Everything Changes
by somebodys_buddy

Summary

Kyle has spent the last twelve years closeted, hiding his feelings for his best friend, and content to remain that way until graduation. But when Craig and Tweek come out, Kyle's resolve begins to crack. After all, if Craig Tucker of all people could be gay, then anybody could be gay. Maybe even a certain dark haired, blue-eyed, beanie wearing...

Goddamnit, no, not *that* dark haired, blue-eyed, beanie wearing idiot.

Notes

This fic starts as angsty fluff and turns into fluffy smut around ch. 3. I didn't mark it as underage since both characters are of age in the state it's set in and where I live, but YMMV.
“Hey, what’s up with Tucker?”

Kyle looked up from his tray of industrial glop to the front of the cafeteria.

“Are-are they holding hands?” Butters sputtered.

Cartman spun around in his seat. “No frickin’ way.”

There, in the cafeteria entrance stood Craig and Tweek, holding hands for everyone in sixth period lunch to see. They hung motionless in the doorway for a good thirty seconds, as though inviting the entire student body to stare at them. And stare they did. For a single moment, the entire cafeteria was dead silent.

It wasn’t a long moment.

“Holy shit.”

“Are you seeing this Heidi?”

“My god, what a couple of fucking…”

“Ten bucks say Trent jumps Tweek before school ends.”

“Fifteen bucks says one of them gets it before lunch ends.”

The noise in the cafeteria was deafening. Kyle could only catch snippets of conversations as he watched Craig and Tweek make their way to their usual table. Not once did they drop hands as they made their way right smack through the middle of the gawking horde.

“What do you think Craig’s gang’s gonna say?” Cartman asked.

Kyle watched as Butter wrung his paper napkin nervously. “I don’t know. They might not let ‘em sit with them.” He mused.

“Mmfmp fmp pfmpfmpf mpmmffpfm fpmffmpf.”

“Kenny’s right.” Stan said. “There’s no way the only black kid in school and his disabled buddy are going to shun the only friends they’ve got.”

“Maybe. But what about Clyde?” Cartman asked.


Cartman shrugged. “Now that Craig’s out…”

“Clyde is Craig’s best friend.” Stan said, folding his arms over his chest. “There’s no way he didn’t know Craig was gay. They’ve been best friends since first grade.”

Kyle stabbed at his mashed potatoes with his spork, his head ducked so Stan couldn’t see him roll his eyes.

“Guess Stan was right. They didn’t do nothing after all.” Butters said, sounding relieved.
Kyle looked over at the other boys’ table. Sure enough, Craig and Tweek were sitting in their usual spot like nothing had happened. Jimmy was waving his arms over his head, no doubt in the middle of a funny story, and Clyde was giving that nasally laugh of his. Craig was silently ignoring them both, like always. The only thing hinting at the change was Tweek, who Kyle noticed couldn’t seem to curb the shy, side glances he gave Craig every few seconds. Craig must have noticed too. Kyle watched as Craig caught Tweek’s glance and gave the disheveled blond the tiniest hint of a smile. Kyle realized with a start, he’d never seen Craig smile before.

Kyle leapt up, his chair legs screeching as they racked across the tile floor. “I’ve got to go.” He stammered. “I have to… I forgot… that thing…” He racked his head for a reasonable excuse, but his brain had abandoned him. It was lodged in his throat, somewhere between his failing lungs and pounding heart. Kyle looked across the table frantically, his eyes landing on Kenny.

“Ffmpffmf fmpppf pnm mfmp?” Kenny asked.

“Yes, exactly.”

With that, Kyle bolted out of the Cafeteria.

Kyle had economics right after lunch, but he couldn’t bring himself to care when the bell rang. Instead, he sat in bathroom engulfed in a trance like state, completely unaware of the passage of time. When the end-of-period bell finally rang, he was shocked to find five minutes had passed, let alone fifty.

He figured it was about time he snapped out of it. Pulling himself off the toilet tank he’d been zoning on for the past hour, he exited the cramped bathroom stall, only to pause in front of the row of rusted bathroom mirrors. He knew that if he really wanted to, he could run down to the nurse’s office and get her to sign him a pass. Looking in the mirror, he realized that his face was so pale, it wouldn’t be hard to convince her he really was sick.

What the hell, he thought, might as well just skip. It’s not like it’s gonna become a habit.

Kyle had never skipped a class in his life. Normally, he was a model student with a perfect attendance record to match his perfect report card. Normally, he didn’t spend his afternoons hiding in public bathrooms, waiting for his heart rate to come down.

It was just, he couldn’t believe it. Craig and Tweek were gay. More than that, Craig and Tweek were out. There were only seven months left before they got their diplomas and left this concrete box for good; Kyle knew—he was counting the days. He’d resigned himself long ago to the fact that South Park wasn’t going to see it’s first openly gay student before he graduated. And now?

Craig and Tweek. They were almost in the clear; almost finished with this place. But now they’re out.

It was incredible.

It was terrifying.

And Kyle had no idea what it meant.

Did this change anything?

Kyle ran his fingers through his red curls before stepping out into the bright hallway. As someone who was normally a model student, Kyle had earned an eighth period study hall. He made his way to
the library, trying his best to purge the events of lunch from his mind.

Of course, forgetting about the gay elephant in the room wouldn’t be that easy. It never was.

“Did you hear the news?”

Kyle eyed the gaggle of girls in the corner warily. He chose a table on the other side of the library, hoping to get out of earshot of the gossip brigade. No such luck.

“What, about Annie’s botched dye job?”

“Oh my god, no Bebe, about Tweek and Craig.”

Kyle whipped out his binder and buried his nose into his calculus notes, as if that could muffle their conversation.

“It’s official. They’re dating.”

“Says who?”

“Says Tweek. He changed his Facebook status this morning. And Heidi says they were holding hands at lunch.”

Bebe’s face broke into a toothy grin. “Finally.” She sighed.

“I know, right?” Red giggled. “It’s about time.”

Kyle blinked at his calculus binder a few times. About time? He was shocked to hear the girls voice a sentiment so close to his own. He knew the guys wouldn’t have much to say about Craig and Tweek, but he hadn’t expected anyone else to be happy about it. After all, the couple had been out for less than a day, and already, Kyle had heard enough homophobic slurs tossed around to fill an urban dictionary results page. And he knew before the day ended, some insecure idiot was going to take a swing at Craig; that was a given.

But in their own twisted way, these girls really did seem genuinely supportive of Craig and Tweek. Kyle didn’t know what to make of it.

“Are you ready to go?” Stan stood beside Kyle, his converse clad foot tapping the tiled floor.

“Yeah, almost. I’m just checking…” Kyle, who was crouched on his heels, eye-level with his bottom tier locker, squinted at his planner.

“Shit. I’ve got an econ test Monday. I’m gonna have to go ask Cartman for the notes I missed.”

“Dude, just text him.”

Kyle shook his head. “I don’t have Cartman’s number. Do you?”

Stan shrugged. “No.”

Kyle rolled his eyes. “Then I’m gonna have to go ask him.”

“Whatever.” Stan slung his backpack over his shoulder as he slammed his locker. “I’ll meet you at the car.”
Stan headed off in the direction of the parking lot, not bothering to wait for Kyle’s response. Kyle grabbed his backpack and headed off in the opposite direction, towards the athletic fields behind the school. On a crisp Friday afternoon like this one, there was only one place Cartman would be.

Sure enough, Cartman was exactly where Kyle knew he would be.

“Hey, Cartman.” Kyle called.

Cartman and Kenny were leaning against the field house, staring vacantly at the track. Cartman looked up when he heard someone calling his name, but let his head drop back down as soon as he saw who it was.

Kyle rolled his eyes, but continued his jog over.

“Hi Kenny,” he said as he came to a halt in front of the pair.

Kenny offered him a silent two-finger salute, which Kyle returned somewhat awkwardly before turning to Cartman. “I need the notes from our econ class today.” He said, his voice flat.

Cartman gave Kyle a cruel grin. “That’s right, I almost forgot. Goody two-shoes here skipped class. And on review day too. What a dumbass.”

Kenny giggled beneath his parka hood. Kyle ignored him.

“Probably had to call his mom to make sure she took her Xanax this morning. I thought my mom was a nut case, but your mom’s wound tighter than her own…”

“Cartman.” Kyle barked.

Cartman gave Kyle a slow smile, as if as if daring him to continue. Kyle held Cartman’s gaze, but didn’t say anything.

Cartman snorted. “That’s what I thought, pussy.”

Kyle took a deep breath. “Are you going to give me the notes or not? Because if you’re not, I’d rather you just tell me now so I can leave. I’m really not in the mood.”

“Not in the mood? That’s funny. That’s exactly what I told your boyfriend last night when he asked me to…”

“Cartman!” Kyle yelled, his face going red. He wanted nothing more than to tell this douche bag off, but he knew how that conversation would end—with Cartman calling him a filthy Jew and Kyle walking away empty handed, so he bit his tongue.

“Okay, okay.” Cartman smiled, holding up his palms in surrender. “I’ll give you the fucking notes…”

“Thank god.”

“…on one condition.”

Kyle’s groan was theatrical at best. He really wasn’t all that surprised; he’d never known Cartman to give something for nothing. He shoved his hands in his pockets waited for Cartman to name his terms.

But Cartman just watched him smugly, his arms folded over his barrel of a chest, that obnoxious grin
of his firmly in place. Staring at the stupid grin, Kyle realized something. It didn’t matter what Cartman was going to ask for; there was only one thing he really wanted. It was the same thing he always wanted from Kyle—a show. He wanted to watch Kyle beg for the notes, watch Kyle fight him every step of the way. Kyle felt that deep, burning, hatred flare up again, the one that’d been burning inside him since elementary school.

Instead of lashing out, Kyle took a deep breath. He knew fighting with the asshole would get him nowhere. In fact, it would just give Cartman the show he was looking for. Better to keep it a civil transaction. Still, Kyle glared at Cartman’s smug face and held out for as long as he could. He knew the first one to talk lost, but unlike Cartman, he didn’t have all day to waste.

“Fine, Cartman. What do you want?” Kyle asked, an exasperated huff working its way into his words.

“I want to know what was so important it made goody-two-shoes, ass-kissing Kyle Broflovski skipped his very first class. I want to know where you were seventh period.”

That wasn’t the request Kyle had been expecting. He stood in silence, mulling it over. Content to wait for the answer, Cartman pulled a cigarette from the pocket of his leather bomber jacket and tucked it neatly between his lips.

Kyle watched the unlit cigarette dangle on the edge of Cartman’s ridiculously pink lips. Just this once, Kyle figured the truth might get him further than a lie.

“I was in the bathroom.”

“Fmmp Mff fmmpfmmpm fmmp mfmpmp!” Kenny exclaimed, punching Cartman on the shoulder.

“Yes, yeah, you were right.” Cartman said. Frowning, he tossed a cigarette to Kenny. “Don’t be a douche about it.” He added, pulling a lighter out of his pocket.

Kenny pulled back his hood and placed the cigarette between his lips before leaning into the flame of Cartman’s lighter.

Kyle scowled. This was taking longer than he wanted.

“You got your answer Cartman, now give me the notes.” He said.

Cartman lit his own smoke and took a long drag before responding. “Sure, Kyle, sure…”

Kyle opened his mouth to speak, but Cartman cut him off.

“Don’t thank your Jew god just yet.” He continued with a smirk. “I can’t give you my notes. Then I wouldn’t have any notes. I’ll give you a copy.”

Kyle scowled. “When? I need to study for the test Cartman. I can’t just walk in there…”

“Jesus Kyle,” Cartman gave him his first real scowl. “For once, could you not get your panties in a twist? I'll email them to you tomorrow.”

“What’s wrong with tonight?” Kyle demanded.

Cartman took another long drag before answering. “Because tonight, some of us will be at Bebe’s awesome party, socializing like normal human beings.”
Kyle ignored Cartman’s jab at his social life. He couldn’t care less what Cartman thought about his social habits.

“These better be some fucking decent notes, Cartman.”

“I wouldn’t count on it. You sitting on the crapper for an hour cost me a fag.” He said, casually tapping the ash off his cigarette.

Kyle glared, but Cartman just smiled back at him innocently.

“What? Does my use of British slang insult you? Now, why is that? Could it be you’re a homosexual too, Kahl?” Cartman asked, mangling the red-head’s name in his signature fashion. “When Craig and Tweek came out today, I bet you were you jealous, weren’t you Kahl? They get to hold hands and fuck unicorns together now, but you’re still all alone in the closet. Does that make you sad, Kahl? Do you wish you had a boyfriend too, Kaaaahl?”

Kyle didn’t know when his hands had turn to fist, he just knew his nails were suddenly digging into his flesh. He tried to focus on the pain instead of the blood rushing through his ears. It had been a long time since he had wanted to punch Cartman this badly. Kyle took a deep breath and tried to calm down, but when he closed his eyes, all he could see was red.

“Fuck you,” he said darkly, his voice barely above a whisper.

“What was that Kyle?” Cartman laughed. “It’s hard to hear you over all the…”

“FUCK YOU CARTMAN!” Kyle screamed.

Kenny’s jaw dropped, his cigarette barely managing to cling to his lower lip.

Cartman, on the other hand, didn’t look surprised at all. Still trembling with rage, Kyle watched Cartman’s bored indifference morph into twisted satisfaction.

A wave of sickening realization swept over Kyle— he’d given Cartman the show he’d been hoping for.

It took every shred of willpower for Kyle to walk, not run, back to the parking lot.
Kyle’s basement was nothing spectacular. Excluding Kenny, Kyle probably had the lamest basement of the four. It was cold, dark, and completely unfinished save for a single square of carpet glued in the center of the concrete floor, which served to mark out a rec room of sorts. Kyle’s parents had never seen a reason to sink any money into the place, so the only furniture in the room was junk that had been intercepted on its way to the curb—a cracked tube television, a three-legged coffee table, a busted out loveseat. The only new item in the room was the Xbox One, which Kyle had purchased with last year’s Hanukkah money. Standing in stark contrast to the rest of the room, the console was in immaculate condition.

Kyle and Stan were sitting beside each other on the aforementioned broken couch, the one with with a gaping hole in the the middle. Every time Stan leaned a little to far to the left, he and Kyle ended up brushing shoulders or knocking knees. Stan didn’t seem to notice. Kyle’s heart skipped a beat every single time.

"I could have sworn I put it in here..." Stan said as he rummaged around in his backpack.

Kyle watched Stan search for the new game. "Game informer's saying this is the best Gears of War since the original." Kyle said, trying to come off as conversation.

In a gesture of frustrated surrender, Stan dumped the entire contents of the backpack onto the floor. "Dude, fuck Game Informer. I can't believe you still read that shit." He said, leaning down to paw through the bag’s contents. The further he leaned, the higher Stan’s shirt rode up his back, revealing the flat plain of skin above his belt. Kyle knew that if he leaned just an inch to the right, he would catch a glimpse of Stan’s boxers through the gap in his jeans.

Kyle didn’t lean an inch to the right. In fact, Kyle didn’t move a muscle. Kyle stayed perfectly still.

"Apparently the Horde mode has a new class system," he said, ignoring Stan’s insult.

"Really? Token didn't say anything about a new class system. Must not have been anything to write home about." Stan was leaning so far forward, Kyle could make out each individual vertebrae that made up his spin.

Kyle fell back against the couch. He didn’t give a fuck what Token thought, but he knew better than to tell Stan that.

"Yeah, well Token never plays co-op, does he?" was all he said instead.

"Finally." Stan said, ignoring Kyle’s comment. He wrenched Gears of War 4 out from under the pile of pencils shards and loose leaf and shoved it into the Xbox. As soon as the console had sucked in the disk, Stan returned to his upright position on the couch, taking the lovely view of his back with him.

“Finally’s right.” Kyle mumbled, relieved that Stan’s perfectly unclad skin was clad once more.

Stan turned back to look at him. “What was that?”

“Nothing.” Kyle said, refusing to meet his best friend’s gaze.

Stan leaned over to hand Kyle a controller. As he did, their knees brushed ever so slightly. “You’re not still mad about the party, are you?” He asked, his eyes narrowing.
“No.” Kyle snatched the controller from Stan’s hand before sliding back up to his end of the couch. Hoping Stan wouldn’t notice the red tinge he could feel creeping up his neck, he turned to the screen and clicked on the ‘Gears of War’ icon a few times. Nothing happened.

“Don’t bother. Token said it takes forever to install.”

Kyle felt his skin prickle. That was the second time today Stan had mentioned Token. He slumped back into the couch. “Whatever. I’ve been waiting three weeks to play this game. What’s a few more hours?”

Stan glared at him. “Seriously dude, what’s your problem?”

What’s my problem? I’ve got a crush on a straight boy, that’s my problem. A straight boy who has no qualms about showing some skin and cuddling up on a loveseat. A straight boy who’s been name dropping the hottest, richest boy in town’s name all night.

Of course, he couldn’t tell Stan any of that. So he picked the most convenient lie.

“I guess I am still mad about the party.”

Stan huffed. “No shit.”

Kyle ran his fingers through his tangle of red hair. He hated lying to Stan. He wondered when their relationship had turned into this carefully constructed web of half truths and gracefully dodged questions. Probably the same day you realized you had the hots for your best friend, Kyle thought bitterly.

Desperate to have some semblance of an honest conversation with Stan, he tried to weave a bit of truth into his response. “I just feel like we never hang out anymore.”

Stan began shoving the mess on the floor back into his backpack, his hands rougher than they needed to be. “We’re hanging out right now.”

“For the first time all month.” Kyle said, his voice small, as though he wasn’t sure he wanted Stan to hear his retort.

Stan shoved his bag under the table.

“What do you want me to do Kyle? Last week was family weekend at Boulder. You know how Shelly gets when I don’t come see her.”

“What about the weekend before that?” Kyle asked.

“My cousins were in town. You knew that.”

Kyle did know that. He knew Stan was busy. Hell, Kyle was busy too. But they’d always been busy, that hadn’t changed. What was new was Kyle’s sneaking suspicious that Stan wasn’t making the effort anymore. That maybe he didn’t care if he hung out with Kyle anymore.

Desperate to bring the conversation to an end, Kyle tried launching the game again. No dice.

“We could have hung out at the party last night. It was really fun.”

Kyle snorted. “Yeah, I’m sure it was.”

Stan ignored the obvious sarcasm in Kyle’s voice. “Token brought enough grass to cover a golf
course. Everyone got stoned out of their minds, and Kenny downed a whole bowl of Bebe’s vodka punch. He threw up in…”

“I don’t want to hear about it Stan.”

Stan fell back onto the couch, causing Kyle to lurch into him. Kyle might as well have jumped for how fast he moved to the other end of the two cushioned sofa.

“Whatever. Your loss.” Stan said, oblivious to Kyle’s freak-out. He scowled at the screen. “I had a ton of fun.”

I bet you did Kyle thought.

Now it was Stan’s turn to mash the A button. “Jesus, is this taking forever.”

It was clear Kyle’s attitude had finally managed to piss Stan off. “My connection sucks.” Kyle said in a sort of half hearted apology. Still, the game refused to load.

Seconds turned to minutes as the two sat in silence, staring blindly at the frozen green loading bar. It was a long while before Kyle finally broke the silence.

“Did Craig and Tweek show up?” he asked.

Stan rolled his eyes. “I thought you didn’t want to hear about it.”

“I’m just trying to…”

“No,” Stan cut him off. “They weren’t there. But Clyde was.” Stan paused for a second before continuing, his voice heavy somehow. “He got really wasted; maybe worse than Kenny. I think Bebe ended up letting him stay the night he was so wrecked.”


Suddenly, the installing banner disappeared from the screen.

“Finally.” Kyle sighed. Stan grabbed his controller and launched the game.

“What do you want to play? The campaign’s got a co-op mode, or we can try out the multiplayer.”

“I want to try the campaign. Last week I read…”

“If I have to hear one more thing about some shit you read in Game Informer, I swear to god…”

Kyle shut up and selected the co-op option from the start screen.

The installing screen popped back up.

“God damn it.” Kyle yelled. Stan tossed his controlled onto the coffee table and sprawled out on the couch, his legs resting on the dented table.

They waited in silence, Stan staring at the ceiling, Kyle with his eyes glued to the loading bar at the bottom of the screen. It was moving at a glacial pace.

“I know you don’t like partying…” Stan began after a few more minutes of ear piercing silence.

“Parties are fine. I don’t like getting shitfaced.”
Stan frowned. “You don’t have to get drunk, Kyle. What, do you think someone’s gonna pressure you into guzzling a beer or something stupid like that? Life’s not a fucking 90’s PSA, Kyle. Trust me when I say no one would give a shit what you do or don’t do.”

Kyle figured Stan had meant to sound encouraging, but his proclamation just came off as harsh and bitter. “I didn’t say…” Kyle began, but Stan cut him off.

“You know, I didn’t have a single drink last night.”

“Right,” Kyle rolled his eyes. “And you still had so much fun.”

When Stan didn’t respond, Kyle’s curiosity got the best of him. He glanced over at his best friend to find a shit eating grin plastered on his face. As soon as Stan noticed Kyle staring, he turned away.

What was that all about?

Before he could ask, the co-op screen popped up. Stan was still grabbing his controller off the table when Kyle noticed something strange.

Kyle pointed at the lit ‘continue progress’ option on the menu with his controller. “You’ve already played this?” It was less of a question and more of an accusation.

“Dude, I got the game three weeks ago, of course I’ve already played it.” Stan gave him a withering look before selecting ‘new file’.

“No,” Kyle narrowed his eyes. “I mean you’ve already played co-op mode. With somebody else.”

“What?” Stan’s fingers froze over the controls, so Kyle pushed ‘A’ for him. The ‘installing’ screen popped back up.

“Fuck.” Stan sighed and tossed his controller onto his backpack this time. “We’re gonna be here all night.”

Kyle wasn’t about to let the subject drop. “So, who’d you find time to play with?” Kyle demanded. “I’m really curious Stan.”

“Token, okay? Jesus, what are you, my mother?” Stan ran his fingers through the jet black fringe clinging to his forehead. When he pulled his hands away, his perfectly coiffed hair was wrecked in a beautiful way. The sort of way that would have normally drove Kyle crazy if Stan wasn’t already doing that himself.

“I got done with basketball early last Wednesday and I figured you were still at synagogue for Yom Kippur…”

“Yom Kippur,” Kyle corrected, unable to keep the irritation out of his voice.

“Whatever. So I asked Token if he wanted to play. What is the big deal Kyle?”

Yeah, what is the big deal Kyle?

Kyle took a deep breath. He didn’t know what the hell was wrong with him. He hadn’t hung out with Stan outside of school in almost a month, now here he was ruining it by jumping down Stan’s throat every chance he got and he had no idea know why. So what if Stan couldn’t shut up about Token? So what if they’d played the game together first? Why the hell did he care so much?

Somebody has sand in his vagina again.
Kyle shook his head violently. The last thing he needed right now was Cartman’s voice in his head.

“Listen, Kyle,” Stan began, “Token was free and he’d been wanting to play the game, it wasn’t like I meant to…”

Kyle held up his hand. “You know what? It’s fine, I don’t even care.”

Stan rolled his eyes. “I know you’re mad. Just let me…”

“No,” Kyle pulled his eyes away from the loading bar to look at Stan. “I really don’t care.” And he meant it. He made himself mean it.

Stan eyed him warily for a moment before shrugging. “Fine.”

Kyle turned back to the loading screen.

Ten full minutes passed before either one of them spoke. It was Stan who eventually broke the silence.

“I’m sorry we don’t hang out anymore. It’s not that I don’t want to hang out with you, it’s just that…” He sighed, letting his head loll back onto the edge of the couch. “Life’s so busy. I mean, we’re both studying for the ACT and applying to schools. You’ve got academic challenge; I’ve got basketball season starting.”

Kyle didn’t say anything.

“I really wish you would have come to the party last night.”

_Not this again._ Kyle tried not to groan.

“Do you remember when the four of us used to get together at Cartman’s place? His mom would buy us a twelve pack and we’d just hang out all night, talking and doing stupid shit in his basement?” Stan asked.

Kyle remembered that they hadn’t hung out in Cartman’s basement since sophomore year. Even so, he couldn’t help but smile a little at the memory.

“Remember that time Kenny brought a bag of grass?” Kyle asked.

“Oh my god, yes! Michael sold it to him and Kenny was just stoked he wouldn’t have to sniff markers all night.”

Kyle grinned. “Cartman told him it was grass. And Kenny’s like, ‘I know dude’, and Cartman was like, ‘no dude, it’s literal fucking grass.’”

Stan was doubled over laughing now.

“Kenny wouldn’t believe us and he ended up smoking the whole bag just to make a point.” Kyle finished.

It was a while before Stan caught his breath. “I forgot about that. Shit, that was fun.”

“You’re not going to try to tell me Bebe’s parties are like that, are you?” Kyle asked after a while.

“I guess not.” Stan sat back against the couch. “But it’s not as bad as you think.”
Kyle found himself sliding into Stan again. At this point, he didn’t care if it was gravity or the inevitability of heart break that kept dragging them down into the hole, he simply angled himself so it was only their knees that ended up brushing.

“Cartman’s there, and so is Kenny. You could just hang out with us all night if you wanted to.” Stan’s eyes lit up like he was a salesman who’d just remembered his clincher. “And the shit the girls wear, oh my god Kyle, you wouldn’t believe it.”

Kyle’s stomach flipped once, twice. He did his best to keep his expression neutral as Stan droned on.

“Heidi showed up in this, this…” Having reached the end of his fashion vocabulary, Stan began making obscene cupping gesture around his chest.

Kyle faked a cough so he could turn away. He could feel his face turning red.

“I don’t think she was even wearing a bra. I mean, you could see everything.” When Kyle regained enough of his composure to look at Stan, he saw he was wearing that shit eating grin again.

“The girls would be all over you Kyle. They think you’re cute or some shit like that.”

“What?” Kyle asked. He could hear the stammer in his voice as he asked. He could kick himself.

Stan laughed. “Yeah, ridiculous right? It’s probably those fucking green eyes of yours. And your height.”

“I’m not that tall.”

Stan gave Kyle a once over. It took every bit of Kyle’s self control to not squirmed under Stan’s gaze. “You’re pretty tall, dude. You know how many times coach has tried to get me to recruit you?”

Kyle pushed himself as far into the couch as he could, like he was begging it to swallowing him whole.

Stan laughed. “Since when are you shy?”

“I’m not shy,” Kyle said, his burning face only partially hidden by the bulging couch cushions. “Where’d you hear all that?” he asked.

“Wendy.” Stan replied.

Oh. Instantly, Kyle’s bashfulness melted into something much less pleasant, something akin to dread.

“Wendy was telling me she could set you up with one of her friends no problem. I guess Milly Larsen really has the hots for you.”

“I didn’t know you and Wendy were talking again.”

It was Stan’s turn blushed.

Kyle felt a sinking sensation in the pit of his stomach. The comment hadn’t warranted a blush.

“We’ve been talking for a while now.” Stan finally admitted. He’d picked up his controller again and had begun fiddling with the joystick. “Actually, we’ve been more than talking.”

No.
“Last night at the party…”

*I can’t listen to this.*

“…Wendy and I…”

*I’m gonna be sick.*

“Well, we…”

**“KYLE!”**

Kyle stood up so abruptly, he knocked over the coffee table.

“**KYLE, I need to talk to you!”** It was Mrs. Broflovski, yelling down the stairs.

“I’ll be right back.” Kyle said, dashing up the stairs before Stan could say another word.

“Oh, Kyle, you didn’t have to come up,” Mrs. Broflovski was standing at the top of the stairs, cellphone in hand. “I just wanted to know what you and Stanley wanted from City Wok. I thought we’d have Chinese tonight.”

Kyle closed the basement door behind him before speaking.

“Stan’s not staying for dinner.”

“Oh, no?”

“No, he has to leave. Right away. He has a really important emergency that he has to go to immediately.”

Kyle was rambling like an idiot, he knew it. But he also knew there was no way Stan could spend the night. Not after…

Kyle felt dizzy. He must have looked it too.

“Are you feeling okay, Buooby? You don’t look so well.” Mrs. Broflovski felt her son’s forehead.

Kyle swatted her hand away. “I’m fine mom,” he said with a scowl.

“Maybe you’re coming down with something.”

Kyle thought about it for a second. “Maybe.” He finally agreed. He certainly felt miserable enough to be sick.

“Alright, do you still want Chinese, or should I fix you some soup?”

Kyle didn’t want to bother his mom, so he convinced her he was feeling well enough to eat some fried rice, even though he doubted he would be up for eating much of anything.

Mrs. Broflovski dialed the number on her phone, then gave a Kyle a strange look.

“Aren’t you going to head back downstairs?” she asked. It wasn’t until she asked that Kyle was realized he was standing motionless in front of the basement door, his hand hovering over the door knob.
“Yeah, of course, I just…” He stared at the door and tried to come up with a game plan. He could feel his mom’s concerned gaze prickling the back of his neck, so he pushed the door open, no idea what he was going to do.

Kyle climbed the stairs back down into the basement. “Sorry, my mom needed to know…”

“Wendy and I slept together last night.”

Kyle almost fell down the stairs.

“It was amazing, Kyle. I mean, don’t get me wrong, it was nothing like porn, but it was still really fucking amazing. I mean, just… wow.”

All Kyle could do was stare at his feet.

Stan huffed loudly. “What is up with you? Look, I know Wendy’s smoking. I get it if you’re jealous…”

Kyle let out a sort of strangled sob.

“…but could you at least pretend to be a little happy for me? You’re supposed to be my best friend. You’re the first person I’ve told.”

I’m the first person he’s told? Kyle wanted to smack himself for the way his heart jumped at the confession. The first person he told about fucking Wendy Testaburger. Jesus Christ, could you get a grip?

“That’s great.” Kyle managed to choke out. “I’m really happy for you.”

Stan rolled his eyes. “Wow, I see now why the theater club didn’t want anything to do you.”

Kyle managed to climb the rest of the stairs without falling, but just barely. “I’m sorry. I don’t know what you want from me.”

“Nothing. It’s… whatever.” Stan turned to face the TV, clearly pissed at Kyle.

Kyle lowered himself back onto the couch, as far away from Stan as he could manage without perching on the arm like a vulture.

Great. Back to the silence.

Kyle stared at the loading bar. It was only halfway full. Goddamn mother fucking useless piece of…

Kyle sighed and stared up at the ceiling. The random collection of pipes and cords glinted orange in the last rays of daylight. Soon, the basement would be completely dark except for the cold glow of the TV screen.

You knew Stan was straight. And you knew he liked Wendy. He was never going to end up with you. And now, if you don’t get a grip, you’re gonna loose what little you have left of him.

“You know you don’t have to lie. If it wasn’t that good, you can tell me.”

Stan glanced over at Kyle, a frown tugging at the corners of his mouth. He didn’t take the bait. “I mean it. If you don’t want to talk about it, we don’t have to.”
“No, I was…” Kyle took a deep breath. “I’ve been acting like a jerk all day and I’m sorry. You’re right, I’ve been feeling jealous, but I’m done being a shit friend.”

Stan nodded but didn’t say anything.

“So…” Kyle tried not to cringe as he asked. “Did you have a hard time getting it up?”

Stan choked on a laugh “Are you kidding?”

“I don’t know.” Kyle shrugged, looking at anything but Stan. “Don’t some guys get nervous?”

Stan shook his head. “It was Wendy Testaburger. I’ve been practicing getting it up to Wendy Testaburger my whole life. If anything, I was way too eager. Once I got it in, I probably lasted ten seconds tops.”

“Ouch.”

Stan laughed. “Yeah, but she was really nice about it. Something about how ‘unrealistic sexual expectations are damaging to the male psyche’.”

“What a feminist.”

“Tell me about it. She made me finish her off. Not that I’m complaining.” Once again, the shit eating grin appeared. Not even for the sake of their friendship could Kyle make himself ask to hear that story.

Of course Stan had to tell him anyway.

Kyle tried to be a supportive friend, he really did. He laughed at the funny parts and smiled at the good parts. He only wished there were some sad parts so he’d have an excuse to cry, because with every word Stan spoke, it felt like another part of his heart had died. He tried tuning out Stan’s voice, but it was no use. He had spent the last twelve years of his life training his ears to pick out Stan’s voice in a deafening crowd. He wasn’t about to unlearn a decade of training in a single day.

It wasn’t long before he couldn’t take anymore. “Stan, I’m sorry, but I need to use the bathroom.” Kyle said it as an excuse, but as soon as it was out of his mouth, he realized how true the statement was.

“Man, you have a weak stomach.”

Kyle didn’t waste time on a response, he just ran up the stairs.

Only when the bathroom door was locked did Kyle give himself permission to loose it. He thought ‘loosing it’ would entail crying or maybe screaming into a bath towel.

Instead, he vomited.

His mother rapped lightly on the bathroom door. “Boooby, are you alright?”

Kyle retched in response.

“That’s it, I’m telling Stan it’s time for him to go home.”

Kyle pulled his head out of the toilet to protest, then realized: he wanted nothing more than for Stan to leave. Immediately. It looked like God had given him the perfect excuse.
So Kyle kept quiet and let Shelia Broflovski usher his best friend out.

Of course Stan had to say goodbye.

“So, I guess you’re really sick, huh?” Stan said through the wooden door. “Sorry for giving you a hard time earlier.” There was such a long pause, Kyle began to wonder if Stan had left. Then, in a much softer voice, Stan added, “I know that was hard for you. Thanks for listening anyway. You’re a good friend Kyle.”

Kyle bit down on his hand to keep from sobbing.

“The game wasn’t finished downloading, so I just had to eject it. I think there might be something wrong with your console.”

*Please, just leave,* Kyle begged silently,

“I guess I’ll see you on Monday.”

Kyle retched again.
Chapter 3

Kyle lost track of how long he had been sitting on the cold tile floor of the bathroom, his head pressed to the porcelain of the sink. It felt like hours, but it had probably only been a few minutes. When he was sure he was not going to vomit again, he pulled himself to his feet and shuffled out of the bathroom, only to hesitate at the foot of the staircase.

He knew the only thing waiting for him at the top of the stairs was a dark bedroom, a few hours of tormented rehashing, followed by an hour or two fitful sleep. Kyle didn’t know much about psychology, but he knew enough to know he shouldn’t be alone with his thoughts right now. He didn’t want to be alone period, but there was no one he could call; no one he could confide in, save for maybe Captain Morgan or Jack Daniels. He couldn’t help but laugh when he found he was actually wishing for a party to attend.

The doorbell rang. Kyle welcomed the distraction— talking to the delivery guy would delay the inevitable for a few minutes at the very least.

“Ike,” Kyle’s mother yelled from the kitchen, “Can you get the door? I think that’s the…”

“It’s okay mom,” Kyle called behind him as he opened the front door. “I’ve got it…” Kyle froze when he saw the figure standing on his porch.

“Hey Kyle.”

For a second, Kyle was speechless.

“Cartman. What the hell are you doing here?” He finally stammered.

To his credit, the boy standing on his doorstep looked just as irritated as Kyle felt. His hands were thrust deep into the pockets of his maroon bomber jacket, his wide shoulders hunched against the crisp October wind.

“I realized that I don’t actually have your email, and your house is only a few streets away, so…”

Kyle glanced down at the folder tucked under Cartman’s arm and shook his head.

“You couldn’t have just called the house and told me to come get it myself?”

“Oh, I did,’ Cartman assured him, “but Shelia informed me you were barfing up your guts and couldn’t be bothered to come get your own god damn notes.”

Kyle frowned at Cartman. “Don’t call my mom Shelia.”

Cartman ignored him. “So I guess you really were sick on Friday. Of course, it could be a side affect of all the ass licking you engage in. I would recommend pulling your face out of…”

Kyle snatched the folder from Cartman’s side. “Thanks for the notes. See you never.” Kyle went to slam the door, but Cartman was quicker, sticking his foot out to stop it mid-swing.

“Wait Kyle,” he said, and then he paused, an uncertain look crossing his face. “There was something else. What I actually was going to say was…”

“Spit it out fat ass.” Kyle hadn’t called Cartman ‘fat ass’ in a long time, probably because Cartman wasn’t fat anymore, and hadn’t been for a long time, but Kyle’s brain seemed to be regressing.
tonight. Emotional strain had left it too weak to formulate a new, relevant insult.

Cartman didn’t seem to mind. “I just wanted to say that I’m sorry for what I said Friday. About you being a homosexual. Not that you aren’t, or if you are, not that it’s not… you know…”

“None of your fucking business?” Kyle offered, brow furrowed.

“Right. Whatever. Let’s stop dancing around the beluga in the room Kyle, we both know you’re Kinsey six gay. The point is, I shouldn’t have thrown it in your face like that. I’m sure being you is really hard, especially when your best friend is an asshole and this entire town…”

Kyle, who’d tuned Cartman out before he’d begun to speak, was suddenly struck by an idea. “Cartman, do you own Gears of War 4?”

Cartman looked confused for a second, but answered the question. “Yeah, I’ve got it.”

Kyle threw the notes onto the key table and grabbed his coat. “Good. I’m coming over and you’re letting me play it.”

Twenty minutes later, Kyle found himself in Cartman’s basement playing GOW4. Everything about the situation had been more painless than it should have been. Kyle’s mom hadn’t put up a fuss, mainly because Kyle hadn’t told her he was leaving. The walk over had been completely bearable, thanks in large part to Cartman’s silence. And now, here he was, sitting in Cartman’s lavishly decorated basement, playing a game that had been installed weeks before Kyle arrived, on a futon that was more than large enough to accommodate them both without causing any accidental physical contact. Kyle should have felt great.

Instead, he felt like shit.

He was still so wound up over everything that had happened with Stan, he couldn’t concentrate on the game at all. When he died for the tenth time in as many minutes, he decided to call it quits.

He tossed his controller onto the four legged coffee table and leaned back, content to watch Cartman mow down locust alone. “Some team player you are.” Cartman huffed.

“Doesn’t look like you need me.” Kyle replied, and it was true. Cartman was unexpectedly skilled.

Kyle watched as weapons flashed and blood splattered across the screen. He was content to let his mind veg-out in the abject silence. He should have known it couldn’t last.

“I thought you were supposed to game with Stan this weekend.”

Kyle shrugged. “It’s all you’ve been talking about for the past week.” Cartman continued.

“What?” Kyle stammered. He hadn’t realized he’d mentioned gaming with Stan to Cartman.

“Yeah, what happened? Did the hippy blow you off for his girlfriend?” Cartman asked.

“No.” Kyle said, the anger from before creeping back into his voice.

“What then?” Cartman pressed.
“Stan did come over, but I got sick.” Kyle said.

“Right.” Cartman said, turning his attention back to his game. Kyle hoped he might let the issue drop.

He didn’t.

“So that’s why you’re over my house now, watching me play the game you’ve been talking about playing with your boyfriend all month. Because you have an upset tummy.”

“Just drop it Cartman.” Kyle said, his voice clipped and cold, the way it had been at the field house.

Kyle waited for Cartman to prod him some more but, miraculously, the brunette let the matter drop. Kyle was shocked to find he was actually disappointed by Cartman’s lack of nagging. He watched Cartman’s avatar crouch and sprint and aim and shoot until he couldn’t take it anymore. As soon as the victory screen appeared, Kyle spoke.

“Stan slept with Wendy.”

Cartman didn’t respond so Kyle continued.

“He says they’ve been talking for the past month. Then last night, things just happened.”

Cartman still didn’t say anything. Kyle let out an irritated sigh. “What the fuck does that even mean, things just happened? And what does he mean, talking? Are they dating? Or are they just, I don’t know, seeing each other, like, casually?”

“I think it means they’re fucking.” Cartman deadpanned.

Kyle glared at him. “You don’t seem phased at all.”

Cartman shrugged. “This isn’t exactly news to me.”

Kyle had forgotten; Cartman had been at the party.

“Besides, I’m not the one who’s in love with him.”

Kyle spun around, his eyes burning with anger. “God damn it Cartman. Could you not be a dick for like, one second?”

“Probably not.” Cartman admitted, not looking sorry at all.

Kyle stood up and stormed over to the stairs.

I should just leave. What the hell was I thinking? That Cartman and I were going to have some sort of heart to heart? Fuck that.

If he’d wanted someone to talk to, he could have called Kenny. It was Saturday night; Kenny was bound to be free and stoned out of his mind. Kyle could have told him anything and he wouldn’t have remembered a word of it come morning. He could have called Butters, or even Tweek. Hell, Tweek would probably understand better than anybody. Kyle could only imagine how long he’d been pinning after his best friend. But here he was, in Eric Cartman’s basement of all places.

He looked up to find Cartman staring at him, his face strangely unreadable.

“I’m trying to have a normal fucking conversation with you. Could you just please, for one minute,
pretend you’re not a raging psychopath and listen to me?” Kyle asked, embarrassed at how much his requested sounded like a strangled plea.

“Sure, Kahl.” Cartman said softly. Kyle had heard those words before, sweet honeyed words talking him off cliffs and into pyramid schemes, but he didn’t care. He needed someone, anyone, to talk to. So he turned around and sat himself back down on the futon.

Cartman turned back to the TV and started up the next round. Kyle sat and watched him, not sure how to begin, not sure if he would begin. One round turned into two, turned into three, and still Kyle hadn’t said a word. It wasn’t until he closed his eyes and leaned back that he finally relaxed enough to begin to unravel the web of emotions tangled between his heart and his head. He worked on that web in silence for a while, untangling his thoughts from his feelings, the truth from the lies. He worked on it until he couldn’t work in silence anymore.

“I loved him.” Kyle finally said. “I really, really loved him. I thought it was a crush. You know, something stupid that happened because we were together all the time, but…” Kyle took a deep breath, determined not to cry in front of Cartman.

“But what, Kahl?”

Kyle stopped. He didn’t know when, but at some point Cartman had paused the muted TV so all he could hear was the sound of his own breathing and the faint hum of the Xbox. Kyle looked at the beige carpet, refusing to meet Cartman’s eyes.

“You know fucking what. I just said I love him, didn’t I?”

Cartman leaned back into the futon. “You need to say the words, Kahl. Out-loud. That’s why you came over, isn’t it? To finally tell someone?”

Kyle tilted his head so he could look Cartman in the eye.

“I don’t…”

“What you couldn’t tell Stan tonight, Kahl.” Cartman pressed. Still, Kyle shook his head and refused to speak.

“Come on Kahl, I know you’re dying to say it. You were dying to tell Stan tonight and you’re dying to tell someone now. What couldn’t you tell Stan?” Cartman’s voice grew louder the longer he badgered.

Kyle clamped his teeth together. He could feel tears welling up behind his closed eyes, but he refused to let a single one fall.

“What can’t you tell him?” Cartman asked again, each word like a shove. “What Kahl, what? What is it? What’s the big fucking secret that you can’t tell anybody? What’s so fucking filthy you can’t even say it out-loud?”

“It’s not filthy.” Kyle said, but his voice broke on the last word.

“Oh yeah?” Cartman goaded him. “Then say it. Fucking say it, you whining, sniveling, bitching, cowering…”

“’T’M GAY!” Kyle screamed. “I’m gay, you fat, fucking douche bag! Is that what you want to hear? I’m gay. And I’m going to Jewish hell, all because I fell in love with an idiotic moron who can’t see what’s right in front of him.”
Kyle sat there, his elbows on his knees, his fist knotted into the red twists of his hair as all the tears he’d been holding in began to drip silently from his lashes.

“I wanted to be with him so bad.” He said, his voice barely above a whisper. “And I knew he wasn’t like that. I knew it was one sided. I knew he liked Wendy. But, I don’t know.” He drew in a ragged breath. “I thought I could pretend for a little while longer. Just until I got out of this god damn town where everyone gives a shit about what I do.”

Kyle laughed, a bitter, cold laugh. “I thought he would at least give me that. But he’s so fucking oblivious!” Kyle sat up and looked at Cartman. ‘He sat there and gave me the fucking play by play! I had to listen to every single detail about how Stan and Wendy went at it like… like dogs in heat. How hard he was looking at her fucking pasty tits… How hot and wet she felt when he fucked her open. The way it felt when he…” Kyle’s voice broke into a sob.

Cartman didn’t say anything, so Kyle kept talking. He fell back against the couch and stared at the tiled ceiling.

“You know what he said during lunch on Friday about Clyde? How there was no way Clyde didn’t know Craig was gay because they were best friends?” The tears were streaming down his cheeks now, but he was past caring. “It took every shred of self-control I had not to tell him right then and there, just so I could see the look on his face when he found out what a complete ass he’s…’

In one quick motion, Cartman wrapped his arms around Kyle’s shoulders and pulled him tight against his chest. It wasn’t a long hug, but it was long enough for Kyle to both tense up and relax in Cartman’s embrace.

Kyle didn’t try to pull back; not until Cartman let go.

A long moment of silence passed before Kyle finally asked, “What the hell was that for?”

Cartman shrugged. “I guess I just wanted you to shut up.”

Kyle scowled as he wiped the tears from his cheeks. Of course Cartman had to ruin the moment by being a dick. ‘Well that’s a stupid way to shut someone up.” Kyle snapped.

“Oh yeah?”

“Yeah.”

Cartman smirked. “It worked on you, didn’t it?”

Kyle glared. “Yeah, well, next time I’d prefer it if you just stick to your usual methods.”

Now it was Cartman’s turn to scowl. “And what would those be?”

“You know,” Kyle began listing the abuses on his fingers, “…throwing a tantrum, screaming, making shitty threats, insulting my friends, insulting my family, being an all around douche, straight up trying to kill me, not to mention all the times you’ve called me a dirty fucking…”

Cartman kissed Kyle.

It wasn’t a long kiss, just a quick press of lips— completely chaste. Not that it mattered. When Cartman pulled back, Kyle was speechless.

“What about that method?” Cartman asked. “Was that an acceptable way of shutting you up?” The
question should have come off as cocky, but if Kyle hadn’t known him better, he’d be tempted to
call Cartman uncertain.

Kyle stared. He felt as though he were frozen and on fire at the same time. Every nerve in his body
tingled with the residual shock of Cartman’s lips pressed against his. He couldn’t move a muscle; he
could barely breathe.

“Well?” Cartman asked, his uncertainty more pronounced than before.

Slowly, Kyle nodded.

“Good.” Cartman said. Then he leaned in, as if for another kiss.

Kyle was ready this time. He closed his eyes and waited, but nothing happened. He could feel the
futon shift with Cartman’s weight, so he knew Cartman had leaned towards him. Suddenly, he felt
Cartman’s breath on his lips.

Kyle’s eyes fluttered open, only to find Cartman’s face a hair’s breadth from his own, his hazel eyes
gazing back at him. They were so close, Cartman’s lips brushed against his as he whispered, “Do
you think I can get you to open your mouth this way too?”

Before Kyle could answer, Cartman pressed his lips to Kyle’s.

At first, everything was rigid. Cartman’s kiss was firm and determined against Kyle’s stiff lips. Still,
it was like Kyle had been electrocuted. Every nerve in his body lit up and vibrated at the sudden
collision. Then, Cartman began to move.

He tilted his head to the side and as he did, he parted his lips ever so slightly, drawing Kyle’s lower
lip between his own. Gently, he sucked on Kyle’s lips, massaging them with his own.

Kyle felt his face and neck flush as his mouth literally melted into Cartman’s. It wasn’t long before
he was tentatively kissing back, working on the soft skin of Cartman’s upper lip with what little of
his mouth Cartman wasn’t monopolizing. Kyle could feel Cartman’s grin in response. The next thing
he knew, Kyle was feeling the warm, wet brush of Cartman’s tongue against his bottom lip.

It was like Cartman had flipped a switch in Kyle. A shutter rippled through him as his mouth fell
open. Cartman took Kyle’s momentary lapse of control as an open invitation. Slowly at first, then
with more insistence, Cartman began stroking the tip of his tongue against Kyle’s. At the same time,
Kyle felt Cartman reach up to cradle his neck.

Kyle couldn’t think of a single reason to object to any of it. In fact, he found himself wanting more.
Kyle brought his own hands up to Cartman’s head, letting his fingers tangle in Cartman’s dark hair.
Only when he had gotten a proper grip on Cartman did he begin kissing him back in earnest.

One second, Kyle was a docile spectator, the next, an insistent participant, pushing back against
Cartman’s advances. Kyle stroked and sucked against Cartman’s lips and tongue, using every bit of
anatomy he had at his disposal. He felt Cartman’s fingers scrape against his scalp as he tugged on
Kyle’s red curls. Kyle groaned.

Their mouths fused together in a wet heat until Kyle couldn’t tell where his mouth ended and
Cartman’s began. The sound of his own breathing was loud and heavy in his ears, but still, Kyle felt
like he wasn’t getting enough air. He felt lightheaded as pin pricks of light began to color the backs
of his lids.
Desperate for air, Kyle finally broke off the kiss. The seal of their mouths broke with a wet popping sound. Kyle knew he should have been grossed out by the sound. Instead, he thought it was erotic as hell.

His shoulders and chest heaved as he sat there panting, absolutely breathless from kissing. Cartman must have felt the same way. Kyle watched Cartman’s chest rise and fall as he tried to catch his breath; his hair moussed and his lips pink and raw.

For a moment, Kyle worried that was it— the moment was over almost as soon as it had begun. He stared wide-eyed at Cartman, looking for some sign that this whole thing had been more than a momentary lapse in sanity. No sooner had the fear entered his mind than Kyle saw Cartman’s eyes turn dark. He returned Kyle’s questioning gaze with hooded, almost predatory eyes.

That was all the invitation Kyle needed.

Within seconds, he was on Cartman, tearing off the other boy’s coat. Cartman was right behind him, helping Kyle out of his own jacket. And then they were kissing again, even more desperate than before. Kyle was practically in Cartman’s lap, his knees folded against Cartman’s chest. It was nice, but a little awkward. Kyle could feel Cartman’s knees every time he leaned in to get a deeper taste of Cartman’s mouth, which was a price Kyle was willing to pay for another kiss, but one he knew he didn’t have to. In one fluid motion, Kyle wrapped his legs around Cartman’s waist and let himself rest on Cartman’s lap. As impossible as it seemed to Kyle, he realized that he and Cartman were even closer now.

Kyle broke their kiss to catch his breath, and Cartman, unwilling to sit idle, leaned in and began kissing up the line of Kyle’s jaw. He worked his way up until he’d captured Kyle’s earlobe with his teeth, tugging gently. Kyle shuttered. Their chests were flush with one another, and Kyle could feel Cartman’s chest press against his with every breath he took.

It wasn’t the only new thing he could feel pressed against him.

As Cartman continued to toy with his ear, Kyle gave an experimental swivel of his hips. Cartman let out a small grunt. Kyle frowned. He knew he could do better than that.

With an almost lazy stretch, he leaned into the brunette’s lips once more as he began slowly grinding down on Cartman. All it took was a few languid gyrations before Kyle had exactly what he wanted: Cartman moaning into his mouth. As he felt Cartman get hard beneath him, he realized he didn’t know what feeling was more powerful— the rush he got from knowing he was making someone hard, or the horrifying reality that it was Eric Cartman’s hard dick currently pressed against his ass.

Still, Kyle continued moving agonizingly slowly. Apart from a low moan here and here, Cartman showed a surprising amount of restraint, so Kyle allowed his exhilaration to win out. They locked lips again, Kyle relishing in every small noise and shutter he teased out of Cartman.

After what felt like an eternity of sucking on lips and jaws and necks, Cartman finally voiced what Kyle’s better sense had been screaming for the past half hour.

“Kyle, I think we’d better… slow down.”

Kyle was busy sucking a hickey into Cartman’s neck, so he was close enough to hear how breathless the brunette was.

Kyle pulled back and looked him in the eye. “Do you want to slow down?” he asked.

Cartman scowled. “No, of course not.”
“Well, neither do I.” Kyle said, leaning back into Cartman’s neck. Before he had the chance to resume, Cartman grabbed him by the shoulders and pulled Kyle back up to face him.

“You have to stop, Kyle.” Cartman growled. “Now.”

Kyle frowned, his irritation with Cartman growing by the second. Cartman was completely killing the mood, and once it was dead, Kyle couldn’t be sure he would ever be able to go back to kissing Eric Cartman.

“Why the hell do we have to stop?” Kyle demanded. “You’ve been begging me to suck your balls since we were nine. What’s the big fucking hold up?”

Now it was Cartman’s turn to frown. “You and your virgin ass, that’s the fucking holdup.”

Kyle didn’t bother trying to deny his virginity. “Who the fuck said I’m the one taking it in the ass?” Kyle demanded instead.

“And who the fuck said we’re doing it at all?” Cartman asked, unceremoniously pushing Kyle backwards onto the futon.

“Look,” Cartman continued irritably, as though talking to a particularly vexing child. “You’re upset, you’re sick, you’re in shock. Hell, maybe you’re even drunk, who knows, but something is clearly wrong with you. It’s obvious you’re not ready to…”

Kyle pushed himself up onto his knees. “Who the hell are you to tell me what I am and am not ready to do?” Kyle glared down at Cartman. “And since when did you give a shit about what’s best for me, huh Cartman? What do you care if I get hurt?”

“I don’t,” Cartman said coolly. “But I’m not going to have sex with you, only to have you decide you didn’t want it after all, then have your seventeen-year-old ass turn around and cry rape as soon as the sun comes up. There’s plenty of other, less needy people I could be fucking.”

Kyle seriously doubted that, but he limited his eye rolls to one. “First of all, I’m not fucking jail bait, Cartman. And secondly, I’m not gonna cry rape, okay? You might be a dirty sleaze bag, but some of us are above pulling stupid shit like that.”

“Sure you are.” Cartman said, but his eyes said, I’ve seen it before.

“Cartman, I’m sick and tired of waiting.” Waiting for something that was never going to happen, with someone I’ll never be with. “I’m ready.”

Cartman laughed. “Really, you’re ready?”

Kyle set his jaw. “Yes,” he said, his gaze steady.

“You really want this?” Cartman pressed.

“Yes, I really want this.” Kyle said, putting as much heat behind his gaze as he could muster.

“Then prove it.”

Kyle started. “What?”

“I said prove it, jewboy. Prove to me that this is what you really want.”

Kyle’s exasperated wail brought a small smirk to Cartman’s lips. “What the hell do you think I’ve been doing for the past half-hour, Cartman?”
“I want you to say it.” Cartman said, his eyes turning dark with lust.

“Say what?”

“Say exactly what it is you want Kahl. After all, you have to tell me what it is you want from me. I need to be sure we’re on the same page.”

So there it was. Cartman was going to make him beg. Kyle groaned. He felt like they were back to square one, like somehow Cartman had organized this entire crazy runaround just to maneuver him right back to the spot where Kyle was begging on his knees.

With a start, Kyle realized that he was literally on his knees. Quickly, he sat back down, only to find he was now looking up at Cartman. His stomach lurched. How could one little detail make the whole thing that much worse? Kyle felt a deep blush work its way up his neck.

“I want to have sex with you.” Kyle finally managed to choke out.

Cartman nodded. “Yes, yes, that’s good. But I’m gonna need you to be a little more specific, Kahl.”

Kyle bit back the anger he felt surging within him. Maybe he didn’t want this after all. He closed his eyes, hoping it would calm him down. Instead, all he saw was a vision of Stan and Wendy in a dark, spare bedroom, humping like rabbits. The picture burned against the backs of his lids.

Kyle jumped when he felt the brush of Cartman’s lips against his ear. His eyes fluttered open as Cartman started to croon in his ear.

“Come on Kahl. Is it really that hard to say?” He whispered softly, his lips trailing over the sensitive skin where his jaw met his neck. Cartman’s tongue lapped gently at the delicate skin, sending a jolt straight to Kyle’s cock.

And just like that, any thoughts he’d had of Stan and Wendy were gone.

Kyle turned his head until his lips were right against the brunette’s ear. “Cartman,” he whispered. He could feel a telltale flush creeping back up his neck and onto his cheeks, but he ignored it. Instead, he gritted his teeth and managed to say it.

“Cartman, I want you to fuck me.”
Chapter 4

One minute, Cartman was kissing Kyle softly, the next he was pushing the redhead back into the futon, his hands tugging at the t-shirt already riding up the plane of the pale boy’s stomach.

Kyle lifted his arms to let the shirt slip over his head, then returned the favor, pulling Cartman’s tee off. Cartman was barely shirtless before he was undoing his own jeans.

“Have you done this before?” Kyle asked, his fingers fumbling with his zipper.

“Yes,” Cartman answered as he kicked off his jeans, “A lot.”

Try as he might, Kyle couldn’t detect a hint of cockiness in Cartman’s voice. He wondered who the hell Cartman had slept with. Had it just been guys, or had there been girls too?

“Have you?” Cartman asked.

Kyle blinked in surprise. He’d assumed his inexperience had been obvious. “No,” he finally answered as he shimmied out of his jeans, his hips lifting off the bed. Cartman’s pants were already lying in a pile on the floor, so Kyle tossed his on top of them.

They were kissing before they could even lay back down; Kyle on his back with Cartman propped above him, the larger boy’s arms braced on either side of Kyle’s slight frame. Even with Cartman suspended above him, Kyle could still feel his weight fusing their chests together, pinning him to the mattress. Still, Kyle figured Cartman was being careful for Cartman. Which was to say, not very careful at all.

Every time their bodies brushed, Kyle felt a shutter tear through him. Every point where their bodies collided—their mouths, their chests, their groins, blazed with white heat. At first, their collisions were haphazard, incidental. Quickly, they became their reason to kiss, to move, to breath. Cartman ground him into the mattress, their cocks grinding and grazing against each other. Kyle could feel his dick twitching and jerking as it leaked into his boxers.

At some point, the kissing gave way to ragged breathing and fists tangled in the fabric of the futon. Cartman panted above him, his face buried in Kyle’s neck as Kyle wound his fingers into the brunette’s dark, matted bangs. Even in the dark, his hair was one shade too light. Kyle shut his eyes to the thought and thrust harder.

Cartman moaned above him. “Kyle, we need to… slow down.”

Kyle scowled. “Haven’t we… already been over this?” he said between breathes. “I want to…”

“I know what you want,” Cartman snapped, “And I’m telling you you’re not going to get it if we don’t… stop now.”

Reluctantly, Kyle stilled his hips. “Happy?” he asked.

Cartman held himself suspended over Kyle. “Hardly,” he said. He rolled off the redhead and made his way over to a dresser beneath the stairs.

“What are you…”

With a start, Kyle realized he’d completely forgotten about condoms. And lube, for that matter. For the first time that night, his mind began to clear. When it did, the weight of what they were about to do finally hit him.

He was lying on Eric Cartman’s futon.

He had agreed to have sex with Eric Cartman.

No, scratch that. He had just begged to have sex with Eric Cartman.

Kyle watched as Cartman, bent over an open drawer, rummaged through what Kyle could only imagine was Mrs. Cartman’s lovemaking miscellany. His black boxers-briefs hugged the bow of ass and the curve of his thighs. The taunt skin covering his shoulders and back gleamed with the effort of the last few minutes.

Somewhere between third grade and now, Eric Cartman had got hot.

Well, that’s a relief, since you’ve already agreed to let him fuck you.

And just like that, he was crushed beneath an avalanche of anxiety. Kyle sat up and pulled his knees to his chest. He was staring at his hands when Cartman turned around.

“You’re looking sick again.”

Kyle’s head jerked up. As he studied Cartman’s bored expression, he realized the comment hadn’t been a challenge or an accusation, merely an observation.

“You still want to do this?” Cartman asked.

Kyle closed his eyes and took a deep breath. He thought about everything that had happened tonight, every step that had lead him here: the years of pinning, the days lost obsessing over Stan, the sleepless nights he’d wasted dreaming about a relationship that wasn’t ever going to be. He thought about all the opportunities he had missed waiting for Stan, all the other people he could have been falling in love with, the years’ worth of chances he wasn’t going to get back.

Kyle was seventeen. He’d been waiting for this for a long fucking time, and he’d been wanting it for even longer.

“Yes,” Kyle said.

“Good,” Cartman said. He turned back to the drawer.

Even as his panic subsided, his new found clarity didn’t. He found it wasn’t an entirely welcome development. Without the lust and the fog, he found himself thinking about uncomfortable things like technicalities and logistics. He knew he’d have to loose his skivvies before they fucked, but beyond that, he was kind of at a loss.

Kyle began cautiously. “How do we, I mean, what should I…?”

“Well, you can’t do it sitting up, that’s for sure,” Cartman said, his back to Kyle.

Kyle laid back.

“And you should probably flip over,” Cartman continued as he made his way back over to the futon. When he saw Kyle he froze. Kyle was completely naked.
Cartman let out a low whistle.

Kyle blushed deeply as he sat back up, but otherwise ignored Cartman’s shit eating grin. “Don’t tell me you want me on my hands and knees,” he said.

“Fine, I won’t tell you. I’ll just stand here till you do it,” Cartman said, still grinning.

Kyle just scowled.

Cartman dropped the grin and scowled right back. “Remind me again which one of us has done this before,” he said, his expression steely. When Kyle’s resolve didn’t fade, it was Cartman who softened, but only slightly. “You want me to fuck you, right? And assuming you don’t want me to tear you a new one while I’m at it, I need to open you up first. This is how we do that.”

Kyle studied Cartman’s face. The older boy looked sincere. It dawned on Kyle that he was going to have to trust Cartman if this was going to work. He took another deep breath.

“Okay, fine,” Kyle said, turning over onto his stomach, “But we’re not fucking like this,” he added as he pushed himself onto his hands and knees.

Cartman scoffed. “I don’t know if anyone’s told you this, but there’s not really a missionary position to gay sex. This is the easiest way to do it, Kahl.”

Kyle gritted his teeth. “I don’t care. You’re not fucking me like a dog.”


Kyle kicked Cartman in the gut. “Shut up fat ass,” he said, smiling in spite of himself.

Cartman barely flinched. “You should be on your elbows, not your hands,” he said as he glanced over Kyle’s shoulder.


Cartman shrugged. “It works better.”

No sooner had Kyle lowered himself onto his elbows than Cartman was bossing him again. “You have to spread your knees more.”

Kyle gritted his teeth. “Why?”

Cartman threw up his hands. “What is it with you and all your fucking questions? This isn’t a sex ed lecture, Kahl. There’s no quiz at the end.”

Kyle frowned but did as he was told.

“Good. Now move your… if you kind of… let me just…” Cartman slipped his hands under Kyle’s hips and began to rearrange him.

Begrudgingly, Kyle let him reorder his limbs. He felt like a Gumby doll.

As soon as Cartman was satisfied with Kyle’s pose, he sat back to admire his work. “That’s perfect,” he said as he as he grabbed the bottle of lube. “Now arch your back.”

“Why?” Kyle asked. He didn’t know why he bothered; he was already lifting his hips in compliance. His obstinacy was more of an after thought than anything.
“Because it looks hotter,” Cartman said. Kyle could practically hear the grin on his face.

He buried his burning face into the mattress. “Fuck you,” he said, the words muffled by a foot of foam. Still, he found himself increasing the curve of his spine ever so slightly. The feeling of being wanted was new, and far more powerful than Kyle could have ever imagined.

“Kyle?” Cartman asked. He couldn’t have been more than a foot behind him, but to Kyle, he sounded like he was miles away.

“What?” he asked, his face on fire. Even if he couldn’t see him, the feeling of Cartman’s eyes raking over his body was maddening.

“You’re really fucking hot like this.”

Kyle rolled his eyes. “Just shut up and touch me already.”

Kyle felt the mattress shift as Cartman pulled himself closer, but he kept his hands to himself. Kyle waited, squirming until he couldn’t take it anymore.

“Cartman!” Kyle barked.

Cartman chuckled. “For Christ’s sake, I’m almost...”

And then his hands were on Kyle.

Kyle didn’t realize just how flushed he was till Cartman’s cool hands were pressed against his burning skin. Cartman palmed the flesh of his ass before pulling his cheeks apart.

“What are you...”

Kyle felt the quick, undeniable swipe of Cartman’s tongue against his hole.

“JESUS CHRIST!” Kyle shouted, a chill running up, then back down his arching spine.

“Shut up, Broflovski,” Cartman snapped. But any clout the command might have held was undercut by the fact that Cartman was laughing. “Do you want the whole neighborhood to hear you?”

“Don’t,” Kyle shivered helplessly, “don’t do that again.”

“Fine, I won’t. Just relax, would you?”

Kyle willed his body to settle back into the futon. He felt Cartman’s hands tugging at his ass again. This time, it was the soft pad of a finger that brushed against him.

“Relax,” Cartman repeated.

That’s easy for you to say. You’re not the one about to get your ass probed. Still, he tried to relax. It was a hard thing to do, especially since every nerve in his body felt like a live wire.

Cartman kept at it, letting the pad of his thumb idly circle over Kyle’s hole. One minute passed. Then two.

“I mean it Kyle. You have to relax.”

“I am relaxed,” Kyle snapped back.
Cartman kept massaging his cheeks and brushing against his hole. To Kyle, it felt like an eternity, but it couldn’t have been more than a few minutes. Whatever Cartman had been waiting for must not have happened, because after a while, Kyle felt his hands pull away.

Kyle felt his face burning, this time with embarrassment. *What the hell is wrong with me? All I have to do is lie here and stop freaking the fuck out, and I can’t even manage that.* His stomach clenched as he waited for Cartman to tell him it wasn’t going to work.

Instead, he felt Cartman’s hands on his back. Slowly, they trailed up the flat plane of his pale skin, ghosting along either side of his spine. When they came to rest on his shoulders, Cartman began kneading as if it were the most natural thing in the world, his thumbs gently working out the tension and stress Kyle had been holding there all night.

“I’ve always wanted to do this,” Cartman admitted as he ran his hands back down the length of Kyle’s back. “It’s why I always used to sit behind you in Garrison’s class. So I could get a glimpse of your pasty ass shoulder peeking out from under your parka every time you raised your hand. You’ve always had a nice back.”

“You too,” Kyle blurted out. As soon as he said it, he was blushing again. He scrambled to recover. “I mean in general, as far as backs go, you have… you know.” Kyle was glad Cartman couldn’t see his face. He was sure it was the color of a tomato by now.

Cartman let his hands trail down Kyle’s back, past his shoulder blades, past his spine. His fingers gripped Kyle’s hipbones as his thumbs pressed into his lower back. Slowly, he continued to work his way down, past Kyle’s hips, past his tail bone, all the while putting pressure on all the muscles Kyle hadn’t been able to relax since Cartman had first pressed their lips together.

By the time Cartman reached Kyle’s ass, Kyle was putty in his hands.

Cartman popped open the lube. “You ready?” He asked, squeezing the gel onto his hand.

“Yes,” Kyle breathed. Then he closed his eyes.

Cartman eased a single finger into Kyle. At first, all he felt was the shock of the cold. Then, he felt the burn. Kyle felt how tight he was, even as he was forced to stretch around Cartman’s single digit.

The rational part of Kyle’s brain knew Cartman couldn’t have gone past the first knuckle. The irrational part of his brain was screaming *fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck…*

Cartman was slow about it, maddeningly slow. If it weren’t for the pain, Kyle wouldn’t have been sure he was moving at all. He felt himself clench and tighten as Cartman slipped one knuckle, then another into his tight ass.

When Cartman spoke, his voice sounded far-off. “Kyle, breath,” he said.

It wasn’t until Cartman said it that Kyle realized he’d been holding his breath.

Kyle sucked in a breath. It was much more ragged than he’d have liked. Then he took another. Cartman stayed absolutely still until Kyle got his breathing back in order. Then he began to move. Slowly, Cartman pulled out, then just as slowly, he pushed his way back in. Then again. Then again.

It was like every move Cartman made, every minute thrust and drag, was heightened beyond anything Kyle had ever felt before. There was hardly an inch of his mind that wasn’t intimately focused on the place where he and Cartman met. Even as he felt his walls stretch and burn against the intrusion, he realized the pain was dissolving into pleasure.
“I’m going to add another finger,” Cartman said.

Kyle, who was biting his lower lip, simply nodded.

Cartman went slow, knuckle by knuckle, this time with two fingers. The burn was just as bad, but Kyle was ready for it. He managed to breathe through it this time. The more Cartman thrust into him, the more the initial pain gave way to pleasure.

Kyle could hardly believe this actually felt good. He’d always just assumed the actors in the porn he watched were doing just that: acting. But this wasn’t all that bad. Sure, it wasn’t nearly as good as having a hand on his dick, but it was still…

Kyle felt a small quiver echo through his body.

“What was that?” he asked.

Cartman just chuckled.

His mind flew back to his body. He felt Cartman hook two fingers inside of him, then…

This time, it felt less like a quiver and more like a jolt.

“That,” Kyle demanded. “What the hell was that?”

“That,” Cartman said darkly, “is what my cock’s going to hit, just as soon as it’s buried inside of you.”

Kyle’s dick gave an involuntary twitch.

Having done enough begging for one night, Kyle refused to ask Cartman to touch him like that again. The brunette made it explicitly clear he wasn’t going to.

Two fingers became three, which became four. It wasn’t until Kyle could feel the lube dripping down his taint and onto his balls that Cartman deemed him stretched enough.

Kyle rolled over and watched as Cartman shucked off his boxers. It took everything he had to keep his eyes from widening.

So that’s why he insisted on working up to four fingers.

Cartman ripped open the condom packet and began to slide the rubber down his length. As soon as it was on, Cartman began lubing up. Kyle openly stared as the lube dripped down Cartman’s thick cock. It wasn’t so much that Kyle wanted to watch, it was more that he couldn’t look away.

Once he was finished, Cartman got to his knees. “Come here,” he said, motioning for Kyle to come closer. Kyle sat up and pulled himself forward until Cartman was kneeling between his legs.

Cartman reached an arm around Kyle’s shoulders and eased him onto his back. Gently, he arranged Kyle’s legs so they were wrapped around his hips. Kyle’s heart went from a weak flutter to steady pound. Cartman grabbed a hold of Kyle’s ankle, then stopped.

“Kahl, you know this isn’t going to change anything, right?” Cartman said. He looked down at Kyle, a dark fringe framing his serious gaze.

It was such a dumb thing to say. Of course it would— this was going to change everything. Even so, Kyle knew what Cartman meant.
“I know,” he said.

Sex wasn’t some magic spell. One hot romp in a dark basement didn’t guarantee anything, especially not between two people with as much history as them. He and Cartman wouldn’t be lovers tomorrow. Come morning, they might not even be friends.

But after tonight, Kyle really hoped they’d be.

“Okay,” Cartman said. With a nod, he hitched Kyle’s leg up onto his shoulder and lined himself up. “You ready Jew boy?”

Kyle rolled his eyes. “And just when I was starting to not hate you.”

Cartman smirked. “That’s too bad. Hate sex is my favorite.” And just like that, he was sliding into Kyle.
Epilogue

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Kyle felt the telltale prick of tears welling up in his eyes.

_Goddamn it._

He hadn’t cried once during sex, not when Cartman had first shoved into him, not when he finally began to move, not even when Cartman had pounded his ass like a fucking jackhammer. Even when Kyle finally came, Cartman’s tight fist pumping his throbbing cock, he had managed to keep it together.

Of course he would cry _after_ it was all said and done.

Kyle clenched his fists and tried swallowing a couple times to no avail. Tears were already beginning to stream down his cheeks.

_What the hell is wrong with me?_

He knew he wasn’t crying from the pain, although there was plenty of that. He didn’t feel sad enough to be crying either. He just felt so… raw. His whole body was an open wound, his heart an exposed nerve, and everything about this moment from the ache in his chest to the throbbing in his core was too much.

From the other room, Kyle could hear Cartman shut off the bathroom tap. As he came out, he tossed Kyle a dry towel before busying himself at the bar in the corner of the basement. Kyle didn’t even try to catch the towel; he simply let it fall on his chest.

Eventually, Cartman sat down on the futon. “I brought you some Advil,” he said, setting a glass of water on the side table before turning towards Kyle. “If you take two now… Are you crying?” he asked suddenly, his tone incredulous.

Kyle threw an arm over his eyes. “No,” he said, his voice whiney even to his own ears. He bit his lip and waited for Cartman to laugh or worse, make some stupid joke about how Kyle cried his way through sex.

Cartman did neither of those things.

Kyle flinched as Cartman grabbed the the towel off his chest. With a firm touch, Cartman slowly began to wipe the dried come off his pale stomach. A shudder wracked through Kyle’s body as Cartman’s hands began to take him apart, piece by piece, all over again.

Cartman worked his way lower, wiping away the remaining lube from Kyle’s thighs and ass, his hands turning gentle as he used the towel to trace Kyle’s red rim.

Kyle tried and failed to bite back a sob. “Cartman…”

_…don’t_, he meant to say. But he didn’t. As humiliating as it was to have Cartman take care of him like a child, he didn’t want him to stop. Embarrassed, Kyle covered his face again.

By the time Cartman finished, Kyle had stopped crying. Cartman reached out a hand and Kyle took
it, letting Cartman pull him into a sitting position. Somewhere between the futon and the bathroom, Cartman had slipped on his boxers and t-shirt, once again leaving Kyle the more exposed of the two, an imbalance Kyle did his best to ignore as he dry-swallowed the pills Cartman had given him.

“Are you feeling better?” Cartman asked.

“Yeah,” Kyle said.

Cartman tossed him a box of tissues. “Good. Now clean up your face before someone comes down here and thinks I raped you.”

Kyle snorted at the tasteless joke, but took a tissue anyways, grateful to finally have something to mop up the snot and tears.

After a moment, Kyle turned to face him again. “Better?” he asked.

Cartman leaned in close, as if to inspect Kyle’s face. “Missed a spot,” he said, licking his thumb before he rubbed at Kyle’s cheek.

“What are you…”

“My mistake,” Cartman said, leaning back on his heels. “I thought it was some of my cum, but it was an ugly ass freckle.”

Kyle shoved him hard, but he was smiling again.

Cartman wasn’t. “Does it hurt that bad?” he asked.

Kyle frowned. “What?” he asked before realizing what Cartman had been referring to. “Oh, no,” he said, blushing.

“Do you want some ice?”

“No,” Kyle said again.

“You sure it doesn’t hurt?”

“No, Cartman,” Kyle huffed, growing frustrated. “I’m fine.”

Cartman scowled. “Then why were you crying?”

Kyle froze. “I don’t know,” he finally admitted.

“Was it bad for you?” Cartman asked.

“No,” Kyle said, trying and failing to keep the irritation out of his voice.

“Was it too rough?”

“No!” Kyle all but growled.

“Then what?” Cartman demanded, his scowl deepening. “Is it because I’m not Stan?”

Kyle’s mouth fell open. “What?” he sputtered. “No! That’s not it. I don’t…” he paused, considering the possibility. “I don’t think…” He paused again.
Cartman groaned, falling back onto the futon. “I knew it. I knew I shouldn’t have messed around with your fucking virgin ass.”

“Cartman…”

“Didn’t mom always tell me virgins are more fucking trouble than they’re worth?”

“Cartman…”

“From now on, I’m never going to…”

“ERIC!” Kyle yelled.

Cartman stopped and looked up at him, his mouth finally closed.

“Eric, I’m fine. We’re fine. The sex was more than fine, alright? I don’t know why I was crying, but it wasn’t because of you, and it definitely wasn’t because of Stan. I wasn’t even thinking of Stan until you brought him up. I was thinking about you, and me, and how fucking weird and good this all was, and what the hell comes next. Alright?”

“So would you just… calm down, okay?” Kyle sighed. “Because I think I might actually kind of like you…”

Cartman’s pitiful expression slowly twisted into a satisfied smirk. “Good, because I think I kind of like you too, Broflovski,” he said as he casually tucked his hands behind his head.

For a moment, Kyle just gapped at Cartman, the brunette’s smug grin widening. “Oh my god, you manipulative bastard,” he finally whispered. “Did you just…”

Cartman shrugged. “What? I knew you liked me, you knew you liked me. I just wanted to hear you say it, that’s all.”

Kyle snatched his boxers off the floor and roughly shoved his legs into them. “I can’t believe you and your fucking manipulative mind games…” He snatched his jeans off the floor and made to stand.

“Hey, hey, just calm down, would yeah?” Cartman said. He wrapped a firm hand around Kyle’s arm and pulled him back onto the futon. “It was only fair. I mean, my cards have been on the table for years.”

Kyle snorted. Then he frowned at Cartman. “Wait, what?”

Cartman shook his head. “You’re such a fucking idiot…”

“Wait,” Kyle said, replaying the last minute of their conversation in his head. “Did you say you liked me?”

Cartman rolled his eyes. “And I have for a long fucking time, Broflovski,” Cartman said, his brow furrowed. “Like, since we were kids.”

“And you knew I was gay?” Kyle asked.

Cartman just looked at Kyle.

“And you never told me?”

Cartman scoffed at that. “Like hell I didn’t. I all but got down on one knee and proposed to you. If
you had been paying one ounce of attention, you would have known I was into you. But your head was so far up Marsh’s ass you never noticed. Not to mention the fact you were so deep in the closet, Tom Cruise wouldn’t even have been able to find you.”

“What the hell are you…”

Cartman held up his hands. “All I’m saying is you obviously weren’t interested. Until now.”

Kyle couldn’t believe it. All those years he’d spent with Cartman, all of the fighting and the ploys and the power plays. And the obvious innuendos. And the half hearted teasing. And the whole hearted apologies.

“And now?” Kyle finally asked.

“Nothing’s changed. I’m still into you, Kahl. Always have been,” Cartman said, his face uncharacteristically open. “The only thing that’s changed is you. So you tell me. What now?”

Kyle stared at Cartman for a moment, not sure how to respond.

“Look, you don’t have to say anything,” Cartman said, leaning in to kiss Kyle’s neck. “We don’t have to figure out anything tonight.”

“Good…” Kyle murmured, leaning in into Cartman kiss. “Because this,” he shuddered against Cartman’s hot mouth, “this isn’t helping me think at all.”

Cartman chuckled at that, kissing his way along Kyle’s pale jaw. “Who knows,” he hummed against Kyle’s skin, “By tomorrow, things between us may have changed again.”

Kyle raised his eyebrows. “What makes you think that?”

Cartman pulled back to look at Kyle, his eyes dark and hooded. “I’m gonna make sure of it,” he said with a wicked grin as he pushed Kyle back into the futon.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for sticking with me till the end! Finals whooped my ass, but I finally got some time to finish this up, and I'm really happy with how it turned out. As always, thank you so much for all the constructive criticism, comments, and encouragement!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!