched the water heavy garment over Mikey’s head and Raph flung it away to sink to the bottom of the river.
Without the drag from the hoodie, Raph was able to quickly pull Mikey to the pier. Keeping a tight hold on one of Mikey’s arms, Raph boosted himself onto the pilings and then pulled Mikey up next to him.

Once they were safely out of the water, Raph rolled Mikey onto his side and began thumping his shell. Water shot out of his mouth as Mikey lay there coughing and gasping. After a short time the feeling that he’d swallowed the wrong way began to subside and though light headed, Mikey was ecstatic to be alive.

“S . . . stop,” Mikey stuttered between intermittent coughs. “I’m okay, Raphie.”

Usually Raph called Mikey out for referring to him by his childhood moniker, but this time he let it pass. Catching hold of Mikey’s bicep, Raph rolled his brother onto his carapace and then leaned over him, hands firmly planted on the planks to either side of Mikey’s shoulders.

Mikey stared up at him, very aware that one of Raph’s knees rested between the younger turtle’s legs. Emotions played across Raph’s face, shifting quickly before settling on one that Mikey knew well.

“What the hell were ya’ doing? Ya’ should have crawled your happy ass into the cab of that truck with Donny,” Raph fussed.

“If I had then the whole arms shipment would have fallen into the river and sunk,” Mikey shot back.

“Better those crates than you,” Raph growled. “Last time I checked, guns don’t drown.”

A cheeky grin painted Mikey’s face as he said, “Neither did I.”

Raph reached up and flicked Mikey between the eyes with his finger.

“Ow!” Mikey exclaimed, rubbing at the spot.

“Ya’ better be happy I was there to save your ass,” Raph told him.

“I knew you would be bro’,” Mikey said, his smile genuine. “I just hope Nobody doesn’t have to pay for the microphone on my hoodie ‘cause that definitely got drowned.”

Rather than responding, Raph remained silent, his expression hard to read. The anger had faded; wiped away as it usually was by Mikey’s optimistic sense of humor.

As his older brother stared down at him, Mikey felt the all too familiar desire for Raph start to make a bid for his attention. “Not now, not now,” Mikey repeated to himself, suddenly warm despite being completely soaked.

Before Mikey could think of how to escape, Raph pushed himself to his feet and strode to where he’d dropped his duster before he’d dived in to rescue Michelangelo. “I’d better let everyone know ya’ didn’t break your damn fool neck,” Raph said as he pulled the long coat back on.

Mikey sat up and wrung the water from his mask tails as he listened to Raph report in. When he went to flip the ends of his mask back over his shoulders Mikey suddenly grimaced as a sharp pain lanced through his side.

Hoping that Raph hadn’t noticed, Mikey glanced up and saw his brother staring right at him.
“Yeah he’s fine,” Raph conveyed to the rest of their team. “I think he bruised some ribs and he’s got an assortment of scrapes and bruises, but he’s still wearing most of his skin.”

Raph paused to listen but Mikey wasn’t close enough to hear what was being said. Pulling his feet under him, Mikey placed his fingertips on the pier for balance and slowly stood up.

“That’s good to hear,” Raph said. “I . . . .”

As soon as Mikey straightened, the pain hit him again and his vision doubled. He felt the pier start to spin and heard Raph exclaim, “Whoa!”

Before Mikey could fall, Raph had an arm around him. Bracing his younger brother against his side, Raph asked, “Ya’ still with me bro’?”

Mikey touched his forefinger to his thumb in an ‘ok’ symbol and offered Raph a weak smile.

“What happened?” Leo asked through the microphone.

“Nothing,” Raph said. “Mikey conked his head when he fell off the truck and he’s wobbly on his pins. I’m gonna haul his butt back to the lair. Tell Nobody I’ll bring his bike back tomorrow night.”

“Take it easy,” Leo said. “Out.”

“Donny?” Mikey asked as soon as he had Raph’s full attention.

“He and the truck are almost to the garage,” Raph said. “Leo and Nobody are right behind him and there aren’t any outriders. Our bro’s are gonna come back this way later to get your car ‘cause Nobody’s gonna have his hands full with turning that truck over to his boss.”

“I can take my own car back,” Mikey insisted, trying to shove Raph away.

Raph merely clung tighter, telling him, “Ya’ can’t even walk straight. If ya’ try to get behind the wheel you’re gonna get arrested for drunk driving.”

“I’m okay,” Mikey said, peering up at his brother.

“No you’re not. You’re a big friggin’ mess, you’re bleeding from a dozen different wounds, ya’ fucked up your ribs, and ya’ got a knot on your head the size of a baseball. You’re getting your ass on the bike and holding on while I take ya’ home,” Raph said flatly.

Mikey suddenly felt every one of his injuries, biting back a groan so as not to prove his brother right. The last thing he wanted Raph to see was any sign of weakness.

“Fine,” Mikey said. “Not gonna argue about someone else doing my work for me.”

The motorcycle waited nearby and Raph helped Mikey over to it, grabbing the helmet and pulling it down on Mikey’s head. Ignoring Mikey’s protests that he could get on by himself, Raph practically lifted his brother onto the seat before climbing on in front of him.

As he started the bike, Raph turned his head to tell Mikey, “Put your arms around me and hang the fuck on.”

Having permission to hold the brother Mikey was fantasizing about was a dream come true and he slid his arms around Raph’s middle and squeezed tight. Neither tried to converse as they
drove back to the lair; Raph’s demeanor wasn’t at all approachable and Mikey was too lost in the bliss of being so close to his brother to try and talk.

Raph pulled into the garage much too soon as far as Mikey was concerned. Mikey didn’t relinquish his hold until Raph killed the engine and lifted a leg to dismount.

Mikey hurriedly slipped off the end of the motorcycle, not trusting himself to be too near Raph now that they were home. Raph looked at him speculatively but before he could say anything, Mikey started walking towards the elevator.

On the way down Mikey was glad that the dizziness was gone; no doubt the ride in the fresh air had helped with that. His head throbbed where he’d hit it and Mikey resisted the urge to reach up and touch the lump that Raph had said he was sporting.

Upon exiting the elevator, Mikey started towards the stairs but Raph caught his arm in a firm grip and piloted him towards the infirmary instead.

“Ya’ got some injuries that need to be tended to and Don ain’t gonna be back for a while,” Raph said, pushing open the door to their sick bay and pulling Mikey inside.

“I can manage on my own,” Mikey contended as he was forced to sit on the examination table.

“Uh huh,” Raph said, gathering together some medical supplies from the cabinet. “I said I’d do it so shut up and be still.”

“You’re a worse tyrant than Donny,” Mikey said, watching Raph lay things out next to him.

“I kinda doubt that but we’ll save the argument for later,” Raph said.

Raph was leaning close to Mikey, examining him as he searched for the various wounds his younger brother had incurred. His nearness made Mikey feel twitchy and he had to remind himself that Raph was only there to render first aid.

Pointing at Mikey’s side, Raph said, “Slowly lift that arm.”

Mikey set his lips in a thin line and did as instructed. Try as he might, he couldn’t hide the wince that came with the discomfort in his side.

Raph’s fingers immediately went to that spot and he probed it delicately. When his brother touched a ticklish spot Mikey giggled, earning a stern look from Raph. The next second Mikey flinched as Raph’s search found the injury.

“ Bruised but not busted,” Raph pronounced with a relieved look. “Take some deep breaths while I go fill the ice pack.”

Raph left the room and Mikey lowered his arm before breathing deeply to inflate his lungs. His throat was still a bit sore from swallowing so much river water and he coughed a little, which didn’t help the pain in his ribs. He knew that wouldn’t go away for a couple of days and resigned himself to the fact he wouldn’t be doing any vigorous activities for a while.

When he returned Raph had a bottle of water in one hand and a filled ice pack in the other, which he carefully pressed to Mikey’s side. “Hold that here,” Raph told him and Mikey took hold of the pack, keeping it in place.
Shaking a couple of pills from a bottle, Raph handed them to Mikey. “Ibuprofen for the inflammation,” he explained, handing the water to his brother after Mikey popped the pills into his mouth.

Mikey took a swig of water and swallowed the meds, his eyes never leaving Raph. “Thanks,” he said.

“Don’t thank me yet,” Raph said. “I’ve gotta clean that assortment of cuts and scrapes ya’ collected from that crazy ass stunt ya’ pulled. Did I or did I not tell ya’ to avoid doing anything foolish?”

Mikey chuckled and then cringed as Raph began ministering to his wounds. “Why should I let you be the only one to do insane things?” Mikey asked jokingly.

Raph’s glance was anything but amused. “I know my limitations and I don’t do that shit to show off.”

“Oh right, you just jump in feet first to prove to everybody how tough you are,” Mikey said sarcastically.

Planting his hands on the table, Raph glared at his brother. “I jump in to keep ya’ guys safe,” he said hotly. “Maybe if I didn’t worry about Don getting distracted by shiny new toys or your focus going all to shit I wouldn’t feel the need to punch first and ask questions later.”

“That’s not fair,” Mikey said. “I was completely on top of things tonight. Didn’t I stop those goons in the warehouse?”

“Yeah ya’ did,” Raph acknowledged, going back to treating Mikey’s injuries. “Then ya’ got so involved in gloating about it ya’ didn’t notice that damn speedboat keeping pace with the truck.”

That shut Mikey up. Raph had a point; instead of dancing on top of the truck, Mikey should have been looking all around them. Maybe if he hadn’t been so elated by the remark he’d heard Raph make he would have noticed the trailer’s doors had come unlocked. He could have crawled back and closed them before the Dragon had come along to yank him off the truck.

“Okay, you’re right,” Mikey admitted.

“Damn straight I’m right,” Raph said with a hint of satisfaction in his voice.

They were both silent then as Raph finished applying antiseptic and bandaging his younger brother. Mikey spent that time watching Raph’s hands, knowing how incredibly powerful they were and marveling at how precise they could be.

After a bit Mikey’s eyes traveled upwards and he examined his brother’s strong profile. Everything about Raph was fascinating; the firm set of his jaw, the intensity in those golden eyes, the way his muscles flexed beneath such captivatingly dark green skin.

Warmth suffused Mikey’s body, quickly pooling in his lower regions. Mikey tried looking away, thinking that would take his mind off of Raph’s alluring physical traits, but that only served to exacerbate the feeling of Raph’s hands touching him.

Mikey slowly shifted on the table, trying to ease the pressure on his stiffening tail without drawing Raph’s attention to it. His brother was attending to a particularly nasty scrape along Mikey’s thigh and each touch brought Mikey a twinge of pain that only further heightened his excitement.
When Raph finally finished with Mikey’s leg, he straightened and started putting the first aid supplies back into the box on the table. Mikey quickly turned his gaze to the wall and began swinging his legs, trying to appear nonchalant.

He felt Raph’s eyes on him and chanced a swift glance in his brother’s direction. Raph had the med box tucked under one arm and was contemplating Mikey through narrowed lids.

“Are you finished?” Mikey asked hopefully.


Mikey nodded and looked back at the wall, forcing himself not to stare at Raph as his brother returned the box to the cabinet. He heard Raph rustling around and wondered what else needed to be taken care of. There was nothing he wanted more than to escape to his room and avoid any more interactions with Raphael.

Suddenly something jabbed into his upper arm and Mikey nearly jumped off the table. Looking to the side he saw that Raph had stuck a hypo in him and was administering a shot.

“What the shell?” Mikey demanded in an annoyed fashion.

“It’s a pain killer,” Raph answered, looking pleased with himself. “The kind that makes ya’ sleepy. Moving around with that bruised rib is a bad idea and ya’ need to rest. Besides, I thought ya’ liked a little pain. This shot too much for ya’?”

Mikey gawked at him, caught off guard and too flustered to speak.


“It figures you’d wait until I couldn’t fight back to bring this up,” Mikey finally managed to say.

“Maybe that’s the only way I knew to get a little honesty from ya’,” Raph countered.

Mikey wanted to be indignant but he was starting to get sleepy. “That’s so unfair,” he muttered.

Raph came around to stand in front of him. “Ya’ want to know what I think is unfair? The way you’ve been jerking me around. If you’ve got some issue with me then tell me instead of passing it off as some damn joke.”

“You’re the . . . the one who said it was a con,” Mikey said. “I agreed so that you’d come home.”

“That ain’t the only reason ya’ agreed,” Raph said. “Ya’ used that as an excuse to jack with me every chance ya’ got. The only reason I didn’t pound ya’ into dirt is ‘cause I figured out ya’ might like it.”

The verbal jab hurt and Mikey pulled his eyes away from Raph. He wondered if the only reason Raph had given him that shot was to get him to speak the truth and not because Raph was overly concerned about Mikey’s injuries.

Raph cupped Mikey’s chin and was surprisingly gentle as he lifted his brother’s head. “I didn’t mean that,” he said. “I don’t like surprises Mikey, ya’ know that. This thing between us is confusing as shit.”
His guard lowered, Mikey said, “Come on bro’. You know what . . . what’s going on with me and from the . . . way you reacted in the tunnel, I know you hate me for it.”

“I do not hate you, Michelangelo,” Raph said.

Mikey’s gaze was a little cross-eyed as the sedative wound deeper into his system. “Course you do. I’m a sicko.” He giggled once and then sniffed, his chin quivering.

Raph sighed and wrapped his arms around Mikey, helping him down from the table. “You aren’t a sicko,” Raph said, sliding under Mikey’s arm on his uninjured side. “You’re confused and right now so am I. This ain’t the time to figure things out though, ‘cause you’re already half out of it.”

He started walking Mikey to the door and the younger turtle asked, “Where are we going?”

“To your bed,” Raph replied. “No more tonight. Keep hold of that ice pack while I get ya’ upstairs.”

Mikey leaned against Raph, using his brother as a brace as he climbed the stairs. They went up slowly, mindful of Mikey’s bruised ribs, though he wasn’t really feeling them at the moment.

Raph assisted Mikey in maneuvering past the piles of comic books and sports equipment that littered the floor of his bedroom. The bed was unmade so after Raph helped Mikey sit on the mattress, he fluffed the pillows and pushed the rumpled blanket aside.

Mikey’s head was dangling, his eyes drifting closed. He was too groggy to lift his feet up so Raph did that for him, urging Mikey onto his carapace and tucking one of his pillows against his side to help hold the ice pack in place.

When he had Mikey settled, Raph shook the blanket out and draped it over his younger brother. Leaning down, Raph tucked the blanket under Mikey’s shoulders but didn’t stand up right away.

Sensing that his brother was still there, Mikey pried his eyes open. Raph was peering down at him, a most enigmatic expression on his face.

As he watched, Raph came closer, stopping only when his mouth was next to Mikey’s head.

“Sometime when you’re feeling better, we need to finish this talk,” Raph whispered.

Mikey’s eyes slid shut again. His body started to relax, the tension easing from his muscles.

And then Mikey’s eyes snapped open as Raph bit down on his collarbone. For a moment Raph’s teeth remained clamped on Mikey’s skin and an unbidden churr issued from the younger turtle.

Mouth open, Mikey gasped as a stimulating spike lanced its way into his groin.

It was over almost as quickly as it had begun as Raph released him and stood up. Mikey lay there panting, gaping through blurred vision at his brother’s smiling face.

Mikey closed his eyes and then opened them again, wanting to verify what he was seeing, but in that split second Raph was gone.
Even with the sedative fighting him for control it took Mikey some little time to fall asleep. He spent that time trying to convince himself he hadn’t just been imagining things.

TBC……………
Mikey woke the next morning with a mild headache and a sense of disbelief.

The night before would have seemed like nothing but a dream if not for the bandages that pinched his skin in various places. Mikey started to lift a hand to his collarbone when a knock on the door stopped him.

Before he had a chance to respond, the door opened to admit Leonardo. His oldest brother carried a tray of food and wore a look of concern on his face.
“I wasn’t sure if you were up,” Leo said, “but it’s been a little while since we last woke you. I thought this time I’d see if you wanted something to eat.”

“Wow, breakfast in bed,” Mikey said, pulling himself upright. He felt the immediate sting of pain from his injured side that reminded him he hadn’t dreamt that either.

Leo set the tray on the bedside table, reaching up to turn on the small bedside lamp before handing Mikey the ice pack. While he moved the pillows behind Mikey’s shell to prop him up, Leo said, “I refilled it. There are a couple of pills on the tray that Don wants you to take.”

Mikey glanced at the tray and then frowned. “Wait, what did you say about waking me?”

“Don did it every ninety minutes last night after he and I got back,” Leo said. “Towards morning I took over. We weren’t sure if you had a concussion, so we had to keep checking on you.”

“Oh,” Mikey murmured, frowning as he absentmindedly took the two ibuprofen from the tray and popped them into his mouth. After swigging a mouthful of water his brow cleared. “Oh! I remember now. I was really annoyed ‘cause you guys wouldn’t let me sleep.”

“You know the drill,” Leo said, taking a seat on the end of the bed.

“Right. If you suspect concussion, wake the patient and make sure he knows his own name. I know who I am, but who are you?” Mikey quipped with a grin.

“Yes, you’re definitely feeling better,” Leo said as Mikey helped himself to a piece of toast. “I didn’t get the chance before to see how banged up you were but it looks like Raph might have used an entire box of bandages on you.”

Mikey mumbled something to the affirmative, his mouth full. Leo pulled the blanket down and surveyed Mikey’s legs as the youngest dug into a bowl of oatmeal.

“Raph wasn’t kidding, you lost some skin,” Leo said. “Maybe Don should give you a checkup.”

“Nah, I’m fine. Head hurts, side hurts, scratches sting, etcetera. You know,” Mikey said offhandedly, taking a sip of orange juice.

“Yeah, we’ve all been there,” Leo said.

He watched Mikey eat but his mind seemed to be on something else. Mikey continued working on his breakfast, trying to hide his curiosity. Leo was usually a straightforward guy; if anything was bothering him he’d address it right away.

There was something Mikey wanted to know too, but he didn’t want to ask the question outright. Maybe if he got Leo talking Mikey could get the answers he needed without raising any undo interest.

“So, what all happened last night after I got ejected from the game?” Mikey asked.

Leo blinked, focusing his attention on Mikey once more. “After Don drove the truck to the garage, Nobody checked in with his superiors, changed into his police uniform, and took the truck to the impound yard. The ATF was supposed to meet him there. Don and I went back for your car but before we got it, we checked out the activity back on the pier. The police and the ATF were all there making arrests. Looks like it was a bad night for the gangs.”
“I’ll bet Hun is fit to be tied,” Mikey said with a grin.

With a shrug, Leo said, “He shouldn’t have gotten on Nobody’s radar. Our vigilante friend is going to be making Hun’s life as miserable as possible in the future.”

“I kind of liked that car, too bad we had to return it,” Mikey said. “Raph wouldn’t mind keeping that bike either.”

“I’m sure he wouldn’t, but he’ll have to,” Leo said, smirking slightly. “Maybe when they put it up for auction he can bid on it.”

“If we pool our money we can probably come up with ten bucks,” Mikey said with an amused snort. “So where is he anyway?”

Mikey was proud of how smoothly he’d segued into that question, sure that it sounded both normal and casual. However, when Leo just stared at him for a second, Mikey grew concerned.

“He’s in the dojo with Master Splinter,” Leo finally answered. He seemed to be studying Mikey, as though looking for answers in the younger turtle’s reactions. “He’s been in a mood since he woke up.”

Mikey almost sighed with relief, sure that it was Raph’s bad disposition that was bothering Leo. “Hey, we didn’t have a fight, so don’t blame that on me,” Mikey said quickly. “Raph chewed me out for getting hurt just like he always does and that was the end of it.”

Leo was still observing him closely. “Nothing unusual at all happened?” he asked.

Years of pranking his brothers had made Mikey good at subterfuge. “Yeah, he managed to play doctor without causing more damage than I started out with,” Mikey said, chuckling.

Despite how adroit Mikey felt his cover up had been, Leo was still making him feel uneasy. Trying to avoid Leo’s eyes, Mikey leaned over to set his empty bowl back on the tray and then winced when the movement reminded him of his bruised rib.

“It looks like you aren’t going anywhere for a while,” Leo said, scooting closer to inspect Mikey’s side.

“Oh darn, I guess I’ll have to lie around playing video games and reading comics,” Mikey said facetiously. “It sounds like pure torture, but what can you do?”

“How about not lying around playing video games and reading comics?” Leo replied with a grin.

“But I’m badly injured!” Mikey protested impishly.

Leo’s eyes went back to scanning his body, his attitude laughingly dismissive. “The only thing wrong with you is a persistent case of apathy. There is no reason we can’t work on your balance and have you spend some time in medita . . . .”

His voice trailing off, Leo’s brow furrowed as he bent down to look more closely at Mikey’s collarbone. “What made this mark?” Leo asked.

Mikey swiftly clapped a hand over his collarbone and felt his face heating up. He hadn’t thought Raph had bitten him hard enough to leave a noticeable mark, but apparently there was enough of something to attract Leo’s sharp eyes.
“I must have . . . uh, been hit there by the trailer door when it was swinging open,” Mikey answered in a rush, hoping the mark didn’t bear a resemblance to teeth.

“Hmm, interesting placement,” Leo muttered, his eyes coming up to meet Mikey’s.

The younger turtle didn’t have to be a mind reader to see that Leo wasn’t really buying it. “Maybe it happened after I hit the water,” Mikey offered.

“That’s a pretty oddly shaped bruise,” Leo said. “Seems like something you’d remember.”

“I did hit my head you know,” Mikey cautioned him. “For a while there everything was a blur.”

“Mmm,” Leo hummed noncommittally. “Mind if I give it a closer look?”

That was the last thing Mikey wanted. “Dude, don’t rub it in anymore okay? I got careless last night and I’ve got the marks to show for it. You’ve made your point.”

Leo sat back slowly, a concerned look on his face. “It isn’t just carelessness, Michelangelo,” he said quietly. “Something is different with you, something that involves Raph. It started that morning at practice when you wouldn’t fight him. Did he lose control with you again?”

“No!” Mikey yelped. “No. Nothing like that. I pranked him and he was mad at me for it, so I figured staying out of his reach was a good idea. It just aggravated him more and then I couldn’t leave it alone. I was bored Leo, that’s all. You know how I get when I’m bored.”

“Yes I do,” Leo replied. “I know how you are when you’re bored, when you’re tired, when you’re happy, and a whole other assortment of emotions. What I don’t normally see from you is anger, at least not the level you displayed last night before Nobody called. Never have I seen you angry to the extent you start breaking things.”

Mikey should have known Leo wouldn’t forget the whole pot slamming incident.

“I thought I was alone,” Mikey explained. “Just because I don’t show you guys that I get mad doesn’t mean I don’t.”

“Why were you mad, Mikey?” Leo asked softly.

Mikey realized he shouldn’t have admitted to being angry just as the confession came out of his mouth. Talking to Leo about sensitive stuff was just like verbal sparring and Leo was almost as good at that as he was with his katanas.

If he took too long to answer, Leo would know he was lying. His best bet was to tell part of the truth and keep his answer short.

“I screwed up a simple three sixty on the indoor ramp and busted my butt,” Mikey said. “Then Don came in and made me turn off my music. I couldn’t skate anymore after that.”

“So you were mad at Don?” Leo asked, eyes narrowed.

Mikey knew that look. It was a sure indication that Leo would try to mend fences by talking to Don next. That would not do.

“I was mad about my skating, bro’. That’s all,” Mikey said.

“But not at Don,” Leo said musingly. “You know, he likes to work to music too. I’ve rarely
seen him turn it off unless he’s trying to have a conversation. Was he trying to talk to you and that’s what broke your concentration? He wasn’t happy that you didn’t fight well during practice, in fact I think he was insulted.”

“Whoa, time out. We talked that out before I ever went up to the garage to skate,” Mikey said.

“So if he wasn’t talking to you, who was he trying to talk to?” Leo asked, hanging on to his train of thought like a pit bull.

Mikey was cornered. If he tried to hold out the answer Leo would focus on why Mikey didn’t want to bring Raph’s name into it.

“He and Raph were doing something to Raph’s bike,” Mikey said, trying to sound nonchalant.

“So it was because of Raphael that you had to turn your music off,” Leo said, his eyes boring into Mikey’s. “You were angry at Raph.”

“No, actually I wasn’t,” Mikey said calmly. That was certainly the truth.

For a moment Leo said nothing while Mikey continued to keep his hand atop his collarbone. Usually when Mikey needed to distract a brother from discovering one of his misdeeds, Mikey started moving around, but he couldn’t use that tactic now. He could only hope that Leo would give up.

No chance of that. Leo glanced at Mikey’s collarbone and from his expression one would think he’d seen it right through Mikey’s hand.

What Leo said next took Mikey by surprise. “Do you remember when we were younger, before the outside world invaded our home? Back when we were perfecting our ninjitsu and were all still on a level playing field, before sensei made me leader of our team?”

Mikey blinked, confused by the change in topic. “Sure I do. We were training all the time.”

“Not all the time, but it was a lot because we didn’t have too many distractions,” Leo said. “Even then you and Don could find other things to do during our down time. It wasn’t like that for Raph and me. We wanted to practice what we’d learned as much as possible. Since it was only the two of us, we spent our spare time together. We were almost inseparable.”

It had been a long time since Mikey had thought of those days and even then it was hard to remember a time when Leo and Raph weren’t at odds. But the more Mikey recalled of that period in their lives, the more he realized the truth in what Leo was telling him.

He just didn’t know why Leo was telling him. It almost sounded like Leo might be about to call dibs on Raph. Mikey sure as shell hoped he was wrong because he wasn’t positive that he could trust himself not to leap for Leo’s throat.

“Okay, yeah I remember that,” Mikey said gruffly. “What’s the point?”

Leo’s eyes didn’t waver but a look passed across his face, something akin to satisfaction. Like just those few words of Mikey’s had given him some kind of confirmation.

“The point is that I know Raph really well,” Leo said. “There are things you don’t understand about him, inner demons that he tries to hide or to exorcise with his fists. It’s why he
spends so much of his time beating his punching bag or pummeling the practice dummy.”

Mikey shrugged. “I grew up with him too, Leo. He’s got a temper and he gets frustrated by all the things he can’t do. I know that.”

Leo shook his head. “I’m not talking about just his temper. That’s all on the surface for anyone to see. He wants what we all want; a good life, safety for his family, and to rid the world above us of the bad element. Raph has a hard time accepting that he can’t fight those battles as often as he’d like or in exactly the way that he’d like. He’s impatient and that makes him hot tempered.”

“If we aren’t talking about his temper then what are we talking about?” Mikey asked, both curious and anxious as to where Leo was going with this conversation.

“Mikey, there are other needs that we all have, some that we can fulfill, and some that we can’t,” Leo said. “Even in that we still cling to certain hopes, thinking that the future might change things for us. We daydream about that stuff and it keeps us optimistic.”

“Like my being the Turtle Titan,” Mikey said.

Leo chuckled. “Yes, like that. Or Don dreaming of scientific breakthroughs. Or my desire to someday become a true ninjitsu master.”

“And Raph?” Mikey asked almost breathlessly.

Exhaling heavily, Leo said, “Raph is still struggling with those demons I told you about. Because of that, he hasn’t give himself the chance to daydream. He fills the void with anger. I don’t want you to do that too, Mikey.”

Mikey was momentarily taken aback. “I . . . I’m not. Really Leo. I’m not holding onto anger about anything.”

“Not even at the fact that Raph can’t devote all of his time to you?” Leo asked.

It was all Mikey could do not to gape at him. Leo was making intuitive leaps that were pretty frightening. What was worse was that Leo seemed to be telling him that Raph was off limits.

“I don’t know what Raph’s deal is,” Mikey said carefully, “and I don’t have a need to take up his precious time. You’re on the wrong track, bro’. My problem is and always will be boredom. Having a bruised rib isn’t gonna help with that, so you should expect to see me in a bad mood for a few days. Try not to read anything into it, okay?”

The hint of sarcasm in his voice wasn’t lost on Leo. With a resigned sigh, Leo stood up and retrieved the now empty breakfast tray.

“You should get up in a little while and rinse off,” Leo said. “You smell like river water and you don’t want Don fussing at you about germs getting into those wounds. And don’t count on lunch in bed, you can make it downstairs if you take it easy.”

“I knew this was too good to last,” Mikey said jokingly.

Leo opened the door but paused there to look back at his brother. “I want you to remember something, Mikey. We work together as a cohesive unit because we have no secrets. Secrets can get us killed.”
Mikey frowned. “I know that, Leo.”

With a nod, Leo left the room, closing the door behind him.

For a long while Mikey sat there staring at the opposite wall. He didn’t bother stretching out again because Leo was right, he needed to take a shower before he got to smelling too ripe.

Mikey wondered why his brother felt the need to make that speech about secrets when it was obvious that Leo knew Raph was hiding something too. Maybe it was because Leo already knew what it was that Raph was hiding, hence all the hinting around about Raph’s inner demons.

That notion made Mikey feel pretty indignant. Why should Leo know more about Raph than Mikey did? What gave Leo the right to rub that fact in Mikey’s face? Was he secretly trying to tell Michelangelo that he wasn’t good enough for Raphael? That only someone who understood Raph as well as Leonardo did could hope to get close to him?

With a frustrated snarl, Mikey flung the ice pack across the room, feeling only a slight satisfaction at the solid thump it made when it hit the wall.

Then his hand drifted back up to his collar bone and he caressed the spot that Raph had bitten. It stung slightly as Mikey’s fingers drifted across the area and his eyes grew heavy lidded with desire.

He’d never seen a mark of any kind on Leo’s collar bone. Or on Don’s for that matter. Whatever the heck Leo had been alluding to didn’t mean anything if the only one Raph had ever chosen to bite was Mikey.

With a secret grin, Mikey slid out of bed, already feeling the fire lighting up his loins. He was going to lock himself in the bathroom for a while so that he could take a look at the mark on his collar bone and then jump into the shower to deal with two of his current immediate needs.

Then he was going to see if he could get Raph alone again. This time Mikey wouldn’t be drugged and he wouldn’t be on the defensive.

Raph was a turtle of action and it was about time that Mikey gave him some.

TBC……………..
Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,407 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 12 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Throughout his life Mikey usually got what he wanted through a combination of cajoling, whining, pleading, or pure dumb luck. Those weren’t tactics he could apply here.

These were uncharted waters; unknown land. Sort of like driving through the Gobi desert without a map.

Sated by a long, hot shower and the judicious use of his hand in relieving his sudden need, Mikey drifted into fanciful thought. Standing in front of the bathroom mirror, Mikey swiped his hand across the glass to clear the fog from it and stared at his image for a second time that morning.

The lightly colored, crescent shaped bruise on his collarbone that was reflected back at him had not changed or disappeared, as Mikey was half afraid it would. Even the fact that he’d just released didn’t stop the tingle in his groin as Mikey stared at the mark Raphael had left on him.

With a sigh, Mikey realized he couldn’t parade around the lair with that particular bruise showing, as much as he’d like to. He still didn’t know Raph’s motivation for biting him. If it had been anyone else, Mikey would have known they wanted to leave a mark on his skin that was blatantly possessive. Raph on the other hand didn’t always think things through. For all Mikey knew, Raph had really wanted to punch him for nearly drowning, and because Mikey was injured, the bite was the hot head’s second option.

Against one wall in the bathroom stood a plastic storage tower on wheels. There were several drawers in it where junk collected and Mikey turned to it now. Over the years, April had bunked with them on many occasions and had left behind feminine detritus, which no one ever threw away.

Many were the times when Mikey had stood next to her in the bathroom, watching in fascination as April applied make-up. She didn’t use much because she was blessed with a near perfect complexion. Every once in a while though she would curse a blemish and then work to hide it until time made it disappear.

Mikey found what he was searching for in the second drawer. A small tube, shaped like a lipstick holder, but containing a concealer that was green in color.

April had explained to a surprised Michelangelo that blending the green around and on a skin discoloration did a very effective job of hiding it. For her it was all about neutralizing the redness of the blemish, but Mikey was hoping the green concealer would be like touch up paint for him.

Dabbing some onto his finger, Mikey worked the concealer onto the crescent shaped bruise.
It took a few minutes to figure out the right amount to use for his skin color, but his efforts finally paid off. Looking carefully at his collarbone in the mirror, Mikey could no longer see even a hint of discoloration.

With a satisfied smile, Mikey placed the concealer back into the drawer where he’d found it. Hardly anyone dug into the storage tower and even if they did, they probably wouldn’t think twice about a green tube rolling around with a bunch of other make-up.

Mikey stepped out of the bathroom, confident that his secret was now safe. If he’d had to spar with anyone there was a good chance the concealer would get wiped off, but because Mikey’s ribs were bruised, he didn’t have to worry about that.

Going downstairs slowly, Mikey glanced around the lair to try and pinpoint the location of each member of his family. He wasn’t sure what time it was but sounds coming from the dojo told him it was early enough for everyone to still be at practice.

Mikey ambled over to the dojo, stepping inside and then stopping to bow his head to Master Splinter. His father acknowledged his presence with a return nod and then turned his attention back to his other three sons, who were practicing a complex set of kicks.

Staying to the far edges of the practice area, Mikey chose an out of the way spot to kneel so that he could watch his brothers work out. His rib bothered him when he moved too quickly, so he eased himself into a position that wouldn’t cause him too much discomfort.

Once settled, Mikey’s eyes went directly to Raphael. He couldn’t see any traces of the ‘mood’ Leo had alluded to earlier, but it was possible that some one-on-one time with Master Splinter had taken care of it.

Mikey knew he should be concentrating on the mechanics of the moves Master Splinter was teaching his brothers, but his imagination kept running off with him. He could visualize being alone in the dojo with Raph, being close to him, doing something – anything – to aggravate his brother enough so that Raph would throw him to the ground.

In his mind, Mikey could see Raph leaning in close and biting him again. He’d hold Mikey down and bite his neck, his shoulder, his side, and most wonderfully his inner thigh, leaving marks all over Mikey’s skin. Mikey wanted Raph to leave more marks on him, lots of them. Marks that wouldn’t leave it to anyone’s imagination as to Raph’s intent.

Shaking his head, Mikey tried to clear it of those images. It would be just his luck to work himself into a frenzy and then have to try to hide a boner from his family. Mikey was sure that the bulge under his plastron caused by a massive woody would be noticed pretty damn fast.

Shifting to try to get comfortable, Mikey felt a twinge in his side that reminded him he wasn’t going to be doing any fast moving for a while. Trying to physically dodge someone’s curiosity was out of the question. Better not to get excited someplace other than behind his own locked bedroom door.

Pulling his eyes off of Raph was hard, but Mikey forced himself to do it, instead turning his attention to Leo. If he wanted at some point in the future to perfect the moves his brothers were learning, there was no one better to study. Leonardo practically turned ninjitsu into an art form.

Mikey realized that as soon as practice was over, Leo was going to come over to check on him. There was no way big bro’ would forget seeing a strange mark on Mikey’s collarbone and he’d sure as heck look for it. Mikey hoped that Raph wouldn’t be nearby when that happened.
because he intended to tell Leo that there hadn’t been an injury on his collarbone, that it had just been dirty.

Mikey absolutely did not want Raph to think he was at all ashamed of being marked by him. Mikey just didn’t want anyone else to know, at least not yet.

Mikey glanced at Don next, noting the concentrated look on the genius’ face. He was next to Raph, a position he frequently occupied when they practiced. Mikey used to think it was an unconscious placement choice because Don liked to keep the peace and being between Raph and anyone who might agitate him was strategic.

Now Mikey wondered if Don just needed to be near Raph. He sure hoped that wasn’t the case, because Mikey had already decided to go for what he wanted and he’d hate to have to step on Don to get it.

And there he was again, letting some possessive part of himself lay ownership to his own brother at the expense of another one. Mikey never even knew he had it in him to feel jealousy. So what if Don and Raph had stuff in common, big deal. Working on motors wasn’t the end all, be all in life. There were plenty of things Raph did that Don wanted no part of.

Without conscious thought, Mikey’s eyes once more sought out the object of his desire. It was amazing how fast Raph was, despite the layers of muscle. He worked at staying flexible, Mikey knew that from certain exercises that Raph did. Not as flexible as Mikey, but then none of his brothers were.

That was probably why Raph was always up for extra sparring with his youngest brother. Mikey didn’t see Don or Leo offering Raph additional opportunities at hand to hand combat. Come to think of it, Mikey didn’t recall Raph ever asking either of them for some more work out time. Raph always went to Mikey for the physical stuff.

With a secret little smile, Mikey’s mind drifted back to the night before when he was skating in the garage. He was sure now that the reason he’d fallen off his skate board was emerald green in color. The distraction that had broken his concentration was the feeling that eyes were on him and Mikey just knew that Raph must have been watching him for a while.

That made Mikey wonder if Raph really needed to replace something on his bike, or if that was an excuse to go up to the garage where Mikey was hiding out. When Nobody had asked of no one in particular “how does he do that?” with regards to Mikey, it had been Raph who answered “we have no idea”.

Mikey had always been rather proud of the fact that he was so athletically gifted and more supple than his brothers. He enjoyed the idea that maybe they envied him a little because of that.

Maybe for Raph it was something more than envy. Something better. Mike sure wanted to know.

Mikey was recalled to himself at the sound of his sensei calling for an end to practice for the day. Wincing slightly, Mikey made it to his feet so that he could bow along with his brothers to their departing Master.

As soon as Master Splinter was gone from the dojo, the three older turtles turned in Mikey’s direction and walked over. Don reached him first, his expression a mix of brotherly concern and a physician’s inquisitiveness.
“How bad is it?” Don asked, clearly focused on Mikey’s rib above all else.

“It’s just a bruise Donny,” Mikey assured him.

“Told ya’ Mikey can take it,” Raph said as though proving a point. “He don’t need ya’ guys fawning all over him.”

A look passed between Leo and Raph, one that Mikey noticed but couldn’t identify. It was gone in a split second but there was enough in that interaction to cause Raph’s expression to shift from lighthearted to annoyed.

Leo’s attention returned to Mikey. “Think you can handle a few stretching exercises? Nothing too strenuous, but we don’t want you to stiffen up.”

“Sure. No sweat,” Mikey said, acutely aware of the fact that Raph had stepped back a few paces but wasn’t leaving.

“Don’t let him overdo it,” Don admonished. “Those skin injuries need to scab over and that bruised rib needs time to heal.”

“I’ll stick mostly to showing him what we learned from Master Splinter this morning,” Leo said. “He can pick it up by watching me.”

Raph snorted. “He’ll pick it up faster than you did too. He always does.”

Without waiting for a response, Raph crossed the dojo to the weight rack, selected a pair of dumbbells, and started doing shoulder presses.

Surprised that Raph hadn’t simply stormed off, Mikey followed Leo to the center of the dojo. Don remained long enough to observe Mikey’s movements, ensuring himself that his brother hadn’t any as yet undiscovered injuries.

Leo kept his word and didn’t push Mikey to try anything arduous. Mikey was glad for that; from the corner of his eyes he could see that Raph was watching them and it made Mikey a little self-conscious. He didn’t ever remember feeling that way around any of his brothers before. In fact, Mikey usually enjoyed having an audience.

His audience didn’t usually include Raph though. Raph had always made a great show of ignoring Mikey. He wasn’t doing that now.

Raph couldn’t be worried about Mikey spilling the beans about the bite. If Mikey was going to do that, he’d already had plenty of opportunities to tell either Leo or Don.

It was all a big mystery to Mikey. So too was how Leo had glanced at his collarbone at least twice but hadn’t said anything. If he’d forgotten about it he wouldn’t have looked.

Puzzles, puzzles everywhere. As if Mikey didn’t have enough stuff to confuse him as it was.

An hour later Leo finally released Mikey from his practice session. Although Mikey wanted nothing more than to apply an ice pack to his side and sit down, he stalled around thinking Leo would leave. Then Mikey could have a few minutes alone with Raph.

Unfortunately, Leo pulled his swords and quirked an eye ridge at Mikey. It figured that even after spending the whole morning in the dojo, Leo appeared to be dead set on spending the
afternoon there as well.

Right along with Raph, who showed no indication that he was planning to leave anytime soon either.

With a mild huff, Mikey moved out of the way so that Leo could start shadow boxing with his giant Ginsu steak knives. Pausing in the doorway, Mikey glanced over at Raph, hoping he’d choose to leave too. Their eyes met but the expression in Raph’s was unfathomable and after a second, he turned away to switch out weights.

Mildly annoyed, Mikey made his way upstairs to gather his breakfast tray and the ice pack. By the time he made it back downstairs and into the kitchen he was really feeling his bruised rib, so he wasted no time in refilling the pack with as much ice as he could stuff into it.

Since the comfort of the couch was only a few feet away, Mikey headed in that direction. Settling against the cushions, he used a throw pillow to prop the ice pack up against his side and then lifted his feet onto the coffee table.

Sighing in relief, Mikey felt around him for the remote before realizing that it was sitting on his father’s favorite chair.

“Shell,” Mikey muttered under his breath.

As he was trying to decide if it was worth the effort to get up, Donatello strolled into his line of sight, some kind of electrical doodad in one hand and a screwdriver in the other.

“Perfect timing, bro’!” Mikey exclaimed happily. “Could you pass me the remote?”

“Hmm?” Don hummed absentmindedly. Looking up, he saw where Mikey was pointing and said, “Oh, sure.”

Taking the remote off the chair, Don sat down in its spot and then looked at the device as though it was some foreign object.

“Earth to Donny,” Mikey said. “The remote?”

Blinking rapidly, Don tossed the remote to his brother and then sat there staring at him.

Instead of engaging the television array, Mikey looked at his brother quizzically, wondering why Don was behaving so oddly.

“What’s the matter, did I grow a mustache?” Mikey asked.

“No,” Don said emphatically. “Of course not. Sorry. I’m trying to figure some things out.”

“That gizmo in your hand?” Mikey asked.

Don looked at it as though he’d forgotten he was holding something. “Not this. This is easy. This I could fix with my eyes closed.”

“Something else needs fixing?” Mikey asked, wondering where his genius brother’s head was.

“I don’t know,” Don responded, still giving Mikey a strange look. “You tell me.”

“That makes no sense,” Mikey said. “You want to be more specific?”
“I feel like something’s going on around here and I’m completely out of the loop,” Don told him.

“For instance?” Mikey asked, prompting him. There was no way Mikey was going to volunteer anything, but he wasn’t going to pass up the chance to pump his brother for information.

“For instance an hour ago in the dojo,” Don said. “I don’t think I’ve ever heard Raph defend you like that before.”

“That’s what you call defending me? Sounded more like Raph telling Leo not to go too easy on me,” Mikey said.

“Usually Raph doesn’t even get that involved in something that doesn’t regard him,” Don said.

Mikey shrugged, trying to appear nonchalant. “Don’t ask me, I just work here.”

Don eyed him. “You’ve changed,” he declared. “I can’t put my finger on it, but you aren’t reacting to things the way you used to. You seem more . . . mature.”

“Wow, you say that like it’s not a good thing,” Mikey said sarcastically.

“Oh it is,” Don rushed to say. “Believe me, it is. I just wonder what brought about the sudden change.”

“Maybe it’s not so sudden,” Mikey countered. “Maybe you just haven’t noticed it until now. Raph’s not the only one around here who tends to get wrapped up in himself. What do you care anyway?”

“I don’t know that ‘care’ is the right word,” Don said. “More like curious.”

“I would think you had plenty of other things besides me to be curious about,” Mikey said.

“Actually I do,” Don said. “I’m curious why Raph is behaving differently too. Or why he and Leo seem to be at odds about something but they aren’t openly fighting like they usually do.”

“If your curiosity is killing you that much, why don’t you just ask them about it?” Mikey inquired pointedly.

“I already asked Leo,” Don said. “He dodged my questions pretty much the same way you are.”

“I’m not dodging anything,” Mikey countered. “I’m just being myself. You’re the one who thinks you’re seeing things that aren’t there.”

“All right, leave me out of it,” Don said, standing abruptly. “But if something blows up in your faces, don’t come to me with a request to fix things.”

He didn’t wait for a response from Mikey before walking away. As Don went back to his lab, Mikey’s eyes followed him, staying on his brother until Don shut his door.

Rather than turning on the television, Mikey sat holding the remote and staring at the blank screens. Up until now he’d thought Don was privy to most of the stuff going on in Leo’s head because Mikey was sure his older brother confided in the genius.

It sure sounded like that wasn’t the case. At least not with regards to whatever it was Leo
had been trying to hint at this morning with the whole ‘Raph has demons’ routine. Big bro’ sure was one to be cautioning him about secrets. If he did it again, Mikey was going to call him a hypocrite.

No longer interested in TV, Mikey glanced towards the dojo entrance, wondering how much time Leo and Raph intended to spend in there today. Mikey’s stomach hinted to him that lunch would be welcomed and he decided to check in with his brothers. An offer to make enough for all of them might lure them out and give Mikey an opportunity to peel them away from each other later.

Mikey held onto the ice pack as he pushed himself upright and sauntered back over to the dojo. As he neared the entrance, he noticed that it was pretty quiet in there.

Something about that made him cautious and rather than just walking in and announcing that it was lunch time, Mikey stopped to lean his shoulder against the wall, bracing himself so that he could peek inside the room.

Far off to one side of the dojo, near the weight rack, Leo and Raph stood facing each other. They were close together, mere inches apart, and Leo had a tight grip on Raph’s arm.

Both were wearing very serious expressions as they conversed in undertones so low that Mikey could not make out a single word. He had never seen them do that before.

As he watched, Mikey saw Raph place a hand on Leo’s shoulder and push him. Leo didn’t move other than to shake his head and latch onto Raph’s other arm.

The sound of Master Splinter’s shoji sliding open pulled Mikey away from the dojo entrance and he moved towards the kitchen swiftly so as not to be caught eavesdropping.

Whatever Leo and Raph were talking about, Mikey had a feeling it involved him. Mikey wasn’t sure if he liked that or not.

Above all else, Mikey wanted to know what they’d been saying. And why they had to be standing so close to each other to say it.

TBC…………….
Chapter 13

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,135 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 13 Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey

After witnessing the mysterious conversation between Leo and Raph, Mikey had high tailed it to the kitchen, getting there before his father did. Needing something to occupy his time, Mikey set about making pizza. A lot of pizza.

The part of the kitchen that wasn’t covered in flour was doused in tomato sauce and half a dozen other ingredients. As Mikey twirled pizza dough high into the air, his mind created any number of explanations for what was obviously a heated discussion between his brothers. Nothing Mikey came up with made him feel any better.

On his first trip to the kitchen, Master Splinter had brewed himself some tea as he watched Mikey set out the ingredients for the pizza. Ever the wise father, he’d said nothing other than he would be back to eat when the food came out of the oven and had then left Mikey to his own devices.

Upon his return, Master Splinter paused in the kitchen doorway to survey the mess his youngest son had made. Mikey saw him out of the corner of his eyes but studiously avoided looking directly at his father, knowing that would be tantamount to admitting he felt guilt over the disaster he’d made of the kitchen.

Stepping past the threshold, Master Splinter chose a seat that wasn’t festooned with pizza components. He remained quiet as he contemplated his son.

Mikey couldn’t very well ignore his father since his presence was obvious, but the silent observation was slightly unnerving.

Wetting a sponge, Mikey turned to face Master Splinter, a grin plastered across his mouth. “I guess I should clean the table so someone can actually eat there.”

“That would be prudent of you, Michelangelo,” Master Splinter replied.

With a few deft swipes, Mikey gathered the primary portion of the mess into a pile and then swept it into his palm to be deposited in the trash receptacle. After once again rinsing the sponge, he went back to the table and rendered it spotless.

“Viola!” Mikey exclaimed theatrically. “Ready for a few slices, sensei? I made your favorite, double extra cheese with cheese on top.”

Master Splinter chuckled. “Yes my son, that sounds quite delicious.”

Mikey cut the pizza into eighths and returned with three slices on a plate, which he set before his father. “Here you go. Want something to drink?”
“Water will be fine, thank you,” Master Splinter said.

When Mikey came back with the water, Master Splinter caught his eye and said, “Sit here and join me. Food always tastes better if you are sharing a meal with someone.”

Happy that he wasn’t being fussed at, Mikey said, “Sure. Let me pull the last two pizzas out of the oven.”

After that was done, Mikey shoved two more into the hot oven and then piled a plate high with various types of pizza. Fetching himself a bottle of water, Mikey plopped down on a chair and took a large bite from his first slice.

Master Splinter eyed the array of food on his son’s plate, eating his own pizza at a more sedate pace. They enjoyed their food in silence for several minutes before Master Splinter said, “The pizza is excellent, my son. You have surpassed yourself.”

“Thanks, sensei,” Mikey said, beaming at the compliment.

“It is also abundant,” Master Splinter added.

Mikey looked up, winking as he said, “I was hungry.”

“I see,” Master Splinter said musingly. “Is that the only reason for this cooking frenzy?”

Suddenly wary, Mikey said, “Yep, that’s it. No other reason at all.”

Master Splinter waited a moment to see if his son would volunteer more but when nothing was forthcoming, he said, “I ask because you only cook in such quantities when something is bothering you.”

Somewhat nervously, Mikey said, “Nah, I’m good.”

“Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said in a tone of voice that made Mikey pause in reaching for another slice of pizza. “I raised you, my son. I can tell when your psyche is out of balance. You have been off for several days. I am here for you, we all are.”

“I know that father,” Mikey said, heaving a big sigh. “Sometimes there are things you’ve just gotta work out for yourself. If I always lean on you guys, I’m never gonna grow into my own.”

“Family is still part of what defines us,” Master Splinter said. “However, you are right that we must choose our paths for ourselves. Please know that you are not alone. If you find yourself overwhelmed by what you are dealing with, you may still come to me for assistance. I will not judge you.”

That moment was the closest Mikey came to spilling his guts and telling his father everything. But then he remembered that Raph had bitten him, that Leo had an enigmatic discussion with him, and that Leo and Raph seemed to be at odds over something.

Those things weren’t his secrets to tell. “It’s cool, sensei. I know I can always talk to you if I need to.”

Master Splinter accepted Mikey’s assurances with a nod of the head and finished eating his lunch. He spoke no more of the matter, but he did admonish Mikey to clean up the kitchen before he left it.
The urge to cook left Mikey soon after that. He was busy putting the kitchen back into shape when his brothers came in to eat. Don showed first, empty coffee cup in hand.

“Wow, Mikey,” Don said, surveying the spread with wide eyes. “To what do we owe thanks for such a prodigious feast?”

“Maybe I’m just bored, Donny,” Mikey said, a trifle sharply. “Maybe I’m bored and hungry.”

Don snorted and raised his eye ridges at his brother. “Well don’t bite my head off. I was only trying to relay that I’m impressed.”

“Oh,” Mikey said in an abashed tone. “Sorry.”

He could tell that Don was on the verge of questioning him when Leo and Raph entered the kitchen. Neither openly behaved as though anything was going on between them, but Mikey could tell that Raph wasn’t pleased with his shadow.

That moniker for Leo was certainly apropos in the next few days. Though Mikey really wanted to catch Raph alone in order to question him with regards to the bite, he could never get the big guy to himself.

To exacerbate matters, everyone in the lair seemed to have a new found love of togetherness, with Mikey at its core.

Michelangelo always dreamed of being in the spotlight, of being the center of attention. That was one of his favorite things about being in the Battle Nexus tournament and then afterwards, when he won the championship to multiverse acclaim.

Having hundreds of eyes on him, adoring him and his feats of physical prowess, had always been Mike’s ultimate fantasy. Here and now though, he found that he’d never before been so aware of eyes, nor had he ever wished for them to be turned elsewhere.

Not even when it was his own family, which was the case at the moment. Every time he glanced up, he caught someone looking at him.

It didn’t take long for the bruise left by Raph’s bite to fade away. Mikey was actually sad to see it go because that mark had provided him with several rewarding fantasies. Having it disappear was probably for the best though, because as his rib healed, Mikey was expected to participate more in practice sessions. He discovered that makeup had a tendency to slide off of sweaty skin.

Mikey wasn’t allowed to spar yet, but Don was adamant that he work on his flexibility, critically observing each of his younger brother’s movements. Those sessions took place after practice and once everyone else had left the dojo.

“You’re sure you don’t feel any pulling on that side?” Don asked as Mikey performed a perfect split while doing a handstand.

“Nope. Good as gold,” Mikey responded. They’d been alone for fifteen minutes but now Mikey saw a pair of emerald green legs come into his range of vision. “Oh hey, Raph!” Mikey called out in greeting.

“How’s it going knucklehead?” Raph asked, stopping next to Don.
“Watch this,” Mikey said in answer. Pulling his legs back together, Mikey pushed off with his hands and flipped through the air, landing lightly on his toes before bounding upwards again.

High in the air, Mikey tucked his chin to his knees and managed to flip twice before uncurling to nail a solid landing.

“Ta da,” Mikey announced with a flourish. ‘I call that the ‘cannonball Mikey’; I’m gonna use that one the next time we get into a fight with the Foot. It’ll knock them all down like a bunch of bowling pins.”

“More likely you’ll shoot clean off of whatever roof we’re on and end up as green splatter on the pavement below,” Don said dryly.

Raph slapped Don on his carapace and said, “Donny here should know all about that. Let us not forget the time he tried to spin on his Bo staff like a pole dancer in order to kick a whole bunch of Foot soldiers. What happened that time genius? Oh yeah, they stepped back and let ya’ make of fool of yourself.”

“How could we forget when you bring it up every chance you get?” Don retorted, blushing heavily.

“Ha ha, pole dancer!” Mikey teased, before taking a run at the closest wall and bouncing off of it to practice his cannonball routine again.

“Tell me something Donny,” Raph said, his voice low. “How the heck can he move his body in ways the rest of us can’t? We all got mutated by the same stuff.”

Mikey was sure he wasn’t meant to hear that question, but he was rather more attentive to anything involving Raph than he’d ever been before. Once he was standing still again, Mikey bent down to grab the backs of his ankles so he could press his face between his legs. It was another position none of his brothers could achieve.

Holding that stance, Mikey listened for Don’s answer.

“I really couldn’t tell you,” Don said. “Mikey is simply more flexible than we are. It’s possible his carapace isn’t fused to his spine in the same way ours is.”

“Interesting,” Raph said musingly.

Mikey straightened up and turned towards his brothers, finding that Raph was staring at him in an odd way. Raph’s expression sent a tingle of anticipation rushing through Mikey’s system and he hoped that Don would leave the dojo soon.

As if reading his mind, Don said, “Okay Mikey, that’s enough for today. You seem to be healing nicely, but don’t overdo it and I still don’t want you sparring. That bruised rib needs a little more time before you start taking any hits to that side.”

“Yes mom,” Mikey said facetiously.

“I’m going to remember you said that the next time you need me to fix the remote,” Don said as he headed out of the dojo.

Hardly believing his luck, Mikey started towards Raph, words already forming on his lips. He’d only taken two steps when Leo suddenly appeared.
Mikey just barely heard something that sounded like a growl come from Raph before Leo said, “Now that you’re finished with practice, it’s time for meditation, Mikey. You’ve managed to slip out of your last two sessions but sensei said it’s either me or him. Take your pick.”

With a scowl, Mikey said, “If that’s my only two options then I choose you. Master Splinter uses too much incense in his room. I always feel like I’m gonna suffocate.”

Raph stormed off to his punching bag as Leo led Mikey from the dojo.

That night Raph announced he was going over to Casey’s, deflating Mikey’s hopes of pulling him aside for a talk. Never in Mikey’s life had it been so difficult to spend some quality time with his red banded brother.

The following day it was more of the same. When their joint practice ended, Master Splinter held Mikey back so that he could work on mastering the kicks his brothers had been taught. Across the room, Leo and Raph lifted weights.

“Very good, Michelangelo,” Master Splinter praised. “Do it again and this time, turn your left foot out a little more.”

“Like this sensei?” Mikey asked, performing the kick as his father instructed.

“Yes, excellent. Let us proceed to the next form,” Master Splinter said.

As Mikey got into position, he couldn’t help but glance over at his brothers. Leo was on his back lifting as Raph spotted for him, but Raph’s eyes weren’t on his workout partner. Raph’s head was turned in Mikey’s direction, his golden gaze fixed on the youngest turtle.

“Michelangelo, attend,” Master Splinter said, pulling Mikey’s focus back to the task at hand.

The next three-quarters of an hour were given over to Master Splinter’s tutelage as Mikey played catch up in his training. Raph and Leo soon finished lifting weights and Raph turned to his punching bag. With his father and Mikey occupying the section of the dojo that Leo normally used for his katas, Leo left them. He would practice with his swords in an unoccupied section of the lair.

Try as he might, Mikey couldn’t stay completely on target. Every once in a while he would look over at Raph, hyper aware of his brother’s proximity. Each glance was like a video log that imprinted on Mikey’s brain, replaying what he’d seen as he completed tasks for his father.

Raph’s leg muscles flexing as he used his entire body to put power into his punches, Raph’s shoulders expanding as he threw a jab, Raph’s biceps bulging with the intensity of each blow. Mikey couldn’t tell at that point whether his mouth was too dry or he was drooling, so he flicked his tongue out over his lips just to be on the safe side.

The harder Raph worked, the louder his grunts became. It was bad enough that the air filtration system in the dojo was pushing Raph’s scent in his direction, but each of Raph’s deeply guttural utterances were starting to give Mikey a problem under his shell.

Having no idea how much longer Master Splinter intended to keep him, Mikey knew he had to do something to escape, and do it quickly. Otherwise, his manhood was going to pop right out into the open.

One ninja skill that Mikey excelled at was the art of deception. He was a pretty good actor
to boot.

Spinning into a fairly powerful kick, Mikey turned just enough so that he came down at a funny angle. As soon as he hit the floor, Mikey grabbed his injured side.

“Ow!” Mikey yelped, wincing in mock pain.

“Michelangelo, are you all right my son?” Master Splinter asked, stepping over to where Mikey was standing.

“I think I overdid it sensei,” Mikey said, breathing hard. “Donny told me not to, but I was feeling fine and I guess I forgot.”

“Shall I call your brother?” Master Splinter asked, his brow furrowed with worry.

“No, don’t bother him,” Mikey said quickly. “Did I do okay? I can try to keep going.”

“That is more than enough, my son,” Master Splinter said, his hand on Mikey’s arm. “You have caught up to your brothers in your training. Perhaps it is best that you go and rest now.”

“I guess I will. Only if you’re sure, Master Splinter,” Mikey said, sounding as earnest as he could manage.

“Yes, yes. You are dismissed, Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said, returning his son’s bow and waving Mikey out of the dojo.

It took all of Mikey’s will-power not to race for the stairs. The fact that he was trying to keep a good sized woody contained made his gait awkward, which aided the illusion that Mikey’s bruised rib was responsible for his difficulty.

Busy with his sword work, Leo barely glanced at him as Mikey went past, for which Mikey was grateful. It was one of those times where Leo’s uncanny gift for focusing stood Mikey in good stead, because normally Leo was very observant.

Climbing the stairs, Mikey was also glad to note that Don was working in his lab. Mikey would have the shower to himself.

Taking care to lock the bathroom door, Mikey swiftly removed his gear and allowed his penis to drop down. His stiff cock bobbed as Mikey started the water for his shower and he wrapped his hand around it as he waited for the water to get warm.

Stepping under the spray of water, Mikey began stroking himself. Bracing one hand against the shower wall, Mikey lowered his head and closed his eyes. In his mind he watched Raph pummel his bag, imagining how his brother’s muscular biceps would look as Raph’s weight rested on them, his arms to either side of Mikey’s body.

Mikey imagined looking up into Raph’s blazing eyes as he experienced the pain of Raph’s enlarged cock driving ruthlessly into his ass. Almost without thinking about it, Mikey moved his hand from the wall and plunged a finger into himself, pushing in past the first knuckle.

Throwing his head back, Mikey moaned, “Ahh, Raphie, more. Yes, yes . . . nghh, yes!”

Tipping over, Mikey orgasmed, his anal canal tightening around his digit. Pulling his finger out, Mikey leaned his head against the wall and panted, waiting for his climax to run its course.
When he was able, Mikey took a minute to soap up and rinse off, hiding the sight and smell of his deed. He dried himself, flinging the towel over his shoulder before gathering his gear in hand, intending to dress in his room.

Unlocking the door, Mikey pulled it open and came face to face with Raphael.

“Oh, uh . . . .” Mikey stammered, at a loss for words.

“Ya’ done in there?” Raph asked, seeming not to notice how flustered his brother was.

“Y . . . yeah,” Mikey answered. “All yours.”

He didn’t wait around to find out if Raph wanted to say anything else, instead fleeing to his room. Once inside, Mikey leaned back against the door and released a breathy exhale.

How long had Raph been standing there? How loud had Mikey been while he jerked off to visions of his brother performing a sexual act with him? Raph had acted like he’d noticed nothing out of the ordinary, so maybe he didn’t know what Mikey had been doing.

Or maybe he did and didn’t care. That concept was almost worse than the embarrassment of possibly being caught spanking the monkey.

Right there at the bathroom door was the first time in days that Mikey had Raph by himself and all he could do was stutter stupidly. If he’d been at all quick-witted, Mikey could have pulled Raph into the bathroom with him for a private conversation.

Banging the back of his head against the door, Mikey inwardly cursed missed opportunities. With growing determination, Mikey decided he’d try again later. If Raph mentioned that he’d heard Mikey moaning his name, then the younger turtle would just use that as a lead in to the topic he wanted most to discuss.

Once again Mikey didn’t get the chance to tackle his brother. At dinner, Raph said he was heading over to Casey’s to watch the hockey match.

Mikey hid his disappointment, but his mind wouldn’t let go of it. Whenever his brother was home, Leo watched him like a hawk, always there as a barrier between Mikey and his goal. Don and their father both directed more attention towards Mikey than was normal, as though watching for signs that would tell them exactly what it was that Mikey was hiding.

A vague plan to get to Raph at night after everyone else was asleep was foiled by Raph’s evenings out with Casey. A couple of times Mikey had been tempted to chase after Raph, going to Casey’s place as he’d done that night when his behavior in the tunnel had freaked Raph out. The problem with that was that Casey would know he’d shown up and get curious. Their human friend had trouble keeping things to himself and would blab about it to the rest of Mikey’s family.

The whole predicament was frustrating. How could Raph just bite him like that and then not want to talk about it?

It was a comedy of errors, Mikey decided. Leo watched Raph constantly. Leo, Don, or Master Splinter were always hovering around Mikey. Raph tended to stare at Mikey more than usual.

Mikey had to wonder if all of that had something to do with the talk Leo and Raph had days earlier. Raph had obviously not liked what Leo was saying to him, but Leo’s grip on his brother’s arms sure looked suspiciously possessive.
Leo had alluded to Raph’s demons, but the leader didn’t know about Mikey’s. There was no way that Leo could keep Mikey away from Raph forever. Mikey was eventually going to have his answers, even if he had to walk over Leo to get them.

That was if Raph didn’t do it first. Mikey couldn’t be sure, but it almost seemed that Raph was going out of his way to be in the same room with his younger brother. Which didn’t explain his going to Casey’s, unless the temptation to defy Leo was growing too strong.

With a snort Mikey finally gave up on the whole circular thinking thing and went to bed.

The next day, Mikey’s fib to his father about his rib bothering him came back to bite him in the ass.

On the wall in Don’s lab was a large, detailed map of New York City streets and the brothers were gathered around it. They hadn’t been out since helping Nobody spoil Hun’s sale of weapons, but they planned on breaking that streak tonight.

“Here,” Leo said, pointing to a spot on the map. “Tenth Street runs this way to West Street on the Hudson, then intersects with West Fourth. In here is the section of the village district that Casey had information about.”

“What was it that Casey said was going on?” Don asked.

“He said some guy he works with occasionally told him he heard some gang was staking out one of them fancy restaurants in the West village,” Raph said. “Thought they were planning to rob the place after it closed either Friday or Saturday night ‘cause that’s when they’d have the most cash on hand.”

“Casey told Raph that his informant mentioned the gang wore jackets with a purple dragon on them,” Leo said, taking over the story. “We’re going to check that tip out and see if we spot anyone watching a particular restaurant. Since we don’t know which one it is, we’ll split up and check different areas.”

Using his finger, Leo slid it along a section of the map. “Raph will cover this area.” Moving his finger, Leo said, “Don, you take this area and I’ll work my way through the remaining sector.”

“Hey, what about me?” Mikey asked.

“You’re staying home,” Leo said, turning to look at Mikey, his expression severe. “Master Splinter told me your side was bothering you yesterday during practice, something you failed to mention to Donatello.”

Mikey shrugged. “I don’t need my ribs to look for something, just my eyes.”

“We’re going to be travelling across roof tops, Mikey,” Don said patiently. “That kind of jumping will put more of a strain on your bruised rib than you need right now. You have to give it time to heal properly.”

“And though we have no intention of getting into any fights tonight, we still might,” Leo said. “We can’t afford to have you incapacitated by a lucky blow. That would put you and the rest of us at greater risk.”

“This stinks on ice,” Mikey protested. “Staying home alone is boring. Even Casey gets to have more fun than I do.”
“Casey ain’t going either,” Raph said. “April has him driving over to Jersey to pick up stuff she bought from an estate sale.”

“You won’t be home alone,” Don said. “Master Splinter will be here.”

“That’ll be fun,” Mikey said morosely. “I’ll have my choice of watching soap operas or doing even more meditation than I’ve already been forced to do.”

“Well I’m sorry, Mikey,” Leo said, though he didn’t actually sound like he meant it. That was confirmed by his next words. “Maybe you’ll think of this next time you lose focus on your surroundings and decide to pull a stunt that will cause you to injure yourself.”

“Oh, I’ll bet it felt good to get that out of your system,” Mikey responded sarcastically.

“Mikey . . .” Don began.

“No forget it,” Mikey said, waving him off. “Go have yourselves a blast. Maybe you can grab some take out from one of those expensive restaurants and eat all of it without bringing me any.”

Aggravated, he stomped off. Noting that the living area was empty, Mikey plopped down on the couch and switched on a video game, turning the volume up louder than normal to drown out the sounds of his brothers leaving the lair.

The fact that it was his own fault that he was stuck at home didn’t do much to mollify Mikey’s irritation. Bruce Lee once said that, “If you don’t want to slip up tomorrow, speak the truth today.” Mikey’s lie to Master Splinter sure was a slip up.

Mikey lost track of time as he played games he’d already gone through dozens of times before, his mind sub-divided between the action onscreen and his situation at home. It finally dawned on him that he wasn’t really enjoying himself and even though Master Splinter could meditate through a hail storm, he couldn’t sleep through one.

Turning off all of the electronics, Mikey tossed the remote onto the couch. Standing, Mikey enjoyed a good stretch and a wide yawn, deciding not to wait up for his brothers. Let them think he didn’t care whether they made it back for not.

Of course he’d have his shell cell on the night stand next to his bed, just in case.

Yawning again, Mikey stepped into his room and flipped the light switch but nothing happened. Frowning, he tried it a couple of times before giving up and pushing his door closed. It wasn’t as if he didn’t know his way around his own room in the dark.

Before he could turn around, someone slammed into his carapace and shoved him roughly against the wall.

Taken by surprise, Mikey groped backwards with one hand and tried to push away from the wall with the other. Thick fingers curved around Mikey’s wrist, twisting it painfully and pulling his arm up behind his shell. Another strong hand slammed down on top of Mikey’s as he grabbed at the wall, his assailant’s superior strength trapping Mikey’s arm.

A familiar scent wafted into his nostrils and Mikey gasped.

“Ya’ like this, Mikey? Is this what ya’ been waiting for?” Raph asked, his voice a low rumble.
Raph pressed against him, using his body weight to keep Mikey from moving. Stunned, Mikey’s mind went blank.

Wrenching Mikey’s trapped arm up higher on his shell, Raph said, “Answer me.”

It was incredible how menacing his own brother’s voice could be and even more amazing how Mikey’s body was reacting. A shiver ran through his form as Mikey managed to ask, “How . . . how did you get away from Leo and Don?”

“That ain’t your concern,” Raph husked into his ear, rocking his hips against Mikey and pushing the younger turtle’s thighs into the uneven bricks in front of him. “Answer my question.”

“Yes,” Mikey hissed as Raph’s knee jammed its way between his legs.

“Pain gets ya’ off. Rough gets ya’ off,” Raph intoned, his tone seductive and coarse.

“Yes,” Mikey moaned, feeling himself harden quickly.

Raph leaned into him, forcing the side of Mikey’s face onto the wall, his plastron flattening against the bricks with a rasping sound. Pulling Mikey’s arm up a bit more had the younger turtle on his toes and panting rapidly.

“It ain’t a gag is it, Mikey?” Raph asked, insistent.

Groaning, Mikey whispered, “No.”

“Didn’t think so,” Raph said. “Ya’ know I can smell your need, don’t ya’? The others can’t tell what it means but I can. Ya’ know why?”

Shifting again, Raph rubbed his pelvis against Mikey’s stiff tail, wrenching a sharp cry from his trapped brother.

“N . . . no,” Mikey stuttered, his cock making an appearance and starting to throb.

“’Cause that scent is meant for me,” Raph told him. “It says you’re ready and willing. That’s what ya’ are right, Mikey? Willing to let me do anything I damn well please?”

Without waiting for an answer, Raph lunged forward and latched onto Mikey’s neck with his teeth, right at the base of his skull.

“Oh Gods yes!” Mikey cried out, his cock bounding upwards and colliding with the wall. Shaking with need and breathing hard, Mikey tried to thrust against the bricks, desperate for relief. Raph’s hand slid down from his brother’s arm, stroking his bridges before reaching around in front of Mikey to fondle his cock.


Mikey’s keening protest was low. “Don’t leave m . . . me like this.”
“Got no choice,” Raph said with a dark chuckle. “Ya’ better keep this to yourself.”

“How?” Mike asked, trying to push his leaking cock into Raph’s hand, though his brother refused to grip it properly. “You bit me again.”

“Ya’ figured out how to hide the last one,” Raph said, giving Mikey’s wrist a hard squeeze. “Figure out how to hide this one.”

Just as quickly as he’d attacked, Raph released his brother.

Though he felt Raph’s body heat moving away, Mikey stayed where he was, wailing, “No! Please st . . . stay . . . .”

His door opened, the light from the corridor outlining Raph’s form. His brother paused for a second, then reached over and grasped Mikey’s tail.

Squeezing the appendage impossibly hard, Raph yanked down on it and then let go as he disappeared.

Mikey climaxed hard, his cum spurting out in long milky ropes to splatter against the wall of his bedroom.

TBC…………….
Chapter 14

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 4,490 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 14 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Despite all of the possessions that filled Mikey’s room, with Raphael no longer present it felt empty.

So did Mikey. The brief period of euphoria that followed his release was rapidly replaced by questions stacked on top of more questions. Heading that list was why Raph had felt the need for their interlude to be so clandestine.

They lived together. The brothers went into each other’s rooms to visit all of the time. Raphael could have easily chosen to come to him at any given moment without raising the least bit of suspicion. Yet Raph had decided to seek answers at a point when he was supposed to be elsewhere.

That he’d snuck off without Leo’s knowledge was obvious because Raph had made it clear he couldn’t stay long. So why was it imperative that he be so secretive?

Mikey sat on the edge of his bed, arms propped on his knees and his head down as he tried to make sense of what had just happened. From the way his tail throbbed, he was fairly certain it had been bruised. Now that his sweat had dried, the sting had gone from the bite on his neck, but it was still sensitive to the touch.

There had been a spot of blood on his finger when Mikey had pulled his hand away. Raphael had broken the skin this time and Mikey had loved it.

If he needed a reminder of how much he’d loved it, which he didn’t, all Mikey had to do was look at his wall. Having tightened the light bulb that Raphael had loosened when laying his trap, the evidence of their encounter was now clearly visible. That thought was what finally pulled Mikey out of his sex induced stupor and onto his feet. He had to clean up that mess before his brothers came home.

Bleach might have been overkill, but it did a great job at destroying odors. By the time Mikey had scrubbed a broad expanse of the wall and the floor, his room reeked of bleach. A dead body could be tucked in the corner and no one would smell it.
His brothers had not returned by the time his cleaning job was finished, so after Mikey returned the tub to where it belonged and tossed out the dish rag, he headed in to shower.

Mikey washed every square inch of his body, double soaping anywhere that Raph had touched. He only dabbed gingerly at the bite mark on the base of his skull though, needing it to be clean so he could evaluate the damage. Making it sting again wasn’t high on his list of smart things to do because he did not need to be stimulated for a second time tonight.

Once more he delved into the drawer filled with April’s leftover cosmetics and found a much used powder compact. Inside the top was a mirror and turning his back to the big mirror over the sink, Mikey used the smaller version to examine the bite mark.

It was a beauty. Fortunately Raph hadn’t opened his mouth wide, using only the central section of teeth, so the mark didn’t cover as large an expanse of neck as Mikey had first feared. Hair would have done a great job of disguising the bite, but that wasn’t an option for a turtle.

Neither was that handy stick of green concealer. It would disguise a little of the redness so it wouldn’t stand out so much, but it was not going to hide it completely.

If it was the dead of winter when it sometimes got cold in the lair, Mikey could have worn a scarf. That would work right up until practice time, when Mikey would have to remove it.

The idea of ‘hair’ and ‘scarf’ did give him an idea though. There was one thing that Mikey and his brothers wore practically all of the time. When old ones wore out, they had fabric they could use to make new ones.

Mikey stared at his mask in the mirror. It was a simple enough design, in fact, Mikey could make replacements with his eyes shut. The mask tails hung nearly halfway down his carapace, made to flutter with his movements and distract enemy eyes from targeting his neck.

There was nothing to say the tails themselves couldn’t be a little wider. It wouldn’t take much; a half an inch per tail should accomplish his goal. When Mikey wasn’t moving, the mask tails would hide the mark on his neck just fine.

Now Mikey just had to think of a way to keep them down when he was moving. Since April’s drawer full of tricks had helped him out twice now, he dug around in it again to see what treasures he could find. Right away he latched onto a small spray bottle labeled ‘firm spray’.

According to the legend on the bottle, firm spray was used as a finishing touch to keep styled hair in place. Mikey remembered how April would sometimes climb off the back of Casey’s motorcycle after a long ride looking as though the wind hadn’t touched her hair.

Deciding to experiment, Mikey grabbed his mask off the towel rack where he’d hung it and held it out in front of him. Following the directions on the bottle, he sprayed a fine mist over the mask tails and then waited.

After a couple of minutes Mikey shook the mask and was pleased to see the mask tails remain fairly rigid. They still flopped around some, but when he stopped moving them, they sank back down straight rather than floating around as usual.

Taking the bottle with him, Mikey returned to his room, shutting and locking the door. From a set of bookshelves against one wall he retrieved the plastic storage box where he kept the orange cloth that was the material from which his masks were made.

It didn’t take him long to create a replacement mask, one with wider tails. Mikey looked
over his finished product, nodding to himself. At the last minute he’d decided to shorten the tails as well as widen them, and that helped to lessen their movement even before he treated them with the firm spray.

Mikey was putting his things away when he heard his brother’s return. Though he was very tempted to greet them and ask how their mission had gone, mostly because he wanted to see Raph, Mikey decided against it. He was supposed to be sore at them for leaving him behind and it would be more in character if he pretended not to give a damn.

Quickly shutting off his light before any of them could come upstairs and discover he was still awake, Mikey collapsed onto his bed, suddenly exhausted. With his eyes closed, Mikey focused on the words Raph had spoken while pushing him against the wall, rather than on the action itself.

Raph had said that Mikey was giving off a scent, one that meant nothing to Leo or Don. Mikey knew for a fact that Raph’s smell had changed for him, even though the others hadn’t seemed to notice any difference.

It was almost as if their bodies were moving into sync with each other, harmonizing. Master Splinter would have called it yin and yang.

‘Willing to let me do anything I damn well please?’ Raph had asked. Mikey had screamed his answer because he was more than willing; he needed it.

Maybe Raph needed it too. Maybe they both got off on the rough stuff, just in different ways.

With that thought floating through his mind, Mikey fell into a deep sleep.

Since Master Splinter had known the brothers would most likely be home late from their newest mission, practice had been pushed back until the afternoon. Mikey knew he could lounge in bed if he wanted to, a luxury he’d normally take advantage of.

However, when his eyes had popped open, Mikey found himself wide awake. If he hadn’t needed to talk to Raphael before, he desperately needed to now. With their normal schedules thrown off, there was a good chance that Raph would be available for a little conversation.

As Mikey was making a beeline for the bathroom he noticed that Raph’s bedroom door was closed. Frowning, Mikey looked around to make sure no one was watching him, and then pressed his head against the door. From inside came the sonorous sounds of Raph’s snoring.

Mikey made a face at the door and proceeded onto the bathroom. It figured that the one morning Mikey got up early just to spend time with Raph, said brother would sleep in.

After performing what magic he could with the green concealer in making the bite on his neck less noticeable, Mikey donned his new mask. When he moved his head, the treated tails of the mask shifted very little, a fact that satisfied the turtle greatly. Using the dual mirror trick to survey how things looked from behind him, Mikey was gratified to find that the new design covered the bite mark completely.

Until that mark disappeared, Mikey would have to take care to avoid having anyone get behind him for long enough to look closely at the base of his skull. Having to be constantly on his toes like that would be a bummer, but it was the price Mikey was going to have to pay for his particular kink.
Speaking of prices, since he’d already paid for the lie about his bruised ribs, Mikey figured he’d just double down and let them keep thinking he was too sore to spar. That was the only practice exercise where he’d have to be concerned with someone getting a look at his exposed neck.

Unless he was paired up with Raph where he wouldn’t have to worry about that. Unfortunately, until he knew where the two of them were going with their secret, Mikey couldn’t risk being that physical with Raph in public. Raph’s proximity meant that Mikey had very little control over certain parts of his anatomy.

Putting on his game face, Mikey sauntered downstairs and into the kitchen in search of breakfast. Since he had the time and nothing else to do, Mikey started scrambling some eggs. He noticed that fresh coffee had been made which told him that Donatello was up and about somewhere.

Deciding that he wanted some toast to go with the eggs, Mikey turned from the stove and discovered that Leo was standing not ten feet away from him.

“Geez bro’,” Mikey yelped, hand on his heart, “are you trying to take one of my lives?”

“You’re a ninja Michelangelo,” Leo said sternly. “You should have been aware of my presence.”

“The only thing I’m aware of this early in the morning is my empty stomach,” Mikey retorted. He wondered how long Leo had been waiting there and if his brother had noticed the changed mask or worse yet, the mark on his neck. “Why are you creeping around behind me anyway?”

“I wasn’t aware that I was creeping,” Leo said. “I came in to check on you and see how you were doing this morning.”

“Why? I thought you only cared about real ninjas,” Mikey said, pushing past his brother and retrieving the loaf of bread from the refrigerator. He took great care to keep his body turned in such a way that Leo couldn’t look at the back of his neck.

“You are a real ninja,” Leo responded, watching his younger brother move around the kitchen.

“Wouldn’t have guessed that from last night,” Mikey shot back.

“You’re still angry that we left you behind,” Leo said.

“Nah.” Mikey waved the idea off with a flip of his hand. “I had a great time here at the lair without any of you guys around. I was gonna rearrange my sock drawer but then I remembered that I don’t have any socks.”

“So you made yourself a new mask instead,” Leo said.

Mikey’s hands stilled for a second and then he dropped the bread into the toaster, hoping that Leo hadn’t noticed the hesitation. “Yep, I decided to perfect my sewing skills. Want one? I won’t charge you much. It’s gonna be my new profession since my lame ninja skills are no longer needed.”

“You were not excluded from last night’s mission because your skills are lacking,” Leo said, sounding exasperated. “You know that as well as I do. It’s been a long standing rule that no
one patrols when they’re injured.”

Mikey hoped that Leo would be misled by his pretending to have had his pride hurt and it seemed to be working. At least Leo was no longer focused on Mikey’s new mask design.

Placing his toast on a plate, Mikey scooped eggs from the pan on the stove onto one of the pieces and then smashed the other slice of toast down on top. Taking his breakfast to the table, Mikey made sure to take a seat facing Leo.

“Last night didn’t sound like a patrol to me, it sounded like a stakeout,” Mikey said, lifting his egg sandwich. “But hey, what do I know? I’m not even capable of telling when my super ninja master of stealth brother is sneaking up on me.”

Mikey took a healthy bite of his sandwich, thinking that might be enough of a dismissive gesture to chase Leo off.

Rather than leaving though, Leo pulled out a chair opposite Mikey and sat down. “Maybe I was a little preemptive last night,” Leo admitted. “Lately I’ve been concerned about your behavior.”

Taking his time in chewing his food, Mikey thought about what his brother had just said. It was obvious now that Leo was hoping to squeeze some information from Mikey. If he played his cards right, Mikey could avoid giving anything away and then turn the tables on Leo. There were things that Mikey wanted to know, like what the subject of that conversation between Raph and Leo had been about.

“We already had this talk,” Mikey said after he swallowed the mouthful of sandwich. “I’m starting to wonder about you, bro’. I mean, it seems like everywhere I go, there you are. Granted the lair’s a small place, but you aren’t my tail.”

“Nor am I trying to be,” Leo said. “You’re reading too much into coincidence.”

“Yeah?” Mikey asked, setting his sandwich on his plate and leaning forward. “Is it coincidence that whenever I’m in a room with Raph you make sure you’re there too? What are you afraid is gonna happen, that I’ll hack him off to the point where he tries to bean me with a pipe again? He doesn’t get angry like that anymore and you guys should trust him.”

“That was uncalled for,” Leo said, sitting back so quickly his carapace thudded against the chair’s back. “Nothing in my relationship with Raph has changed and that was a single idiotic mistake on my part.”

“It has changed Leo,” Mikey said, staring at his brother. “You told me that yourself. You got made leader and had your wishes fulfilled. According to you, Raph still has his demons, whatever they are, and maybe, just maybe, you’re holding that over him.”

Leo’s expression changed, taking on a more calculating look. “Is that why you want to be alone with Raph, Mikey? Are you hoping you can help him exorcise those demons?”
Mikey knew he was treading on dangerous ground and needed to word things carefully. “You’re the one who brought them up, remember? Could be that you made me curious or could be that you told me that stuff so that I would be curious. What the heck did you think I’d do with that information?”

“I thought it would make you cautious,” Leo answered quickly.

“Why should I be cautious around my own brother?” Mikey asked. “Whatever those demons are, he’s had them for a really long time according to you. Why should they be any cause for alarm now?”

“Because I think you’re trying to play with them,” Leo said bluntly. “I don’t think Raph is the only one with demons.”

“We all have demons Leo,” Mikey said softly. “Even you. Demons aren’t always evil. Sometimes it’s better to learn how to work with them than it is to keep them buried.”

“Demons come with a price tag,” Leo warned.

Mikey shrugged. “Could be it’s one worth paying. You been telling Raph not to sell his?”

“I hope you guys are talking about buying more coffee,” Don said, shuffling his way into the kitchen. Yawning, he reached for the coffee pot and refilled his cup. “I heard someone say something about price. Is that why you didn’t get any on your last grocery run, Mikey?”

Don’s timing couldn’t have been worse and Mikey had to resist the urge to throw what was left of his sandwich at the genius. “Sorry Donny,” he said, striving to sound apologetic. “I forgot to write it down on the list.”

“That’s okay,” Don said, leaning back against the counter and taking a sip from his cup. “April’s coming by later to bring me a new graphics board, I’ll have her grab some at the market on her way over here. Did Leo tell you that last night was a bust?”

“He hasn’t had the chance,” Mikey said with a grin. “I was too busy fussing at him about being left out.”

Don snorted. “All that we managed to do was get soaked. It started to rain before we made it home.”

“No sign of any Purple Dragons?” Mikey asked.

“None. You didn’t miss a thing,” Don said.

“Don’t try to appease me Donatello,” Mikey told him with fake reproach. “I still resent being left behind. You owe me.”

Don was interrupted before he could reply. “Nobody owes ya’ anything,” Raph said as he entered the room. “Ya’ should be happy ya’ didn’t have to drag your ass out into the cold rain. Did you save me some of that coffee, Donny?”

“The rest is yours,” Don said, stepping aside so that Raph could get to the coffee maker.

Although his egg sandwich was now cold and not very appealing, Mikey began eating it anyway. It gave him something to do so that he wasn’t staring at Raph. That was a good thing too, because after a cursory glance in Raph’s direction, Leo’s eyes had turned back towards the
youngest turtle.

Mikey ignored Leo’s contemplative gaze as he finished his breakfast. Sitting back in his chair, Mikey released a long, loud burp of satisfaction and rubbed his stomach.

“Gross,” Don murmured.

“Ain’t he always?” Raph asked in agreement. He acted and sounded no different from any other day and Mikey wondered just how good an actor he really was.

“Anybody want to help me install some new security cameras?” Don asked. “I’ve finally got enough of the wireless kind so I can replace the old ones in tunnels E-seven through twelve.”

“Can’t today, Donny boy,” Raph said. “I’m on vacuum detail.”

“I’ll do it,” Mikey said, earning a surprised look from Don. “I need to get out of the lair before I go stir crazy.”

“As opposed to being just plain crazy,” Raph said with a laugh, nudging Don with his elbow.

Mikey got up and deposited his plate in the sink, making sure not to turn in such a way that either Leo or Don could look at the back of his neck. Helping Donny install security anything was not on Mikey’s list of favorite pastimes because those jobs were always tedious, but it was better than being under Leo’s watchful eyes.

As Mikey poured some water into the bottom of the frying pan he’d used, he said, “I’ll wash this stuff later.”

“Good, ya’ can wash my breakfast things too,” Raph said as he grabbed a cereal bowl from the cabinet.

Mikey couldn’t resist teasing him. “Oh of course your highness.”

Raph chuckled as he shook cereal into his bowl. “Now that’s what I like to hear. A little respect.”

“Then I’ll be sure to give you as little as possible,” Mikey retorted good-naturedly.

Don drained his cup, setting it down beside the coffee maker and then shutting the machine off. “Come on, Mikey. Let’s see if we can’t get this job done before practice starts.”

“Lead the way,” Mikey said, waving Don on ahead of him.

They detoured around the refrigerator door, which Raph was holding open so he could retrieve the milk. As Mikey passed him, Raph said in a taunting tone, “Nice mask.”

Startled, Mikey glanced at him and saw the smirk on his brother’s face. Whatever Mikey would have liked to say in return was swallowed because Leo was still seated at the kitchen table.

As Mikey feared, the job of helping Donatello install security cameras involved lugging around all of his brother’s equipment and tools, and standing in ankle deep water while the genius was perched on a step ladder. It was monotonous, it was boring, and it was dull.

He couldn’t even rely on some interesting conversation because when Don was that focused on a job he didn’t talk much. Mikey tried to get him to describe the restaurant scene in the
Remembering that Don ate mostly to survive and not from any real appreciation for culinary skill, Mikey gave up. At least the job kept Mikey away from Leo for several hours.

On their way back to the lair, Mikey broached the subject of practice, delving once more into his devious bag of fibs. “Think I can spar today? I barely notice my bruised rib anymore.”

Don eyed him in a displeased manner. “The fact that you still notice it at all should answer that question for you, Mikey. Why are you pushing to do more than you probably should?”

“’Cause I don’t want to be left out of the next patrol you guys go on,” Mikey said. That much was true. He just had to find a happy medium between avoiding a sparring session that might lead to the discovery of the bite mark on his neck and being confined to the lair.

Stopping in the tunnel outside the door to the lair, Don faced Mikey and said, “How about I suggest foot work only, no kicks above the waist, no take downs? We could all use some practice on that technique.”

“Then I can go on patrols with you guys?” Mikey asked brightly.

“We’ll see,” Don answered noncommittally as he punched in the code that operated the secret entrance into the lair.

Mikey grinned. If Master Splinter or Leo had said ‘we’ll see’ it would mean a big fat no. With Don it meant that Mikey still had room to plead his case later.

“I need to put this stuff away,” Don said, indicating the equipment he and Mikey were carrying. “Set that down and tell Master Splinter I’ll join you guys in the dojo in a few minutes.”

“Okay,” Mikey agreed, divesting himself of his load.

The door to Master Splinter’s room was closed as Mikey walked by but he didn’t think much of that because his father rarely left it open. Afraid that he and Don were late, Mikey walked quickly into the dojo only to find that the only one occupying it was Raphael.

“Leo’s in Master Splinter’s room getting some last minute instructions,” Raph said when he saw Mikey glance around. “Where’s Don?”

“Dropping off the stuff we brought back with us,” Mikey told him. Seeing an opportunity, he practically sprang at his brother. “Leo and Don have no idea you came home to see me last night, do they?” he asked, wanting clarity.

“Hell no,” Raph said. “They damn well better not find out either.”

Mikey moved closer to him, unable to resist his brother’s mysterious pull. “I wanna do that again.”

“What makes you think that wasn’t a one-time deal?” Raph asked, crossing him arms over his plastron.

Placing his hands on Raph’s forearms, Mikey leaned into him. “’Cause you liked it as much as I did,” he murmured in a low, seductive voice, “and you said ‘next time’.”

He saw Raph’s eyelids twitch and then in a deeply guttural voice, Raph said, “Ya’ ain’t
worried I’ll bite ya’ someplace ya’ can’t hide? Or leave some bruises ya’ can’t explain?”

“I’m very creative,” Mikey assured him. “Are you so worried we’ll be found out that you’re willing to stop before you find out how much I can handle?”

The question drew a sharp intake of breath from Raph, who suddenly uncrossed his arms and grasped Mikey’s biceps tightly. “You’re playing with fire, Michelangelo,” he warned, his eyes piercing straight into his younger brother’s.

“Maybe I like getting burnt,” Mikey said, gripping the edges of Raph’s shell as he pressed against the larger turtle’s body.

The sound of approaching voices made Raph release his brother swiftly. Mikey still retained his hold, his nostrils wide as he inhaled his brother’s almost intoxicating musk.

“Ain’t ya’ got any sense?” Raph hissed. “Act normal.”

Stepping back abruptly, Raph broke free of Mikey’s hold, snapping Mikey back to reality. With an excited grin, Mikey back flipped away from his brother, coming to a stop halfway across the room before the rest of his family entered the dojo.

There was no missing the look that Leo shot at both of them, but Raph merely appeared impatient for practice to begin. For his part, Mikey wore an eager expression on his face, anxious to work off the surge of energy that pulsed through his system.

Raph hadn’t turned him down. Mikey knew that meant he was going to get his ‘next time’. He just wasn’t sure he wouldn’t bounce out of his own skin waiting for it.

TBC.............
Chapter 15

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,841 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 15 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Throughout most of the afternoon, Michelangelo found that he was experiencing a great deal of empathy for Spiderman.

His very short but informative conversation with Raphael had left the youngest turtle feeling electrified and hyper sensitive. Mikey was so jacked up that it was like he suddenly had a sixth sense, acutely aware of the proximity of each and every member of his family.

During practice Mikey kicked butt, as he so aptly put it, before Master Splinter announced an end to the day’s session. There was no move that any of his brothers could make that Mikey didn’t anticipate.

The physical activity in the dojo had helped to take some of the edge off but Mikey was still too fidgety to settle down to anything once practice was over. He thought Raph might be feeling something similar because the hot head immediately turned to his punching bag without a word to anyone.

Leo had been so intent on playing twenty questions that morning that he hadn’t said whether they were going to continue their restaurant patrol tonight. Mikey wasn’t sure if he wanted to go with them, or find an excuse to stay home again with the hopes that Raph would sneak off for another rendezvous with him.

It would have been great if Raph would give him a hint as to what Mikey should do next, but his brother had turned into a clam after their short whispered conference before practice began.

Mikey needed information, but he wasn’t going to approach Leo with his questions. He’d had enough verbal sparring for one day and if he’d learned anything from watching Leo strategize tactics over the years, it was that gathering information before proceeding was essential.

Since Raph wasn’t talking, and Leo was out of the equation, that left Mikey with either Master Splinter or Donatello to choose from. Mikey’s performance at practice had been good enough that he thought either of them would approve his going on patrol again, but Master Splinter would surely yield to Don’s expertise in that area.

So Don it was. Squeezing him for information wouldn’t be all that hard since Don was more than likely expecting Mikey to ask anyway. Mikey had brought up the subject earlier after he’d spent the morning helping Don install cameras. When Mikey had asked if he could patrol with his brothers, Don had said ‘we’ll see’. Mikey figured it was time to pin his brother down on that point.

It was Leo’s turn to cook dinner and from the sound of things, his oldest brother was already in the kitchen. Leo was not a great cook because he lacked the imagination required by the
culinary arts and actually considered cooking to be a chore. Mikey snickered to himself, thinking that if Leo ever did anything that earned Master Splinter’s ire, the best punishment would be giving him meal preparation duty for a month.

Mikey had no doubts that though Leo was banging around in the kitchen, he was also quite cognizant of the whereabouts of both Raph and Mikey in relation to each other. Leo could be out of the kitchen and breathing down their necks in a manner of seconds, so Mikey squelched the urge to go back to the dojo.

Instead he went looking for Donny. Finding that the genius wasn’t in his lab, Mikey took the elevator up to the garage and located his brother there.

Don glanced up when he heard Mikey’s approach. “Wow, I would have thought you’d be avoiding me out of fear that I’d find some other boring job for you to help me with. Unless you’re up here because you want something from me.”

Mikey’s grin was disarming. “Maybe your boring jobs are less boring than the lair right now. Besides, Leo’s in the kitchen and the sounds of his suffering were more than I could stand.”

Don’s chuckle was low and soft. “You mean the sounds that represent your future gastric suffering don’t you?”

Grimacing, Mikey said, “Don’t remind me. He promised never to try anything fancy ever again. We’ll probably have plain rice and broiled fish for dinner and I’ll be perfectly happy with that.”

“Every time we talk about that experiment of his it makes me glad I lost track of time and missed dinner,” Don said. He turned his attention back to the onboard mapping console that he’d removed from the van.

“Lost track of time, yeah right,” Mikey said as he gave Don a dirty look. “You skipped that dinner on purpose ‘cause you knew what we were in for.”

Don pointed a screwdriver at Mikey, his eyes twinkling. “Do not try and claim that you were clueless as to Leo’s abysmal culinary track record. Even Raph knew better. Why do you think he scheduled pizza night at Casey’s that evening? Why do you think Master Splinter chose to fast on that particular day?”

“Is that why Leo doesn’t get dinner duty very often?” Mikey asked. “Do you think if I royally screwed up my chores I could get out of them?”

“I do not,” Don said without looking up. “Master Splinter would know you’d done it on purpose. Leo actually tries to cook, he’s just really, really bad at it.”

Silence fell on the pair for a few moments as Mikey watched Don deftly take the console apart, his hands sure and quick. Mikey wondered if Don had trained his hands to work so fast because he was trying to get them to keep up with his brain. There was no way that could happen unless Don gave himself another pair of hands or two. The mental image was so amusing that Mikey laughed aloud.

“What?” Don asked, pausing for a moment.

“Nothing. I was just thinking how you’d look if you had eight arms, like that Indian goddess whose name I can’t remember,” Mikey said.
“Durga?” Don asked. He shrugged. “That would be handy, I have to admit.”

“Think you’d stick with one Bo staff or two?” Mikey asked.

“Hmm, maybe just the one,” Don said as he pried the back off the console and laid the inner components bare. “The length of the staff in relation to the proximity of the arms would make handling two problematic during a battle.”

“You could always switch to swords,” Mikey said. “Image Leo’s face if you’re fighting with eight while he’s still stuck with two.”

“You’re doing a lot of imagining tonight, Mikey. And a lot of picking on Leo,” Don said musingly.

“He’s been picking on me,” Mikey said, crossing his arms. “Speaking of which, he hasn’t said one word about patrolling tonight. Are we or aren’t we?”

Don’s eyes drifted up to him and then back to what he was doing. “In other words, am I going to announce that it’s safe for you to go with us if we go? You didn’t have to beat around the bush bro’. You could have asked outright.”

“Okay, so I’m asking,” Mikey said. “Is the restaurant patrol still on and do I get to go?”

“Leo told us last night when we got back that we were on again for tonight,” Don said. “He also said you didn’t need to know that until after we saw how you did at practice.”

“Hmmph,” Mikey snorted. “Figures. He knew I’d dog him all day if he said no outright.”

“Yes he did,” Don agreed. “Before you ask again, I already told him I see no reason why you can’t go. It’s still up to him, so try to avoid being annoying.”

“But Don-ny,” Mikey intoned, “that’s my super-secret weapon.”

“It’s not all that secret, Michelangelo,” Don said dryly.

Mikey stayed in the garage with Donatello, watching him install the graphics board that April had dropped off, until it was time for dinner. They took the elevator down to the lair and while Don split off to wash up, Mikey went to the kitchen and helped to set the table.

Since Mikey often did that as a way of hurrying the start of a meal, Leo didn’t seem surprised at his brother’s offer to help. Mikey took the opportunity to get a sneak peek at what Leo had prepared and as he’d predicted, it was very simple and non-life threatening.

As the family sat down to the meal, Don tipped Mikey at wink. Donatello had such an understated sense of humor that Mikey almost laughed out loud and then he wondered if Don was eating with them because he’d guessed the food would be safe or if he had spy cameras in the kitchen.

While they ate the four brothers and their father carried on a lively and intelligent conversation. They lightly teased Leo about his cooking and Raph tapped the back of Mikey’s hand once when the youngest reached for a bowl rather than asking for it to be passed.

It was all very normal. Partway through the meal Mikey looked up and realized that everyone was acting just as they always did, as though nothing odd was happening to any of them. That struck him as surreal and he had to remind himself that the things that had occurred between
him and Raph weren’t his imagination.

As dinner drew to a close Leo looked up at his family, the expression on his face quieting his brothers. “Last night our stake-out provided us with no confirmation that the Purple Dragons or any other gang were planning to rob restaurants in the West end. We’ll go back tonight and see if we can spot anything. If we find nothing untoward tonight I’m inclined to ask Casey to double check his information. From what I saw that area is too lively, too well-lit, and too well-patrolled by law enforcement to make it a viable target.”

“I’ll call him tomorrow if nothing happens tonight,” Raph volunteered. “Maybe he got his wires crossed or something.”

“It’s possible he heard it wrong or his informant got the area mixed up with somewhere else,” Don said. “I have to agree with Leo that trying to rob anything in that section of the West end would be like committing theft in the middle of Times Square.”

“If Casey can ask around and get that same information from another source, then we’ll continue our patrol,” Leo said. “There’s always the possibility that whatever gang this is has already gathered the intel they need and are simply waiting for a night when there would be a large payout.”

“Guys, can I make a suggestion?” Mikey asked rhetorically, continuing without giving anyone the chance to acknowledge him. “We should stick to the places that have separate bars inside the restaurants. Most restaurants aren’t gonna be doing a big cash business, everybody buys their meals on credit these days. Bars are the only places that still take in a lot of green.”

“‘We’ Michelangelo?” Leo asked, fixing his youngest brother with a stern look.

“Aw come on, Leo,” Mikey said, a hint of petulance in his voice. “You saw me at practice. I’m all healed up.”

A corner of Leo’s mouth lifted and Mikey knew his brother was messing with him. “It’s all right, Mikey. Don told me he thought you were back to a hundred percent so you’ll be coming with us tonight. By the way, your point about the most likely places for someone to hit is well reasoned. We’ll modify the search routes after dinner.”

“And after you boys have put the dinner things away and cleaned up the kitchen,” Master Splinter said, a hint of humor in his voice.

His sons all quickly acknowledged their father’s housekeeping reminder and then shared the clean-up duties equally. When the turtles returned to the map in Don’s lab, Master Splinter went with them, curious about the newest job his boys had taken on.

With his finger on the map, Leo traced out the new route assignments, telling Mikey, “I’m assigning this sector to you because the buildings in this area are older than most in the district. They aren’t very tall and they’re closer together, so jumping from one to the next shouldn’t put any undue strain on your ribs.”

“No problem, dude,” Mikey said agreeably, just happy that he was being included this time around.

“You will maintain a line of communication at all times Leonardo?” Master Splinter asked.

“Of course sensei,” Leo replied. “We check in with each other at regular intervals whenever we have to separate during a patrol.”
“Very good,” Master Splinter murmured. “As the old saying goes, ‘there is safety in numbers’.”

Leo glanced up at the clock mounted near the door and said, “We’ll leave here at ten and concentrate on the places that have bars in them, as Mikey suggested. Be sure you cover every possible spot that would give someone a vantage point from which to watch an establishment.”

“You know, the best place to gather information on a potential target is inside the restaurant or bar itself,” Don said.

Leo nodded. “I’ve thought of that. Obviously we can’t go inside so we just have to hope that part of their forces will be out where they can be found. Even if we talked Casey and April into going undercover in a restaurant, we don’t know which one to direct them to.”

“Yeah, not only that, they might not be able to spot one particular target in the crowd unless Casey had seen ‘em before,” Raph said. “Patrolling separately like this is our best bet bro’.”

Being in such an enclosed space with Raph made it hard for Mikey not to just stare at him, but the younger turtle was making the conscious effort. When his brother spoke though, Mikey could look at him without raising suspicion, and he saw Raph’s eyes flicker in his direction as he delivered that last line. The flash from that golden gaze was so quick that Mikey would have missed it if he wasn’t so focused on Raph’s face.

Mikey wondered what that look had meant, if anything. For some reason, Mikey felt as though Raph’s words had carried some sort of double meaning, but could not imagine what that might be.

“Since there’s still an hour until we leave, I’ve got some findings I need to catalogue,” Don said, looking at his brothers meaningfully.

“He means get out of his lab,” Mikey translated with a grin.

“Be safe my sons,” Master Splinter said. “Caution is more than a byword.”

“It is a way of surviving,” Leo finished for him. “We’ll be careful, sensei.”

One hour wasn’t enough time to really get into a good video game, so Mikey whiled away those sixty minutes by lying upside down on the couch with a stack of his favorite comic books. He heard rather than saw Leo pass by at least twice and Raph a total of three times, once stopping for a moment.

When Raph’s steps came to a halt near him, Mikey lifted the comic away from his face and looked up. Their eyes met but Raph didn’t say anything, nor did his expression change. He merely stared at Mikey briefly before moving on.

Words were Mikey’s stock in trade and not being able to exchange any significant ones with Raphael was driving him crazy. When a character in one of his comics drugged another character in order to get away with a crime, Mikey actually contemplated doing the same thing to Leo so he could spend some uninterrupted time with Raph. The only problem with that was even if it worked, when Leo woke up he’d know exactly what had happened and who had done it to him. The prospect of the repercussions from that was something Mikey didn’t even want to imagine.

The brothers met in the garage at ten. Raph went directly to his motorcycle while Don warmed up the van.
“I thought we were going on foot like you guys did last night,” Mikey said, stopping near the van.

“No, last night we drove to within a few blocks of the start of our search grid and then took to the roof tops,” Leo told him. “If our quarry has wheels we need to be prepared to follow them.”

“Makes sense,” Mikey said.

“Remember Mikey, do not engage in a fight. We’re only doing surveillance and unless something happens, we need to avoid being seen,” Leo warned him.

“I know, I know. Don’t take chances with my ribs,” Mikey said, rolling his eyes. “If one of you guys needs help though, I’m not gonna stand around and watch you take a beating. You can’t ask that of me dude.”

Leo smiled. “I won’t. I can’t expect you to do something I wouldn’t be able to do either.”

As Leo jumped into the passenger seat, Mikey glanced longingly at Raph, who was revving his motorcycle. There was nothing Mikey would rather have done than hop on behind the hot head, but he knew that action wouldn’t go over well with Leo or Raph.

Climbing into the van, Mikey took his seat and watched as Raph drove out of the garage. Don followed along behind him, using the remote control mounted on the dashboard to shut and lock the garage door.

At that time of night it wasn’t a long drive to the West end. The turtles stopped before they reached the crowded restaurant district, parking the shell cycle and van in a dark alleyway before ascending to the roof of the nearest building.

The brothers crossed to the opposite ledge and looked out across the expanse of city before them. For a few blocks there was nothing to see but darkness as both businesses and residents had called it a night. Beyond that was the gleam of light that told the story of restaurants bustling with activity.

Leo lifted a foot to the ledge, leaning an elbow on his knee as he surveyed the street below. Only a few street lights worked at pushing back the shadows despite the fact that the area was deserted.

His brothers waited, knowing their leader was assessing not only what he could see, but what he sensed as well. Finally Leo straightened and said, “We’ll meet back here once we’re certain everything has closed up for the night. Code in every half hour and call about suspicious activity immediately.”

“Will do boss,” Don said.

“Then let’s do this,” Leo said.

“I’m so looking forward to some action tonight. You up for that, Mikey?” Raph asked with a grin, pounding his younger brother’s shell before making the flying leap across to the building opposite them.

Mikey immediately read more into those words than had probably been meant and momentarily froze to stare after Raph’s retreating form. Normally he would have had some buoyant comeback, some snappy retort made quickly enough to reach Raph’s ears, but those words didn’t even make it to the processing center of his brain, much less his mouth.
Fortunately, Leo and Don were both too focused on beginning their patrol to notice Mikey’s sudden statue impression. When he saw them take off in different directions, Mikey’s paralysis left him and he talked his feet into moving.

It took Mikey a few minutes to pull his brain back to the task at hand and he was properly motivated towards his job by the time he reached the beginning of his search area. Crouching down low on a roof top, Mikey scrutinized the entrance to an upscale bistro, noting that even after ten at night the place was still taking in heavy foot traffic.

Through the windows he could see that while the dining area was well filled, it was the bar along one side of the space that had attracted the majority of late night occupants. This was exactly the sort of establishment that would be pulling in enough cash to warrant the attention of the Purple Dragons.

Mikey’s eyes swept across the road in front of the bistro and then followed the line of businesses to either side of it. There was a cross street a half block down on the left and a narrow alleyway a few yards to the right of the bistro entrance.

Deciding to explore the alley first, Mikey had just started to move when he sensed another presence nearby. Leaping to his feet, he spun around with his fists up, only to see Raphael coming towards him.

“Glad to know you’re paying more attention to your surroundings,” Raph said, an enigmatic expression on his face.

Mikey slowly lowered his hands. “What are you doing here? Did you find something?”

“Yeah. You,” Raph responded. “We need to talk.”

Moving away from the edge of the roof top, Mikey said, “We sure do, but five minutes isn’t enough time and we’re supposed to be patrolling. What happens when Leo decides to check on your whereabouts with his shell cell tracker? Dude, we’ll both be busted.”

Raph snorted. “Don’t ya’ think I’d have a plan for that? I left my shell cell back on a roof inside my search grid.” Digging into his belt, he produced another shell cell. “This is Master Splinter’s. I forwarded my line to this one, so if Leo calls, he’ll get an answer and I can still code in. Even Don won’t be able to tell I did that. I want ya’ to do the same thing and then leave your phone here and come with me.”

Mikey produced his shell cell slowly, contemplating Raph as he did so. “But what happens . . .”

“Just do it,” Raph said, interrupting him. “I’ll answer ya’ once we get someplace where neither Leo nor Don can find us. Don’t worry, if they need us we won’t be far.”

Despite his misgivings, Mikey punched in the code that would send his calls to Master Splinter’s shell cell and then placed his phone inside one of the planters that decorated the roof top. When he looked up, Raph was already moving and Mikey had to jump to catch up to him.

After a couple of minutes it was clear that Raph was leading him back to their starting point. Rather than stopping on that roof though, Raph took the fire escape down to the alley where the van and shell cycle were parked.

Raph mounted his motorcycle as Mikey leaped down to the ground. Turning in the seat, Raph told him, “Get on.”
Having no idea what Raph was planning or how far he was going to take them didn’t stop Mikey from doing as he’d earlier dreamed of and climbing on behind his brother. As the motorcycle’s engine thrummed to life the seat between Mikey’s legs vibrated pleasurably, and the younger turtle scooted closer to the hot head, reaching forward to cling to the edges of Raph’s shell.

The route Raph took was on a direct line back to the lair. Mikey was sure that wasn’t where Raph was headed, not with Master Splinter there. Before they reached the alley that led to their garage, Raph turned off into a different alley and pulled into an abandoned warehouse.

Parking the shell cycle near a cement post, Raph hopped off and went back to the opening they’d driven through. A heavy wooden door stood against the wall and Raph pushed it into place, sealing the entry behind them.

Mikey stood next to the motorcycle, his eyes adjusting to the darkness in the warehouse. He was sure Raph had chosen this spot for their talk, but was surprised when Raph strode past him, crooking a finger to indicate that Mikey follow him.

Without a word, Mikey trailed along behind his brother. Embedded in one wall of the empty warehouse was a large metal grate, hinged along the top. Raph curled his fingers through the bars and pulled the grate upwards before looking back at Mikey.

“Get in there,” Raph said.

Mikey’s normal reaction to a command to enter a strange dark place would have been all verbal, but there was nothing ordinary about anything between him and his brother at the moment. He stepped through the opening and then waited as Raph came in behind him, lowering the grate back into place.

“I got something I want ya’ to see,” Raph said, using a pencil flash to light the way as he led Mikey through an access tunnel and then down a flight of stairs. An opening ahead of them took them into the sewers and Raph made a right turn into an area that Mikey did not recognize.

“We’re close to the lair,” Raph said, “but this section of tunnel ain’t connected to any of the ones near our home. I found this when I was exploring the area, looking for a place to. . . .”

His voice trailed off and Mikey prompted him, “A place to what?”

Raph made another turn and stopped in front of a metal door. “A place to hide what I am.”

He extracted a key from his belt and unlocked the door, shoving it open and then stepping inside. Mikey hesitated at the threshold, noting that the air didn’t smell at all musty, and then suddenly there was light.

“Come on in,” Raph said, smirking at his brother.

As Mikey entered, Raph closed and locked the door behind him. Mikey barely took note of that fact as he looked around at what was a fair sized room, the walls made of brick and the floors polished wood that had been swept clean.

The lights came from sconces mounted on the walls. Not all of them were lit, giving the room a dull golden glow. There was a long wood bar on the left side of the room with a dusty mirror mounted on the wall behind it. Pedestal bar seats lined the space in front of the bar and against the back wall was a stack of tables and chairs in varying states of disrepair.

It was the right side of the room that drew Mikey’s attention. Pipes ran along the wall and
ceiling and dropped down into an enclosed cubicle, most likely a restroom, located nearer the entrance to the room. At the back of that area was a large bed constructed of a box spring with two mattresses piled on top of it. To one side of the bed was a good sized cedar chest and at the foot of the bed was its twin.

Mikey slowly walked to the bar and looked over, half expecting to see sliced limes and liquor bottles. What he found was that an ice chest was in residence on the floor back of the bar and pretty much nothing else.

He was aware of Raph’s eyes tracking him as Mikey made his way to the other side of the room, first inspecting the cubicle and finding that it did indeed contain a washbasin, toilet, and a tiny shower stall.

Heart pounding, Mikey took a few tentative steps towards the bed and then stopped, finding it suddenly hard to breathe. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw that Raph had not moved away from the door, though he was avidly watching each of Mikey’s movements.

“What . . .” Mikey began, his tongue feeling thick. Swallowing, he tried again. “What is this place?”

“It was built as a bomb shelter sometime back during World War I,” Raph told him. “After that it got converted into a speakeasy. I read somewhere that there were a lot of these built in New York City back in the day and started looking for some. Got lucky when I found this one so close to the lair.”

“Why?” Mikey asked, dumbfounded at learning of his brother’s secret.

All signs of the smirk were gone from Raph’s face, replaced by a seemingly dark veil that spoke of inner shadows. Only his golden eyes seemed to shine, perhaps enhanced by the lighting or the quirk of nature that had given Raphael such unusually colored irises.

“I think ya’ already know,” Raph said. “I thought maybe you’d figured it out that night when I caught ya’ in the tunnels after you’d screwed with me during practice.”

Sudden understanding dawned on Mikey. “Is that why you were so pissed? It’s why you never told anyone about what happened isn’t it?”

“After ya’ came to Casey’s and apologized, I could tell ya’ didn’t have a clue about me,” Raph said. “I didn’t buy into that whole idea that it was a con of yours either, but I needed time to figure out what was going on in your head.”

“You pretended to think I was playing an elaborate prank on you because you were trying to keep your secret?” Mikey asked. “I thought you were just giving me a way out to save us both a lot of embarrassment.”

He started towards his brother and Raph immediately lifted his hands and patted the air in front of him. “Stay back,” Raph warned. “You stay on that side of the room until we get done talking. You’re giving off that scent again and I know I probably am too.”

Mikey chuckled, though not with any real humor. “I guess we don’t really have the time for anything else, not when we still have to patrol our sections of the West end before we report back.”

“Forget about that,” Raph said. “I made that shit up.”

Startled, Mikey asked, “Made what up?”
“The whole story about Casey’s informant and Purple Dragons looking to hit a restaurant,” Raph answered. “It’s completely bogus. I picked the West end ‘cause it’s not too far from this place as the crow flies and from here we ain’t far from the lair. I made up another one for Casey so he doesn’t spill the beans that I was using him for cover. He thinks I’ve been talking to someone in the police department gang unit who’s willing to forget I’m a freak who likes to wear costumes in exchange for us sharing gang info with each other.”

“Casey’s a terrible liar,” Mikey pointed out.

“That’s why I told him to stay away from us for a while,” Raph said. “I told him I was only gonna work this gag a couple of times as a way to go topside alone and then I’d tell ya’ guys the Purple Dragons decided the West end was too high profile and changed their minds about hitting anyplace there. That’s true too, Hun is a dumb ass, but he ain’t dumb enough to run straight into the cops arms. Only Leo doesn’t know the Purple Dragons as well as I do, so he wouldn’t realize them idiots going after a restaurant doesn’t make sense.”

“Pretty elaborate story for something that you can only pull a couple of times,” Mikey said, his eyes narrowed as he contemplated Raph.

“I didn’t know ya’ was gonna get your happy ass grounded,” Raph snapped. “The whole point of making up something that’d force us to split up during a patrol was so I could get you alone for a talk. There wasn’t enough time last night with ya’ being stuck at home, so I had to make do with delivering my message in a more straightforward way.”

Mikey shivered, remembering how Raph had crushed him against the wall of his bedroom, forcing him through pain and coarse words to acknowledge the truth of his perversion.

“I like pain,” Mikey conceded slowly, his eyes never leaving Raph’s, “not in general, but just from you. It . . . it gets me off.”

Raph nodded. “That was pretty obvious last night. I’m glad last night worked out the way it did. I’d rather have learned the truth about ya’ that way than to show ya’ this room and find out I was on the wrong track.”

“How long have you had this place?” Mikey asked, trying to understand his brother’s motivations.

“I found it a year ago,” Raph answered, his eyes boring into Mikey.

“A year . . . oh, so you didn’t make it for me?” Mikey asked, trying to keep his voice light despite the disappointment he felt.

“Yeah, actually I kind of did,” Raph told him.

“But I didn’t know I was like this until almost two weeks ago,” Mikey said. “I don’t understand.”

Raph licked his lips, drawing a deep breath as he said, “Remember when we were kids and I used to pick on ya’? Like, all the time. I didn’t know why, I mean, I had two other brothers I could have gone after if I just needed the entertainment. The one I always bullied was you. I liked the way ya’ took things, how ya’ rolled with it and kept coming back for more.”

“I liked it too,” Mikey admitted. “Sure sometimes what you did really hurt, but I liked the attention. Then we got older and you stopped. I missed it and I guess that’s why I started playing pranks on you, ‘cause I wanted to get that connection back again.”
“I had to stop,” Raph said. He looked like he needed to say more, but hesitated, as though he had reached a point of no return and wasn’t sure he wanted to cross it.

“We came here to talk,” Mikey said, prompting him.

“This room is the only place where I can be alone when certain urges hit me,” Raph said. “I’ve got a dark side and sometimes I can’t shove it down without help.”

Waving at the two cedar chests, Raph continued, “I’ve been collecting things and when I look at them, when I imagine what I can do with them, it helps get me past those times when the urges are too strong.”

With an insightful leap, Mikey asked, “Leo knows about those urges, doesn’t he? He told me you have demons.”

Raph chuckled humorlessly. “Yeah, that sounds about right. Leo found out a long time ago what I am. He told me I can’t allow those kinds of thoughts to take root; that I can’t allow myself to give in to those needs.”

A minor epiphany hit Mikey then. “That’s why you wanted me to say I wasn’t getting turned on by you when you caught me in the tunnel. Why you told me to stay away from you, that I was sick and fucked up. It was because Leo said that same thing to you, didn’t he?”

There was a pained expression on Raph’s face and it almost appeared as though he wouldn’t answer. When he finally did, it was with a barely heard, “Yeah.”

Mikey suddenly felt a rush of jealousy so fierce it was like a physical blow. In his head he saw Leo gripping Raph’s arms, pressing in close to him, looking for all the world like someone claiming possession.

With a low growl, Mikey began to move towards Raph, ignoring the warnings to stay back.

TBC………………..
“Mikey, stop!” Raph repeated, edging closer to the door. “Stop dammit!”

It was only the fact that Raph obviously meant to bolt from the room if Mikey didn’t do as he said that kept the youngest from marching right up to his brother. Shaking from the physical reaction to his sudden jealous flair-up, Mikey stood stock still in the center of the room, his fists clenched and hanging at his sides.

“When?” Mikey asked from between gritted teeth. “When were you and Leo together?”
“When . . . what?” Raph asked with real surprise. “Never!”

Since it was obvious that Raphael hadn’t expected Mikey’s reaction, the youngest paused to examine his feelings. He’d been so sure that everything Leo had said to him about Raph, the way Leo had been acting, and how they’d been so secretive in the dojo, had meant that Leo was laying a claim to the hot head.

“Leo told me you guys were inseparable when we were younger,” Mikey said slowly.

“Inseparable and together ain’t the same thing, Mikey,” Raph said. “Geez, are ya’ actually jealous of old Fearless?”

“I’m jealous of anybody that gets close to you,” Mikey blurted. Realizing how that sounded, Mikey passed a shaky hand across his forehead and said, “Dude, I’m sorry. I don’t wanna turn into one of those weird stalker types you see in scary movies. I told you this is new to me.”

“You have to learn to control that,” Raph said adamantly. “That’s something you have to understand right now, Mikey. This . . . this room is a secret. My secret. Maybe our secret. It don’t work if ya’ can’t learn to hide things.”

“Is that why you bit me?” Mikey asked. “To see if I knew how to keep anyone from finding out?”

“I bit ya’ because I wanted to,” Raph said, his voice suddenly deeper, more dangerous sounding.

The tone was almost hypnotic, seeming to drift in waves across Mikey’s skin, setting off primitive warning signals that touched the core of his being. Instincts that should have been telling him to cut and run were instead bathing in the prospect of erotic torment.

“Raph . . . .” Mikey moaned, needing more.

Before either could continue down that path, the shell cell in Raph’s belt beeped, breaking the spell. Raph visibly shook his head, grabbing the phone to look at it and away from Mikey.

There was a second beep and Raph said, “Leo and Don coding in. We’d better do the same.”

He punched in a series of numbers and then tossed the phone to Mikey. “Hit star six before ya’ enter your code. I set it up so the code will look like it’s coming from your shell cell.”

Mikey did as he was told, marveling at the level of detail Raph had gone to in order to have a private conversation with him. Amend that, he thought as he threw the phone back to Raph. A private and very delicate conversation.

It was time for some straight answers. Not understanding everything that was going on around him was part of the reason that Mikey was having uncharacteristic fits of temper and jealousy. Mikey didn’t know how much time Raph’s subterfuge would buy them and he wasn’t going to take chances on not getting to ask his questions.

“How much does Leo know and how did he find out?” Mikey asked firmly. “What am I going to have to deal with?”

Rubbing a hand across his face, Raph said, “Damn, I had this all worked out in my head. I
was gonna tell ya’ my secret and leave fucking Leo out of it. But I guess I can’t, not if I don’t wanna be hiding things from ya’ for the rest of our lives. Whatever we decide to do after we leave this room, it can’t involve keeping things from each other.”

“It’s an issue of trust, right Raph?” Mikey asked, his tone softer. “Me trusting you and you trusting yourself.”

A look of pain marred Raph’s features as he said, “‘Cause I lost it once and almost killed ya’ with a pipe.”

“That happened back when we were going through a lot of changes,” Mikey reminded him. “We met our first human, we had to move because of Stockman’s mousers, and you and Leo were disagreeing about stuff like, every day. You were frustrated and I didn’t help by jacking with you all the time.”

Raph shook his head. “I still shouldn’t have done that to you, not to you.”

“Remember what you asked me when that happened? You asked me if I thought I was better than you,” Mikey said, another light bulb going off in his head. “That wasn’t about me beating you while we were sparring, was it? That was whatever happened with you and Leo coming through.”

Releasing a long sigh, Raph said, “You and your freakish insight. Let me tell this from the beginning, okay? It’s the only way it’s gonna make sense.” He didn’t wait for Mikey’s agreement as he plunged on. “Like I said, when we were kids I spent a lot of time messing with ya’. Couldn’t seem to help myself. Ya’ didn’t run off crying the way human kids on TV do though, ya’ pushed back but ya’ never got really mad at me.

“Then we started growing up. At some point, I ain’t exactly sure when, the fun I got out of tormenting ya’ turned into a need. I couldn’t go a day without being physical with ya’. I started dreaming up new ways to torture ya’ and that led to me lying in bed fantasizing about stuff and wondering how far you’d let me go.

“I wanted to do things to ya’, Mikey. Stuff that got into my head somehow like dark visions. Daydreaming about that shit made me squirmy, made my gut heat up until I got so turned on I was sporting a woody under my shell and trying to keep anyone from noticing.”

“How . . . how old?” Mikey asked in a dazed whisper.

“Twelve, maybe thirteen,” Raph answered. “The hard core training Master Splinter was putting us through helped take the edge off but it didn’t make it go away. There were times I jabbed my sai clean through the practice dummy ‘cause I was so wound up.”

He snorted a derisive laugh. “Don would probably say it was a substitute for my dick. Shit, maybe it was. I’ll leave that psychobabble to him. I got one frame of reference and that’s me. All I know is that controlling myself was getting harder and harder. It was about then that Leo turned into Splinter Junior and started jumping between you and me and saying I needed to control my temper.”

Shrugging, Raph continued, “It wasn’t temper though and I knew it. Pissed off angry was what happened whenever Leo got in my face. That feeling wasn’t nothing like the one I got around you. I’m pretty sure at first Leo thought it was the same; that you were an easy target for me and that’s the only reason I was hurting ya’.”
“So he was playing protective big brother?” Mikey asked. “I didn’t realize that and I sure as shell didn’t need him to do that.”

“Don’t I know it,” Raph said, a corner of his lip lifting and taking a few lines of stress from his face. “Ya’ give as good as ya’ get, always have.”

“So how did Leo figure out the differences in your feelings?” Mikey asked, knowing he was getting close to the core of Raph’s problem with their older brother.

“Puberty.” Raph laughed, a faraway look in his eyes. “Fucking puberty. Hit me hard. Probably worse than it hit the rest of ya’. Wasn’t just stuff like waking up in the morning with a stiff dick or in a puddle of my own jizz. It wrapped around those needs of mine and turned them into urges, ones I could hardly handle. One night they got the better of me.”

When he paused, Mikey licked his lips, ignoring the hammering heartbeat in his chest to ask in a raspy undertone, “How?”

Raph’s gaze was out of focus, his mind turned inward as he relived a past experience. “Even though Leo and I were fighting more often than not, we still spent a lot of time together practicing. One night after the rest of ya’ had gone to bed, me and him met up in the dojo to spar, ‘cause neither of us could sleep.

“Leo was stressing about being the perfect ninja ‘cause Master Splinter had made him leader. Me, I was having those thoughts again and earlier that day Leo had pulled me off of ya’ after I’d forced ya’ up against the kitchen counter.”

Blinking rapidly, Mikey said, “I remember that! You lifted me off my feet and my head connected with one of the upper cabinets. I was seeing stars.”

“Yeah, it was that day,” Raph said, continuing to look back in time. “I was still ticked at him for butting in but I was trying not to show it, ‘cause I knew he’d take advantage of my temper to get me even more out of balance. He’s good at that mental shit.

“After a couple of throws I suddenly realized that I’d gotten stronger than him. I could tell he was trying to adjust his fighting style because we weren’t evenly matched in the power department anymore.

“I don’t know what the fuck crawled into my head. It was partly this thrill that now I had an edge over him and then right on top of that the frustration from his always being in the way.

“He came at me low, moving fast for my legs, and instead of dodging I rushed him like a damn linebacker. I hit him with a lot more force than I should have and took him right down to the mat.

“It knocked the air out of him but Leo still tried for my pressure points to get me off of him and I grabbed his arms and forced them down on the mat. I was straddling his hips, my weight pinning him, and he knew damn well he didn’t have no place to go.”

Mikey listened in fascination, the image spinning in his mind almost as if he’d been there to witness the scene. His mouth had dropped open to form a small ‘O’ and he was barely remembering to inhale, afraid the sound of his own breathing would make him miss something.

Raph’s eyes glittered as he went on. “He tried to tap out. I felt his wrist move under my hand and I answered by grinding both of his wrists into the floor. His eyes got big and he was staring at me like he’d never seen me before. I dug my knees into his outer thighs and despite his
best efforts, Leo let a little grunt of pain escape his mouth.

“I knew I was hurting him and I didn’t care. I got excited by it, by that feeling of control, by *punishing* Leo for constantly being in the way of the things I wanted.

“It was the first time I ever let that genie out of the box and I couldn’t fucking stuff it back in. I could feel myself getting hard and I started rocking my pelvis back and forth, rubbing myself against Leo and just staring down at his face. He was moving under me the whole time, writhing on the ground like a trapped cat who’s twisting every which way to get free.

“I had this sudden urge to wrap my hand around his throat and let loose of one of his wrists so I could do just that. As soon as my fingers closed on his neck, my cock dropped down and it was heavy and solid as a damn rock.

“I was so focused on getting off on Leo’s pain that I forgot how dangerous he can be. It took about two seconds for the feeling to return to his free hand and the next thing I knew, the whole right side of my body went numb.”

“He’s the master of pressure points,” Mikey murmured, still mesmerized by the tale.

“He sure the fuck is,” Raph said with a grimace. “He shoved me off of him and jumped to his feet faster than I could say my first cuss word. I was on my side on the mat, trying to at least lift myself into a sitting position, with my dick hanging out and still at half-mast.

“I ain’t ever gonna forget the look on his face. If I was a piece of shit clinging to the underside of a rotted pig stuck inside a filthy trash can Leo couldn’t have looked more disgusted. Just seeing his expression made my cock shrivel up and pull back into hiding.”

Raph’s attention turned fully back to his brother again, the self-loathing obvious on his face. “No way am I gonna repeat everything he said to me, but it was damn close to what I said to ya’ in tunnel, only without the curse words. He figured out right then that what I did to him didn’t have anything to do with desire for him. It was all about opportunity and the fact that he’d pissed me off.”

Staring hard at Mikey, Raph’s voice cracked slightly as he said, “I didn’t want him Mikey, ya’ gotta believe that. I’ve never wanted him or Donny or anybody else. Just you little brother. And in that moment, Leo knew it.”

“I believe you, Raph,” Mikey told him, swallowing hard.

“Leo made me promise not to act on my desires,” Raph said. “He made me swear it. He told me to control my demons or he’d control them for me. I didn’t have much of a voice at that point, not with his eyes tearing holes in my soul, but I had to ask how he thought he’d do that.

“He said he’d tell Master Splinter. Just like that, no emotion at all. He said, ‘I’ll tell *Father* what you’ve become’. Like I was hiding some monster inside of me. I suppose I was. He stormed out of the dojo and left me sitting there. I was too petrified to move for a couple of hours, thinking he’d change his mind about keeping it to himself and go straight to Sensei.

“I knew, deep down *knew*, that if Master Splinter found out, he’d send me away. Leo understood exactly how that threat would affect me.”

“That wasn’t fair,” Mikey said, feeling a sudden outrage for his passionate brother.

“Yeah well, Leo fights with the weapons he’s got, you know that as well as I do,” Raph
said with a shrug. “Doesn’t mean I didn’t resent having him hold that over my head. Bad enough he was lording it over us with the whole ninja leader shit, but every time we had a disagreement, I could almost hear him taunting me with the fact he knew my secret.

“Then just when I think I’m burying those needs by keeping my hands off of ya’, the whole thing turns around and ya’ started pranking me. I did okay with that ‘cause I could pop ya’ one in retaliation and then stop. Since it wasn’t me starting anything, Leo didn’t pay much attention to it and Master Splinter just thought it was sibling horseplay.”

“I started worrying about Master Splinter too,” Mikey acknowledged. “These last few days I’ve been trying to get you to, you know, hurt me ‘cause I liked it, but I didn’t wanna do anything that would alert sensei that I wanted my own brother.”

“Welcome to my prison,” Raph said facetiously. “Mikey, that time with the pipe, that was frustration just like ya’ said. But it was more than that too. That was me always holding back, always afraid to give it all when we got into it. Always hearing Leo’s voice in my head telling me ya’ was too good for me. It all boiled to a head and I snapped. Only it wasn’t you I was holding a pipe over; it wasn’t you I was seeing at that moment. It was Leo.

“When him and Donny pulled me off of ya’, I freaked out. That incident reinforced what Leo said to me, that I have to contain myself because I’m sick and twisted and dishonorable. I shouldn’t have repeated that to ya’ in the tunnel, but seeing ya’ react to pain exactly the same way I do to dishing it out scared the fuck out of me. If you’d let Leo see that, he would have fucked with your brain the way he fucked with mine. Or blamed it on me and gone through with his threat.”

“None of that’s gonna happen,” Mikey said decisively. “I’m not afraid of his threats. I’ve been thinking about this and I don’t believe that what I want, what turns me on, is wrong. I like it, it makes me feel alive.”

Raph held up a hand, making Mikey pause. “You’re thinking from the receiving point of view, bro’. From the side of things that can only get hurt, not from the side that dishes it out.”

“You worried you can’t stay in command of yourself?” Mikey asked, frowning. “Well I think you can. I think there’ve been plenty of times when you could have hurt me bad but didn’t and besides, I can take it. I know how to keep you from going too far. I know how to give you what you need so you don’t have bad thoughts.”

“Do ya’ understand, really understand, what it is you’re asking of me? The demons, as Leo calls them, they’ve gotten stronger. That’s why I got this place a year ago, so I’d have somewhere to go when an urge hit that I couldn’t master. What if I lose it? What if I grow rash or careless? I could do more than just hurt ya’,” Raph said, almost pleading for Mikey’s comprehension.

“We’ll set up ground rules,” Mikey said, refusing to let Raph change his mind. “We’ll use words that will snap you out of it. I can always yell ‘Master Splinter’s coming’.”

Raph laughed shakily. “That’d probably stop me all right.”

Not the kind to let go of something when it was nearly in his grasp, Mikey wore his most serious expression as he said, “Raphael, I want you to do things to me.”

Flicking a tongue across his lips, Raph indicated the cedar chests and said, “Ya’ look in those chests before ya’ decide that. Ya’ look in them and think about what ya’ see. I’m gonna wait up top while ya’ do. Don’t take long; Leo might think he needs to check on us or Don might get suspicious and figure out what I did with the shell cells. Key’s in the lock, make sure ya’ secure
the door when ya’ leave.”

Mikey wanted to argue the point; wanted to explore his own needs for Raph right then, but before he could try to get him to stay, his brother was out the door.

Turning slowly, Mikey eyed the two chests. Debating which to open first, he opted for the one nearest him, which was at the foot of the bed.

Walking over to it, Mikey stared at the top for a second. Despite his overwhelming curiosity to know what was inside, Mikey found that his hands were trembling.

“Stupid,” Mikey muttered under his breath. “How are you gonna convince Raph that you’re brave enough to handle him when you don’t have the guts to look at his secrets?”

With no further hesitation, he lifted the hasp and flung the top back. Nesting inside were a myriad of unfamiliar objects along with a handful of things he either recognized or immediately knew what they were intended for.

Everything looked clean and unused, though Raph had said he looked at them when his urges got too strong. How simply looking at them helped, Mikey didn’t know.

Until he reached inside and lifted out a small whip with nine knotted thongs attached to the grip. Flipping his wrist experimentally, Mikey lashed his own thigh and the resultant sting made him gasp.

Shuddering at the unexpected rush of pleasure, Mikey dropped the whip into the chest. In the back of his mind was Raph’s warning to hurry, but Mikey couldn’t resist the need to burrow into the chest, lifting and examining a few more of the objects as he tried to guess their uses.

There were different types of gags, leather harnesses, various restraint devices that he had no idea how to work, multiple cylindrical items made of plastic and rubber, candles in different colors, paddles, and masks.

It took intense will-power for Mikey to close the chest’s top. He was glad at that moment for his ninja training, which kept him aware of the passage of time and the need to get on with it.

As he took the few steps required to reach the second chest, Mikey ignored the heat growing in his belly and the tightening of his shell. Kneeling in front of the chest next to the bed, Mikey unhooked the hasp, planted both palms on the top, and pushed it open.

A row of magazines and paperback books met his gaze. Randomly choosing a magazine, Mikey held it so that it fell open at will. The page he saw depicted a young man tied down and splayed openly across a bed, red stripes crisscrossing his pale skin. Next to the bed stood a man dressed completely in leather, his head and face covered, holding a leather strap in one hand.

Breathing heavily through his mouth, Mikey replaced the magazine and pushed the paper goods aside so he could look beneath them. Layered under the reading material were coils of rope of varying sizes and materials. Scattered amongst them were tubes of lubricant.

Sure that he’d fully explored that chest, Mikey was about to close it when he spotted something solid looking between the coils of rope. Reaching past them, his hand closed over an object made of cloth.

Because it was soft and malleable, Mikey had no problem extracting it from the chest. As it unfolded so that Mikey could see what it was, he almost choked.
A cloth dummy of nearly his same height and size sprang fully open, its arms out to its sides and legs spread wide. Across the face was one of his orange masks and inside the eyes were blue dots that matched the color of his irises.

Mikey was vaguely aware of the discomfort of his trapped erection as he scanned what was clearly meant as his stand-in from top to bottom. There were tell-tale stains along its length, leaving very little to the imagination as to how they’d gotten there.

Now he knew why Raph had fled the room after turning the chest exploration over to his younger brother. Raph was fearful of Mikey’s reaction to what he was going to find and perhaps just as fearful that knowing Raph wanted to use him in so many perverse ways, Mikey would chastise him as Leo had done.

Returning the dummy to the chest, Mikey closed it with a thud and rose to his feet. After taking a few faltering steps towards the door, Mikey had to stop to catch his breath and talk his spiraling arousal down from dangerous heights.

Once he was sure his system was under control, Mikey strode the rest of the way to the door, exiting the room and locking it up as Raph had requested.

Heading back the way he’d come with his brother, Mikey thought about what he now knew of Raph, and Leo, and himself. Though he wasn’t sure what their next step should be, he was absolutely positive about one thing.

Mikey knew that he couldn’t stop now. No matter what Raph said, no matter his dire warnings, Mikey wanted Raph to use the things in those chests on him.

TBC……………
Chapter 17

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 8,349 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 17 Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey

~~Caution: chapter contains aspects of bdsm and the use of submission devices.

Chapter Notes

Preview image by the amazing Sherenelle of DeviantArt.

Raph was seated sideways on his motorcycle, arms crossed and head turned towards the warehouse entrance when Mikey exited the access tunnel through the grate.

Mikey paused for a moment, looking across the warehouse at his brother. He could tell that Raph had not wanted to see his face as Mikey came out of the secret room. Mikey knew why too; the expression that Raph wore was one of insecurity, fear, and self-loathing.
In that moment Mikey felt an overwhelming connection to Raphael, as well as a deep empathy that was painful. Mikey had experienced those same horrible feelings after his first encounter with Raph, when his brother had told him he was sick and fucked up.

For Mikey that had only lasted a few days but for Raph those emotions had eaten at him for years. In many ways Michelangelo was more resilient than his siblings; he chose to find solutions for negative feelings rather than suffer their stigma.

The same could not be said for Raph, who displayed a brash mask to the world but was in fact in constant emotional turmoil. Mikey could see his brother’s vulnerability showing through and though he knew that Raph would quickly hide it, the chaos was always there beneath the surface.

More determined than ever to learn what they could have together, Mikey walked purposefully up to where Raph waited. Raph’s expression immediately smoothed out and when he turned his head to look at his younger brother, the tough veneer was firmly in place.

“I still want this,” Mikey announced, showing not the slightest hint of hesitation.

For several heartbeats there was no verbal reaction from Raph. He stared at Mikey, his gold eyes gleaming as his jaw worked from side to side.

Finally releasing an audible sigh, Raph said, “Okay. I gotta figure some things out before we go further. Right now we need to get back before we’re missed. Grab the door.”

As Raph climbed onto the motorcycle, Mikey jogged over to the door and shoved it aside. He waited there for Raph to pull up next to him and then hopped on behind his brother.

The return ride to the alley where the van was parked was made in silence. There were so many things that Mikey would have liked to say, but having his words muffled by the wind whipping past his face would have diminished their meaning. Raph was never all that talkative anyway and had already said more than normal during their earlier conversation.

Mikey half expected to find Leo and Don waiting near the van for their return and was relieved to see that they weren’t. Raph parked his motorcycle in exactly the same spot and position it had been in before they left and Mikey knew that was because Leo would have noticed a change.

Once they were back on the roof top, Raph said, “We’ll split up here. Go back to your patrol and make it look good. Ya’ gotta be able to describe a couple of restaurants in case Leo asks. Don’t forget to take the forwarding off your phone and code in, it’s about time we do that again.”

“Wait a second,” Mikey said, stopping Raph as he started to leave. “When and how are we gonna sneak away so we can spend some time together?”

“Leave that to me. I’ll come up with something,” Raph assured him before trotting off towards his assigned search route.

Wasting no more time, Mikey ran back to the roof where Raph had found him. On his mind was the elaborate plan Raph had implemented in order to have a private talk with his younger brother. Mikey had no doubts that Raph could create a situation that would put the two of them in that secret room of his again, and probably fairly soon.

The first thing Mikey did upon arriving at his destination was to retrieve his phone. He’d
been careful to keep an eye out for Leo or Don and was glad to have made it back without seeing
either of them.

Mikey saw that Raph had already coded in again and promptly followed suit after resetting
his phone. Then he took a moment to glance down at the bistro across the street, seeing that the
crowds had started to thin out.

With a satisfied nod, Mikey began to make a quick circuit of his search area. He couldn’t
remember who it had been assigned to the evening before, but if it was part of Leo’s route, Mikey
knew he’d better have a good mental picture of the sector.

As he ran, Mikey thought about the situation he and Raphael were in. Although he knew
they could manage a few clandestine trysts, they weren’t going to be able to keep it up forever.

Nor did he want to, if Mikey was honest with himself. There was no reason for them not to
be together the way they preferred, at least not to Mikey’s way of thinking. What he and Raph
wanted from each other was mutually beneficial and if handled correctly, wouldn’t be detrimental
to anyone.

From what Raph had said, he’d been drawn to Mikey since they were very young. Mikey
knew that he’d always been fascinated by his hot headed brother as well, so they weren’t merely
settling for the proverbial ‘bird in hand’.

Mikey wasn’t sure what Leo’s reasoning might be for not wanting his brothers to fully
enjoy each other’s company, even in a carnal way. Granted, Leo didn’t know that what they had
was a mutual interest, but once he did, how could he argue against it?

As much as Mikey would have loved to simply confront Leo with the truth of these things,
he knew he couldn’t. Raph’s feelings about what had occurred between he and Leo ran too deep
and he wasn’t confident enough about where he stood with Mikey to be willing to come out to
anyone about it.

Nor was Raph at a point where he’d be willing to fight for what he wanted. Mikey silently
cursed Leo for scarring Raph in that way. Mikey had never felt as protective of his passionate
older brother as he did in that moment. Leo had told him that he understood Raph, but Mikey was
sure that he understood Raph much better.

That was when it came to Mikey that it wasn’t Leo’s judgment of him that bothered Raph,
it was that of Master Splinter. Leo had gone straight for the jugular with his threat to tell their
sensei and it was those words that had resonated with Raph for years.

Any type of censure from their father was more than Raph could bear; it was his Achilles’
heel. Raph strove to gain Master Splinter’s notice, worked to shine in a group of siblings that
appeared to achieve greater things. Leo was almost a Master ninja in his own right, the leader, the
right hand to their sensei. Don was the brains of the bunch, a genius whose intellect rivaled that of
the greatest minds ever known.

Mikey was himself extraordinarily gifted, a natural athlete with the insight to see past most
deceptions. Though their father had many times tried to explain to Raphael that his talents were in
the depths of his soul, his character rich and unique in its ability to empathize with the suffering of
others, and his innate protective instincts grounded towards acts of pure unselfishness, Raph
couldn’t understand.

Because Raph refused to acknowledge that he was in any way special, he suffered from the
thoughts that he wasn’t loved. He would never do anything that would earn Master Splinter’s
disdain. That was one of the things that Leo knew quite well.

Raph had told him ‘Leo fights with the weapons he’s got’. Playing on Raph’s emotions
with regards to their father was one of those weapons.

Mikey halted for a moment to think about that. On the street below was a little piano bar
and Mikey could hear the music drifting up to him as he reasoned something out. Fighting with
weapons worked well until you no longer had those weapons.

Removing Leo as an obstacle might be as simple as taking away his sharpest armament, and
in this instance that wasn’t his katana. What Mikey needed to do was to remove Master Splinter
from the equation. Convincing their father that allowing two of his sons to be in a relationship
would transfer all of the power back to Raph and leave Leo holding nothing.

How exactly he’d do that Mikey didn’t know. But now he had a game plan and he intended
to see it through. Let Raph work on ways for them to be together without anyone’s knowledge,
Mikey would spend his time making sure they didn’t have to do that for the rest of their lives.
Raph didn’t even need to know how Mikey was scheming behind the scenes; heck it was probably
better if he didn’t have a clue, that way he couldn’t freak out about it.

Having such a plan in place left Mikey feeling very much in control of his future. He was
never one to accept that he couldn’t have something he wanted and he wasn’t about to entertain
that notion now.

Since he knew his brothers would expect him to be the first to return to home base, Mikey
took a moment to grab an evening paper and then made his way back to their starting point. There
was a large heating unit on the roof top and Mikey took a seat with his shell pressed against it.
From his vantage point he could see and hear anyone approaching.

Opening the paper, Mikey skimmed the comic section and then turned his attention to the
news. He was engrossed in a story of the indictment of a gang of weapon’s dealers and how
Officer John Longer had played an instrumental part in that coup, when he heard someone land on
the roof.

Glancing up, Mikey saw Don coming towards him. With an ingratiating grin, Mikey said,
“Nobody made the news. Apparently he saved the city from an influx of illegal arms.”

“I’m glad to know they’re giving him the credit,” Don said. “It wouldn’t have surprised me
if his boss had tried to hog the glory.”

“I think she got kicked down in rank and assigned to the personnel office after her superiors
found out how she buckled under pressure from that crook Ruffington,” Mikey said. “At least
that’s what I heard.”

Don shook his head. “I don’t know how you find out this stuff, considering we have no
access to the gossip mill.”

“Maybe you don’t, but I do,” Mikey told him, puffing out his chest. “The Turtle Titan hears
things.”

“Did he hear anything during his patrol?” Leo asked, striding up to them.

Both Mikey and Don had missed his arrival, but that wasn’t surprising since Leo had long
ago perfected the Way of Invisibility and the Way of Silence.
“Nothing other than a lot of people having a good time,” Mikey said. “Something we need to do more often.”

Raph’s arrival wasn’t as stealthy as Leo’s, but it was pretty silent for a turtle of his size. He’d heard Mikey’s comment and said, “Kicking butt is fun. Problem is there wasn’t none to kick tonight.”

“I think Casey’s losing his touch,” Mikey said, folding the paper and standing up. “Mostly his tips are good, but this one’s a washout. The only thing patrolling a bunch of restaurants did for me was to make me hungry.”

“Yeah okay, quit your griping,” Raph said, scowling at Mikey. “I’ll give him a call tomorrow and find out what’s going on. Maybe I’ll make it an early morning call and wake his ass up. Teach him to feed me bad information.”

“Please stop saying ‘feed,’” Mikey said with feeling, holding his stomach. “I’m running on empty.”

“Let’s head home before we have to hear any more about Mikey’s appetite,” Don suggested with a smile. “He can have dibs on the leftovers from dinner.”

“Aww dude, I only said I was hungry, there’s no need to punish me for it,” Mikey said and then ducked a swipe to his head from Leonardo.

There was a rumble of thunder from overhead, causing the turtles to look up. “We seem to be caught in an area of low pressure lately,” Don said as he examined the clouds.

“Unless we also wanna be caught in a rain storm, I suggest we get our asses off this roof,” Raph said.

“I second that motion,” Leo said in agreement, leading the way down to the alley.

Mikey did not even glance in Raph’s direction as his brother started his motorcycle. Leo seemed to be in a light hearted mood and if that was because he believed his brothers were back to normal, all the better.

On the way back to the lair Mikey commandeered the passenger seat in the van while Don drove. Leo entertained himself by pulling up a map of the West End on the navigational console.

“See anything we missed?” Mikey asked him after a few minutes.

Leo shook his head. “Nope. We covered everything that wasn’t purely residential. You didn’t see anyone out of the ordinary loitering near a bar or restaurant?”

“Since I don’t frequent either of those things I couldn’t tell you what would be considered out of the ordinary,” Mikey said. “I didn’t see anyone that looked like they belonged to a gang, or anyone doing something shady. Those things I do recognize.”

“I didn’t see anything like that either,” Don said. “There were some big crowds around a few of those places, but they were really well behaved. A lot more than you see in other parts of the city.”

“Maybe that tip wasn’t wrong so much as a decoy,” Leo said musingly. “It’s possible that the Purple Dragons have figured out how to relay false information to Casey. If they find out that works, they might lead us right into an ambush. We need to tell Casey to be wary of anything the
man he works with tells him.”

That last sentence made Mikey sit up and take notice. Anyone other than Raph talking to Casey about this endeavor was a recipe for disaster.

“Raph already said he was gonna call Casey in the morning,” Mikey interposed quickly. “You should tell him to relay that to Casey before he makes that call.”

“I’ll tell him when we get to the garage,” Leo said.

“That type of subterfuge is pretty cunning for someone like Hun,” Don commented, turning into the alley that led to their hidden garage. “He’s normally as subtle as a freight train.”

Raph had already opened the garage door, so Don spun the van around and backed inside. A little mud had splattered the motorcycle during the drive to the lair and as Mikey hopped out of the van he saw his brother busily cleaning it off of his ‘baby’.

Leo walked over to Raph, no doubt to talk to him about his new theory, and Mikey went along with Don directly down to the lair. They parted company as Mikey headed towards the kitchen and the genius made a beeline for his lab.

Mikey was actually hungry, but that wasn’t from watching happy diners all night. His nerves had been on a roller coaster ride and had burned off his earlier meal. He’d have to think about stocking Raph’s hide-out with snacks if being with the hot head was going to have this type of effect on him.

It wasn’t much longer before both Leo and Raph made an appearance. Neither entered the kitchen and Mikey watched the pair head upstairs together, separating to go to their rooms. Absently chewing on a piece of cold chicken, Mikey almost bet himself that Leo wouldn’t go to sleep until he knew that Mikey was also safely tucked away for the remainder of the night.

By the time Mikey had finished his snack, Don had turned out the lights in his sanctum and gone to bed. Mikey washed his hands and decided he was finally tired enough to sleep.

He was at the bottom of the stairs when Leo came out of his room and started down.

“Dude, I thought you’d gone to bed,” Mikey said, though he knew better.

“I usually look in on Father before I go to sleep,” Leo told him. “He can sense I’m there and will know we’re safe. It helps him to rest easier.”

Mikey had started his climb but paused part way up to say, “I hadn’t really thought about it before, but being a dad is hard work, don’t you think bro’? I mean, it isn’t all about making sure we learn everything we need to survive, or providing us with necessities. Master Splinter must worry about us being happy too. You know, like quality of life sort of stuff.”

“I’m sure that’s all true,” Leo responded, his gaze unwavering. “It’s even more difficult when he has to divide needs from wants. Benefitting from his wisdom is a lot better than learning something the hard way. Sometimes it’s impossible for us to step back from our desires and realize they aren’t our best choices.”

“And sometimes our instincts are correct,” Mikey countered. “Good night, Leo.”

“Good night little brother,” Leo said, turning towards their father’s room.
Hearing the sounds of Raph’s snoring coming through the door told Mikey that his brother hadn’t had any difficulty dropping off to sleep. It was a good sign; at least Raph wasn’t pacing the floor eaten up with guilt over his intention to break the promise he’d made to Leo.

Mikey entered his room, closing the door and stripping out of his gear before dropping into bed. As far as he was concerned, Raph shouldn’t have been forced to make that promise in the first place. What Leo had said to his brother was nothing less than coercion.

There was also the possibility that Raph’s conscience wasn’t bothering him because he hadn’t gone too far with Mikey yet. The episode in his room hadn’t lasted long and could be written off as nothing more than a test to find out what was really going on in Mikey’s head.

Before he drifted into dreamland, Mikey made another decision. He would absolutely not allow Raphael to feel any kind of disgrace over their libidinous interactions. Mikey would be Raph’s guide towards emotional freedom and in turn, Raph would use Mikey’s body in ways that would fully satisfy both of them.

The next morning as Mikey went about his usual routine, he realized that he felt more like his old self than he had in quite a while. Knowing that he and Raph had reached a mutual accord had drained Mikey of his obsessive need to find ways to get his brother to hurt him.

Keeping his secret was much easier when Mikey didn’t have to hide it from Raph too. Raph also seemed in lighter spirits, as if having a confidant had drained some of the puss from old wounds.

Feeling sanguine about his rationale from the previous evening, Mikey was determined to begin his campaign. A prime opportunity presented itself after lunch, when Master Splinter got comfortable in his chair to continue watching his ‘shows’.

Normally, the brothers steered clear of their father’s chosen form of entertainment, finding the stories unutterably boring. Mikey had a sneaking suspicion that Master Splinter gained some of his wisdom about the vagaries of human behavior from those dramas. The premise behind all of them seemed to be ‘anything that can go wrong, will go wrong’.

Mikey tried to appear nonchalant as he drifted towards the television array. No one else was around, though he could hear sounds of activity from other areas of the lair.

Taking a seat on the couch, Mikey glanced towards his father. Master Splinter was too engrossed in his program to even acknowledge his son’s presence. Turning his eyes to the TV, Mikey watched some of the drama unfold and noticed that there was a difference between the shows his father watched in the morning and the ones he was addicted to in the afternoon.

They did all have one common theme though; people doing bad things to each other and then attempting to justify their actions. Mikey made a face, unable to understand why people couldn’t grasp the simple concept of living their lives in a way that wouldn’t cause harm to anyone else. What the heck did it matter what people did in the privacy of their bedrooms if no one else was hurt or in any way affected by it?

As Mikey waited for a commercial break, he tried to decide what he would say to his father. He couldn’t broach the subject outright, at least not at this juncture. A roundabout approach was called for; Mikey wasn’t looking for blessings yet, he was only laying the groundwork.

When the first commercial began, Master Splinter blinked, as though coming out of a fugue
“Ah Michelangelo, have you developed a taste for daytime drama?” Master Splinter asked.

Mikey shrugged. “I don’t know sensei. I’ve never watched any before. Guess I wanted to see what you found so interesting.”

There was a twinkle in Master Splinter’s eyes as he said, “I am afraid that these do not contain the level of entertainment you normally find in car chases and random acts of extreme violence.”

“Yeah, I kind of noticed that,” Mikey acknowledged. “It’s mostly about people, right? How they act around each other and the stuff they do to mess up their lives?”

“That is one way to look at it,” Master Splinter said. “I would say the underlying theme in all of them has to do with the human’s natural instinct to search for love.”

Mikey was bright enough to see that an opening had been presented to him without his having to make an effort. Silently thanking his father’s soap operas, Mikey said, “Is that like the whole soul mate thing I’ve heard April talking about?”

“Yes, something like that,” Master Splinter said. “Some would say it simply stems from the need of all living things to procreate, and to choose the best available specimen in order to improve the rate of their offspring’s survival.”

Hoping that their conversation wasn’t going to lead down a road to a talk about the birds and bees, something their father had discussed with them years ago, Mikey ventured to say, “That doesn’t always apply though, does it Master Splinter? I mean, there are a lot of people who prefer someone of their own gender, right?”

“That is quite true,” Master Splinter said, nodding sagely. “It is a subject that they have finally begun to address on my shows. I find it very refreshing.”

“So~o, you don’t have a problem with same sex couples?” Mikey asked.

“If they care about one another, if they treat one another with love and respect, how is it my place to disapprove?” Master Splinter asked rhetorically.

“Some people think it’s wrong, that it goes against nature,” Mikey said, watching his father closely.

“I am afraid those people have not made a nearly detailed enough study of nature,” Master Splinter said. “One must remember that people who have closed their minds rely on a certain belief system to supply them with their truths. Such dogma can be injurious since it does not incorporate facts, it is merely an ideology developed around a specific paradigm.”

“Wow Master Splinter, that’s deep,” Mikey responded with awe.

His father studied Mikey for a moment and then asked, “Do you have difficulty accepting the sexual preferences of certain groups of people, my son?”

“Uh, no, no, no,” Mikey replied hastily. “I’m a live and let live kind of guy. I just like the idea of people being happy with whoever they’ve chosen.”

“As do I,” Master Splinter said with a smile. “Happiness and fulfillment are beautiful
things. I am hoping that Maddie and Sinclair will soon realize they are made for one another and cease their endless fighting.”

It took Mikey a second to realize that his father had shifted his attention back to the program he’d been watching. Mikey wisely decided that he’d made enough of an effort for the day towards his campaign to win his father’s approval. Master Splinter did not have a problem with two males being together and was obviously committed to an individual’s rights to be with whomever they chose.

At least to a certain degree, Mikey amended to himself. Same sex couples were only part of the equation. There was still the bigger question of how Master Splinter would react to siblings making the choice to find contentment in each other’s arms.

Having nothing better to do, Mikey relaxed against the couch cushions and started watching television with his father. After a while he began to find the interplay between characters pretty interesting. He knew that a group of writers had created the story and dialogue, but he had to admire their grasp of human nature.

Periodically, Master Splinter would insert his take on what was happening and Mikey was surprised at how much he enjoyed spending the time with his father. For his part, Master Splinter seemed just as happy that one of his sons was showing an interest in his past time as well.

After a while Mikey dozed off to the droning of the television and the warm comfort of his father’s presence.

The next thing he knew, a strong hand was gripping his shoulder and he woke to find Raph leaning over the back of the couch looking down at him.

“Hmm, mmph?” Mikey grunted, noticing that Master Splinter was still in his chair.

“Wake up noodle head,” Raph said. “I’ve got dinner duty and I’m making chicken parmesan. Where the hell’s the cheese grater? I can’t find it.”

“Raphael, language,” Master Splinter intoned without looking at his son.

“It’s where we always put it,” Mikey grumbled. “You know, under the . . . .”

He stopped talking when he saw Raph’s eyes widen and then the almost imperceptible movement of his head in a nod towards the kitchen.

“It’s easier if I just show you,” Mikey said, now fully awake. He scrambled off the couch and followed his brother, who was already on his way.

Once they were in the kitchen, Mikey went directly to one of the lower cabinets and produced the cheese grater. Setting it on the counter, he saw that Raph had situated himself so that he could keep an eye on the rest of the lair.

Raph glanced at him and in a low voice said, “Go to bed early. Turn your lights out, but don’t go to sleep. I need ya’ to sneak out and meet me at exactly midnight. Go six blocks east of here, you’ll have to be above ground. When ya’ get to the alley behind Dryer’s Deli take that manhole back down to the sewers.”

He paused for a moment to study the area outside the kitchen and Mikey whispered, “How are you going to get away?”
“Shit, here comes Leo.” Raph darted over and grabbed the cheese grater, taking it to the kitchen table. “You'll find out at dinner,” he hissed at Mikey.

When their older brother walked through the door, Raph was busily grating an onion and Mikey was pulling pans out for him to use. Raph acknowledged Leo’s presence with a nod and Mikey grinned at him.

“Hey, you wanna bet with me on how long it takes for that onion to make Raphie cry?” Mikey asked.

“Keep calling me ‘Raphie’ and I’m gonna rub this onion in your eyes,” Raph threatened without looking up.

They continued their banter as Raph prepared the meal, accepting assistance from Mikey and allowing Leo to touch nothing more than the dirty dishes. It would have seemed like a normal everyday event if not for the fact that Mikey knew the only reason Leo was there was to keep an eye on his two brothers.

Even Leo couldn’t keep that up forever. Mikey figured he was being extra vigilant now for two reasons; he was looking for signs that Raph and Mikey were trying to get together, and as a reminder to them that he’d always present them with an obstacle.

Raph’s passionate nature came through in his cooking, especially when it was a dish he preferred. There wasn’t a lot of talk at the dinner table because the family was too busy savoring the meal, which had been done to perfection.

Partway through dinner, Raph cleared his throat and said, “I’m going over to Casey’s later to catch the mixed martial arts tournament on the tube. The last time I tried to watch something on TV here, I was rudely interrupted.”

He glared at Mikey who somehow managed to look both abashed and mischievous all at once.

“It is raining outside,” Master Splinter said mildly, his way of reminding Raph to be careful.

“Yeah, I’m going on foot. Don’t wanna take the shell cycle out in the weather. I’ll be back late, so don’t wait up for me,” Raph said, unable to avoid glancing in Leo’s direction.

“Did you talk to Casey yet about the West Village tip?” Leo asked.

“I got him on the phone this morning,” Raph answered. “He said he’d go out and do a little information gathering and let me know what he found out when I get to his place.”

“Hopefully he doesn’t come back with another tip that turns out to be a wild goose chase,” Don said. “His sources used to be a lot more reliable.”

“He’s a bone head,” Raph said, as if that explained everything.

Dinner could not end soon enough as far as Mikey was concerned. He was feeling the anticipation for his rendezvous keenly and was glad he’d taken that earlier nap since it would probably be the only sleep he managed.

Mikey had to make an effort not to bounce off the walls, but Raph didn’t appear affected by nerves at all. Maybe that was because he was a really good actor, or that he used bluff and bluster
on a regular basis to hide his feelings.

Because he needed some way to burn off the excess energy, Mikey offered to clean up the kitchen, announcing that it was his way to make up for throwing a fake cockroach on Raph.

Rather than thanking him, Raph rudely mumbled, “That’s a start”, after which he left for Casey’s apartment.

It took Mikey about an hour to finish in the kitchen, during which time he was left to himself. He was glad for that; he wasn’t in the mood for any witty repartee and certainly couldn’t deal with anyone noticing something amiss and asking if he was all right.

When he wandered out into the lair to see what the rest of his family was up to, he found that Master Splinter was watching the evening news, while Leo divided his time between the broadcast and a game of chess with Donatello.

That bode well for Mikey’s chances of escaping the lair unseen. There was nothing in the news to agitate Leo because if there had been, he wouldn’t have accepted a game challenge from the genius. In turn, Don apparently had no pressing projects otherwise he’d be engaged elsewhere. If the chess match ran its usual course, they’d play a couple of rounds and call it a night.

Walking over to where his family was, Mikey stretched his arms wide and yawned prodigiously. “This family is boring,” he announced with finality.

“Sorry we haven’t the faculties to entertain you properly,” Don murmured, his eyes on the chess board.

“Even your words are boring.” Mikey said.

“You can probably find more exciting ones in the dictionary,” Leo told him.

“That’s right, gang up on me,” Mikey said. “I’m going into the world of my comic books to get away from this life of drudgery.”

“Dramatic much?” Don asked rhetorically as he moved one of his pieces.

Mikey made sure to yawn again, making a great show of it, before heading up to his room. Before he went inside he glanced down at his brothers and saw Don use the back of his hand to pat a yawn of his own.

Grinning, Mikey closed himself in his room and spent a half hour thumbing through some of his favorite comic books. He heard the faint sounds of his brothers bidding their father goodnight and decided it would be a good time to pretend to go to sleep as well.

Shutting out the lights, Mikey moved to the center of his room, kicked aside the rug, and sank down cross legged onto the cold stone floor. In that position he was too uncomfortable to accidentally fall asleep, though as wired as he felt, Mikey didn’t think there was much chance of that happening.

From his position Mikey could just make out the red digital numbers on his bedside clock. He watched another half hour tick by, all the while listening for household sounds. Finally he heard Donny call out a goodnight to his older brother and a couple of minutes later came the sound of the genius’ door being closed.

It was down to Leo now. By straining his hearing, Mikey picked up noises that told him
Leo was moving around below, probably turning out lights and checking on Master Splinter. The faint whisper of the TV was extinguished and Mikey realized he was holding his breath. Leo needed to go to bed soon, or Mikey would never make it out of the lair.

Eventually Mikey heard the soft pad of Leo’s footsteps on the stair treads. He honed in on that sound, his attention laser focused on tracking his brother’s whereabouts. Leo went down the hall to the bathroom and Mikey waited, heart beating in his chest. After a few minutes, Leo came out and started walking towards his room.

Just when Mikey thought it would be safe to breathe again, Leo stopped, directly in front of his door.

“Oh shell,” Mikey thought, wondering if he’d locked the door. If not and Leo tried for a peek inside, Mikey was going to have to launch himself at his bed and hope he made it without being busted.

It came to Mikey then that he was being too silent. He wasn’t a loud snorer like Raph, but he was by no means quiet either. Don had told him on a number of occasions that he tended to talk in his sleep and maybe the fact that he wasn’t making any noise was what had caused Leo to stop in the first place.

Carefully sliding back towards the bed so the sound would be coming from the right area, Mikey emitted a low snort, followed by some light snoring. He kept that up for thirty seconds before switching to a low mumble, the words unintelligible nonsense that he hoped sounded like his usual sleep talk.

All the while Mikey kept his eyes glued to the shadow of Leo’s feet that showed under the door. In another couple of minutes they moved away and then Mikey heard Leo’s door click shut.

The relief was so great that Mikey almost keeled over. He felt light headed and a little shaky, probably from the adrenaline he knew had to be coursing through his veins. When the feeling started to wear off, Mikey nearly laughed, giddy from the high of anticipation and nearly getting caught.

A look at the clock showed him that it was almost eleven. He had another forty-five minutes to wait.

After what seemed like an eternity, it was time for Mikey to slip out of the lair. He fixed the rug and then rolled some blankets into roughly his size, pulling another blanket over them. From his door, it looked exactly as if he were in bed.

Without the slightest sound Mikey exited his room, closing the door behind him. He waited there, listening intently, and heard the faintest of snores from Leo’s room.

Mikey employed every bit of stealth he’d ever learned to get out of the lair without being seen or heard. Cautiously, he exited the tunnels, going above ground into a light drizzle that helped to shield him from prying eyes.

Because the dampness had reduced the sidewalk crowds to zero, Mikey remained street side, taking only a few minutes to traverse six city blocks. He turned into the alley behind the deli as Raph had instructed, using up a second to pry the cover off of the manhole before dropping back down into the sewers.

At first glance there was no sign of his brother and Mikey thought he might have arrived
early. Then he worried that something had happened to Raph. Or just as bad, that he’d changed his mind.

“Ya’ have any problems getting out of the lair?” Raph asked, moving forward from the deep shadows.

“A little,” Mikey admitted. “I had to wait for Leo to stop prowling around.”

Raph grimaced. “He’s gonna be a problem.” With a short laugh, he added, “Well, more of a problem than he already is.”

“Did you even go over to Casey’s?” Mikey asked.

“Yeah, I sure as hell did. He’s my alibi, only he don’t know it. I got him shit-faced drunk on cheap beer and some decent whiskey I picked up at the bodega down the street from his place. He passed out a half hour ago and he won’t wake up until I shake his ass in the morning to tell him I’m leaving,” Raph said as he started walking through the tunnel.

Mikey moved along with him. “He’ll think you were there all night?”

“That’s the idea,” Raph said. “Don’t know if Leo has his head so far up his ass that he’ll check, but if he does, Casey will swear I never left the apartment.”

“I rolled up some blankets so it’ll look like I’m in bed asleep,” Mikey said. “That’ll work if all he does is peek into my room. He was asleep when I left.”

“He missed his calling. Leo should have been a cop,” Raph said and then changed the subject. “Pay attention to the route we’re taking and remember it. This is another way to get to that room without having to go through the warehouse.”

He stopped talking after that and Mikey wondered if Raph was as nervous as he was. Either one of them could call the whole thing off at this point and be done with it. Once they entered that room, Mikey was pretty sure neither of them would look back.

They had travelled through about a mile of tunnel when they came to a dead end. A section of the tunnel had been bricked up and a lattice work of two-by-fours had been built in front of the wall, bearing a sign with the city works department’s seal that said “Keep Out”.

Raph chuckled at the puzzled expression on Mikey’s face before reaching down to a spot under the far left footing. Mikey heard something click and then Raph swung the barricade aside.

“There’s a latch down there,” Raph said, pointing it out to his brother. “I put this up here. Swiped that sign so it’d look official. I put in this fake brick wall too.”

“Fake?” Mikey asked, staring at what looked like row after row of solid brickwork.

“Yeah. Ya’ think I spent hours helping Don build all of the entrances to the lair without learning a few things?” Raph asked. “Watch.”

He reached up to the wall and pressed a series of bricks. Each one slid back an inch until he touched the final one in the sequence, and then they all snapped back into place and the wall separated in half.

Raph pushed against the halves and the wall opened. Signaling for Mikey to enter, Raph pulled the wooden barricade shut and latched it before entering the tunnel on the other side of the
“Did ya’ see the pattern those bricks made when I pressed them?” Raph asked, his eyes glowing in the low light.

“It kind of looked like a giant ‘M’,” Mikey said, feeling his face flush.

“That’s what it was,” Raph admitted. He started down the tunnel, flashing a quick look at Mikey. “I was thinking about ya’ when I designed it.”

Now Mikey understood what Raph had meant when he’d said he’d made his secret room a year ago for his youngest brother. He understood the significance of the cloth dummy made to look like him. Everything about this secret part of Raph’s life and been created around a fantasy life that involved Michelangelo.

It wasn’t much farther before they reached a tunnel that intersected with the one that Mikey recognized would lead to the underground room. By the time they reached the metal door, Mikey’s gut was churning and the palms of his hands were damp.

Raph pulled a key from his belt and handed it to Mikey. “This one’s yours. Go ahead and try it on the door.”

Licking his lips, Mikey stepped in front of Raph and inserted the key into the lock. It turned without a hitch and Mikey opened the door.

For a second Mikey froze, his mind going completely blank.

“If ya’ don’t want this, if ya’ have any doubts, back out now,” Raph whispered hoarsely.

Mikey’s head swiveled slowly around until their eyes made contact. The tough outer veneer had stripped away from Raph’s face, giving Mikey a glimpse of emotions that were raw and exposed.

“I told you my answer yesterday,” Mikey said. “It hasn’t changed. I’m just processing the fact that this is finally coming true for us.”

His assurances took some of the tension from Raph’s shoulders and after offering his brother a quick smile, Mikey entered the room.

Walking to the center of the space, Mikey waited as Raph locked the door behind them. Before turning around, Raph took a deep breath and exhaled.

Spinning to face Mikey, Raph said, “Okay, here’s the rules. First off, we don’t touch each other until we strip; weapons, gear, masks. Everything. Do ya’ know why?”

Mikey’s eyes remained tight on Raph. “Scent.”

“Yeah. Our scent right now is aggressive to everybody except us. To Leo, Don, and even Master Splinter the change in how we smell is in their subconscious and they process it as us being at odds with each other. They don’t understand the difference and we don’t need to help them see the light by our smelling strongly of each other,” Raph explained.

“Second rule,” Raph continued, “there’s a shower in the bathroom and before we leave this room we get cleaned up. After that we don’t touch each other again. We gear up after we shower so there’s no chance our scent will transfer to our things.”
“Simple enough,” Mikey said encouragingly.

“Third rule,” Raph said and then paused to clear his throat. “Third rule is about trust. ‘Cause like ya’ said, I’ve got to learn to trust myself not to go too far, and you’ve gotta trust me to stop when ya’ say so. But that cuts both ways, Mikey. I’ve gotta trust that you’ll say stop. I’ve gotta trust that ya’ know when you’re supposed to stop whatever we’re doing.”

“I will, Raph. There’s no way I want you to do something to me that scares you into quitting this,” Mikey assured him.

“Then we’ll do like ya’ suggested for the verbal cue. When ya’ want me to stop, just say ‘Splinter’,” Raph said. “If ya’ can’t talk, then ya’ lift one finger or knock three times on something. Make sure I hear it, make me quit, ya’ got that Mikey?”

His voice had a hint of agitation in it and Mikey quickly said, “The rules are good, Raph. Don’t worry about me, okay? Look, the way I see it, the more you get to act out your fantasies, the more you practice, the less chance there will be that you’ll snap and lose control. It’s just like practicing ninjitsu, bro’.”

As he spoke, Mikey walked over to the bar and began removing his gear, piling it on the wooden top. He continued to watch Raph as he did so, seeing that his brother was avidly following every movement of Mikey’s hands.

When the change came over Raph, Mikey could almost feel it in the air around him. Something inside his brother seemed to shift, a dark veil coming down over Raph’s face as his eyes appeared to shine with some hidden inner cunning.

There was a dangerous and hungry look in them now that had Mikey shivering in anticipation. The tentative, questioning aspect was gone from Raph’s countenance as he too stripped down to his skin.

“Get over here,” Raph directed.

Not knowing what was going to happen added excitement to the situation. Mikey did as he was told, feeling hot all over. When he drew near, Raph stepped aside and said, “Stop there and turn around.”

Mikey has just barely turned when Raph placed the palm of his hand against Mikey’s plastron and shoved him forcefully back against the wall. There was muscle behind that push and Mikey’s carapace made a loud thump as it hit the bricks.

Raph’s hand stayed in place and he leaned in close to his brother, searching for something, maybe fear, in Mikey’s eyes. For just a heartbeat Mikey thought that Raph might kiss him, but then the older turtle backed away.

“Put your hands flat against the wall behind you and spread your legs,” Raph ordered, his voice husky. “Then don’t move.”

After Mikey complied with that command, Raph moved away from him, going over to the chest at the end of the bed. As he dug around inside of it, Mikey’s heart started hammering, beating out an impossibly fast rhythm.

When Raph had found what he wanted, he came back towards Mikey. The younger turtle watched his approach with a small amount of trepidation and then his eyes drifted down to the object in Raph’s hand.
Raph was holding a pair of long metal forceps and at the sight of them, Mikey released a low, keening moan.

There was no hint of regard in Raph’s expression, just a dark purpose that matched all of the dreams Mikey had ever had about his brother. The slight dread that Mikey felt was overwhelmed by the raw need that was lighting a fire in his loins.

“Open your mouth and stick out your tongue,” Raph demanded.

Mikey swiftly made his tongue available and started to breathe faster. He kept his eyes focused on Raph’s face as his brother slid the end of the forceps onto the middle of Mikey’s tongue and then clamped it shut.

The pain was immediate and almost unbearable, unlike anything Mikey had ever experienced.

“Does it hurt?” Raph asked in a gravelly tone of voice.

Mikey couldn’t talk but he managed an affirmative noise. “Uhhh huhhh!”

“Good,” Raph told him. “If ya’ want it off ya’ can take it off yourself. But when ya’ do, I’ll stop touching ya.”

Blinking to acknowledge his understanding, Mikey waited. For several long and excruciating minutes Raph only stared at him. Rather than diminishing, the pain began to creep farther along Mikey’s tongue and his eyes started to water.

At the same time, Mikey was becoming more and more aroused.

Finally he felt the rough skin on Raph’s hand touch his inner thigh, right near Mikey’s knee. The hand slowly slid upwards, lightly scratching the sensitive surface area along that part of Mikey’s anatomy.

When Raph’s hand touched the crease between thigh and groin Mikey grunted. His cock had started to swell, inflating exponentially with the pain he was feeling.

Raph began to caress the skin inside the crease with a fingernail, passing it back and forth, his eyes never leaving Mikey’s face. Tears of pain crept from the corners of Mikey’s eyes and rolled across his cheeks but he was also panting from the stimulation, his erection a living thing trapped under his shell.

Then Raph pinched the skin along the crease, very, very hard.

A loud moan escaped from Mikey, followed on its heels by a churr that vibrated his upper body. Just as the pain from the first pinch began to fade, Raph did it again.

“Ahhhhhh!” Mikey exclaimed around the forceps, shaking from an extremely violent need.

“Drop down,” Raph muttered, his voice guttural.

Mikey’s dick tumbled out of hiding and to his relief, Raph took it firmly in his hand. As Raph began to fondle Mikey’s solid erection, he said, “Remember, if the clamp comes off, so do my hands.”

Squeezing his eyes shut, Mikey nodded. An intense array of sensations swept across his
body; the pain in his tongue traveling along his spinal cord and into his lower regions, making the blood pump into his cock.

Raph continued to stroke Mikey’s shaft, his own breathing sounding coarse in Mikey’s ears. Mikey felt a bump from Raph’s other arm and opened his eyes. Unable to look all the way down because of their positions, Mikey could still see that both of Raph’s arms were moving in identical rhythmic motions and knew his brother was jerking off to Mikey’s pain.

At that moment Raph leaned forward and lightly bit the tip of Mikey’s tongue.

The pain was a sudden flash fire that made Mikey screech at the top of his lungs. At that exact same moment he climaxed into Raph’s hand.

Spiraling dizzily on a cloud of pain and euphoria, Mikey barely felt the heat of Raph’s cum hitting his leg.

TBC……………..
Chapter 18

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,815 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 18 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

For several moments the only sounds coming from the two brothers was that of their heavy breathing. Raph slumped heavily against Mikey, his forehead braced against his younger brother’s shoulder.

Mikey’s eyes were shut, the aftermath of his orgasm still snaking its way through his system. He did not move though; did not take his hands from the wall, did not attempt to remove the forceps. His tongue was numb and Mikey knew that when the feeling finally started to return, it might be as painful as when Raph had first applied the clamp.

Very slowly Raph pushed away from him. When their eyes met, the look in Raph’s was unfathomable. Without a word, Raph reached up and gently removed the forceps.

Stepping back a few paces, Raph tucked himself away, glancing down his brother’s body and then back up into Mikey’s eyes. It was a nonverbal command and Mikey obeyed, his hands shaking as he took them from the wall and followed Raph’s example of recovering his modesty.

“Aafff.” Mikey tried to say his brother’s name, but his tongue wasn’t working quite yet. He wanted to reassure Raph that he wasn’t hurt and that he’d enjoyed their encounter. From the lack of expression on Raph’s face, Mikey simply couldn’t tell how Raph was handling it.

In response to Mikey’s utterance, Raph turned to the side and aimed a thumb at the small bathroom. “Go first,” he said, his voice low.

Since Mikey didn’t as yet have the ability to talk, there was no point in trying to break through Raph’s shield, so the younger turtle did as he was told. Standing beneath a warm spray of water in a shower stall that barely accommodated his size, Mikey felt a tingling in his tongue that told him that the numbness was wearing off.

Several clean towels were draped over a rack along one wall and Mikey took one, drying himself off before exiting the bathroom. Raph was waiting for him, holding a pail of water with a sponge floating on top of it. A glance at the wall where they’d had their encounter showed Mikey that all traces of their mutually satisfactory finish had already been scrubbed away.

Without a word, Raph passed Mikey and entered the bathroom. Mikey stood looking at the closed door, wondering what, if anything, Raph would say to him once they had both resumed their roles as ninja brothers.

Because it was useless to try to predict what Raph’s actions might be, Mikey walked over to the bar and retrieved his gear. He was tying his mask on when Raph came out of the bathroom.

Though the sensation was starting to return to his tongue, it still felt like a heavy lump in
Mikey’s mouth, so he simply stood and watched his brother. Raph had left the bucket in the bathroom and now he retrieved the forceps from the end of the bar where he’d placed them earlier. Walking around behind it, he leaned down and Mikey heard the sound of a cabinet opening.

Curious, Mikey set his forearms on the bar and looked over to see what Raph was doing. His brother stood up with a bottle of vodka, catching Mikey’s eye and tipping the bottle towards him before uncapping it.

Holding the forceps over the small sink behind the bar, Raph poured a generous amount of vodka onto the implement, effectively disinfecting it. When he was satisfied with the job, Raph took a swig from the bottle and then held it out to Mikey.

The only time Mikey had ever tasted alcohol was once when he’d snuck a sip of beer from Casey’s bottle while his friend wasn’t looking. He hadn’t liked it much but was willing to try the vodka, especially if Raph wanted him to.

Mikey could see Raph’s glittering eyes focused on him as he closed his lips around the mouth of the bottle and tipped his head back. He could just feel the cool liquid hit his tongue and reflexively swallowed, not exactly sure if he’d drunk a thimbleful or a jigger’s worth due to the lingering numbness.

As Mikey took the bottle from his mouth, the vodka hit a section of taste buds that had come back to life. The strength of the alcohol took him by surprise and he started to cough, flapping his tongue as he tried to dislodge the liquid.

Raph grabbed the bottle from him and began to laugh, the first sound he’d made since they’d stepped away from each other. It was a little mocking, a little big brother-ish, and so absurdly normal that Mikey felt a wave of relief. He grinned at Raph and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

“I knew you had the booze back there, hon,” Mikey said, his words not forming perfectly yet.

Patting the bar, Raph said, “This bar’s too nice not to have a little something on hand. Thought the vodka might help ya’ get some feeling back into that tongue of yours.”

“You’ve been having that clamp for me, haven’t you?” Mikey asked with amusement.

Raph looked down, recapping the bottle as he murmured, “Most all of the stuff in those chests I picked up with you in mind.”

For a moment Mikey wished he hadn’t said anything, worried that Raph wasn’t yet comfortable enough with their arrangement to discuss what they were choosing to do. But then Raph glanced up again, a sly smile warming his features.

“Though I gotta say the idea of sticking clamps on your tongue has come to me on more than one occasion over the years,” Raph said.

Mikey chuckled and then realized his tongue seemed to be back to normal. “Unless I let you, there’s no way you’d ever catch me to do that.”

Raph put the bottle back where he’d gotten it from and straightened up, placing his hands on the edge of the sink and looking Mikey fully in the eyes.

“I suppose that’s the key thing we have to remember here, ain’t it?” Raph asked. “The fact
that you’re gonna let me do stuff to ya’.”

Mikey retained a lightly amused countenance as he said, “Seems to me that I’m getting as much out of it as you are. That’d make this consensual and mutually beneficial.”

“Is it?” Raph asked, appearing quite serious.

“Yes,” Mikey answered quickly. “Listen bro’, your desires might have developed before mine, but that doesn’t mean that my sexual preferences didn’t happen naturally. You should know me well enough by now to understand that I can’t be influenced by any means into doing something I don’t want to do.”

“You’re right, I should,” Raph said. “Ya’ gotta admit though, this is a little abnormal even for us.”

“Stop believing you’re a freak,” Mikey stated bluntly. “Just ‘cause I wasn’t there to hear exactly what Leo said to you, that doesn’t mean that I believe he’d really think there was something wrong with you. The problem with you two is that you don’t talk properly. He makes pronouncements and you get defensive.”

“Dammit Mikey,” Raph growled, “things ain’t always as simple as ya’ want them to be.”

“And they aren’t always as difficult as you make them out to be,” Mikey shot back. “I’m just saying that you shouldn’t feel any guilt about what we do together. It’s no one’s business but ours anyway.”

Raph snorted and pushed back from the bar. “Yeah, business we have to hide from everyone. Speaking of which, you’d better get back to the lair. I hope you’ve got a story ready in case tight-ass Leo discovered that ya’ snuck out.”

There was a lot more that Mikey wanted to discuss with Raph, but his brother was effectively shutting down their conversation. Mikey took the hint and decided he’d said enough for one night.

“I’ll tell him I couldn’t sleep and needed some air,” Mikey replied with a shrug. “Short lies are the best, makes them easy to remember and hard for him to disprove.”

A corner of Raph’s mouth lifted. “Ya’ never let things faze ya’ for long, do ya’ Mikey?”

“I have a very optimistic attitude towards life,” Mikey said flippantly. “The rest of you could take lessons.”

“Save it for some other time,” Raph said, coming out from behind the bar and crossing to the chest at the end of the bed to place the forceps into it.

Mikey stood near the door, waiting for his brother. After they both stepped out of the room, Raph pulled the door shut and locked it.

“Let me lead the way out so I can make sure I remember the route,” Mikey requested. It was a subtle way for him to give Raph an opportunity to express doubts about their continuing to meet, if the older turtle had any.

For a second their eyes met and Mikey could tell that Raph knew there was a subtext to his brother’s words.
Clearing his throat, Raph said, “Yeah, that’d be best. Next time one of us might have to wait here for the other to get free.”

Mikey favored him with a toothy grin before heading into the tunnel. His memory was flawless as always; Mikey spent a lot of time exploring tunnels in search of places to skateboard and had developed a sixth sense for finding his way around.

From the inside it wasn’t necessary to use the trick pattern in order to open the fake brick wall. Raph showed Mikey that there was a single brick in the center that needed to be pushed to open the wall and once they’d stepped through, it closed on its own behind them.

Mikey worked the latch on the wooden barricade as Raph had instructed and then made sure it clicked solidly back into place after they’d exited. Together they walked back towards the section of sewer where Mikey had first entered the tunnels, but they were only half-way there when Raph stopped.

“I’m cutting off in this direction,” Raph said, pointing towards an adjacent tunnel. “It’ll get me to Casey’s faster.”

“Oh okay,” Mikey said, though he’d hoped to share Raph’s company for a little longer. “Um, I . . . I had . . . .”

Holding up a hand, Raph stopped him. “Spare me the cliché ‘I had a good time’ speech. We both got off and that was the whole point of this, right? I’ll catch ya’ back at the lair in the morning.”

He didn’t give Mikey an opportunity to say more, turning on his heels and jogging away at a fast clip.

Mikey watched Raph until the shadows swallowed him up and then continued on by himself. The night had been exhilarating, their encounter exciting and sexually gratifying. Only now Mikey felt as if something was lacking. Maybe he was romanticizing too much, looking for a connection that went beyond physical release.

Raph had been all business once they entered that room and it certainly hadn’t taken more than that to get Mikey off. Sharing this secret life with Raph had a thrilling element to it that couldn’t be denied and Mikey felt like he should be satisfied with that. He just really didn’t know why he wasn’t.

The drizzle had been replaced by a fog by the time Mikey exited the tunnels into the alley behind the deli. It was chilly and Mikey wasted no time getting back to the section of tunnels that would take him home.

As he neared the lair, Mikey grew extra cautious. Standing just outside the door, Mikey realized his heart was beating like a drum and took a minute to do some deep breathing to calm himself. Sneaking around wasn’t unusual for a ninja and normally he wouldn’t be so nervous about it. Only this time he was attempting to employ stealth to avoid detection by another ninja, and one who was admittedly better at it.

Mikey was glad that Don had built a smaller entry door from the tunnels into the lair so that he wouldn’t need to open the main entrance. Sliding quietly through the door, Mikey made sure it closed properly behind him but didn’t immediately move away from it.

Something clattered inside the lair and Mikey nearly jumped out of his skin. Darting
forward, he pressed himself against a support post, his once steady heart now racing again.

    It had to be Leo. His brother had sensed Mikey’s absence and checked on him. Leo knew everything; knew that Mikey had gone to meet Raph. Leo was waiting for one of them to get back. Leo was going to jump him and berate him loudly enough to awaken sensei. Master Splinter was going to take Leo’s side and . . . .

    The sound of a low mumble reached Mikey’s ears and he realized it was Don’s voice. Daring to peek out from his hiding place, Mikey noticed that a light was on in Don’s lab. Another bit of garbled speech was followed by the noise of something being pushed across a table.

    Such low conversation was normal for the genius, who often talked to himself. Don must have awoken to an idea and been unable to go back to sleep.

    Feeling a little shaky with relief, Mikey started towards the stairs before a sudden idea made him change direction. Instead of going directly back to his room, Mikey made a detour to the lab.

    Standing in the open doorway, Mikey watched as Don scavenged amongst the storage shelves full of junk that lined one wall. With a double handful of stuff, Don went over to one of his work tables and dumped everything on one side, muttering to himself as he sorted the pieces.

    “Dude, does your mind ever shut off?” Mikey asked, his voice carrying a touch of amusement.

    Startled, Don’s head whipped around. “Sorry Mikey, did I wake you?”

    “A little,” Mikey said, chuckling. Indicating his gear, he said, “I was half asleep and thought we were being invaded. How often do you get up again in the middle of the night?”

    Looking sheepish, Don said, “Pretty often, actually. Only Master Splinter and Leo have ever noticed before.”

    Hiding his concern, Mikey asked, “They aren’t awake too are they?”

    Don shook his head. “No. They’ve gotten used to the sounds I make and don’t bother to check on me anymore. Well, sort of. Every once in a while Leo will get up and remind me I need more than a couple of hours sleep.”

    “I’ll play Leo tonight then and tell you the same thing,” Mikey said. “Why don’t you just jot down whatever your idea was and save it for tomorrow?”

    With a sigh, Don said, “I wish my brain worked like that. It won’t turn off no matter how many notes I make. Sometimes if I can just start the project, or make a diagram of the idea, I can relax again enough to sleep. That’s why I keep a cot in here. Once I’m sleepy I have to lie down immediately. Walking upstairs wakes me up too much.”

    “You’re weird,” Mikey pronounced good-naturedly. “I don’t have that problem. I’m going back to bed. Try not to drop anything else, okay?”

    “I won’t. Sorry again,” Don said.

    Mikey waved it off and left him, taking the stairs two at a time. His eyes flicked over to Leo’s door and he saw that it was firmly shut, so apparently Don’s nocturnal wanderings hadn’t bothered him tonight.
Back in his own room, Mikey swiftly stripped and hopped into bed. He didn’t bother to unroll the body shaped blankets he’d left there, instead wrapping his arms around them so he could pretend it was Raph sleeping next to him.

Morning came without Mikey having any memory of falling asleep. When his alarm sounded Mikey rolled out of bed rather than touching the snooze button as he usually did. Mikey wasn’t sure what time Raph had meant to be home, but he had a strong desire to see his older brother as soon as possible.

When Mikey made it to the kitchen the first thing he saw was Raph seated at the table, his feet up on the chair Mikey usually took, and a newspaper open in front of him. Raph wasn’t reading it at that moment though, he was looking with amusement at the half-asleep genius who was on the chair next to him, nursing a cup of coffee.

Raph caught Mikey’s eye as the younger turtle entered and then he nodded towards Don. “Found him slumped over his work table, his face planted square in the middle of some gizmo he was working on.”

There was a small question hidden in the words and Mikey picked up on it. “Yeah, he got up really early this morning with some crazy idea and woke me up. I went down to check on him and warned him to get some sleep.”

“I’m sitting right here,” Don said, somewhat irritably.

“First cup of coffee dude?” Mikey asked.

Don grunted and took a sip from his cup. Grinning, Mikey dropped some bread into the toaster before glancing back at his brothers. Raph had returned to reading his paper and Don was rubbing his forehead, his eyes closed.

Mikey was rather pleased with himself. Raph had Casey to alibi his whereabouts and Mikey had now established, through Donatello, that he’d been present in the lair throughout the night. If he could maneuver things so that Don mentioned that to Leo in an offhand way, then maybe their suspicious leader would let up on him and Raph a little.

To Mikey’s mind, that was one of two primary tasks he needed to accomplish. Work it so that things looked as though they were back to normal in order to stop Leo from hounding their every move and to continue to cultivate Master Splinter into becoming an ally.

By the time Mikey took his breakfast to the table, using Leo’s chair rather than trying to displace Raph’s feet from his, their older brother made an appearance. Leo entered with a tray of tea things, having taken a light repast with their father.

“Don, the heater is out in Master Splinter’s room,” Leo said as he set the tray on the kitchen counter. “It’s been out for a couple of days and he didn’t want to bother you about it, but I think he’s caught a chill.”

That opened Don’s eyes quickly. Draining the last of the coffee from his cup, Don pushed back his chair and got up. “Is he running a fever?”

Leo shook his head as he began washing the tea things. “No, but he’s got a blanket pulled around his shoulders like he can’t get warm.”

“It’s the humidity,” Don said. “His heater has a built in dehumidifier to keep the moisture levels down because the dampness gets into his fur. I’ll fix it right away and remind him not to
worry about telling me when things break.”

“Think he needs anything?” Raph asked, folding his paper and looking over at Leo with concern. “Maybe we should move him to the couch and set the other space heaters around that area.”

“I think that would be a good idea,” Leo agreed. “Even if Don can fix his heater quickly, it might take a while for it to warm up his room.”

“The spare heaters are up in the garage,” Don said.

“I’ll help Raph get them,” Mikey said. “You and Leo can convince Master Splinter to camp out in front of the TV.”

“We’ll postpone practice until later,” Leo said, following Don out of the kitchen.

Mikey and Raph were out of their chairs almost simultaneously. Neither said a word as they entered the elevator, but once the doors were shut, Raph glanced over at Mikey.

“Straight up, find the heaters, straight back down,” Raph said. “We don’t give Leo even a second to wonder what took us so long.”

“Everything just like normal, right Raphie?” Mikey asked. He was unable to keep the slightest touch of sarcasm from his voice.

“What do ya’ want from me?” Raph snapped. “This ain’t normal, we ain’t normal.”

Mikey immediately regretted letting Raph hear the sound of dissatisfaction in his voice. He was walking a tightrope between the rest of his family and Raphael and couldn’t afford to forget that.

“Chill,” Mikey said in his most ingratiating manner. “I’m on top of it. I fixed things so Don thinks I was home all night. At this rate, soon Leo won’t have any reason to be watching us like a turtle hawk.”

“Can’t be soon enough,” Raph muttered as they entered the garage.

Since that had a promising ring to it, Mikey didn’t push the issue further. There was a storage room off to one side where items they didn’t use every day were kept and they went directly to it. Raph held out his arms and Mikey piled four of the largest heaters into them, then retrieved another two along with a couple of extension cords.

Back in the lair proper they set out the heaters under Don’s directions. With Master Splinter safely ensconced in blankets and the warmth from the heaters already cutting the damp chill from the air, the brothers went about taking care of some of their regular chores.

As it drew near noon, Mikey took to the kitchen, having decided to prepare some homemade chicken soup for the family. It didn’t take him long to have a large pot bubbling atop the stove and he used the tea tray to transport a large bowl of soup and some crackers into the entertainment area.

His father was still tucked into his blankets, sitting back comfortably against some pillows. He glanced up from the TV when Mikey approached and smiled at his son. Mikey set the tray down on the coffee table and retrieved a small folding table from its spot against the wall.
Mikey could see that Master Splinter’s eyes had a slightly glassy look to them and knew his father had started to run a fever. As he set the soup in front of Master Splinter, Mikey asked, “Has Don given you any meds yet?”

“Thank you, Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said. “No, he has not. He has been working to restore the heat in my room and I have not seen him.”

“You need to take something before your temperature goes any higher,” Mikey said. “I’ll ask him what I should give you. Do you want some tea?”

“That would be wonderful, yes,” Master Splinter replied, dipping a spoon into the soup and blowing on it to cool it enough to eat.

Mikey checked his father’s room first, but didn’t see Don or the big portable heater that normally occupied one corner. On his way to Don’s lab, he ducked into the kitchen and put a kettle on to boil.

He heard voices in the lab and when Mikey entered, he saw that Raph was helping Donny with his repair efforts.

“Master Splinter’s running a fever,” Mikey said without preliminaries. “What should I give him? By the way, I made a big pot of soup for all of us and he’s eating some now.”

Don waved a hand toward his desk and Mikey saw a pill bottle sitting there. “Give him two of those,” Don said. “We’re almost out and I figured we’d need them, so I sent Leo over to April’s to get more, along with a few other things we’ll need if Master Splinter ends up with a full blown cold. She’s having the pharmacy deliver the meds to her place.”

Mikey grabbed the bottle and said, “I hate it when Master Splinter gets sick.”

“I don’t like it when any of us gets sick or injured,” Don said, returning to his repair work. “With as much rain as we’ve been getting, I should have checked that his heater was working properly.”

“Ya’ can’t think of everything Donny, so stop worrying about it,” Raph said as he used a screwdriver to pry apart a section of the heater.

“Yeah bro’,” Mikey chimed in. “He could just as easily have chosen not to turn the heater on.”

Making his departure, Mikey got back to the kitchen just as the kettle began to whistle. With an expertise born of years of practice, Mikey prepared a pot of tea and took it along with a clean cup back to where his father waited.

He noticed that Master Splinter had only managed to eat about half of his soup and hadn’t touched the crackers. Without remarking on that fact, Mikey moved the bowl off of the tray and put the cup in its place, pouring out the steaming, fragrant tea for his father.

Setting the pot aside, Mikey shook out two pills from the bottle and set them next to the tea cup. “Don said to take those,” he explained. “Leo’s gone to get some supplies from April in case you wind up having caught a cold.”

Master Splinter nodded, appearing weary. After a moment he lifted the cup and blew on it before taking a tentative sip. A small smile graced his lips and he gave a contented sigh as the hot brew slid down his throat.
Worried that his father would doze off before the tea was cool enough for him to swallow his medicine, Mikey said, “I’m gonna get myself some soup. I’ll be right back.”

His father lifted a hand in acknowledgment and Mikey wasted little time getting to the kitchen, filling a bowl, and returning to Master Splinter’s side. He took a seat on the floor, putting his bowl on the coffee table. From there he had a good view of his father.

After a moment his father lifted the remote and changed channels to one of the shows he favored. The tea had cooled down and he took the pills, much to Mikey’s relief.

Mikey agreed with Don that he didn’t like it when anyone in the family was sick or hurt, but for some reason Mikey’s concern was more acute when that family member was his father. Maybe it was because he’d always seen Master Splinter as invincible and didn’t want to believe that anything could ever happen to him. When they’d lost Master Splinter during one of their battles with the Shredder, Mikey had refused to accept the idea that he might not ever return.

That time had been the worst for Raphael. Though Raph might be loath to admit it, he had a deep seated attachment to Master Splinter. As much as the hot head spouted independence, he needed his father, probably more than any of them. Mikey had wondered about that from time to time without figuring it out. Now with the change in Mikey’s relationship with Raph he thought he might have a better understanding of his brother.

Raph needed to be validated. He needed someone to convince him that he had worth. Only his father could do that for him. Master Splinter was the only one in his life who had consistently had an unselfish interest in Raph’s well-being.

That certainly explained Raph’s intense fear of falling in his father’s estimation of him. Leo had said he knew Raph really well, that he understood all of Raph’s inner demons. Was an acute need for Master Splinter’s acceptance one of those demons? If so, then Leo’s threat to expose Raph’s sadistic tendencies to their father was beyond cruel even though it had proven to be effective.

Right then Mikey knew that there was going to be a time when a confrontation with Leo was going to be necessary. Raph might have succumbed to the idea that their trysts would have to be hidden from the family forever, but Mikey wasn’t willing to live that way. He refused to see their attachment as shameful.

Mikey had been so lost in reverie that he didn’t notice that Master Splinter was watching him. Therefore when his father spoke, it startled him.

“Could you pass me the soup, Michelangelo?” Master Splinter asked.

“Uh, sure Master Splinter,” Mikey answered, jumping to his feet. When he picked up the bowl he said, “It’s pretty cold. I can warm it up real quick.”

Shaking his head, Master Splinter said, “That will be unnecessary. Your soup is quite tasty whether warm or cold.”

“Thanks sensei,” Mikey said, beaming as he placed the bowl on his father’s tray. While he was standing he also refilled Master Splinter’s tea cup.

Taking his seat on the floor once again, Mikey started to turn his attention to the program his father had been watching. Before he could get into it, Master Splinter cleared his throat and Mikey looked over at him.
“Can I get you something else, father?” Mikey asked.

“You are a very good son, Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said. “What I would like is an answer to a question.”

Puzzled, Mikey said, “Sure. What’s the question?”

“Are you happy?” Master Splinter asked.

Slightly taken aback, Mikey answered, “Yeah. Why wouldn’t I be?”

“I am a father. Questions of that sort plague my waking hours more often than I would like to admit,” Master Splinter said.

“We’re supposed to be worrying about you today,” Mikey told him, a twinkle of humor in his eyes.

“Mine is a simple head cold. It will pass,” Master Splinter said. “My concerns for your future do not have so easy a path.”

Mikey wasn’t sure what his father was alluding to, but he felt like a discussion along those lines might possibly prove useful. “I don’t know, we seem to be doing okay,” Mikey offered tentatively.

“So I am not to take your sudden predilection for my company as anything more than that? There is nothing weighing on your mind that you hope I might help to resolve?” Master Splinter asked astutely.

A straight out question of that sort wasn’t something Mikey was as yet ready to deal with. He didn’t want to just say ‘no’ because that would have shut down the subject and he wasn’t ready for that either.

With a shrug, Mikey said, “I like spending time with you. Besides, maybe there’s stuff I wonder about too.”

“Perhaps the ‘stuff’ pertaining to our previous conversation? My stories tend to revolve around the same basic theme,” Master Splinter noted sagely.

“I don’t wanna say I don’t get curious,” Mikey said. “Why would that make you ask if I was happy?”

“Perhaps I worry that in your life you will not be able to experience complete fulfillment because you do not have the same chance for it that is afforded to other living beings,” Master Splinter said. “None of you has ever expressed any thoughts on that topic to me and I had decided not to broach it myself.”

The subject was very much the one that Mikey wanted to explore with his father and he picked up on one word more than the others. “’Had’ sensei? Like maybe it’s something you think we should talk about now?”

“I am sensing a change in you, Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said bluntly. “It is in more than my perception, though what I see and hear are the largest factors in what I believe to be the truth. Have you become aware of your sexuality?”

Mikey glanced at the television as he tried to formulate an answer. Two characters were
engaged in a heavy make-out session and Mikey felt the heat rising on his neck.

“Yeah, I guess so,” Mikey admitted, flushing with embarrassment.

“An awareness of desires for someone perhaps of your own sex?” Master Splinter asked. “Our previous conversation seemed to fall in that direction.”

“You agreed that you liked the idea of people being happy with whoever they chose,” Mikey said quickly.

“My son, I am not condemning you,” Master Splinter said. “It is my opinion that there is nothing wrong with your preference for males. Has someone in particular drawn your fancy or has this revelation come about from prolonged exposure to mass media?”

It took Mikey a second to comprehend his father’s allusion. “I guess I first noticed it when I was reading comics or looking through magazines,” he said. “The guys were always more interesting to me than the girls.”

He purposely avoided answering the first part of Master Splinter’s question because he certainly wasn’t ready to broach that subject. Mikey was also pretty sure he hadn’t softened his father up enough for him to be accepting of who his son actually desired.

“Often with that type of realization there also follows an awareness of one’s limitations,” Master Splinter said. “For the four of you that can prove to be a nearly insurmountable difficulty.”

“’Cause we’re turtles,” Mikey responded, knowing exactly what his father meant. “Mutated ones.”

“That does not mean you could not find someone to accept you,” Master Splinter said softly.

“Yeah, I know that,” Mikey said. “I think that alien warrior Jhanna liked Don that way, so I know it’s not impossible. It’s just that . . . I don’t know, I don’t find myself much interested in the usual options.”


Mikey nodded slowly, his eyes fixed on his father. “Guess that doesn’t leave me with lots of choices, but I do still have some.”

“Yes you do,” Master Splinter agreed, his focus just as intent on his youngest son. “Please remember as you search, if you choose to search, for a special someone that you should both be of one accord. Whatever happens between two beings there should always be a basic understanding in place. The question will arise at some point, preferably early on, as to what partner A wants and what partner B wants from the relationship. If those are not the same things, the connection is doomed to failure.”

Maybe it was the fact that Raph was at the forefront of his mind, but it almost seemed to Mikey as though his father knew that two of his sons were engaged in a connection that was less than brotherly. He had to remind himself that Master Splinter was merely speaking in generalities and couldn’t actually know anything.

Mikey was saved from any further discussion by Leo’s return. His older brother was carrying two bags filled with what looked like half a drug store. As Leo approached their father, a look of concern on his face, Mikey stood up and took the bags from him.
On his way to Don’s lab with the newly purchased items, Mikey glanced back over his shoulder. Though Leo was leaning over to check on Master Splinter, he was not the son who held their father’s attention.

Master Splinter’s gaze was still aimed towards Michelangelo, his expression contemplative.

TBC…………..
Chapter 19

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,961 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 19 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey
~~Phew, verbal gymnastics take longer to write than choreographing a fight scene!

“How is he doing?” Leo asked as Don entered the kitchen.

It was dinner time. The brothers had spent the afternoon at practice with Leo leading them while Master Splinter rested. Don had repaired their father’s heater and it was warming up Master Splinter’s room, but the aged rat was still seated on the couch, blankets wrapped around his body.

Showing his brothers the empty bowl he was carrying, Don said, “He ate all of his soup. His temperature is normal, but I’ll keep monitoring it. The tea with honey helped his sore throat and that’s getting better, but he’s starting to sound congested.”

“Do we have medicine for that?” Mikey asked worriedly.

“Yeah, Leo brought back the whole pharmacy,” Raph answered with an amused glance at his older brother.

“We should take turns sitting with him tonight,” Leo said. “Age and illness don’t go well together.”

“I’d carry him to his bed, but ya’ know he won’t let me,” Raph said. “Be happy to take the first shift though.”

“Let Don go next otherwise he won’t turn in at all,” Mikey said. “I’ll take the third that way the one of us who actually likes early morning can finish off the night.”

“Set both of your alarms Michelangelo,” Leo told him sternly. “You know that if Don starts reading a book he won’t remember to wake you.”

“Hey, I’m not that bad,” Don protested.

“Then sit down and eat something,” Raph directed, scooping a large serving of the casserole Mikey had made onto Don’s plate. “’Cause ya’ tend to forget to do that too.”

Don pulled his chair out and plopped down on it. “You guys are exaggerating,” he said, sounding exasperated, then once more insisted, “I’m not that bad.”

Mikey reached over and rubbed the top of Don’s bald dome. “You’re our very own absentminded professor.”

Laughing, Mikey pulled his arm back fast when Don swatted at it. Ignoring his youngest brother, Don turned to the table and began to eat. “I’ll set out the medications he might need along with a list of instructions for when and if they should be given to him. Unless he starts running a
fever again, the best thing is to let him rest.” Don said between bites.

After taking a sip of his tea, Leo set his cup down and addressed Raph. “I haven’t had the chance to ask you, did Casey find out anything about that tip he got on the Purple Dragons?”

Mikey kept his focus on his food, pretending to have little interest in the subject. Raph had already shown himself to be a consummate liar and didn’t require his assistance.

“Yeah, get this,” Raph said, sitting up straighter in his chair. “The guy who gave him the info got his facts all twisted up. The Purple Dragons are watching one of those restaurants, but during the day, not at night. They ain’t planning on robbing it either, they just want to see what kind of business they do in the afternoon ‘cause it’s up for sale and Hun’s thinking about buying the place.”

“You have got to be kidding me,” Don said incredulously. “What would Hun do with a restaurant?”

“Launder money,” Leo answered immediately. “Make himself look like a legitimate business man, hide things in plain sight, bribe the local authorities, disguise shipments as food related items, peddle influence, and a host of other things. Shall I continue to name them?”

“No,” Mikey said hastily, talking around a mouthful of food. “We get the point.”

“So what, if anything, do we do about it?” Don asked.

“The first thing we should do is discover which restaurant Hun is going after,” Leo said. Looking at Don, he asked, “Do you have a way to find that out?”

“He’d have to file for a business license,” Don said. “That would be the best place to start since I know his name and those of his dummy corporations. I can create a search engine that will alert me if there are hits on any of those names.”

“Little Hun is building an empire,” Raph said mockingly. “Papa Shredder would be so proud.”

“I doubt that Karai is,” Leo said, his expression dark. “She’s already had trouble with him trying to invade Foot Clan territory once.”

“So let them chew each other up,” Raph said, staring hard at Leo. “It can’t be anything but good for us if they start fighting. Throws them both off their game.”

“It would be if they met in some abandoned building to face off,” Leo told him, leaning forward. “The way they do it hurts too many innocent people.”

“I guess your answer is to jump in the middle of it again when it ain’t our business,” Raph shot back, scowling at his brother.

Don leaned towards Mikey and whispered, “Haven’t we heard this argument before?”

Nodding, Mikey muttered, “Yep. Didn’t much like it the first time either.”

Mikey continued to listen to Leo and Raph bicker, barely registering their words because he’d heard it all before. Raph had to be keeping up his end of the argument on general principles because Hun buying a restaurant was surely only another part of his original elaborate lie.
The lie he’d made up so that he and Mikey could reach an arrangement that mutually satisfied both of their kinks. Not knowing what Raph had in mind for getting them some additional alone time left Mikey out of the play. He couldn’t aid Raph if he didn’t know what was going on in his brother’s head.

Raph seemed to have a preference for controlling their interactions and that was okay with Mikey, he wanted to submit. But here at home, trying to act normal around each other, trying to hide what they secretly were, that required a certain amount of communication. It meant they had to have a meeting of the minds and Raph had to trust Mikey to do his part.

It also meant that Raph had to give him a part. Mikey was not just another toy from Raph’s cedar chest and he sure wasn’t that imitation Mikey dummy either.

Mikey didn’t much want to go back to using his hand and his imagination, but he would if Raph started treating him like some object. What was it that Master Splinter had said? It was something about how two partners needed to know what each one wanted from their relationship.

The ongoing argument seemed to be heating up as both Leo and Raph were leaning far over the table trying to get into each other’s faces. When one of them got pissed enough they’d usually storm out, but they couldn’t do that tonight. Not after deciding that all of them were needed to look after Master Splinter.

Don appeared on the verge of trying to break them up when they heard Master Splinter start coughing. It had a phlegmy sound to it and the effect on the arguing brothers was instantaneous as they both immediately stopped talking to look towards the living area.

Both Leo and Don were out of their chairs almost simultaneously.

“I’ll get the medicine,” Don said, heading for his lab.

“I’m going to check on him,” Leo said, suiting the action to the words.

Raph glared at Leo’s retreating shell and then flicked the edge of his plate hard enough to push it away from him.

“What was that all about?” Mikey asked, keeping his voice down. “Why are you fighting with him over stuff you made up?”

Turning his glower on Mikey, Raph answered the question with his own. “What makes ya’ think I was lying about Hun?”

For a moment Mikey was unsure, seeing the serious expression on his brother’s face. Then he caught the gleam that came and went in Raph’s eyes.

Snorting, Mikey said, “Good one.”

Raph’s face twisted into one of amusement. “Leo would have been suspicious of the whole thing if we didn’t have that same boring ass argument. Besides, he pisses me off with that attitude of his. If I had my way, we’d egg Karai and Hun on to fighting each other. Don’t matter who gets bumped off as long as it gets rid of one of them.”

“He has a point about innocent bystanders getting caught in the fallout,” Mikey said mildly.

“Don’t you start too,” Raph said. “If we engineered things just right those two groups wouldn’t fight out in the street, they’d take it someplace private. Leo won’t see it that way, he
wants to jump in the middle with both swords swinging.”

“Engineering things so that people kill each other isn’t his way,” Mikey said, explaining something his hard headed brother knew all too well. “It doesn’t matter who those people are. You aren’t really that cold blooded either, you’re just frustrated with both Karai and Hun. We all are.”

“Suppose so,” Raph said, surprising Mikey who thought his brother would jump down his throat. Maybe his new relationship with Mikey made him more open to an opposing view. “Could be he’s still got a thing for Karai and he’s just trying to protect her.”

They could hear the murmur of voices coming from the other three family members. Mikey didn’t really buy into the idea that Leo had the hots for Karai, though he was pretty sure that Karai had a secret thing for Leo. Nobody got as mad as Karai had gotten with her blood vendetta unless they thought they’d been jilted.

“Nah, Leo’s family first, last, and always,” Mikey said. “It’s why he’s in there hovering over Master Splinter instead of in here monitoring us. Speaking of, this would be a great time for you to tell me what your plan is for getting us together again.”

“Damn, ya’ really want it, don’t ya’ Mikey?” Raph asked, sounding pleased with himself.

“Don’t you?” Mikey countered. “I’m not the one with the secret room full of sex toys.”

“Shhhh!” Raph frowned, turning his eyes towards the door. They could still hear the others talking so he turned his attention back to Mikey. “What’s wrong with you? Don’t ever bring that up while we’re at home.”

“Then stop acting like I don’t have a part in this,” Mikey whispered hoarsely. “We both have to find ways to get out of here and we’d probably do a better job of that if we worked together.”

“Ya’ sure are pushy,” Raph said, some of the annoyance leaving his voice.

The fact that he wasn’t disputing Mikey’s point could mean that Raph had conceded that he had one, or he could just be deflecting his brother off of the topic.

Either way, Mikey was more like a badger than a turtle when it came to getting his way, something that Raph should have been aware of. “Obviously we can’t do anything tonight,” Mikey said, his gaze fixed unwaveringly on Raph’s face. “What about tomorrow, if Master Splinter’s feeling better?”

Leo and Don’s voices suddenly sounded as though they were getting closer, so Raph said hurriedly, “Yeah. We’ll see.”

Raph rose from his chair and began picking up empty plates. He was next to the sink when his two brothers walked into the kitchen.

Mikey looked up. “Anything serious? You were gone a long time.”

“No,” Don said, sitting down to finish his now cold meal. “We were telling him our plan for the night and he kept insisting it wasn’t necessary.”

Raph came over and reached for Don’s plate. “Let me stick this in the microwave for a second and heat it back up. Try to stay parked in your chair long enough to eat it this time. Mikey
can get off his ass and check on Master Splinter if it’s needed again. He’s already shoveled down enough food for two.”

“I’m a growing boy,” Mikey said in mock protest.

Leo sat down and reached for his cup. The tea was cold too, but Leo didn’t seem to notice as he finished it. For a second he let his guard down and Mikey could see how weary his brother was.

Don rewarded Raph with a smile when his warmed food was again in front of him. “Thanks,” he responded gratefully.

“Let Raph and me tuck father into bed,” Mikey offered. “You two go to bed early. I’ll do the same as soon as we get him settled.”

Leo gave him an odd look and Mikey immediately regretted the proposal. Almost as quickly he felt a rush of resentment at having to worry about the way he worded stuff or chose to do things.

“I still have to give you an instruction sheet,” Don protested.

Mikey ignored him, his eyes directed at Leo. “What, you don’t think we can handle it?” he asked combatively.

“I never said that,” Leo responded with some surprise.

Opening his mouth to dispute that, Mikey was interrupted when Raph put his fists on the table and leaned in. “How about Mikey goes with ya’ Donny. He can make sure ya’ don’t turn those instructions into a novel and fetch the meds at the same time. Then ya’ can turn in. I’ll get Master Splinter to his room while Leo straightens up behind us and cuts off the rest of the heaters. Mikey can put the supplies in Master Splinter’s room and then walk upstairs with Leo. Otherwise, Splinter Junior will hang around outside sensei’s door all night.”

Right then Mikey understood why Raph had been so reticent about sharing his plans. Somehow he knew that Mikey was feeling resentful towards Leo, an emotion that was foreign to him, and that Mikey hadn’t learned how to hide that acrimony.

Chagrined at his uncharacteristic and foolhardy lapse, Mikey grinned. “Sounds good to me. That way I don’t have to listen to Master Splinter complain that we’re treating him like an invalid.”

Don had stopped eating to stare at his oldest and youngest brothers. At Mikey’s words he pushed back from the table and got up. “Come on bro’. I think I am tired enough to enjoy a couple hours of sleep before it’s my turn to stand watch.”

Ready to escape Leo’s searching gaze, Mikey quickly followed Don out of the kitchen.

As they passed through the lair on the way to Don’s lab, Mikey glanced in Master Splinter’s direction. His father was resting back comfortably, his focus on some television drama that probably fit exactly the type of program he enjoyed. Mikey was glad they had at least those small pleasures and knew that was mostly due to Don’s intellect.

He hadn’t given much thought to Don other than a few jealous twinges when the genius and Raph were together. Mikey realized that gaining Master Splinter’s blessing for his relationship with Raph was only part of the rather complex equation. At some point Don was going to need to
be included in their explanations. What if Don had feelings for Raph too?

That was something Mikey was going to have to find out.

Neither of them said anything as they entered the lab and Don sat down at his laptop. His thick fingers flew over the keys, typing with a speed that always left Mikey amazed. How he didn’t have a million typos Mikey never knew. Their fingers weren’t designed for a normal keyboard, though Don had modified his slightly.

Normally Mikey would wander around the lab touching things that drew his attention and driving Don to distraction. Tonight his mind was thoroughly occupied, so Mikey just stood next to Don’s desk and ruminated quietly.

After a few minutes Don was finished. He sent what he’d typed to the printer and while he was waiting for it, strode over to the shelves where he’d placed the items Leo had brought from the pharmacy. Having needed them throughout the day, Don hadn’t bothered to shift anything to the infirmary.

Mikey watched his brother place things into a wicker basket and was startled when Don suddenly spun around to look at him.

“What is going on with you?” Don demanded. “You’ve been completely out of sorts lately. First you’re clashing with Raphael, and now you’re being short with Leo. I don’t want to be worried about you, but you aren’t giving me much choice.”

“I thought you’d figured it out,” Mikey said. “I’m maturing.”

“That doesn’t explain your edginess. You don’t hesitate to snap at us and that’s not like you,” Don said.

“And you guys don’t hesitate to keep treating me like I’m half-grown,” Mikey parried. “We’re all pretty much the same age, bro.”

“Being seen as the youngest has always been something of an advantage to you,” Don pointed out.

“That is not true,” Mikey said distinctly. “You guys always say that when you think someone else in this family is going easy on me. I could claim that being a genius has been an advantage to you. None of us gets special treatment. The fact is that when I want something I’m more persistent than the rest of you.”

“What is it that you want now, Michelangelo?” Don asked, the timbre in his voice changing.

Don’s expression was at once speculative and calculating. It set off warning bells in Mikey’s head, starting when his brother had used his full name.

Mikey shrugged. “I dunno. Same thing as you guys I guess. A chance to live, have some fun. Mostly I just want my life to have some meaning. I know you guys make fun of me when I’m the Turtle Titan, but at least I’m showing the world that I exist.”

“Is that what’s been bothering you lately?” Don asked. “Feeling as though you need a connection to something outside our current existence?”

“That’s the thing that’s always bothered me,” Mikey answered. “You know that. It’s not
“I thought you’d come to terms with that after your first big adventure with Silver Sentry,” Don said. “Didn’t you discover that being a ninja was who you really are?”

“I’ve accepted that,” Mikey said. “Dressing up like Turtle Titan once in a blue moon and being seen with SS is exciting, but I’m not that persona when it comes to crime fighting. Not anymore.”

“Yet that isn’t enough,” Don said thoughtfully. “You want something else and I think you know what that is, you just don’t know how to get it.”

Donatello wasn’t just a knowledgeable genius, he was a pretty sharp one too. For all the teasing they did about how he’d forget to take care of himself, that wasn’t the case when it came to noticing the most subtle of changes in his brother’s attitudes or behaviors.

Mikey wanted to explain things to him, wanted to get his take on what was happening to him and between him and Raphael. But there were obstacles, one of which was not knowing if Don had a secret agenda of his own. After a minute, Mikey thought of a way to broach the subject.

“You know how sometimes you put those little slides under the microscope so you can look at those tiny little organisms that fascinate you so much?” Mikey asked.

Confused at the change in subject, Don said slowly, “Yes.”

“That’s kinda like us, isn’t it? There’s a small dot of liquid that represents their world and they’re trapped in it. You watch them swim around, sometimes bumping into each other and bouncing off, simply existing together but not really connecting,” Mikey said.

Don’s brow cleared. “We connect Mikey,” he said gently. “We love and support each other through everything. Our family bond is so strong that I can feel you guys even when I’m not with you.”

“Same here bro’,” Mikey said. “Master Splinter would call that a spiritual connection. It’s ‘cause we’re totally tied to each other and that’s an awesome bond. It’s just not the only kind there is.”

There was a flicker of understanding in Don’s warm brown eyes, enough of one to tell Mikey that his brother might be catching on.

“We’re pretty limited on our options Mike,” Don said, his gaze deep and compassionate.

“Are we?” Mikey asked, knowing that Don had used the more adult version of his nickname for a reason. “I kinda think some of the limits we put on ourselves are pretty arbitrary. Don’t you?”

Before Don could answer, they heard Raph’s voice just outside the door. “Hey!” he called out and then stuck his head into the lab. “What’s keeping ya’ two? We got Master Splinter into bed and I have a good book to keep me company, but I can’t get rid of Leo and settle down until somebody delivers those meds.”

“Sorry,” Don said hastily. “I got caught up in running his symptoms through my head and deciding on when and what dosages. Mikey finally had to stop me from accounting for every scenario in the book.”
“Yeah, I just told him if we didn’t know what to do, we’d wake him up,” Mikey added with a light laugh.

“That’s exactly right,” Raph said. “I swear brainiac, I don’t know who worries more, you or Leo. Give me the stuff and then both of ya’ get out here and drag Leo upstairs before I pop him one. I’m tired of him stepping on my feet.”

Mikey quickly handed over the instruction sheet and Don finished placing bottles into the wicker basket. Casting a swift look around the lab, Don walked over to join his two brothers in the doorway, passing the basket to Raph.

Raph led the way back towards Master Splinter’s room. Don and Mikey peeked inside but didn’t enter because Raph glowered at them before turning his stern look back to Leo, who was hovering over their father.

“Let him sleep already,” Raph told Leo in a mild tone that belied his impatience. The last thing their father needed to hear was the two of them arguing.

Leo tucked the blankets around Master Splinter’s shoulder before straightening up. “Have you got everything you need?” he asked Raph.

“I gave him the instructions and all the medicines he might require,” Don answered for his red banded brother. “He’ll be fine. The heater is working great but if it goes out for some reason, pull a couple of the smaller ones in here and wake me up.”

“Come on Leo,” Mikey said. “Leave Raph to it and catch some shut eye so the rest of us can.”

“Go to bed my son,” Master Splinter said in a slightly raspy voice. “I am in good hands.”

Leo bowed to his father and moved past Raph, offering him a small smile as he did so. The gesture of confidence surprised Raph and he responded by patting Leo’s shoulder before his brother was out of range.

As Leo slid the shoji doors shut behind him, Mikey wondered, not for the first time, how Leo and Raph could be so gruff with each other one minute, and then so united the next. That must be part of their connection, the one that Don had alluded they all had.

Together the three brothers walked upstairs. They said good-night to each other before separating to go to their own rooms.

Leo entered his without a backwards glance and then Mikey stepped into his own room, turning to take a last look around.

Don was still standing on the threshold of his own bedroom, his eyes fixed on Mikey. The expression on his face was enigmatic and all Mikey could think to do was to offer him a bright smile before nodding his head and disappearing into his room.

A second after Mikey closed his door, he heard Don’s click shut too.

TBC……………….
Michelangelo was relieved when Donatello woke him for his shift at watching their ailing father.
Not that Mikey particularly liked being awakened at such an insane hour. It was just that Don’s being there on time meant that Master Splinter was sleeping peacefully. If he had taken a turn for the worse, Don would be tending to him, not giving that task over to Mikey.

After making certain that Don actually went to bed like he was supposed to, Mikey did a quick round of the lair to check that unneeded lights and electronics had been shut off. When that was done, he quietly entered his father’s room. Master Splinter was deeply asleep, the sound of his even breathing reassuring the worried turtle.

Settling comfortably onto an old futon with his shell braced against the wall, Mikey began flipping through the comic books he’d brought down with him. His turn at watch would only last a couple of hours, but just a quarter of that time had passed before Mikey grew bored.

Master Splinter hadn’t moved, hadn’t showed any signs of discomfort at all since Mikey had joined him. The bedroom was warm and toasty, a small lamp giving off enough light to read by but not enough to disturb their father’s sleep.

With nothing to do but let his thoughts wander, it was inevitable that they turned to Raphael. Mikey could picture him sprawled in his hammock, his muscular form relaxed and on display. The visual was so tantalizing that Mikey had to fight with every ounce of his will-power not to rush upstairs and invade his brother’s bedroom.

Needing to exert some self-restraint, Mikey looked around to see what his brothers might have left behind that could possibly entertain him. His eyes fell on a large dictionary and he realized that’s what Don had been reading to pass the time.

“It figures,” Mikey thought to himself with a snort of amusement. He lifted the thick volume, hefting it to get a feel for its weight, and then set it on his lap.

Glancing over at his father and seeing that he was still sleeping soundly, Mikey opened the dictionary. Feeling slightly guilty, he flipped to the section containing words that began with the letter ‘S’ and looked up ‘sex’.

One of the definitions read: “physical activity in which people touch each other’s bodies, kiss each other, etc. physical activity that is related to and often includes sexual intercourse.”

Mikey re-read the sentence and then stared unseeing at the page. “Often includes sexual intercourse” ran through his mind several times as he started to think very hard about what that meant.

Granted he’d only had two real encounters with Raph, but each of those involved the giving and taking of pain. Mikey had found the ultimate pleasure in both of those meetings, but Raph had peaked only once, and by using his own hand. In neither case did Raph actually use Mikey’s body for his own sexual gratification.

Surely Raphael would want to at some point. Mikey had no experience in that arena and no real exposure to the mechanics involved in something like that. The concept wasn’t entirely foreign to him, he could guess enough to know that simply touching Raph’s penis wasn’t everything that they could do together.

Would Raph let Mikey touch him? Would Raph expect more than that, would he want Mikey to perform certain acts with him? The thought excited Mikey but it also made him wonder if he could actually go through with it if Raph demanded those things from him. Mikey hadn’t really fantasized much beyond having his own sexual needs fulfilled.
Blinking himself back to reality, Mikey quickly turned the pages of the dictionary to other words such as lust, desire, need, and love. His mind frantically hopped from definition to definition, finding himself only partially in each description.

Only the word ‘love’ gave Mikey solace, offering him the definition he felt truly explained what he wanted in a relationship. “A profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person, especially when based on sexual attraction. A feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection.”

That’s what Mikey wanted, what he desired above all else. Mikey wanted to be loved by Raph, he wanted to enjoy the kink they both shared, to balance his brother, and to take part in an intimacy that went beyond the physical. He simply had no idea if Raph also wanted that same thing.

Up until that moment Master Splinter had been quiet, but now he groaned in his sleep. Mikey instantly set the book aside, all previous thoughts leaving his head as he quickly moved over to his father’s side.

As gently as possible, Mikey touched the back of Master Splinter’s hand. After determining that it didn’t feel as though the fever had returned, Mikey leaned down and listened to his father’s breathing.

There was no indication that his airways were blocked or that he was at all congested. Mikey looked into his father’s face, watching the small frown line smooth out from his brow.

Mikey thought he understood. His own inner turmoil had been sensed by Master Splinter and that was what his father had reacted to.

Very faintly, Mikey whispered, “It’s all okay, Father. I’m figuring it out. Don’t worry.”

Almost as soon as the words left Mikey’s mouth, Master Splinter sighed and his body appeared to relax.

Assuring himself that Master Splinter had settled again, Mikey returned to the futon and to reading the dictionary. This time however, he avoided all trigger words.

When three-thirty rolled around, Mikey got to his feet, checked Master Splinter one last time, and then headed upstairs to wake Leonardo for his shift. The urge to peek into Raph’s room returned as he approached the bedrooms, but Mikey resisted it.

Mikey paused at Leo’s door with his hand partially lifted to knock. After glancing at Don’s room he decided against making any noise, fearful that he’d wake the genius. Donatello tended to sleep as lightly as Leo whenever a family member was sick or injured.

Using great care, Mikey turned the knob and opened the door. The room was dark and Mikey didn’t completely close the door behind him so that a little light from the lair could seep into the room.

His eyes adjusted quickly and Mikey walked across to Leo’s bed on cat’s feet, moving as silently as he could. He was surprised to reach his brother’s side without waking Leo and realized in that moment that the older turtle must be truly exhausted.

Very slowly, Mikey kneeled next to Leo’s bed and studied his brother’s face. Awake or asleep, Leonardo’s expression was enigmatic, giving nothing away. Having a sibling who was always so stoic could be something of a pain. Trying to read his thoughts was even more so.
Lately all they had done was to converse in circles. Mikey would give a lot to know what Leo truly thought, what he kept hidden behind that aloof mask of his. Sleeping this soundly was a good indication that Leonardo was stressing about something, whether that was their father’s illness, the situation with Raph and Mikey, or both, was hard to tell.

As Mikey looked down at Leo he wondered if there was a way to get through to him, to help him understand and accept what Raph needed. Surely if Leo knew that Mikey wanted the same things, that this particular fetish was desired and mutually accepted by both, he couldn’t stand in their way.

Frowning, another idea made its way into Mikey’s head. What if Leo knew or sensed more about Raph than just his kink? What if those demons Leo had alluded to weren’t entirely about Raph’s need to dominate someone through pain?

Mikey pondered that idea. Suppose what Leo worried over wasn’t necessarily a fear that Raphael might physically harm Michelangelo, but the concern that Raph couldn’t give Mikey what he truly wanted? Hadn’t Master Splinter also hinted at something along those lines?

Staring down at Leo, Mikey whispered, “What are you keeping from me?”

Almost instantly Leonardo’s eyes popped open. His gaze fell immediately on his younger brother. “Is everything okay? Is it my shift?”

The questions assured Mikey that Leo hadn’t heard his words, just the sound of his voice.

“Dude, you were so out of it. I can’t believe you didn’t hear me come in. I’m wide awake bro’, I can stay up longer. Maybe you should get some more shut eye,” Mikey told him.

Leo sat up and Mikey got to his feet, moving back to make room. Grabbing his mask off of the bedside table, Leo began tying it on. “No, I’m good. Did Father wake?” he asked.

Mikey shook his head. “Nope. He’s sleeping easy. No coughing or wheezing, and his breathing doesn’t sound labored at all. Guess we can thank the ooze for giving us all great recuperative powers.”

“I’d thank it if it didn’t allow us to get sick in the first place,” Leo said dryly as he pulled on the rest of his gear and seated his weapons on his shell. “Go on to bed and try to sleep. We don’t need for anyone else to become ill.”

“Not gonna argue with you bro’,” Mikey said. “I left some comics down there or if you’re desperate you can read Don’s dictionary. It’s filled with words nobody will ever need to know.”

Leo chuckled and picked up a book from his table. “I’ll stick with this.”

“Sun Tzu?” Mikey asked, quirking an eye ridge. “Don’t you like, have that memorized by now?”

“It’s a new translation,” Leo answered. “I’m curious to see how it differs from my other copies.”

“Copies’ being plural,” Mikey said. “That’s pathetic. You really need to expand your horizons.”

“I’m sure I could do that with costumed comic book heroes,” Leo responded with a hint of humor.
“At least they show a certain sense of style, something you are hopelessly without,” Mikey retorted.

“I’m a ninja, Mikey. I don’t need style, just invisibility,” Leo said as he headed out the door.

“They call that skill ‘art’ for a reason,” Mikey countered, following him. “You should pull off that invisibility trick with more panache.”

Leo placed a finger to his lips and then pointed at Don’s door. Of course he couldn’t leave it alone, having a fondness for getting in the last word. “Panache is for turtles who can’t manage invisibility or silence,” he whispered.

“Ouch,” Mikey murmured, covering his heart with one hand. He was grinning as he watched Leo go downstairs.

Entering his own bedroom, Mikey thought about how much he enjoyed moments like the one he and Leo had just passed together. The easy back and forth of their conversation made him feel very relaxed and entertained.

The problem was they weren’t really saying anything of substance. Mikey turned out the lights and crawled into bed, kicking the blanket to the bottom because he didn’t need it just yet. Lighthearted bantering was enjoyable, but they were all still harboring secrets that apparently no one was willing to talk about.

Mikey dug the back of his head into his pillow and shifted around to get comfortable. In the silence he could hear the ticking of his small bedside alarm clock and the usual muted sounds that came through the walls and pipes of their underground home.

His eyes were beginning to drift shut when another sound reached him. It took only a fraction of a second to realize it was Raph’s snoring that he heard.

As before, the snoring reverberated through Mikey’s body like a siren’s song, enticing him in ways that set off a deep longing in the young turtle’s system. Unconsciously moving his hips, Mikey’s hearing locked onto the sound and his eyes glazed over.

Visualizing his brother’s strong body, biceps bulging as he held Mikey down, only served as further enticement. Mikey could almost feel Raphael’s shaft against his leg again, perhaps this time sliding upwards in search of an opening to penetrate.

With a deep, shuddering breath, Mikey released his aching cock. There was no way he’d sleep now, not without alleviating the pain from his throbbing hard-on.

Wrapping a hand around his erection, Mikey began to masturbate. Stroking himself, Mikey followed his memory to his last encounter with Raph, reliving the feeling of his brother’s nails against his skin, his fingers pinching sensitive areas of Mikey’s anatomy.

Mikey almost wailed as his orgasm hit. At the last second he stuffed his fist into his mouth to muffle the sound as cum erupted from his erect organ.

Wave upon wave of sheer pleasure rolled through Mikey’s system. In moments it was done and Mikey’s hand flopped down onto the mattress, his teeth releasing their grip on his fist as he was completely relaxed.

Panting, Mikey lay there while the air cooled his skin and the cum on his plastron grew...
sticky. His endorphins kicked in and soon Mikey could feel nothing at all, his body seeming to float on a cloud.

After a while he became aware that the cold was starting to bother him. Catching a hold of the blanket with his toes, Mikey used the smallest of efforts to lift it towards his fingers and then pulled the blanket the rest of the way over him.

In seconds he was sound asleep, images of Raphael running through his head.

When Mikey finally made it downstairs the next morning he saw that Master Splinter was once more seated on the couch, a blanket around his shoulders.

Walking over, Mikey bade his father good morning and asked, “How are you feeling?”

“Quite well, thank you Michelangelo,” Master Splinter replied. “Donatello insisted that I ‘take it easy’ again today. I have agreed only because if I do not, he and Leonardo will hover around me the entire day.”

Mikey chuckled. “You should totally take advantage of that, sensei. I can’t even guess how many hours you must have spent taking care of us when we were little. You deserve some payback.”

“You seem quite ready to reverse our roles,” Master Splinter said. “Have you grown so much?”

The expression on his father’s face was searching, as though he was trying to look directly into Mikey’s mind. Perhaps something of what had occurred in his room the night before still lingered in the aged rat’s head, some residual memory of Mikey’s mental chaos.

If that was so, Mikey needed to set his father as ease, and quickly. “If it seems that way then it’s because you did such a great job raising us. We’re supposed to learn how to be good adults, right? I don’t mind if you want to keep spoiling me though.”

He delivered that last line with his customary grin, hoping to disarm his father. It seemed to work as Master Splinter’s brow smoothed out.

“I shall have to work on my technique I see. Spoiling you was certainly never my intent,” Master Splinter said mildly.

“Don’t make any extra effort on my account,” Mikey told him. “Can I get you anything? Want me to tell Don and Leo to leave you alone for a while? I can say you’ve threatened to start throwing things at their heads.”

“I need nothing and I can deliver my own messages without resorting to force,” Master Splinter said, his amusement obvious.

“I’ll remind you of that next time you hit me with your stick,” Mikey said as he headed off towards the kitchen.

On his way there the grin slipped from Mikey’s face as more serious thoughts came to him. As the years progressed, it seemed their father was succumbing to illness more frequently. He usually recovered with the same amazing speed, but it was still worrisome.

Every time Master Splinter was feeling down Mikey found that he was imagining the worst. He couldn’t comprehend life without his father. From the time they were young, Master
Splinter had been their whole world. He was their mentor, teacher, guide; he eased their pain, chased away the things that frightened them, nurtured and cared for them to the best of his ability despite the hardships they faced.

As much as Mikey would miss him, he knew their father’s loss would be hardest on Raphael. For all of the macho front Raph put on, underneath he had self-doubts that could only be put to rest by his father’s assurances. Mikey hoped that one day Raph would be able to trust him enough to bare his soul to him the way he did with Master Splinter.

Shaking his head, Mikey dispersed those depressing thoughts, refusing to dwell on his fear any longer. He entered the kitchen to find that his brothers were enjoying a leisurely breakfast.

“What’s to eat?” Mikey asked, looking at the stove. “Am I the only one who ever makes a hot breakfast?”

“Yes,” Raph answered without looking up from his newspaper. “Help yourself to cereal, just make sure it’s not mine.”

He emphasized the final word and turned a page aggressively enough to cause the paper to rustle. Don took a sip of his coffee and then told Mikey, “There are still some of the sweet rolls that April made in the fridge. Give them a short zap in the microwave and they’re really delicious.”

“Cool,” Mikey said, bouncing over to the refrigerator and retrieving the rolls. “By the way, Master Splinter says you guys are annoying him.”

“I doubt that very much,” Leo said, refusing to be riled.

“Then you’d be wrong,” Mikey announced. Placing the sweet rolls in the microwave to warm them, he added, “He said you and Don are hovering. Apparently I’m the only perfect son.”

Raph scoffed. “If that’s the case, then we’re all in a world of trouble.”

“Finish up guys,” Leo said, draining his tea cup and rising from his chair to deposit it in the sink. “I’m headed to the dojo, join me when you’re finished. I know we’re all tired, so we’ll just work on forms today.”

“’We’ll just work on forms’”, Mikey groaned as he sat down with his breakfast. “I’d rather spar. Mister Perfectionist will decide my foot placement is one millimeter off and have me repeat the same move forty-seven times.”

“Then I’d suggest you watch your foot placement,” Don said before leaving the kitchen to join Leo in the dojo.

Mikey glared at the doorway. “You notice how he always says that stuff on his way out of the room?”

“Ya’ want he should stay and listen to ya’ bitch some more?” Raph asked, folding his newspaper and setting it aside.

“I’m venting,” Mikey said, looking at his brother. “There’s a difference.”

“Not from our point of view,” Raph said, bending forward to fix his brother with a stern gaze. “Ya’ sleep good last night?”
Mikey felt the color rise in his face but tried to appear disinterested as he bit into his sweet roll. “Okay I guess,” he mumbled around the sticky confection.

A corner of Raph’s mouth lifted. “Did ya’ get off thinking about me?”

“What makes you think you were on my mind at all?” Mikey returned, giving Raph a snide look.

“Gimme a break,” Raph said, leaning back once more. “I can tell from the way ya’ keep looking at me and trying to act like ya’ ain’t that you’re ready to go again.”

“I guess that means you’re thinking about it too,” Mikey said, knowing that was an admission but needing to hear Raph’s response.

“I’ve got two cedar chests full of sex toys,” Raph said flatly. “I collected them for a reason. Let’s talk about how we get the shell out of here without setting off Leo’s radar.”

“What? No fancy lie that you’re ready to break out for just such an occasion?” Mikey asked sarcastically.

Raph’s chair slid back and he got up. “How’s about we keep it simple? I’ll let ya’ know what to do later, after we make sure Master Splinter’s gonna be all right.”

“The ball’s in your court,” Mikey said, watching him leave the room.

Quickly finishing his breakfast, Mikey washed the stickiness from his hands and joined his brothers in the dojo. Though he tried to appear nonchalant, inside Mikey was a bundle of nervous energy. It was hard for him to move slowly, hard to stick the precision necessary to go through his forms.

He earned several rebukes from Leo but no one looked at him with suspicion. Mikey’s siblings were far too used to his overabundance of energy to think that he was uncharacteristically clumsy.

When their practice session was completed and they’d all had lunch, Master Splinter called them over, turning the television off in order to have their undivided attention.

“My sons, first I would like to thank you all for your excellent care giving,” Master Splinter said after his boys were seated. “I am feeling much better. I intend to abide by my normal schedule which means that I will be returning to my room to meditate after our discussion.”

“I’ve turned the heat down to low so that it won’t get overly warm in your room,” Don said. “I don’t want to turn it off because it’s keeping the dampness out of the air.”

Master Splinter nodded. “That is prudent, thank you Donatello. When I turn in for the night I do not want any of you sitting with me. Last night I indulged you because I could tell that you were all worried. Your concern is no longer necessary.”

“But Master Splinter . . .” Leo began.

His father lifted a hand, shutting off Leo’s protest. “No. On this I must insist. I am not yet an invalid and do not wish to be treated as one.”

“Would you allow me to at least place a monitor in your room?” Don asked. “Sound only. That way if you should experience some distress you can call to me.”
“If I allowed that, you would spend the entire night listening to it,” Master Splinter said. “You do not sleep enough as it is, my son.”

A half-jelled idea began to form in the back of Mikey’s mind and he blurted, “Give the monitor to Leo. He sleeps light anyway, so he can sleep and listen at the same time. None of the rest of us can do that, we wouldn’t risk falling asleep.”

“That would be an excellent compromise father,” Leo agreed quickly. “We would all worry less if you’d allow us to use a monitor.”

Mikey studiously avoided looking directly at Raph, though from the corner of his eye he could see the scowl on his brother’s face. Master Splinter contemplated his sons for a moment before saying, “I will agree to that. One night only in order to lay your fears to rest.”

He stood up to indicate their talk was over. Leaving the blanket behind, Master Splinter moved to the solitude of his room and his meditation.

“I guess I’d better make sure the monitors have fresh batteries in them,” Don said after their father had departed.

No one else moved as Don made his way to his lab. Silence settled over the three remaining brothers until it grew unnaturally heavy and then Mikey said, “I’m gonna play a video game since Master Splinter doesn’t need the TV array anymore.”

“Knock yourself out,” Raph growled. “I need to loosen up my muscles.”

While Mikey was searching for the game controller, Raph stomped off towards the dojo. Leo remained on the couch, his eyes on Mikey as he loaded a disc into the gaming console.

“Did you want to play too?” Mikey asked as he returned to his spot on the couch.

Leo shook his head. “No. I’m going to head in and spot Raph on the weight bench. I want to give him a minute to get over whatever hacked him off this time. Do you have any idea what that might have been?”

Mikey glanced over his shoulder at Leo and then turned back to the television screen. “Not a clue. I’m not gonna ask either. I haven’t pranked him in days, so it can’t be me.”

With a sigh, Leo stood up. “Must be me then. I’ve no doubt he’ll explain it to me at a rather loud volume. I’ll go and get it over with so he doesn’t stew.”

“Price of being the leader dude,” Mikey said, pretending that his focus was fully on the game.

Though he went through the motions of hunting for his onscreen enemies, Mikey was actually listening for sounds of an argument coming from the dojo. He knew that what he’d said about Leo operating the monitor had irritated Raph, but he hoped he’d have an opportunity to explain himself later. The last thing that Mikey wanted was for Raph to take his vexation out on Leo.

After a quarter of an hour passed without a sound, Mikey relaxed. His attempting to take the initiative in formulating an escape plan hadn’t blown up yet, and with any luck, he could catch Raph alone and talk fast enough so that it never would.

Though he kept his eyes open for that very type of opportunity, it wasn’t until early
evening before Mikey saw his chance. Leo had joined Master Splinter for meditation and Don was in the kitchen, taking his turn at dinner duty.

From the corner of his eye, Mikey had seen Raph go up to the garage shortly before Leo entered Master Splinter’s room. Wasting no time, Mikey shut down his game and made a beeline for the elevator.

As soon as he reached the garage, Mikey hopped out of the elevator and located Raphael. His brother was cleaning the leather seat on his motorcycle, a regimen he maintained with regularity.

Raph didn’t look up when Mikey entered and that made the younger turtle immediately nervous. Rather than approaching Raph, Mikey stopped near the work tables which were several feet from where the motorcycle was parked.

For a few minutes Mikey simply watched as Raph rubbed leather cleaner into the seat. Mikey knew the subject he wanted to broach, but he was hoping for a sign from Raph that would tell him how to start.

“Is the bottle of leather conditioner sitting on one of those tables?” Raph asked without glancing at his brother.

“Hang on, I’ll check,” Mikey said, turning to run his eyes over the tables.

He didn’t hear Raph coming. Less than a second after Mikey turned, Raph had slammed into him, shoving Mikey’s thighs up against the edge of the table. A rough hand on the back of Mikey’s head forced the younger turtle down until his chest hit the table top.

“What were ya’ thinking?” Raph demanded. “Leo’s gonna be half awake all night listening for noises on that damn monitor.”

“I know,” Mikey said, his voice coming out muffled because the side of his face was pressing into the table. “It also means he won’t leave his room for fear of missing some sound from Master Splinter’s room.”

For a moment the only thing Mikey heard was Raph’s heavy breathing. He could feel Raph’s body pressing into his lower half and his tail practically vibrated at the feeling of his brother’s rough scutes rubbing against it.

Then Raph grabbed the top edge of Mikey’s shell and jerked him up, spinning him around but keeping him trapped against the table.

“The ball’s in my court, huh?” Raph asked, leaning in close to Mikey’s face with his eyes narrowed. “When I say I’ll tell ya’ what to do, it means ya’ keep your mouth shut and leave the planning to me.”

Mikey’s arms were back, his palms flattened against the table in order to hold himself upright. Raph’s hands lowered to Mikey’s hips, his fingertips digging into the flesh so hard that Mikey felt sure he was going to have bruises.

Almost unconsciously, Mikey started to spread his legs, his breath quickening with excitement. Though he seemed unable to stop his show of submissiveness, Mikey still had something he needed to explain to his brother.

“I w . . . wanted to help,” Mikey managed, gritting his teeth to control the stuttering before
trying again. “I thought that if Leo stayed in his room, the sound of your snoring would assure him you were in yours.”

“But I wasn’t planning to be in my room,” Raph said, clipping his words.

“I know that,” Mikey rushed to say. “Remember when I shared your room because April was in mine? You kept saying you didn’t snore every time I complained about it until one night I recorded it and played it back for you. I still have that recording.”

“So?” Raph asked, still appearing angry.

“So I can set it to run in a continuous loop. It’ll sound exactly as if you’re in your room sleeping. Leo won’t want to leave his room because of the monitor and he won’t think he needs to if he believes he knows where you are. We can leave at different times and meet at the room at one o’clock,” Mikey suggested.

“Ya’ need it bad, don’t ya’?” Raph asked, his golden eyes boring into Mikey’s. “Let’s get something straight; ya’ don’t make the plans, I do. Ya’ got ideas, ya’ run them past me first. Ya’ do what I say, when I say it. That’s how this is gonna work. The minute ya’ try to play a lone hand again, we’re done.”

Mikey didn’t know what to say. The ultimatum was clear, if Mikey tried to take a role that was anything but compliant, Raph would stop their secret interactions completely.

He didn’t want that, even as part of his mind screamed that their relationship was totally without balance. Though his brain seemed trapped by indecision, Mikey’s body continued to acquiesce to his brother’s muscled form, the space between his legs now wide enough for Raph to work his way between them.

Thrusting his hips forward, Raph’s groin slammed into Mikey’s. “Do ya’ get what I’m telling ya’?” Raph pressed, expecting an answer.

“Yes!” Mikey exclaimed, eyes wide with growing lust.

A satisfied look settled on Raph’s face and he leaned in closer. Mikey watched his approach, breath quickening in anticipation as his eyes darted down towards Raph’s lips.

Mikey’s head was suddenly jerked backwards as Raph caught the trailing ends of his mask. Raph lowered his mouth to Mikey’s neck, drawing a gasp from the younger turtle at the feeling of suction against his skin.

Seconds later, Raph ground his lower half against Mikey’s and began nipping at his throat. Closing his eyes, Mikey waited for the first bite.

TBC.........
Just as Mikey felt Raph’s teeth begin to dig into his skin, the sound of the elevator startled them both. In the time it took Mikey to open his eyes, Raph had dashed back over to his motorcycle.

Mikey knew he was in no condition to try to escape, his cock half hard and bulging beneath
his lower plates. Thinking fast, he hopped onto the table and grabbed the container of leather conditioner, tossing a shop towel across his lap in the same swift movement.

By the time the elevator doors opened and Leo stepped through, Mikey was studiously examining the container’s label and Raph was once again rubbing down the seat of his motorcycle.

Furtively glancing at his oldest brother, Mikey saw Leo pause to stare at them, his expression grim, before finally striding in their direction.

“Yo Mikey, splash some of that conditioner on a rag and toss it over here,” Raph said, lifting a hand in Mikey’s direction.

It took less than a second for Mikey to understand and react, popping open the container’s top and spreading a large dollop of conditioner onto the shop towel. The smell was strong and effectively wiped out the scent of arousal, exactly as Raph had known it would.

Leaning forward, Mikey threw the towel at Raph’s outstretched hand and watched as his brother deftly grabbed it out of the air. By that time Leo had drawn close to them and Mikey’s burgeoning erection had deflated under the fear of being caught by him.

“Hey Leo, what’s up?” Mikey asked in as nonchalant a manner as he could manage.

“How’s Master Splinter?”

“Father is well,” Leo replied, his eyes raking over Mikey before his head turned in Raph’s direction. “I came to tell you two that it’s time for dinner.”

“Peachy,” Raph said, vigorously rubbing conditioner into the motorcycle seat.

Leo continued to stare at Raph who just as studiously ignored him. The tableau held for a good thirty seconds before Leo said, “Now.”

Raph’s growl was low and dangerous. Without looked up, he said very distinctly, “Fuck. Off.”

The tone as much as the words themselves made Leo stiffen. It was clear to Mikey at that point that Leo hadn’t merely come up to the garage to tell them to report for dinner or even to check on them. He’d come with an agenda, possibly an ultimatum of some sort, upon learning that Mikey and Raph were alone together in the garage. His opening salvo was something he had to know would aggravate his hot headed brother.

Mikey was not ready for that to happen. He was still working on gaining Master Splinter’s support and he didn’t want any of this to come out into the open until he had that and possibly had also given Don an inkling of the situation in order to win his sympathy.

Four of them against Leo’s prejudices was a shell of a lot better than Raph and Leo facing off with Mikey caught in the middle.

Jumping down from the table, Mikey placed himself directly in Leo’s line of sight, cutting off his view of Raph. “Let’s go down, I’m starving. If Raph doesn’t make it to the table on time that means more food for me.”

He said it in exactly the tone he usually used when trying to tease and annoy Raph. A small frown creased Leo’s forehead, his eyes drawn to Mikey as his focus shifted. It was clear that he’d expected Mikey to either take no part in his confrontation with Raph or to come to Raph’s aid.
It helped that Raph continued to purposely disregard both of them.

“Don made stew,” Leo said, relaxing just a little. “There’s plenty.”

“Guess that means he was experimenting with ingredients again,” Mikey said, taking a step in Leo’s direction to get him moving towards the elevator. “Wonder what he decided would taste good together this time.”

“I’m sure it will be delicious,” Leo said magnanimously, walking alongside Mikey.

“Yeah, to those of us who get some of it,” Mikey said, raising his voice a little. He made sure that Leo saw him turn his head and stick his tongue out at Raphael.

On the way down in the elevator, Leo asked, “What’s his problem?”

Mikey shrugged. “Cabin fever, dude. He got all stressed over Master Splinter not feeling well. Now he’s wound up and full of nervous energy. I’m kinda thinking you are too, coming up there and trying to start something with him.”

“That was not what I was doing,” Leo protested.

“Sure you weren’t,” Mikey said sarcastically, throwing a perceptive glance in Leo’s direction. “It was pure chance that made your announcement sound like a really rude command.”

Leo didn’t seem to have a response to that, which was fine by Mikey because they’d reached the lair. Both Don and Master Splinter were seated at the table waiting for them, a large tureen of stew in its center.

An even bigger pot sat on the stove top, steam curling out of it. Mikey gave the pot a quick look before he sat down and said, “Geez Don, did you put the entire refrigerator in there?”

“Just about,” Don replied, grinning at his brother. “‘Grab bag stew’ is a great way to get rid of leftovers.”

“Oh, so now you’re naming this stuff,” Mikey said, leaning forward to take a whiff of the contents of the tureen. “I hope that doesn’t mean it’s actually alive.”

“Not anymore,” Don quipped back. “I’m pretty sure I cooked it long enough to kill everything.”

“Dude, that’s so gross,” Mikey replied with a chuckle. Reaching for the ladle, he said, “If you’re waiting for Raph, don’t bother. He’s in a mood.”

A quick frown came and went on Master Splinter’s face. “Then let us begin before the meal grows cold. Raphael will join us when he is ready.”

Mikey quickly filled Master Splinter’s bowl first and then did the honors with his brother’s bowls before filling his own. As much as he’d teased Don about it, the stew actually looked and smelled delicious.

It tasted that way too, though Mikey only managed one spoonful before Raph entered the kitchen.

From the look on his face, it was clear he was still peeved at Leo. Maybe Mikey too, the younger turtle couldn’t be sure.
“Decided to start without me anyway, huh?” Raph asked gruffly as he glared at Leo.

“I gave you fair notice,” Leo responded, his eyes flashing.

“That ain’t what I’d call it,” Raph snapped. “Ya’ followed me up to the garage and started barking orders at me, something ya’ ain’t got no right to do.”

“Boys!” Master Splinter said sharply.

If he thought that would fend off the fight that was obviously brewing, he was mistaken. Leo slowly stood up, the pulse beating on the side of his neck a good indication that his own temper was on a short tether.

“Maybe if you stopped disappearing I wouldn’t have to come looking for you,” Leo snarled.

“Since when is being in the garage disappearing?” Raph demanded. “How about ya’ quit dogging my steps? Every damn time I turn around you’re in my face! My shell don’t stretch enough for two, stop trying to climb in here with me. Screw this, I need some air.”

Raph bolted from the kitchen, turning in the direction of the elevator. Leo nearly knocked over his chair in his rush to chase after him.

“Leonardo, let him go!” Master Splinter commanded, his voice raised. When Leo stopped in the doorway, his father continued, “Your brother is not angry with you, it is my illness that has caused his anxiety. Raphael needs to breathe some fresh air and to be alone with his thoughts.”

“Yeah bro’,” Mikey piped up, thinking it would be a good time to add in his two cents worth. “You know how he gets. Give him a couple of hours to cool off and he’ll head home.”

“And here I thought we might actually go a few days without them having a fight,” Don mumbled under his breath.

Mikey lifted his spoon, relieved when he saw Leo turn back to the table and approach his seat again. “You should know better, Donny. That would have been way too abnormal. Hey, this stuff is actually pretty good,” he said as he took another bite.

“Your confidence in my cooking is underwhelming,” Don said, the hint of a smile returning to his face.

“If I thought it was beneath you to use me as a guinea pig I wouldn’t be so distrustful,” Mikey said, keeping the mood light. “Speaking of which, why don’t you eat some of this? From the way you’re watching me, I keep thinking you’re waiting to see if the stew makes me grow another head.”

Leo had returned to his chair and dutifully began to eat, following his father’s example. Mikey and Don kept up their banter throughout the meal, joined occasionally by comments from Master Splinter. Their oldest brother remained sullen and withdrawn; his demeanor not unnoticed by their father.

When dinner drew to a close, Master Splinter requested that Leo join him in his room. A knowing look passed between the two remaining brothers as their father and older sibling left the kitchen.

Together Mikey and Don cleaned up after the meal, stowing the leftovers and washing the
dirty dishes. They didn’t talk much; Mikey’s mind was occupied with thoughts of Raphael. He hoped that Raph starting that fight with Leo had been part of his overall plan to escape the lair, but Mikey couldn’t be sure. Without a hint one way or the other, he’d just have to go through with what they’d discussed earlier.

Mikey didn’t notice that Don was studying him as they worked side by side. Don said nothing to give away his thoughts, but the expression on the genius’ face was very much like the one he got when looking through his microscope.

Unable to settle down to anything, Mikey roamed around the lair until the ten o’clock news broadcast came on. Leo and Master Splinter had already taken their seats when Mikey joined them and pretended he was interested in the outside world when all he cared about was whether Raph was going to make a return appearance.

Don joined them for the first half of the news and then had yawned widely and excused himself. Mikey was happy to see him head up to his bedroom rather than into his lab; there was a good chance that meant he was tired enough to go to sleep right away.

It wasn’t long before Mikey made his escape as well. He had seen Don give their father a bottle of medicine with the instructions to take it at bedtime and he also knew that the monitors were in place; one in Master Splinter’s room, one in Leo’s.

Mikey was also sure that whatever else Master Splinter had discussed with Leo, he had also reiterated his wish that Leo not get up to check on him. Sitting near his not quite closed bedroom door, Mikey listened for the sound of the television being turned off.

He was almost holding his breath as he heard Master Splinter and Leo bid each other a good-night. Just as he’d hoped, Leo climbed the stairs several minutes later and went directly to his bedroom.

That was when Mikey made his move. He knew Leo would be occupied with removing his gear along with a few other bedtime rituals and while his brother was busy with that, there was a window of opportunity. Sliding out of his room with the tape player in hand, Mikey darted into Raph’s bedroom.

Plumping a couple of spare pillows and laying them inside the hammock, Mikey tossed the blanket over them, slid the player underneath and turned it on. He made sure that all of the lights were turned out and then silently left the room, closing the door behind him.

With his own bed already made up to look as though he was in it, Mikey darted down the hall to Leo’s room. He tapped on the door and then quickly entered without waiting for an invitation, shutting the door behind him.

Leo was sitting on the edge of his bed and looked up as Mikey came in, a questioning expression on his face. His bedside table held the monitor, its green light indicating that it was on.

“Is something on your mind, Mikey?” Leo asked.

“Sort of,” Mikey responded, plopping down on the rug in front of Leo. He hadn’t really planned on what he’d talk about with his big brother because this was only meant to be a short distraction, but he decided then to tackle a piece of what was bothering him.

“I’m listening,” Leo prompted him, perhaps gleaning something of what Mikey wanted to broach.
“Ever since I got hurt after that mission we went on with Nobody, it seems like you don’t want me and Raph to be alone together,” Mikey blurted out.

He waited for a response but Leo’s face had smoothed out and was showing him nothing. After a minute, Leo said, “Go on.”

“Am I wrong?” Mikey asked, refusing to be baited into saying more.

Again Leo didn’t answer right away. Mikey stared at him, trying to read what was going through his head.

Finally Leo released a short breath and answered, “No.”

“Come on, Leo. Enough with the cryptic answers,” Mikey said. “Why? He’s my brother too. It’s not like we haven’t been alone together thousands of times in our lives. There’s nothing different about us.”

“I’m not blind,” Leo told him. “There was at least one injury on your body that wasn’t from falling off of that truck. One injury that you took great pains to hide from me and everyone else. You got it from Raph.”

Mikey had half expected Leo to hit him with that at some point. He decided to take the bull by the horns and throw his brother off his game.

“That’s right, Raph bit me,” Mikey admitted, watching Leo carefully. “He was pissed about me showboating and nearly drowning. I wouldn’t shut up about being indestructible while he was trying to bandage me, so he hauled off and sank his teeth into my collarbone. He probably would have hit me like he usually does, but his hands were full.”

Leo appeared disconcerted by Mikey’s admission. “Why didn’t you just tell me that?”

“What business was it of yours?” Mikey countered. “Raph was embarrassed that he did it ‘cause of course I asked him if he was three years old. We handled it between us and he finished patching me up. What the shell Leo, was that why you started talking about demons and secrets?”

“I also asked why you were so mad before you took that call from Nobody,” Leo reminded him. “You never really answered that question, though I gleaned it had something to do with Raph.”

“Glean whatever you want, dude. If we’re gonna talk about someone around here always being mad at Raph, that conversation would have to turn to you,” Mikey said with a small amount of satisfaction. “Maybe you’re reading too much into normal things because you’re trying to find a reason to stay mad at him. I don’t know why ‘cause that doesn’t make any sense. After all, you’re the one who went out of his way to try and make Raph sound like the Devil’s little helper.”

“I wasn’t trying to do that,” Leo disagreed. “I was only trying to warn you to be careful.”

“Of my own brother?” Mikey scoffed. “I know you guys were close when you were little but you sure are making a huge effort to push him away now. If you two want to spend the rest of your lives having dumb arguments, have at it. But don’t keep doing things to try to pull Don and me away from Raph too. Raph is a lot of fun and I like letting him know I enjoy his company, even if it’s just me pranking him and him beating me silly.”

“Is that what it seems like to you, that I’m pushing him away?” Leo asked. “There are things that have happened between us that you know nothing about.”
Mikey stood up. “Guess what, Leo? I don’t want to. That’s between you and Raph, just like the stuff that we do together is between you and me, and the stuff I do with Raph is between me and him. You’re the one who wanted to bring up demons, I’m thinking you have a few of your own. You should sort them out before you really alienate Raph.”

He strode toward the door, not at all surprised that Leo didn’t try to call him back. Now was the time to find out how well his subterfuge would work, so Mikey paused after he opened the door and looked back at Leo.

“Sounds like Raph made it home,” Mikey said. The sound of the recorded snores was loud enough to penetrate into the room. “Hope you’re happy about that. Maybe you can discuss it with Raph in the morning, if you really wanted to. I’d say you should sit up and think about that, but Master Splinter will have your shell if he thinks you weren’t following his wishes.”

Mikey was a little snarky when he delivered that last line, but he wanted the reminder that Leo needed to stay in his room to stick in his big brother’s head. He made sure Leo’s door was firmly closed when he left, going to his own room and without entering, shut his door loudly enough so that Leo would be convinced that Mikey had gone to bed.

It was a bit earlier than the time Mikey had suggested that he and Raph meet, but since the circumstances were favorable, he went ahead and slipped out of the lair.

Mikey’s entire trip to the hidden room was spent with the worry that Raph was as angry with him as he’d seemed to be with Leo. If so, Raph might very well not show up, deciding to teach Mikey a lesson about stepping out of his place in the relationship. Raph’s perception of Mikey’s role dictated that he play a completely submissive part. Mikey had no qualms about doing so inside that secret space, but outside of it, they could have a problem.

Using his key to gain entry to the room, Mikey took a quick look around, half hoping that Raph was there waiting for him. He wasn’t though, and the room looked the same as it had after their previous meeting.

Unsure of exactly what to do with himself, Mikey went ahead and stripped down, placing his things on the bar just as he’d done before.

Mikey roamed around the room, taking a moment to stop in front of the stack of broken furniture on the back wall. He wasn’t as handy as his brother Donatello, but Mikey thought he could salvage enough parts to make one good table and a couple of usable chairs out of the junk. He thought that might give the room a homier feel.

Wandering around behind the bar, Mikey stared at his reflection in the dusty mirror. To his eyes he appeared both nervous and anxious and hoped that wasn’t how he’d seemed to Leo during their discussion.

The sound of the lock clicking back turned Mikey and he watched as Raph stepped into the room. His brother’s glance in his direction was unfathomable before he secured the door.

“I saw a chance to sneak out early so I took it. Leo totally bought into the recorded snores; he thinks you’re in your room and that I’m in mine,” Mikey announced, aware that he was babbling. “I worried that you wouldn’t come ‘cause I thought you might really be mad at Leo and maybe at me too but I’m totally letting you decide when and what we . . . .”

Raph had begun removing his things, staying quiet during most of Mikey’s speech. Now he lifted a hand to put an end to Mikey’s verbal outpouring.
“I am pissed at Leo,” Raph said in a low voice. “Usually am so I don’t give two shits about it. All I’m looking for is an excuse to leave the lair and mister uptight gives me one. The two of us are still learning how this thing’s gonna work. I didn’t tell ya’ before that ya’ don’t do anything without running it by me, so that’s my fault. Now ya’ know.”

Mikey didn’t say anything else as he watched Raph finish disrobing. There was a flash of understanding about this part of their ritual that came to Mikey as Raph set aside the final bit of his gear. It wasn’t just about the need to avoid getting their scent onto each other’s things, it was also about dropping the items associated with their being ninjas.

That helped to explain the shift in Raph’s demeanor once he was completely naked. His mask and weapons were the persona that dominated his life and brought with that his duty to family and honor. Without those things, Raph’s base needs came to the fore.

The next time he looked at Mikey, it was with eyes that gleamed with dark intent.

“Come out from behind there,” Raph directed.

Mikey’s heart had begun beating faster as soon as Raph looked at him. Now he felt an almost dizzying rush of adrenaline as he complied with Raph’s order, and walked quickly towards his brother.

Raph moved into the center of the room and waited for Mikey to join him. As soon as Mikey was facing him, Raph said, “Get down on your hands and knees and don’t move.”

Sinking onto his knees, Mikey then lowered his palms to the floor, his eyes focused on Raph’s face. He didn’t look down, though he knew Raph’s groin was directly in front of him. Mikey could smell the musk coming from that area of Raph’s anatomy and knew that whatever Raph was planning had already gotten him excited.

For a moment Raph did nothing, simply staring at his brother. Then he reached down and slid a hand across Mikey’s bald head before stepping around him and walking over to one of the cedar chests.

From Mikey’s position it was difficult to see what Raph was doing, though he could tell from the sounds that his brother was rummaging around for something. When he heard Raph approaching him again, Mikey shifted his eyes as far to the side as he could and caught sight of a black sleeping mask dangling from his brother’s hand.

The last thing Mikey saw on Raph’s face was a look of lustful hunger before the mask was lowered over his eyes. Raph carefully adjusted it and then asked, “Can you see anything?”

“No,” Mikey answered, his voice pinched as he began to grow aroused.

“Don’t move,” Raph commanded again and once more left Mikey’s side.

Without his knee pads, Mikey could feel the hard wooden floor under him. A dull throb settled into his knees and though he could have relieved that ache by rocking back a little, he knew better than to budge an inch after being told not to.

The noise from Raph’s shuffling around in the cedar chest reached Mikey again and he waited, breathing deeply in an attempt to remain calm. He nearly jumped when the lid slammed down and the sound of Raph’s steps seemed loud as he once more drew near.

“Open your mouth,” Raph said, his voice guttural, “wide.”
Since Raph hadn’t said anything about his tongue, Mikey didn’t move it as he opened his mouth as wide as it would go. He felt the heat coming off of Raph as his brother leaned over him and placed something into his mouth, pushing it between his lips. Whatever it was felt soft against his teeth, but so solid that Mikey couldn’t close his mouth. Then something pressed against both of his cheeks before being tightened at the back of his head and Mikey knew the device was held in place by straps.

“Good,” Raph said, the word breathy. “Lift your tail.”

Mikey closed his eyes behind the mask and focused on getting his tail to go up as high as possible. Raph moved around behind him, humming appreciatively, and Mikey shivered with anticipation.

A squelching sound reached Mikey’s ears and he moaned, unable to contain himself.

“If your tail comes down, everything stops,” Raph told him, his voice low and compelling. “Everything. That’s the signal. Grunt if ya’ understand.”

Mikey grunted his acquiescence, trepidation warring with anticipation. He was so focused on trying to figure out what Raph was going to do next that he barely remembered to breathe.

Something touched his anus and it was all Mikey could do not to instinctively leap away from it. What he felt was wet, slick, and too rubbery to be Raph’s cock. Raph showed no hesitation as he slowly began to push the object into his brother, going neither too fast nor too slow.

It stung. Little panting gasps were all Mikey could manage as the object began to fill him, small ribs along its length poking at the interior walls of his rectum. As if to ensure that Mikey experienced all of them, Raph twisted the object as he was inserting it.

The burn as his asshole was stretched seemed to last an eternity. Mikey found it to be excruciating and exhilarating all at the same time. His cock swelled in response to the pain, his groin electrified by the feel of anal penetration.

Then it stopped as it pressed against something unyielding inside of Mikey. Raph twisted it a couple of times before releasing a heavy breath. Following that there was no more movement.

Nor was there another sound from Raph for several minutes. Mikey’s entrance twitched around whatever had been shoved into his ass, though now his mind processed that it was probably a plug of some sort.

Mikey’s jaw ached from being held open by the ring in his mouth. He knew it was round with an opening in the center because he’d touched his tongue to it, tasting leather in the process. His salivary glands were working overtime and he found it incredibly difficult to swallow with his mouth in that position. Strands of saliva seeped past his lips and dripped onto his chin.

He was so concentrated on the things that had already been inserted into two of his orifices that Mikey failed to hear Raph move around to his side. It was when he felt something slide over his head, lightly brushing his face as it dropped onto his collar bones, that Mikey realized his brother had introduced yet another of his ‘toys’ to their current game.

Almost as suddenly as it touched him, the object tightened, rising up to circle his throat. Mikey heard his brother take a step closer, a low rumble signifying Raph’s approval at whatever he’d placed there.

Mikey was certain it wasn’t a collar. Raph hadn’t fastened anything, hadn’t worked any
snaps or buckles. It was smooth and rounded, not flat, and Mikey thought it might be a leash.

A moment later Mikey’s head was forced upwards when the leash tightened even more, pulled taut when Raph jerked on the line.

“Walk with me like a good boy,” Raph murmured in a deeply guttural voice. “Hands and knees. Don’t make me choke you.”

Normally Mikey would have balked at this type of humiliation, but he was too stimulated by Raph’s show of power to care. There was a tug on the leash and then the heat from Raph’s thigh touched his shoulder, telling Mikey that it was time to move.

Raph kept a solid grip on the leash as he began to walk, leading Mikey around the room. Without the use of his sight, the feelings from the plug in his ass, the ring in his mouth, and the hard wooden planks against his knees were all heightened.

Each time Raph made a turn, the leash was pulled almost unbearably tight, only to loosen again as they moved into a straightaway. Mikey had watched enough dog shows to know he was being taught to heel, and the fact that he had to hold his tail high only added to that illusion.

Mikey had no idea how long he’d been walking when the pain of attempting to ignore his throbbing erection became too much for him. With a low whine, he dropped down, his shaft immediately filling to its full, hard size.

Raphael quickly yanked back on the choke leash, bringing Mikey to a complete stop.

“You are doing a good job for your master,” Raph told him in a low, dark tone. The praise brought a churr up from Mikey’s chest, his breathing ragged with excitement.

Keeping the choke pulled tight, Raph moved around behind Mikey to stroke his uplifted tail. Shuddering in reaction, Mikey almost didn’t catch Raph’s next words. “Spread your legs.”

Eyes watering behind the mask, Mikey shifted his thighs apart. Through the floor he felt the thud of Raph knees touching down behind him and then the heat from Raph’s breath ghosting over the skin on his butt cheeks.

A battle scarred hand wrapped around Mikey’s cock making him squeak in surprise. Rather than fondling his length though, Raph pushed something cold and metallic over the head of Mikey’s cock.

Trembling, Mikey waited as a wide metal ring began to constrict his cock, about an inch above the tip. It pinched his incredibly swollen shaft just enough to titillate the flesh. Once it was in place, Raph released Mikey’s dick.

As soon as his brother’s hand left his flesh, Mikey’s cock began to sway as a heavy weight connected to the ring started to swing under him. It felt exactly as if someone was tugging on his penis with more force than was necessary.

“Heel boy,” Raph commanded in a satisfied tone, pulling on Mikey’s leash.

Once more Mikey walked on his hands and knees next to Raph, this time with the weight attached to his cock rocking back and forth and jerking his flesh along with it. Pressure began to build in Mikey’s loins, his asshole grasping at the plug and saliva dripping down his chin.

“You are not allowed to cum,” Raph said harshly, startling a groan of protest from his
younger brother. Mikey was rewarded with a hard tug on the leash for his insubordination, the leather digging painfully into his throat.

He could drop his tail. That was all Mikey had to do to end this play. He wouldn’t though; there was no way he wouldn’t see this through, no matter what tortures Raph put him through. Mikey wanted this badly; he loved this rough treatment too much. Every nerve ending in his body was singing and he’d never felt such rapture in his life.

No matter how hard he tried, Mikey couldn’t contain the churrs and low moans that made it past his forced open lips. After a while even he recognized that there was a sound of desperation in his tone, his heavy breathing turning to gasps as he fought the need to orgasm.

Abruptly brought to a stop, Mikey remained in his prone position, his entire form quivering. The heavy weight continued to move like a pendulum beneath Mikey, its momentum fed by Mikey’s ragged breaths.

The scent of Raph’s musk suddenly assaulted Mikey’s nostrils, announcing his brother’s nearness. Inhaling deeply, Mikey knew the smell could only be this strong if Raph had set his cock free.

“You are being so good for me, Mikey,” Raph intoned, his free hand rubbing across Mikey’s head. The choke leash was still pulled taut, Mikey’s head forced up and back by the pressure against his larynx. His voice now rough and gravelly, Raph said, “Time to learn a new trick.”

Raph’s own breathing sounded irregular as he moved closer to Mikey’s face. With a grip on the back of Mikey’s head, he fed his cock through the ring that held his brother’s mouth wide open.

Mikey felt Raph’s shaft slide over his tongue, stopping partway into his mouth before advancing a second later. This was the type of thing that Mikey had anticipated would happen eventually, even if he’d been too naïve to understand all of the mechanics.

He wasn’t sure what he was supposed to do other than remain as still as he could. There was a slightly salty, mildly bitter taste being painted along his tongue and Mikey knew that had to be from Raph’s pre; no doubt his brother was as aroused by their game as Mikey himself.

Having a wide, deep mouth had its advantages, but even a turtle has his limits, especially with regard to the size of a turtle cock. Mikey felt the tip of Raph’s dick touch the back of his throat and keep going, setting off his gag reflex. He might have pulled away if not for the leash and Raph’s hand on his head both anchoring Mikey in place.

The upper part of Mikey’s body convulsed as he gagged, his blocked airway denying him the ability to cough. It lasted less than a millisecond before Raph pulled his cock back, but to Mikey it had seemed like an eternity.

Mikey realized his was going to have to relax if he didn’t want to choke again. He could feel Raph’s dick gliding forward again and knew his brother intended to use every inch of his mouth without mercy.

Forcing his throat to remain limber while also keeping his tail high and ignoring the throbbing ache of his own cock was a lesson in focus unlike any Mikey had ever been subjected to. Once more Raph’s rock hard length caressed the back of his throat, backing out a bit quicker this time, before the big turtle began to thrust in a regular rhythm.
As Raph set a steady pace fucking his mouth, Mikey understood he would not be allowed a release until his brother got off. His position did not afford him much control over the situation, but Mikey did have two advantages; he knew how sensitive the head of Raph’s cock was and he could still use his tongue.

Lifting the back of his tongue each time Raph pushed into him brought the tip of his brother’s penis into contact with Mikey’s soft appendage. It wasn’t long before Raph was ramming his cock into Mikey’s mouth at a quick pace.

Mikey’s low moans were echoed by his brother’s louder groans as Raph plundered the warm, wet orifice in front of him.

“Yeah, oh yeah. So good,” Raph muttered in a husky tone that warmed Mikey’s core. “Good boy. Ngh . . . uhm . . . ahh, so good. Should I let ya’ cum?”

Moaning as loudly as he could, Mikey tried to signal his agreement.

“Mm, not . . . not yet,” Raph said. He was plunging into Mikey’s mouth with more force now, practically lifting the crouching turtle off the floor. “Have you been good . . . good enough? Ahh . . . ahh . . . shit. Do ya’ deserve to cum?”

Mikey’s pleading groan was longer and louder, his throat vibrating as it carried the sound. Raph suddenly jammed his hips forward, his cock sinking deeply into Mikey’s pharynx.

“Oh fuck!” Raph shouted as he released his hot load down his brother’s throat. Unable to breathe, Mikey was still glad his brother hadn’t shot off into his mouth because he would not have been able to swallow the thick juices that flowed from Raph’s cock in copious amounts.

Tears formed in Mikey’s eyes as he grew light headed from lack of oxygen. Just when he thought he could take no more, Raph pulled his cock out of Mikey’s mouth.

Gasping and trying hard not to retch, Mikey could hear Raph’s harsh panting as he attempted to settle himself. The strong musk coming off of Raph’s form told of his recent release and Mikey tried to wrap his mind around the fact that he just given his brother a blow job.

It was difficult to think while his own cock bobbed swollen and needy beneath Mikey. In a moment Raph removed the hand that was holding Mikey’s head and the sound of his feet padding around to his rear reached Mikey’s ears.

Raph’s lips unexpectedly wrapped around Mikey’s upright tail, setting off a string of churrs that strained Mikey’s sore throat. Then Raph grabbed the butt plug, pulled it back and rammed it forward again.

Raking his teeth along Mikey’s tail, Raph began fucking him with the plug. He was in no way gentle, the force of his movements rocking Mikey as the ribs on the plug plundered the delicate skin inside Mikey’s anus.

Suddenly the plug hit something inside of Mikey that made him squeal. A shot like a lightning bolt raced into his cock and Mikey found himself nearly sobbing from his need for relief.

Raph’s teeth left his tail as he unerringly found that spot inside of Mikey again. Unable to form the words to beg, Mikey whimpered and shook, his cock growing ever more painful as he desperately tried not to climax.

Dizzy and disoriented, Mikey felt the plug make another full strike on that special place in
his rectum.

“Cum.” It was a single word, issued by Raph in a deep and commanding voice.

Mikey didn’t orgasm, he erupted. Despite the snug fit of the ring on his cock, his shaft expanded and then exploded as if his cum was jet propelled.

Still climaxing, Mikey felt the room start to shift under him just before he passed out.

Someone gently patting his cheek brought Mikey around. Opening his eyes, Mikey blinked a few times before realizing he could see.

What his eyesight brought him was a vision of Raph leaning over him, a concerned look on his face. Flat on his back on something soft, Mikey found that he was no longer encumbered by the mouth ring, the butt plug, or the weighted ball on his cock.

Neither was he sporting the leash that had been around his neck. “How . . . .” Mikey had to clear his throat before trying again. “How long was I out?” he asked in a raspy voice.

Raph’s look of relief was quickly followed by one that Mikey could only quantify as tender, an expression he’d never seen before on the older turtle’s face. For a moment Mikey thought his brother was finally going to kiss him, but then Raph grinned. “’Bout twenty minutes. I carried ya’ over to the bed. Damn Mikey, I read somewhere that a guy could cum so hard he’d faint, I just didn’t know it was true.”

“I did not faint. I passed out,” Mikey clarified, finding the distinction somehow important. Pushing himself up onto his elbows, he scanned the room but all signs of their play had vanished. “You already cleaned up?”

“Yeah,” Raph got off the bed. “Next time it’s your turn. I’m gonna hit the shower. How about ya’ take your time getting up so ya’ can make sure your head don’t start spinning again?”

“Oh okay,” Mikey said as he slowly sat up and cradled his head.

Raph stood looking at him for another minute before heading into the bathroom.

While he waited for Raph to finish cleaning off, Mikey took a quick assessment of his body. His jaw ached, his throat felt raw, his ass burned, and his dick was sore. All in all Mikey felt wonderful. Their game had been incredibly satisfying and Mikey was proud that Raph had reached climax while using him.

His own forceful orgasm left Mikey both relaxed and somewhat wrung out. No masturbation release could compare to the sheer power that a climax brought about by Raph’s manipulations could give him.

Mikey was on his feet and operating under his own steam when Raph stepped out of the bathroom. It was getting very late and they’d been gone a long time, but Mikey didn’t try to rush his shower. He wanted to make sure that every inch of him was clean so there were no tell-tale odors left behind, even taking the time to let the water rinse out his mouth.

Raph was geared up and leaning against the wall when Mikey came out. He watched Mikey get dressed, his golden eyes hooded and expression indecipherable.

“I piled pillows on your hammock and put a blanket over them so it’d look like you were asleep,” Mikey said, not making eye contact. “I did the same in mine. I don’t think Leo will look
into your room after the argument you guys had, but better safe than sorry.”

Raph didn’t respond for a couple of minutes. With all of his things in place and his mask tied, Mikey finally glanced at his brother.

“Guess I’d better not go down in the elevator,” Raph said. “The sound might wake someone. I’ll park the bike in the garage and then take the street exit around to the sewer entrance in the alley. Go ahead and take off. It’d be better not to be caught together if anyone does happen to be wandering around.”

Mikey nodded and headed for the door. He paused before opening it, looking back at Raph.

“Until next time?” Mikey asked, staring into his brother’s eyes.

“Sure,” Raph told him without moving from his position. “I’ll work something out.”

There were so many things Mikey wanted to ask him, but Raph seemed closed off now that the sex play was done. Besides, they’d been out of the lair for a couple of hours and taking any more time would be pushing it.

Mikey had to work hard not to think about what they’d done together as he jogged back to the lair. That was made more difficult by the fact that certain parts of his body insisted on reminding him of the entire episode.

Sneaking in the way he’d gone out, Mikey paused at the entrance and listened for sounds that might indicate someone was awake. Hearing nothing, he moved towards the stairs.

He’d only gone a few steps when Leo’s bedroom door suddenly opened. Heart racing, Mikey quickly darted around behind a pillar, his eyes glued to Leo as the older turtle came out of his room.

Leo glanced around the lair and Mikey held his breath for fear he’d be seen. He released it slowly when Leo turned away from him and moved along the corridor.

Crossing his fingers, Mikey waited for Leo to enter the bathroom, certain it was his destination. Unfortunately, when Leo was opposite Mikey’s bedroom he reached for the knob, opened the door, and went inside.

TBC.............
Chapter 22

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,770 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 22 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Mikey had trained his entire life to think and act in near unison.

He did so now. As soon as Leo disappeared into his room, Mikey darted across the lair, removing his mask and weapons while in flight.

Reaching the couch, Mikey jammed both items under a cushion without missing a beat and continued on to his primary destination.

Carefully sliding Master Splinter’s shoji aside, Mikey entered his father’s room as silently as his haste allowed. Closing the rice paper paneled door behind him, Mikey practically leaped onto the futon that still occupied a space on the floor.

Thankful for the medication his father had taken that kept him asleep, Mikey pulled a coverlet over himself and curled up to feign slumber.

He was barely in time. Just as his eyes closed, Master Splinter’s door opened and Leo stepped through.

Mikey waited until he heard the sound of Leo’s approaching steps before lifting his head and blinking sleepily at his brother. Leo kneeled next to the futon and whispered, “What are you doing in here?”

“I dunno,” Mikey murmured. “I couldn’t sleep after our talk. Guess I figured being close to Sensei would help me stop worrying about stuff.” He yawned prodigiously, noting that Leo was still staring suspiciously at him.

“He didn’t want us in here with him,” Leo quickly pointed out.

“Don gave him that medicine that makes us all sleepy so I didn’t think I’d disturb him.” Mikey started to stretch, but a twinge in his lower regions stopped him. He continued talking to hide his reaction from his brother. “Sorry bro’, I must have made some sound in my sleep that woke you up. Kinda forgot about the monitor.”

“I looked in your room and found the pillows you lined up on the bed,” Leo said, a slightly accusatory tone coming through in the whispered words. “You purposely tried to make it appear as though you were still there.”

Mikey sighed, allowing a hint of exasperation to come through the sound. “Well, duh. Didn’t want anyone to know I went against Master Splinter’s wishes.”

Though he knew that continuing to talk in their father’s room might awaken him, Mikey had to buy Raphael some time to get to his own room. Leo catching onto Mikey’s trick was bad
enough, if he found that Raph was gone he’s raise a ruckus that might well doom Raph and Mikey’s future.

“You could have come to me . . . ” Leo began.

“Leonardo.” Master Splinter’s voice turned Leo and Mikey’s attention in his direction. Their father pushed himself into a sitting position, fixing both of his son’s with a stern look. “Your brother did not wake me. I had only begun to doze when Michelangelo came into the room and because he moved as though he did not want to disturb me, I pretended to sleep to ease his mind. I sensed that worry kept your brother from his repose and decided it would do no harm to allow him to remain here. His presence has in fact been soothing and has allowed me to rest comfortably.”

It was clear to Mikey that his father was telling a little white lie on his behalf. He had no idea why Master Splinter would cover for him, but he certainly couldn’t ask that question with Leo right there in the room with them.

Mikey also wasn’t sure if he should ask permission to remain where he was. Once he was alone with his father, Mikey knew Master Splinter would want answers. Though Mikey wasn’t afraid to have that conversation, he didn’t want to get into it so near the time he’d just returned from a sexual rendezvous with his brother. Mikey didn’t embarrass easily, but he was sure that would do it.

Shoving the coverlet off of him, Mikey sat up. “I’d better not stay. Leo’s trying to listen to the monitor and I kinda talk in my sleep sometimes. That’s probably what woke him up.”

“If Mikey being here helps you sleep, he could stay,” Leo offered. “I can adjust for his presence.”

“That will not be necessary,” Master Splinter told him. “Both of you should return to your own beds. Let us not make this a habit.”

“If you are certain Father,” Leo said, standing. He offered a hand to Mikey, helping him to his feet.

“Good night my sons,” Master Splinter said, his tone final.

Mikey knew he couldn’t stall any longer, but he took his time walking to the door. Leo had it open and was patiently waiting for him, though his brow was furrowed at Mikey’s slow pace.

On their way to and then up the stairs, Mikey continued to drag his feet, yawning periodically in the hopes that Leo would think he was simply sleepy. He could hear his brother’s recorded snores coming from Raph’s room and wondered worriedly why he hadn’t gotten home yet. Raph had been right behind him.

Walking next to Leo, Mikey took the inside path along the corridor to their rooms, keeping himself between his oldest brother and the bedrooms. He made it a point to pass Raph’s room without hesitating or glancing towards it, expecting Leo to keep moving right along with him.

To his chagrin, Leo stopped opposite Raph’s door and looked at it speculatively.

“What are you doing?” Mikey asked in a harsh whisper, trying to hide his anxiety.

Taking a step closer to the door, Leo said, “I just want to peek in on him.”

“Are you nuts?” Mikey approached him, hoping to draw Leo away from his intention. “If
he wakes up that’s gonna piss him off all over again.”

It was Mikey’s agitation that made him use a vulgar word that wasn’t normal to his vocabulary and of course Leo noticed. Eyes narrowed, Leo said, “It’s unusual for you to worry about our fights. Are you trying to cover for him?”

“No I’m not,” Mikey responded heatedly. “I’m trying to help you stop screwing up your relationship with him. You know darn well he hates feeling like you’re his babysitter.”

Mikey tried to insert himself between Leo and the door, but his brother already had a firm grip on the knob. Glancing at Mikey, Leo said, “If he didn’t act like he needed one, I wouldn’t have to keep doing it.”

Other than physically restraining his brother, there was nothing Mikey could do to prevent Leo from turning the knob and pushing the door open.

Leo took a step into the room and Mikey was practically on his heels. When Leo came to an abrupt stop, Mikey bumped into him. Peering past his brother, Mikey saw Raph lying in his hammock, facing away from them and snoring loudly.

The relief that flooded into Mikey made him weak-kneed, but not so much that he couldn’t back out of the room. Leo came with him without prompting, pulling the door silently shut.

Although he knew he should let the matter drop, Mikey couldn’t help himself. “What did that prove? Are your trust issues so bad you don’t believe your own hearing?”

Leo’s lips pressed into a thin line before he opened them enough to say, “It’s late. I’m going back to bed.”

Mikey dearly wanted to taunt his brother further, but thought better of it. Rather than say another word, he watched Leo march into his bedroom and close the door without a backward look. After listening to Raph’s snores for another minute, Mikey went to his own bed where the night’s activities finally caught up to him. He was asleep in minutes.

Something woke Mikey, making him sit up with a start. Peering at the clock on his nightstand, he saw that it was four-thirty in the morning. With a groan, he realized he’d only been asleep for just over an hour. Leo would be up soon and right after that his father.

If he didn’t want to be a walking zombie at practice, Mikey needed to go back to sleep. He couldn’t though; whatever had awakened him was gnawing at the back of his mind.

Reaching up to rub at his eyes, Mikey saw that he’d gone to sleep wearing his pads. That’s when he remembered that he’d hidden his mask and weapons in the couch.

Jumping out of bed, Mikey thanked whatever subconscious thought had pulled him out of a deep slumber. He needed to retrieve those things before anyone else got up. The mask was no big deal; he had others and could easily explain leaving one stuffed inside the couch. However, the nunchucks were his babies and he never traveled far from them. A family member finding them in the couch would raise a shell of a lot of questions.

Moving as quietly as he could so as not to be caught by Leonardo, Mikey tiptoed down the stairs. His oldest brother woke naturally at the same time each morning without the need for an alarm. To Mikey that meant that Leo probably wasn’t deeply asleep as the five o’clock hour neared and added caution would be necessary if there was going to be a chance of snagging his things without getting busted.
Reaching the couch, Mikey dipped his hand under the cushion, intent on grabbing his gear and making a beeline back to his room. The only problem with that plan was that his mask and weapons weren’t there.

Lifting the cushion, Mikey stared with disbelief at the empty space beneath it. Dropping the cushion, he yanked the second one off the couch, thinking he’d mistaken which one he’d hidden his things under in his rush to dodge Leo. To his dismay, the couch held no secrets other than stray kernels of popcorn and dust bunnies.

“Were you looking for these, Michelangelo?”

Alarmed by the unexpected voice, Mikey spun around to find Master Splinter standing nearby. In his hands were Mikey’s mask and his nunchakus.

For a moment Mikey was frozen, the edges of his panic threatening to send him into a total shut down. Master Splinter continued to gaze at him in calm contemplation, his expression more compassionate than it was accusatory.

“Yeah,” Mikey finally managed to answer. Then he remembered himself and said, “Yes Master Splinter.”

His father nodded once, as if in silent acknowledgement of Mikey’s show of respect. “Please follow me. I believe a conversation is in order.”

Master Splinter turned and walked towards his room, leaving Mikey with no choice but to follow. As he did so, Mikey didn’t attempt to formulate how he was going to explain away trespassing into his father’s domain earlier, lying to Leo about why he’d entered, or the fact that he’d hidden his belongings in the couch. At the moment Mikey was too numb to think of much of anything.

Kneeling on the rug before his father, his head down, Mikey was surprised when Master Splinter joined him on the floor. Master Splinter set Mikey’s mask and nunchucks in front of his son and then contemplated his youngest.

“You have had very little sleep,” Master Splinter said.

Mikey lifted his head, unsure as to whether that was a statement or a question. He glanced at the monitor which was still sitting near his father’s bed, not wanting their conversation to be overheard.

“It is off,” Master Splinter assured him.

“I snuck out last night,” Mikey finally said, sticking to the truth but keeping it simple. Short lies; simple truths. It kept the two things from colliding.

Master Splinter’s whiskers twitched. He knew that ploy as well as Mikey did.

“Alone?” Master Splinter asked.

Technically, Mikey had gone out alone. “Yes Sensei.”

“But you did not remain that way, did you Michelangelo? You went out in search of your brother Raphael,” Master Splinter said.

“I didn’t like the argument he and Leo had,” Mikey said, deciding it was time to bring some
of his reservations with regard to his oldest brother to the forefront. “I was in the garage helping Raph with his motorcycle when Leo came up to announce dinner. That’s where the whole thing started. Usually I don’t take sides in one of their fights, but it kinda seemed like Leo was trying to push Raph. I don’t know what’s going on with him, but Leo’s been riding Raph a lot lately.”

“I too have taken notice of this occurrence,” Master Splinter acknowledged. “For a time, you were also at odds with Raphael, were you not? It seems you have worked through that situation and have grown closer to Raphael because of that. Perhaps Leonardo and Raphael will also find a way to resolve their differences.”

“Raph and I are never upset with each other for very long. When I mess with him it’s just good-natured brother type stuff. Leo’s digging at him hard, like he’s trying to set Raph off,” Mikey argued.

“Your defense of Raphael is admirable,” Master Splinter responded in a tranquil tone. “Even more so when one considers the fact that you resorted to subterfuge in order to meet him outside of our home and then attempted to deceive Leonardo as to your whereabouts upon your return.”

Flushing slightly, Mikey said, “Thanks for covering for me.”

“Raphael is your brother,” Master Splinter said. “There is no reason you should not spend time with him. One cannot help but wonder why the two of you feel the need to hide that from Leonardo.”

“Cause he doesn’t want us to be alone together!” Mikey blurted out. As soon as the words left his mouth he wanted to bite his own tongue. He was too tired to be doing this type of verbal fencing with his father.

“I see,” Master Splinter said, eying his son. “Do you know what has prompted this change in Leonardo’s attitude towards the two of you? Perhaps it was something that occurred the night when you were injured?”

Mikey shifted, aware of a discomfort in his butt and why it felt that way. “Raph’s not the monster Leo makes him out to be,” he said in a sulky tone.

“Leonardo has never expressed those types of concerns to me,” Master Splinter said with a frown. “Why would he feel the need to suddenly disparage Raphael in your eyes?”

Thinking he saw a way out, Mikey said, “Maybe ‘cause he thinks Raph will be a bad influence on me.”

“In what way? What has changed between you, Michelangelo?” Master Splinter asked.

Mikey was silent. He didn’t know how to answer that question without opening himself up to even more of them. Raph was right when he’d told Mikey not to try to do anything on his own.

“Raphael is very passionate,” Master Splinter said, startling his son into looking up at him. “His emotions are strong and compelling. The two of you are not unlike, though Raphael tends towards a darker aspect while your aura glows with an alluring brightness. I have noticed that lately, Raphael’s dissatisfaction with the status quo has been tempered somewhat. His anger is less volatile and more discerning. Noting this, I have wondered if perhaps some deeper need of his is finally being met.”

“That wouldn’t be a bad thing, right?” Mikey asked tentatively.
“It depends on how it is being met,” Master Splinter answered.

When he didn’t continue, Mikey felt the need to prompt him. “On what, Father?”

“Upon the honesty and longevity of those emotional fulfils,” Master Splinter said. “It is easy to do what feels good without taking the time to contemplate repercussions. We have had enough discussions for me to believe I understand what is happening between Raphael and yourself.”

“You do?” Mikey asked querulously. “Are we wrong?”

“That is not a pronouncement I am prepared to make,” Master Splinter said. “If you chose to be more forthright with me, perhaps I could offer an opinion, but I sense that you are not ready to do that as yet. In our earlier discussions you alluded to options. Until you or Raphael are at a point where you wish to be completely candid with me, I cannot offer sound advice. I will however admonish you to think deeply about the choices you make, and to ask yourself if you have made them because of a true attachment or whether it is due to an idealized notion.”

“I know how to answer that question for me,” Mikey said, knowing that statement would exhibit some of his vulnerability.

“But you are unsure of Raphael,” Master Splinter said, guessing correctly. “Have you considered that Leonardo has some inkling of this and in his own way he is trying to circumvent the possibility of your getting hurt?”

“I don’t need him to do that,” Mikey replied sullenly. “I can take care of myself. Leo says things that cause Raph a lot of pain. He makes threats that aren’t fair. You said you’d noticed that Raph is less angry and I think that’s because he needs someone to assure him that he’s not a monster. Leo spends his time putting Raph down.”

Master Splinter seemed to examine that assertion. “If I were to offer to have a talk with Leonardo about this, what would be your response?”

Mikey’s mouth snapped shut. He wanted Leo off their backs, but he wasn’t ready for Leo to defend himself to his father by fully divulging Raph’s secret. Master Splinter might not be so receptive to two of his sons being together if he knew the full extent of Raph’s desires.

Very slowly, Mikey said, “I think those two have to find a way to work it out themselves.”

Master Splinter nodded. “Yes, I thought you might say that. It has been my belief all along. Leonardo is a natural leader, and as such he uses whatever weapons are available in his arsenal. That does not mean that all of them are as sharp as he would have his team believe. I for one, while fully supporting him in many things, am not necessarily the ogre he might sometimes make me out to be. The mere threat of an action is sometimes harsher than the results of that action.”

Mikey felt a bit of weight lift from his shoulders. “I’ve always thought you were fair, Father.”

“Your ego is robust, my son,” Master Splinter said with a touch of humor. “It always has been and has never needed any help from me. The four of you have differing personalities and characters and the level of reinforcement each requires is dissimilar. I am strongly cognizant of Raphael’s dependence on me, as I am sure you are.”

“So is Leo,” Mikey said quickly.
"And so one skilled at employing the military takes them by the hand as if leading a single person." Master Splinter quoted. "'Know the other and know oneself'."

"That’s Sun Tzu, right?" Mikey guessed.

"Yes it is," Master Splinter answered. "This is what Leonardo studies in his quest to be a great clan leader. Sun Tzu admonishes him to know his troops as well as he knows himself. He gathers his knowledge about the three of you and keeps it close, utilizing it to control your actions. That is his destiny. Leonardo works very hard at this because while his leadership abilities are natural, he does not have the innate gift of insight. That is your strong suit, Michelangelo."

Not sure he understood what his father was telling him, Mikey said, "So, maybe Leo doesn’t understand Raph as well as he thinks he does? That maybe Raph can learn that he doesn’t need anyone to validate him?"

"Do not misunderstand me," Master Splinter said. "Leonardo would never impede his brother’s efforts to better themselves. He truly wants what is best for all of you. However, his protectiveness may sometimes blind him to certain truths. Leonardo understands Raphael very well; understands the complexity of his nature. What Leonardo tends to underestimate is you, Michelangelo. In the past I have strongly advised him not to be deceived by your outward show of irreverence."

"You told him that?" Mikey asked in astonishment.

"Of course. I am your father," Master Splinter said. "Despite your display of frivolity, I know your true talents. You have a gift that can heal Raphael’s inner turmoil while also assuaging Leonardo’s fears."

"I can do it," Mikey responded eagerly. "I know I can."

His father leaned forward, making sure to have Mikey’s full attention on his next words. "Remember this my son, do not lose your own needs in those of your brothers’. Do not set aside the thing that will make you happy in your efforts to provide for Raphael. That will only do both of you a great disservice."

Taken aback at how close his father had gotten to his own misgivings, Mikey could only stutter, "I . . . I’ll try not to do that."

The rattling of china pulled Master Splinter’s attention to his door. "Leonardo approaches with my tea. I will keep him occupied while you escape to your room for some additional sleep. Do not fret, my son. Our talk will remain between us."

"Thank you Sensei," Mikey said, grabbing his nunchucks and shoving them into his belt before tying on his mask.

He was rising to his feet as the shoji slid open. Turning, he saw Leo poised in the doorway, balancing a tray of tea things on one hand. The sight of his youngest brother brought a frown to his face.

"Please enter, Leonardo," Master Splinter said. "I have been contemplating some meditation exercises that I believe would be advantageous for all of you to learn and would like to review that with you."

"Of course Master Splinter," Leo said, coming into the room.
Mikey took that opportunity to slide past him and make a quick exit, heading straight for his room.

Once inside, Mikey peeled off his things and sat down on the edge of his bed. Going over his discussion with Master Splinter, Mikey had the distinct feeling that he’d dodged a bullet with his father.

The same could not be said of Leo. From the look on his face, Mikey was pretty sure that Leo was now aiming a really big shot right at a target on his shell.

When Leo did decide to unleash his arsenal, he might be surprised to find that Mikey had no intention of evading him. Shoving Leonardo off balance was difficult, but Mikey was confident he could do it.

The only problem was that Mikey wasn’t ready for Raphael to find out exactly what he was up to.

TBC........
Chapter 23

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,418 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 23 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey
~~It seems that Mikey is being backed into a corner.

The best description Mikey could think of to describe the day was ‘awkward’.

It had begun with his narrow escape from Leonardo in the very early morning hours. From there it was his own awkward attempts to keep Leo from peeking into Raphael’s room, followed only an hour later by a tricky conversation with Master Splinter.

Mikey had managed to grab a couple of hours of additional sleep before his alarm clock told him it was time to begin his daily routine by going down to breakfast. Everything in the kitchen, including Raphael, had seemed normal until Mikey tried to stuff his mouth with cereal. That’s when he discovered that his jaw was both stiff and a bit sore.

Remembering why his jaw bothered him brought an awkward flush to Mikey’s face which he thought he’d managed to hide from his brothers. Leo and Don didn’t see it, but Raph was looking at him over the top of his newspaper. His smirk told Mikey that Raph not only knew that Mikey’s jaw was sore, but also that he was proud to have been the one who had made it hurt.

While glad that Raph apparently didn’t harbor any feelings of guilt or shame with what they’d done, Mikey didn’t think he should be so cocky about it either. Mikey didn’t expect gushing concern, but he’d kind of hoped that Raph wouldn’t be completely insensitive to his discomfort.

Problems at breakfast were one thing, difficulties in the dojo quite another. The mild twinges that Mikey had felt in his lower regions since he’d risen from bed were easy to disregard. However, the range of movement required to practice properly exacerbated the pain to the point that it couldn’t be ignored.

Of course it didn’t help one iota that the pain reminded Mikey of what caused it and that started to excite him. Trying to avoid the pain and therefore the resultant titillation made Mikey uncoordinated at practice.

Mikey was surprised that when Master Splinter called for an end to practice he didn’t hold his youngest son back. It was possible that Master Splinter thought that Mikey’s poor performance was due to lack of sleep, being quite aware of how little Mikey had gotten. Whatever the reason, Mikey was just glad that his father wasn’t going to prolong his agony and that an end to his suffering was within sight.

As Mikey made his way to the couch, visions dancing in his head of spending a few hours blissfully lost in a game, he saw Raph disappear into his bedroom. Raph had a set of free weights up there and sometimes worked out while reading. His collection of books was eclectic and his brothers had been amazed to discover that Raph had a fondness for Michael Crichton.
The fact that his siblings couldn’t imagine him being so cerebral had aggravated Raph and at the time Mikey had found that amusing. Now it simply offered Mikey a better understanding of the brother he wanted to be even closer to.

When Mikey rounded the couch he immediately saw why Master Splinter had let him off easy. Several dust rags, a feather duster, and spray cleaner were stacked on the cushions, and the vacuum cleaner had been placed directly in front of the couch itself.

Groaning, Mikey glanced towards his father’s room, only to see Master Splinter and Leo entering to begin one of their daily meditation sessions. For a brief moment, Mikey wondered if Master Splinter would talk to Leo about any of the things that his youngest son had shared with him. Then he remembered that his father had expressed the belief that his sons should sort out their differences themselves.

It was a reprieve of sorts, albeit one that was doomed to be short lived. Mikey was going to have to face off with Leo at some point if he wanted his interactions with Raph to eventually normalize, if it was even destined to. Mikey hated to face it, but he still had no clue what kind of relationship he was having with Raphael.

Deciding to vacuum the lair first, Mikey unwound the length of electrical cord hanging from the hook on the back of the cleaner and walked over to an outlet to plug it in. Bending over pulled at several of his sore spots and Mikey groaned.

“Are your ribs bothering you again?”

Mikey squeaked and jumped back in surprise, clutching his chest dramatically when he saw Don standing nearby. He hadn’t even heard the genius’ approach.

“Dude, when did you start taking lessons in stealth from Leo?” Mikey asked. “Give a guy a heart attack, why don’t you?”

Don didn’t respond to that, instead stepping closer, his eyes narrowed. “You’ve been moving stiffly all morning. It’s your ribs again, isn’t it? You’ve reinjured yourself.”

“My ribs are fine,” Mikey replied, offering his brother a disarming smile. “Not in the least bit stiff.”

Mikey’s hopes that his assurances would dissuade Don from continuing his inquisition were shot down when his brother tipped his head slightly, his expression growing more curious.

“I heard you groan when you bent down,” Don said. “At practice I could see that your range of motion was gravely diminished. Something is bothering you.”

“Can’t a guy have an off day?” Mikey asked, feeling exasperated.

“You’ve been having a lot of them lately,” Don said. It didn’t sound like an accusation, more like an observation.

“Okay, so I’m having an off month. I can’t be awesome all the time ‘cause that would be setting the bar way too high for the rest of you guys. Gotta let my bro’s have a little hope,” Mikey told him.

“And the groan?” Don insisted.

Waving towards the array of cleaning items scattered over the couch, Mikey said, “Master
“You’ve been sneaking out at night to meet Raph haven’t you?” Don asked abruptly.

Mikey nearly swallowed his tongue. Choking on his own spit, Mikey had to clear his throat before he could answer and in spite of that he still stammered. “Wh... what makes you ask that?”

A slightly smug look settled onto Don’s face. “I knew something was off with you and Raph but neither of you would tell me anything. When I asked Leo about it he just told me not to worry. Since you all decided to keep me out of the loop, I decided to find out what was going on for myself. I set up a camera near the tunnel entrance to the lair and the garage.”

“In the garage?” Mikey asked, his voice coming out in a squeak. Had Don seen his encounter with Raph on the garage work table?

“Pointed right at the garage door,” Don said with a hint of complacency. “I saw Raph come in on his motorcycle early this morning and then duck back out. He entered the lair through the sewer tunnel entrance only a few minutes after you did.”

Mikey was both relieved to hear that and disgruntled that it hadn’t dawned on him that Don might do such a thing.

“You should have been a spy,” Mikey grumbled. “Did you ask Raph about it?”

“No, because it’s normal for Raph to leave the lair without notice and come in late, though I’ve never seen him try to hide his return,” Don said.

“Maybe he wasn’t trying to hide anything, maybe he just didn’t want to make noise and wake Master Splinter,” Mikey said.

“I would have considered that as the answer if he wasn’t coming in right on your heels,” Don replied. “Are you and Raph going out to patrol on your own? If you two are picking fights without full team backup, Leo’s going to have a fit.”

It wasn’t the best answer to Don’s questioning, but it was better than the truth and Mikey clutched at it like a lifeline. “Oh, so that’s why you asked about my ribs. You think I got into a fight topside.”

Don frowned. “You haven’t answered my question. Are you and Raph teaming up behind our backs and getting into trouble?”

Mikey could see that he needed to give Don something or he’d probably run to either Raph or Leo for answers. The genius could be very tenacious when he wanted satisfaction for his curiosity and this looked like it was going to be one of those times.

“I wouldn’t say we were getting into trouble,” Mikey answered cautiously. “We are sneaking out sometimes to patrol a little on our own. It’s kind of a bonding thing.”

“But you sure that’s all it is?” Don asked, not looking convinced. “You and Raph seemed to be more at odds lately than usual. In fact, for a while there he looked really angry with you, almost as angry as he gets with Leo at times. If all you’re doing is trying to appease him by going out and taking chances then that isn’t very healthy.”

“If I didn’t know better, I’d say it almost sounds like you think I’m afraid of Raph,” Mikey
said, eyeing his brother. “Since when have I been worried about his being mad at me? He gets mad, he gets over it.”

“Then why do you feel as though you need to bond? Can’t you just play video games with him the way you’ve always done? Raph is a great fighter, I’ll grant you that, but he’s also a hot head who isn’t known for thinking things through,” Don said.

“All the more reason for me to go with him,” Mikey responded. “You’re concerned about Raph and me when you should be more worried about Raph and Leo. I don’t know what his deal is, but Leo’s been really hard on Raph. Like you said, Raph’s a hot head and I’ve been thinking he’ll do something rash if he’s out there on his own.”

Mikey felt pretty good about that explanation. It was right in line with what he’d told his father, it accounted for Mikey and Raph both sneaking out, it explained why Mikey was keeping that fact a secret, and it covered everything that Don had observed.

“Raph does tend to hunt danger when he and Leo are at odds,” Don said thoughtfully. “It’s like he has to get his anger out physically and since he can’t go after Leo as aggressively as he wants, he looks for the next best thing.”

“Yeah, and then beats the pulp out of it,” Mikey said. “The ‘it’ usually being some dumb Purple Dragon. Problem is, when he’s in that mode, a dozen Dragons won’t stop him and neither will a bunch of Foot ninja showing up unexpectedly. That’s why I’ve been going out after him.”

“To help him look for a fight?” Don asked incredulously.

“If I tried to talk him out of it he’d kick me to the curb and be alone again,” Mikey said. “Bad tactics, dude. What I do requires finesse and subtlety at which I am a master.”

“And what exactly does this mastery of yours entail?” Don was staring at him suspiciously.

“Direction my brother. It’s all about direction,” Mikey answered smugly. “I arrange things so that I’m guiding Raph away from big fights towards smaller ones. We bust a couple of guys breaking into cars instead of taking on a bar filled with Dragons. That kind of thing. We both come back in one piece and Raph’s happy ‘cause he got to hit someone.”

“That is so screwy it has to be true,” Don said.

“Sure it’s true,” Mikey said smoothly. Now that he’d committed to the lie, it flowed easily. “You gotta promise not to tell Leo about what Raph and I are doing. They’ve gotta solve whatever’s going on between them, but until then, this is how I can keep Raph safe. If you upset the delicate balance I’m maintaining, Raph will go do something stupid.”

Don was frowning again. “You’re asking a lot of me. It goes against my nature to sit back and watch any of my brothers do things that could potentially cause them harm.”

“What choice do you have?” Mikey asked. “If you tell Leo or Master Splinter they’d probably order me not to sneak out with Raph and I’d probably do what they said. Raph won’t though, he’ll just get angrier and go out alone. Is that what you want?”

“I don’t want any of this,” Don said. Rubbing his forehead as though it suddenly hurt to think, he sighed deeply. “Look, I’ll keep your secret on one condition. That condition is that neither of you come home injured. You two do something stupidly dangerous to the point that it requires medical care and all bets are off. I’ll chew whichever of you survives a new one and then
spill the beans to Leo and Father.”

Mikey smiled brightly at his answer. “Thanks bro’. You’re the best ever!”

Don lifted a hand to stop him. “Don’t pound my shell just yet little brother,” he said. “I’m not keeping this secret forever. From a statistical point of view, the odds aren’t in your favor that your run of luck will last. Raph and Leo might need to have their heads banged together to fix whatever is going on with them but dodging it your way is only a short term solution. If something doesn’t break soon, I’m going to inform Leo about your night time rendezvous’ with Raph.”

“How soon is ‘soon’?” Mikey asked, the weight of dread settling back into his gut.

“I’ll give you a week,” Don said. “After that either it stops, or we have a family powwow.”

“You drive a hard bargain dude,” Mikey said. “Guess I don’t have a choice other than to accept your conditions.”

“No you really don’t,” Don told him. “I mean it, Mikey. Don’t either of you get injured or it stops now and Leo will be the least of your worries.”

“Message received loud and clear Donny,” Mikey said.

Don’s expression softened. “Do you want me to discuss this with Raph too? It might be easier coming from me.”

A touch of panic hit Mikey and he quickly said, “No way bro’. Raph’s cool with you and let’s keep it that way. The last thing we need to do is make him feel like everyone’s ganging up on him. He’ll disappear for a week.”

“He’s going to know the ultimatum came from me,” Don pointed out.

“Well sure he is,” Mikey said. “But it’s the delivery that counts.”

“Raph might still come to me for an explanation,” Don said. “You delivering the message isn’t going to change that message.”

“Yeah, but it might change how badly he reacts to it,” Mikey replied. “We’ve been talking a lot while we’re out on these runs. Let me spoon feed this to him, okay? Trust me, it’ll go over better that way.”

Don took a deep breath and then released it. “Fine. I leave it up to you. Just know that all of this is against my better judgment.”

“I know,” Mikey said. “Thanks Don.”

With one last hard look at his younger brother, Don left him. Mikey watched him walk away, happy to note that Don headed straight for his lab and not upstairs where Raph was.

As if this whole situation wasn’t complicated enough, now Mikey had a time line to deal with. One week was all Don was going to give him before telling everything he’d observed to Leo and their father.

Mikey wasn’t overly concerned about Master Splinter’s reaction, since his father wasn’t completely in the dark about him and Raph. It was Leo who was going to be the problem. Discovering that despite his best efforts, Mikey and Raph were carrying on behind his back was
First Master Splinter and now Donatello. Maybe Leo had been right to tease Mikey about his lack of subterfuge. He should have found a better way of answering Don’s past questions so that it didn’t seem as though they were keeping things from him. Mikey should have realized that Don would find his own answers rather than leaving it alone. After all, he’d grown up with the guy and Don was nothing if not inventive.

Kicking the vacuum cleaner in frustration, Mikey watched it roll forward a couple of feet before coming to a stop. He was starting to feel exactly like a soccer goalie, running and diving to keep anything from getting past him and all the way to Raph.

It was comical really. Raph wanted to have all of the control, he didn’t want Mikey to take any steps without consulting him first, and here Mikey was making dozens of moves without his brother’s knowledge.

Raph had told him in the garage that if Mikey played a lone hand again they were done. Before their last ‘play’ time Raph had reiterated to him that he never do anything without running it by Raph first.

The problem was that the things that Mikey had set in motion before Raph had said those things were running on their own steam now. At least they were with what Mikey had begun with Master Splinter, the Don part of the equation was a wild card in the deck.

Surely Raph would understand that Mikey had to tell Don something or risk having everything blow up in their faces immediately. He couldn’t possibly get so mad about that he’d call off what they’d started, could he?

Striding forward, Mikey grabbed hold of the vacuum cleaner and aggressively punched the on button. Once it was going, Mikey began shoving it around the floor, his irritation making him violent.

“Why the shell do I care if Raph gets hacked off enough to call it quits?” Mikey asked himself. “Why should I spend the rest of my life worrying whether something I do is gonna make him mad enough to board up that secret room and never touch me again? If he cares about me at all he’ll work with me instead of ordering me around.”

Even as he had those thoughts, Mikey knew he would hate it if Raph put an end to what they had started. Having a physical relationship with someone he cared for was beyond good, it was more awesome than he could have imagined.

“Why does everything have to be so complicated?” Mikey muttered aloud as he continued to vigorously vacuum the lair. “This is all Leo’s fault.”

The words were barely out of his mouth when Leo stepped out of Master Splinter’s room. He glanced in Mikey’s direction but the younger turtle pretended to be immersed in his work, catching the look out of the corner of his eye.

Leo moved purposefully towards Don’s lab, appearing for all the world like a turtle on a mission. After that first initial glance he paid no mind to his brother at all and that was just fine with Mikey.

As Leo walked past, Mikey had to resist the urge to hurl something at his head. He suddenly wondered if this was the way that Raphael felt towards their leader all of the time. If so,
it was astonishing that there wasn’t a minor explosion between the pair every couple of hours.

Then Leo entered Don’s lab and as was out of Mikey’s sight. As soon as Leo was beyond his view, Mikey blinked and took stock of the emotions that had just coursed through him.

In a moment he started to chuckle, and then allowed himself to have a good laugh before executing a couple of dance steps with the vacuum cleaner.

Whatever this bond was that he was forming with Raph, it seemed that some of the hot head’s temperament was rubbing off on Mikey. That might not be such a bad thing since it looked like breaking developments were winding their way towards a battle within the family.

If Mikey was just a little bit lucky, part of his disposition was being absorbed by Raph as well. This was fast becoming one of those situations that required some chill, a thing that regular Raph sorely lacked.

Mikey had a feeling that he and Raph being of like minds would mean the difference between a skirmish and an all-out war.

TBC………..
Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,480 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 24 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Mikey stood beneath a warm spray of water, head down, his mind taken up with thoughts of hamburgers. At least he was trying to stay focused on hamburgers, after all, he was hungry.

In a lot of ways, Mikey was a very basic kind of turtle. He liked his entertainment in the form of movies, or comics, or video games, and he liked to eat. He had a pet cat named Klunk who he adored, and he had close friends, some of them human.

The most important thing in his world though was his family. His father and his three brothers. Until recently that was all Mikey had needed. His world changed when Mikey discovered a deeper need, a need that centered around one brother in particular.

Leonardo had preached to him about Raphael’s demons. Michelangelo wondered if Leo had any idea that his youngest brother harbored demons of his own. Mikey himself hadn’t even realized that until recently.

Mikey was the prankster in the family, the wise guy. He prided himself on his ability to use his wiles to fool his brothers. A good prankster had to be able to sell a trick, otherwise he couldn’t pull one off.

The problem was that Mikey wasn’t doing a particularly good job of pulling anything over on his brothers just now. Maybe that was because his pranks, unlike this situation, could be implemented and executed in a relatively short time frame.

Master Splinter had once told him that he believed that Mikey had the makings of a very good leader, but he lacked focus. Long range planning required focus, as Mikey was quickly learning. Now he knew why Leo meditated so much; he was honing that skill. If only Mikey could sit still for that long.

Stepping out of the shower, Mikey towelled himself vigorously, striving to think about nothing other than what he planned to cook for dinner. It had been a long day filled with chores. As soon as he finished one task, Master Splinter would quickly appear to assign him another.

Mikey suddenly winced as the rough towel made contact with his tail. He’d completely forgotten that Raph had gripped that sensitive appendage between his teeth while using a butt plug to . . . to . . .

“Hamburgers, hamburgers, hamburgers,” Mikey chanted to himself, gripping the edges of the sink, his eyes tightly closed. In a moment he had a mental image of a thick, juicy burger dripping with cheese and felt safe enough to open his eyes. His reflection stared back at him, appearing slightly accusatory.
“Oh shut up,” Mikey told himself. All he’d done all day was think about the situation he was in with Raph and the rest of his family. The only real conclusion he’d reached was that he had to talk to Raph about Don and his secret cameras. And the ultimatum.

Then Mikey realized that the chores his father had made him do weren’t actually punishment. They were boring and repetitive and Mikey disliked them because of that. The only escape he had while doing something as mundane as cleaning was inside his own head.

Master Splinter knew that. He had told Mikey to think deeply about the choices he made and to ask himself certain questions. Mikey certainly wasn’t going to be doing any deep thinking while occupying himself with his normal activities, and meditation was out of the question because to him that was sheer torture.

It was only when Mikey was stuck with manual labor that his mind truly wandered to a place deeper inside himself. When his body was active with something that didn’t require his concentration, Mikey wasn’t at all too fidgety to think.

Chuckling, Mikey found that he’d discovered the only perfect way for him to ‘meditate’. It was amazing how his father had latched onto that before Mikey had, but then the aged rat wasn’t called ‘Master’ for nothing. This wasn’t an epiphany Mikey intended to ever share with his brothers though; he could well imagine what they’d do upon learning that chores were actually good for their younger brother.

Wearing a grin, Mikey left the bathroom and made a quick detour to his room to pull on fresh gear before heading downstairs.

A glance showed him that his family were all together in the living area – the newly cleaned living area – watching some real life detective show. Master Splinter was in his favorite chair, while Leo and Raph occupied the couch, sitting on opposite ends of course. Donny was even there with them, but as usual wasn’t completely idle. Seated on the rug, he had an array of tools spread out on the coffee table in front of him as he worked to repair April’s food processor for her.

Mikey stopped in the kitchen doorway to listen to them. Don and Raph were discussing certain aspects of a new investigative tool the detectives on TV were using, to which Leo supplied an observance of his own. It all sounded perfectly harmonious, as though none of them was harboring any secrets.

Shaking his head, Mikey entered the kitchen to begin his meal prep. After he added some spices to the ground meat and mixed it all together, Mikey decided they’d have skin-on home fries with their burgers. The bag of potatoes had been sitting in the pantry for a while and it wasn’t getting any younger.

The smell of sizzling grilled burgers and golden fries soon wafted through the lair and drew the other turtles to the kitchen. Without having to be asked, they began to prepare the condiments and set the table. Mikey knew what attracted them; he might not be able to practice his culinary skills at one of those fancy bistros on the West end, but burger night at the lair ala Michelangelo was a crowd pleaser.

Everyone helped themselves buffet style and then sat around the table to enjoy the meal. Master Splinter eschewed the bun in favor of the fresh rice Mikey had made for him, preferring that healthier alternative with his meat patty. He did however indulge in some fries, the fur around his eyes crinkling with pleasure as he dipped them into ketchup before popping them into his mouth.
It made Mikey happy to see his father enjoying himself, sharing a meal with his sons and looking as though he felt much better than he had in a couple of days. That his brothers joined him in that sense of relief was clear in the way each of them behaved. The tension they all felt when Master Splinter was ill was starting to lift.

No one would be leaving the lair tonight, not even Raph. That much was pretty clear from some things that were said by Master Splinter, one of which was how he believed he would sleep well knowing his sons were all at home. None of them would risk disappointing him after that, or take the chance that his growing agitated would cause him to become ill again.

Mikey had no problems with that. Though he wanted like crazy to experience additional highs through Raph’s rough handling inside their secret room, he knew he had to give his body a reprieve. His jaw was still a little sore; he’d even had to be tentative about opening his mouth wide enough to eat his hamburger. The sting in his ass had faded somewhat but was still noticeable when Mikey sat, and his dick was tender to the touch.

Yep, a one night intermission was necessary. Pain was one thing, pushing it to the point where he was actually injured another. That would certainly break his promise to Donatello not to come home requiring medical care.

Speaking of Don, he was currently hogging Raph’s attention again. This time they were talking about microorganisms and the odds that a satellite or probe returning to Earth could carry a deadly one. Since Raph had brought it up, Mikey figured it was from something he’d read in one of his books.

Mikey felt a tinge of dissatisfaction in noting how the two of them became more animated as the conversation continued. Raph never had those kinds of deep discussions with him. Surely what he and Raph were sharing wasn’t based entirely on simple physical fulfillment, was it?

After a moment Mikey had the sensation that he was being watched and glanced away from the pair to find his father contemplating him. He could almost feel Master Splinter looking directly at his thoughts, reading the turmoil there as clearly as if it were the printed word.

Giving Master Splinter his most disarming smile, Mikey tried to deflect him from his surveillance. Mikey doubted that it worked.

Then alarm bells went off in Mikey’s head. Leo hadn’t said anything for several minutes, his silence worrisome. Reaching for more fries, Mikey cast a surreptitious look in his oldest brother’s direction, dismayed to find that Leo also appeared to be studying him.

“Did you want some more dude?” Mikey asked quickly, hoping to cover his faux pas.

Leo’s expression remained stoic. “No, I’m done.”

“Ha! More for me then,” Mikey said, scooping a larger bunch of fries than he actually wanted onto his plate. Squirting some ketchup over them, Mikey had to resist the urge to also squirt some in Leo’s eyes.

After that it was hard for Mikey to recapture the sense of satisfaction he’d been feeling over their little family gathering. Mikey did his best to act as though all was right with the world, even offering verbal appreciation when Donatello volunteered to wash up after the meal.

Mikey half expected Raph to extend his services to help Don. Raph might have to, if Don hadn’t told him about a book in his collection he thought Raph would enjoy. After learning from
Don where he could find the book, Raph exited the kitchen.

Having had enough of cleaning for the day, Mikey left when Master Splinter and Leo did, hanging back from them in case they decided on some post-dinner meditation. Mikey was glad he’d anticipated that happening when Master Splinter invited Leo to his room to do exactly that.

Left standing by himself in the center of the lair, Mikey realized that this was his opportunity to talk to Raph alone. He saw Raph come out of Don’s room with a book in his hand and enter his own, so Mikey quickly jogged upstairs.

Stopping in Raph’s open doorway, Mikey saw that Raph was plumping the pillows in his hammock but hadn’t yet crawled into it. Mikey waited for a second and then cleared his throat.

“Yeah?”

“Leo’s with Master Splinter and we need to talk,” Mikey said in a rush, keeping his voice down.

“What about?” Raph asked, hopping into his hammock, his legs dangling over the side.

“Well, about Donny for one thing,” Mikey said, coming into the room and grasping the edge of the door.

“Leave it open,” Raph said sharply. “Don’t talk loud and keep your eyes open in case someone starts in this direction. What about Donny?”

Mikey shifted so that he was standing near the door frame, turned in such a way that he could see the stairs. “He installed cameras near the tunnel entrance and in the garage,” Mikey told him, not beating around the bush because he didn’t know how much time they’d have.

Raph went perfectly still, his eyes narrowed at Mikey. “When?” he asked, his deep voice sounding gruff.

“A couple of days ago,” Mikey said. “The one in the garage is pointed at the door, so he didn’t see us together, but he did see you come in on your motorcycle and leave again, and then the two of us coming in through the sewer tunnel entrance one after the other.”

After a few seconds of silence, Raph blew out a gust of air and muttered, “Damn.”

“I only found out about it because he told me,” Mikey said. “Actually, he confronted me about it. He asked if I’d been sneaking out at night to meet you.”

Raph’s head had lowered as if in deep thought but it quickly lifted at Mikey’s words. “What did ya’ say?”

“I told him he should have been a spy and then asked him if he’d talked to you about it,” Mikey said. “He said no because coming and going without notice was normal for you, but being sneaky about it wasn’t. Then he asked if we’d been going out to patrol by ourselves and told me that if we’ve been picking fights without full team backup that Leo would have a cow.”

“Fucking Leo and his snitch,” Raph said, glowering at Mikey.

Despite his jealousy towards Don, Mikey felt like he had to defend him. “Don’s just worried, Raph. He saw me moving funny at practice and thought I’d injured my ribs again.”
“Right when ya’ think ya’ ain’t gotta take Don into account he comes up and blindsides ya’,” Raph said. “Teach me to underestimate the Brainiac. What’s the punchline?”

“I let him think we’re bonding over fights with gang members,” Mikey said. “What else could I do? He had to have an answer ’cause ‘mind your own business’ would have sent him straight to Master Splinter or Leo. I told him I was making sure you didn’t try to bite off more than you could chew when we went topside because I could tell you were pissed at Leo and needed to take it out on someone.”

“I suppose that’s exactly what ya’ guys think I do, ain’t it?” Raph asked, appearing slightly amused.

Mikey snorted. “Of course that’s what you do. It’s not like you ever try to hide it.”

The partial grin slipped off Raph’s face then as he asked, “I know Donny didn’t just drop it, so what was the point of his talking to ya’?”

“I asked him to keep what we’re doing a secret and he said he would on one condition, that neither of us gets hurt. If we come home needing to be bandaged up he’s going to tell both Leo and Master Splinter everything,” Mikey answered.

The frown line between Raph’s eyes smoothed out and he spun in the hammock, swinging his legs into it and settling back against his pillows. “Peachy. I sure as shell ain’t gonna get hurt with what we do, and any marks ya’ end up with you’re gonna make sure don’t show. Got it covered.”

Mikey stared at him in mild frustration. “He didn’t just leave it at that, Raph.”

His brother had opened his book but at Mikey’s words closed it again and rolled his head over to look at Mikey. “Would ya’ just cut to the chase already?”

“Don started spouting odds and saying he expected our luck to run out,” Mikey said. “He said you and Leo need to fix whatever’s going on between you and solve your problems soon. If you don’t, he’s going to call for a family meeting in a week and spill the beans. I promised I’d tell you about his ultimatum so he wouldn’t have to, though he offered to deliver it himself.”

“Yep, that’s Donny for ya’,” Raph said absently, his gaze fixed on Mikey. “He’s sneaky with the techno mojo, but a straight arrow when telling ya’ how things are gonna go.”

Raph paused to think about what Mikey had told him, his thick fingers tapping a rhythm against the hard cover of the book in his hand. Mikey waited, intensely interested in seeing a side of Raph he’d never paid much attention to before. He’d always thought of the hot head as being bold and rash, never giving any regard to his actions, just taking them. Apparently Raph had another side as well, one quite capable of subterfuge and planning.

Mikey had to admit that was pretty hot. He’d already seen how talented Raph could be with a lie, and how his creativity could be so provocative when they were together in the secret room. Was it any wonder that Raph and Don could find common ground to connect on a more cerebral level?

Finally Raph sighed deeply, his eyes glinting as they once more focused on his younger brother. “I guess me and Donny are gonna have us a conversation about some things,” he said. “Don’t know exactly how it’s gonna go ’cause I’ll have to play it by ear, so ya’ keep your mouth shut anytime you’re around him, before and after. Ya’ savvy?”
Apparently Raph was going to keep Mikey out of the loop again. Though he was none too pleased about it, Mikey knew he had no choice. This wasn’t the time or place to get into an argument about Raphael choosing to call all of the shots.

Nodding, Mikey said, “Yeah. You’ll let me know if it’s about to hit the fan though, won’t you? It’d be nice to have a little warning so I can go hide over at April’s.”

Raph obviously caught the sarcasm in his tone and frowned. “What’re ya’ getting steamed under the shell for? Ain’t I been keeping things running smooth for us? We get our time together and nobody’s the wiser. That’s the point ain’t it?”

“Sure Raph, that’s the point,” Mikey answered in a milder tone, squashing his irritation. Getting Raph all worked up right before he was going to have a talk with Don was a terrible idea. “Guess having Don almost bust us gave me a case of nerves. It’d be nice not to have to hide stuff from our bro’s.”

“We talked about this and ya’ said ya’ could handle it,” Raph replied, his tone dark. “I told ya’ this whole thing wouldn’t work if ya’ couldn’t learn to hide things from the rest of the family. Ya’ stood in the middle of that room and agreed, Mikey. That’s part of the trust we gotta have between us. I opened up and gave ya’ everything; that room, how I am, how long I been thinking about ya’, and the contents of those two chests. The only thing I asked for in return is this stays a secret.”

A certain wild look was starting to appear in Raph’s eyes and Mikey knew the panic was trying to set in again. The last thing Mikey wanted was for Raph to completely shut down on him out of fear that their father would learn that his red banded son was a sadist.

“All I meant was that it would be less complicated not to be hiding stuff from anyone,” Mikey said, keeping his inflections light sounding. “It’s just a comment dude. I’m keeping the faith.”

“See that ya’ do,” Raph said, practically glaring at him. He seemed to calm down and Mikey felt a touch of relief. “Is Donny still in the kitchen?”

Mikey had been keeping an eye peeled for the genius but hadn’t seen him yet. “Yep. You want me to tell him to see you when he gets done?”

“Hell no,” Raph said. “Make yourself scarce. He’ll come looking for me on his own to see if I found this book. He doesn’t need any hints that we might be plotting stuff together.”

“Oh boy,” Mikey agreed, knowing that was his signal to leave. He didn’t want to, but knew that his continued presence would further irritate Raph. “Later.”

Stepping away from Raph’s room, Mikey debated on going into his own and hanging out there. If he pressed his head against their shared wall, he might be able to hear Raph talking to Don. The problem with that was Raph would know Mikey was next door with the sole purpose of listening in. By no stretch of the imagination was that a good idea.

Feeling on edge, Mikey decided that an action packed video game was just what he needed. Back downstairs, he loaded the player and grabbed the controller, perching himself on the edge of the couch as the game began.

From the corner of his eye Mikey saw Don start up the stairs. Keeping his focus subdivided between the game and his brother, Mikey watched as Don paused in Raph’s doorway to
ask him something.

There was a barely perceptible change in Don’s body language after a minute and then Mikey saw him nod before saying something. Right after that, Don entered the room and Mikey lowered the volume on his game, hoping to pick up a word or two.

He needn’t have bothered. Almost immediately Mikey saw Don turn to close the door, shutting himself inside the room with Raphael.

In the game, Mikey’s character got killed. Mikey didn’t much care.

TBC………….
Chapter 25

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 4,433 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 25 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

For all of you who are anxious for a little 'action', there will be some in the next chapter. ;) This is probably the most complex story I've ever written, so bear with me. Emotional entanglements are always a huge challenge.

Mikey intended to remain where he was so that he could see when Don exited Raph’s room. He was certain that Don’s attitude or expression would give him a clue as to how their discussion had gone.

He missed his opportunity. Not long after Donatello disappeared into Raph’s domain, Leonardo came out of Master Splinter’s and called for his younger brother’s assistance. Worried that his father had suffered a relapse, Mikey sprang from the couch to join Leo.

It turned out that Leo was conscripting him into service. Mikey didn’t bother to hide his groan when Leo told him they were going to give Master Splinter’s room a good cleaning while their father made himself some tea and enjoyed the evening news broadcast.

Though he was pretty fed up with cleaning by now, Mikey managed to keep his complaints to a minimum. At least this time he wasn’t doing it alone and he knew that the better kept their sensei’s personal space was, the less chance he’d succumb to another illness.

While Leo carried the extra futon back into the dojo, Mikey changed the linens on Master Splinter’s bed. Between them, Mikey and Leo dusted, swept, vacuumed, and even scraped up the melted wax from the around the base of the many candles scattered throughout the room.

When they were finished and Mikey was finally allowed to leave Master Splinter’s inner sanctum, the first thing he did was look up towards Raph’s room. To his relief he saw that the door was open, but then he noticed that Donatello’s door was closed.

Mikey barely noticed it when Leo walked past him on his way to join Master Splinter in front of the television array. When Leo suddenly stopped and turned to look at him, Mikey was jolted back to reality, realizing his mistake.

Quickly tilting his head back even farther, Mikey said, “We’ve got dust strings hanging from the ceiling again and I’m not cleaning them. I did it last time, it’s someone else’s turn.”

“Nobody said anything about the dust strings Mikey,” Leo said in an even tone.

Lowering his head, Mikey met Leo’s eyes. “Dude, all I’ve done today is clean stuff. If you and Master Splinter have decided that’s a great way to tell me to do better during practice, the message has been received. Just wanted to clear that up before one of you pointed at the ceiling.”

“Your cleaning assignments were none of my doing,” Leo said, keeping his voice down so
as not to disturb their father. “Sensei told me that he knows the reason for your poor practice performance and that he’s handling it. Since that’s between the two of you, I won’t ask, but I do want you to know that you can talk to me if you need to. About anything. I won’t judge.”

“Sure you won’t,” Mikey thought to himself. Shifting to his all-purpose grin, Mikey said, “Well in that case, I think we should talk about the chore assignments for the rest of the month. I’m pretty sure I’ve done enough in one day to cover my obligations . . . .”

He stopped because Leo was shaking his head. “Not going to happen.”

“How about the rest of the week?” Mikey asked in his best cajoling tone. He was concerned that Leo wasn’t reacting to his playfulness with his usual amused tolerance.

“Not even a day. You haven’t been acting like yourself bro’, in the dojo or around us. If we don’t know what to expect of you, that can have dangerous consequences. As it is, your showboating almost got you killed last week,” Leo said.

“That point has already been made and rubbed in plenty,” Mikey said with a touch of impatience. “Is the new norm that we keep ragging on each other about past mistakes? ‘Cause if so, I’ve got some sweet ones on you.”

“We don’t do that,” Leo responded quickly, “unless one of us continues to make the same mistakes. I don’t want you to repeat your mistakes, Mikey. I’m even hoping that my warnings might keep you from making new ones.”

That comment was loaded with double meaning but Mikey decided to ignore the innuendo. He wasn’t ready to go where this conversation seemed to be heading, especially not after Raph’s heated reminder that Mikey wasn’t to address their situation with anyone else in the family. Especially not with Leo.

Mikey managed to aim another carefree grin at Leo. “You know me, always ready to learn.” From the corner of his eye, Mikey was relieved to see Raph exit the bathroom and make straight for his own bedroom, without even a glance at Donatello’s door. “Okay then, see you later. Going to bed now. Totally escaping before Master Splinter thinks of something else for me to do.”

He just registered the thwarted expression on Leo’s face as he dashed past him. It gave Mikey solace to have escaped before Leo could try to bring up the whole ‘Raph has demons’ issue again. If there was one thing Mikey knew, it was best not to let Leonardo pick the time or place for a battle. Fearless already had too much of an advantage.

Setting a course that took him straight into his bedroom, Mikey swiftly shut his door and turned out the lights, lest Leo get a notion to follow him. Once he was prone, Mikey felt the exhaustion seep into his body. Who knew lair cleaning could be as tiring as one of Master Splinter’s turbo practice sessions?

As he drifted off to sleep, Mikey’s last thought was how glad he felt that Don had gone to his room alone. Mikey wasn’t sure what he’d have done if Raph and Don were still together when he was finished cleaning his father’s room, but it probably wouldn’t have been pretty. Or smart.

Practice the next morning was a dismal affair. It was raining again; the city seemed to be caught in a squall line and the streets were flooding. That meant that the sewers were also flooding.
Donatello looked as though he hadn’t gotten much sleep. Before practice began he’d told his brothers of the weather forecast, one that meant they would all have to be vigilant lest some obstruction in the tunnels cause water to overflow into the lair.

Going out on practice runs or patrol was out. This was one of those instances where protecting their home was paramount. Mikey knew that meant he and Raph wouldn’t be able to sneak out either. Their private activities were curtailed for the interim.

Having to patiently wait for something he wanted was not Mikey’s strong suit. Raph on the other hand seemed completely unperturbed, once again making Mikey wonder if Raph was just that good an actor or if their ability to be together didn’t matter to him one way or the other.

Annoyed by that thought, Mikey decided to ignore Raph completely. When they lined up in front of Master Splinter, Mikey made sure to place himself on the opposite end as far from Raph as he could get. He already knew how Raph’s scent would affect his resolve.

The brothers flowed seamlessly through movements as their sensei called them out, his sharp eyes looking for any break in form. Mikey had the distinct feeling that Master Splinter was watching him especially hard. Being of no mind to be stuck with chores again, Mikey proved that he could be as apt a pupil as even the perfect Leonardo.

They were just completing a spinning back kick when the lights suddenly winked out.

There was a hard thump as Don landed off balance and fell against Mikey. Instinctively grabbing his brother, Mikey pushed him upright as Raph asked, “What the shell’s going on?”

Just as quickly as they went out, the lights came on again.

Master Splinter remained placidly at ease, his eyes on Don. “You should have executed that landing perfectly Donatello. There is always a chance for the unexpected to occur. Your training should negate any difficulties that might ensue.”

The words were barely out of his mouth when the lights flickered off once more.

“Ya’ forget to pay the electric bill Donny?” Raph asked teasingly.

“This is none of my doing,” Don insisted. The lights came on and Don glanced up. “The rain must be shorting out some of my connections. I was afraid of that.”

“Let us return to our practice,” Master Splinter interrupted. “This will be a good training exercise for you four. Adjusting quickly to light or the sudden absence of it is a skill you should all mas . . . .”

His words were cut off by the piercing tones of the lair’s proximity alarms.

“Dude!” Mikey shouted, clapping his hands over his ears.

Mikey saw Leo and Raph glance at each other, instantly alert and both reaching for their weapons. Then the alarm stopped.

“Donny?” Leo asked, looking at his brother.

“Probably the rain,” Don answered and then directed himself to his father. “We shouldn’t take that for granted though, sensei.”
“Very well,” Master Splinter said. “It would be better to resolve these problems quickly. You are all dismissed.”

Don made straight for his security monitors with his brothers right on his heels. Each of the wide screens usually gave him four individual images of the various tunnels close to the lair. To Don’s obvious dismay, the pictures were blurred, some of them so grainy nothing was visible.

As Don’s fingers flew over the keyboard that controlled his security systems, Leo asked, “Are we sure someone didn’t tamper with your equipment?”

“I’m running a diagnostic now,” Don said. “You see the way some of the pictures clear up for a few minutes and then go fuzzy again? I’m fairly certain it’s technical and electronic failure, not an attempt to circumvent our security protocols.”

“What I see is a hell of a lot of water running through the tunnels,” Raph said.

The lights in the lair went out again. If not for the illumination from Don’s computer screens they would have been plunged into total darkness.

“I’m glad I installed a battery backup for the more critical systems,” Don said grimly. “We’re going to have to do some emergency repairs if we want electricity.”

“Why do I have the feeling that means getting wet?” Raph asked.

Don’s grin, aimed at Raph, became visible as the lights clicked on. “Because that definitely means we’re all getting wet.”

“You know, Donny has that ‘welcome to my world’ look on his face,” Mikey said grumpily. “You’d almost think he was enjoying this.”

“Well I’m not Mikey,” Don said as he began gathering tools from his storage shelves. “It is a good opportunity to replace some of the junction boxes and monitors though. Things don’t last long in such a damp environment.”

“We going to need to run some new electrical wire?” Raph asked.

“Yep,” Don said. “There are bundles of the stuff in the garage.”

“We’ll go up and get them while you decide how to divvy up the work between the four of us,” Leo said.

“Correction,” Master Splinter said, drawing his sons’ attention because they hadn’t realized he was there, “divide the work between three of you. I require Michelangelo’s assistance with another task.”

Mikey didn’t miss the quick glance Leo shot in his direction before the older turtle bowed and said, “As you wish Father.”

“Come with me Michelangelo,” Master Splinter said as he walked away.

“Good luck you guys,” Mikey said. “Call me if you need me.” He followed after his father, not feeling nearly as relieved at having avoided slogging through raging tunnel water as he should have. Just because it was Master Splinter who’d gotten him out of an unpleasant job didn’t mean his brothers would excuse him for it.
Rather than taking Mikey to his room or the dojo as the turtle expected, his father led him into the kitchen. Mikey saw Leo and Raph pass by on their way to the elevator. From their expressions Mikey could tell they were both focused on the job at hand, which was a good thing considering their track history.

“So, what’s up Master Splinter?” Mikey asked when his father stopped and turned to face him.

“I have an obligation to fulfill that is long overdue,” Master Splinter told him. “This will be a good opportunity to complete it as well as to check on a friend. If you would, please remove the items from this bottom cabinet.”

Master Splinter pointed at one of the kitchen cabinets and Mikey complied with the directive. Swinging the door open, he saw a very large metal teapot and two oversized thick metal cups.

It took two hands to extract the teapot. Mikey set it on the kitchen table before retrieving the cups and placing them on the table as well. “Wow, where did these come from and since when did we befriend the jolly green giant?”

There was a look of amusement on his father’s face. “I doubt that Leatherhead would care to have you call him that. I requested that Donatello create these for me some time ago. Our friend Leatherhead enjoys tea as much as I, but he has difficulties with normal teapots.”

“Yes, he smashes them to pieces,” Mikey said with a grin, remembering one such incident.

“Truly not his fault,” Master Splinter said, a hint of rebuke in his voice. “I feel committed to giving him this small comfort due to his situation and lack of family.”

“We’re his family sensei,” Mikey said quickly.

Master Splinter nodded. “Yes we are. You and I will deliver these gifts and check on Leatherhead’s welfare at the same time. Can you manage the teapot and cups during our journey?”

“No sweat Master Splinter,” Mikey said. “Hope we don’t have to swim for it though.”

“As do I,” Master Splinter replied. “I believe there is a route that will take us through maintenance tunnels where we should not encounter much water.”

Mikey frowned. “Are you sure you want to be doing this? You just got over a cold sensei.”

“I will be fine. Let us go now. I communicated with Leatherhead earlier and he is expecting us,” Master Splinter said.

As they exited the lair, Mikey saw that his brothers were already gone. The lights had flickered off and on twice while Mikey was in the kitchen and he had the feeling that it was going to be a long day for those three.

During their trip, Mikey wondered why his father chose now to deliver the teapot and not sometime when Don could go with him. It wasn’t because Master Splinter wanted to check on Leatherhead, he’d already spoken to him and could have found out then if the rains were causing the croc any problems.

His father said nothing though, so Mikey didn’t bring it up. Maybe Master Splinter just wanted to give Mikey a chance to talk if he needed to, just as Leo had expressed the night before.
Everyone seemed to want Mikey to talk. Except Raph.

Mikey knew the code that would manipulate the secret door to Leatherhead’s home and instructed Master Splinter how to use it, since his hands were full. They entered to find Leatherhead waiting for them.

“Master Splinter! Michelangelo! I am delighted to see you,” Leatherhead called out to them, beaming as he approached his guests.

“As are we to see you,” Master Splinter replied with a bow. “It has been much too long since we last visited. I trust you have been well?”

“Very much so. And yourselves?” Leatherhead asked.

“Master Splinter had a cold, but he’s over it,” Mikey answered. “The rest of us are great. Are you staying dry?”

“The rains have caused me little difficulty,” Leatherhead told them. “This station was designed with appropriate drainage. Donatello could not make it?”

Though he wasn’t sure, Mikey thought he caught a hint of wistfulness in the question. They were all great buds with Leatherhead, but Don was far and away the closest to him. They spoke the same language – geek.

“He is occupied with repairs to our electrical systems,” Master Splinter said. “The rain is causing mischief.”

Leatherhead looked concerned. “I would be most happy to assist him with those repairs. Please let him know that I am available.”

“I will be happy to do so,” Master Splinter said. He waved towards the items that Mikey was carrying. “These are for you my friend. Donatello created them to my specifications. If possible, one should always have a personal teapot to suit his needs.”

Smiling widely, Leatherhead lifted the teapot from Mikey’s arms and turned it around to admire it. “Thank you! It is remarkably well made, a tribute to Donatello’s craftsmanship.”

“Yeah, and it’s just your size too,” Mikey said with a grin.

“A handy thing, I shall treasure it always,” Leatherhead said.

From his kimono, Master Splinter extracted a gift wrapped box. “This is for you as well. It is a special tea blend that we have shared on occasion.”

Leatherhead accepted the box, looking happier than Mikey had seen in a long while. “Allow me to brew tea for us. It will warm you after your journey here and give me a chance to enjoy this lovely teapot.”

“I would be most honored,” Master Splinter said.

“Please, make yourself comfortable,” Leatherhead said, indicating the oversized couch that took up one section of his home. There was a large screen television against one wall and it was on. “I have been following the weather, perhaps the meteorologist will tell us when we can expect the rains to stop.”
“Thank you,” Master Splinter said. “I too have been wondering when we will receive such a pronouncement.”

Master Splinter made his way over to the couch and Mikey tagged along with Leatherhead into the area he’d transformed into a kitchen. Mikey knew that Don had helped him with the set up and everything was arranged to accommodate someone who was very large.

Setting the cups on the countertop, Mikey leaned back and watched Leatherhead fill the teapot with water and place it onto his stove. As Leatherhead unwrapped the box of tea, Mikey asked, “What do you do with yourself all day, LH?”

“I keep myself very busy Michelangelo,” Leatherhead said. “There are ongoing experiments, many that Donatello and I are working on together. I also spend much time on replicating a Transmat machine in the hopes that I might someday travel to the Utrom home world.”

“You’d come back though right?” Mikey asked. “I mean, we’d be sad to see you go. Don’t know that Donny would have anybody to talk to if you weren’t around.”

Leatherhead glanced up. “I would not like to leave permanently either my friend. It is for that reason that your brother and I work so diligently on the device. Donatello has one of the finest minds I have ever encountered; I would miss him greatly. I would miss you all greatly.”

Mikey noticed that Leatherhead tacked that ending on quickly, as though realizing he needed to include all of them, not just Don. It made Mikey wonder if Leatherhead had a thing for his brother. He thought to himself, “Why not? Everybody else seems to.”

A second later he noticed that Leatherhead was studying him, his head cocked slightly to the side. “You seem different Michelangelo. Has something happened?”

“Heck no big guy, I’m just as awesome as I’ve always been,” Mikey assured him with a grin.

Leatherhead’s nostrils flared. “Your scent is off. Are you sure you are not ill?”

“Oh shell. He can smell me too?” Mikey thought. Out loud he said, “Couldn’t be better. You probably smell the sewers on me, the water’s running high and the whole place reeks. Well, reeks more than normal. We’ve all been a little worried about sensei, maybe that’s what you sense. He was pretty sick a couple of days ago.”

The teapot began to sing and Leatherhead turned away to add the tea. When he did so, Mikey took a couple of steps back, putting some space between them. He did not need for Leatherhead to catch enough of his scent to figure out he was emitting pheromones.

When the tea was ready, Leatherhead filled two small cups and one of his new larger ones. Mikey took the two cups meant for he and Master Splinter and Leatherhead followed.

Master Splinter smiled his pleasure as Mikey handed him a cup. Leatherhead sat near them on a specially made chair while Mikey sank onto the couch with his father. They all drank tea as Leatherhead and Master Splinter talked, leaving Mikey to his own thoughts, though for appearances sake he chimed in every now and then.

Mikey did have to admit this was better than trudging through muck, mud, and nasty water to help Don with electrical repairs. For one thing there was far less chance of his being electrocuted, something he liked to avoid whenever possible.
It also took Mikey out of Raph’s presence. Considering how aggravated Mikey was with said brother at the moment, distance was probably a good idea. Was it asking too much that Raph appear even a tiny bit as eager to be with Mikey as Mikey was to be with him?

Before he knew it, Master Splinter was rising from the couch preparatory to leaving. Mikey gathered up their cups and took them into the kitchen before rejoining his father at the entrance to Leatherhead’s domain.

“I thoroughly enjoyed your visit, Master Splinter. Please do not be a stranger,” Leatherhead said.

“Nor you,” Master Splinter responded. “Come and visit us soon. Donatello has many new devices you have probably not seen. I know he would be excited to show them to you.”

Mikey saw Leatherhead’s eyes light up at the mention of his brother’s name. “I would find that most enlightening,” Leatherhead said. “Please extend to Donatello the offer of my services with his repairs. Anything I can do for him would give me great happiness.”

“I will certainly pass that along,” Master Splinter said. “Thank you for your hospitality.”

They exchanged a few more civilities while Mikey tried to look courteous rather than bored. He never could understand why being polite had to take so long.

Finally they were on their way home. Small rivulets of water ran down the center of the maintenance tunnel they were walking through, a good indication that the sewers were inadequate to the current deluge. The rain would do a fine job of washing the city streets clean, but it was going to make a mess of the places where the turtles did most of their travelling.

Master Splinter was as silent as he’d been on the junket to Leatherhead’s. Mikey had to assume that the point of having his son go with him wasn’t so that they could talk.

“Leatherhead has an attraction for your brother,” Master Splinter said out of the blue.

“Huh? What?” Mikey asked, startled. Okay, maybe Master Splinter did want to talk.

Master Splinter’s face held a complacent look. “He does not realize that anyone has noticed, but I have been aware of it for quite a while. Donatello is utterly ignorant of the fact.”

Mikey’s mind played back the things Leatherhead had said and the way he’d looked whenever the discussion turned to Don. “Is that why you brought me along with you instead of Donny?” he asked. “Are you trying to keep Don away from Leatherhead?”

“No of course not,” Master Splinter said. “My purpose was to show you the face of desire. I wanted you to look upon longing, to see the physical manifestation of unrequited love. Do you know why Leatherhead’s need for your brother will remain unfulfilled?”

Not sure if it was a trick question, Mikey went the safe route and said, “No.”

They were walking side by side and Mikey’s eyes were glued to Master Splinter. “It is because he will not risk losing Donatello’s friendship. Leatherhead would prefer to suffer in silence than to chance having your brother spurn his advances. He still sees himself as a monster, not as someone who has much to offer.”

“So . . . you wouldn’t care if Leatherhead and Donny . . . got together?” Mikey asked tentatively.
“My only care is that my sons are happy and safe,” Master Splinter said. “Leatherhead would be a wonderful partner for Donatello. He is intelligent, strong, talented, and would die before allowing anything untoward to happen to your brother.”

“But you never told Leatherhead that, right?” Mikey asked. “Why?”

“It is not my place,” Master Splinter said. “I will not be an obstacle but neither will I be the hand of fate. The current relationship between Leatherhead and Donatello suits them both and does not require my interference. If one of them were to outright ask for my counsel, I would do my best for them.”

“Oh,” Mikey said lamely. He thought about Master Splinter’s words for a moment and then frowned as he clued in on what he perceived as his father’s main point. “Why did you want me to see the way Leatherhead looks when he’s thinking about Donny?”

“A mirror reflects best when one is looking directly at it,” Master Splinter said enigmatically. “Do you not see yourself in Leatherhead?”

Mikey didn’t answer right away. Master Splinter seemed to be telling him that his feelings for Raph weren’t all that well hidden, at least not from his father. From past conversations, Mikey had already gleaned that Master Splinter knew things.

Could his father also be trying to tell him that Raph was nearly as clueless as Don when it came to what Mikey wanted? That almost seemed to be the gist of the hints that Master Splinter had already dropped.

“I guess if you want something, you have to take risks,” Mikey said slowly. “You know, not necessarily play it safe all the time.”

“It is always a risk to speak your mind,” Master Splinter said. “It is often the greatest risk of all to place yourself willingly in the path of potential pain. Do you know what you get from life if you are unwilling to take risks?”

This answer didn’t take Mikey long to formulate. “Nothing?”

“Confusion and nothing,” Master Splinter said. “Please think about that my son. Think about it very hard.”

Mikey spent the remainder of their journey home doing just that.

TBC..........
Several hours passed before Michelangelo saw any signs of his brothers. Since he didn’t know how long they would be out, Mikey stayed busy and productive around the lair. The last thing he needed was for those three to walk in and find him taking it easy.

Besides preparing enough food to feed a small army, Mikey tackled the chore of weapons maintenance, something that had been neglected for some time. When he took breaks, it was to do
a quick check of the lair and garage for leaks.

While he was in the garage, Mikey took a peek outside and saw that the deluge hadn’t let up. Since his return with Master Splinter, neither the lights nor the alarms had acted up again, so Mikey assumed that Donny had discovered the cause of those particular problems.

Locating Don’s new cameras was easy once Mikey knew to look for them. They weren’t the kind that he could sabotage by moving the position of the lens; these were fixed in place. Leave it to Don to anticipate a retaliatory action from him.

Mikey was in the dojo sharpening the tips of their kunai when his brothers returned. Carrying one of the kunai and the sharpening stone with him so they’d see he hadn’t been idle, Mikey went out to greet them.

All three were wet, bedraggled, and disgruntled looking. Raph shot a look in Mikey’s direction that the younger turtle couldn’t decipher and then unceremoniously dropped the tools he was carrying on the floor.

“I’m calling dibs on the shower,” Raph said. “Let Mikey put this stuff away since he didn’t have to share our fun.”

“Hey, that’s not on me,” Mikey protested. “Master Splinter needed my help with something. For your information, there’s hot food in the kitchen. You’re welcome!”

The last was called out to Raph’s retreating back as the hot head left halfway through Mikey’s speech and proceeded upstairs.

“Never mind him,” Leo said. “He’s cold and cranky. Were you doing weapons maintenance?”

His nod at the kunai reminded Mikey that he was holding the weapon. “Oh yeah,” Mikey said. “I didn’t know what else to do when we got back, so I cooked and then started fixing that box of weapons we shoved in a corner. I’ve been checking the lair and garage for leaks and haven’t seen any. It was still raining hard a half hour ago.”

“Got back? You and Master Splinter left the lair?” Don asked with a frown. “Where did you go? Did he get wet? That wasn’t the best idea, Mikey. Master Splinter isn’t fully recovered from his cold.”

“What makes you think I had a choice in the matter?” Mikey countered. “Master Splinter was determined to look in on Leatherhead so he made me carry that oversized tea set you made over to LH’s place. I checked sensei’s heater when we got back and made sure he wasn’t wet or chilled. Next time you try to talk him out of doing something he’s decided to do.”

“Is Leatherhead having any problems?” Don asked. “His electricity isn’t shorting out too, is it?”

Mikey watched Don carefully as his brother asked questions but saw nothing more than a sincere concern for a friend. “He said the drainage at his place is good and nothing was wrong with the power while we were there. LH even made tea in his new teapot. He seemed pretty happy with it. Oh, and he said to tell you he’d love to help you with your repairs if you need him.”

Don released a tired sigh. “I think we’ve got it for now. I need to check the systems and make sure all of the cameras are back online. I’m just happy we managed to install some of the wireless ones the other day or we might have been out in the tunnels until midnight.”
Tucking the kunai and sharpening stone into his belt, Mikey leaned down and picked up the things Raph had dropped. “I’ll carry these back to your lab. Why don’t you leave your things here too, Leo? I can come back for them ‘cause I’m sure you want to report in to Master Splinter.”

Leo set the items he was holding on the floor and stretched before saying, “Thanks Mikey. Master Splinter will want an update on the tunnel conditions. If I’m not out when Raph finishes with his shower, you go next Don. Make sure he doesn’t forget, okay Mikey? As much as he loves to study germs, Don doesn’t really need to walk around covered in them.”

“Sometimes you guys treat me like I’m two,” Don grumbled as he headed for his lab.

“I’ve got this bro’,” Mikey told Leo, giving him a thumbs up before trailing after the genius.

Don laid his tools on a bench and then waved towards the storage shelves when Mikey came in. Eyes already on his computers, Don didn’t notice that Mikey took the time to clean and dry the tools and supplies before putting them away.

“Find anything out there we need to worry about?” Mikey asked.

“No anymore,” Don said without looking away from his work. “We had to clear a couple of drains of accumulated debris. There were several places where the wiring had been chewed by rats and the water just finished the work of shorting the electricity. Fortunately I only had to replace one camera.”

“No maintenance crews down here yet?” Mikey dried his hands, watching Donny zip through tunnel images as he checked that all of his cameras were functional.

“We heard a crew but they weren’t near us,” Don replied. “As long as we keep the drains clear, they won’t come anywhere near the lair.”

“Be nice if it’d stop raining,” Mikey said as he headed out the door.

Retrieving Leo’s tools from the floor, Mikey heard a door bang and looked up in time to see Raph leave the bathroom. His brother paid no attention to his surroundings as he made straight for his room.

So far today Raph hadn’t directly spoken to him and he’d barely even looked at Mikey. He wasn’t acting different with Don, so they must have reached some sort of accord the night before. If it wasn’t to Raph’s liking, then why did he seem to be taking it out on Mikey rather than the turtle who’d issued the ultimatum?

When Mikey re-entered Don’s lab, his brother was still focused on his computers. “Some of the stuff Leo was carrying is camera parts, you want those any place in particular?” Mikey asked.

Don glanced at him and then pointed at a wooden box under one of his work tables. “Dump them in there. Those are broken but I can probably salvage parts off them.”

Mikey followed his directions and then said, “Raph’s out of the bathroom. Go rinse off before Leo comes in here and chews me out for not chewing you out about it.”

“I will if you don’t touch anything while I’m gone,” Don said, giving his brother a fierce look.
“Scout’s honor dude,” Mikey said with a grin.

Pushing his chair back, Don got up and walked towards the door. “You aren’t a scout.”

Mikey’s grin turned mischievous as soon as Don was gone. “Maybe I should have said ‘ninja’s honor’,,” he muttered to himself as he took a seat in Don’s chair.

Quickly running through the security systems list in one of the files on Don’s computer, Mikey found the camera at the lair’s entrance and the one in the garage. Making a mental note of the designations Don had assigned to them, Mikey erased the keystroke logger that would tell Don his brother had been messing with his equipment.

Mikey wouldn’t do anything to those cameras yet, but the rain provided him with an excuse for the recordings from them to be blank when he needed them to be. Letting Don think that he wasn’t computer savvy served Mikey well in the past and would continue to do so in the future.

What was it Master Splinter liked to say? Oh yeah, “Never let an opponent know all of your strengths.”

Returning to the dojo, Mikey made sure to appear busy working on the box full of kunai that required sharpening. Some little time later, Leo and Master Splinter entered, their father devoting some one on one training time to his eldest son.

The three of them passed comments back and forth as they worked, their words genial and light hearted. Then Raph stepped into the dojo and the atmosphere shifted perceptibly.

Raph grunted something at Leo when his brother offered to spar with him, opting instead to spend time with his punching bag. To his younger brother Raph said not a word, merely scowling when Mikey called out a greeting.

It was clear from the way Raph went after his bag that he was brooding about something. Leo pointedly ignored him, returning his focus to training, but Raph’s attitude left Mikey feeling jumpy and out of sorts.

The bantering stopped altogether, as though Raph’s presence carried with it a pall that covered everything. Mikey tried to keep his head down and his eyes on his work, but he couldn’t help an occasional glance in Raph’s direction.

Each time he looked up, Mikey found that Master Splinter was contemplating either him or Raph. His father’s knowing stare was very disconcerting.

Dinner was a quiet affair, with Don babbling almost incoherently about his worries with regard to the rain and the remainder of the family saying very little.

When the meal ended but before the brothers could go their separate ways, Master Splinter called for their attention.

“Our practice session today was interrupted,” Master Splinter said, “and by necessity we were unable to continue. Since things seem to be in working order again, I have decided upon a little training exercise for you four.”

Don murmured something about ‘computers’ and ‘on-line’ but was ignored. “Of course sensei,” Leo said. “In the dojo?”

Before any of them could move in that direction, Master Splinter held up a hand to stop
them. “Not just yet my son. I have noticed that the four of you appear to be at odds with one another as of late. Perhaps it is the weather that is responsible for this adversity, but it is a dangerous state of mind to be in for any of you. Therefore I have decided that tonight you will split into teams.”

It was all Mikey could do not to look at Raph. Maybe he should have done so; that would have been less obvious than glancing around at all of his brothers, the way they had done upon hearing Master Splinter’s pronouncement.

His father nodded, as though some idea of his had been confirmed. “Leonardo and Donatello will remain here in the lair with me to participate in a meditation exercise. Due to weather conditions it would be unwise for all of you to proceed topside. However, that is where I want Raphael and Michelangelo to go.

“Remaining unseen in a downpour may seem a simple thing, but water offers its own set of challenges to the way of invisibility. I want you to compete in your attempts to stay hidden from each other. Do not return until you have regained a sense of amity.”

Leonardo had begun to frown as soon as Master Splinter announced that he and Don would be remaining in the lair. Now he said, “But Master Splinter, Donny and I could go out too and . . . .”

“No,” Master Splinter said, interrupting him. “You four will not always be together. You will not always be there to give them direction. Your brothers must learn cooperation through teamwork without the aid of your guidance.”

Mikey was surreptitiously watching Leo and could see that his brother was dismayed by this turn of events, but there was nothing he could do about it. Arguing with their father was out of the question.

Master Splinter was waiting expectantly and Leo said nothing further. Bowing to his father, Leo moved on to the dojo with Donatello alongside him.

“Raphael, if you could please straighten the kitchen before you and your brother leave?” Master Splinter requested.

“Sure thing sensei,” Raph answered, looking nearly as puzzled as Leo had.

Once he was out of sight, Master Splinter indicated that Mikey should follow him. They entered Master Splinter’s room.

Sliding the door shut behind them, there were no preliminaries as Master Splinter said, “Do what you must to work things out between you two. If you do not have the time to spend together, you will never discover if what you desire is also truly what you want, my son.”

“But Master Splinter, Leo’s not happy about this,” Mikey said. “He doesn’t want Raph and me to spend time alone together.”

With a sigh, Master Splinter said, “Leonardo is very protective of you all, sometimes to a fault. Growth comes from making your own mistakes, which he would try to have you avoid by throwing himself in your path.”

Mikey thought about that before saying, “Yeah, I guess so. But sometimes we have to clear that path ourselves, right?”
Master Splinter smiled. “Yes. You are wise in many ways Michelangelo. Allow me to sweep this path for you at least this once. You will have many opportunities to do so for yourself in the future.”

Glancing towards the door, Mikey said slowly, “I don’t know about that. I think Raph wants all the control on this one.”

“Resolve your issues with Raphael,” Master Splinter said. “If you and he are not of one mind, how do you expect Leonardo to relinquish his doubts?”

Mikey started for the door and then stopped. Looking back at his father, he asked, “Why are you helping me with this? Doesn’t it bother you that two of your sons want to be together in this way?”

Rather than a direct answer, Master Splinter said, “I see many things in my meditation. There are numerous outcomes to our lives and some are not good. Others lead to a light that shines with happiness and contentment. Perhaps this is the outcome I envision for my children.”

It was the sort of non-answer answer that drove Mikey nuts, but he didn’t have the time to pursue it now. When he stepped out of Master Splinter’s room, he found that Raph was waiting for him.

Together they left the lair, jogging through the driest of the tunnels. Neither said a word for several minutes, though Mikey could see that Raph was taking them directly towards the secret room.

“Turn your phone off,” Raph said suddenly, startling Mikey.

Doing as he was told, Mikey asked, “That’s so Don doesn’t get a notion to track us right?”

“So neither Don nor Leo get that notion,” Raph said. “If they fuss about it when we get home, we’ll tell them we were supposed to be hiding from each other, like Master Splinter instructed. Can’t do that if we can use the phone for tracking.”

Raph reverted to being uncommunicative again and they exited the tunnels to go above ground for the six blocks that would take them to the alley behind Dryer’s Deli. Mikey wondered if his brother simply didn’t want to talk, or if he was running through some sort of mental checklist that would keep them from being outed, like when he’d thought of their phones.

When they dropped back into the tunnels behind the deli, Raph huffed in relief. “Damn, I was worried this was gonna be flooded. Haven’t had this much rain since I found that room so I didn’t know if whoever made it thought about how to keep it dry.”

Behind the fake wall the tunnels were clear as well and the one nearest the underground room wasn’t even damp. As Raph unlocked the door, Mikey said, “Guess the guy who made this didn’t want his fancy clientele to get muddy.”

He chuckled nervously, feeling the familiar roiling in his gut that came each time he walked past that open metal door. As he usually did, Mikey kept going all the way to the bar to begin divesting himself of his gear.

The slamming of the door seemed louder than usual and Mikey jumped. Turning, he saw that Raph was still geared up and staring at him.

“What?” Mikey asked, feeling defensive though he wasn’t sure why.
“Master Splinter,” Raph said crisply. “Ya’ want to tell me what that was about?”

“He told me we’d better resolve our differences,” Mikey answered, going for part of the truth. “Since I wasn’t the one stomping around the lair like a grump, why don’t you tell me what that was all about? You’re drawing Master Splinter’s attention by acting like I’m contagious.”

“Ya’ are contagious,” Raph said, taking a deep breath, his nostrils flaring. “The more we do down here, the more I want to do.”

“Oh, me too,” Mikey said, agreeing with him. “What’s the problem?”

“The problem is ya’ suddenly turning into Master Splinter’s little helper,” Raph said. “Ya’ do remember he’s a ninja master, right? One wrong word and he’s gonna be onto us.”

“So I won’t say any wrong words,” Mikey said. “Are you going to worry every time I talk to Master Splinter, or Leo, or Don? You’ll end up with an ulcer dude.”

“I don’t like it,” Raph said bluntly. “All Leo needs is some idea that we’re connecting like this and the shit’s gonna hit the fan.”

Mikey had already removed his things but he reached out to pick up his mask and started to tie it back on, feeling all of the frustration he’d been trying to hide. “If this is causing you that much heartburn, we can just quit.”

He and Raph stared at each other, neither blinking. Mikey worked to keep an arch expression on his face though his insides were churning, his stomach acid creating bile that wanted to come up. This was the toughest bluff of his life.

Then Raph’s eyes narrowed as he said, “Don’t have a cow. I’m gonna worry more ‘cause ya’ never seem to worry enough. Ya’ already know why I don’t need this to fall down around my head, so sue me for reminding ya’ every now and again. I’ll stick with it as long as ya’ abide by our rules. So go ahead and pull out now if that’s what you’ve got a mind to do.”

Very slowly Mikey removed the knot from his mask and took it back off again. “I’m where I want to be.”

Raph’s eyes glittered as he watched Mikey lower his mask onto the bar. From where he was standing, Mikey could smell the sudden spike in Raph’s endorphins and he took a shaky breath as that scent made his tail stiffen.

There was a predatory expression on Raph’s face as he divested himself of his gear, never once looking away from Mikey. The menacing aspect of his character appeared as soon as the mask left his face and Mikey’s toes curled into the floor in anticipation.

Moving with deliberation, Raph stepped to the center of the room. “I want ya’ right here in front of me.”

Quickly doing as he was told, Mikey stopped directly before Raph, standing only inches from his brother. At that distance Raph’s scent was overwhelming and Mikey felt his dick start to twitch beneath his shell.

“Don’t move,” Raph instructed before striding past Mikey, his shoulder just brushing against his younger brother’s.

As usual, Raph had placed Mikey so that the younger turtle could not see what his brother
was doing. Mikey heard the lid on one of the cedar chests open and the sound of Raph digging into it for something. A moment later he heard Raph open the other chest as well.

Because he’d been told not to move, Mikey didn’t dare take a peek back to see what Raph was taking out of those chests. Knowing the vast array of items inside both of them had Mikey’s pulse beating faster with each passing second.

“Hold your arms out in front of you, hands together,” Raph said while he was still out of sight.

Obediently lifting his arms, Mikey heard a swishing sound behind and then just above him. It was hard to resist the urge to look up, but Mikey managed it, though he was starting to quiver. There were a few more odd noises just outside of his range of vision and then Raph appeared. He was holding a pair of handcuffs, the main sections made of wide leather bands rather than metal, and Mikey made a gurgling sound at the back of his throat at the sight of them.

Swallowing thickly, Mikey remained still as Raph buckled the cuffs onto his wrists. The fit was tight, allowing for no wiggle room inside them. As soon as his brother was cuffed, Raph yanked on the short center chain to tug Mikey’s arms up over his head.

This time Mikey did tilt his head back to see what was happening. Above him hung a thick rope with a hook dangling from the end. With his arms extended fully over him, the chain on the cuffs was just out of reach of the hook.

“Get up on your toes,” Raph told him gruffly.

Mikey had to stand up on the very tips of his toes in order for Raph to drape the chain over the hook. Once that was done, Raph stepped back and nodded in satisfaction at Mikey’s fully extended form.

“Comfortable?” Raph asked facetiously.

Breathing hard, Mikey was too turned on to answer. A corner of Raph’s mouth lifted, satisfied with the lack of response. Again he disappeared behind Mikey, but only a couple of seconds passed before Mikey felt his brother touching his ankles.

From his vantage point Mikey couldn’t see what Raph was doing, but he could feel a strap being wrapped first around one ankle before his legs were pushed far apart, his toes losing contact with the floor. Then the second ankle was trussed and Mikey found that he couldn’t close his legs because something stiff was between his ankles, holding them in a split position.

Without the ability to move at all, Mikey felt the first touch of panic he’d ever experience inside the room. He started to jerk on the hook, trying to twist his body around so that he could locate Raph.

“Whoa, hang on there,” Raph said, suddenly in front of him. His grip on the edge of Mikey’s shell steadied his brother. “Ya’ want to stop?”

Looking into Raph’s face calmed Mikey and he swallowed again before stammering, “N . . . no.”

“Do ya’ trust me?” Raph asked, his gold eyes boring into Mikey’s.

“Yes,” Mikey answered with more confidence.
“Ya’ don’t act like it,” Raph said. “Here’s the deal, once I start ya’ have to keep your tail up. If it drops I’ll stop everything and let ya’ go. Or we can stop right now. What do ya’ want me to do?”

Mikey licked his lips, aware of the thudding beat of his own heart. “Hurt me,” he finally whispered, aware of how needy those two words sounded.

Raph exhaled deeply. “Lift your tail and open your mouth.”

It took Mikey a half second to comply because he knew it was his last chance to say anything. The expectant look on Raph’s face made Mikey’s mind up for him and he lifted his tail, feeling the cool air touch its sensitive underside.

Opening his mouth as widely as it would go, Mikey expected to feel the ring gag Raph had used before being pushed into place. Instead he tasted rubber as Raph shoved something past his teeth before tightening straps around Mikey’s head to hold the thing in place. Once it was secure, Mikey tentatively felt around the object with his tongue, discovering that it was a ball.

Panting around the sides of the gag made Mikey’s cheeks puff out and pushed saliva past the ball to run down his chin. When Raph left him again, Mikey extended his toes, finding that if he did that, the tips of his toenails just scraped the floor.

The cuffs were wider than normal, but his entire weight being borne by his wrists was on the dangerous side of painful. Opening his hands, Mikey felt for the hook and once he’d found it, he wrapped his hands around it, releasing the pressure on his wrists. Mikey realized that he could pull himself off of the hook if he wanted to and immediately knew that Raph had designed that flaw into it on purpose.

From his peripheral vision Mikey saw Raph coming around in front of him again. Standing back a few paces from his dangling brother, Raph kept his hands behind his back as he surveyed Mikey. Since he hadn’t blindfolded the younger turtle, Mikey guessed that Raph wanted him to know what was coming next.

Bringing his hands forth, Raph allowed Mikey to see that he was holding a leather whip. The handle was short and from it dangled nine braided leather cords, each of the ends knotted.

Mikey moaned when Raph began to slap the leather cords against the palm of his hand. A shiver ran the length of Mikey’s spine down to his groin and the muscles in his ass clenched, his vision glued to the whip his brother was holding.

Raph’s eyes were hooded, his entire manner cloaked in a dark intent. He watched Mikey squirm, his head cocked slightly to one side as he listened to the desperate whimpering of his younger brother.

Mikey could see that Raph was aroused from the bulge in his lower plastron. He could feel his own erection fighting for freedom but worked to contain it, wanting Raph to think he had to force Mikey to drop down.

Just as he had that thought, Raph stepped forward and swung the whip against his unprotected side. The sting as the knotted ends roughly caressed his flesh pulled a gasp from Mikey. Almost before the echo of the whip faded, Raph lashed Mikey again, this time on his outer thigh.

Each strike made Mikey jump, his skin burning and tingling where the leather had touched
it. Raph avoided his face but no other part of Mikey’s body went unscathed. The whip found Mikey’s arms, his chest, shoulders, sides, legs, even his feet.

Walking around behind his dangling victim, Raph whipped Mikey’s buttocks several times in a row, making Mikey’s legs tremble. Then Raph lashed Mikey’s tail, forcing a keening cry from the helpless turtle.

“Why . . . are . . . you . . . holding . . . back?” Raph rumbled with each swing of the whip.

When the knotted ends made biting contact with Mikey’s inner thighs, he couldn’t contain his hardening cock any longer. With a loud grunt, Mikey felt his dick slide into the open.

It appeared that Raph was waiting on just that moment. With ninja speed he grabbed Mikey’s cock, stroking it until it was a solid erection, and then he snapped something tightly around its base.

“Rrf!” Mikey called out from around his ball gag.

His brother’s only response was a low chuckle, the sound lustful. Stepping back he raised the whip and then caught Mikey’s eyes. An almost evil grin stretched across Raph’s mouth. Mikey knew what would happen next.

Though Raph didn’t swing it hard, Mikey swore he could feel each individual leather thong hit the top of his penis.

“Aaaahhh!” Mikey shouted, throwing his head back. A split second later the whip connected with precision against the underside of his cock and Mikey’s entire body jerked.

Chest heaving, Mikey lowered his head. His cock was throbbing and not just from the pain of being whipped; Mikey was desperate to cum but he couldn’t because of the thing clamped around the base of his dick.

Raph dropped the whip to the ground and swiped his fingers across the head of Mikey’s cock. Lifting his hand, Raph showed Mikey the pre-cum coating his fingertips.

“Feels like you’re gonna burst, doesn’t it Mikey?” Raph asked with satisfaction. “That whipping would have got ya’ off all by itself wouldn’t it?”

Mikey hung there panting but that wasn’t enough, Raph wanted an answer. “Wouldn’t it?” Raph asked loudly.

“Efff!” Mikey yelled, hoping it sounded enough like ‘yes’ to satisfy his brother.

Apparently it did. Raph rubbed his fingers together, seeming to enjoy the feel of Mikey’s fluids. After a moment he squatted down in front of his brother, his upper body disappearing from Mikey’s view.

A hot breath against his skin was all the warning Mikey got as Raph suddenly bit his inner thigh.

“Ughh!” Mikey grunted, his body swaying and cock jumping at the sharp pain.

Raph leaned back until he was sure Mikey could see his face. “Afraid it’ll show? There’s someplace I could bite that no one else would see.” As he said that, he flicked Mikey’s cock with a finger to emphasize his point.
“Ohh!” Mikey replied sharply, hoping that his ‘no’ made sense.

Slowly standing, Raph stared into Mikey’s face with gleaming eyes. He circled the head of Mikey’s cock with one hand and slid it forward, repeating the maneuver a couple of times and nearly driving Mikey out of his mind before he finally stopped.

“Let’s see what I can do with this,” Raph said, letting his brother see that his hand was wet with Mikey’s pre-cum.

All Mikey could do was wait as Raph strolled around behind him. The wait wasn’t long as Raph’s dry hand began to play with his tail before drifting down to grasp one of his butt cheeks and pull it aside.

A wet finger probed the entrance to Mikey’s ass, scratching around the puckered opening before pushing partway inside. Having experienced anal penetration with a rubber toy, Mikey knew what to expect and tried not to tense up.

Raph withdrew his finger, teased the skin around Mikey’s entrance, and then pushed back inside again. This time he went in up to his knuckles, rumbling his satisfaction at making Mikey gasp.

Mikey felt him pull out again. Tightening his hands around the hook, Mikey waited to find out what torture Raph had in store for him next. When he felt two of Raph’s thick fingers begin to burrow into his ass, Mikey almost lowered his tail.

Almost. The pain of the invasion was excruciating, but the feeling was traveling from Mikey’s nerve endings straight into his cock. Desperate for release, Mikey started to unconsciously thrust with his hips, his instincts searching for some sort of friction along his shaft and tip.

The movement made him swing back and forth and Raph removed his fingers in order to grab the edges of Mikey’s carapace and steady him.

“Want me to let ya’ cum, Mikey?” Raph asked in a guttural voice.

“Eff!” Mikey responded at once, not caring how distressed he was sounding.

“Ya’ ain’t done anything for me yet,” Raph taunted, rubbing his plastron against Mikey’s carapace. “I get to go first. Maybe if I’m satisfied, I’ll let ya’ cum. Maybe.”

Mikey nodded his head, having no idea what he was agreeing to but at this point willing to have Raph do anything to him.

He felt Raph’s hands on his backside, the fingers digging into the flesh on his buttocks as he separated the cheeks of Mikey’s ass. The thick heat of Raph’s meaty organ pressed into the valley between Mikey’s cheeks and then Raph released them to grip the edges of Mikey’s shell again.

With slow, careful movements, Raph began to slide his cock up and down between Mikey’s butt cheeks. The sounds of his pleasure made Mikey close his eyes and tilt his head back, the throbbing of his own organ like a drum beat that dictated Raph’s rhythm.

Raph started to move faster, maintaining the same position though every now and then the head of his cock would dip into Mikey’s asshole. Careful to do no more than that, Raph sped up as he drew closer to his orgasm.
“Shit, so tight,” Raph muttered, lost in the feeling of his impending climax. “Fuck, not even . . . not even inside of ya’ and it feels . . . good . . . so good . . . .”

Mikey began to whine against the ball gag, spittle coursing down his jawline, the pain in his lower extremities heightened by every one of Raph’s movements. He needed to cum, he had to cum, or he felt his insides would explode.

Raph’s movements suddenly became ragged and with a hoarse cry he climaxed. Even as his cum began to paint Mikey’s ass and legs, Raph reached around to snap the cock ring off of Mikey’s dick.

The response to freedom was instantaneous. Mikey’s hips jerked forward and he came, his jizz spewing out in a torrent to splatter the floor in front of him.

With a deep groan of satisfaction, Mikey’s eyes slid shut and his entire body went slack as he drifted into darkness.

TBC……..
Chapter 27

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 3,172
multi-chapter 2k3

Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.

Part 27 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

The intensity of his release left Mikey so lightheaded that he faded out, not completely unconscious, but not truly conscious either.

Fortunately, that dazed state lasted for only a couple of minutes before Mikey was once more aware of his surroundings. As his eyes fluttered open, Mikey saw that Raph was directly in front of him, the powerful clasp of his brother’s arm holding him up. Raph took Mikey’s entire weight, lifting his brother so that he could reach overhead and slip the handcuff chain off of the hook.

Mikey moaned as his arms were lowered and Raph ducked between them so that the younger turtle’s forearms were draped over his shoulders. Still dizzy, Mikey’s head dropped forward onto Raph’s collarbone.

“Take it easy Mikey,” Raph said in a gentle tone. “I’ve got ya’.”

Getting a tight grip around Mikey’s body, Raph carried him over to the bed and carefully laid him on his carapace. Mikey blinked up at him as Raph kneeled on the mattress and slid out from under the younger turtle’s arms, settling Mikey’s hands onto his stomach. Leaning over Mikey, Raph loosened the straps holding the ball gag in place.

Mikey was slightly embarrassed when Raph extracted the wet ball from his mouth and it dripped onto his chin. He’d been drooling like an infant while that thing was between his teeth and his face felt sticky with saliva.

That didn’t seem to effect Raph at all. His brother tossed the ball gag aside and then shifted on the bed so that he could get at Mikey’s wrists. Too tired to move, Mikey followed Raph’s progress with his eyes, his hands and arms still too numb to register that they’d been freed.

“Ya’ okay bro’?” Raph asked, looking up at him.

“Aahh,” Mikey croaked before trying to lick his lips with a tongue that felt fat and sluggish.

“Hang on, let me get ya’ some water,” Raph said, bounding off of the bed and disappearing from view.

Mikey allowed his eyelids to close as he drifted on a sea of endorphins. After a second he started to feel the pins and needles that signaled the return of circulation to his arms, but it wasn’t particularly unpleasant. He was much too high on his brain’s chemical reaction to an orgasm to feel any pain signals.

Raph returned with a cold bottle of water, twisting the cap off as he took a seat next to Mikey on the bed. Lifting his brother’s head, Raph held the bottle to Mikey’s mouth and helped
him drink.

Mikey nearly finished the bottle before his mouth felt normal again. Twisting his head a little, Mikey indicated that he was done and Raph leaned away to set the bottle on the ground.

“Better?” Raph asked.

“Yes,” Mikey said with the hint of a smile. He was too relaxed to want to move much.

“Just lay there, I’ve gotta get that bar off your legs,” Raph said before transferring to the end of the bed.

The younger turtle enjoyed the feeling of Raph’s hands grazing his skin as he unbuckled the straps on Mikey’s ankles. With the spreader bar and the cuffs in his hands, Raph got up and started to walk past Mikey.

Calling on his reserve energy, Mikey lunged upwards to latch onto Raph’s arm, stopping him. “Stay here.”

Raph frowned. “Are ya’ okay?”

Mikey slowly sank back down without relinquishing his grip on Raph, forcing his brother to either stoop or sit on the bed. Raph sat.

“We don’t have to rush back for once,” Mikey said quietly. “Maybe we could just enjoy the moment?”

Although that seemed to fluster Raph, he remained where he was, his eyes on the bondage gear he was holding. “I guess ya’ want to talk about feelings and shit,” he finally said.

That wasn’t really what Mikey wanted to hear, but he understood his brother enough not to be hurt by it. He wished Raph would lie down next to him and relax, but that was probably too much to hope for.

“Actually I was just thinking about how nice it would be if we could slow down after we play and savor the afterglow,” Mikey told him, watching Raph’s expressions closely.

Raph’s eyes turned to him, an odd look on his face. “Ya’ mean snuggle?”

“Why not?” Mikey asked.

“’Cause I don’t snuggle,” Raph answered.

“Then how do you know you wouldn’t like it?” Mikey countered. “We’re down here trying new things, so think of it as one of those new things.”

Raph huffed, starting to appear slightly annoyed. “Mikey, some stuff ain’t suited to our situation. Do ya’ get me?”

“No,” Mikey said bluntly. He sat up so that he could get closer to Raph. “What is this to you? With me I mean?”

“Oh fuck, this is one of them touchy feely conversations,” Raph said, grimacing.

“There’s nothing wrong with that,” Mikey insisted. “We’ve been together our whole lives, we’re brothers and... and whatever this is.”
“It’s a means to an end, Mikey. That’s all,” Raph told him.

Pulling out of Mikey’s hold, Raph jumped up and dropped the bondage gear into one of the chests, slamming the lid down. When he stomped off towards the bar, Mikey got off the bed and followed him.

Raph crossed behind the bar and took a pail out of one of the lower cabinets. He ignored Mikey as he began to fill it with water and a floor cleansing solution.

“I get that you don’t want to think beyond what we do here,” Mikey said, a tender timbre in his voice. “You’re thinking we shouldn’t invest too much into something we might not get to continue. But Raph, what if we could go on without worry? Would you want that?”

Raph set the pail down roughly, the water sloshing over the sides as he looked up at Mikey. “What the hell are ya’ talking about? I already told ya’ why this has to be a secret. Ya’ already know that no one would approve.”

Very softly, Mikey said, “Master Splinter was the one who suggested we go off our own together.”

“To resolve our differences,” Raph practically shouted at him. “Ain’t that what ya’ told me? Dammit Mikey, what have ya’ been saying to him?”

In the back of his head, Mikey heard Raph’s words from earlier as he said ‘I’ll stick with it as long as ya’ abide by our rules.’ Rule number one of kinky club; nobody talks about kinky club.

“Why do you always assume I’m the one giving stuff away?” Mikey asked boldly. “I haven’t said anything to Master Splinter about what we do, but he said something to me. He said when he meditates he sees stuff that could be our future. Some stuff isn’t so great, but other stuff, other choices we make, could lead to us being really happy. Being with you makes me happy. What the shell is wrong with that?”

“Maybe I ain’t interested in happy,” Raph said. “Maybe for me that’s just a damn word that don’t mean anything. I eat when I’m hungry, drink when I’m thirsty, and come down here when I’m too fucking horny to be around anybody else.”

“This isn’t a one way street Raph,” Mike said.

“I don’t know what that means. What the hell does that mean?” Raph asked belligerently.

“It means we both have to get something from this arrangement,” Mikey told him.

“We’re both getting our rocks off,” Raph said. “What more do ya’ want?”

Mikey could feel his frustration level climbing. Either Raph really was this obtuse or he was in denial. Or worse, he actually didn’t give a damn.

“That’s shallow,” Mikey replied. “Don’t you feel more of connection to me than just my being a brother with benefits?”

Raph put his palms on the bar, leaned on his hands, and lowered his head. Shaking it, he said, “I knew I should have kept my mouth shut. I should have ignored the crap ya’ was dishing out the way I always have and never even started this.”

Mikey’s heart dropped into his stomach. “Wow Raph, that’s harsh. I guess all I am is a step
up from that cloth dummy you’ve got tucked away. Why’d you make it look like me? Was that ‘cause I meant something to you, or ‘cause I was the one you wanted to hurt the most?”

Raph’s head came up slowly, his eyes narrowed as they fixed Mikey with a sharp glare. “Why the hell is this all of a sudden important to ya’ now? When I showed ya’ this room I was upfront with ya’. I said ya’ were the only one I ever wanted to do stuff with. I always figured ya’ were the only one who ever really got me. We balance out, okay? I think I knew that from the time we were little. Whenever I’d get pissed I could always push that off on ya’ without worrying that you’d start crying about it. Ya’ took my crap and ya’ liked it.”

“This is way beyond just taking your crap,” Mikey said. “If all we were both looking for was kinky sex, then why the change in our scent? Not only mine, but yours too. Why’d I suddenly need you to hurt me when I didn’t know anything about your secret? Why only you? How come all I can think about is you and why do I get jealous if anybody else looks at you cross ways? Aren’t you feeling any of that?”

Raph swiped a hand across his face. “The last thing I wanted was for this to get complicated,” he said. “The last thing I wanted was for this to get complicated.”

“You deserve to have something special in your life Raph,” Mikey said, holding his brother’s eyes with his own. “We all do. It should be something of your choosing, no matter what that is, as long as it doesn’t hurt anyone else. This thing we do isn’t causing anyone harm. Maybe you’re blowing what Leo said to you all out of proportion, or maybe you’re letting him have power over you when he really doesn’t. He couldn’t possibly know how Sensei would react to any of this.”

“Get this Mikey, and get it now. That ain’t something I’m willing to take a chance on. You’re the dreamer in the family, not me. The here and now is plenty good enough for me. As far as I’m concerned, the only differences we’ve got is whether we keep coming back here. I’m putting myself out there as much as I intend to. If that ain’t good enough for ya’, then give me your damn key.”

“It’s really important to you that you have all of the control, isn’t it?” Mikey asked, purposely ignoring what sounded like an ultimatum from his brother.

“No,” Raph growled, “it’s necessary that I have all of the control. My place, my rules. That’s what ya’ agreed to, Michelangelo. So here it is, plain and simple, just like ya’ said earlier. If you’re gonna cause me heartburn over this, then we quit. Ya’ suddenly can’t handle the rules, give me back my damn key. Otherwise, shut the fuck up about it.”

“You wouldn’t fight for this? You’d stop, just like that?” Mikey asked, brow furrowed.

Raph stepped back from the bar and crossed his arms. “Yeah, just like that.”

Mikey had no idea if Raph would feel bad or not over ending it and that thought put a lump in his throat. Raph had told him not to get attached, but it was way too late for that because Mikey was already attached. Why did Raph have to be so hardheaded?

Raphael was just stubborn enough to follow through on his threat. It didn’t make sense to Mikey; this room and Raph’s almost life-long fantasies centered on his youngest brother. In the grand scheme of things, the three trysts they’d had inside the secret room couldn’t possibly have fulfilled Raph’s ultimate daydream. Mikey was pretty sure he knew what that daydream was.
In his best cajoling tone, Mikey asked, “How can you stop when you haven’t really gotten what you want?”

A flicker of emotion crossed Raph’s face before he controlled it, but Mikey knew he’d scored a hit.

“Ya’ think ya’ know me, don’t ya’?” Raph asked with a mixture of anger and petulance.

“Yeah, I do,” Mikey said. “What you said, we balance out. I think you know me well enough to know that I wouldn’t do anything that would hurt you. That includes telling anybody anything on my own. All I want is that you leave it open that if you somehow find out that Master Splinter doesn’t care that we’re together, you’ll consider telling me how you really feel about me.”

“I can tell ya’ that right now,” Raph said with a snort, lowering his arms. “You’re an annoying little shit.”

“Wow, that’s original,” Mikey shot back with a laugh, knowing that Raph couldn’t deal with anymore of the deep stuff at the moment. Raph could only handle feeling vulnerable for very short periods of time.

“It’s also your turn to clean up,” Raph said, dropping a sponge into the pail and passing it across the bar to Mikey. “I’m hitting the shower.”

Accepting the pail, Mikey clammed up, realizing that he’d pushed Raph far enough for one night. It was only after Mikey had taken a few steps away from the bar that Raph came out from behind it. Mikey took the pail over to where the evidence of their encounter lay splattered across the floor. Without a second look, Raph entered the tiny bathroom and closed the door.

On his knees, Mikey began to scrub the floor clean. Other than knowing what the fluids were, the job itself was mindless work, so Mikey thought about the conversation he’d just had with Raph.

They hadn’t really resolved anything. Their whole talk had been pretty circular when Mikey replayed it in his head.

One little thing struck Mikey as important and he concentrated on that. Twice tonight he had managed to bluff Raph out of calling the whole thing off. The first time it was Mikey who’d said ‘let’s quit’. The second time he’d pushed Raph into asking for him to return his key if Mikey didn’t like how things were.

Raph had backed away both times, though the second time had been dicey. Mikey had only felt a sense of relief when Raph hadn’t insisted. The younger turtle wanted to believe that Raph hadn’t pushed his point because he didn’t want to stop coming to this room with his brother.

Considering everything they’d said to each other, it occurred to Mikey that though Raph asserted his right to have all of the control, it didn’t mean Mikey had no power. Raph had admitted to having his sadistic tendencies from an early age, and this room was certainly a testament to that.

If Raph was so driven by his need that he’d go to all the trouble of finding this secret room, hooking up the plumbing, and stocking it with toys, then he had to be very invested in his kink. Possibly invested enough that Mikey could use his wiles to convince Raph to get over his fear of being outed. Mikey’s power over Raph versus Leo’s.

Mikey was pouring out the dirty water into the sink behind the bar when Raph came back into the main room.
“All yours,” Raph said, hooking a thumb in the direction of the bathroom.

Without a word, Mikey left to get cleaned up. As he entered the bathroom he saw that Raph was taking the ball gag over to the bar. Probably to clean and disinfect the thing seeing as how Mikey had drooled all over it.

Glancing at himself in the cracked mirror that hung over the sink, Mikey could see the redness of the welts that crisscrossed his shoulders. Examining his thighs, Mikey found that they too showed the marks from the whip Raph had used on him.

Mikey adjusted the temperature of the water in the shower so that it was a little cooler than he normally liked it to be. Avoiding heat kept the welts from stinging and when Mikey was finished with soaping and rinsing his body, he switched the water to cold. Though it left him shivering, the cold reduced the swelling on the welts.

After he stepped out of the shower stall, Mikey checked himself again and was relieved that the welts were much less noticeable. However, they weren’t invisible, and he’d have to do something about that.

Mikey’s mind was on that problem as he left the bathroom and proceeded to the bar so that he could begin gearing up. Raph was leaning against the wall near the door and approached to within a few feet of his younger brother as Mikey slipped into his knee pads.

When Mikey straightened he found that Raph was staring at his thighs. Reaching a hand out, Raph’s fingers gently grazed one of the welts before he pulled it back. The touch seemed compassionate and Mikey’s breath caught.

“Are those bothering ya’?” Raph asked softly.

“Not really,” Mikey answered. “Gotta figure out a way to hide them, at least for when we get home. Once I apply some of that salve that Donny made these will be gone by morning.”

“Didn’t want to break the skin,” Raph said, his eyes conveying an emotion that Mikey couldn’t interpret. “I was being careful.”

“I know,” Mikey told him. Thinking he understood, Mikey added, “You haven’t lost control even once. I told you that I knew you wouldn’t.”

“Yeah,” Raph acknowledged, his voice cracking. Clearing his throat, he repeated, “Yeah. Ya’ said ya’ trusted me more than I trust myself. Can ya’ keep on doing that, Mikey?”

Warmth blossomed suddenly in Mikey’s chest and he said, “No problemo, bro’.”

A hint of color suffused Raph’s neck and he turned away, moving over to the door. “We gotta go out and play in the rain now so everyone will think we’ve been practicing the ‘way of getting soaked,’” he said humorously.

An idea struck Mikey as he joined his brother. “Hey, if I’m covered in mud these welts won’t show. I can always say you shoved me down in it.”

They exited the room and Raph locked the door. “I like that idea,” he replied, “especially the part where I shove ya’ into the mud.”

Laughing, the pair made their way through the tunnels and then climbed into the wet world above them. They spent the next half-hour running through the rain, taking turns tagging one
another.

True to his word, Raph made sure that Mikey was appropriately muddy before they called it a night and headed for the lair.

TBC………………..
Chapter 28

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,743 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 28 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Arriving at home dripping wet and covered in mud, Michelangelo wasn’t at all surprised to see that Leonardo had waited up for him and Raphael.

He was astonished to see that Donatello was seated on the couch with Leo, the two of them ostensibly watching a movie together. Of course Leo wouldn’t be so obvious as to be standing at the door copping an attitude at the fact that they’d been out so late. They’d had Master Splinter’s permission after all.

It was Don who spoke first. Looking back as the pair entered and seeing Mikey trod across the floor leaving muddy footprints, he said, “You’re mopping those up, Mikey. Tonight, not sometime tomorrow.”

“You don’t mind if I rinse off first do you?” Mikey asked sarcastically. He had no intention of coming back downstairs after cleaning the mud off himself. Not unless Leo and Don had already turned in for the night.

“I’ll take care of the floor.”

Leo, Don, and even Mikey looked at Raph in surprise. “What?” Raph asked belligerently. “I’m the one who shoved him into the mud. You pay to play. First rule of sports.”

He stomped off towards the kitchen to get the cleaning supplies and his three brothers stared at his receding shell.

“O-kay. That’s not Raph. Who did you bring back with you?” Don asked.

“Yeah, well . . . .” Mikey chuckled nervously. “I’m totally taking advantage of it before he changes his mind. ‘Night guys.”

Speeding upstairs, Mikey dashed into the bathroom and locked the door. As he took his second shower of the night, Mikey tried to wrap his head around trying to figure out what could have prompted Raph’s offer to mop the floor.

He knew his brother, knew that Raph could be thoughtful and caring, but he didn’t usually show those traits unless one of his brothers was injured or ill. If they were fit and able-bodied, Raph would not voluntarily step in to take over a chore.

Maybe he was feeling guilty. On the rare occasions when Raph acknowledged he felt guilt over something he would perform an act of penitence. Saying he was doing the mopping to make up for shoving Mikey into the mud might go over with Leo and Don because it fit into that category. That explanation wouldn’t fly with Mikey though, because getting caked in mud had been his own idea.
So either Raph was helping to cover Mikey so that their brothers didn’t see the welts left by the whip, or he was performing an act of kindness because he cared and didn’t know how else to show it.

Having a brother who had so many strong emotions yet refused to articulate a single one of them was aggravating. Trying to read said brother’s mind was also exasperating.

Another round beneath cold water had eased the welts left by the whip even more, something that Mikey was happy to see. If they could be out and open about their relationship, Mikey would wear those welts proudly. It bothered him that Raph could be so gratified at giving them to Mikey, yet turn around a second later and be paranoid that someone might see them.

When he’d finished cleaning the grime off himself, Mikey rinsed the mud from his gear and left his things hanging from the curtain rod to dry. Wrapping a towel around his waist, Mikey slowly opened the bathroom door just enough to get a view of the corridor. After he was sure that no one was nearby, he grabbed his nunchucks and made a beeline for his room.

Once inside, Mikey was careful to not only lock the door, but to also place a chair under the knob. He didn’t really think Leo would pick the lock to gain entry, but it wasn’t a chance Mikey was willing to take. Not when his skin was covered in marks that could have been placed there by no one other than Raph.

Within the drawer of Mikey’s nightstand was a container of the special salve Don had made for them. Digging it out, Mikey sat on the edge of his bed and began to apply the creamy substance to his skin. He was happy for his flexibility because some of the places Raph had whipped were hard to reach, but Mikey managed it.

When he began doctoring the welts on his inner thighs, Mikey found the bite mark Raph had made. The sensory overload from earlier had made him forget about it and Mikey examined it now to see how much work would be required to hide it from his brothers.

Fortunately the skin wasn’t broken, but there was the makings of a nice double crescent present against the background of sea green. The spot Raph had chosen was near his groin, so unless Mikey lifted his leg, neither Leo nor Don would be able to see it.

Mikey made a face as he dabbed salve onto the bite mark, not from any sensitivity, but at the concept of being a ninja who practiced high kicks daily. Bruises, welts, bites, and a whole slew of other markings were all natural mementos of he and Raph’s chosen nocturnal activity. As adept at Mikey was at hiding those signs, the odds weren’t in his favor and besides, he didn’t want to do that forever.

With that thought came another. As far as he knew, forever in this instance was exactly one week long, per Donatello. The conversation Raph had with Don on the subject of the genius spilling the secret of their sneaking out together was something Mikey had meant to question Raph about. He’d gotten side tracked with trying to find out how Raph felt about him.

After most of an evening together, Mikey still didn’t know the answer to either of those things. Raph wanted to control everything but Mikey really, really needed to know what was happening with Don. Whether or not Raph wanted to tell him what was going on, Mikey intended to tackle him about it the next day. He’d find a way to be alone with the hot head long enough for that.

Having reached that decision, Mikey turned out the lights and sprawled out on his bed. The pressure of the mattress on his welts made them sting a little, but not so much that Mikey couldn’t
fall asleep.

Mikey went from cursing Donatello the night before to silently thanking him the next morning. A careful examination of his body behind the locked bathroom door showed him that Don’s salve had performed its magic and made all but a few of the welts on his skin invisible.

The ones that still showed, along with the bite on his inner thigh, Mikey hid with an application of the green concealer. Satisfied with the job he’d done, Mikey geared up in his slightly damp padding and tied on a fresh mask before heading downstairs.

Since he’d waited until the very last minute to get out and about, Mikey expected to be the last one downstairs. Therefore he was surprised to find none of his brothers in the kitchen or in the central part of the lair.

Curious, he peeked into Don’s lab and then the infirmary, finding no one. Growing concerned, Mikey headed for the dojo, wondering if they’d decided to start practice early.

He was only partway there when Master Splinter’s shoji slid open and Don and their father stepped out.

“Hey, what’s going on?” Mikey asked, changing direction to join them. “Where are Leo and Raph?”

“In the tunnels,” Don answered, looking worried. “You know how I monitor the dispatch frequencies for the police, fire, and public works departments? A call out to DEP early this morning woke me up. They were dispatching a crew to open valves on two seldom used drainage tunnels due to flooding on Canal Street.”

Mikey’s eyes widened with understanding. “Tunnels near us?”

“Yes.” Don glanced at Master Splinter who left them to go to the kitchen and then looked back at Mikey. “I immediately woke Leo to let him know because the sewer sliders needed to be lifted out of the water and secured to their docking stations. I told him that we should also set up the metal grill across the opening to that dead end tunnel where we store the sliders so that any city workers who wander that way won’t investigate the tunnel.”

“Didn’t I say that I wish it’d stop raining?” Mikey asked rhetorically.

“So do I,” Don said, rubbing his eyes. “The governor has already declared a state of emergency for the city. I told Leo we should check along those two tunnels that are about to be flooded to make sure there was no debris that might block the flow because not only might that flood our home, but it would bring a maintenance crew too close to us for comfort. Leo told me to stay here and continue monitoring the emergency responders and that you guys would take care of the tunnels.”

“Nobody woke me,” Mikey said, frowning.

“Raph told Leo not to,” Don explained. “He said the two of them could handle it and they should leave you here with me in case something else happened. I waited until Master Splinter had his tea before filling him in on current events.”

A loud burst of static and then the squawk of voices made Mikey jump. Don had started moving at the first sound and Mikey followed him to the dining table where the radio his brother used to monitor everything going on in the city was currently located.
Don fiddled with a couple of dials and then listened intently as a voice that was nearly unintelligible began to speak. They were answered by someone else who Mikey couldn’t understand because a lot of what they said was in some sort of code.

“I’m guessing that made sense to you,” Mikey said.

“It did,” Don replied. “I’m glad they left you with me. We’ve got to board up the outside of the garage door quick. Another city crew is on its way to the area because of a downed power line. I’ve done a good job of disguising where I’ve tapped into the electrical grid, but I don’t want them to get curious about one door that looks like it’s being used in an area where everything else is boarded up.”

“I will listen to the radio Donatello,” Master Splinter said. “I am preparing a meal for the four of you and will tell you if I hear anything.”

“Do you understand them Master Splinter?” Mikey asked.

“Perfectly my son,” Master Splinter said. “I learned how to speak ‘city’ back when I was the one solely responsible for keeping us hidden.”

“Come on, Mikey. Everything we need’s in the garage,” Don said, already on his way to the elevator.

In the garage the pair split up; Don to gather tools and Mikey to the corner where they kept a pile of wooden boards. He picked out the ones that were the correct length, balancing the stack on one broad shoulder as he jogged over to join Don at the door.

They exited the garage through the smaller entryway and proceeded to nail boards across the garage door. Keeping their ears open for the sounds of approaching maintenance trucks, Don and Mikey worked quickly, cold rain pelting their shells as they labored. Once they had the door barricaded, they used two of the boards to form an ‘X’ across the small entryway, leaving just enough space underneath to crawl through. On the way in Don grabbed the newspaper that they had delivered every morning to the garage’s address.

Back inside, they locked both doors before giving themselves a brisk rubdown with some dry towels. Afterwards Don attached additional padlocks to keep the doors closed. The entire time they had been working, Mikey had noticed that the expression on his genius brother’s face was growing more and more worried.

Finally unable to take it anymore, Mikey asked, “Dude, what’s wrong? Your mind is like a million miles away.”

Don grimaced, standing back to survey their work before glancing over at Mikey. “I’m concerned about Leatherhead. I tried to reach him on his shell cell this morning to warn him about what’s going on, but he didn’t answer. He doesn’t have a way to monitor emergency services, doesn’t watch TV very often, and doesn’t listen to his radio when he’s concentrating on something. LH may not know about the extra flooding or that the tunnels are going to be full of city workers.”

Mikey felt a touch of guilt; he hadn’t thought of Leatherhead at all that morning until Don said something about him. LH’s assurances about his home being safe from flooding had pushed all worry over the croc right out of Mikey’s head.

“LH said the station has great drainage, so he’s not being flooded,” Mikey said. An idea
struck him. “You should totally go and check on Leatherhead. It would blow if he wandered into the tunnels and got spotted by somebody. Master Splinter is monitoring the radio and can tell me if they say something important.”

Don might not be aware of LH’s infatuation with him, but that didn’t mean Mikey couldn’t maneuver things so that LH got to spend time with the genius.

“I don’t know, Mikey. There’s so many . . . .” Don began.

“He’s all alone bro’,” Mikey said, interrupting him. “He’s family. I’d go but if he didn’t answer his cell ‘cause something’s broken, I can’t help fix it. If he’s in real trouble, call me and I’ll bring the cavalry.”

Don’s brow cleared. “Okay, you’re right. I’ll grab my duffel and head right over there. Let the others know?”

“Sure thing. Go on, I’ll put the tools away,” Mikey told him.

As Mikey returned the tools and unused nails to the shelves where they belonged he thought to himself, “One down, one to go.”

Getting Don to visit Leatherhead was good for at least a half day’s absence. With any luck, Don would get sidetracked by some project over there and be gone even longer. It was one step closer to the private conversation Mikey wanted to have with Raph, he just needed to figure out what to do about Leo.

Long range planning was Leo’s forte, Mikey was better at thinking on his feet. He’d wait for his brothers to return before deciding on a course of action.

When Mikey entered the lair he could tell from the smell emanating from the kitchen that his father had made rice balls for breakfast. Since they had part of a leftover turkey in the refrigerator, Mikey guessed that it had gone into the rice balls and his stomach started to rumble in anticipation.

The radio was still mumbling things and Mikey guessed that it must have been routine stuff because there was no sound of urgency in any of it. Mikey found Master Splinter still hard at work in the kitchen, some completed rice balls resting on trays in the center of the table. Going to the sink, Mikey washed his hands, saving his father the need to remind him.

“Donatello told me of your suggestion that he look in on Leatherhead,” Master Splinter said without taking his eyes off his work. “I requested that he take some of the onigiri with him; enough for himself and Leatherhead as well.”

“Oh, that’s why you’re still hard at it,” Mikey said, seeing the rice cooking on the stovetop.

Master Splinter nodded, his agile hands forming the balls from already cooled rice. “Please eat, Michelangelo. I’ve used the leftover turkey, as well as tuna and the pickled plum that Raphael likes so well.”

Mikey didn’t have to be told twice. Getting a plate from the cupboard and chopsticks from the utensil drawer, Mikey sat at the kitchen table and helped himself to the succulent cone shaped balls of rice. With an expression of pure bliss he chewed his first bite, eyes closed as he savored the taste of turkey hidden inside the ball.

When the first one was down, Mikey hopped up to pour himself a cup of tea from the pot
steaming atop the stove. Normally he enjoyed a glass of orange juice in the morning, but that taste clashed with rice balls. Seated again, he said, “Perfection as always, Master Splinter. No one makes these as good as you do.”

“Thank you my son,” Master Splinter replied, smiling at the young turtle. He started to say something else but paused, tilting his head at the spurt of sound coming from the radio.

“Anything?” Mikey asked after a moment.

Master Splinter shook his head. “Street closures. It has rained too much. The television meteorologist this morning refused to agree to call an end to the wet weather. It is vexing.”

Mikey chuckled. “Kinda don’t think it works that way,” he said, knowing full well that Master Splinter was being amusing. “If it did, I’d pay him a midnight visit and suggest he change his mind. I’m tired of everything being so wet.”

“Mother Nature, as they say, is fond of doing as she likes,” Master Splinter responded philosophically. He placed another completed tray of onigiri on the table and retrieved an empty one.

Continuing to eat, Mikey watched his father remove the pot of rice from the heat before returning to his preparations. The aged rat wielded a cutting knife with skill, slicing turkey into small pieces with astounding speed.

“Was your evening with Raphael a successful one?” Master Splinter asked suddenly.

Startled, Mikey swallowed too quickly and had to sip tea to keep from choking. After a moment he said, “Yeah, I guess so.”

Master Splinter turned and gave him a piercing stare. “Were you able to resolve anything or did you simply ‘play’?”

Mikey sat there, dumbly gazing at his father, wondering exactly what Master Splinter considered to be ‘play’. He felt himself flushing at the notion of his dad knowing that he was engaged in sexual relations with Raph, his own brother. He also mentally kicked himself for thinking it was such a grand idea to send Don off to Leatherhead’s, leaving Mikey alone with Master Splinter.

Finally deciding to be as honest as he could without actually admitting to what they did together, Mikey said, “I brought up some of the stuff that’s been bothering me. You know Raph, he’d rather cover his real feelings with aggression instead of explaining them with words, but I kinda know where he’s coming from.”

“I gather that means your issues were not resolved,” Master Splinter said, looking as if he expected that.

Mikey flipped his hands over on the table, indicating his frustration. “It’s not so easy Father,” he admitted. “Raph has these walls that he’s built up and getting through them takes time. We haven’t had a lot of that since figuring out we kind of want to be together. Besides, Raph freaks out at the mere mention of anyone in the family learning about us, especially Leo. He doesn’t even know you and I talk about this stuff.”

“Have you attempted to tell him of our discussions?” Master Splinter asked, taking a seat across from Mikey.
“He asked about what I’ve been saying to you after you sent us off together. Raph looked like he was about to panic so I just told him what you said about wanting us to be happy. He said he’s not interested in being happy.” Mikey looked at his father with a pained expression. “I think he’s punishing himself for having certain, um, desires. Like he doesn’t think he deserves to be happy so he refuses to make the effort to get to that point.”

A look of understanding crossed Master Splinter’s face. “Raphael will not be whole until he learns that he is not a monster who cannot control himself. He must learn that he can trust himself and that his brothers trust him as well, on all levels.”

“I’m trying to show him that,” Mikey said. “I have to go slow ‘cause he’s so jittery.”

“He fears what I might think of him, does he not?” Master Splinter asked, his voice tinged with compassion. “Raphael has always been extremely competitive with Leonardo and much of that is because he believes that being the better fighter is the way to shine in my eyes. It is difficult for him to understand that in his own unique way he does shine. Each of you has strengths that make me immeasurably proud.”

“Never did know why Raph thinks he has to be the best ninja,” Mikey said. “He rules a battle, Sensei. I always know I can count on him to watch my shell in a fight. I always figured he just resented having to take orders.”

“Raphael’s personality is not suited to leadership at this time in his life, though he is very capable in his own right,” Master Splinter said. “To lead, one must have the ability to be coldly calculating, to understand the sacrifices one might possibly be forced to make, and then to have the willingness to make them. A good leader must sometimes ask his subordinate to perform a dangerous act and though his first inclination might be to place himself in harm’s way, he knows that an army cannot march without its leader. Leonardo is able to do this but Raphael is not.”

“Raph’s more of a blunt instrument, right Father?” Mikey asked.

“Indeed. He is an integral part of Leonardo’s arsenal, a necessary component of a good team and Leonardo must have Raphael by his side. It pains me to see them so divided. I am hoping that by allowing you and Raphael to be together he will begin to have a healthier view of himself. That may also show Leonardo that he is not Raphael’s keeper nor does he have to be,” Master Splinter said.

Mikey sat silent for a moment, examining what he wanted to ask next and how best to phrase it. Master Splinter did not press him, merely waiting until his son chose to speak.

“Unless we did something like, truly evil, you couldn’t ever be disgusted with us, could you Master Splinter?” Mikey finally asked.

“No, Michelangelo, I could not,” Master Splinter answered. “Is this what your brother fears most?”

“Yeah,” Mikey said in a low voice.

“Is it the reason you broached the subject of mating preferences to me over a week ago?” Master Splinter asked shrewdly. “Were you attempting to learn of my thoughts on the subject, or were you laying the groundwork for my acceptance?”

“Both I guess,” Mikey conceded. “Should have known I wouldn’t fool you.”

“You should not have felt it necessary to try,” Master Splinter said. Holding his hand up
when Mikey started to speak, he added, “I understand why you took this route my son. Raphael is unwilling to share his secret so you have been forced to tread lightly. You want to be able to announce to him that I accept your choice to be together and that I do not hold him in low regard for his decision.”

“It’s a little more complicated than that,” Mikey said, thinking now would be a good time to tell Master Splinter everything.

He didn’t get the chance. The sound of Leo and Raph’s voices suddenly echoed through the lair, indicating their return. Master Splinter reached across the table to pat the back of Mikey’s hand before rising and returning to the kitchen counter to continue preparing breakfast.

“Where is everybody?” Raph called out.

“Kitchen!” Mikey shouted back, turning his attention to his plate. He was chewing on a rice ball when Leo and Raph entered the kitchen.

“Donny?” Leo asked after glancing around.

The smell of sewer and of musty water hit his nostrils and Mikey made a face. “You guys need to take showers right now. I can’t even taste my food.”

“Ain’t no point in that if we have to go back out again,” Raph said. “Where’s Donny?”

“Your brother could not reach Leatherhead on his shell cell, so he left to check on him,” Master Splinter said. “I must agree with Michelangelo, please take a shower and then come tell us what you found in the tunnels.”

“Rock, paper, scissors for who goes first?” Raph asked Leo.

“Go ahead,” Leo said, “I want to call Don and see if everything’s okay.”

With a nod, Raph jogged off towards the stairs and Leo stepped out of the kitchen, taking his funk with him. Once they were gone, Mikey finished his breakfast and then began washing the dishes.

Raph didn’t take long, coming back squeaky clean and wearing fresh gear. After Leo peeked in to tell everyone that Don was at Leatherhead’s and might be there for a while, he went up to the bathroom.

“Want some tea?” Mikey asked when Raph sat down to eat.

“Rather have coffee if Don left any,” Raph said around a mouthful of food.

Mikey glanced at the coffeepot. “He did. It’s gonna be strong.”

“That’s what I want,” Raph told him.

“Kay, sit tight.” Mikey grabbed a cup and poured out some coffee, taking it to Raph.

“Thanks.” Raph accepted the cup and spooned some sugar into it before taking a sip. “Perfect,” he said with a sigh. “Damn, those wet tunnels were cold as a witch’s . . . .”


“. . . shell,” Raph finished with a grin. “Didn’t take long to fix up the sleds, but we found
all kinds of cra . . . stuff blocking one of the tunnels. We barely got it cleared before a wall of nasty water barreled right into us. Would not want that backing up into our home.”

Mikey pointed at a tray of rice balls. “Those are the pickled plum.”

“All right!” Raph exclaimed enthusiastically, helping himself to several of them. “It don’t get much better than this.”

It took a lot of self-control not to stare openly at his brother as Raph ate, each flash of his teeth reminding Mikey of the bruise on his inner thigh. Fortunately his father was finishing the final batch of rice balls, so Mikey turned his attention back to the clean-up.

Mikey had his shell to the door as he wiped down the stovetop and didn’t know that Leo had returned until his brother was right next to him. Leo’s mastery of the silent approach was one of the things that always worried Mikey; he never knew when Leo was going to catch him trying to pull off a prank, or when they were younger, hiding a comic inside the pages of a text book he was supposed to be studying.

Now those sneaky ninja moves were cause for another concern. Trying to keep one particular secret from a brother who could practically appear out of nowhere was a pretty big challenge.

“Is there any tea left or should I brew some more?” Leo asked.

“There’s plenty,” Mikey said. “I kept it warm for you.”

“You’re a lifesaver,” Leo murmured, holding his cup out when Mikey offered to pour.

“Anytime bro’,” Mikey said.

When Leo sat down he asked, “Did Don eat anything before he left?”

“He took it with him,” Mikey answered. “Took something for LH too. I always wonder if he has enough to eat.”

“I’m sure he does,” Leo said, knowing Mikey meant Leatherhead and not their brother. “Don would have raided the pantry by now if LH looked to be hungry.”

“Don wouldn’t ever let anything bad happen to Leatherhead, would he? ‘Cause he cares about the big guy,” Mikey said, pouring another cup of tea for their father, who took his with him as he left the room.

A moment later the sounds from the radio faded as Master Splinter carried it into the living area so he could listen to it and the television news at the same time.

“We all care about Leatherhead,” Leo said.

“He’s best buds with Donny, so it stands to reason the genius would notice if anything was wrong before the rest of us did,” Raph said. “Shit, I meant to ask Don if he got the paper.”

Mikey spotted it on the counter where Don had tossed it, still covered in the protective plastic wrap. He picked it up, stripped the wrap off, and handed it to his brother.

“Don and me had to go up to the garage after you guys left,” Mikey said. “There’s a downed power line in the area and he wanted to nail boards across the garage door so that none of
the city workers could tell the place was being used.”

“Nice to know ya’ didn’t escape the work this time,” Raph said with a smirk, opening the paper.

“I got wet too,” Mikey said dramatically. “Soaked to the skin by a cold, cold rain as I worked until blisters formed on my poor fingers.”

Leo was staring at him and Mikey grinned, happy for an appreciative audience. Until he saw that Leo was focused on his thighs.

“Did you run into something?” Leo asked.

Mikey glanced down, realizing that he’d wiped off the concealer when he’d dried himself in the garage. The whip had cut a little deeper in a few places and the welts still showed.

Keeping his legs together so that Leo wouldn’t see the bite mark too, Mikey said, “Oh those. Yep, slipped on the wet pavement and landed on some loose boards. Just another example of how I suffer for this family.”

“Clumsy shit,” Raph murmured from behind his newspaper.

“Leonardo,” Master Splinter said from the doorway, gaining their attention. “When you have finished your breakfast, could you please join me? We should discuss plans to deal with this continuing downpour.”

“Of course Sensei,” Leo replied.

Mikey poured the remainder of the coffee into Raph’s cup so that he could turn the coffeemaker off and clean the pot. A few minutes later Leo excused himself and left for his powwow with Master Splinter.

Waiting through a slow count of twenty, Mikey wandered over to the doorway and looked out. He saw Leo sitting on the couch in a spot nearest to Master Splinter’s chair as they watched the weather coverage and conversed in low tones.

Darting back to the table, Mikey slid into a chair and leaned forward, gaining Raph’s attention. Peering at his brother over the top of the paper, Raph asked, “What?”

“I forgot to ask you what happened when you talked to Don about his ultimatum,” Mikey said swiftly, keeping his voice down. “Before you say I don’t need to know, yes I do. I won’t know how to act around Don if I don’t know what the two of you said.”

An exasperated look formed on Raph’s face but he set the paper down rather than ignoring the question, which Mikey had half expected him to do. “I asked him if something was bothering him ‘cause I didn’t want to say you’d told me about the cameras. He said the same thing to me that he did to ya’, about how and why he’d put the new cameras up. When he was done I told him to stay the hell out of our private business; that it wasn’t none of his affair what the two of us want to do.”

“That wasn’t the end of it though, was it?” Mikey asked. “Don doesn’t quit that easy.”

Raph scowled. “Nope, he sure don’t. He said it was his business if we got hurt so I told him we weren’t gonna get hurt. I said that having ya’ around helped me keep my head on straight and avoid the heavy duty brawls in favor of the little stuff. Told him I wasn’t fool enough to take
chances on getting ya’ hurt and he ought to give me a little credit for some common sense.”

“How’d that go over?” Mikey watched his brother avidly, hoping he’d managed to remove an obstacle in their path.

With a snort, Raph asked, “How do ya’ think? He didn’t back down but he did say he’d advance his deadline to two weeks. When I threatened to rearrange his face he calmly asked me how I thought I’d do that if I was paralyzed by some drug that’s forty-seven letters long and only Donny can pronounce.”

As much as Mikey hated to hear the news, he couldn’t help but grin. “You remember that time when we were eight and Leo was trying to get Don’s head out of a book so he’d be on time for practice?”

“Sure, that was back when Master Splinter used to punish all of us if one of us was late,” Raph said. “Teaching us about teamwork.”

“Don was ignoring him so Leo yanked the book out of his hand and one of the pages got torn,” Mikey continued, seeing the beginnings of a smile etch Raph’s lips. “Leo apologized all over the place but we could tell from Don’s expression that he was pissed.”

Raph began to laugh. “I remember that the next day Leo somehow wound up covered in the itching powder that Don had made from scratch.”

By then the memory had Mikey laughing too. “Scratch being the operative word. I didn’t think Master Splinter was ever going to get Leo out of the bathtub.”

After a moment the laughter dwindled and a melancholy look settled onto Raph’s face. “We used to have good times, didn’t we?”

Mikey wasn’t sure where the sadness had suddenly come from, but he was quick to say, “We still have good times.”

“Not like we did as kids,” Raph insisted. “Now things are just too fucking complicated.”

“They don’t have to be,” Mikey said. “Anything can be fixed, Raph. We’re the ones in charge of our own futures.”

Raph stood up abruptly, startling Mikey. “Reality check little brother. No we ain’t, never have been. Ya’ want to keep thinking that way, go ahead, but leave me the hell out of it. If any of your fanciful delusions involve me, don’t be spreading them around to anybody else.”

He snatched up his newspaper and stormed out of the kitchen, leaving behind a very stunned Michelangelo.

TBC…………….
Chapter 29

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,142 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 29 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Trying to understand Raphael’s mercurial emotions was a useless endeavor, but Mikey attempted it anyway.

While they were talking about an incident that had occurred when they were quite young Raph had seemed, for a moment, to become a carefree kid again. The memory had brought a brightness to his eyes that Mikey hadn’t seen in quite a while. His laugh had an open genuineness to it that had been long lost as well.

Then it appeared that the reality as he knew it had come back full force, bringing with it a level of bitterness in Raph that took Mikey by surprise. Raph had snapped at him that they had no control over their futures. Mikey knew that Raph had always resented the fact that they were relegated to a life lived in secrecy. Heck, even Mikey lamented that because he would love to have people know how much good he and his brothers did in the world.

But this thing between the two of them wasn’t something out of their control. How could Mikey get his brother to see that when Raph didn’t want to open his eyes to the possibilities?

In Mikey’s universe, you fought for the things you really wanted. If somebody builds a wall, you go around it. At this point that somebody was Raph himself.

Seated alone at the kitchen table, Mikey reviewed the probable reasons why Raph continued to be so touchy when the question of their future came up.

One, Raph was starting to acknowledge that he had deeper feelings for Mikey. Being the eternal pessimist, Raph figured he’d screw something up and Mikey would back away from him. If that happened, Raph would get hurt. To avoid that, Raph was trying to maintain an emotional aloofness.

Two, maybe Mikey’s advances were so easy for Raph to blow off because the big guy actually wasn’t all that interested in anything more than sexual gratification. He’d certainly assured Mikey of that a number of times.

So far Mikey had spent a lot of time thinking about his own feelings and trying to find ways to have an open relationship with Raph. Mikey had made an effort to maneuver Raph into his way of thinking and attempted to manipulate circumstances so that Raph wouldn’t feel threatened. Above all, Mikey had tried to rob Leo of his control over Raph.

Raph should have realized on his own that they wouldn’t be able to keep their secret for long. Theirs was a family that practically lived in each other’s shells. That was the truth of their existence.
Mikey knew his brother was smart. If Raph was insistent they keep up this charade, then it
was because he didn't intend for it to last long. He also didn’t intend to ever tell their secret to
anyone. Hence, unless something drastically changed, whatever Mikey had going with Raph was
doomed to a very short shelf life.

That thought left Mikey with an empty feeling. He still wanted to help Raph see what they
could have together, in case his brother was shutting him out solely because of his fear of
repercussions from the family. It was clear that trying to get Raph to talk it out wasn’t going to
work. Not when Raph wouldn’t talk.

Leaning his elbow on the table, Mikey rested his chin in his palm and made a face.
Dealing with Raph was very much like navigating a really difficult video game. There were
challenges to defeat in order to advance to the next level. There were rewards such as food, extra
lives, allies, weapons, and new powers to be had if one knew how to acquire them. There were
also mine fields to avoid if one didn’t want to lose.

Rather than playing alone though, Mikey had a partner in this game, one who insisted he be
privy to any moves Mikey intended to make. This partner also claimed the right of veto power
which drastically restricted anything Mikey could do.

Mikey acknowledged that Raph had been keeping his secret for a very long time without
anyone the wiser, but that was because he’d been by himself. It was always easier for a loner to
keep a secret.

Glancing up at the clock, Mikey realized he’d been sitting there doing a whole lot of
circular thinking for a half an hour. He had to decide something.

What finally hit him was that the best thing he could do was to keep his distance from
Raph. Avoid talking to him unless absolutely necessary, and to try to do those things in a manner
that wouldn’t raise his family’s suspicions the way it had the last time he and Raph were so at
odds. Maybe all Raph needed was some breathing room.

“You’re deep in thought.”

Startled, Mikey jerked upright to find Leo standing near the table and staring down at him.
“Yep. Surprise, surprise, I use my brains sometimes,” Mikey said with a touch of sarcasm.

Leo frowned. “Is there some reason you’re so grouchy?”

“Other than the fact that you keep suddenly appearing at my elbow?” Mikey asked.
“Nope.”

“Actually I came in here to get the broom,” Leo said, though he remained where he was,
“not to scare you. I didn’t know you’d still be in here. Is something wrong?”

Mikey’s guard came up immediately. “Nothing but the rainy day blahs,” he fibbed. “Since
Donny’s not here, I think I’ll go watch the feed from the garage cameras. Maybe I’ll see
something exciting, like the city linemen installing a new transformer.”

“He won’t like it if you mess with any of his settings,” Leo warned.

“He’ll like it even less if nobody pays attention to those guys and they find their way into
our garage,” Mikey countered. “Don showed me how to access the different cameras, he wouldn’t
have done that if he thought I’d break a piece of his precious equipment.”
“There are perimeter alarms that will warn us in advance if anyone enters the garage,” Leo said, telling Mikey something he already knew. “You don’t have to waste your time sitting in front of the monitors.”

“If I get bored I’ll watch You Tube on Don’s computer,” Mikey said. “It’s not like I’m getting anywhere near the televisions, not with Master Splinter parked in front of them. Raph’s off hibernating with his newspaper, Don’s doing his Brainiac thing with LH, and you have the urge to clean. Oh, and before you get ideas, I’ve had my fill of that. The dishes didn’t wash themselves.”

“I wasn’t going to suggest that you help clean,” Leo said.

“Cool, glad we’re in agreement,” Mikey replied, standing up and heading for the door before Leo decided to ask him anymore questions. “Later.”

Sitting in Don’s lab, Mikey realized its appeal to the genius. Even with the door open in order to avoid suspicion about what he was doing, the space was quiet and best of all, private.

Pulling up the feed from the camera outside of the garage, Mikey watched the alleyway for about ten minutes without seeing any signs of life. Pouring rain had a tendency to kill curiosity and Mikey figured the city workers had a to-do list a mile long by now. Don had the two of them board up the doors out of an abundance of caution, but they probably could have left them wide open and no one would have wandered inside.

Quickly growing bored with watching the rain fall, Mikey turned to Don’s computer. It was a temptation to look up some stuff about what he and Raph were doing in the hopes that it would help him understand his brother’s mental state. As soon as the notion struck Mikey though, he stepped on it.

The problem was that Mikey wasn’t confident enough in his computer skills to be sure he could completely cover his tracks so that Don wouldn’t know what he’d been researching. It was one thing to be busted for messing with the cameras, quite another for Don to discover Mikey wanted to know about deviant sexual practices.

So to be safe, Mikey spent his time alternating between checking the cameras and watching bootlegged movies on You Tube. He even imagined what it would be like to actually hang out in a movie theatre, eating popcorn and listening to the crowd around him.

Though he expected Don to show up at any moment and kick him out, Mikey made himself comfortable in his brother’s worn desk chair. There he remained for most of the day, uninterrupted by anyone. When he got hungry, he brought his meals into the lab, avoiding the slightest chance that he’d encounter Raph.

Donatello didn’t return until late, looking tired and saying he’d eaten dinner with Leatherhead. He didn’t even comment on the fact that Mikey had made himself at home in his sanctuary, other than to remind his younger brother to take his dishes with him when he left.

When Mikey decided to turn in for the night, he did so quickly, shouting a good-night in the general direction of his brothers. Falling into bed, he purposely forced his mind to think of anything other than his current dilemma and especially turned his thoughts in other directions when they tried to drift back to Raph.

Practice the next day was something of a challenge, but Mikey got through it, even managing to be his usual self when paired with Raph for weapons sparring. When it was over Mikey felt pretty proud of himself. Master Splinter hadn’t chided him once and none of his
brothers had given him any strange looks, so he figured they saw his behavior as perfectly normal.

The fly in the ointment was that it was still raining. It wasn’t a steady downpour like on the previous day, but when it stopped coming down it was only for short intervals. Even though they couldn’t see the rain from inside the lair, it was definitely having an effect on everyone’s mood.

For Mikey it was a bout of acute boredom. He didn’t want to stay in the lair but his usual underground escapist activities had been made impossible by flooding sewer tunnels.

The thumping sounds of heavy fists against the punching bag told Mikey what Raphael had chosen to do to pass the time. When Mikey approached the kitchen he heard both Leo and Don’s voices. A quick peek showed him they’d pulled the stove away from the wall and were working on it, tools sprawled on the floor around the pair.

Seeing those tools gave Mikey an idea. There was something he could do to while away the hours, and it was constructive. The only problem was that he didn’t want Raph to catch him at it.

Taking advantage of the moment, Mikey darted into the elevator and rode it up to the garage. From a shelf full of odds and ends he grabbed a leather knapsack and began filling it with both tools and the supplies he thought he’d need to do furniture repair.

When he had everything he could think to get, Mikey unlocked the small entry door and opened it enough to slide the bag outside. With the door closed and secured again, Mikey went back down to the lair.

After double checking that his brothers were still occupied with their activities, Mikey slipped into Don’s lab. From his previous foray into Don’s security systems, Mikey was able to quickly find and manipulate the recording so as to erase the two minutes that showed him opening the garage door. Into those two minutes he copied a portion of recording time that was an image of an empty garage.

Mikey had just managed to escape the lab and be halfway up the stairs when the door into the sewer tunnels opened.

“Yo! Where is everybody?” Casey called as he entered the lair.

“Hey Case man,” Mikey responded, turning and coming back down. “How’s it hanging?”

“High and tight Mikey,” Casey said with a grin. “The rain is friggin’ cold! Thought I’d check on ya’ guys and see if you’re staying dry.”

“So far,” Mikey said. “Can’t say the same for the electricity and Don’s security systems. We’re like one step ahead of the city crews every time something goes out.”

“I hear ya’,” Casey said. “The maintenance guys over at my ratty old apartment building are actually having to earn what they get paid. Hey Raph!”

Mikey glanced over his shoulder and saw Raph coming towards them. He was unwinding the extra wrap that covered his knuckles, the veins on his biceps still extended on muscles that bulged from his workout. Holding his breath so as not to catch his brother’s scent, Mikey looked away.

“What’s up Case?” Raph asked.

“Mikey says everything’s okay down here,” Casey replied. “Thought I’d see if ya’ wanted
to help me over at April’s place. The water’s trying to come up onto the sidewalk in front of her shop and she wants to sandbag the area and move stuff away from the front window. I already loaded up her van with sandbags. It’s parked up on the street ‘cause your garage door is barricaded.”

“Don and Mikey had to do that yesterday to keep the city workers from snooping around,” Raph said. ‘Give me a minute to tell Leo where I’m going so he can remind me stay out of sight and then I’ll join ya’.”

“He’s in the kitchen,” Mikey said so that Raph wouldn’t spend time looking for their older brother. After he disappeared from sight, Mikey asked Casey, “You think that job at April’s is gonna take a while?”

Casey looked at him suspiciously. “Why? Ya’ fighting with Raph again and want him off your shell?”

“Not yet, but I’m hoping to avoid that,” Mikey said glibly. “He gets cabin fever, I say the wrong thing, and then I’m running for my life.”

“I was gonna ask if you wanted to come along,” Casey suggested without much enthusiasm, “but it sounds like you want some space.”

“As much as I like schlepping for April, I’d rather do it when Raph’s in a good mood,” Mikey said hastily. “You two have a great time lugging stuff around and then moving it again when April doesn’t like where you put it.”

With that said, Mikey bolted upstairs and into his room. He didn’t completely close the door though, keeping his ears open so he’d know when Casey and Raph left.

Once he was sure they were gone, Mikey exited his room and jumped down to the lower level. Grabbing his hoverboard, he proceeded on to the kitchen, stopping at the door.

“I’m going out,” Mikey announced, talking fast. “I’ll be on my hoverboard so I can avoid the water in the tunnels and yes I’ll keep my eyes open for maintenance workers. See you guys!”

As he said those final words Mikey hopped onto the hoverboard and raced out of the lair before Leo could protest his planned exit.

A few minutes later Mikey stopped near the ladder that gave him access into the alley next to their garage. Going up to street level, he glanced around to make sure he was alone, and then avoided Don’s perimeter alarms so that he could retrieve the knapsack.

Back underground, he rode the hoverboard to his next exit, hiding it from sight before slipping into the oversized raincoat he’d tucked into the knapsack. In the rain, the coat did a good job of hiding him from being seen by the occupants of passing cars. He didn’t have to worry about meeting people on the sidewalk because there weren’t any around.

Mikey finally made it to the secret room and let himself in with his key. Taking off his raincoat, Mikey set the knapsack on the floor and went directly to the back wall where the broken tables and chairs were piled.

Sorting through them, Mikey chose a table and two chairs that looked to be in the best shape. All three things needed work so he took them to the center of the room and then dumped the contents of the knapsack out on the floor so he could begin the repair job.
As he worked, Mikey let his thoughts dwell on Raph. Just hearing his brother say his name earlier had sent a tingle down his spine, but he was happy with the fact that he hadn’t let that show. Mikey wanted Raph to notice that he was giving him some space.

There had to be a way to take things to the next level. This was becoming too difficult, this trying to find ways to sneak out of the lair so they could be together. It was either progress or stop.

Even as the concept of quitting entered his mind, Mikey knew he couldn’t. Just remembering their encounters left him breathless and needy; he wanted it too much. For a moment he thought that maybe that could be enough for him, simply letting himself be lost in the euphoria of Raph’s control, relishing the pain and the release.

The notion sat there only briefly before Mikey realized he couldn’t do it. If it was only him making the sacrifice, Mikey might possibly be able to push aside his desire for a real relationship and be happy living a secret existence.

But then he remembered the look of anguish in Raph’s eyes as he’d told the story of what had happened between Leo and himself. Raph didn’t grasp how important it was to his mental health to stop hiding what he was from his family. He didn’t know that keeping his secret and sneaking around behind everyone’s backs was accepting a shame he didn’t deserve.

Mikey cared deeply for Raph and wanted to help him become whole again. Giving his brother a physical outlet for his desires was only a first step, letting him see that there was nothing wrong with those desires the second and biggest step.

After a few hours Mikey called it quits. The table and chairs were fixed and he placed them near the bar, creating a space with what he hoped was a homey feel to it. Maybe his words couldn’t convey to Raph the things that Mikey wanted between them, but with any luck, Mikey would be able to show his brother through his actions.

On his way home, Mikey stopped at his favorite Chinese take-out place to pick up the food he’d called ahead for. Sliding some bills under the back door, he knocked on it and then ducked out of sight as one of the kitchen help came out and placed a couple of sacks on the ground.

Taking the food, Mikey went back to the lair on his hoverboard. He tucked the knapsack into an alcove for later recovery and went directly to the kitchen. As he’d suspected, the stove was still out of service and his dinner delivery was much appreciated.

While they ate, Mikey noticed Raph eyeing him a number of times. Ignoring those looks was tough, especially with how his heart skipped a beat whenever that golden gaze fell on him.

Raph told them how the storm drains in front of April’s building were filled to overflowing, meaning that the tunnels near her place were impassable for the time being.

“Her whole street is lined with sandbags,” Raph said. “I saw a lot of that on the drive to and from April’s place. The flooding situation’s gonna get way worse if this rain don’t let up.”

“What did the tunnels look like on your ride, Mikey?” Don asked.

“Ya’ went out?” Raph asked, staring intently at his brother.

Mikey swallowed the retort about where did Raph think the food came from and opted for a straight answer to Don’s question. “I had to stick to the biggest tunnels ’cause the feeder tunnels are running really high,” Mikey said. “Are you sure they only opened two valves?”
Don sighed wearily. “I’m sure it’s more than that by now, considering how many streets are currently flooding.”

“People are attempting to drive through the water,” Master Splinter said, his expression grim. “The news reporters have taken great pains to warn residents of the hazards, but many are not listening. There have already been over a dozen rescues.”

“They pull people from their cars and the cars float off to do more damage,” Leo said with disapproval. “I don’t understand why someone’s time seems more important than their life.”

“’Cause they’re humans,” Raph said, shaking his head. “They all think the world revolves around ‘em and that the waters are gonna part because they need to get through. It don’t have to make any more sense than that.”

That was as good an explanation of Raph’s view of the world as any, Mikey thought to himself. Where Don preferred to think the best of people, and Leo tended to stick them in columns labeled good and evil, Raph was realistic. People were going to do what they wanted to do and as long as they didn’t hurt anyone else, Raph wouldn’t pass judgment.

The evening ended on that note. Raph offered to help Don finish up with the stove, saying that it would never be repaired if Leo continued to touch it, and their older brother had graciously accepted both the offer and the put down.

Mikey went to bed early, reading himself to sleep with the adventures of Silver Sentry. Klunk usually patrolled the lair after the lights went out, but tonight he curled up next to Mikey, purring contentedly as his fur was stroked.

“At least somebody wants to sleep with me,” Mikey thought as he turned out the reading lamp.

Morning came and went swiftly. Mikey continued to keep his distance from Raph, interacting with him only when necessary. Because he wasn’t overt about his avoidance, Raph didn’t appear to feel slighted, which kept him from becoming angry. He did seem puzzled though, to the point where he would stop to contemplate Mikey from time to time. Mikey pretended not to notice.

Breakfast had been a cold meal because despite having repaired the stove, it was still pulled away from the wall. A large hole had been opened up to reveal water seepage, making the use of electricity a bad idea. Raph and Don once more set to work on the problem, chasing everyone else from the kitchen.

Mikey borrowed Don’s computer again, with his full permission, in order to type out a grocery list and send it to the market so it could be filled. Finding a place that took online orders and then delivered the items to April’s shop had been the greatest breakthrough since sliced bread as far as Mikey was concerned. It was also a great reason to escape the lair again.

Knowing that Leo was in the dojo, Mikey went that way to inform his brother of his destination. He stopped for a few minutes to watch the news broadcast with Master Splinter.

“The current prediction is that the rains will taper off during the afternoon and return again tonight,” Master Splinter said without turning around. “One wonders if the weather will humor the forecaster and be reasonable, or prove itself to be unpredictable.”

“Either way, a few hours without rain isn’t gonna help the situation much,” Mikey said.
“True, however a brief respite is sometimes necessary to allow those affected by a storm the
time to see things clearly and to formulate future plans,” Master Splinter said, turning his head
slightly so that he could see Mikey. “Do you not agree?”

“Um, sure Sensei,” Mikey answered, though he was fairly sure that his father wasn’t just
talking about the rains.

Excusing himself, Mikey continued on to the dojo, where he found Leo about to begin
cleaning his swords. Mikey was actually glad to see that, knowing that the ritual would take a
couple of hours at the minimum.

“I sent off our shopping list,” Mikey announced. “I’m gonna go hang at April’s and wait for
the delivery.”

“Are you sure they’ll make the delivery?” Leo asked, looking up from his seat on the floor.
“Raph said the streets around her shop are flooding.”

“Yeah they’ll make it. The delivery guy drives a moped and cruises the sidewalks to dodge
traffic. This is just a normal day for him,” Mikey replied glibly.

Leo’s stare was unwavering. “How will you get there? It’s light out and the tunnels aren’t
passable.”

“It’s not that light,” Mikey said facetiously. When Leo didn’t looked amused, he added,
“According to Master Splinter’s favorite weather man the rains are letting up. I’ll use the roof top
highway. No one will see me.”

“If you stayed here we could go together to April’s later on,” Leo said. “I wouldn’t mind the
company and we could talk about things.”

That was the last thing Mikey wanted to do. “Thanks for the offer, but I need to stretch my
legs. They’re getting restless.”

“Pick the subject,” Leo said, as though he hadn’t heard Mikey. “Anything at all. I won’t
judge you.”

“Maybe some other time,” Mikey said, edging towards the door. “Couldn’t sit still right
now.”

If Leo said anything else, Mikey wasn’t there to hear it, making himself scarce quickly. He
had no idea why Leo suddenly felt in need of his presence, but that whole ‘let’s talk’ notion made
Mikey skittish. Mikey had thought he’d been doing a good job of mitigating Leo’s suspicions.
Could Mikey’s nonchalant attitude toward Raph the last couple of days have triggered Leo’s
doubts again?

Afraid that Leo would attempt to track him, Mikey went straight to April’s place. The roof
tops were wet, the sky menacing, and as he figured, he had the skyline to himself. Popping into her
shop through the side delivery door, Mikey ascertained first that no one else was in the shop before
announcing his presence.

“Mikey! I haven’t seen you in forever,” April gushed.

“Not been getting much traffic in here, have you?” Mikey asked astutely.

“No,” April answered, tucking a strand of hair behind her ear. “The only people who come
in are the ones trying to dodge a downpour. What brings you by?"

“Food,” Mikey said with a grin. “We needed to restock so I’ve got a delivery on its way here. Do me a favor would you?”

“What do you need?” April asked, instantly alert.

Mikey chuckled. “Nothing bad girl. I just wanted to take a look at some tunnels a few blocks from here and Leo started clucking the minute I said I was going out. If he should happen to ask, could you tell him what time I got here and that I went upstairs? You won’t even have to lie, ‘cause I will go up.”

“Climbing the walls Mikey?” April asked.

“We haven’t been out of the lair to do anything in days,” Mikey said with as much drama as he could muster. “I’m going stir crazy.”

“Take off, I’ll cover for you,” April said good-naturedly. “Please be careful, your brothers would kill me if you got into trouble.”

“Who, me?” Mikey asked jokingly. “Caution is my middle name.”

Bounding up the stairs to April’s apartment, Mikey made his exit through one of her windows, but not before hiding his shell cell. If anyone wanted to check, the tracking signal would show he’d never left her place.

Once again Mikey visited the secret room. Though his visit was shorter than on the previous day, Mikey accomplished what he’d set out to do. Using one of the chairs to stand on, Mikey cleaned the mirror behind the bar and the light sconces mounted on the walls. He made a mental note to return with replacement bulbs for the ones that had burned out and fresh linens for the bed.

Locking up, Mikey returned directly to April’s apartment, grabbed his shell cell, and then went down to her shop where he found that his groceries had been delivered. Transferring everything into a couple of canvas shopping bags, Mikey said his good-byes and went home.

Fortunately the family was able to have a hot dinner that night because with Raph’s help, Don had gotten the stove back in place and everything was in good working condition.

There were a couple of times while they were clearing the table and cleaning up the kitchen after the meal that Mikey felt like Raph wanted to say something to him, but then hesitated. It might have been because Mikey was being distant with him, or because Leo seemed to have them under keen scrutiny. If his oldest brother was hoping to see something in their interactions, Leo wasn’t getting any satisfaction. Mikey made sure that he and Raph had no interactions.

When Raph announced that he was going to hang out at Casey’s apartment, Mikey felt like he’d caught a lucky break. Not long after he left Mikey learned that Don and Master Splinter were going to Leatherhead’s to play Mahjong. Mikey felt like he’d won the lottery.

Leo had taken some fresh candles up to his room and closed himself inside, a routine that indicated his brother intended to meditate for hours. Having the lair to himself, Mikey decided he’d watch a horror movie marathon, eat snacks, and enjoy lounging around without the worry he’d be interrupted.

The first thing he did was to make a large bowl of popcorn with extra butter. Taking that and
a soda with him, Mikey entered the living area and set both items on the coffee table.

A glance showed him that the remote wasn’t on the table or on top of any of the televisions, so he turned towards the couch. He saw it on one of the cushions and reached for it.

Only to have it snatched out from under his hand.

Jerking upright, Mikey saw Leo standing only a couple of feet away from him. Mikey’s mouth went dry at the expression on Leo’s face. It was the one that said his brother was there for a confrontation and was determined to have his questions answered. In the hopes that he could get Leo to surrender his objective, Mikey adopted his most carefree attitude.

“Movie marathon Leo,” Mikey said with what he hoped was an engaging grin. “Don’t want to miss the start.”

He stuck his hand out for the remote but Leo held onto it. Meeting his brother’s eyes, Mikey’s stomach dropped at the all too serious look in them.

“No more Michelangelo,” Leo said, his voice firm and steady. His gaze skimmed down to Mikey’s thighs and then came back up again. “You didn’t fall down in the garage. He’s hurting you, isn’t he?”

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The first thought that ran through Mikey’s mind was that they weren’t going to have to worry about Don’s ultimatum after all. Then he decided to try and brazen it out.
“So I guess earlier when I said I didn’t need to talk, you thought that meant that I did?” Mikey asked lightly, hoping that his flippant attitude would end the discussion before it could begin.

“You never said you didn’t need to talk,” Leo said, his determined expression resolute. “What you said was ‘maybe some other time’. It’s time Mike. Maybe past time. Don was with you in the garage and he said you didn’t fall. Did you think I wouldn’t ask him about it?”

Mikey shrugged. “Why would I think about it at all? I’ve got some scratches, Leo. Call out the National Guard. It happened when I fell in the mud the other night. I didn’t want Master Splinter to know because he sent me out to get better at working in rainy conditions.”

“Enough,” Leo snapped. “I’ve watched mysterious marks appear and disappear from your skin ever since the night we helped Nobody. The same night that Raphael bit you and you tried to hide that fact from me. I told you then that Raph has inner demons. That warning was so that you would step back and not be foolishly pressured into allowing his demons to have full reign over you.”

“What makes you think I’m being pressured into doing anything?” Mikey asked, a touch of aggravation seeping past the nonchalant mask he was trying to maintain. “I do have a mind of my own you know, and it functions just fine.”

“Then what is this? Curiosity? I asked you once if you were trying to play with Raph’s demons. I now think that you’re encouraging them,” Leo said. “You aren’t doing Raph any favors.”

“Yeah? And I asked you why I should be afraid of my own brother. All you did was talk in circles instead of answering my question. I do distinctly remember you telling me that secrets weren’t such a great thing,” Mikey shot back.

“Then let’s not have any,” Leo responded quickly.

“That works both ways bro’,” Mikey said, crossing his arms defiantly. “You started it with the riddles about Raph’s demons, and trying to always be near us when we’re together, and staring at me all the time. If you have some kinda problem with me or with Raph, then spit it out.”

“The problem I have is with you and Raph,” Leo said, “together.”

A distinct chill ran down Mikey’s spine. He wasn’t prepared for the discussion Leo seemed to be forcing on him, but Mikey had foolishly ignored the warning signs that came from being left alone in the lair with his older brother.

“Then wouldn’t it have made more sense to talk to us together?” Mikey asked. “That is if you think there’s something between us that’s any of your business.”

“You have bruises, Mike. Bruises, and welts, and bite marks. During practice I’ve noticed the discoloration on your tail. If I have to worry about you trying to fight while injured then it is my business,” Leo stated adamantly.

“Last time I checked, bruises never kept any of us from fighting,” Mikey pointed out. He was still holding onto the hope that Leo would drop the subject. “I know they’ve never stopped me.”

“I’m not as concerned about your physical health as I am about your mental health,” Leo said, his eyes nearly piercing Mikey.
“What’s that supposed to mean?” Mikey asked, wary at the shift in subject.

Leo’s lips pressed into a thin line before he opened his mouth to take a deep breath and release it. Mikey recognized that as Leo’s way of trying to decide how to phrase something.

“I know that Raph will never completely agree with me on everything,” Leo said. “None of you does, not even Don. But I also know that you’ll trust me to weigh my options and that what I decide we’re going to do is the best choice for us. I won’t get that from Raph. I’ve accepted that he can’t give that to me. There are parts of Raph that are walled off; parts that rebel at certain concepts. Fully trusting my decisions is one of those parts.”

“Okay,” Mikey acknowledged slowly. “What does that have to do with me?”

“What do you want from him, Mike? How important is it to you?” Leo asked adamantly. “Because if he can’t give that to you, it’s going to cause you a lot more pain than you’ll get from bites and bruises.”

Mikey frowned, not liking what Leo was alluding to. “Just ‘cause you have a sorry relationship with Raph doesn’t mean that the rest of us do. Maybe if you showed Raph that you trusted him, he’d be more trusting of you.”

“Is that why you’re giving him what he wants, so that he’ll trust you?” Leo asked. “How much will you take from him before you realize he’s not going to offer more of himself to you? What do you think will happen when you’ve finally worked up the courage to ask for something for yourself?”

“He’s my brother,” Mikey answered heatedly. “I’m not gonna put him down for being the way he is and I’m not gonna call him a monster because he has issues. It’s bad enough that the outside world calls us freaks without members of our own family calling each other names.”

Once those words were out, Mikey wished he could retract them. He saw a flash come and go in Leo’s eyes and knew that he’d confirmed something for his older brother that he’d meant to keep to himself.

“I don’t have to explain my motivations for doing certain things,” Leo said, “but I will if I think that’s what is necessary to keep members of my family from making mistakes. Raph loses control unless he has a good reason not to, a reason that bypasses that anger component of his brain. Understanding him is how I keep him safe.”

“You’re not trying to understand him, you’re trying to have power over him. You can’t keep doing that; he’ll never be whole and neither will you. Maybe you should meditate on a new way to connect with him instead of just threatening to always report everything to daddy,” Mikey said sarcastically. “You’re supposed to be a leader, not a tattle tale.”

“Keeping Master Splinter apprised of situational changes is part of my role as leader,” Leo said. “He’s still our father and I value his advice. Apparently so do you considering how much time you’ve spent talking to him lately. Was that an attempt at an end run around me, Mike? Do you think that you can ease Sensei into accepting your new relationship with Raph without actually telling him what that means?”

“It sure would suck if you couldn’t do something that you enjoyed,” Mike said, irked that Leo had figured out his plan regarding Master Splinter. “Something that relaxed you, that didn’t hurt anyone else and sure as shell wasn’t anyone else’s business.”
“So you’ve already pointed out,” Leo said. “Stressing that doesn’t make it a valid argument. Have you ever stopped to think that maybe I care about both you and Raph? That maybe I don’t want either of you to be hurt? You’re quick to point out that I’m the leader and you’re right, I am. You don’t know what I have to deal with. It’s on me to keep Raph alive, no matter what it takes. Keeping him in line by any means necessary is for his own good.”

“And just maybe I have another way of doing that,” Mikey replied quickly, waving a hand for emphasis. “It might even be better for him than living in fear. If Raph wasn’t always worried about what the rest of his family thinks of him he would find some balance.”

“Do you think he’s with you because he’s looking for love?” Leo asked bluntly. “Raph has always been attracted to you Mike, and not in just a brotherly fashion. It was obvious from an early age that he liked to play rough and you let him. Don’t mistake that for true affection; Raph can’t give you that and he’ll hurt you, not just physically. He’ll break your heart.”

“You don’t know what you’re talking about,” Mikey said angrily, pointing a finger at his brother.

“Don’t I?” Leo countered. “That bite mark on your collarbone indicated that Raph was thinking about breaking a pledge he made to me and I talked to him about it. Mikey, he has an addiction, plain and simple.”

Mikey remembered how he’d seen Leo and Raph in a deep discussion the day after Raph had first bitten him. Clearly Mikey hadn’t done as good a job of disguising or explaining away that bite as he thought he had.

All of his subsequent efforts to hide or disguise various marks had been futile with regards to covering up their activities from Leo’s prying eyes. At this point Mikey wasn’t even sure he’d fooled Don or Master Splinter either.

“That’s like saying Don is addicted to science,” Mikey countered. “Just because that’s what you want to think doesn’t make it true. The problem isn’t Raph or me, it’s you. Anything you don’t understand you try to label. If you can’t change it, you try to stomp on it. How’s that healthy?”

“You’re deflecting,” Leo said, his eyes narrowing. “You recognize the honesty in what I’ve said about Raph and you’re trying to turn the conversation back to me. Have you already told him what you want and been rebuffed?”

Hearing Leo say that hurt almost as bad as when Raph had said he wouldn’t fight for what they had. Mikey hadn’t wanted to believe that, but now Leo was saying it too.

“That is so not fair,” Mikey said, as much to himself as to Leo.

His brother reached out to grip Mikey’s forearm. “I’m not trying to manipulate either of you,” Leo said. “I’ve been upfront with Raph in telling him that his actions have consequences. That’s all I’m trying to explain to you as well. Raph found a balance that worked for him and that kept his demons at bay. Let him go back to that.”

Mikey looked down at Leo’s hand. It wasn’t as large as Raph’s and the touch didn’t have the same warmth. That warmth couldn’t have been something that Mikey was imagining to be there.

Leo didn’t know about the secret room. He didn’t know that Raph had not found a balance
“You don’t know everything,” Mikey repeated aloud. “You want to, Leo. Maybe you even need to and ‘cause this thing between me and Raph is something you can’t wrap your head around, so you’ve decided to condemn it as bad. It’s not bad though and just because you keep saying it is doesn’t make it so.”

He tried to pull his arm away but Leo’s grip was strong. “Don’t be naïve,” Leo urged, clearly frustrated. “I’m sorry but there are things about what we can and can’t have that we must accept. We’re mutants and the only ones of our kind. I get that, Mikey. It’s a painful realization to face and trying to find ways around that is easier. Letting Raph abuse you isn’t going to get you what you want.”

“Are you sure you’re not the same as him, Leo?” Mikey asked, pointedly glancing down at Leo’s hand on his arm. “Maybe you’re addicted to power. Is that why you worked so hard to be chosen as leader?” He tugged at Leo’s hold to no avail. “You’re leaving a bruise, thought you hated those. Do you want to explain it to Raph after he sees it? Want to tell him we were only talking?”

Leo released him and Mikey stepped back, putting distance between them. He could tell from Leo’s expression that his brother wasn’t quitting, he’d argue this with Mikey all night if he had to in order to change Mikey’s mind.

Mikey didn’t want his mind changed. He wanted the truth and Leo wasn’t the one to give it to him.

“Do you need me to talk to Raph for you?” Leo queried softly. “Are you afraid of what he might do? That he might cause you serious injury if you call things off?”

“I’m not afraid of him!” Mikey shouted, exasperated that Leo couldn’t see that. “I’ve never been afraid of him! I’m the only one who has never feared Raph!”

“Not even when he almost bashed your head in?” Leo asked.

“No. Uh-uh. You don’t get to go there,” Mikey said, more pissed off than he’d ever been at his oldest brother. “You can’t claim that you aren’t trying to manipulate me or Raph and then bring up ancient history. Saying stuff like that doesn’t help anyone grow, it keeps them under your feet.”

“Acting like a spoiled kid who can’t get what he wants isn’t growth,” Leo snapped. “If you don’t learn from past mistakes you’re destined to repeat them.”

“Are you gonna build your entire future with Raph based on two past events?” Mikey asked incredulously. “How’s that giving him any kind of a chance? You’re assuming that’s all there is to him. Raging hormones explains what happened between you two and frustration was the only thing the matter with him that day he threatened to bean me with a pipe. You don’t get to hold that against him for his whole life.”

“Is this thing you’re doing with Raph raging hormones too? He hurts you to get his kicks. You’re letting him cause you pain so that he can relieve his sexual frustration. That might make him mellow but you’re not getting anything in return and you never will!” Leo exclaimed.

Having Leo say that out loud tweaked Mikey’s panic button. This was exactly what Raph hadn’t wanted to have happen. It was the reason that Raph had told him to keep his mouth shut.
“Wow, can’t believe your mind went there,” Mikey said, trying to look disgusted. “Raph likes to push me around and right away you think . . . .”

“Drop it,” Leo interrupted curtly. “I was on the receiving end of one of Raph’s attacks, I know exactly what happens to him. I wouldn’t let him have his way with me so now he’s trying it with you. And succeeding by the look of things.”

Mikey’s heart had been pumping wildly since he and Leo had started to talk, but now it thumped painfully in his chest. Was this the clue to Raph’s behavior that Mikey had been missing all along?

“He’s not doing stuff to me just because he can,” Mikey insisted, though the words began to feel like a lie. “He’s not. Maybe I like it too, did you ever think of that? Maybe Raph and I were meant to connect this way. I’m not a substitute.”

“The fact that you’re this defensive makes me wonder if you truly believe that,” Leo said gently.

“Shut up!” Mikey yelled. “I don’t want to talk to you about this. Butt out!”

Mikey began to back away and Leo followed, not allowing the space between them to grow.

“Raph will get what he needs from whoever will give it to him,” Leo said, pressing his advantage. “That’s what addicts do. He’ll let you believe what you want to believe, he’ll say things he thinks you want to hear, and he’ll demand that you keep secrets from your family. He will bring you a great deal of pain in the end, Mikey. Please help me put a stop to this.”

It felt like Mikey’s throat was closing and he couldn’t breathe. If Leo was right, then Raph was just using him.

“This is not a game,” Mikey said, staring icily at Leo. “Raph’s not playing some game with me, I know him.”

“Do you really?” Leo asked. “Or is that what you tell yourself to rationalize allowing Raph to do as he pleases with you? Is that why you’ve been avoiding him for the last couple of days?”

Mikey couldn’t look at Leo anymore, he needed to think. “I . . . I can’t stay here right now. I’ve gotta clear my head.”

He bolted, darting past Leo and out of the lair. Leo called out to him but the words were indistinct because Mikey was moving too fast.

Images were jumbling for attention inside Mikey’s head and it started to feel like it was going to explode. Leo’s explanations made Mikey see things that Raph had done and said in a different light and he couldn’t shrug off the uncomfortable feeling that gave him.

Though he was moving fast and was sure that Leo hadn’t come after him, Mikey could only think of one place he wanted to go and he couldn’t risk anyone following him there. He knew it wasn’t the smartest thing he could do, but concerns about his own personal safety weren’t at the top of his list at the moment.

Taking his shell cell out of his belt, Mikey threw it far down a nearby side tunnel, hearing the splash as it hit water. Even though Don had designed them to be waterproof, he still grimaced at the sound but made no move to retrieve it. He didn’t much care if Don got mad at him.
Racing on, Mikey escaped to the streets and then back down into the tunnels when he was near the secret room. He tried not to think of anything other than avoiding being seen, which was easier to do under cover of falling rain. The predictions had been right; there had been a short dry spell in the afternoon but nightfall had signaled the beginning of another bout of precipitation.

Once Mikey was inside the room with the door closed behind him he paused, unsure as to what had driven him to come there. He made a slow circuit around the room, waiting for something to provide him with answers, but other than the table and chairs, it all looked very impersonal.

Finally he pulled out one of the chairs and sank down onto it. Mikey’s eyes landed on the bed and he stared at it, wondering how it would feel to wake up next to Raph. To wake up to the warmth of Raph’s arms around him, holding him close. Was that just another of those daydreams his brothers were always teasing him about having? Was Leo right that Mikey was hoping for the impossible?

With a pained sigh, Mikey folded his arms on the table and lowered his head onto them. Leo’s words to him were confusing and made Mikey question things he’d been so sure about before. He’d thought that giving in to his desires and allowing Raph to assuage his as well was good for both of them because of the idealized notion that what they had would grow from there.

For Mikey it had; he’d developed deeper feelings for Raph. When Raph didn’t seem to share them, Mikey figured it was because Raph’s prior experience with Leo made him cautious. Expecting that their emotional attachment would advance at the same speed wasn’t realistic, Mikey had told himself. Now after talking to Leo, Mikey wondered if expecting Raph to have an emotional attachment at all was what was truly unrealistic.

Mikey wasn’t sure how long he’d been sitting there when he heard the key turn in the lock and the door open. He lifted his head slowly to see Raph standing there staring at him.

“Knew I’d find ya’ here,” Raph said, hitting the door with his fist hard enough to shut it with a resounding bang.

Rising from the chair, Mikey asked, “How did you know I even left the lair? You were at Casey’s.”

“I was having a good time too, until Leo called me,” Raph said gruffly, looking none too pleased. “Seems he got worried when ya’ stomped out of the lair and didn’t come back, so he tried to call your shell cell. Ya’ didn’t answer so he interrupted Don’s night out too and asked the genius to track your signal. In case ya’ wanted to know, Don’s pissed ya’ threw your cell into water. He had to get wet to retrieve it.”

“Figured he would be,” Mikey said, not really caring. “Then Leo called you and asked if I was hanging with you and Casey. You covered for me and said I was and then high tailed it over here. Big deal.”

“Yeah it’s a big fucking deal,” Raph huffed, his eyes blazing. “I did not cover for your stupid ass ‘cause I didn’t know what the hell was going on. As soon as Leo found out you weren’t at Casey’s he lit into me about that little talk the two of you had and said it was my fault that ya’ were so messed up. I told him to chill and that I’d find ya’ and that he shouldn’t assume anything from stuff ya’ might have said. Then I hung up on him and left my cell at Casey’s so I could come find ya’.”

“So now you’re pissed,” Mikey said, glaring back at Raph. “I guess you thought this
“What the fuck is wrong with you?” Raph shouted at him. “Of course it was supposed to last because it was supposed to be a damn secret!”

“I didn’t tell Leo anything!” Mikey yelled. He stepped away from the table so that he could face Raph head on. “He’s been on me like a second skin since the night you first bit me. Every mark you left on me he’s seen; it didn’t matter what I did to cover them up. He knew what those marks meant too, thanks to what happened between the two of you.”

“Ya’ said ya’ could cover them or explain them away,” Raph growled. “Ya’ wanted me so bad ya’ swore ya’ could fix things so that no one would be suspicious. Why the hell didn’t ya’ walk away from Leo? Ain’t ya’ got brains enough to know what he might do?”

“Why did that have to be on me?” Mikey asked. “Why was it my responsibility alone? Didn’t you want this enough to help me make it work?”

“Not enough to risk everything!” Raph bellowed. “Ya’ live in some damn fantasy world with a white picket fence and this kind of shit.” He pointed at the table and chairs. “Make yourself at home, everything’s normal. It ain’t fucking normal!”

Spinning, Raph kicked one of the chairs and sent it flying against the bar where it smashed into pieces. Mikey stared at it, dumbfounded by Raph’s ferocity before growing very angry.

“I think Leo was right,” Mikey said bitterly. “Inflicting pain is your addiction and the fact that I get off on it is enabling you. That’s as deep as it goes for you, isn’t it?”

“I told ya’ that from the beginning,” Raph said. “Don’t start trying to lay guilt on me. This is about sex, not falling in love. Stop pretending to yourself that it’s ever gonna be more.”

“Did Leo damage you that badly?” Mikey asked. “Do you think that if you never open yourself up completely you won’t be hurt? Do you hold Leo’s opinion in such high regard that you let him make you believe you’re too screwed up to deserve to be loved?”

“Grow up!” Raph roared. “Leave Leo out of it, he wasn’t supposed to know anything about us in the first place!”

Mikey was feeling ugly and in no mood to be sensitive. “How can I leave Leo out of it when everything’s centered on him? You want to know what I think, Raph? I think you’ve been using me as a surrogate for Leo. Your kink first showed up with him but he flat turned you down. Maybe you want Leo, maybe you’ve always wanted him, but you settled for me ‘cause you figured I’d be a pushover and let you do whatever you felt like. I’ll bet you wouldn’t keep fighting Leo all the time if he felt anything for you.”

Raph’s fist shot out so quickly that Mikey didn’t even see the blow coming. It connected squarely with his jaw and rocked Mikey back on his heels. Reacting without conscious thought, Mikey threw a punch of his own, bruising his knuckles on Raph’s jawline.

“Ya’ little son of a bitch,” Raph snarled.

Before his brother could do anything else, Mikey snatched the room key from his belt and threw it at Raph.

“There’s your key. Shove it where the sun don’t shine ‘cause we’re through,” Mikey retorted before storming out of the room.
Mikey didn’t remember anything about his return run home. He was fuming mad and hurt, and on top of that, he felt abused. A distinct sense of betrayal lingered just below the blanket of his anger and he wasn’t sure if that was because he felt that Raph had misled him or that he’d deceived himself.

Recognizing where he was just before he entered the lair, Mikey braced himself, preparing to meet a hostile Leo and irritated Donny. It was a minor shock to discover that neither of them was in sight and Mikey decided to go straight to his room before they discovered he was home.

Stepping into his room, Mikey closed the door before going to flick on his bedside lamp. He lowered himself onto the edge of his bed and rubbed wearily at his eyes, certain that he wasn’t going to get any sleep.

A faint rustle of cloth startled him and Mikey’s head jerked around to a corner of his room. Master Splinter stood there.

“It seems we have much to discuss, Michelangelo.”

TBC-------
Chapter 31

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 2,951 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 31 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

Seeing that Master Splinter had been waiting for him in a shadowed corner of his room
struck Mikey as an appropriate ending to a very miserable night. Mikey figured he might as well
get it over with rather than suffering the pain of anticipating when the other shoe might drop.

“I guess Leo told you about our fight,” Mikey said gloomily.

“Leonardo informed me that the two of you had argued,” Master Splinter said. “He had no
choice. His phone call to Donatello interrupted both our evenings and brought an end to our
pleasant visit with Leatherhead,” Master Splinter said.

“Sorry Master Splinter,” Mikey said. “I didn’t know he’d do that.”

“Your argument was sufficiently disquieting to warrant his concern,” Master Splinter said,
“as was your refusal to answer his calls. His inability to reach you prompted a call to Donatello
which in turn disturbed me.”

“I threw my shell cell in the water so Leo couldn’t find me,” Mikey responded morosely.

Master Splinter nodded, moving across the room and then sitting on the bed next to his
son. “I understand your pique, but that was an extremely foolish thing to do. Apparently the
disabling of communication devices is contagious. Raphael became unreachable soon after
Leonardo spoke to him about you.”

“Raph found me and I came home,” Mikey said. “Guess he didn’t want Leo to annoy me
anymore so he hid where I was.”

“I will forgive the choice to turn off the phones, but please do not ever again venture
outside of the lair without your shell cell,” Master Splinter said sternly. “The outer world is not a
forgiving place and being unreachable could have very serious consequences.”

“Yes Sensei,” Mikey said, his voice lacking its usual vigor.

They were both silent then, Mikey looking down at his knees and Master Splinter studying
his son. Mikey could only imagine what his father must think of him. No doubt Leo had put a
very nefarious spin on the activities he’d probably guessed Raph and Mikey had been carrying on
behind everyone’s backs.

“You are troubled, my son,” Master Splinter finally said, his voice a gentle, low tone.

“Yes,” Mikey replied.

“Have you also quarreled with Raphael?” Master Splinter asked.
Mikey’s hands closed into fists but otherwise he didn’t move. “Yes.”

“Perhaps with regards to the meaning of the relationship you share with him?” Master Splinter queried.

“Shared,” Mikey said, stressing the past tense.

“I see,” Master Splinter said. Another pause. “Was it a physical relationship?”

Mikey glanced up at his father and then looked away again. “I guess you want to know if what Leo told you is true.”


Blinking in surprise, Mikey looked up again. “But you’re here.”

“Of course,” Master Splinter said. “One does not need to be a ninjitsu master to know when one’s child requires solace. Leonardo was extremely agitated with regards to your argument, but he was not inclined to share your secrets, nor did I want him to. Your brother goes to great pains to keep all of his brothers’ confidences to himself.”

“But he . . . .” Mikey stopped himself, not sure what to think of that revelation. “I thought he told you everything.”

Master Splinter looked slightly amused. “Perhaps he has allowed you to believe that because it served a purpose, but it is not so. He is very loyal to you and your brothers, even with regards to his own father. I trust his judgment in these matters. Leonardo will share anything he requires my counsel to resolve, otherwise he will seek to sort out the difficulties himself.”

“Then why did you ask . . . ?” Mikey began.

“You had already alluded to such a relationship with Raphael in our previous conversations,” Master Splinter answered. “I merely wished to verify it in order to know how best to offer you guidance.”

“I don’t know that you can say anything that would help now,” Mikey said, feeling the weight of his sadness.

“I sent the two of you off together the other night so that you could resolve your issues,” Master Splinter said. “I did so fully understanding that you might possibly spend the time on activities that did not include conversation. I did hope that you would at least reach a partial accord.”

Mikey felt a flush of embarrassed warmth suffuse his cheeks. “We talked. It’s just really . . . complicated.”

“So you have expressed to me before,” Master Splinter said. “Is it because your physical relationship has progressed to a sexual one?”

If there had ever been a time in his life that Mikey wanted to melt into the floor, now was it. He hesitated to answer, but Master Splinter was staring at him expectantly.

“Yes Father,” Mikey finally acknowledged.

“I have often wondered what path puberty might dictate my sons take,” Master Splinter said
almost musingly. “Would the fact that you four are unique in all the world force you into a life of celibacy, or would a biological imperative require you seek comfort from your own kind? I had rather hoped for the former as it would have entailed fewer difficulties.”

“I guess we let you down,” Mikey muttered.

“How could you let me down when I had no expectations?” Master Splinter asked, his expression sympathetic. “Hoping that your lives will not be complicated and desiring only your happiness is something I do because I am your father. I want you to have a good life, a life of fulfillment, but it is your life, Michelangelo.”

“I think I got fulfillment and sex mixed up,” Mikey blurted. “Kinda thought they went together, but they don’t. Now I know what you meant about the whole partner A and partner B thing.”

“Ahh,” Master Splinter responded with understanding. “You and Raphael are not of the same mindset as to the meaning of your relationship.”

“We’re not even in the same ballpark,” Mikey said with a grimace. “Ballpark being a good comparison ‘cause he thought what we had was a game and I didn’t.”

“I take it that you believed the two of you were forming a bond, something as important as the one that makes you brothers, but is different, perhaps deeper?” Master Splinter asked.

“Guess I read too many comic books, huh Master Splinter?” Mikey felt his eyes mist over and blinked rapidly, determined not to give in to self-pity.

“Do not discount your feelings my son,” Master Splinter said firmly. “Making a physical pact with someone should engage feelings of an emotional connection. There is nothing wrong with the expectations you had, nor is there anything wrong with Raphael’s desire to remain aloof from those feelings.”

Mikey thought about that and then sighed. “I’m guessing that’s where the whole understanding what we wanted from the relationship thing comes in. I shouldn’t be upset with Raph then, ‘cause he was straight up with me from the start. I just wanted something with him so bad I thought I could follow his rules.”

“The excitement of discovery and the pleasure of a new set of sensations does tend to dull one’s view of what they would usually consider acceptable,” Master Splinter said. “How long did it take you to realize that what you desired was not in line with the terms that you had agreed to with Raphael?”

“Not that long.” Mikey admitted. “Kinda around the time I started talking to you about . . . well, about my sexual preferences.”

“Were you seeking to discover my thoughts on the subject, or attempting to smooth the way for my approval of your relationship?” Master Splinter asked.

“Uh, both?” Mikey peeked up at his father, not really wanting to admit he’d had a secret agenda at the time.

“Perhaps our discussions were your way of circumventing a perceived threat to your intended relationship with Raphael?” Master Splinter asked astutely.

Mikey hung his head again. “Seems like everybody figured out what I was trying to do,”
he said.

“I assume that by ‘everybody’ you mean Leonardo,” Master Splinter said with a nod. “This is why you assumed that my being in your room was because your brother had told me of your intimate dalliances with Raphael. If he had known of it when you and I began our talks, then the argument you had with him would have occurred before tonight. Why would you feel the need to smooth your path with me as a way of removing Leonardo’s power over you if he did not have an inkling of the fact that you and Raphael were already engaged in a sexual relationship?”

“I, um . . . .” Mikey trailed off, not sure how to answer that question without giving away what had happened between Leo and Raph. Miserable, Mikey clamped his mouth shut.

“Ahh, I see,” Master Splinter said, sitting back and folding his hands in his lap. “Leonardo was already aware of Raphael’s proclivities, perhaps from an encounter of his own with his brother. That explains many things.”

“It wasn’t the same,” Mikey said fervently. “It was years ago too. I can’t . . . I can’t tell you about it ‘cause what happened is between them.”

“And it appears to have been a prelude to the bumpy relationship that Leonardo and Raphael have forged in the intervening years,” Master Splinter mused. “Raphael became aware of his sexuality at a much earlier age than the rest of you. Perhaps a need to have others submit to his will is a part of what angered him when Leonardo was chosen to lead.”

“Raph didn’t understand. He was stronger than Leo and a better fighter,” Mikey said, having no notion as to why he felt the need to defend Raph still.

Looking steadily into Mikey’s eyes, Master Splinter asked, “Does Raphael get rough with you when you ‘play’? Does he require that you submit to him in ways that are painful and perhaps degrading?”

“It’s my fault!” Mikey exclaimed, determined that Raph would not be blamed if everything was to come to light. “I found out by accident that I like it when he hurts me. I like it a lot. I pushed him until he gave in and agreed to do stuff with me.”

“With you’, not ‘to you’,” Master Splinter said in a thoughtful tone. “That is a very telling turn of phrase my son. It denotes a certain equality in your relationship with Raphael. You do not have to relay specifics, but I am curious as to the level of trust your activities require between the two of you. Is it very high?”

Mikey contemplated that question for a moment, astounded at how perceptive his father was. “It’s high, like, super high. Raph is kinda scared sometimes to try stuff ‘cause he thinks he won’t be able to stop if it gets dangerous, but I’m . . . I mean I was showing him that he’s got more control than he gives himself credit for.”

“Yes, I would imagine that Raphael has spent years being eaten alive both by his resentments and his inner turmoil,” Master Splinter said. “I have tried with minimal success to show him that he is worthy of our devotion to him and that he is important to his family. There have been times when I have feared that his own rage would tear him apart. Despite the arguments which still occur between Leonardo and Raphael, I have sensed a tendency towards more balance within Raphael over the past two weeks.”

Chin quivering slightly, Mikey looked down again, fighting to control his emotions. “I thought maybe if he saw how much I trusted him and . . . cared, that he’d know he was special. He
doesn’t want that. He just wants to get his kicks and keep it a secret. He probably won’t even come home now ‘cause he’s sure Leo knows everything and is gonna tell you.”

“I realized that as soon as Leonardo admitted that he had quarreled with you and Raphael became unreachable,” Master Splinter said. “Leonardo has allowed Raphael to believe that my learning of his sexual predilections would lead to serious consequences, has he not?”

“He thought you’d kick him out of the family,” Mikey said. “Worse than that, he’s afraid of how you’ll look at him; that you’ll be disgusted and tell him he’s a disappointment.”

With a deep sigh, Master Splinter shook his head. “Raphael has always had a greater need for my approval than do the rest of you.”

“I was kinda harsh during my fight with him,” Mikey confessed. “I walked out on him and he probably thought I’d blab about us as soon as I got home. I guess I just did.”

Master Splinter placed a reassuring hand on Mikey’s shoulder. “Do not beat yourself up over this, Michelangelo. I had already perceived much of what you have told me, you have only confirmed it.”

“Are you mad at me for not telling you all of this right from the start?” Mikey asked, his brow furrowed in sadness.

“Of course not,” Master Splinter assured him. “You were not ready. I knew that you would speak when the time was right.”

“I don’t know about right time,” Mikey said sorrowfully. “I kinda had to.”

They were silent again. After a moment, Master Splinter moved his hand from Mikey’s shoulder and set it on top of one of Mikey’s. The young turtle drew in a shaky breath and turned his hand over, holding his father’s as he’d done as a tot, drawing both love and support from him.

“There will be no practice tomorrow,” Master Splinter said in a low voice. “This family must have time to repair itself. I have already informed Leonardo of my decision in that regard and that I have also banned you all from leaving the lair until these current issues are resolved.”

Mikey’s head came up quickly. “But . . . but Raph won’t come home!”

Master Splinter squeezed his hand. “He will be home. As soon as I was informed that your brother could no longer be reached on his shell cell, I phoned Mr. Jones and asked him to relay a message to Raphael. He is to tell your brother that there will be no repercussions with regards to anything that has occurred and that Raphael is to return home.”

“Do you think he will?” Mikey asked.

“Yes I do. Raphael does not want to leave his home, my son. It is why he has been so adamant that you keep his secrets. Any assurance he gets that he will not be forced from here will bring him back,” Master Splinter said.

Mikey thought about that. He didn’t want for his family to split apart, he would never forgive himself. All of this was his fault; he should have never given in to temptation, he should have resisted his urges and never pursued Raph so ardently.

“Things have gotta go back the way they were,” Mikey murmured, almost as if no one else was present. “Leo will leave Raph alone then and Raph and I can just be brothers again.”
“Do you believe that it is possible to simply hit a reset button and nothing will have changed?” Master Splinter asked.

“Why not?” Mikey asked. “Raph didn’t want this, he’ll be happy to have me act like nothing happened. Leo won’t have to worry about us anymore and that’s all he wants.”

“And you, Michelangelo? What do you want?” Master Splinter asked gently.

“I know what I don’t want,” Mikey told him. “I don’t want to be the reason this family gets all screwed up.”

“Is that a good enough reason to relinquish the love you hoped that you would have?” Master Splinter asked.

“Yeah,” Mikey answered. There was a painful tightness in his chest as he said it, but he thought he could learn to live with that. “It’s the best reason. I was being selfish before and see what happened? I don’t want to hurt anyone, especially Raph, by being immature about stuff. If they see that I’m not dwelling on anything that happened then things can go back to normal.”

“It is an interesting supposition,” Master Splinter said, searching his son’s face. “We shall have to see where that notion leads. For now, you should get some sleep. I requested that Leonardo and Donatello do so before you returned and I must be in my own room before Raphael arrives. He will be skittish and a quiet lair will be his best assurance that he has not walked into a lion’s den.”

“I don’t think I can sleep,” Mikey said gloomily.

Master Splinter stood up and tugged at the blanket, forcing Mikey to rise enough so that his father could pull the blanket to the end of the bed.


Mikey did as he was told, realizing that it would be pointless to argue with his father. He could lie awake in a prone position just as well as he could sitting up.

As soon as he was comfortable, Master Splinter laid his palm against Mikey’s forehead and placed the fingertips of his other hand to a spot at the base of Mikey’s neck. In seconds Mikey began to feel immensely drowsy and knew that his father had used his expertise in pressure points to make his child sleep.

Mikey’s eyes closed, his mind leaving his pain and worries behind as he fell into blissful unconsciousness. The last thing he felt was his father pulling the blanket over him and tucking him in.

TBC……………
Chapter 32

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 4,819 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 32 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

When Michelangelo finally woke and glanced at his bedside clock he saw that it was past noon. He had forgotten to turn off his alarm but apparently Master Splinter had done so before leaving.

Mikey had slept well, thanks to his father, with no dreams to mar his rest. He thought about simply turning over and going back to sleep. There was no practice today and it would be normal for him to be the last of his brothers to rise.

It wouldn’t be normal for him to stay in bed all day though. The last thing he needed for anyone to think was that he was depressed. He had told Master Splinter that things had to go back to the way they were and that started with Mikey himself. If he could show his brothers that he hadn’t changed, then they could relax and be themselves again. Even Raphael.

Getting up was hard though; the prospect of what he might face when he stepped out of his room almost overwhelmed his resolve. Since Mikey had to pee, he let the call of nature be the impetus to pull him off his bed and through the door.

A glance showed him that the doors to his brother’s rooms all stood open. Fortunately, so did the bathroom door and Mikey made it into the porcelain sanctuary without meeting anyone.

As he took care of his usual business, Mikey kept his focus on the next step in his routine, not allowing his mind to drift beyond that. When he caught himself wondering if Leo and Raph had talked, Mikey slapped his thoughts down and returned them to contemplating breakfast.

On his way to the kitchen Mikey heard Donatello humming lightly to himself in his lab. At least one brother seemed above the fray and Mikey knew that if he needed a port in the storm, he could always duck in there with Don and spend the day reading comic books. After he informed the genius that he needn’t worry about Raph and him going out anymore.

There were sounds coming from the dojo and Mikey paused in the kitchen doorway, his head cocked in that direction. He recognized Master Splinter’s voice; the tone indicating that he was in the process of instructing someone. Leonardo of course. Even with practice officially called off, his obsessive brother would still be training.

Walking to the refrigerator to grab the eggs, Mikey allowed himself a tiny bit of concern as to Raphael’s whereabouts. Surely everyone wouldn’t be behaving in such an ordinary fashion if he hadn’t come home. Shaking his head, Mikey forced his worries aside and took the eggs to the counter top.

Mikey had just poured his beaten egg concoction into a warm pan when he sensed someone enter the kitchen. Reaching for a spatula, Mikey glanced over his shoulder, expecting to see Raph.
It was Leo.

He turned back to mixing his scrambled eggs, half hoping that Leo hadn’t noticed that he’d been spotted. But of course he had; he came directly over to Mikey, standing off to the side right in Mikey’s line of sight. Mikey should have known that Leo would be waiting for him to make an appearance. Leo wasn’t one to put things off.

Remembering his resolution, Mikey put his game face on and looked up with a grin. “Have you eaten bro’? I can add some eggs to this if you’re hungry.”

“Mikey, about last night,” Leo said, getting right to the point. “I absolutely was not trying to hurt you.”

With a wave of his spatula, Mikey said, “All forgotten. You were trying to help, I get that.”

Leo frowned, no doubt having expected his younger brother to be defensive. “We should really talk about it. I know I said some things that you didn’t want to hear.”

“Don’t need to talk anymore,” Mikey told him. “I thought about what you said and you’re right, I was mostly curious. The more you told me I shouldn’t do stuff with Raph the more I wanted to do it. I realized that was kinda childish. I already told Raph it’s over and now I’m telling you. Over, done, finished, let’s move on.”

“Did you reach that conclusion after talking to Master Splinter?” Leo asked. At Mikey’s surprised glance, Leo said, “I guessed that he was going to wait up for you after he told Donny and me to go to bed.”

Mikey stirred the eggs, stalling as he examined what it was that Leo was really asking. When he thought he had a handle on that, Mikey said, “Yeah, I talked to Master Splinter last night, but I only told him stuff about me.” He stressed ‘me’ so that Leo would know that Mikey hadn’t discussed the thing that had happened between Raph and him.

“I wasn’t worried about that,” Leo said, understanding immediately. “We had tea together this morning and he didn’t address the issue so I knew he hadn’t been made cognizant of it.”

“Cognizant,” Mikey repeated with a chuckle, relieved that Master Splinter hadn’t let on to Leo the things their father had guessed. “You’ve been hanging with Don too much.”

“I appreciate that you didn’t air my shortcomings to Father,” Leo said, his expression softening. “You weren’t the only one thinking about what was said last night. We’re not kids anymore and it’s not my place to undermine the perception you have of your brothers. I can want to protect you without saying or doing things that detract from them.”

Mikey eyed him suspiciously. “That’s a complete about face. What did you have with that tea this morning?”

For a moment Leo looked discomfited. “Father reminded me that a good leader should not engender such fear of retribution in his team that they are reticent to tell him things. By painting such a . . . damaged picture of Raphael for you, I was not only making it difficult for you to talk to me, but I was projecting my own inadequacies in dealing with him onto you. That wasn’t fair. If I have issues with Raph, I should address them with him.”

“Address away, just don’t involve me in that discussion,” Mikey said quickly. “I’m out of the equation. You two figure out how to hug it out based on your own differences, not on anything
that happened between me and Raph. I’m shoving that all in the past.”

“Are you sure you can do that?” Leo asked, not looking convinced.

“Oh yeah,” Mikey said easily as he dumped the contents of the pan onto a plate. “It’s not like the stuff we did meant anything. We were just, you know, trying things out. For kicks. Wasn’t important to either of us.”

He carried his plate to the table and poured out a glass of milk before sitting down.

“That’s not the way it sounded last night,” Leo said, hanging on obstinately. “You were very defensive about your relationship with Raph.”

Mikey shrugged, chewing a bite of eggs before answering. “That’s ‘cause I didn’t think it was any of your business. Kinda natural to get pissed when someone is trying to tell you what you can and can’t do with your own life. I told you, after I thought about it I figured out that our whole argument was juvenile. I don’t own Raph and neither do you. It’s stupid to fight about the things that don’t really matter.”

“Are you saying that Raph doesn’t matter to you?” Leo asked, staring fixedly at Mikey.

“I’m saying he’s my brother,” Mikey said, gesturing with his fork. “Just like you, just like Donny.”

Mikey continued to eat, behaving as though he was oblivious of the fact that Leo was still observing him. Finally Leo sighed in a defeated manner, the stress lines in his forehead smoothing out.

“I’m sorry for this whole thing,” Leo said gently. “I’m sorry that I came on so strong, and I’m sorry that you were hurt. Raph cares about us; I know he does. Someday he might even learn how to show it.”

“I know he does,” Mikey said, swallowing the lump in his throat while keeping his expression neutral. “So do you, so do I. That’s why I’m not playing this game anymore. Everything back the way it was, okay?”

Leo studied Mikey as he let those words sink in. There was a compassionate look on his face as Leo said, “If that’s what you need, then so be it. Have I ever told you how brave I think you are?”

“You’ve never said you think I’m smarter and better looking than the rest of you all put together,” Mikey replied with a grin, “but I take it for granted that you know.”

One of Leo’s hands lifted as he walked past Mikey, as though to pat his brother’s shoulder, but he changed his mind and pulled it back. Mikey was thankful for that; his feelings had been tested enough for the moment, with even the slightest show of sympathy he might have broken down.

Mikey wondered if Leo might actually be relieved that his youngest brother had decided to take this route of pretending that nothing had happened. It would let Leo off the hook in many ways; he might not even feel the need to speak to Raph about any of it. Peace could once more descend on the household, with Leo and Raph continuing to make no effort to understand each other.

“Not my concern,” Mikey mumbled to himself, swiftly finishing his meal and washing up.
He wanted to be out and doing stuff instead of sitting around letting his thoughts linger on things he’d decided were best forgotten.

One of those had been Raph’s whereabouts. Mikey stopped midway to the door as he realized that it hadn’t been Leo in the dojo with Master Splinter. His father’s decision to allow Raph to return home to a quiet lair had been meant to put the volatile turtle at ease. Spending quality time working one-on-one with Raph was Master Splinter’s way of showing Raph that he was still and always would be, a highly regarded member of the family.

That was good, Mikey decided. This way Raph would know that Mikey had not badmouthed him to anyone and he’d believe Mikey had kept their secret as promised. If things were to return to normalcy between them, then Raph couldn’t start out resenting Mikey for not holding his tongue.

Mikey inhaled deeply, fortifying himself, and exited the kitchen. Since he couldn’t actually go ‘out’, Mikey opted for the next best mind bending alternative and headed straight for the television array. Choosing a game that required a high level of skill and contained a lot of action, Mikey sat down to play.

Several hours passed unnoticed as Mikey lost himself in the game. He paid no attention to the comings and goings of his family, nor did he dwell on the fact that no one bothered him. It might have felt awkward to Mikey if he’d taken the time to think about it, but because he was determined to pretend everything was as usual, their lack of attention was overlooked.

It was Don’s turn to make dinner and that brought the genius out of his lab. Before going into the kitchen, Don announced that he’d invited Leatherhead to eat with them. Wondering who Don was talking to, Mikey turned off his game, stretched, and had a look around.

Leo and their father were just coming out of Master Splinter’s room and Mikey saw that Don was looking in their direction. Glancing at the digital display on the disc player, Mikey found that it was nearly time for the first evening news broadcast. He was going to have to find another way to entertain himself because his possession of the TV’s was about to be usurped.

Abandoning the couch to make room for Leo and his dad, Mikey wandered towards the dojo. He heard the news broadcast begin, the rain once more the lead story. Master Splinter might prefer that none of them leave the lair, but depending on the forecast, they might have to, if only to ensure that the tunnels near their home were still draining properly.

Mikey sort of expected to see Raph still in the dojo, but his brother was not there. Backing up, Mikey looked up towards the bedrooms and saw that Raph’s door remained open. In the garage no doubt, allaying his boredom with some mechanical project.

It took a second for it to register that he’d actually gone to the dojo in the hopes of running into Raph. Mikey had not seen him at all that day. Frowning, Mikey analyzed his action in an attempt to discern what his motives were.

First off, he knew that Raph was probably angry with him and not in the mood to interact. Mikey found that he resented that; Raph had said some very hurtful things to him and had no right to feel bitter about the way Mikey had called it all off. Raph had practically begged Mikey to do just that.

Secondly, Raph had yelled at him to grow up and Mikey felt that he needed to show Raph he was doing so. They were going to have to sit around the dinner table with a guest and it wouldn’t be fair to Leatherhead if there was an active show of hostility between the brothers.
Thirdly, Mikey discovered that his hands were shaking at the idea of being near Raph. He couldn’t live with the anticipation of what might happen once they were face to face again; Mikey needed that to be over and done with. Raph had no idea that his brother had pledged to set time back to before Mikey had perceived his own kink and started them down a path that had ultimately brought them to this.

Whatever this messed up need that Mikey had to liken pain with pleasure, it was something he now understood and meant to control. Mikey had decided that he was not destined to be with Raph and he needed to smooth things over with his brother. He had to convey to Raph that nothing about them being brothers should change just because they’d had a fling together and couldn’t make it work.

Mikey turned purposeful steps towards the elevator and took it up to the garage. He did not notice that Leo had turned to watch him and probably wouldn’t have cared. Mikey had meant it when he’d told Leo that the thing with Raph was done. If Leo wanted to check up on them, he was certainly welcome to.

The sound of the metal grinder led Mikey to Raph. His brother was grinding the rust off a fuel tank that was one of the many salvaged auto parts they’d dragged back to the lair from the junk yard. There was plenty of things requiring attention in that stack and no surprise that Raph had chosen to while away his idle hours doing manual labor.

At Mikey’s approach Raph switched off the grinder, his lips curving into a snarl. Lifting the safety goggles from his eyes, he snapped, “What do you want?”

Hoping to get it over with quickly, Mikey said, “Dude, I’m sorry I blew up. I get it okay? You didn’t want us to get attached and you told me that up front. It wasn’t fair of me to try to change the rules. It’s all fine now, it’s in the past and forgotten. Can we just go back to being bro’s again?”

Raph’s eyes narrowed and he slowly set the grinder down. “This your new way of fucking with me? I’ve still got a big secret ya’ can hold over my head.”

“I said the past was forgotten and I meant it,” Mikey assured him. “That room was and is yours. I won’t ever go there again and I won’t talk about it to anyone. Even though I was mad when I left you last night I didn’t say a word to anybody about us, so you can be sure that I never will. I only came up here to tell you that so you wouldn’t wonder where we stood. We’re good now right?”

Raph looked slightly stunned, as though a different scenario had played through his mind about what would happen when they talked again. He no longer appeared extremely angry; more like puzzled and mildly peeved.

“Uh, sure,” Raph said slowly. “Yeah Mikey, no hard feelings.”

“Cool,” Mikey said with false brightness. “FYI, Leatherhead’s coming to dinner. I have no idea what Don’s cooking, but I’m sure there’ll be a lot of it.”

“I’ll be on time,” Raph assured him, lowering the safety goggles.

Mikey spun on his heel and left, taking that as a sign that Raph needed to be alone. Going down in the elevator, Mikey recalled how Raph had said ‘no hard feelings’. With a snort, Mikey told himself, “Right. No feelings period.”
If Mikey hoped that getting his meeting with Raph over with would ease the shaking in his hands, he was wrong. Now he felt jittery all over, like his body had just taken a heavy duty shot of adrenaline and was now having to deal with it.

Not wanting to chance having someone decide to engage him in conversation while he was feeling out of sorts, Mikey walked over to where Leo and Master Splinter were watching the news. He sat down cross-legged on the floor, a not unusual position for him, thus avoiding being too near Leo on the couch.

Being where he was would show Leo that he wasn’t doing anything with Raph, help pass the time before dinner, and with Master Splinter nearby, prevent Leo from asking questions. It would also give Mikey time to calm down and find his center again.

Leatherhead’s arrival was heralded with enthusiasm by the small family. Raph kept his word and was there to greet LH, listening with concern when the giant croc explained how he’d had to vary his route to the lair due to the city workers who were inside the tunnels.

“You should plan to stay here with us, LH. At least until the workers get out of our section of tunnels,” Raph said.

“As much as I would enjoy the company, I would feel ill at ease attempting to sleep away from my home,” Leatherhead explained. “One bad dream and my temper could become a liability for you all, as it once did. The familiarity of my current abode provides me with the serenity required to maintain an even temperament.”

“It’s good that you know yourself so well,” Leo said as they took their places around the table. “There are many who wouldn’t come to that type of understanding even over a lifetime.”

“I have had much time to contemplate these things,” Leatherhead said. “When you have once been forced into an encounter with your demons, you tend towards an examination of them.”

Mikey took a sip of water, trying to pretend that the conversation wasn’t striking close to home. The last thing he wanted was for anyone to notice that this kind of talk made him uncomfortable.

“Sounds kind of lonely,” Mikey said. He was seated next to Leatherhead. “What do you do for fun?”

“Introspection can be fun, Michelangelo. Spiritual development helps us achieve a higher level of enlightenment,” Leatherhead told him.

“What Leatherhead practices is very similar to Buddhism,” Don chimed in, placing the last of the platter of food on the table and sitting on Leatherhead’s other side. “The Utrom were dedicated to an altruistic desire to aid other life forms, it’s one of the reasons for their space travel. Leatherhead and I have had many interesting discussions on the topic.”

“Don’t think the Shredder ever got that message,” Mikey said with a grin. “Either that, or it went right over his head.”

“He was an anomaly amongst his kind,” Leatherhead said with disapproval. “One with enough charisma to corrupt those with a lesser fidelity to wisdom.”

“Ya’ mean the greedy ones,” Raph translated. “Always gotta be some of those kinds in the bunch.”
“Exactly, Raphael. One of the inherent flaws in most sentient beings is a certain level of
greed,” Master Splinter said. “For those of us who recognize it as a negative attribute, it is
something to avoid.”

“And the ones who embrace it are taking the easy way out,” Leo interposed. “You have to
work harder not to give in to a natural desire to have more for yourself.”

The dinner conversation continued in that vein, remaining both lively and entertaining.
Mikey contributed to it, striving to maintain the illusion of being his usual self, despite a faint
sense of surrealism.

At least Leatherhead hadn’t given him any strange looks or flared his nostrils in Mikey’s
direction. Either the croc was being polite, or there was no longer a difference in Mikey’s scent.
Mikey’s resolve to end things with Raph had not only set things back on track to normalcy, but had
also meant the potential for a tricky situation had been avoided.

If only Mikey could find some comfort in that knowledge.

When Leatherhead’s visit ended, Don gave him a large foil packet of leftovers and insisted
on walking partway with him. This had led to Leo offering to go with them as well, so as to watch
Don’s back on the return trip. Master Splinter had agreed to lift the ban on leaving the lair for a
short period, contingent on his two most responsible sons adhering to their stated purpose.

Raph immediately settled in to watch some televised wrestling, leaving Mikey with the
decision to either join him, or clean the dishes. He chose the latter. Though it was out of character
for him to volunteer for such a task, Mikey felt he could logically be excused for not wanting to
push his company on a brother he’d just had a disagreement with.

Leo and Don returned to the lair without incident. Before Master Splinter retired for the
evening, he informed his sons that rather than a joint practice session the next day, he would be
working with them individually. It came as no surprise that he scheduled Leonardo for the early
slot.

When Master Splinter turned in, so did Mikey. Even though it had been a short day, he was
exhausted. On his way to bed Mikey saw that Don had joined Raph on the couch and that Leo was
at the table melting candle stubs for the wax to make new candles. Everything as usual. Wasn’t
that what Mikey wanted?

In spite of his exhaustion, Mikey had a fitful night’s sleep. Alone in his quiet room all of
the thoughts he’d fought so hard to keep at bay came filtering back into his head. It was only after
he’d given up trying to sleep and had started reading that he’d finally managed to drift off.

Mikey woke with a start, tears streaming from his eyes. He’d had a dream, a bad one, he
gathered, because of the effect it had on him.

The dream, like most he had, was fading quickly. By closing his eyes, Mikey was able to catch
stray images in order to piece together what had upset him. It seemed important that he do so.

The shifting kaleidoscope in his mind’s eye told him that something terrible had happened
to Raph. Mikey couldn’t quite grab hold of what that was, but he had a vague feeling that it was
because of something that he had done. He felt as though Raph’s horrible ending had been
Mikey’s fault, that his brother had been upset with him and had done something foolish.
Mikey didn’t believe in foreshadowing, but he did believe that dreams were a way for the subconscious mind to resolve issues. Or even deliver messages. He thought this one might be encouraging him to stay the course he’d set, no matter how difficult.

Just then his alarm went off and Mikey reached over to silence it. He’d volunteered to train after Leo because he wanted to get it over with. After splashing some cold water on his face, Mikey went downstairs and met his sensei in the dojo.

It was all business from that point. Mikey focused on his lessons better than he had in a long while because that was better than thinking about anything else. One day at a time, he told himself.

Once he’d finished practice, Mikey grabbed something to eat and tried to think of an activity that would keep him busy without it appearing that he was trying to avoid interacting with his brothers. Under normal circumstances, he would have devised some pranks to play on them, thus assuaging both his boredom and theirs at the same time. He wasn’t in the right frame of mind for that, especially since his favorite target had once been Raphael.

Mikey finally settled on something he hadn’t taken up in a long while, his art. Locating his sketching pad and the box of graphite pencils April had given him, Mikey took them into the entertainment area. Seating himself comfortably on the floor in front of the televisions, Mikey began to draw.

The scenes depicting local flooding gave him plenty of inspiration, along with the things he’d seen since the rains had started to fall. He even drew a picture of Nobody, the vigilante perched atop a building with a deluge pouring down all around him, seemingly oblivious to the storm.

After a while Mikey’s hand started to cramp and he shook it while clasping and unclasping his fingers.

“Looks like you could use a break.”

The mild voice belonged to Donatello and Mikey glanced up to see the genius standing nearby.

“What’d you have in mind?” Mikey asked.

“How about a little weapons sparring? I could use a good stretch,” Don said.

Mikey set his art supplies aside and stood up. “Master Splinter didn’t give you enough of a workout?”

“He wanted me to concentrate on katas,” Don said. “That wasn’t enough to get the blood really pumping.”

Grinning as they walked to the dojo, Mikey said, “I guess getting your butt trounced by me will do the trick.”

In the center of the room the pair faced each other and bowed. “Not today Michelangelo,” Don told him, swiftly drawing his bō staff and attacking his brother.

The move was so unexpected and unlike the usually non-aggressive Donatello that it took Mikey by surprise. He barely managed to dodge the first strike, though he took a nasty hit to his thigh while he was drawing his weapons.
Twirling his nunchucks, Mikey feinted to the left to pull Don out of his stance and then attacked to the right. Don adjusted quickly, using his staff to regain his balance and flipping it up to deflect Mikey’s onslaught.

It left Don’s upper body exposed and Mikey swung his second nunchuck at Don’s shoulder, knowing a good hit would leave his brother too numb to hold his staff. Rather than belatedly attempting to ward off the strike though, Don swept his staff down low and across, catching the back of Mikey’s ankles and sweeping his feet from under him.

The tactic was so unusual for Don that Mikey was momentarily too stunned to roll when he hit the mats. Before he could, Don pounced on him, pressing his staff to Mikey’s neck.

Mikey managed to get his hands on the bō when Don brought it down, but his arms were in too close to his body and he didn’t have the leverage to push his brother off. Especially since Don was stronger than him and was applying a lot of pressure. Enough to have actually strangled Mikey if the younger turtle wasn’t doing his level best to keep the bō off his throat.

There was an unusual gleam in Don’s brown eyes as he held his brother down, one that Mikey found disconcerting. When Don shifted, Mikey thought it was because the genius was going to release him, but instead Don was simply changing his position, moving to straddle Mikey.

Leaning over, his face inches from Mikey’s, Don asked, “This what you like little brother?”

Mikey’s mouth fell open and his breathing stopped as he gaped at Donatello. A tiny satisfied smile curved Don’s lips as he took in Mikey’s stupefied expression.

A choked sound from the doorway pulled Mikey’s gaze in that direction, though Don didn’t take his off Mikey. Standing there staring at them was Raphael. As soon as their eyes connected, Raph whirled around and marched out of the dojo.

TBC............
“Donny, let me up!” Mikey demanded, feeling a sense of panic over Raph’s reaction at seeing Don pinning him to the floor.

“Fascinating,” Donatello said without moving. “It’s not the same with me, is it?”

Mikey stared at him, unable to process what Don was doing. “Wh... what are you talking about?”

“The rush you get when it’s Raph behaving aggressively with you,” Don answered, a smug look on his face. “Your pupils aren’t dilated, you aren’t responding with the same short, quick breaths, and your body is much too tense. You’re actually fighting me for control.”

“Of course I am,” Mikey responded, struggling against Don’s hold. “I’d do the same with anybody who’s trying to choke me!”

“Not with Raph you don’t,” Don said. “Not lately. You open up to him and you probably don’t realize you’re doing it either.”

“Doing what?” Mikey asked, despite the fact that his mind was demanding he shut up.

“Submitting,” Don whispered against Mikey’s head. He smiled when he saw Mikey’s eyes grow wide. “It’s in your posture, your expressions; your body language as a whole. He gets close and you make yourself vulnerable.”

“Not funny anymore Donatello,” Mikey said, rolling from side to side as much as Don’s weight allowed. He lifted a knee and thumped it against Don’s carapace. “Get off me!”

Mikey was starting to grow frantic. Normally he could have found a way out of Don’s trap, but his mind was too full of the image of Raph’s face from a moment earlier.

“If I do, you’ll just chase after him,” Don said. “Weren’t you trying to stop doing that?”

“I won’t. I won’t go after him, just let me go!” Mikey cried out, his heart beating wildly in his chest.

“Let’s find out,” Don said.

Lifting his knees from the floor, Don rose to his feet in one fluid movement, taking his bō staff with him. Mikey immediately jumped up and turned towards the door.

With a flick of his wrist, Don stuck his bō staff right in front of his younger brother, barring Mikey’s path. Mikey came to a quick stop to avoid running into the staff and then Don stepped
around to block Mikey’s exit.

“Get out of my way,” Mikey ground out with determination.

“Move me,” Don challenged. When Mikey hesitated, Don asked, “Afraid I’ll pin you down again? Or are you worried that you might start responding to me the way you do when it’s Raph hurting you?”

“Fat chance,” Mikey snapped. “Why don’t you leave it alone, Donny? This is none of your business anyway.”

Don laughed shortly. “Of course it’s my business. Do you think I don’t know about Raph’s proclivities? I’ve been studying his behavior since the first time he and Leo got into a real fight. I’ve been studying Leo’s too. They don’t want each other.”

Mikey had been about to make a break for it, determined to be as violent as necessary to escape Don, but those words froze him. He blinked at Don and asked slowly, “What do you know about any of it?”

“Raph’s a sadist,” Don said. “He hides it really well but I’ve noticed the physiological changes that occur when he becomes aggressive. They’re almost exclusive to his interactions with you, by the way. I say almost because I’m pretty sure something happened between Raph and Leo once, something that didn’t end well.”

“You said they don’t want each other,” Mikey said, clinging to that sentence as if it were a lifeline.

“Oh Mikey, of course they don’t,” Don said, shaking his head. “If Raph had ever acted out with Leo it would be because he thought he got the upper hand in something. And it would only have happened if Raph was already frustrated and feeling like no one respected him. He’d get carried away over a need to prove himself. It wouldn’t be about Leo, it would be about Raph.”

“But Raph . . . .” Mikey stopped to think about what he wanted to say. “But Raph really values what Leo thinks of him.”

“He should,” Don said and then rushed on quickly when he saw Mikey’s expression. “We should all value each other in that same fashion. Leo tries to hide the fact that he very much values Raph’s opinion of him. Raph is too hard on himself and thinks that everyone views him through that same prism of self-doubt.”

“Then we should be helping him past that!” Mikey exclaimed, fully feeling the dissatisfaction of the last couple of days.

“How do you help someone who doesn’t want the help, Mikey? Did you ask any of us for help?” Don asked quietly.

Mikey remembered back to the very moment he’d discovered his own particular kink and how ashamed he’d been. When Raph had learned of it by accident, Mikey had wanted to crawl into a hole and pull dirt on top of himself.

“I couldn’t,” Mikey admitted, his voice shaking slightly.

“You like pain, don’t you?” Don said. “I’ve been watching you since that day at practice when you went out of your way to avoid physical contact with Raph. You didn’t know that about yourself until around that time. Something happened didn’t it? Something that made Raph pounce
on you the way he does when you aggravate him. Only this time you got excited by it.”

His face flushed, Mikey could only nod in agreement. “I pulled a prank on him. After he paid me back for it and left, I was . . . you know, wound up,” he said, barely able to meet Don’s eyes. “Raph found out the next day. He was mad because he thought I’d made him look foolish at practice and he trapped me in the tunnels.”

“Do you understand this part of your sexual identity Mikey?” Don asked, sounding once more like the sympathetic brother that Mikey knew him to be.

Mikey scuffed the ground with his feet and murmured, “I don’t want to be with women. I don’t just want to be with another guy, I want to be with my own brother. Is screwed up a sexual identity?”

“You are not screwed up.” Don stated adamantly. “We are a group of four very unique beings. What we want, what we desire, those things are going to be unique as well.”

“Even to wanting Raph to hurt me?” Mikey asked, his voice cracking. “Come on Donny, you gotta admit that’s out there.”

“It’s not so out there that there isn’t a term for it,” Don told him with complacency. “I told you that Raph’s a sadist, do you know what that means?”

Shaking his head, Mikey answered, “Not really.”

“Generally it means someone who derives pleasure, especially sexual gratification, from inflicting pain or humiliation on others,” Don said. “That’s the dictionary version. Of course I have no first-hand knowledge of exactly what Raph prefers, but knowing him, I’m going to guess he likes to be rough. For him it would be less about humiliation and more about seeing what he could put a partner through. How much they can take. Am I close?”

Mikey cleared his throat. “You . . . might be.”

Again that small smile curved Don’s lips. “Still keeping his secrets? It’s okay, we were raised to be loyal to each other. I’ll just go on with my guesses, shall I?”

His pause told Mikey that wasn’t a rhetorical question. “Okay.”

“Now you,” Don said, cocking his head slightly to one side and contemplating Mikey. “You’re a masochist. Do you know that definition?”

“You’re the opposite of Raph?” Mikey asked in return.

“Very astute guess,” Don said, his tone compassionate. “To answer your question, yes. A masochist derives sexual gratification from their own pain or humiliation. In your case, specifically from the pain that Raph inflicts on you. It doesn’t work the same with anyone else as I just proved.”

The frantic feeling was starting to fade as Mikey listened to Don explaining things to him. This is what Don did; he boiled things down to concepts that were simple to understand, and he did it in a non-judgmental kind of way. Mikey felt a sense of relief at finally being able to openly talk about this without the guilt of breaking Raph’s confidences.

“How do you know all this stuff, Donny? I mean, what even made you think any of that had to do with us? Did . . . did Master Splinter talk to you about it, or . . . or Leo?” Mikey cleared
“No one has shared anything with me, Mikey. That was the point of the questions I’ve been asking,” Don said. “Remember when we were really little and promised we’d never keep secrets from each other? It wasn’t just that we were so close, it was because we knew we’d never have anyone else to share things with except each other. The older I’ve gotten, the more I’ve realized how important that pledge was. Major secrets are just bad for us.”

Mikey recalled the conversation he’d had with Leo the morning following his accident on the pier. “Secrets can get us killed,” he murmured, almost to himself, parroting the words Leo had said to him.

“Exactly,” Don said with a nod, “and they can pull us apart. That’s why this is my business. My cameras verified that you and Raph were going out to be alone together. When I asked about it, you both gave me essentially the same story. That’s another thing that roused my suspicions. First you tell me that you’re there to moderate Raph’s behavior and then he tells me almost that exact same thing? Not likely unless you two were concocting a story to cover for what you were really doing.”

“Geez Donny, you didn’t have to get all dramatic like this, you could have just talked to me about it,” Mikey said, frowning at his brother.

Don slid his bō staff into place on his shell and then shrugged. “I tried that. Several times. What did you say? Oh, yeah, same as you told me a minute ago. ‘It’s none of your business, Donatello’.”

“You know, I did hint at the way I was feeling the night Master Splinter was sick,” Mikey told him defensively.

“A hint isn’t the same thing as sitting down and talking with me,” Don said. “Using analogies about tiny organisms trapped under a microscope isn’t the same as saying ‘hey Donny, that connection I was talking about is one I want to have with Raph. By connection, I mean sex.’ If you had done that I might have been able to help before you got hurt.”

“If I had done that you’d have dropped your teeth,” Mikey snapped. It almost sounded like an ‘I told you so’ from his smart brother, and Mikey’s wounds were too fresh. “Dude, I know you’re trying to help and all, but everything’s cool. I’m not hurt. Don’t even know where you get that idea.”

“I’m observant Mikey,” Don said, crossing his arms, “and I listen. As I said, you and Raph gave me pretty much the same cover story to explain meeting up outside the lair, but the way you each delivered that information was very different. I developed a theory based on that and on what happened the night before last.”

“So now you’re basing theories off of stuff your brothers do? Would’ve thought you’d be too busy,” Mikey said with a hint of sarcasm.

“I’m in charge of security and I think this qualifies,” Don retorted. “But you go on being defensive, it substantiates my hypothesis. Every one of your previous responses to our conversations showed the same pattern; that you were looking forward. You were desiring a real relationship with Raph and were laying the groundwork for acceptance. What you wanted was a future with Raphael as your intimate partner.”

“Raph’s responses on the other hand were guarded. They did not allude to any hopes for a
change in his circumstance. He was evasive or he made threats, but he did not try to garner sympathy for his position. Raph had no confidence in the concept of holding onto something with you, so he gave up fighting for it. He’d decided early on to live in the present, enjoy what he could while he could, and live without it when the time came.”

“You’re making me feel so much better,” Mikey muttered acerbically.

“The night before last it all came to a head, didn’t it?” Don asked. When Mikey glowered at him, Don went on as though his brother had responded in the affirmative. “That’s what I thought. You were alone here with Leo and he took that opportunity to confront you about Raph. Really Mikey, you should have known that Leo would figure it out just as I did. I only issued my ultimatum because I wanted to force you to go to Leo yourself.”

“I tried that,” Mikey said. “Not exactly the straightforward approach ‘cause Raph wouldn’t have liked it, but I kept trying to get Leo to see that Raph wasn’t the monster he tried to make him out to be. All Leo wanted to do was talk about demons and me getting hurt.”

“Then you should have focused on yourself during the conversations and not attempted to change Leo’s perception of Raph. That’s something between the two of them,” Don said. “Let me guess, Leo attacked Raph’s motivations and you defended them. The conversation grew heated with both of you keeping Raph at the center of your disagreement.”

For a moment Mikey wondered if Don hadn’t bugged the lair as well as planting hidden cameras. “Raph is at the center of our argument,” Mikey asserted.

Shaking his head, Don said, “No, your feelings for Raph are. Mikey, that’s been the difference all along. It’s what started everything rolling downhill. You awoke to your own sexuality and made the conscious choice to pursue what you wanted, just as you always do.”

“What’s so wrong about that?” Mikey demanded. “Why do we always have to place limits on ourselves? Why can’t we fight for the things we want in life?”

“That’s what you should have told Leo,” Don said with a hint of satisfaction. “You should have told him that you started this, that you pushed Raph into giving in to his base desires because you wanted them, and that you like it. You should have told Leo that your passions are a perfect match to Raph’s. Maybe then Leo wouldn’t feel he needed to protect you from getting hurt.”

“Wouldn’t have mattered much to Raph,” Mikey said with a scowl.

“You mean in the fight you had with him after arguing with Leo?” Don asked. “It didn’t require a rocket scientist to figure that one out, the events of that night pretty much spoke for themselves. Raph had to look for you because you became unreachable after your discussion with Leo. He found out what was said from Leo who probably chastised him, ergo Raph’s anger when he confronted you.”

“You’re a little scary, Donny. Anyone ever tell you that?” Mikey asked, frowning.

“Yes,” Don said, continuing as though he hadn’t been interrupted. “You were still agitated and rather than attempting to calm Raph as you’ve been doing in order to hang onto to what you’ve got, you lashed out. You told him what you wanted and that didn’t include keeping your relationship or your shared predilections a secret any longer. Raph blew up. But he wasn’t the one who ended it, was he?”

“I did,” Mikey said, reminded of his misery. “Not my finest moment. Not my finest month
“You meant it though, didn’t you?” Don asked, appearing to understand. “The secrecy was exciting at first, but you needed to know it had a deeper meaning.”

“Master Splinter wanted me to realize that too,” Mikey said. “He kept giving me hints to look inside myself. All I could see was how awesome . . . um, doing stuff with Raph was.”

“Sex,” Don said with the hint of a smile. “You can say the word without betraying Raph’s trust. I’ve already guessed it on my own. By the way, did you know there is a reward system in part of the brain? It’s one of the reasons we desire sex because that’s what keeps a species alive. I have a theory about yours.”

“Of course you do,” Mikey said.

“The medial forebrain muscle is a bundle that’s part of the reward system,” Don said, ignoring Mikey’s sarcasm. “It’s involved in integrating the reward and pleasure components of our brains. I think yours is wired differently, so that a certain amount of pain feels like pleasure when it’s supplied by someone who has already fired off your attraction receptors.”

“So then I’m not messed up?” Mikey asked hopefully. “Like, it’s a physical problem, not a mental problem?”

“It’s not a problem at all,” Don assured him. “You are perfectly normal. There are probably hundreds of thousands of people who derive pleasure from pain. As long as you know when to stop and trust that your partner does as well, it’s a completely healthy sexual activity. Raph would stop if you said to, wouldn’t he?”

“Yes,” Mikey rushed to say. “Totally. He always makes sure it’s safe and reminds me how to stop whatever we’re trying.”

“Then neither of you should feel any shame at what you’re doing,” Don said.

“Raph does,” Mikey said. “That thing you said might have happened between him and Leo? It did, a long time ago. Leo freaked and said some things and they’ve been tormenting Raph ever since.”

“Despite his sadistic tendencies, deep down Raph probably fears hurting a partner, no doubt because of the way he reacted to Leo,” Don said. “The difference is that he’s not and never has been attracted to Leo. What happened was a combination of hormones and anger. He’s probably shoved aside any hope of finding a partner or having a meaningful relationship because of that. Raph gave in to you because of his attraction and the fact that due to your strength, musculature, and flexibility he figures you can take whatever he can dish out. Discovering that you like pain made it even more acceptable because he didn’t have to worry about holding back. That and he trusts you.”

“Not enough to open up to me,” Mikey said sadly. “Guess he thinks if he doesn’t do that he won’t get hurt.”

“Or maybe he thinks he doesn’t deserve to be loved,” Don said. “Someone should show him he does.”

Mikey stared at his brother for a moment and then asked, “What are you doing exactly? Was all of this just to prove a theory? Raph walked in on us while you were pulling your stunt.”
“How did that make you feel?” Don countered. “Are you afraid of what he’ll think? You’re the one who ended things with him.”

“That doesn’t mean I want to rub anything in his face,” Mikey replied hotly. “I want things to go back to the way they were before we got together.”

“It doesn’t work that way,” Don said. “You can’t turn off your memories and you can’t turn off your feelings.”

“Raph did,” Mikey shot back.

“Are you certain about that?” Don asked. “That’s not how it appeared to me when he saw me pinning you down.”

“He turned around and walked out!” Mikey exclaimed. “It sure looked like he didn’t give a crap.”

“But you do,” Don said calmly. “Your first instinct was to jump up and go after him to explain. I doubt you would have felt you needed to if you didn’t sense that he was distressed at seeing us in that position.”

“I want to make it so he’s not reminded of what we used to do,” Mikey said. “What he saw didn’t help with that.”

“Tiptoeing around his sensibilities isn’t going to help him,” Don said. “Raph keeps himself insulated to a certain degree; closed off from us. I tried to broach the subject with him once but he grew agitated and very angry with me.”

Looking surprised, Mikey asked, “Raph got mad at you? He never gets mad at you.”

“There are boundaries that even I can’t cross Mikey,” Don told him. “But you could.”

Mikey shook his head in denial. “Nope, not me. I tried once and I’m done. If you’re trying to make Raph jealous, forget about it. Not gonna happen.”

“I wasn’t trying to make him jealous,” Don said. “None of my words or actions are going to change Raph’s decisions to keep his feelings from being hurt by isolating them. He’s too obstinate. The only one with a chance of getting through to him is you Michelangelo. I did this to wake you up.”

“Forget it,” Mikey said obdurately. “I’m going forward, not backwards. Raph had his chance.”

“Deny it all you want,” Don said, “but I know what I saw in the way you reacted to the pained sound Raph made when he caught us. My little intervention had a side benefit of allowing Raph to confront what he feels for you. Take my advice and use his shock to your advantage. Don’t let this chance for that kind of love to slip away from you, Mikey.”

“Now we’re just talking in circles,” Mikey said with a touch of frustration. “Whatever you think about it doesn’t matter anymore ‘cause Raph and me are done. Oh, and you can take down the cameras.”

He sidestepped Donatello and strode towards the door. Mikey could hear Don coming after him and set his mouth in a grim line, determined not to address the topic anymore.
As he neared the dojo entrance, Mikey heard the sound of raised voices. Moving faster, he exited into the lair and then stopped in his tracks at what he saw. Don likewise halted beside him.

“I wasn’t disgusted by you or the sex thing!” Leonardo exclaimed, standing face to face with Raphael. “I was upset because you wanted to hurt me! How could I have deserved that much hatred from you after we’d been so close? How could you despise me so much?”

“Because ya’ rubbed your fucking power in my face every chance ya’ got!” Raph roared back at him. “Not a day went by that ya’ didn’t take pleasure in reminding me that ya’ were the great and mighty leader! I was supposed to bow at your feet and admit I wasn’t as good as ya’!”

“I’ve never said that to you,” Leo declared. “The only reason I’ve ever reminded you that I’m the leader is when you’ve behaved as though we aren’t a team!”

“Ya’ carry that crap into our daily lives too ya’ prick!” Raph shouted. “Always trying to control everything, always telling me what I can and can’t do! Ya’ got no respect for me and ya’ never have! I’m done with this shit! Now everybody knows everything and ya’ can all be disgusted with me behind my shell ‘cause I ain’t sticking around. I’d rather not live here than see Mikey be with someone else!”

Raph’s arms shot out, his palms connecting with Leo’s chest plates. The force of the blow lifted Leo off his feet and sent him flying backwards.

Leo collided with an arm chair and both crashed to the ground. Even before Leo hit, Raph was moving, running at full speed for the exit.

“Raphael, stop!” Master Splinter called out from the doorway to his room. “Come back and talk to me!”

His voice didn’t even slow Raph down. In the blink of an eye, Raph disappeared.

Side by side, Don and Mikey stared after him in stunned disbelief.

“Well, I certainly didn’t foresee that happening,” Donatello said in an astonished tone.

TBC…………..
“This is your fault!” Mikey yelled, looking at Don. “You always have to overthink everything don’t you?”

“If I had analyzed every possible variable then obviously I would have made certain that Leo and Raph didn’t encounter each other before I was finished talking to you,” Don replied absently. He was still staring at the lair exit. “Clearly I hadn’t anticipated Raph walking in on us.”

“You hadn’t . . . .” Mikey stopped, at a loss for words. “How could you not imagine he’d walk into the dojo? He spends half his waking hours in there!”

“Guys stop!” Leo called as he got up from the floor. Coming towards them, he said, “This is my fault, not Don’s and not yours Mikey. I did this damage years ago and it’s just coming to a head now.”

“Because you let it fester!” Mikey shouted, turning on Leo. “Maybe you were too young then to know that what you were saying to Raph would hurt him badly, but when you got older and saw how messed up your relationship with him was, you should have taken it all back. You just couldn’t let go of that power over him could you?”

“Mikey!” Don exclaimed.

“No Donny, he’s right,” Leo said. “I did know that what I had said might cause lasting trauma, but it wasn’t because I wanted power over him. It wasn’t, Mikey. I was punishing Raph because of my deeply held conviction that he hated me.”

Master Splinter had approached the trio, but he remained off to one side and silent, allowing his sons to air their grievances without his interference.

“So what, you decided that if he hated you that you’d give him a good reason to hate you?” Mikey asked incredulously.

Leo shook his head. “I never brought it up again, you have to believe that. I wanted to forget about the incident because I didn’t want to think about how Raph despised me. When we’d go through periods where we were getting along again, I thought that maybe he was putting it behind him too. Then we’d have a fight and I’d know that peaceful period was just a détente.”

“The first time that happened you could have sat down with him and talked about it,” Mikey said. “You could have asked him straight out if he hated you.”

“If I did that and he’d acknowledged it then I would have known it was the truth,” Leo said, a pained expression on his face. “I’m being honest with you, Mikey. More honest than I’ve even been with myself. If Raph never actually said he hated my guts, then I could fool myself into
believing it wasn’t true, at least for short periods of time. This family is all I’ll ever have; all I’ll ever want. Living with the knowledge that one of you hates me is almost too much to bear.”

“Hiding from the truth, no matter how hurtful, is no way to live either Leo,” Don said, his tone compassionate. “Whatever that past incident was, it carried over into how Raph perceived your interactions with him and by default, into your leadership of our team.”

“Raph has always thought you were trying to control him and that’s ‘cause of what you said to him that night,” Mikey contributed. “Maybe if that wasn’t still hanging over your heads you two could have plain old differences of opinion instead of knock down drag out fights.”

“You have both been laboring under a misconception Leonardo,” Master Splinter interposed. “It is time to rectify this situation.”

“Yes Father,” Leo said contritely.

“This thing with Raph, it didn’t just hurt him did it Leo?” Don asked. “You’ve been damaged by it too. It’s why you’re always so aloof with us, isn’t it? It’s also why you’ve been trying to protect Mikey.”

Leo grimaced. “When Raph got so violent during our sparring session a few years ago and became aroused by that, I thought that his acting out sexually was from hatred. I didn’t want Mikey to experience that, I didn’t want him to be contaminated by finding out the hard way that Raph might not be able to feel anything for him.”

“One doesn’t have anything to do with the other,” Mikey said. “Besides, he doesn’t hate you. No matter what he says when he’s angry, he doesn’t hate any of us. Raph wouldn’t have been so worried about you guys finding out about us and what we do together if he didn’t care what you thought. Why do you think he said that about respect? When you hate someone you don’t care about having their respect.”

“You have become very wise, Michelangelo. Perhaps the time for hiding and secrets is over,” Master Splinter said.

His words made Mikey flashback to his dream and he was suddenly overwhelmed by a sense of urgency. “We need to go after Raph,” he said.

“I’m sure he just needs time to cool down, Mikey. He’ll come back like he always does,” Don said.

“No, I’ve got a bad feeling,” Mikey said, growing agitated. “He’s not going to come back if we don’t let him know that he’s not a monster.”

Leo started to say something but Don cut him off. “We can track his shell cell. Let me get my bag.”

Although Mikey expected that trying to track Raph that way wouldn’t work, he didn’t say anything. Together he and Leo moved to the exit and waited there for Don to join them, which he did a minute later.

As soon as they stepped out into the tunnels, Don opened his shell cell and activated the tracking beacon. His screen showed three dots practically atop one another and then a fourth dot some distance away. It wasn’t moving.

With a frown, Don said, “He’s either stationary someplace or . . . .”
When he trailed off Leo grimly finished the sentence for him. “Or he’s thrown his shell cell away.”

They started running, following a path that would take them directly to where Raph’s phone was located. It didn’t take long; Raph had only gone about a mile before ditching his shell cell.

Don stood looking down at the communication device, half buried in ankle deep mud. “Why does everyone have to discard their shell cells in the nastiest of places?” he asked rhetorically.

He leaned down to extract the phone from the mud, shaking the excess muck off of it before wiping it down with a rag. After wrapping the shell cell in the rag, Don gingerly deposited it in his duffel bag.

While he was doing that, Leo was on his own shell cell, placing a call. “Casey? It’s Leo. Have you seen Raph?”

Mikey could hear Casey’s voice but his words were indistinct. Leo’s scowl deepened and when Casey stopped talking, Leo said, “Disagreement is an understatement. If he shows up there, can you call me without letting on that you’re doing so? I’ll make sure he thinks I guessed where he was going.”

Once more he listened before saying ‘thank you’ and hanging up.

“I suppose we’d better split up,” Don said. “If he’s gone topside he’s going to be hard to track; it’s still pouring down rain.”

“We’ll have to anticipate him,” Leo said. “Casey is going to check with April and relay the message to call me if he shows up at her place. It’s late afternoon and normally he wouldn’t venture topside, but he’s agitated and it’s raining hard so he might chance it.”

“Raph’s been preoccupied with the Purple Dragons lately. He might try going after them or even Hun,” Don suggested.

Despite the frightening dream he’d had, Mikey didn’t think Raph would be in a frame of mind that would push him towards their arch enemies. His gut was telling him that Raph could be found in the one place that he considered a sanctuary.

“I think I might know where he’s gone,” Mikey said slowly, “but you guys can’t come with me.”

“It might be better if . . . .” Leo began.

“No,” Mikey said, stopping his brother. Pulling his shell cell from his belt, Mikey made sure that Leo and Don saw him turning it off. “I’ll keep this with me but Donny, you have to promise not to turn it on remotely. You have to swear it or this phone goes into the mud too.”

Leo and Don looked at each other as though silently communicating and Mikey added, “If either of you guys uses this phone to track me anyway, then both Raph and I will leave for good.”

There was a hard-headed conviction behind his words that conveyed themselves to his brothers. “I won’t remotely activate your phone,” Don said, “and Leo doesn’t know how to do that. I promise.”
“You can’t follow me either,” Mikey said, looking directly at Leo. “If we’re gonna fix this, we’ve got to have some trust.”

“Neither of us will try to follow you,” Leo said solemnly.

Taking a deep breath, Mikey released it before saying, “Okay. In case I’m wrong, you guys should keep looking for Raph. When he’s upset he likes to go up high so he can look out over the city. You know the places that are sheltered and that’s where he’d be ‘cause even when he’s pissed he knows better than to try and get hit by lightning.”

“How will we know if you’ve found him and that you’re both safe?” Leo asked.

Mikey thought for a moment. He couldn’t use his shell cell because the second he turned it on, Don would know where he was. As he mused, Mikey’s eyes drifted down and landed on Don’s duffel bag.

Looking up at his brother, Mikey asked, “Do you have that lineman’s phone with you?”

“Yeah,” Don said, twisting around to unzip his bag and dig around in it. When he found the phone he handed it to Mikey.

“If I find Raph or I see he’s in trouble, I’ll hook this up to a land line and call Casey,” Mikey said. “He can relay the message to you.”

“Aren’t you being overly cautious?” Leo asked, his brow furrowed.

“No I’m not,” Mikey told him. “I have to do this for Raph so that he’ll know he can still trust me.”

Without waiting for further protests from his brothers, Mikey turned around and trotted off. The direction he chose was dictated by the location of the nearest safe exit out of the sewers.

Even though Mikey knew that most businesses had closed due to the flooding he was still careful to check for people before leaving the safety of the tunnels. He remained at ground level, letting the torrential rain disguise both him and his footprints.

As much as Mikey believed that Leo wouldn’t betray his trust, he wasn’t going to underestimate his brother’s protective instincts. Because of that, he took a circuitous route to the alley behind the deli, checking his back trail along the way.

Dropping through the manhole in back of the deli, Mikey relied on his intuition which was still telling him that Raph had gone to the secret room. It was the perfect place for Raph to turn into a home and safe from prying eyes, including those of his own family.

Once his eyes adjusted to the change in light, Mikey began walking, keeping his eyes on the ground. Away from the manhole the earth was dry and it didn’t take long for Mikey to see damp spots that indicated someone had passed along this route in front of him.

Reaching the brick wall, Mikey took a chance that the pattern hadn’t been changed; if it had been, then he’d have to double back and go in through the abandoned warehouse.

His luck held and the brick wall opened for him. He waited for it to slide shut before proceeding; a last bit of caution in case he’d been followed.

When Mikey reached the heavy metal door to the secret room he paused to take several
deep, calming breaths. They only helped a little; his heart was still beating a fast rhythm inside his chest.

Lifting his hand, Mikey used the side of his fist to pound on the door. Though Mikey wasn’t sure that Raph would even answer, he counted to fifteen slowly and then banged on the door again. Mikey had just reached the end of another slow count, determined to let his brother know he wasn’t leaving, when the door creaked open a scant couple of inches and Raphael peered out at him.

“What do ya’ want?” Raph growled at him.

“I want in,” Mikey said. “Are you gonna open up or should I talk to you from out here?”

For a moment it was a toss-up as to whether Raph would open the door or slam it in Mikey’s face. While Raph debated that, Mikey surreptitiously pressed the ball of one foot against the base of the door.

“Come in,” Raph finally said, backing away from the door. “What the hell do I care?”

Mikey entered the room and closed the door behind him. When he turned back around, he saw that Raph had gone over to the table where the remnants of the chair he’d broken lay. Nearby were a handful of tools, some nails, and wood glue.

“You’re fixing the chair,” Mikey said with some surprise.

“Yeah, well, the set up looks out of balance with just one chair,” Raph said with a shrug as he sat down, keeping his eyes fixed on his work.

Something else seemed off about the room and when Mikey glanced around he saw that the cedar chests were missing.

“Where are the chests?” Mikey asked.

Raph waved towards the bar without looking up. “I stuck ‘em back there. I figured you’d drag Leo and Don down here on a rescue mission and they didn’t need to see that stuff right off the bat.”

The slightly sarcastic tone in his voice didn’t escape Mikey’s notice, making him feel defensive. “There’s no way I would have brought them here,” he responded indignantly. “I gave you my word. I even made sure they couldn’t track me.”

“Don’t even know why ya’ bothered coming here at all,” Raph mumbled. “You’ve got yourself a new playmate don’t ya’? One that meets with Leo’s approval.”

“There’s nothing going on between Donny and me,” Mikey said, taking a couple of steps towards Raph. “What you walked in on was just as much a surprise to me as it was to you. Don figured everything out on his own and he wanted me to talk about it. Just like Leo did. I didn’t tell anyone anything about us but I have been talking to Master Splinter about my own sexuality because I wanted his advice and I needed to know how he’d react. Maybe I was even feeling him out to get his opinion about two of his sons getting together.”

Raph looked up at him then. “How could ya’ even think that was smart?” he spluttered indignantly.

“I had to talk to somebody,” Mikey said quickly, before Raph could get wound up. “You
wouldn’t talk to me about how what we were doing made you feel and I needed to talk. How was I supposed to know he’d work out what was going on by himself?"

“Because he’s Master Splinter, that’s how!” Raph exclaimed, slamming the wooden chair leg he was holding down on the table.

“I’m sorry that I’m not as good at keeping my feelings hidden as you are!” Mikey shouted back. He closed his eyes to get himself back under control. Opening them, he told Raph in a calmer voice, “I never broke my promise, Raph.”

Although Raph’s hands were closed into fists, they were both on the table, indicating that he was controlling himself. “Okay Mikey, I accept that,” Raph said. “Ya’ tried, I know ya’ did. This thing was bound to get away from us sometime.”

Mikey didn’t like the way Raph’s shoulders had slumped. “If you’re worried about what Master Splinter thinks of you, don’t be. He’s totally accepting of the fact that we’ve been together sexually. He even guessed that you like to play rough and I like to submit. He doesn’t think less of either of us for that.”

Raph opened his hands but only to cover his face with them. “That’s it. I ain’t going home ever. This shit is more than I can handle.”

“Give me a break,” Mikey said sharply. “You’re stronger than that. You came here knowing darn well that this would be the first place I’d look for you. Don pulled that stunt earlier because he wanted to let me know that he’d figured it all out. He said he’s tried to talk to you about it in the past but you wouldn’t give him the time of day. Don not only doesn’t care that we were doing sexual things together, he was insisting that we should be together. He knows exactly what turns us both on.”

“Oh geez, Mikey.” Raph uncovered his eyes to look at his brother.

“Don’s a genius, what do you want from me?” Mikey asked. “You don’t think I wasn’t standing there extra green in the face while he told me you like hurting me and I like being hurt?”

“He said that?” Raph asked with a frown.

Mikey waved a hand in the air. “He used some big words but basically that’s what they mean. Leo knows too but I guess you figured that out when you two got into your latest fight. He told you the truth, Raph. All this time you’ve thought he was disgusted by what you did that night but he wasn’t. He doesn’t care about the sex aspect of this at all. Leo’s spent all these years thinking you hated him. He just wants to know that you don’t and that you weren’t getting off on the idea of killing him.”

Raph appeared stunned by what Mikey said. “He thinks I wanted to kill him? I’d never do that to any of ya’!”

“Be realistic bro’. you don’t think Leo remembers that you tried to bean me with a pipe?” Mikey spoke bluntly, being a little brutal to snap Raph out of his self-pity. “I know you’re well past that kind of thing and I wouldn’t have even remembered it if Leo hadn’t brought it up.

“That’s why he’s been butting in and trying to keep us apart, he doesn’t know we’d found balance in our connection. He’s been worried that you’d get too rough. That’s the honest truth of it. Leo’s not disgusted by you but he is really, really worried about how far you might go. You need to come home and talk to him. You need to explain that you don’t hate him and that what
we’d been doing together didn’t stem from a desire to destroy anything.”

“I don’t think I can do that,” Raph said. “Look, I’ve got a better idea. I can just live here and you could come over every day to be with me. It’ll be like what the humans do, ya’ know, the kids grow up and move out on their own. Ya’ guys don’t need me on the team, I’m the one who’s always going off half-cocked and getting us into trouble.”

Normally Raph would have accepted any excuse to return home. It was in his spirit to fight to hold onto his family, to remain with them at all costs. The only thing Mikey could imagine to explain this behavior was that Raph was taking the easy way out. He couldn’t quite bring himself to believe what Mikey had said about Master Splinter accepting him for who he was and he’d rather exile himself than to hear his father tell him he was as sick and twisted as Leo had made him believe.

“No, that’s not workable,” Mikey said outright. “We aren’t humans. We were meant to stay together as a family always and you know that as well as I do. Our team does need its warrior and that’s you, Raph. As far as my coming here to be with you, that’s off. I told you I wanted to go back to us just being brothers. I decided to give up what we had before because it’s the best thing I can do for our family. I realize it’ll hurt but I’ll deal with that. I thought stuff would go back to normal and we’d never have to talk about it again, but I didn’t know Don would decide he needed to take a hand in things.”

Raph stood up and came towards Mikey. “We don’t have to stop, Mikey. They all know about us so we don’t even have to work at keeping it a secret.”

Mikey shook his head. In spite of everything, Raph still didn’t seem to understand what Mikey needed most. “You still don’t get it. For me this wasn’t just about ‘getting off’. I loved you and wanted you to love me back, but that’s not something I can force you into doing and I’m sure as hell not gonna bargain for it ‘cause then it wouldn’t be real. If I can’t have that from you then all those fun and games don’t have any meaning. It’s just empty sex and I can get that from my own hand.”

“Everything is so damn easy for ya’, ain’t it Mikey?” Raph asked indignantly. “Ya’ decide something has to be a certain way and there ain’t no gray areas. For me there’s never been anything but gray areas.”

“I think they call that sitting on the fence,” Mikey shot back. “When it comes to fighting you’re decisive as hell, why can’t you do that with your personal life? You’ve got no problem throwing your temper around, but have you ever stopped to get in touch with what’s actually making you angry? Or are you so afraid of your emotions you’d rather not analyze them?”

“Shit Mikey, that ain’t me!” Raph shouted. “They’re called feelings for a reason; you’re just supposed to feel them!”

“And you don’t feel them for me,” Mikey said, refusing to get into a shouting match with his brother. His heart was beating so hard he could feel it in his throat. “You know what Don asked me? He asked how you help someone who doesn’t want help. It shouldn’t be like that in our family, we shouldn’t ever feel ashamed of what we like or how we feel about something and we shouldn’t have to hide anything.”

“You’ve seen the inside of those chests,” Raph said, his voice now low and raspy. “That stuff wouldn’t be there if I hadn’t acknowledged that I’m as sick and twisted as Leo told me I was.”

“Then I guess I’m sick and twisted too,” Mikey said. “I think the stuff in those chests is
awesome. To me those things are grown up toys that lovers play with to spice up their sex lives. You’re the one who holds onto the notion that what’s inside those chests represent something dark. It’s not up to Leo to define who you are and you sure as hell shouldn’t base your entire self-image off what a thirteen-year-old said to you.”

“That thirteen-year-old was my own brother,” Raph snapped, “and he was right!”

Mikey stared at him. “As long as you hold onto that and don’t ever let Leo explain that he was wrong, you’re never gonna be happy. You didn’t ask me to keep coming here because you want to be with me, you did it because seeing Don on top of me made you feel possessive. It was the same when we were kids; you’d toss away a toy ‘cause you were bored with it but as soon as someone else picked it up, you wanted it back.”

“That’s not true,” Raph said. “Ya’ told me when ya’ came in that Don wasn’t making a play for ya’. I asked ya’ to keep coming here ‘cause that’s what I want, not because I think someone’s trying to take something from me.”

“If I did that you’d be getting what you want all right, but I wouldn’t get anything out of it,” Mikey said, suddenly feeling very tired.

He couldn’t be in this room with Raph any longer. Don had been right, memories couldn’t be turned off and here they were too strong. The kind of pain he was experiencing now wasn’t the kind Mikey enjoyed.

“We could . . . maybe work through that?” Raph asked, his hands out towards Mikey as though he was reaching for some hope.

“Love isn’t an injury you work through, Raph. It doesn’t blind side you and you shake it off,” Mikey said. “It’s something that’s beautiful and you want it more than anything. It’s just what the dictionary said, it’s a tender, passionate affection for another person. What love isn’t is a one way street and that’s all you’re offering me.”

Mikey turned and took the few steps required to reach the door. Looking back at a now quiet Raph, he said, “Come home bro’. You’re needed there and you know that’s where you really want to be. If you can’t manage that then please don’t do anything nuts. I can keep this room a secret as long as you don’t go crazy topside or try to get yourself hurt.”

“Don’t go.” Raph looked like he was struggling with something and Mikey watched him, his own insides churning as sharp pains lanced through his chest.

“I have to,” Mikey finally said after a couple of minutes.

“Don’t go,” Raph repeated. “I . . . need you. Dammit Mikey, I . . . I’m hurting here. You’re right, I did come here because I knew you’d find me. When you’re with me I feel . . . I feel like things are how they should be. I need you.”

All of the oxygen seemed to have been sucked from the room. Despite the painful constriction in his neck, Mikey’s sense of indignation insisted he say something. “You want me to have sympathy for you now after the way you’ve treated me? You have no right to ask that!”

He didn’t wait for Raph to respond to that as he grabbed the door handle, flinging the door open. On the verge of losing control and completely breaking down, Mikey stepped across the threshold for the last time.

TBC……………
Caught up in the rush of his own emotions, Michelangelo did not even realize that Raphael had closed the distance between them until he felt his brother’s hand on his arm. Raph pulled Mikey back into the room and simultaneously slammed the metal door shut, blocking Mikey’s exit.

Spinning to face his brother, Mikey yanked his arm out of Raph’s grip. “Just because I used to let you do things to me in this room, don’t start to think you can manhandle me whenever you want. Touch me the wrong way again and I’ll remind you why I’m Battle Nexus Champion.”

Raph lifted his hands up near his shoulders, showing Mikey his palms. “Okay, I’m cool, Mikey. I just want to say something. Can ya’ give me another minute, please? Ya’ can rush off in a huff afterwards if ya’ still feel like ya’ need to.”

The anger at Raph grabbing him that way burnt off some of the misery that had sent Mikey scurrying for the door. Resting his palms on the handles of his nunchucks as a warning, Mikey gave Raph a hard look before saying, “I’m listening.”

Lowering his hands slowly, Raph stared into Mikey’s eyes, his breathing harsh and uneven. It looked as though he was struggling with something so Mikey waited, neither prompting nor hurrying his brother, though his curiosity had been piqued.

“The other night when ya’ threw your key at me I was damn mad,” Raph said, his mouth twitching with some barely contained emotion. “I thought ‘fine, we’re done. I was on my own before and I can handle that’. After a few hours I calmed down and figured you’d change your mind and come back to me. All I’d have to do was play it cool and act like I was doing ya’ a favor when I took ya’ back.”

He paused and since it seemed that he was gathering his thoughts rather than waiting for some type of reply, Mikey held his tongue.

Raph pressed his lips together before going on. “I was still working hard not to acknowledge my own feelings ‘cause my fucking pride got in the way.” He laughed shortly. “Like I can afford to have pride after all the shit that’s gone down. Anyway, I waited and when ya’ came up to the garage yesterday I figured that was it, that was when you’d say ya’ was hasty and we should keep working on what we got.”

“But I didn’t,” Mikey said softly when Raph hesitated.

He watched Raph swallow not once but twice before the older turtle could continue. “No ya’ didn’t,” Raph conceded. “Ya’ said everything was in the past and forgotten, that we’d go back to just being brothers. I guess it was when ya’ said it was all forgotten that it finally dawned on me.
that ya’ was gonna walk away for real.”

Raph’s hand was shaking slightly as he lifted it, looking away from Mikey as he rubbed his fingertips across his forehead. He turned his hand up to wave it once before dropping it back to his side. “I couldn’t think what to do so I let ya’ walk away. The rest of the time before dinner I spent thinking that ya’ had fun with me but then ya’ decided I was as big a loser as Leo had said, that maybe Leo finally convinced ya’ that I was just using ya’.”

“I don’t let Leo or anyone else decide my feelings for me,” Mikey said in a lightly chiding manner.

“Yeah, in that way you’re a lot stronger than me,” Raph said before inhaling raggedly. “I was ready to prove Leo right and keep on being a loser too. I was gonna keep my mouth shut and act like what we’d done had been for shits and giggles and didn’t mean nothing. Then I saw Donny holding ya’ down in the dojo, pressing against ya’ like he was, and all I could think was that maybe Leo had set that up, that he’d convinced ya’ that ya’ had better options.”

“So you reacted the way you did because you were mad at the idea of Leo getting the upper hand,” Mikey said in disgust. “Thanks for sharing.”

“That ain’t it!” Raph exclaimed, a pained expression on his face. “This is why I don’t talk about this shit, I always say stuff wrong.”

Mikey counted to ten in his head, telling himself to stay calm and not behave so defensively. He could see that Raph was trying to explain something to him and realized that his whole future might depend on letting Raph have his say.

“Sorry,” Mikey said. “You can talk Raph, I won’t judge. Whatever happens, we should still be able to do that with each other.”

Raph nodded, his balled up hands loosening again. “I never told ya’ this before, but I spent years fantasizing about us being together, about what it would be like if ya’ said ya’ wanted to share everything with me. Never mentioned it when we did get together ‘cause I thought it’d sound silly. So there I was with my big chance and I blew it. I screwed it up because I figured that I’d eventually do something stupid anyway and you’d think I was a sick fuck just like Leo does.”

Shifting, Raph’s eyes darted away from Mikey’s and then back up again. “When we had our games I decided that as long as I didn’t kiss ya’ or let myself get really intimate that I’d keep myself safe. That when ya’ finally decided you’d had it and that I was too perverted and twisted to share your life with, I’d be insulated enough so it wouldn’t hurt.”

“When have I ever led you to believe that I thought you were perverted or twisted?” Mikey asked defensively.

“That’s just it, ya’ didn’t,” Raph said. “All you’ve done since we got together is tell me I ain’t messed up in the head. Sure, ya’ say stuff that confuses me, but mostly it pulls me up and makes me feel like the world ain’t an upside down place. Like maybe I got something to offer other than my two fists.”

“Of course you do,” Mikey said with a hint of exasperation. “Just because I said you’re our warrior doesn’t mean that’s all you are to us. You’re the one who makes Leo check and double check his decisions; if you didn’t do that and he made a mistake, he’d wallow in it forever. Don loves it when you tease him about being a Brainiac, every time you do that he comes up with another new great idea. I sometimes think he’s showing off for you.”
“And you, Mikey?” Raph asked tentatively.

Mikey remembered back, through all of their years together, to how special Raph had always been to him. “You can be a big pain in the butt sometimes, but you’ve always been fun. You’ve always been the one I feel most connected to, the brother I like hanging with the most. You’re like me, not content to hide underground looking for personal enlightenment or reading technical manuals. I don’t want that to change. I’d go crazy if we couldn’t hang together.”

“Wouldn’t want that to happen,” Raph said, his lips quivering in the faintest of smiles. “Look Mikey, I had a chance to think about the way I’ve been acting. How it’s all been about me and I haven’t been thinking about your needs at all. That wasn’t right and if the roles were reversed I don’t know that I could have put up with my shit as long as ya’ did.”

Heart thumping in his chest, Mikey stared at his brother. He’d never seen Raph in such a raw emotional state, his barriers down, his feelings on display. Still it wasn’t enough to hear Raph admit his mistakes, Mikey needed more.

“Don’t tell me what you think will soothe my feelings,” Mikey said, his eyes never leaving Raph’s, “just tell me the truth.”

Raph lifted a hand, reaching out hesitantly towards Mikey. When the younger turtle didn’t flinch, Raph gently pressed his fingers to Mikey’s chest. “I don’t want to be alone anymore, Mikey. I like how ya’ make me feel. I’ve always felt connected to ya’ too. I like that I can be who I am around ya’.”

“You know what I really want, Raph. I want something real, a relationship that’s more than sex,” Mikey told him. “I won’t take less than that.”

“I ain’t saying I won’t fuck up from time to time,” Raph said, stepping closer to Mikey. “I got a talent for it. One thing I could always count on was ya’ telling it to me straight. I owe ya’ that too. I love ya’, Mikey.”

“You do?” Mikey asked, afraid to breathe lest he would break whatever spell they were under. “You aren’t just saying that so I won’t leave?”

Raph made a sound in the back of his throat before moving right up against Mikey. “I know better than to try and fool ya’. You’ve always been good at seeing right through me and calling me on my bullshit. So ya’ decide, am I telling ya’ the truth?”

As he asked the question, Raph leaned in, his gold eyes boring into Mikey’s blue ones. Mikey could feel Raph’s breath against his lips, his brother’s heartbeat against his chest plates. When Raph’s mouth touched his, Mikey’s eyelids fluttered and closed, his entire being focused on the caress of Raph’s lips.

For a moment all they did was press their mouths together. Then both tried to move at the same time and teeth bumped against lips, Raph’s tongue painted a wet stripe on Mikey’s chin, and Mikey’s swiped across Raph’s gums. It was sloppy and awkward and absolutely wonderful.

When they pulled back a little, Mikey whispered, “Wow, you really don’t know what you’re doing, do you?”

Raph chuckled, his arms circling Mikey. “Not a clue. Let’s see if we can’t figure this out together.”

Once more they came together and this time Raph tilted his head just a little, making their
mouts meld tightly. Mikey waited, letting his brother lead him, opening his mouth at Raph’s urging, his tongue rising up to meet Raph’s.

The sensation of his tongue sliding along Raph’s was the most intense feeling of Mikey’s entire life. A tiny sound, higher in pitch than a moan, slid up from Mikey’s throat and his grip on Raph tightened. The rasping sound of their plastron’s scraping together brought out a churr from Raph and Mikey responded in kind.

Everything around them collapsed outward until all that was left of Mikey’s world was Raphael. The air sparked with life, seeming to lift the pair up so that Mikey couldn’t even feel the floor beneath his feet. Whatever he had imagined a kiss could be, this was so much more.

As their mouths slowly separated, the pair gazed at one another, their breathing heavy with desire.

“Damn me to hell,” Raph husked, “but I don’t ever want to stop kissing ya’. I’m a fucking fool for waiting so damn long.”

“When you finally decide to go for a little romance you don’t mess around,” Mikey said, his voice hushed.

“No more halfway with ya’, Mikey. Ya’ get everything I can give ‘cause ya’ deserve it,” Raph told him.

As much as Mikey wanted this moment to last for a few hours, there were other things to be considered, like the family who was worried sick about Raph.

“Remember our pledge not to keep secrets from each other? We can’t hide stuff from our family anymore,” Mikey said, still holding Raph close. “For this to work, they have to know what our being together means.”

Raph cleared his throat, his head down. When he lifted it he showed Mikey a small grin and said, “Not all the details I hope.”

Mikey’s chest swelled with happiness at hearing Raph’s attempt at humor. It showed him that Raph was trying, for his sake, to leave behind the shame he’d been feeling over what he shared with his brother.

Shaking his head, Mikey said, “Oh heck no. We can leave that to their imaginations. It’ll make them jealous.”

“Shit, I love how everything’s such a positive for ya’,” Raph said. “Don’t think I ever realized how much I depend on that.”

Raph initiated another kiss and Mikey fell into it willingly, certain now that nothing in life could be better. There was only one obstacle to both of them finding the ultimate happiness with each other and that was what had Mikey breaking the kiss and stepping out of Raph’s arms.

“I’d sure as shell like to stay here all night,” Mikey said, seeing the confused look on Raph’s face, “but our bro’s are out there in the rain looking for you. I told Leo I’d call Casey and have Casey relay the message that you were safe so they could head home.”

His brow furrowed, Raph said, “If ya’ turn on your phone Don will know exactly where we are.”
Mikey unclipped the lineman’s phone from his belt and held it up for Raph to see. “Why do you think I’m carrying this bulky thing around? I’ve just gotta find a land line somewhere.”

“There’s some old phone lines running into a box in here,” Raph said, perking up. “They might still be hot. Come on, let’s find out.”

He led the way over to the corner of the room where the broken furniture was stacked. Shoving things out of his way, Raph cleared a path to a door that Mikey hadn’t been able to see before. When Raph opened it, Mikey saw that a small room lay on the other side.

“I’m guessing this was probably an office of some kind,” Raph said, stepping inside and making room for Mikey. “There’s even a safe built into the wall.”

The safe was small, its door hanging open, and its walls looked to be a couple of inches thick. “I’ll bet they had gambling along with the bootleg liquor,” Mikey said, visions of old gangster movies flashing through his head.

“Yeah, we could have us a booming trade amongst the mutant population,” Raph said with a grin. “If there ever is one.”

Mikey glanced at him, a mischievous expression on his face. “No way, dude. I like the room just the way it is.”

He was gratified to see a flash of the old familiar lust in Raph’s eyes. His brother swallowed before saying, “Here’s the box where the lines come into the room. See if ya’ can get a tone.”

Unwrapping the two cables attached to the phone, Mikey hooked the clamps onto the first set of wires inside the box. Hearing nothing, he removed the clamps and tried the next wire. Right away he heard dial tone and quickly punched in Casey’s phone number.

“Ya’ got Casey, who is it and what do ya’ want?” Casey answered.

“Case man, it’s Mikey. Do me a favor, call Leo and tell him I found Raph and we’re both safe, okay? He and Don can go on home,” Mikey said.

“Why can’t ya’ call him yourself?” Casey asked.

“It’s a long story. Raph can tell it to you sometime,” Mikey said.

“Whatever,” Casey said. “I’ll let Leo know.”

“Thanks,” Mikey said before pulling the clamps loose.

“Glad he ain’t the curious type,” Raph said as he watched Mikey put the phone away.

“That makes two of us,” Mikey agreed. Something dawned on him then. “You were fixing that chair for me, weren’t you?”

Raph’s cheeks colored, making Mikey’s heart do a back flip. “Yeah. Ya’ built that setup for us and I felt like an ass for breaking the chair. I thought if ya’ saw that I’d fixed it ya’ might not be so pissed at me.”

“I like that thought,” Mikey said. “You have to finish it though ‘cause it does look out of balance with just the one chair. Kinda like us. We’re gonna be out of balance until we get you
“What’s that mean?” Raph asked, frowning.

Mikey took a minute to decide what he wanted to say. As awesome as it was to have Raph admit to loving him, things were still not quite right in their little world.

“You and Leo,” Mikey said.

As soon as he said it, Mikey saw the stubbornness sneak back into Raph’s expression, his mouth pressing into a thin line. A small growl, probably unintentional, escaped Raph.

“Dude, just hearing his name sets you off,” Mikey said, crossing his arms. “Our relationship isn’t gonna be whole and good until you and Leo clear the air.”

“What does Leo have to do with anything?” Raph asked obstinately. “After we tell him that we’re together and we’re happy that way, he ain’t got no choice but to back the fuck off.”

“That’s not why you have to talk to him, like really talk Raph,” Mikey said just as intractably. “You still have a notion in your head that enjoying rough stuff in the bedroom means there’s something wrong with you. Leo put it there and he’s the one to take it out. At the same time, you’re the only one who can convince Leo that you don’t hate him, ‘cause you don’t.”

“Mikey,” Raph said, pausing to expel a puff of air. “Have ya’ stopped to think maybe he don’t care anymore?”

“Of course he cares,” Mikey replied. “Why else would he have even brought it up? He tried to tell you that he’s not disgusted because you had a hard on during that fight. Leo’s hurt because he thinks you despise him. You don’t, right?”

Raph’s jaw worked from side to side before he finally muttered, “No. He makes me so mad sometimes I want glue his face to a wall, but I don’t hate him. I sure as shell don’t want to kill him either. Never have.”

“That’s what he needs to hear,” Mikey said. “You told me that what happened that night was because you were frustrated about his becoming the leader, that it drove a wedge between you and changed your friendship. Puberty and that new feeling of strength got to you and it felt good to be able to pin him, to show him you were better than he was at something. That’s exactly what you need to explain to Leo.”

“And when he asks how come seeing someone else in pain gets me off?” Raph asked. “How the hell do I explain that to him?”

“Tell him the truth, it usually works,” Mikey said. “You don’t get off on causing pain, you get excited by your lover submitting to you, showing absolute trust in anything you do. Pushing boundaries is thrilling to both of us. He doesn’t need to fully understand it, he just needs to know it has nothing to do with him.”

“I told ya’ I ain’t good at explaining stuff,” Raph said miserably.

Mikey watched him for a moment, knowing from Raph’s expression that he’d do what Mikey asked but it might end up exploding badly anyway. Raph was right; he was more a creature of passions than the kind of guy who could put those feelings into words.

“We’ll do this together then,” Mikey said emphatically.
“Are ya’ sure?” Raph asked. “I can do this. You’re right ya’ know, I need to do this.”

Mikey shrugged. “That pledge we made as kids was that none of us keep secrets. It’s only right that all four of us talk about this together. Besides, Leo’s seen the marks on my skin and know what they mean and Don guessed on his own just from watching us. Even Master Splinter . . .” he trailed off, his face heating up as he remembered how it had felt when his father asked, “Does Raphael get rough with you when you ‘play’? Does he require that you submit to him in ways that are painful and perhaps degrading?”

“Master Splinter what?” Raph asked, sounding worried.

“Reads minds I think,” Mikey answered with a chuckle. “What you said before, he’s Master Splinter. He’ll tell you himself that he expected that a couple of us would pair off like this. You’ve been worrying for nothing.”

“I couldn’t know that, could I?” Raph asked defensively. “Leo’s the one who always had his ear, he could have spun that story about me any way he wanted to.”

“Hearing me tell you he’d never do that isn’t the same as him telling you that himself,” Mikey said. “That’s one reason you guys need to talk. He kept your secret even after he figured out that the two of us were getting kinky with each other.” Eyes lighting up, Mikey added, “Speaking of which, now I don’t have to hide your bite marks anymore.”

The agonized expression on Raph’s face smoothed out when Mikey said that. “There ya’ go, finding the positive side of things again. Ya’ sure ya’ don’t want to explore some of that kinky stuff before we head home?”

Mikey felt a shiver go down his spine when the cocky half grin appeared on Raph’s mouth. He wanted to see that confident look on his lover’s face for an eternity and the only way that would happen was if they had nothing left to worry about.

“Not just yet,” Mikey said with true regret. “Much as I prefer to procrastinate on most things that are gonna be tough, this time it’s better if we don’t. Come on, let’s go home.”

They walked back to the entry door together but before Mikey could open it, Raph caught him in his arms again.

“One more for the road,” Raph said against Mikey’s mouth, his deep voice vibrating through the younger turtle’s core.

Mikey melted against Raph, enjoying his lover’s dominance in the most meaningful way possible. This time it was Raph who ended the kiss, proving to Mikey that he meant it when he said they’d go home and repair the rift in their family.

They exited the room and Raph pulled the door closed after them. Fishing something from his belt, Raph tossed it to Mikey, who caught it and opened his hand. It was the key to the door.

“I’m hoping ya’ want that back,” Raph said.

With a bright smile, Mikey inserted the key and locked the door before slipping the key into his belt.

“Darn right I do,” Mikey replied. “Home?”

Raph took a deep breath. “Home.”
TBC................
Chapter 36

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 4,917 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 36 Rated R TCest Raph/Mikey

As soon as Michelangelo and Raphael stepped into the lair, Donatello came rushing towards them, towels draped across his arm. He offered one to each of them, hurrying into speech before either of his brothers could say anything.

“Raph I’m so sorry,” Don said in a slightly breathless manner. “I was just trying to prove something to Mikey, I didn’t mean to foul things up between you two.”

Patting his face dry, Raph said, “Ya’ didn’t, Donny. I managed to do a fine job of that on my own. That . . . stunt ya’ pulled turned out to be the wake-up call I needed.”

Don glanced from Raph to Mikey, who didn’t even try to hide the contented expression on his face. Looking back at Raph, Don asked, “So you and Mikey . . . ?”

“We straightened stuff out,” Raph told him.

“And we came home to talk to you guys about it,” Mikey added.

He could see Leo standing in the living area, watching them but making no move to approach. Master Splinter stood nearby, his countenance displaying an expectation that Mikey knew meant their father wanted to see an end to the discord between his sons.

Movement from off to the side drew Mikey’s attention and he turned his head to see Leatherhead standing in the doorway to Donatello’s lab.

“Leatherhead!” Mikey called out. “What are you doing here?”

After he said it, Mikey realized that his words sounded a little rude. The large crocodile did not seem to notice as he started towards the trio. His eyes made the rounds from Mikey and Raph to Don, before returning to his perusal of Mikey.

Stopping next to Don, Leatherhead said, “Donatello contacted me after you three split up to search for Raphael.”

“I thought Raph might have gone to see Leatherhead,” Don supplied. “While Leo and I went up to search the rooftops, LH offered to check a couple of places in the tunnels where he thought Raph might have gone.”

“Your brothers were quite concerned about you Raphael,” Leatherhead said with mild reproach. “As I have learned through past errors, running away does not solve problems.”

Mikey looked at their crocodilian friend with astonishment. It was unlike him to be so outspoken when it came to their family interactions.
Then Mikey noticed Don surreptitiously touch Leatherhead’s arm, the movement seeming one of intimate familiarity rather than simple friendship. It lasted only a second, but it was enough to raise questions in Mikey’s mind.

“He was worried,” Don said as if to ease the sting of Leatherhead’s words. “We all were.”

“My apologies,” Leatherhead said sincerely. “This is a family matter.”

“There is no need for apologies,” Master Splinter said, taking a few steps closer to the group but stopping midway between them and Leo. “To us you are family, Leatherhead.”

“I thank you,” Leatherhead responded with a polite bow. “Perhaps though it would be best if I were to take my leave and allow the brothers some time to themselves.”

“Don’t go yet,” Don said hastily, looking up at the croc. “You shouldn’t walk back by yourself, not with the flooding and all of the city crews in the tunnels.”

Mikey could see how Leatherhead’s gaze softened whenever he was looking at Don and he wondered how he’d never noticed that before. “I could wait for you in your lab,” Leatherhead suggested. “It would give me an opportunity to review the schematics you have created.”

“That would be great,” Don said. “I don’t know how long . . . .”

When he trailed off, unsure how to finish, Leatherhead said, “Take as long as you need, I am in no hurry.”

As Leatherhead made his way back to the lab, Mikey had an epiphany as to why their friend had come so close to actually chastising Raph. Leatherhead had seen how worried the genius had been and was reacting protectively to Don’s fright.

The door to the lab closed behind Leatherhead, a diplomatic gesture that would ensure the turtles had privacy. Don turned around and walked back towards Leo, snapping Mikey out of his reverie. He could ruminate later about Don and Leatherhead, right now there was something of much greater importance that had to be handled.

Together Raph and Mikey approached their father. Master Splinter patiently waited for the pair, his eyes bright and knowing.

“Master Splinter . . . I’m sorry I ran out earlier,” Raph said quickly, just glancing at his father before lowering his head.

“Ahh Raphael, you have always had such difficulty with your anger,” Master Splinter said. “At times you have allowed it to cloud your mind so that is becomes your worst enemy, an internal one. Am I right in assuming that you have chosen to allow Michelangelo to assist you in facing this enemy?”

“Yes Father,” Raph said, his voice low but steady.

“Good,” Master Splinter told him. When Raph lifted his head in surprise, his father said, “You and I will talk of this later, now a more urgent conversation must take place. Come with me.”

Mikey thought they might be going to Master Splinter’s room, but instead his father took them into the living area where Leo and Don were standing next to each other.
“Sit down, all of you,” Master Splinter directed. When his sons hesitated, he said, “Now, please. Leonardo, take this chair.”

Patting the top of the armchair that he usually preferred, Master Splinter indicated that Leo was to sit their instead. Standing behind the chair, their father watched as Leo did as he was told. Once Leo was seated, Don lowered himself onto the end of the couch nearest his oldest brother. Raph chose the chair directly opposite Leo’s and Mikey took the other end of the couch, placing him within arm’s reach of his lover.

Glancing around at his sons, Master Splinter nodded once. “This will do nicely. None of you is to move until you have all opened up to each other about any secrets you have been keeping. You will remain where you are, even if it should take hours, to discuss all of the problems between you. Is this clear?”

“But Master Splinter, Leatherhead . . . .” Don began.

“Is astute enough to realize he may have a long wait. How long will depend on how forthcoming the four of you are,” Master Splinter said. “I say four because I am going to my room. I am your Father, not a referee. If you are old enough to engage in adult activities, you are all quite old enough to find your own resolutions to any problems that might result.”

All four turtles stared at him and saw the small, satisfied smile on their father’s face. Master Splinter turned away, walking towards his room. Before he was out of their sight, he looked back and added, “I will know if any of you attempts to leave without accomplishing the task I have just set before you. Trust me when I say you do not want to tempt my ire. I have had enough of the squabbling.”

With those final words, Master Splinter made his exit. Mikey heard the door to his father’s room open and close. At that moment Mikey felt like he was eight again, fighting with his brothers until a promise of his father’s retribution made them all straighten up.

Silence engulfed the brothers following Master Splinter’s departure. The turtles looked at each other, none of them seeming to know how to begin. Mikey watched as Raph and Leo finally stopped looking around and focused on each other. The pair appeared to be engaging in a staring contest and Mikey decided it was time to break the impasse before those two got into an antagonistic mindset.

“So . . . Master Splinter said no more secrets,” Mikey began. “Raph and I have something we want to tell you guys.”

He glanced at Raph, offering him the chance to speak. Mikey saw Raph’s jaw work from side to side, the way it did when he was forced to give ground on something, even though doing so went against his nature.

“Ya’ both know how much I’ve always liked being around Mikey,” Raph said. “Sure he pulls crap and is an attention hog, but he’s fun and exciting. I guess I kinda felt different about him from early on, like a special sort of feeling ya’ get around someone ya’ want to be with. Ya’ get me? Like be with in a way that ain’t exactly brotherly.”

When Raph hesitated, glancing at Mikey, the younger turtle picked up the ball. “Raph and I are together, as in a couple. You know, the kind that kisses and has sex and stuff,” he paused to look at his brother’s faces. “And before you ask for details, forget it. I’m not the kind to kiss and tell. Well, technically I do kiss and tell, but that’s all you’re getting out of me.”
“Thank you for being up front about it,” Don said as soon as Mikey stopped speaking. “I had of course figured that out on my own but it’s nice to hear you and Raph say it aloud.”

Mikey looked at Leo expectantly, as did Donny. Leo was frowning but it wasn’t the expression he got when he disapproved of something, it was more concentrated as though he was following a train of thought.

“Have you two gone over all of the possible ramifications of something like this?” Leo finally asked.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Raph shot back with a touch of belligerence.

Determined not to let their discussion devolve into a fight, Mikey intervened. “Leo, why don’t you just tell us your concerns so we can address them? It’ll be faster than playing ‘guess what’s bugging me’ or even twenty questions.”

“All right, I will,” Leo said with resolve. “Just because you can have sex doesn’t mean that you should, especially with your brother. Convenience, opportunity, physical compatibility, and lack of other options are not reasons to engage in sexual relations with a sibling.”

Raph’s low growl was audible to Mikey, who looked at him and almost imperceptibly shook his head. It took a second, but Raph’s shoulders relaxed, the combative look on his face easing a bit.

“What Raph and I feel for each other didn’t just happen, Leo. It evolved over time. Raph realized he was into me way before I thought of him that way, but he kept it to himself. My interest happened all on its own and Raph tried to discourage me at first. We finally hooked up not just because it felt good, though I gotta say that it does. We committed ourselves to each other ‘cause it was right,” Mikey said earnestly.

“I managed all these years not to play favorites during the battles we’ve had with the Foot and the Purple Dragons,” Raph interposed. “I ain’t gonna start doing that now. One of the things I love about Mikey is that he can handle himself. If you’re worried this is gonna screw up our team, forget about it. Ain’t gonna be a problem.”

“You’ll forgive me if I’m cautious,” Leo said bluntly. “My experiences over the years with you have been rough at best. When I issue an order you don’t like, am I going to have to deal with not only you balking, but Mikey doing the same?”

“I’m his lover, not his puppet,” Mikey said. “If I have questions about what you want us to do, they’ll be my questions that I think up all on my own. It’s not like I always follow you blindly anyway.”

“Which is another reason I love him,” Raph couldn’t resist saying.

“And you wonder why it is I remind you that I’m the leader,” Leo snapped, straightening in his chair. “I don’t do it to rub it in your face, I do it because you give me zero respect.”

“Ya’ want to talk respect?” Raph asked angrily. “Ya’ haven’t shown me any since the day Master Splinter handed ya’ those blades and said ya’ was the leader. It ain’t any surprise that I resent the shit out of ya’ for taking on that role. It fucked us up!”

“So you figured the best way to deal with that resentment was to pin me down and choke the life out of me?” Leo asked harshly. “The idea of getting rid of me was so good that you were getting off on it!”
“Ya’ can’t put that on me, it wasn’t part of what happened between us,” Raph said. “Hell that was back when a strong breeze coming through the tunnels and hitting my crotch would make me pop a woody. Ya’ were twisting around under me, rubbing against me, and my damn body reacted. Ya’ got away from me and called me every fucking name under the sun for it.”

“How did you think I’d react?” Leo exclaimed. “At the very least you showed that you despised me! You weren’t just hurting me, you were trying to hurt me, and I could tell from the look in your eyes that you were enjoying it. There were bruises on my neck, Raph. Every time I looked in the mirror I saw those bruises and they reminded me that you had wanted to choke the life out of me.”

“That thought never crossed my mind,” Raph insisted. “Yeah, I knew I was hurting ya’, but to me it felt like payback for all the hurt I was feeling. Ya’ got the job as leader and that was fine. Sure I wanted it too and I busted my ass to be a better fighter, but ya’ worked harder than me and ‘cause of that ya’ got the nod. Soon as that happened, ya’ didn’t act like Leo anymore.”

“I couldn’t,” Leo said, leaning forward. “When Master Splinter gave me the job he also told me all of the responsibilities that went along with it. Like the fact that it was all on me to keep you guys alive. That every decision I make could put you three in peril and that I might even have to sacrifice one of you to save the others. Hearing Master Splinter say that was like he put this giant weight on my shoulders. All I could think of was that if I screwed up, even a little bit, I could lose one of you.”

“Leo, that’s . . . that’s so much pressure,” Don said softly. “Almost too much. You should have talked to us about it.”

“And burdened you with what I had volunteered to take on?” Leo asked, looking at Don. “How would that be the right thing to do? I wouldn’t even be talking about it now if I didn’t want Raph to understand that I wasn’t on a power trip. Everything I’ve done, everything I’ve said was because I wanted to protect you, Raphael. I never wanted to control you, I only wanted to get you to see how some of the choices you make don’t just affect you.”

“All I ever wanted to do was protect ya’ guys too,” Raph said earnestly. “We ain’t gonna always agree on how that gets done but making me feel like crap with the things ya’ say ain’t a good way to get your point across.”

“When that thing happened between us, I shouldn’t have reacted by calling you names,” Leo said, sounding regretful. “I’ll admit that I wanted my words to do more than sting, I wanted them to cut you. I was afraid that at some point you might attack me again because you hated me so much and I said what I did to ensure there was never a reoccurrence.”

“I don’t hate ya’, Leo. Damn, ya’ get under my shell like nobody’s business but I don’t hate ya’. I didn’t hate ya’ then, I was just friggin’ pissed that we weren’t friends anymore and ya’ had started lording it over me like ya’ was suddenly that much fucking better than me,” Raph said.

“I wasn’t trying to do any of that,” Leo said. “All I wanted to do was prove to Master Splinter that I took my responsibilities seriously. I felt like he was watching me all the time; that if I goofed off or didn’t push you guys he’d come down on me for not doing the job I’d been given. I couldn’t be a kid anymore. There was no time to play because I spent every waking hour trying to learn everything I could. I never knew when or from where danger would come and I needed to be ready for it.”

Mikey kept his mouth closed and avoided making movements that might draw Leo or Raph’s attention. They were talking to each other, really talking, and unless they needed a
contribution from him, he wasn’t going to get involved. Don seemed to feel the same way because other than the one compassionate comment, he was remaining silent.

“It wasn’t just the names ya’ called me. The thing that got to me the most was how ya’ threatened to tell Master Splinter that I was sick and deranged.” Raph paused, his facial muscles twitching as he worked to control his emotions. “That threat’s been hanging over my head for years. Ya’ want to talk about your burdens? Try living with something like that. I never knew when ya’ might decide I needed to be banished and I’d suddenly lose my whole damn world.”

“I would never have told him,” Leo said quietly. “Not in a million years. Not even when I saw the marks start to appear on Mikey’s skin and guessed what was going on between the two of you. I regret that I never told you that before now.”

“Ya’ had the chance to say it when ya’ cornered my ass in the dojo,” Raph told him. “Ya’ sure as hell said plenty of other stuff, like how I should leave Mikey alone.”

“It didn’t occur to me to bring that up,” Leo said. “My focus was in trying to learn if my suspicions were true. My mind equated danger with lust when it came to you because I only had my own experience to go on. All I’ve seen is how Mikey angers you and how you retaliate with such violence.”

“Dude, do you think I’m that brain dead that I’d keep messing with Raph if he was really hurting me?” Mikey asked incredulously, choosing that as a good time to say something. “I picked on him because I wanted his attention and getting popped a couple of times was worth it. He never hit me as hard as he could and I knew he wouldn’t.”

“And before ya’ bring it up, let me do it first,” Raph said. “That pipe incident was a one off. There was a lot of shit going on in our lives, especially with losing our old lair and starting to spend time topside. Every time we went up, ya’ went overboard with the orders and the lectures and it had finally got on my last nerve. Mikey’s usual antics just set me off. I still replay that minute when I was holding the pipe over him and I honestly think I’d have dropped it without hitting him.”

“So do I,” Mikey said swiftly. “When we’re together, Raph always stops the second he thinks anything’s wrong. He likes to see what I can take and I like to see what he can dish out. We have rules and we both follow them. It’s all about trust bro’. I trust Raph completely.”

“They derive sexual enjoyment from something called sadomasochism,” Don explained, looking at Leo. “It’s a type of domination and submission, were one partner takes a lead role in deciding what he will have his partner submit to. For Raph and Mikey, it involves an element of pain.”

“I can call a stop to it any time I want,” Mikey said. “We take all kinds of precautions and I don’t ever get really hurt. I know that’s what you kept trying to warn me about, Leo. All that talk about Raph’s demons and stuff was your way of telling me that Raph gets off on causing pain. Thing is, I like the pain. It gets me off too.”

“It wasn’t just physical pain I was talking about when I was trying to give you a heads up, Mikey,” Leo said, his brow furrowing. “My concerns were deeper than that; I was afraid that Raph couldn’t return the level of affection you would start to look for. Your heart is big and I knew that there was no way you could become sexually involved without feeling something for Raph. I was worried that you’d fall hard for him and he’d cause you the kind of pain that could destroy you, that it would leave you jaded and cynical or worse, it would break your spirit. I couldn’t stand that thought.”
“We had a rocky start for that very reason,” Raph admitted, looking at Mikey before setting a hand on his arm. “I was scared to let myself love him when he did say he wanted to be with me. I was sure I was gonna fuck it up ‘cause I never had any hopes that I could be with Mikey. Didn’t think he’d see me like that, didn’t think he’d swing that way, and I sure as shell didn’t think I deserved to have him. Still don’t, but he disagrees and I ain’t arguing with him.”

“Wouldn’t be any point to that ‘cause I’m right,” Mikey said complacently. He was warmed by Raph’s touch and thrilled that Raph was showing a side of himself that he rarely let anyone see. Mikey liked the thought that it was his influence that was helping Raph to be so forthright about his feelings.

“I think I’m actually envious of you two,” Don said, smiling at the pair. He looked over at Leo, leaning towards him as he said, “Mikey and I have talked a little about his intimacy with Raph. I’ve researched the fundamental dynamics of the particular kink they enjoy and it isn’t dangerous if done in a proper environment under specific conditions. What it boils down to is they both like being in control but in different ways. Just because Mikey submits doesn’t mean he is helpless; he’s deriving his pleasure from gaining Raph’s approval and commanding his full attention, something he’s always seemed to need.”

Leo turned his focus to Don and for a moment it seemed as if they were silently communicating. Then Leo looked back over at Mikey and Raph.

“I don’t know that I now or ever will understand what the two of you enjoy doing together, but the truth is I don’t have to,” Leo said. “Not as long as your involvement with each other doesn’t alter the dynamics of our team or the way we operate in a fight. I can’t ignore my own doubts and your words aren’t going to diminish them. The only thing that will do that is time and the things that do occur in future battles.”

“That’s fair enough,” Mikey said before glancing at Raph. “Isn’t it?”

Raph cleared his throat before answering. “Yeah, guess I’d be thinking the same thing if I was Leo.”

“For a time I’m going to be picking and choosing the conflicts we’ll engage in topside,” Leo said. “We’ll be avoiding anything major until I get a handle on how you two operate given your new connection.”

“This business with Hun and the restaurant thing, I’ve been checking to see if he’s applied for a license but nothing so far. Suppose he does pop up again, are we going to pursue it?” Don asked.

Mikey coughed, his eyes meeting Raph’s. With a sheepish look, Raph said, “Forget that whole thing, I made it up. I needed time alone with Mikey to talk through some stuff and couldn’t do it at the lair ‘cause Leo was all over us, so that Hun stuff was a lie.”

Both Leo and Don were silent as they stared at Raph, making Mikey worry that they were mad, but then Don chuckled.

“I didn’t know you could be so deceptive,” Don said.

“I’m a ninja,” Raph said with a shrug. “My favorite part’s the fighting, but I can pull some of the other skills out of my bag of tricks when I need to.”

“How about I promise not to be ‘all over’ you two if you promise no more lies or secrets?”
Leo asked. “Maybe we can talk things through like this rather than my arguments with you, Raph, escalating to the point where you run out of the lair in a fit of temper.”

“I can get on board with no more lies or secrets,” Raph agreed, “as long as I don’t have to promise not to get pissed off at ya’ from time to time. That’s asking too much.”

“The next time could you just hit me?” Leo asked. “You have no idea how much I worry that something might happen to you when you go racing out of here.”

“That’s a deal,” Raph said with a cocky grin. “Hitting ya’ don’t ever get old.”

“Something I’ve been wondering,” Don interjected. “Where do you two go when you’re having your encounters?”

Mikey and Raph studied each other for a minute before Mikey raised and lowered his shoulders slightly, indicating that the answer to Don’s question was to be left up to Raph.

“We’ve got a place,” Raph answered carefully, shifting in his seat. “Ain’t far from here, it’s well hidden, it’s fortified, and it’s totally secluded. That’s all I’m gonna say about it and I ain’t gonna show it to either of ya’. That place belongs to me and Mikey. It’s safe and that’s all ya’ really need to know.”

Remembering the lineman’s phone, Mikey took it off his belt and passed it across to Don. “The place could use a couple of extra touches,” Mikey said. “You still have any of those old landline phones that still work?”

“So you don’t have to use your shell cells while you’re in your ‘secret place’?” Don asked, his brown eyes twinkling with amusement. “Sure, I’ve got a couple you can choose from.”

“Damn that reminds me, I’d better call Casey and tell him I ain’t lost no more before he gets a bug up his butt,” Raph said, setting his hands on the arms of his chair preparatory to rising. “Is this therapy session over with or what?”

“I want to say one last thing,” Leo told Raph before his brother could get up. Taking a deep breath and releasing it, he said, “I apologize for what I said to you four years ago. I didn’t mean a single word of it. It was just a defense mechanism that kicked in because I didn’t know any other way to handle the situation. Can you ever forgive me?”

Mikey noticed that Raph’s hands had tensed, his grip tightening on the chair arms. After a second or two they relaxed and so did Raph.

Yeah. Same question back at ya’. I’m sorry I got so fucking violent over nothing but my own damn hurt feelings. I had a lot of growing up to do then and there’s still room for improvement,” Raph answered.

“The same goes for me,” Leo said. “Let’s try to pick back up on that friendship we had so many years ago, could we? It would mean a lot to me.”

He stood up and used his foot to push the coffee table out of the way. As he did so, Raph also got up. When Leo moved towards him and offered his hand, Raph met him halfway and they shook hands.

“This is stupid; what are we, business partners?” Raph asked gruffly before pulling Leo against him and wrapping his arms around his older brother.
Leo seemed stunned at first but then quickly returned the hug. Mikey watched them for a moment and then looked over at Don.

“Aww, I think I’m gonna cry,” Mikey said with an impish grin.

Raph pulled back from Leo and scowled at his lover. “Shut up knucklehead.”

With a laugh, Leo patted Raph’s shoulder. “Go make your call to Casey before he shows up here. Don, you’d better collect Leatherhead and walk him home. We shouldn’t keep him waiting any longer.”

Mikey popped up off the couch. “I’ll walk with you guys, if that’s okay Donny.”

There was a hint of playfulness in his tone that Don didn’t miss. Narrowing his eyes, Don said, “Sure Mikey. Glad to have the company.”

“One more thing,” Raph said. Stepping over to Mikey he grabbed the sides of his younger brother’s face and planted a kiss right on his lips. “That’s all the PDA you guys are gonna see, but I had to get it out of my system.”

Swiping Mikey’s shell cell from his brother’s belt, Raph walked towards the staircase as he punched in Casey’s phone number.

Smiling happily, Mikey looked at Don and Leo. “Nope, uh-uh. That is totally not all the PDA you guys are gonna see. Raph just doesn’t know that yet.”

His brother’s groans just made Mikey smile that much wider.

TBC……………..
“Michelangelo, I am delighted that you and Donatello were able to walk with me back to my home,” Leatherhead said as the trio traveled through the tunnels together. “I hope I have not caused you any inconvenience.”

“Never,” Mikey answered jauntily. “We like your company. Besides, Leo’s tackling dinner and his pain is more than we can handle. Most of the time, so is his food.”

“We’d rather know you made it home safely than to wait and wonder,” Don added. “If the rain doesn’t let up soon, we may all find ourselves swimming through these tunnels.”

“Let us hope that does not happen,” Leatherhead said. “My abode is one level higher than yours and you are all most welcome there if it becomes necessary for you to move.”

“We’re all right for now,” Don told him. “We’ve been keeping an eye out for blockages and as long as everything continues to drain properly, our lair shouldn’t be in any danger.”

Mikey jogged out ahead of the pair with the excuse that he was scouting along their route for any stray city workers. He had already made two previous excursions, but only half of his mind was on his stated mission. What he was really trying to do was to see if either Don or Leatherhead would repeat the small intimacy he’d witnessed between them earlier.

So far the only thing he’d observed was that once they thought he was out of sight, the pair moved nearer to each other. That wasn’t necessarily telling, but it did raise even more suspicions in Mikey’s overactive imagination.

Cutting over into the next cross tunnel, Mikey stopped where he was, pressing against the tunnel wall so he could peek around the corner at Don and Leatherhead. For a minute they did nothing more than drift closer together, but then Leatherhead lowered his mouth near Donny’s head and said something in a low voice. Don immediately broke into a smile, looking fondly up at the large crocodile.

Mikey grinned. That might not be proof of anything, but it was a good starting place for the questions he intended to let loose on Donatello once they were on their return trip to the lair.

The route back to Leatherhead’s home was a bit wetter than it had been when Mikey made the trip there with Master Splinter, but other than that they encountered no obstacles. Only once did they have to stop and take shelter in a shadowed alcove due to unusual sounds up ahead of them. When they discovered it was only the echo of voices coming through a nearby grate, they continued on.

Upon reaching Leatherhead’s dwelling, the turtle brothers entered with him, ensuring
themselves that his living space was still dry. Mikey wandered away from the pair on the pretext of examining some of the mutant crocodile’s books, but remained near enough to hear what they were saying.

“I wish you could have stayed for dinner LH,” Don said, a wistful note in his voice.

“As much as I enjoy dining with your family, tonight it seemed best that I decline,” Leatherhead replied.

The pair were facing each other, Leatherhead stooped over just enough so that he and Don could converse in low murmurs. Mikey wouldn’t have been able to catch their words but for the fact that he was focusing all of his energies into his sense of hearing.

Opening a book, Mikey pretended to be lost in its pages. From the corner of his eye he caught Don’s surreptitious glance in his direction before his brother turned back to Leatherhead.

“There are some things going on with my brothers that I’d like to discuss with you,” Don said. “I’d rather it was just the two of us when we have that talk.”

“I am available to you whenever you wish,” Leatherhead told him. “You and your brothers owe me no explanations, but you may rest assured that I shall treat all of our conversations with the utmost confidence.”

“I’ve always known that you’re the soul of discretion,” Don assured him. “It’s just . . . delicate, but something of which you should be made aware.”

“I trust in your judgment,” Leatherhead said.

“If you wanted to review some of those notes on my genome theory I could bring them by too,” Don added, sounding hopeful.

Leatherhead smiled happily. “I would like that. Perhaps tomorrow? Or is that too soon?”

“No, tomorrow is perfect,” Don agreed. Mikey could swear he heard a lilt in his brother’s tone. Clearing his throat, Don raised his voice to say, “Mikey and I had better get back. Thanks for helping us look for Raphael.”

“I am here anytime you need me,” Leatherhead said.

That was Mikey’s cue to put the book back where he’d found it and walk over to join the pair. To his mind, Leatherhead’s words had a definite double meaning.

“I think it’s awesome that you live so near us LH,” Mikey said. “Donny here sometimes feels this urge to go off into geek land and you’re the only one who understands him.”

“Hey!” Don said in mock protest. “Leo understands me . . . some of the time.”

As Mikey chuckled, Leatherhead said, “Donatello has one of the finest minds I have ever known and that is taking into account those of the Utrom scientists. It is my great good fortune to count him as my friend. To count all of you as such.”

It was obvious the last sentence was an afterthought, but Mikey didn’t pounce on it the way he normally would. As much as he’d like to prolong the conversation to see how much he could trick Don and Leatherhead into saying, it would be much faster to simply ask his brother some questions. He couldn’t do that until they were alone.
“But me the most, right?” Mikey asked flippantly. “I’d love to hang out and hear you sing my praises, but I’m hungry. I could even eat Leo’s cooking.”

“I’d better get him home,” Don told Leatherhead. “Mikey must be nearly starved if he’s that desperate.”

They bade Leatherhead a good night, checking to see that the tunnels outside of his home were clear before leaving. As they rounded the first bend, Donatello turned to wave at an especially dark recess in two intersecting walls and when Mikey strained his eyes he saw that a small camera was mounted there.

“You think LH is watching us?” Mikey asked.

“Of course,” Don answered with certainty. “He’d want to be sure we were safe. I do the same thing whenever he leaves our place unescorted.”

The pair walked in silence for a bit, Don’s thoughts seeming far away. For his part, Mikey was determined to get some answers from his brother before they got near the lair.

“Just to be sure he’s safe,” Mikey finally said, watching Don’s face as they walked.

His brother frowned. “Right. That’s what I said.”

“Only because you want to be sure he’s safe,” Mikey repeated.

If he hadn’t been looking at his brother so intently Mikey would have missed the hint of color that touched Don’s cheeks.

“Yes,” Don maintained without meeting Mikey’s eyes. “I don’t know why you keep repeating that.”

“Don’t you?” Mikey waited a second and when it appeared Don wasn’t going to take the bait, he decided to be blunt. “What’s going on between you and Leatherhead?”

Instead of stopping, Don started to walk faster. “I have no idea what you’re talking about,” he said, attempting to brazen it out.

“Sure you don’t,” Mikey said, stepping around in front of Don and forcing him to stop. “Don’t think for one minute I didn’t notice you touching him earlier and how you two can hardly stand to be more than a few inches away from each other. Come on, give.”

He was gratified to see not only a startled expression on Don’s face, but one of embarrassment as well. Don tried to cover it quickly, but Mikey’s abrupt confrontation had caught him off guard.

“I knew I should have insisted on making this trip alone,” Don said. “You always were an incorrigible snoop.”

“Is there another kind?” Mikey asked with a grin. “Leatherhead likes you.”

“He likes all of us,” Don said quickly.

“Nope, not the way he likes you,” Mikey clarified. “I didn’t think you knew and neither did Master Splinter, but you do, don’t you?”

“You talked to Master Splinter about this?” Don asked, his eyes widening.
Mikey shook his head. “He talked to me about it. Master Splinter knew something was going on between me and Raph even when we thought we were doing a good job of hiding things. He said that LH has an attraction for you and you didn’t know, but sneaky Donny does know.”

Don studied Mikey for a moment, as though trying to make a decision. Finally he sighed and said, “I haven’t been oblivious to Leatherhead’s interest. I honestly didn’t know for a while, but then I’d catch him looking at me in a certain way and after a time I guessed. He always tried to hide it, so I knew I shouldn’t bring it up. I didn’t want to embarrass him and you’d better not do that either.”

There was the faintest hint of a threat behind those words. Since Mikey had never had any intention of doing such a thing, he didn’t let it bother him.

Of course, he couldn’t let it pass without teasing his brother. “Wouldn’t think of tackling him to the ground and forcing him to admit that he has the hots for you,” Mikey said mischievously.

“Very funny,” Don said, still looking serious. “Leatherhead won’t understand your lame attempts at joking. He’ll think you’re making fun of him, or worse, that you’re insinuating there’s something wrong with him for feeling that way.”

Mikey held up his hands. “Chill bro’. I’m not gonna say anything to LH about this. I only wanted to talk to you about it ‘cause it looks to me like you might be feeling him too now.”

“Aw geez, Mikey.” Don lifted his head, looking up at the ceiling to avoid Mikey’s gimlet eyes. Then he exhaled sharply and met Mikey’s gaze. “Yes, okay? Yes, I think I enjoy Leatherhead’s company now for a new set of reasons. I might even have feelings for him.”

“But not for Raph, right? ‘Cause you two have a lot in common the same as you have with LH,” Mikey said.

Donatello looked amused. “No, I don’t have those kinds of feelings for Raph. As much as I enjoy hanging out with him, we’re just really close brothers. He is and always has been completely into you, little brother.”

“And people say he’s not smart,” Mikey said, preening a little. “So what are you gonna do about the LH thing?”

Don shrugged. “Nothing. What we have works for us. We enjoy each other’s company as often as we’d like without complications.”

“What complications?” Mikey asked. “Raph and I have paved the way for you, Donny. If you wanted to get with Leatherhead nobody in our family would have a problem with that.”

“It’s not that simple,” Don said. “Sure, from what you say Master Splinter would probably accept us, but there’s still one family member to be considered.”

Knitting his brow, Mikey asked, “Leo? I know he has concerns about the whole couple’s thing, but he wouldn’t ever dream of standing in the way of you being happy.”

“I know he wouldn’t,” Don said. “It’s not that, it’s . . . you know what, never mind. Let’s drop it and go home.”

He started forward, bypassing Mikey and setting a quick pace. Mikey trekked along beside him, thinking hard about what Don might possibly be keeping to himself.
Suddenly a strange thought came to him and Mikey instantly knew he could have guessed what Don’s problem was. Once more he dashed out in front of his brother and made Donatello stop walking.

“You’ve got feelings for Leo too, don’t you Donny?” Mikey asked smugly.

From the expression on Don’s face, Mikey knew he was right. He remembered how Leo spent so much of his spare time in Don’s company. Mikey always thought it was because their clan leader was consulting with the brains of the team, but now he wondered if there was more to it than that.

Then there was the night when Mikey, covered in mud, had arrived home with Raph to discover Leo and Don sitting together on the couch waiting up for them. Sitting close together on the couch.

“You’re wrong,” Don said. “It’s just that he’d be left all alone.”

Mikey had played enough poker with Don to recognize his tells, and it was obvious that wasn’t the entire truth. “Out with it, Donny. It was just a little while ago when we all looked at each other and promised to have no more secrets.”

“Having no more secrets doesn’t mean we should share every personal thought that goes through our heads,” Don contended.

“That means you are having personal thoughts about Leo,” Mikey said triumphantly. “What’s the big deal? Bet you could have them both if you played your cards right. Shell, I thought Raph and I were kinky, but you’ve got us beat by a mile.”

Don swiped a palm across his face. “Look Mikey, I’ll admit that I’m progressive with regards to intimate relationships and it wouldn’t bother me one bit to have two lovers. I just don’t think Leo could handle the concept of sharing his partner with someone else, even if he were to express an interest in me. Which he hasn’t.”

“Then you should introduce the subject. Go for it Donny, take the chance. It’ll probably work out like it did for me and Raph,” Mikey said enthusiastically.

“I wish I shared your optimism,” Don said. “The problem is, right now you’re seeing everything through rose colored glasses.”

“I don’t wear glasses,” Mikey protested facetiously.

“You know what I mean,” Don said. “You’re in love and nothing seems like it could go wrong. I envy you, Mikey. You’re braver than I am, you can ignore the voice in your head that tries to tell you all of the bad things that could happen. I don’t even know if what I’m feeling is real or simply a reaction to what’s happened between you and Raph. Maybe what I’m experiencing is empathy or wishful thinking and neither of those things is a good reason to embarrass myself with Leo. Or Leatherhead for that matter.”

Mikey didn’t know right off how to respond to that statement. There was a resolute expression on Don’s face as he nodded once, knowing he’d made his point. Together they started back to the lair.

It wasn’t in Mikey’s nature to just leave it at that though. He reviewed all that he’d been through, from the very beginning when he’d had such an intense response to Raph’s retribution for the fake cockroach incident, up until he’d known he was in love with his brother.
Mikey had gone through a range of emotions and hours of questioning what was happening to him. He’d tried different tactics to deal with his desires and would probably never forget the mental or physical reactions he’d experienced. One of those had been what Don had just expressed to him, doubt that he was actually having real feelings for Raph or merely a lustful craving for attention.

Then Mikey realized there had been at least one thing that had affected him that wasn’t imagination or fantasy.

“Hey Donny, can I ask you another question?” Mikey kept his eyes on his brother as he posed the query.

Don glanced at him. “You’re going to ask no matter what I say, so go ahead.”

“Have you noticed that Leo’s scent seems different?” Mikey asked.

His steps slowing, Don’s brow furrowed. “I hadn’t before but you’re right, lately it does seem different. The change is subtle though, and not at all bad. In fact, now that I think about it, he smells better. More enticing.” Looking hard at Mikey, Don asked, “Have you noticed that too?”

“Nope, nuh-uh,” Mikey said, shaking his head. “Only scent I notice these days is Raph’s. Bet you never thought much about LH’s scent before either but maybe you are now. How about you put your big brain onto that mystery and let me know what you come up with. And afterwards if you’re still convinced you’re imagining how you feel about those two.”

He watched Don’s inquisitive aspect start to shift as the implications of what Mikey had said began to take root. Pleased with himself, Mikey let the matter drop. They were almost home anyway and Don needed time to contemplate what he’d just learned.

When they entered the lair the first thing that Mikey heard was clanging coming from the direction of the kitchen. That was followed by the sound of Leo’s voice and then Raph’s.

Looking towards his father’s room, Mikey saw that the doors were still closed, indicating that Master Splinter hadn’t come out yet.

Touching Don’s arm to prevent the genius from going into his lab, Mikey flipped a thumb towards the kitchen and said, “Uh, you realize that we left those two alone together? They seemed to have drifted into the kitchen at the same time.”

Don cocked his head to listen. “It doesn’t sound like it’s unsafe to enter. We probably should check on them though.”

Together they cautiously approached the kitchen door, making sure to stay out of sight. Peeking around the doorframe, the pair were astonished to see Raph whisking something inside of a bowl while Leo stirred a pot on the stove.

“Do you think I should add more pepper?” Leo asked, peering over his shoulder at his brother.

Raph shook his head, leaving the bowl to join Leo at the stove. “I think ya’ put enough. Let me taste it.”

Leo lifted the spoon, blew on it, and offered it to Raph. After his brother had sipped some liquid from the spoon, Leo asked, “What do you think?”
“No more pepper, but go ahead and add another dash of salt,” Raph told him. “Just a dash, don’t go overboard.”

Mikey and Don looked at each other before breaking into wide grins. Détente had never sounded or smelled so good.

TBC……………..
Chapter 38

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,352 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 38 Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey

Somehow Mikey convinced Don to forgo a trip to his lab in favor of playing some video games while Leo and Raph tackled the dinner preparations.

It might not have been entirely due to Mikey’s skills at persuasion that kept Don away from the allure of his computers; part of it was no doubt the singular nature of their two brothers working so easily together. That was something both Mikey and Don felt the need to observe.

For once Leo managed to serve them a dinner that wasn’t merely palatable, it was delicious. Mikey made a mental note that Leo’s aversion to cooking could be overcome by simply having someone keep him company during the process. It was the only area where Leo could have used a boost in confidence.

Master Splinter had taken control of the television array just before dinner in order to catch the latest weather update. It became a topic of conversation while they ate.

“The television meteorologist has finally decided to pronounce an end to the rain,” Master Splinter told his sons.

“That’s a great relief,” Don said. “There will still be a lot of run-off and the sewers are going to be at high tide for a while, but it’s a start to things finally drying up.”

“We should stay on a schedule for surveying the tunnels, shouldn’t we Don?” Leo asked. “People will start shoving things through the drainage openings rather than waiting for street clean-up.”

“You’re right.” Don nodded in agreement. “It happens every time there’s a big storm that causes flood damage. People are so anxious to dispose of the things that have been ruined by high water that they can’t wait for the already overworked city disposal departments to come by. If it fits through a drainage opening they’ll shove it in there.”

“Or they’ll pop open one of the manhole covers and throw their trash down there,” Raph said. “I’d like to catch one of those bozos doing that so I can return the junk to the middle of their bedroom when they ain’t looking.”

“Now that would be funny,” Mikey said. “Could you see the look on someone’s face when they woke up to find a pile of garbage at the end of their bed?”

They all started to chuckle at that thought and then Leo said, “With a sign taped to it that reads, ‘Courtesy of the neighborhood sewer dwellers’.”

“Local Union two twenty-two,” Raph added with a guffaw.
That exchange had them all laughing and Mikey noticed the pleased smile on his father’s face. It had been a long time since Leo and Raph had been so at ease with each other that they could bounce jokes around.

When the laughter eased, Don said, “You know, the one good thing about all the junk going into the sewers is that there are so often some real treasures mixed in with it.”

“Yeah, people see a tiny spot of water on something and don’t want it anymore,” Mikey said.

“I sense several hours of treasure hunting in our futures,” Leo said, looking affectionately at Don.

“A missed opportunity is gone forever,” Don quoted with a grin. “Remember when we were kids and used to pretend we were pirates?”

With a laugh, Raph said, “Yeah I do. Leo always wanted to be Blackbeard.”

“He would not accept the fact that turtles can’t grow beards,” Don said, a fond expression on his face.

“It was supposed to be a pretend beard,” Leo countered in mock protest. “You were the only one who insisted on factual accuracy.”

They continued to banter back and forth, the conversation light-hearted and fun. After a bit, Mikey noticed that Don and Leo tended to finish each other’s sentences, or say the same things at the same time.

It wasn’t a new phenomenon but Mikey had never paid much attention to it before. Armed with his new knowledge about Don’s feelings for Leo, he now did. Mikey realized that those two were a very like-minded pair, even down to their almost obsessive devotion to their chosen fields of study.

Watching Don during dinner, Mikey wondered if there was more than purely altruistic reasons for his taking a hand in bringing Raph and him back together. It was entirely possible that Donny was also trying to pave the way for himself to take a lover, especially if that lover was to be Leo.

That type of long range goal setting was another thing that Don and Leo had in common. Mikey had been so worried about what Raph and Donny shared that he’d never thought about how well Leo and Don’s personalities fit together.

There was a mellowness to Donatello that Mikey was certain must appeal to Leo. It was the type of natural soothing calm that Leo sought for in his meditation.

Something else Mikey noticed during dinner as well was the frequency with which Leo’s eyes turned to Don and lingered on him. Leo had chosen to sit next to Don and his chair seemed to have been pulled closer to the genius than usual.

Maybe Don was content with the status quo but that didn’t mean that Mikey shared that sentiment. He’d gotten the truth out of Donny and through a bit of clever snooping, he meant to find out what was going on in Leo’s head too.

When dinner ended, Don stood up and said, “I’ll clean up since you guys cooked.”
Catching Raph’s eyes, Mikey tipped his head in Don’s direction and wiggled his brow in a meaningful way. Raph’s frown indicated he understood and would play along, but would expect answers later.

Jumping up from his seat, Raph grabbed some of the dishes and said, “I’ll help ya’. The job will go quicker with two of us on it.”

Master Splinter departed to watch some television. That left Mikey alone with Leo, but out in the middle of the lair wasn’t the best setting for Mikey’s plan.

“Hey bro’, wanna help me with my leaping split kick?” Mikey asked. “Master Splinter says I should practice it since you’re the only one who’s bothered to get it down.”

“Sure Mikey,” Leo said, looking surprised. “I’d be happy to help.”

Leading the way into the dojo, Leo grabbed a pair of boards from a pile stacked against one wall. Mikey waited for him in the center of the room, stretching his muscles until Leo got into position.

During Mikey’s first attempt he connected with one of the boards but his toes merely glanced off the other.

“Again,” Leo said. “Focus on your leg placement; you can put power into the kick later.”

It took several tries but Mikey finally mastered the kick, much to Leo’s delight. Having gotten his brother into such a receptive mood, Mikey decided to begin his offensive.

“Leo, before we quit, could we talk a little?” Mikey asked.

“Of course we can,” Leo said, tossing the broken boards aside. “What did you want to talk about?”

“Here, join me,” Mikey said, lowering himself to the mats and sitting cross legged. He waited until Leo was comfortably seated opposite him before continuing. “I wanted to ask what you really think about Raph and me being together.”

“That wasn’t my primary concern when you two made your announcement,” Leo replied noncommittally.

“You sure about that?” Mikey asked. “When I told you to just say what was bugging you, the first thing out of your mouth was that because we could have sex didn’t mean we should, especially with our own brother. Then you listed a lot of the physical reasons why someone has sex and said they weren’t a good basis for doing it with a sibling. We told you we were in love and
explained how that happened and the subject got dropped. So I want to know what you really think about two of your brothers having sex with each other.”

“Mikey, you already know that your revelation wasn’t a complete surprise to me,” Leo said. “I had a suspicion that things were going down that path as soon as I saw the bite mark on your collarbone. Master Splinter and I have had discussions before about our prospects with regards to acquiring mates.”

“Yeah, we had a couple of those too,” Mikey admitted. “He said he thought a lot about what puberty might do to us and if we’d want to seek each other out for sex. Well, he didn’t quite say it like that, but it’s what he meant.”

“That’s in line with our talks as well,” Leo said. “It was something he said I should contemplate in my meditation because as the leader I would have to understand how that type of connection could change our team dynamics.”

The last thing Mikey wanted was for Leo to go off in that direction again. “That’s not my biggest concern right now, Leo. What I want to know is if the idea that Raph and I do sex stuff with each other grosses you out.”

There was a hint of amusement on Leo’s face now. “I’m not going out of my way to imagine the two of you engaging in sexual intercourse, if that’s what you’re asking. My answer is no. I’m not sure what it would have been if Master Splinter hadn’t brought up the subject and made me think about it before this. As he reminded me, we aren’t human. Donny would say that all living beings are biologically programmed to be attracted to their own kind.”

Mikey felt a little secret thrill that Leo had invoked Don’s name. “Can’t argue with that kind of logic, can you? Course you never know how that ooze might have affected the whole programming thing. We could almost be attracted to anyone. I just knew right away that Raph was the one for me. Have you ever felt that kind of pull, Leo?”

He thought he did a pretty seamless job of sliding that question in and was gratified when Leo’s eyes darted towards the doorway before returning to Mikey.

“I haven’t given that much thought before now,” Leo said. “My commitments occupy all of my time.”

“You said ‘before now’,” Mikey said, pouncing on Leo’s wording. “Does that mean you could be open to something if it came your way?”

Leo chuckled. “You’ve got romance on the brain, Michelangelo. I’ll just say I’m very happy for you and Raph. You two complement each other in the best possible way. I wouldn’t mind someday finding something like you have, a person to share everything with.”

“Want my advice? When you think you’ve found that person, don’t let opportunity pass you by,” Mikey said. “Spend too much time questioning stuff, and a good thing could slip through your fingers.”

Instead of the glib response Mikey half expected from Leo, his brother grew quiet, his eyes once more drifting towards the main lair. “I’ll take that under advisement little brother,” Leo finally said.

The sound of Raph and Don’s voices brought the pair to their feet and out of the dojo. Don was on his way over to join Master Splinter and Raph was looking around, no doubt in search of
Mikey. When he spotted the younger turtle, Raph strode towards him with a determined expression on his face.

“I think I’ll go catch the news with Master Splinter and Donny,” Leo said diplomatically when Raph reached them.

“Make sure that weatherman don’t change his mind about the rain,” Raph said as Leo walked away.

“You’re going all domestic bro’. Cooking with Leo, cleaning with Don. What’s next, are you gonna take up knitting?” Mikey asked, teasing Raph.

“I already do that every time I break a bone,” Raph quipped. “Come over here, I want to talk to ya’.”

As he tagged along behind Raph back into the dojo, Mikey had a whimsical thought about how that space had probably heard as many confessions as it had kiai’s.

Rather than go out to the center of the room the way he had with Leo, Mikey stopped when Raph did, just after they entered the dojo. Waiting expectantly for Raph to speak, Mikey was surprised when his brother slipped the fingers of both hands into Mikey’s belt, backed him into the wall, and planted a deep kiss on his mouth.

Mikey groaned into the kiss, instantly turned on by the aggressive way Raph’s tongue sought his. Before Mikey could get too wound up, Raph broke the kiss, nipping suggestively at Mikey’s lower lip before fully pulling his head back.

It helped a little, but with Raph’s body still pressed against him, Mikey was having a hard time keeping his brain from turning to mush.

“I talked to Master Splinter while Don and ya’ walked Leatherhead home,” Raph said, his voice low and husky.

“Your enthusiasm tells me that talk went well,” Mikey said with a small smile.

“Hell yeah it did,” Raph said, looking slightly awed. “He’s okay with this, with us. He said he’s been thinking all along that we might get together.”

“That’s what I tried to tell you before,” Mikey said. “Master Splinter’s advice helped me a lot, especially when I found out he doesn’t care if two of his sons decide to mate, as long as we’re happy.”

“He told me that,” Raph said. “Father also said he don’t want details and he don’t want to see us screwing our brains out in public, but if we ever need his advice we should go to him.”

“Sensei did not say ‘screwing our brains out’,” Mikey admonished.

Raph grinned. “I’m paraphrasing. I did tell him we had a place where we go when we want some alone time and I made sure he knew it’s hidden and safe. He didn’t ask where it was or anything, but he did want to know if there’s more than one exit.”

“Oh.” Mikey’s mental eye ran over the secret room and he again said, “Oh. There isn’t, is there?”

“Never thought to look for one, but it made me wonder. That room was a speakeasy back in
the day. There was always a chance the cops would find and raid the place. The guys who ran the joint had to know that might happen and if they didn’t want to get pinched, they’d sure as hell make sure they had a way out,” Raph said.

“We should go look for it,” Mikey said, then added suggestively, “How does right now sound to you?”

“I was just thinking the same thing,” Raph said with a wink.

“All right!” Mikey yipped enthusiastically.

Mikey started to pull away from Raph but his brother held him fast. “Slow down there ya’ horny turtle. I got one more question for ya’. What was ya’ up to with Leo? I could hear the two of ya’ working out for a while, but then it got quiet. Leo looked like he had something on his mind when he walked out of here.”

With a nonchalant shrug, Mikey said, “We talked a little. Basically I just wanted to make sure he wasn’t hiding any lingering doubts about us being together. You know, the whole ‘brothers having sex’ thing. He swore his only worry was me getting hurt and then his team being messed up. If being the leader means you have to be that uptight, I don’t ever want the job.”

Raph chuckled. “Ain’t nobody in their right mind gonna offer it to ya’, so don’t worry.”

“Hey, I resent that,” Mikey said in mock protest. “So, what’s the deal bro’? We have the whole evening ahead of us with nobody dogging our footsteps or worrying about us being alone together. You want to waste any more of it with talking?”

“I do not,” Raph said emphatically. “Come on.”

He practically dragged Mikey through the door, only releasing his hold on the younger turtle’s belt when they were out of the dojo. They saw Leo standing with their father just outside Master Splinter’s room.

“Master Splinter is turning in for the night,” Leo told them.

“Good-night Sensei,” Mikey called out.

“Good-night Master Splinter,” Raph said. “Thanks for everything.”

“Good-night to you my sons,” Master Splinter said. “May you all sleep well.”

After Master Splinter entered his room and the door slid shut behind him, Leo fell into step with Raph and Mikey. Don was standing near the couch with the TV remote in his hands and muted the sound from the television when he saw them.

“So, were you guys going to stick around and play some video games?” Leo asked.

Raph cast a sly grin in Mikey’s direction and answered, “We’re gonna play a game all right, but not an electronic one and not here. Mikey and I are going out and we’ll be back when we get back.”

“Then the video game console is free for the night,” Leo said, turning to Don. “Want to hang out and play a few sessions, Donny?”

Mikey tried not to smile too widely at the surprised expression on Don’s face. Leo walked
over to Don, taking the remote from his hand and Mikey did not miss how his fingers brushed across Don’s

“You d . . . don’t want to practice or meditate or something?” Don asked with a hint of stutter.

Leo shook his head. “No, for once I’d just like to spend time with my bro’, the way we used to do.”

Raph caught hold of Mikey’s arm and began impatiently pulling him towards the elevator. Mikey turned as he stepped inside and before the doors shut, saw Leo and Don sitting very close together on the couch.

“We’re not going on foot?” Mikey asked as they ascended to the garage.

“Nope, gonna take the shell cycle,” Raph said, tugging on his jacket and tossing the extra one to Mikey. “Rain’s supposed to be letting up and this is faster.”

Raph donned his helmet and climbed onto the shell cycle, starting it after Mikey put a helmet on and slid in behind him. Pressing against Raph’s carapace, Mikey put his arms around his brother as the garage door began to open.

Sensors at the entry point closed the door behind them and Raph swung out into the street, swerving around the few cars that were out. There was still a light mist falling and they passed a couple of streets that were barricaded due to flooding.

Fortunately the alley that led to the abandoned warehouse was open. The wooden door still blocked the entrance and Raph stopped his bike, getting off to push the door aside.

After they’d parked and removed their helmets, Raph went back to seal the entry again. Mikey used a small pencil flash to light his way and then they both proceeded through the grate and into the tunnel that led to their secret room.

Mikey used his key to gain entry, anticipation already seeping into him. Following their usual routine, he walked over to the bar, removing his jacket and draping it over one of the pedestal bar seats. He had just taken his nunchucks from his belt and set them on the bar when Raph chucked his sai there too before spinning Mikey around and pulling him into a passionate kiss.

Breathing heavily, Raph extracted his tongue from his brother’s mouth and said against his lips, “We don’t have to worry about scent anymore Mike.”

“Umm,” Mikey hummed into Raph’s mouth as his brother backed him towards the bed.

When the backs of Mikey’s thighs made contact with the bed, Raph leaned into him, forcing his brother onto the mattress. Their mouths separated at that point and Mikey lifted his feet onto the edge of the bed and pushed so that he could slide back farther.

Raph’s eyes were hooded as he gazed at Mikey splayed out below him. That look alone had Mikey’s shell feeling tight, but he knew to wait for Raph to tell him when he could drop down.

Without a word, Raph shrugged out of his jacket before turning and going behind the bar. Mikey heard the sound of one of the chests being opened and in a moment Raph returned, holding a large tube of lubricant.

Mikey’s heart started thumping wildly in his chest, a churr rising from his diaphragm. A
corner of Raph’s mouth lifted at the sound and he tossed the tube down next to Mikey, its thump making the younger turtle gasp.

Reaching down, Raph took hold of Mikey’s left knee pad and slowly removed it from his brother’s leg. He repeated the process with the right knee pad, the rough skin on his fingers scratching erotically against Mikey’s flesh.

Raph’s stare was hypnotic as he held Mikey’s gaze while divesting himself of his own gear. As his red mask fluttered onto the bed, Mikey made to remove his belt but Raph’s grunt stopped him.

Climbing onto the bed, Raph straddled one of Mikey’s legs and worked the knot loose on his brother’s belt, his fingertips grazing the center line on Mikey’s scutes. Groaning, Mikey quivered with the effort to contain his arousal, though it was trying hard to push its way free.

One by one Raph next removed Mikey’s elbow pads before leaning in close to untie the knot on his orange mask. Sliding it off of Mikey’s head, Raph let it slip from his fingers to flutter down next to them before planting both hands to either sides of Mikey’s shoulders and capturing his mouth.

The kiss was more intense than any he’d yet experienced with Raph and Mikey wrapped his arms around Raph’s neck to pull him closer. They churred simultaneously as Raph lifted one hand from the bed and stroked it along Mikey’s bridges. His palm then drifted lower to caress Mikey’s hip and outer thigh, his hand tightening around the muscle before turning inward to cup the area near Mikey’s groin.

Raph abandoned Mikey’s mouth in favor of his neck and Mikey lay there panting, desperately clutching Raph as though afraid he might stop. He winced when Raph bit his collarbone, pleasure endorphins surging through Mikey’s body and making his hips lift.

The movement brought out a dark chuckle from Raph, who murmured, “Impatient.”

“Oh shell, Raphie,” Mikey gasped out. They were the only words he could think of, his mind muddled with lust.

Sucking on Mikey’s skin, Raph moved across from his collarbone to the apex of his shoulder, where he once again bit Mikey hard. Crying out, Mikey’s nails raked across Raph’s carapace as he shuddered through the immense pleasure.

Raph flicked his tongue across the bite before lifting his head, his smoldering golden gaze transfixing the younger turtle. Then Raph lowered his mouth to Mikey’s center front line, licking his way down that sensitive area between Mikey’s scutes until his mouth was directly over the bulge in Mikey’s plastron.

“Come on out,” Raph growled, his hot breath blowing across the softer cartilage in that one spot.

Exhaling loudly, Mikey released his erection from its protective pouch. He’d barely relaxed when Mikey suddenly felt Raph’s tongue swipe across the tip of his dick, making the younger turtle squeal at the incredibly titillating sensation.

Mikey’s toes curled as Raph’s tongue twisted around his shaft. Having lost his grip on his brother’s carapace, Mikey’s hands dug into the bed sheets, his eyes half closed with pleasure.

When Raph’s entire mouth clamped down around his member, Mikey’s head ground against
Cold air hit his dick and Mikey lifted his head to look down, meeting Raph’s eyes and knowing his own were filled with need. Raph’s mouth hovered barely an inch above Mikey’s cock, one hand curved around the base to hold it at attention.

“I’m gonna make love to ya’ Mike,” Raph said, his voice gravely. “Ya’ ready for that?”

“Shell yes,” Mikey hissed, squirming against the bedding. “Tell me what to do and I’ll do it.”

Raph released his cock to reach up and snag the lubricant. “Spread your legs some more and keep your tail down against the bed. Just let me do the driving and I’ll take care of ya’.”

Mikey watched each of Raph’s movements avidly, noting that Raph’s penis hung hard and heavy between his legs. The mere sight of his brother’s enormous phallus sent spasms of desire along Mikey’s spine, making his asshole contract.

As Mikey shifted his legs further apart, Raph moved as well, coming to a stop when he was kneeling between Mikey’s thighs. Mikey’s heart jumped when the top of the lubricant popped open, his eyes transfixed by the image of Raph squeezing the tube’s contents onto one of his fingers.

When Raph touched that finger against the opening beneath his brother’s tail, Mikey tensed. “Shh,” Raph soothed, his fingertip tickling Mikey’s entrance in order to paint lubricant around the puckered ring. “Gonna go nice and slow. This time ya’ tell me to stop if it hurts too bad, ya’ understand me, Mike? This time we do it right.”

Emotion so strong it nearly closed Mikey’s throat made it difficult for him to answer at once, so he nodded first and then managed to croak, “Okay, Raph.”

With great care Raph penetrated Mikey’s rectum, his finger gliding in smoothly up to the first joint where he stopped for a second. There was a mild sting, enough to stimulate Mikey’s senses without being overly painful. As Mikey gave breathy voice to his pleasure, Raph began pushing again and almost at once the sting intensified.

Mikey’s churr was cut off as his back teeth snapped together. At the same time his cock jumped as the pain radiated straight into Mikey’s groin.

“Mike?” Raph asked, hesitating.

“Keep going,” Mikey hissed. “Feels go~od!”

Instead of doing as Mikey asked, Raph extracted his finger, ignoring his younger brother’s groan of protest. “I already said that this time I ain’t wanting to hurt ya’,” Raph said, liberally coating his finger with additional lubricant. “I want ya’ to remember everything about me, not about pain.”

A feeling unlike anything he’d ever experienced bloomed into warmth inside Mikey’s chest. Mikey thought if love was a physical thing, it had to be that feeling more than any other.

True to his word, Raph carefully prepped his brother, sliding first one entire finger into Mikey and then adding a second. By the time Raph began to scissor his fingers inside Mikey’s ass,
the younger turtle was panting with need, precum dribbling from his cock and slicking his shaft.

As Raph twisted his fingers inside Mikey, they brushed against something that made Mikey yelp, the back of his head slamming into the mattress. His entire body shuddered at the overwhelming rush of pleasure that was very like a flash fire dancing along his nerve endings.

“Sh~ell!” Mikey exclaimed as the feeling began to subside.

Mikey didn’t even realize his eyes had closed until he pried them open. The first thing he saw was Raph’s leering grin.

“Prostate,” Raph said in as smug a tone as Mikey had ever heard from him. “Wondered if I could find it with my fingers.”

Breathing heavily, Mikey said, “If you do that again I’m gonna cum.”

He remembered back to when Raph had used the butt plug on him and had hit that same area, not once but three times. When Mikey was finally allowed a release he’d passed out.

Chuckling, Raph extracted his fingers. “I’m gonna do that with my dick,” Raph told him, slathering his cock with lube before adding provocatively, “I want ya’ to cum when I’m inside of ya’.”

The way Raph said those words had Mikey shivering in anticipation. Mikey’s hands once more dug into the sheets as Raph got into position above him, gripping the edges of Mikey’s carapace and tilting his hips up to a more advantageous height.

Grasping his cock, Raph lined up the tip with Mikey’s anus and entered him. Once he had penetrated past that tight ring of muscle, Raph braced himself, palms firmly planted to either side of Mikey’s body.

With infinite care Raph buried his length inside of Mikey, groaning his pleasure the entire way. Mikey’s cock bounced against his own plastron, the burn of Raph’s penetration electrifying the younger turtle’s very core.

“Damn,” Raph finally said in a breathy exhale. “Never knew anything could feel so fucking good.”

“Me either,” Mikey agreed, his voice quivering slightly. “Raph~ie . . . give me more.”

Obligingly, Raph pulled partway back before snapping his hips forward. Setting up a steady pace, Raph began to thrust into Mikey, fucking him amidst the grunts and churrs to which they both gave voice.

Mikey latched onto Raph’s beefy arms, lifting his hips to meet each of his brother’s powerful downward drives. Having Raph’s large cock drilling into him made Mikey feel both greedy and gratified, his whole body aflame with his lust.

“Ahh, ahh, ngh~mmm.” Mikey panted, his cock throbbing.

He started to slide one hand down Raph’s arm in order to take care of his own needs but his brother stopped mid-thrust when Mikey moved.

“I got this,” Raph told him.
Leaning to one side, Raph braced himself on his forearm and wrapped a hand around Mikey’s cock. When Raph began to move inside of Mikey again, his hand did too, tight and steady along Mikey’s shaft.

Digging his heels into the mattress, Mikey’s body shook as an intense tingling sensation swept through him before settling into his groin. When Raph stabbed his prostate, the tingling grew and spread into his cock.

“Raph, oh, oh man,” Mikey whispered nonsensically. “Raph, I’m . . . ahh, ahh.”


When Raph’s hard cock hit Mikey’s prostate again, it sent the younger turtle over the edge. Crying out his brother’s name, Mikey exploded over Raph’s hand, his cum jetting out to splatter his plastron.

“Ah . . . yes!” Raph shouted as he plunged forward and climaxed. Releasing Mikey’s cock, Raph slapped his hand down on the mattress as his hips pumped a couple of quick, sharp thrusts into his brother.

Buried all of the way inside of Mikey, Raph stopped moving. Head down and breathing heavily, Raph’s body trembled once. Swallowing thickly, Mikey’s eyes fluttered open, his heart racing and his breathing fast. His eyes sought Raph’s and as if feeling that vivid blue gaze, Raph looked up.

A slow smile curved Raph’s lips, the sight bringing a delighted chuckle to the younger turtle. Surging downwards, Raph’s mouth connected with Mikey’s and locked on as he kissed his brother passionately.

After a few minutes Raph’s cock slid out of Mikey, who could then feel his brother’s warm seed dripping from his ass. The sensation was absolutely glorious.

Breaking the kiss, Raph looked into Mikey’s eyes and told him, “I love ya’, Michelangelo.”

Mikey couldn’t have stopped smiling if he tried. “I love you too, Raphael.”

TBC………..
Chapter 39

Chapter Summary

Word Count: 5,676 multi-chapter 2k3
Summary: Michelangelo has a secret that he's apparently been keeping from himself.
Part 39 Final Rated NC-17 TCest Raph/Mikey
**WARNING! Extreme BDSM practices depicted in this chapter.
++I am delighted with how well this story has been received and by all of the incredible feedback I've gotten. Thank you all very much for your comments, your guidance, and your encouragement.++

Chapter Notes

~~This lovely preview image was created for this part by the very talented Sherenelle from DeviantArt.

“I have a confession to make,” Mikey said in a soft voice.
He and Raphael lay wrapped in each other’s arms on the bed inside their secret room. After their lovemaking, the pair had fallen asleep together, Raph having pulled Mikey tightly against him. Since they were both unused to sleeping next to anyone, they woke easily to even the slightest shift in position.

“‘Bout what?” Raph asked drowsily. One of his fingers was slowly tracing the outline of the bite mark on Mikey’s shoulder.

That bite had broken skin and Raph’s calloused finger touching the raw wound stung just enough to cause a certain warmth to begin pooling in Mikey’s lower regions. As much as he loved the gentleness Raph had displayed during their first true coupling, Mikey still relished his brother’s sadistic tendencies. Mikey liked pain with his pleasure and that was just pure fact.

“You know when you asked what I was up to with Leo and I said I was making sure he didn’t have a problem with us having sex?” Mikey asked. “That was only part of the story.”

“That figures,” Raph replied in a low rumble, the tone making Mikey’s tail wiggle. “This ain’t one of those confessions that’s gonna make me want to bap ya’, is it? I don’t feel like moving that much. You’ll have to hit yourself.”

Mikey nuzzled Raph’s shoulder, letting his brother’s scent embed itself in his nostrils. “There’s no fun in my hitting myself. I’ll wait until you have some energy. Anyway, what I’m about to tell you is something you’ve got to keep to yourself.”

“Geez Mike, have ya’ been snooping again?” Raph asked in mock reproach.

“May~be,” Mikey said. “It was just something I sort of noticed about Leatherhead and it made me curious.”

He didn’t mention that it was Master Splinter who actually brought Leatherhead’s crush on Don to his attention. It wasn’t important and his father might not appreciate Mikey dragging him into the action the younger turtle had set in motion by the use of that information.

“Go on,” Raph quietly urged him.

In a quick rush, Mikey blurted, “Leatherhead has the hots for Donny.”

Raph didn’t react at first and Mikey waited. Then Raph slowly rose onto one arm so that he could stare down at his brother.

“He . . . what?” Raph asked incredulously. “What the shell gives ya’ that idea?”

“Dude, all you have to do is look at him or listen to him when Don’s around or when he’s talking about Donny,” Mikey said. “LH is majorly lovesick over our genius brother.”

Raph seemed to accept that statement as fact because instead of questioning Mikey’s inference he asked, “Does Donny know?”

“He didn’t, but he figured it out,” Mikey said. “Don admitted as much to me after I busted him being more touchy feely with LH than normal.”

With a frown Raph asked, “Does that mean they’re gonna get together? How would that even work?”

“Dunno, don’t want to know,” Mikey said. “I love LH to pieces, but I wouldn’t want that
mouthful of teeth coming towards my face. Don’s kinky enough to figure it out if he really wants to.”

“Wait, hold up there,” Raph said. “What’s with the ‘Don’s kinky’ and ‘if he really wants to’ stuff? Thought ya’ just this second hinted that they’ve been feeling each other up.”

“Don thinks they might have to stay in the friend zone,” Mikey said. “He said that the friendship they have works for them. Don’s worried about certain complications and I’m not talking about the having a lover or being gay kind, ‘cause the two of us already smoothed all of that out.”

“Then what other complications is he worried about? Wanting to have sex with LH and not knowing how?” Raph asked.

“Are you kidding me?” Mikey countered with amusement. “This is Donatello we’re talking about. If he wanted to bang LH, Don would figure out a really awesome way to do it. The complication I’m talking about is how Don’s kinky.”

“I seriously don’t want to hear about some fetish Donny has,” Raph said. “The one we got is enough.”

“Oh, you’ll want to hear this one,” Mike said with a grin. “Don has the hots for someone else too and likes the idea of spreading the love around. Not to mention spreading his legs.”

“Didn’t need that mental image,” Raph said, mildly reprimanding his brother. “Who the hell else could he want to fuck? It’s not like we have a whole lot of . . . .”

When he stopped mid-sentence Mikey watched Raph’s face and saw the look of dawning understanding creep into his expression. It was fighting with one of disbelief.

“Go on,” Mikey said with glee. “You’re on the right track.”

“Holy crap! Leo?” Raph asked, staring wide eyed at Mikey.

“Yep,” Mikey said.

“You’re fucking jerking me around,” Raph stated with amazement.

“Nope,” Mikey responded.

Raph plopped back down on the bed next to Mikey and stared up at the ceiling. Missing his brother’s touch, Mikey rolled over and set his chin on Raph’s chest so that he could stare at the larger turtle.

“He wants to be with both of them?” Raph asked, more to himself than Mikey.

It didn’t keep Mikey from answering anyway. “Donny said that he’s progressive when it comes to intimate relationships and it wouldn’t bother him to have two lovers. The way he was throwing around words like ‘sadist’ and ‘masochist’ after you caught him pinning me down in the dojo, I’m guessing he’d boink both LH and Leo at the same time if he could figure out how to get them to agree to that.”

“What did I just say about mental images?” Raph asked disapprovingly. “Leatherhead was raised by Utroms and there ain’t no telling what he thinks about sharing a lover, but Leo’s so uptight I’d don’t know if he’d go for that. Don probably ain’t gotta have to worry about it anyway,
Leo practically said he don’t get the whole incest thing. Donny should just focus on LH.”

Mikey shook his head by rocking his chin from side to side on Raph’s scutes. “He won’t, not if it means Leo gets left out in the cold. Leo comes first in his book and if Don doesn’t know where Leo stands, he won’t make a play for LH. Problem is, he won’t make a move on Leo either. He says he’s not brave enough and doesn’t even know if he’s having real feelings or if the two of us being together is making him horny.”

“He’s overthinking stuff,” Raph said absently. Then his eyes shifted so that he was looking at Mikey. “What the hell does that have to do with your confession about the talk you had with Leo? That’s how this whole conversation started, Michelangelo.”

Looking sheepish, Mikey said, “I sort of wanted to feel Leo out on what he thought about taking a lover of his own.”

Raph snorted. “Ya’ decided to butt in. Why ain’t I surprised?”

“I might have stayed out of it if Donny hadn’t said he liked Leo’s scent when I asked him about it,” Mikey said defensively.

Raph rolled his eyes. “Ya’ asked him that why?”

“Because that’s how I knew we were supposed to be together,” Mikey said, as if that were the most obvious thing on earth. “Remember that it was you who told me about the whole scent thing. Don and Leo aren’t affected by yours or mine, but Don is turned on by Leo’s. That’s gotta mean that Leo is giving off a come hither smell to Don ‘cause he’s into Donny too. Right?”

“You’re making me dizzy,” Raph complained. “So what happened? What did Leo say when ya’ asked him?”

Mikey lifted his head to give his brother an exasperated look. “Keep up, Raphie. I didn’t ask Leo anything outright ‘cause Don admitted everything to me in confidence. I had to be subtle.”

“Ya’ wouldn’t know subtle if it bit ya’ on the ass,” Raph told him. A thought seemed to come to him then. “Hey, when Leo came out of the dojo and went straight over to Donny, was that because ya’ pushed him in Don’s direction?”

Smiling complacently, Mikey said, “I might have told Leo not to let opportunity pass him by. But that was totally after he said he’d like to find someone who he could share everything with too, just like we have.”

“Offering to play video games ain’t exactly a sign that Leo wants to put the high hard one to Donny,” Raph said sourly.

“That’s very colorful Raphael,” Mikey teased. “How do you know it wouldn’t be the other way around? Anyway, maybe that offer wasn’t a neon sign, but the finger brush was.”

“What finger brush?” Raph eyed Mikey suspiciously.

“Leo caressed Don’s fingers when he took the remote from him,” Mikey said, “and then Donny stuttered. They are so-o into each other.”

“Leave it to ya’ to notice something like that and jump to conclusions,” Raph said. “Suppose you’re wrong?”
“Ha! Suppose I’m right?” Mikey countered.

“Hmm,” Raph hummed, looking thoughtful again. “Ya’ know, Leo did ask me something about Don while we were making dinner. I didn’t think much of it ‘cause all he wanted to know was if I thought Don was okay. When I asked why he wouldn’t be, Leo said he was worried about how Don didn’t say much during our talk.”

“Don already knew everything, he didn’t need to say much,” Mikey said. “Besides, he was pretty focused on what Leo was saying. I think Leo asking about Donny just proves my point.”

“You would,” Raph muttered, though with a hint of humor in his voice.

“Dude, Leo totally wants to hit that and you know what that means,” Mikey said excitedly. “I mean think about it. Where will they go? I don’t want to hear Leo and Don’s grunts and groans while they’re banging each other. We need to set some ground rules.”

“We’ll talk about that if those two get together,” Raph said. “And that’s a big if ‘cause this whole thing could just be your imagination running away with ya’. Besides, we’ll get plenty of warning if it turns out to be true. I’m sure Leo will insist on some kind of ceremony to announce they’re together before he even kisses Don.”

“I think Leo’s a lot more spontaneous than you give him credit for,” Mikey said.

“Whatever,” Raph said huskily, staring at Mike with a certain gleam in his eyes. “I don’t want to talk about them anymore. Fact is, ya’ should be punished for fibbin’ to me about that talk ya’ had with Leo.”

Mikey’s legs immediately quivered, his tail stiffening at Raph’s seductive tone. “Heck yeah, I should be punished. You need to punish me. If you don’t crack down on me there’s no telling what I’ll try to get away with.”

With a swiftness Mikey had come to admire, Raph rolled off the bed and stood next to it, looking down at his brother. “Don’t move,” Raph told him.

Breath quickening Mikey froze in place, only his eyes following Raph until the older turtle stepped out of sight. From the sounds that he heard, Mikey guessed that his brother was rifling around in both ‘toy’ chests and his heart began to race in anticipation.

On his side holding himself up on one elbow, Mikey was able to see Raph’s return and to focus on the objects in his hands. Raph made no attempt to hide them, probably knowing the effect they’d have on his brother.

In one hand were two coils of red colored rope and a wooden paddle with holes in it. In the other hand was something that looked like a butt plug with a tube connected to it and a rubber bulb attached to the other end of the tube.

Mikey churred at the sight, squeezing his knees together as another quiver ran through his frame. Raph laid the items out on the bed, reaching down to pick up the tube of lubricant from where it had fallen on the floor.

“Sit up and hold your hands out in front of ya’, wrists close together,” Raph ordered.

Quickly doing as he was told, Mikey sat on the edge of the bed and put his arms out. Raph picked up a section of rope, folded it in half, and leaned over Mikey to loop the rope over the back of one of his wrists.
Bringing the rope down, Raph curved it under Mikey’s wrists and over the other side, catching it in his fingers so that it didn’t touch the top of Mikey’s joints. He repeated that maneuver twice before bringing the closed end of the fold over the rope above Mikey’s wrists and tying it into the section holding Mikey’s hands together.

Mikey watched Raph’s face the entire time, exhilarated by his brother’s concentrated expression. Because of the intricacy of the tie, Mikey felt like Raph had practiced this on his dummy counterpart, no doubt thinking of the real Michelangelo while doing so.

Raph’s breathing grew heavier as he continued to loop and knot the rope together. When he was done and had tugged on the remaining long section of the rope, Mikey saw that there was a distinct bulge in Raph’s lower plates. Considering how hard Mikey had become as the one being tied up, he could well imagine the turn on it was for Raph to be the one doing the binding.

“Get in the center of the bed and lie face down,” Raph instructed huskily.

Rather than attempting to speak, Mikey merely nodded, twisting around so that he could crawl into position. Raph maintained his hold on one end of the rope, walking around to the head of the bed and forcing Mikey to extend his arms.

Planting his chin on a pillow, Mikey watched as Raph tugged his arms until they were not only fully stretched over his head, but also pulling in a slightly uncomfortable way on his shoulders. Squatting, Raph tied the rope to the metal rail of the bed frame, keeping it taut so that Mikey had no wiggle room.

Standing again, Raph caught Mikey’s eyes, his own golden orbs gleaming with intent. Catching hold of the pillow, Raph removed it from beneath Mikey’s chin and tossed it aside.

“Don’t want ya’ suffocating when I start your punishment,” Raph said. “‘Remember what ya’ need to say if it gets to be too much for ya’. Say it loud enough so I can hear ya’ and I’ll stop.”

“Okay,” Mikey replied, knowing he wouldn’t be using the safe word. He was pretty sure Raph knew it too, judging by the smirk on the larger turtle’s face.

Giving the top of Mikey’s bald dome a pat, Raph moved around the bed. Mikey tried to turn his head so he could see what his brother was doing, but because of the position of his arms, his chin collided with his bicep.

Mikey did see Raph’s shadow as it loomed over him, and then felt the second rope touch the back of his neck. It slid down until it was stopped by the top edge of Mikey’s carapace. Hooking the rope there, Raph moved backwards to squeeze and fondle the backs of Mikey’s thighs.

“Get up on your knees,” Raph told his brother in a guttural tone.

In order to do that, Mikey had to dig one knee into the mattress and push his rump into the air before wriggling enough to get his other knee under him. The movements made the bump caused by his hidden erection to rub against the bedding, exciting him to the point where keeping his arousal contained became painful.

Raph caught hold of Mikey’s calves and pushed upwards until Mikey’s legs were nearly folded in half under him. Then Mikey felt the rope again, this time as part of it made contact with his leg a few inches below his knee and came back over the top of his thigh.

The rope was looped around twice more before Raph tied it off and moved to repeat the
process with Mikey’s other leg. When Raph was finished, Mikey could move neither his arms or
his legs, and his butt was suspended nearly a foot above the bed.

“That’s a fine looking ass ya’ got there,” Raph said in appreciation of the view. “I’m gonna
give it another pounding. Ya’ up for that?”

“Yes, Raphie, yes!” Mikey exclaimed enthusiastically.

“Betcha just thinking about it has ya’ hard as a rock, don’t it?” Raph asked, his hot breath
blowing across Mikey’s backside.

“Mmmm . . .” Mikey moaned, wanting desperately for Raph to fondle him.

Raph nipped at one of Mikey’s butt cheeks. “Why don’t ya’ drop down and let me see how
hard ya’ are?”

The words had barely left Raph’s mouth when Mikey’s cock tumbled out. It swung heavily
between Mikey’s legs as he panted, waiting with forced patience for what would come next.

Raph climbed onto the bed, his weight dipping the mattress behind Mikey. Deprived of his
ability to watch his brother, Mikey used his other senses to gauge what Raph was doing. He heard
the lubricant being opened and the low squeak of a hand touching rubber. The next thing Mikey
knew, something was pushing against his entrance.

The butt plug was tapered and narrow and Raph easily worked it all of the way into
Mikey’s ass. Because he was still wet inside, Mikey only experienced a little sting and some slight
discomfort as the object was pushed into him.

A thump told Mikey that Raph had set the bulb attached to the other end of the butt plug
onto the bed. There was a shift as Raph reached for something and then Mikey could sense his
brother’s presence behind him again.

“Here’s what’s gonna happen,” Raph stated in a matter-of-fact tone that sent a shiver down
Mikey’s spine. “I ain’t gonna touch your dick. Both of my hands are gonna be busy, so the only
way you’re gonna cum is on your own.”

Mikey groaned at that pronouncement and then gasped as the wooden panel connected with
his ass.

“Oh yeah, your ass is mighty fine,” Raph said, swatting Mikey’s butt again. “Gonna look
even better all reddened up, maybe even bruised a little.”

He emphasized every other word by smacking Mikey’s ass with the paddle. Each time the
paddle connected, Mikey’s cock jumped until he found himself pulling against the ropes that were
holding his arms, desperate to touch himself.

For a moment the steady swing of the paddle stopped and Mikey exhaled, barely registering
that he’d been holding his breath. At that moment he felt something change inside of him and
focused past the burn of his butt to the plug inside of him.

That’s when he felt it expand. “Raphie!” Mikey called out, squirming as much as his
position allowed.

Raph chuckled darkly before paddling Mikey again. “No moving,” he snapped. “Told ya’
my hands were gonna be busy.”
The plug expanded again as Raph pumped the bulb. Stretched wider and wider, Mikey’s cock throbbed in reaction to the object pressing against the walls of his rectum.

“Oh shell, oh shell, oh shell!” Mikey chanted, the feeling of the plug thickening inside of him and the pain from the spanking making his need for friction against his neglected cock almost unbearable.

Each whack of the paddle was accentuated by another squeeze on the bulb attached to the butt plug until Mikey’s cock was pulsating and dripping. He could smell the heavy musk coming off of Raph and knew his brother’s dick was out, no doubt as hard as Mikey’s own.

The next time the plug expanded it pushed against Mikey’s prostate, sending a burst of electricity coursing straight into his cock. Mikey trembled with the shock of such intense pleasure, crying out as the paddle hit him, doubling the feeling.

“Getting close, Mikey?” Raph asked, hitting him again.

“Yes!” Mikey shouted.

“Want some help?” Raph asked with another strike to his brother’s ass.

“Yes!” Mikey repeated, his eyes tightly closed, forehead digging into the mattress.

Quite unexpectedly the butt plug was yanked out of his ass and Mikey felt Raph’s cock plunge into him. Gripping one edge of Mikey’s carapace, Raph began to thrust, moving both hard and fast.

At the same time he dropped the paddle and began striking Mikey’s butt cheeks with his bare hand. For some reason that stung more than the paddle had and by the time Raph’s hand came down a fourth time, the pressure in Mikey’s groin reached overload.

“Raph~ie!” Mikey yelped as he climaxed, his cock jerking as cum spurted from it onto the bed.

“Shit!” Raph bellowed, driving his hips forward and burying himself as he erupted into Mikey.

Breathing hard, Raph draped himself across Mikey’s body, the rise and fall of Mikey’s own deep breathing lifting and lowering him. It took several minutes for Raph to gain enough control of himself so that he was able to pull out of Mikey.

Neither of them said anything as Raph began to untie the ropes holding Mikey’s legs tucked under him. When they were free, Raph helped Mikey to uncurl himself and straighten his legs, rubbing them gently as though he knew his brother was experiencing a pins and needles sensation from lack of circulation.

Mikey kept his hips slightly elevated so that he wouldn’t crush his own dick, which was still out. Raph got up and went around to untie Mikey’s wrists, making quick work of it and then massaging Mikey’s hands, wrists, and arms until Mikey could comfortably move them again.

When Mikey started to roll over, Raph stopped him with a hand on his shell. “I wouldn’t do that just yet,” Raph admonished him. Taking a seat on the bed near Mikey’s legs, Raph leaned down and pressed a gentle kiss to each of Mikey’s butt cheeks. “Ya’ ain’t gonna want to put any weight on your ass for a while.”
Raph lay down next to Mikey, pulling Mikey’s upper half on top of him so that he could
kiss his younger brother. Mikey moaned into the kiss, relishing the feel of Raph’s tongue in his
mouth.

“That was awesome,” Mikey said in a sleepy voice as their mouths separated.

“Yeah,” Raph mumbled in agreement, wrapping an arm around his brother. “I set the alarm
clock to wake us before daybreak. Go to sleep.”

Mikey barely heard him, already drifting off in a cloud of pure relaxation. He was sound
asleep by the time Raph began to snore.

A buzzing sound roused Mikey from slumber, the persistent noise annoying him enough so
that he tried to bury his head in a pillow. When the object under him proved to be too solid for that,
Mikey remembered he was lying on top of Raph.

His movements woke the older turtle, who groaned in annoyance and turned his head to
locate the sound. “Shell, I put the clock on top of the bar,” Raph said.

Rubbing the sleep from his eyes, Mikey said, “That’s so you wouldn’t throw it across the
room.”

Raph sat up, displacing Mikey from his comfortable position. “We can’t ignore it if we
don’t want to get caught out after the sun comes up.”

“You’re assuming it’s going to,” Mikey said. “I’ll believe the rain’s stopped when it
actually does.”

When his brother got out of bed to turn off the alarm, Mikey rolling into a seated position,
wincing as his ass came into contact with the mattress. Raph was looking at him and grinned.

“There’s a reminder of the dicking I gave ya’ that’s gonna stick with ya’ for the rest of the
day,” Raph said proudly.

Mikey grinned, enjoying the smug tone in his brother’s voice. “What happens when I get
excited each time I feel that reminder? Hmm? Which one of us explains that to Master Splinter?”

Raph threw his head back and laughed. When Mikey finally stood up, Raph told him, “Go
take a quick shower while I clean up in here. It’s bad enough everyone’s gonna see your red ass
without also seeing my cum dripping out of it.”

“That is seriously crude bro’,” Mikey told him as he made his way to the bathroom.

The water felt good flowing over him and Mikey took his time cleaning himself. He kept
the temperature a little cooler than normal because that felt better on his sore butt.

When he came out of the bathroom, Mikey saw that Raph had put away all of the items that
belonged in the chests and had pushed those chests back into their original positions. While Raph
was taking his shower, Mikey geared up and then stripped the sheets from the bed, rolling them
into a tight bundle so he could take them home and wash them.

He was dusting the bar when Raph came out and continued with his dusting as Raph pulled
on his pads, belt, and mask. “Looks like sex is a great incentive for getting ya’ to clean up,” Raph
said playfully.
“Food works too,” Mikey said with a grin. “We need a refrigerator in here.”

Shaking his head, Raph said, “You’re spoiled. I was just thinking that before we leave, we need to check out that back room for another exit like we’d planned on doing.”

“Cool,” Mikey said in agreement, leaving the bar and walking into the office with his brother.

They stood side by side and studied the walls. “My guess is it ain’t gonna be on that wall with the safe in it,” Raph said. “Best bet would be somewhere near where those phone lines come in ’cause I’m thinking the electrical cables come in from that direction too. Might be an opening back there to bring all of that in from the street.”

It was a logical assessment and the brothers chose different spots on the brick wall and began tapping on them. After a couple of minutes a hollow sound rewarded Raph’s knocking.

“I think these bricks are thinner here,” Raph told Mikey, rapping the spot again. “Ya’ hear the difference?”

“Uh huh. How do we open it?” Mikey asked, joining his brother.

“Feel around it,” Raph said. “Gotta be something ya’ press.”

Mikey squatted and began testing the bricks nearest the floor while Raph pressed his fingers into the ones up high. It wasn’t long before one of the bricks gave way when Raph pushed on it and a door sized panel swung open.

It was just wide enough for Raph to squeeze through, though he signaled for Mikey to remain where he was. Raph didn’t go far into the tunnel behind the secret panel because it was almost pitch black in there. He’d barely taken three steps away from the opening when the panel started to shut again and Mikey had to quickly press the brick to keep it open.

Raph rejoined his brother and they let the panel close. “Guess they fixed it up to swing shut behind them so they didn’t have to waste time manually shutting it,” Raph said. “We’ll have to prop it open next time we’re here and explore where that tunnel goes.”

“Better find out if there’s a way to open the panel from the other side too,” Mikey said.

“Ain’t got time now, we need to go home,” Raph reminded him.

Grabbing their jackets and putting them on, the pair exited the room after Mikey tucked the bundle of sheets under one arm. Raph locked the door and they made their way back up to the shell cycle.

Raph took the sheets from Mikey once the two of them were standing next to the bike. “Glad ya’ brought these and I think ya’ will be too in a second.”

Giving his brother a puzzled look, Mikey said, “Why?”

Making sure to tie the bundle so that nothing would come loose, Raph set it on the motorcycle seat. “Padding,” he said with a wink.

Flushing, Mikey remembered that his ass was a little raw. “I’m glad this is such a short ride.”
He climbed onto the shell cycle, slowly lowering his butt onto the padding while Raph moved the door away from the warehouse entrance. After they drove through, Raph hopped off to close the entrance again and then they headed back to their garage.

Mikey put his arms around Raph’s waist and leaned against his brother’s carapace, taking some of the pressure off of his behind. Through his helmet’s visor Mikey watched the buildings fly by, enjoying the view now that there was no rain coming down.

Pulling into the garage and parking, Raph got off the motorcycle first and offered Mikey a hand. The gesture wasn’t necessary but Mikey was touched by it anyway and accepted his brother’s assistance.

“Come ‘ere,” Raph said after they’d removed their helmets and jackets.

Mikey moved up against him and was rewarded with a deep, searching kiss. Raph’s hands slid over his bridges, down to his outer thighs, and then back up to gently cup Mikey’s ass.

“Can’t wait to have another go at this,” Raph said against Mikey’s lips, squeezing his butt ever so lightly.

“Just say the word,” Mikey replied. “You know I’m always game.”

Raph chuckled. “Ain’t no doubt about that, bro’. Wanna bet Leo got up earlier than usual and is waiting for us? If he went to bed at all.”

“No bet,” Mikey told him, holding Raph’s hand as they entered the elevator. “He’ll never stop worrying about us and I don’t think I want him to.”

“Truth is, I don’t want him to change either,” Raph confided. “Just don’t tell him I said that.”

The lair was in semi-darkness when the brothers stepped out of the elevator. Light was coming from one television in the array and when the pair walked closer, they saw that an infomercial was playing, though the sound was down so low only a hum could be heard.

Just the top of Leo’s head showed above the back of the couch and as Mikey and Raph drew nearer, they saw he wasn’t alone. Curled against him and soundly asleep was Donatello, one hand tucked against Leo’s hip and the other curved around Leo’s inner thigh.

Both of Leo’s arms were around Don and neither of them wore their gear. Mikey saw that it lay in a haphazard pile on the floor, as though hastily removed.

It didn’t take more than a sniff to learn that their scents were all over each other. Mikey looked at Raph and smiled brightly, both with delight and a touch of an ‘I told you so’.

That’s when Leo stirred, no doubt sensing their presence. Moving only his head, Leo glanced up and saw his brothers. Rather than looking embarrassed, he lifted a hand from Don’s shoulder and touched it to his lips.

“We’re home, go back to sleep,” Raph whispered, tapping Mikey’s shell before leaving to go into the kitchen.

Instead of following him, Mikey squatted behind the couch, propping his arms atop the back and resting his chin on them. Leo maintained eye contact with him, but didn’t otherwise move.
“Guess you found that person,” Mikey whispered.

“Your advice was sound little brother,” Leo whispered back. “I found out Donny felt the same way about me that I felt for him and seized my opportunity.”

“From the looks of things, you’re on the right track,” Mikey said. “Next time, take it to the bedroom.”

“We’ll wait until you and Raph are gone to your secret hiding place again,” Leo responded, a twinkle in his eyes. Sobering a little he added, “Don said he told you about Leatherhead.”

Mikey shrugged. “Seems like he told you too. Don never could stand keeping anything from you, I hope you appreciate that. What are you gonna do?”

“I do appreciate that about him,” Leo said. “I love him for that and so much more. I also love how much he cares about others. We’ll figure something out.”

Hearing Raph clear his throat, Mikey stood up, telling Leo, “Do what Raph said and go back to sleep. Who knows, maybe Don will finally get enough rest if he’s sleeping with someone.”

When Mikey reached his brother, Raph muttered, “Leave them alone.” He handed Mikey a microwaved burrito and headed back towards the elevator.

Walking next to him, Mikey asked, “Where are we going?”

“You’ll see,” Raph answered cryptically.

They had both finished their quick breakfast by the time Raph led Mikey to the ladder that would take them up to the roof. Climbing up behind Raph, Mikey stepped onto the roof and then followed Raph to the edge overlooking the nearby skyline.

Putting an arm around Mikey, Raph said, “I wanted to watch the sun come up with ya’.”

Touched by the gesture, Mikey leaned against his brother. “Aww, Raphie, you’re a romantic.”

“Shut up,” Raph growled at him good-naturedly.

A rosy glow painted the horizon and the pair watched it expand and brighten the sky. There were only wisps of clouds remaining, the rain gone and the city more than ready for a respite from its damp spell.

Mikey blinked back tears of joy at being able to share such a beautiful sight with the brother he loved so much. Then he laughed when a rainbow appeared, curving over the skyline, so vivid Mikey felt like he could reach out and touch it.

“Wow, that’s kind of a cliché ending, don’t you think?” Mikey asked, peering up at his lover.

Raph’s grip tightened, his head dipping down to Mikey’s. “I kinda like it. Besides, it ain’t the ending Mikey. It’s the beginning.”

Mikey agreed with him by initiating a kiss, one that held all kinds of promises.

The End
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