

OUT WITH TOYS

A BRADEN AND ELLIOT SHORT STORY FROM
OUT ON THE SERVE

LANE HAYES



Eliot

MOVING SUCKED. I hadn't personally had to schlep my crap around in over three years. I didn't realize how draining it could be to take a hard look at the ancient T-shirts in the bottom of my dresser drawer and decide which ones were coming to our new pad in Manhattan Beach. According to my boyfriend, there wasn't room for all of them. Then again, he might not notice.

I snuck a sideways peek at Braden diligently wrapping the framed photos he'd taken off the walls in our room. He hummed while he worked, and fuck if he didn't look happy as a clam. My man loved to clean, straighten, tidy, and organize. I felt like a whiny five-year-old who'd been told he wouldn't get dessert until he put his toys away while Braden was literally in his happy place. *Ugh*. There were easily twenty fun things we could be doing, and that was just the clothing-optional list. But no, we had to pack. I sighed heavily and narrowed my gaze.

Nah, he wouldn't notice. I emptied half my bottom drawer and dumped it into the box beside me.

"What are you doing, El?"

Busted.

"Nothin'. Just packing."

Braden rolled his eyes, then carefully propped the frame against the bare wall and came over to investigate.

"We talked about this, babe. Our new place is bigger, but we still don't have room for all this stuff. And what's the point in bringing a bunch of old clothes you never wear?" He grabbed the T-shirt lying on top. "What is this thing anyway?"

"Are you kidding me?" I snagged it from him and held it up, flattening it on my chest. "This is a prize concert tee from Coachella. I've had this for five years."

He cocked his head and squinted. "What band is it?"

"It's not a band. It's *all* the bands." I turned it around to inspect the lettering and gave up after a minute. "Um, I think this was the year Drake headlined."

"Right. Or it could be a volleyball practice tee from your senior year of high school," Braden snarked. "I cannot believe I'm in love with a hoarder."

"I'm not a hoarder. I'm a conservationist."

"Oh, brother."

"It's true. I take great pride in preserving local culture. This T-shirt might be volleyball gold someday."

"When?"

"I don't know the exact date, smartass. Just...some day in the future when I'm a beach legend."

He pursed his lips in amusement and nodded. "Okay, that's fair. But I thought you said it was a concert tee."

I scowled, studying the faded yellow garment, noting the hole in the seam and a freaky looking stain in the armpit. "Uh... okay. I give up. I don't know what the fuck this is."

“No one knows, El. And no offense, but I don’t even think Goodwill wants that one.”

“Fine.” I threw the shirt across the room and tugged at Braden’s wrist when he kneeled up. I yanked him off balance and tackled him, pinning his arms next to his ears. “I don’t want to pack anymore. It’s exhausting. I need a nap. You look like you could use a little rest too.”

Braden hooked his legs around my ass and grinned. “We only have time for a short one. We’re going to Colby and Sky’s for dinner in an hour.”

I pressed kisses along his jaw and down his neck. “We can be late.”

“That would be rude,” he moaned, arching his back when I rolled my pelvis over his. Damn, the feel of his cock against mine never got old.

Braden and I had been “roommates” for seven months and boyfriends for five of those months. Maybe that didn’t seem like a very long, but I knew without a shadow of a doubt that Braden Marquette was my forever person. And I knew I was his. I’d never been with anyone who fit me, got me, challenged me, and rocked my world all in one. I was head over heels for him. The best part was knowing he felt the same way about me.

I might be...how did he put it? Organizationally challenged, but he didn’t seem to mind. In fact, I’d like to think I helped him keep perspective. Sure, there might be a place for everything, but the world wouldn’t end if your shoes didn’t make it into the closet before you went to bed, right?

“They’d understand,” I purred, nibbling his bottom lip. Our workout shorts didn’t leave much to the imagination, and fuck, the tease of friction felt amazing. I lowered myself over him, grinded a little harder, and whispered in his ear, “I’d just tell them we had to finish packing...my dick into your ass.”

“Or my dick in *your* ass.”

"I'd be down with that. But you've got to pin me down first."

"Easy." Braden barked in amusement, then wrapped his arms around my neck and kissed my cheek before bucking his hips and rolling sideways. He climbed on top of me...or tried to anyway. I wrestled him off, and it was game on. We were laughing pretty hard by the time he straddled my thighs and declared himself the winner. "Say it, El. Braden dominates. He is my master."

"In your dreams," I snorted. "I'm just resting."

"You're flat on your back, babe. I can do any sexy thing I want to you right now."

"Okay. I like the sound of that. What are you going to do? Be specific...graphic is fine."

Braden gave me an evil grin as he sat up and surveyed our bedroom. I didn't have to look around to know it was a bit of a disaster. He insisted on making the bed every day, but the floor was covered with discarded clothes and junk I'd pulled out of drawers. He'd known moving wasn't going to be pretty, but the poor guy looked a little shell-shocked. I couldn't blame him. Braden kept most of his clothes and his extremely uncomfortable futon in his old room. As long as the closet door remained shut, he'd probably had no idea how much crap I really owned.

"Graphic? Um, want to watch you clean out your nightstand...naked."

I furrowed my brow and shook my head in mock dismay. "That is *not* sexy. In fact, that's the opposite of sexy."

"*Au contraire!* It's where we keep the lube and that butt plug you bought me for Christmas."

"Hmm. True. All right." I pushed him off me, stripping out of my clothes before crawling on all fours to the nightstand.

"Feel free to shake your ass a little." Braden chuckled, then picked up one of my shirts, folded it neatly, and reached for another.

“You want a show or do you—wait. Are you organizing my clothes?”

“I wouldn’t dream of it,” he deadpanned, moving on to the next shirt. “Am I getting my show or not?”

“Don’t throw my shirts away when I’m not looking,” I grumbled, pulling open the bottom drawer of the nightstand.

I grinned like a madman when I remembered what was buried under a couple of ancient tees I might have used as cum rags a while ago. I deftly stuffed the crusty old shirts under my bed and gathered up my goodies.

“I won’t. But c’mon, you don’t wear more than half of these sh—holy crap! Is that what I think it is?”

“Well, if you think it’s my dildo collection, you’ve guessed correctly.” I waggled my eyebrows lasciviously as I sat on the bed. I arranged the three dildos in a neat line and patted the space beside me. “Come here.”

He obeyed. He warily eyed the toys, then gingerly picked up the smallest one...a ten-inch pink dildo. “This one looks like ours.”

Ours.

Okay, this was a sex toy we were talking about, but that word got me every time. I wasn’t just me anymore. I was part of “us.” That little pronoun bound me to him in ways that made my heart flip. I know...nuts. I had a romantic streak, for sure. And this wasn’t my first significant relationship. However, this was the one that mattered most.

Every girl and guy before Braden taught me how to be a better partner to him. I’d learned patience, kindness, and...how to deal with frustration and confusion. ’Cause let’s be real, there was no such thing as “acing” a relationship. I was gonna come up short and get it wrong every once in a while. But as long as I tried and gave it my all, Braden wouldn’t hold my shortcomings against me. We loved each other and we trusted “us.” And that

trust made it possible for me to let down my guard and be myself...silly, irreverent, messy, and sometimes downright raunchy.

Case in point...the dildo collection.

“Ours is in the top drawer. All nice and clean. This is the first one I ever bought.”

I held my palm up, grinning at Braden’s bashful expression when he handed it over. His ability to go from straightlaced to naughty in seconds flat—or vice versa—turned me inside out. Everything about our current situation was hot as fuck. I was buck-ass naked across from my fully clothed boyfriend, checking out dildos. Yeah, that was hot. My dick twitched in response. I might as well text Colby now—we were definitely going to be late.

“Why’d you buy it? I mean...never mind. You don’t have to tell me,” he said quickly.

“Don’t get shy on me. There isn’t much to tell. I just wanted to know what it felt like to have a cock in my ass. Thank you, Amazon.” I gave him a wicked grin and smacked the plastic phallus against my thigh. “I ordered this one my freshman year of college. It felt kind of funny...or taboo, so I only used it a couple of times. And when I had a girlfriend, I didn’t use it at all. After I came out, I gave it another go or two, but I like the real thing better. Don’t you?”

He lowered his eyes to the flagpole between my thighs and nodded. “Definitely.”

I gripped myself at the base with my right hand and reached for the jumbo-sized dildo beside it. It had to be eighteen inches long with a four-inch diameter. “Sadly, this one’s never been used.”

“Yeah, that’s because it’s ridiculous.” He scoffed. “What about that one? You mentioned it once. I didn’t realize I’ve been sleeping next to it for months.”

I dropped the monster dildo and reached for the double-sided one. “We gotta try this one out.”

“How?”

I grinned. “Easy. You put one end in your ass, and I’ll put the other in mine.”

“That does not sound sexy.”

“Hell yes, it does,” I argued. “Let’s try it now. Get naked and pass me the lube.”

Braden pointed at the dildo and laughed. “Not so fast. That thing needs to be washed and sanitized before it goes anywhere near my ass.”

“So what I’m hearing is...as soon as this bad boy gets the Mr. Clean treatment, you’ll give it a try.”

“Uh, well...I guess. I can’t even visualize the logistics involved.”

“It’s not rocket science, Bray. Google ‘double-sided dildo’ and check out the images.”

“Now?”

“Yeah. Take your time scrolling. I’ll just be here with my hand on my dick.” I leaned back on my elbow and stroked myself from base to tip.

Braden licked his lips and watched the show. When I nudged his thigh, he pulled his cell out and launched his web browser. “Oh. Wow.”

“See anything you like?”

“Um, it’s pretty much all lesbians.”

“Hot, but that won’t help us. Type ‘gay men,’ ” I suggested, twisting my wrist leisurely.

“Bingo.” He frowned as he scrolled.

“What’s the matter?”

“Every position has the guys facing away from each other. That doesn’t do it for me.”

“Keep scrolling.”

He nodded, his gaze flitting to my cock, then to his screen again. "Oh, I like this one."

"Show me."

Braden pointed to a photo of two muscular dudes sucking face as they rode a purple phallus. "That looks manageable."

"Manageable?" I snorted.

"Yeah, the other ones are intimidating. I think you need to be kinda flexible."

"Babe, I guarantee you the guys in that photo are not gymnasts. Check out the video."

"I'm not watching porn on my phone," he replied primly.

I barked a laugh. "Why the hell not?"

"Because it's...rude."

I couldn't help it. My amused chuckle morphed into a full-blown belly laugh. "God, I love you. You're in the privacy of your own home, in your bedroom...with your boyfriend...who's naked and sportin' full wood right now. If you need my permission, I happily grant it. Scroll away, bad boy. I'll spank you later."

Braden covered his face, but his shoulders shook as he snickered good-naturedly. "You're turning me into a pervert."

"You're welcome." I raised my right leg and tapped my dick against my inner thigh. "Do it. Or give me your cell, and I'll take one for the team."

He rolled his eyes before handing over his phone. I released my cock and propped my head on the pillows so I could comfortably scroll through double-sided dildo porn...as one does. I found a hot one of two athletic-looking dudes with a pink fifteen-inch snake, similar to mine...I mean, ours. They were making out. One guy had two fingers in his man's ass while he ran the tip of the toy along his shaft. The other dude writhed on those digits and moaned theatrically.

It was cheese central. There was no denying they both had rockin' bods and beautiful cocks, but it wasn't necessarily sexy. It

was just...sex. And there was definitely a difference. Don't get me wrong. I'd watched my fair share of porn, and no doubt this fifteen-minute clip would send me over the edge, but I preferred doing over observing. And the tent in Braden's shorts told me he felt the same way.

His slack-jawed, lust-filled gaze made my motor tear from zero to a hundred in two seconds flat. My cock twitched hopefully. I knew if I touched myself, this would be over too soon. And though I didn't think we were about to break into any double-dildo action, I was invested in drawing this out and seeing where it led.

"How many fingers is he taking?"

"Just two. Wimpy. You'd think a porn star could take more," I chided in a huskier than usual tone. "Want to keep watching, or do you want me to look for another one?"

"Uh..." Braden gripped his length through his shorts and closed his eyes briefly. He lowered them, kicked the fabric aside, and crawled between my thighs. "Put the phone down. I'm so fucking horny. I can't wait till after dinner. I need to come now."

I tossed his cell on the nightstand and pulled him against me, fusing my mouth to his as I rolled on top of him. We rutted like animals, humping and grinding in a frenzy. There was nothing sweeter than the slide of our rock-hard cocks. Braden was a big fan of a good make-out grind session.

Actually, he loved it all.

In the beginning, I'd tried to be careful...for his sake. Braden was infinitely more reserved than me. He wasn't inexperienced by any means, but I thought he'd want things to progress slowly...and romantically. Not so much when it came to sex. My man was a freaking horn dog. We could be playing video games with our feet entwined one minute and have our hands down each other's pants the next. Sometimes a quickie blowjob or

hand job was all either of us needed—however, we took the time to explore whenever possible.

I learned something new about him every day. Braden liked order and rules, but he liked to push his personal limits too. If he begged for one finger, I knew he'd ask for a second and a third very soon after. This might not be our double-dildo moment, but I knew Braden...and he was ready and willing to play.

He broke our kiss to yank his T-shirt over his head. He leaned across me to grab the bottle of lube from the top drawer and handed it to me before turning away again. We'd been tested months ago and condoms were no longer part of the program, so I wasn't sure what he was looking for until—

"Well, what do we have here?" I singsonged, popping open the cap on the lube.

"This one is clean," he said, dropping the ten-inch toy on the mattress beside me. He lay flat on his back, then spread his legs wide and motioned for me to hand over the lube.

I poured some onto our palms and scooted between his thighs. I stroked myself languidly while giving him a thorough once-over. Fuck, he was beautiful.

"Mine."

Braden moaned. "Yes. Hurry. I'm about to explode."

"How did you get so worked up so fast, baby? Was it the porn, the dildo collection, or...organizing my T-shirts?" I lubed up the toy, then traced his entrance a few times before pushing a single digit inside.

"Oh, fuck. Give me another one."

"Slow down and talk dirty to me. Tell me what turned you on," I purred.

"You."

I held up the dildo and arched a brow. "And what else?"

Braden's Adam's apple slid in his throat theatrically. He

licked his lips as he gripped his shaft and tugged it. “The idea of us fucking each other at the same time makes me crazy. My mind is tripping over it. I should warn you, I don’t think I’m gonna last, so just...give your fingers and—”

“How many?”

“Two.” His breath hitched when I obeyed. “Oh, yes.”

I twisted my wrist the way I knew he liked it, then slipped the tip of another digit in. “Feel good?”

He nodded. “Fuck me, El. Please.”

“God, I love it when you beg.” I pulled my fingers out and inched closer still. I tapped my cock against his hole, loving the way it twitched. “You’re so ready for me, aren’t you?”

“Fuck, yes.”

“Let’s try this first.” I put the tip of the dildo at his entrance and slowly pushed. Watching it disappear inside him was hot as fuck. I only gave him a couple of inches. “When we use the other toy, we can be like this...face to face.”

“I want to do it,” he panted, lowering his gaze to watch the action.

“I know, baby.” I didn’t want him to come like this. That was reserved for me. But damn, I loved that sex-hazed, eyes-half-mast look. I kissed him hard and pulled away.

“What are you doing?”

“Turn around. Hands on the headboard,” I commanded, smacking his bare ass. I waited for him to obey, then added, “Let’s see how much of Donny you can take.”

“Who?” he snorted.

“Donny the dildo. Every dildo needs a name. This big guy is Donny.”

“Oh, my God. You’re insane and I—oh...yeah, right there. More. Do it like you mean it.”

I pressed kisses along his spine and whispered dirty sweet nothings until he told me he was ready for more. His cock was

leaking precum, and mine was hard enough to pound nails in the wall by the time I tossed the toy aside, lined my cock at his hole, and plunged inside.

I fucked him in a frenzy, grasping his shoulders as I pumped my hips. Braden clutched the headboard with white knuckles, chanting one long steady stream of “Fuck me, fuck me, fuck me...” So I did.

We came seconds apart and collapsed on the mattress, panting like we’d both run a marathon. I stared at the ceiling and sucked in a breath before rolling onto my side.

I ran my fingers along his jaw. “Let’s stay home and have a pizza picnic.”

Braden smiled. “That sounds so...romantic. But we can’t flake on our friends. That’s not cool.”

“They won’t even notice if we’re not there.”

“Yeah, they will. It’s not a kegger, El. It’s a dinner party,” he said, sitting up.

“That sounds so grown-up. Did we get old and no one told me?” I griped, throwing my arm over my eyes.

Braden climbed over me. He nudged my arm with his nose and pressed a kiss on my lips. “Yep. We’re getting older every day. Science, you know.”

“Ha.” I captured his wrist before he pulled away. “Are you gonna love me when I’m old and gray and need Viagra to get it up?”

He didn’t laugh like I thought he would. His expression was actually a little serious.

“I’ll love you forever, Elliot. You never have to worry about that. I don’t care if you lose your hair, gain weight, or start wearing socks with your Birkenstocks. I’ll always love you.”

“I don’t own Birkenstocks.”

“Someday, you might. And you might trade in your board shorts for khaki cargo shorts too.”

“No way will I look like someone’s dad,” I scoffed.

Braden grinned. “Hey, someday you might *be* someone’s dad.”

I kissed his hand. “Are we going to have kids? And if so, how many?”

“Yes and...I don’t know. Maybe two?” He made a funny face and bit his bottom lip. “Am I freaking you out?”

I shook my head, then sat up quickly and put my arms over his shoulders. “No. I want those things. I want us to grow old together. I want to marry you, have kids with you...I want it all.”

“Me too. I love you.”

He kissed me again before getting out of bed and surveying the room with a wary gaze. No doubt he was mentally cataloging what needed to be done and where everything should go. I smiled at the thought.

“Hey, babe?”

“Yeah?”

“Never let me wear cargo shorts or Birkenstocks,” I deadpanned. “Especially not together. Our kids will be traumatized.”

“They’ll get over it. They’d be far more traumatized if they knew their dads played with toys.” Braden snickered, then picked up the double-sided dildo and pointed at the one on the mattress. “Hand it over, please.”

I did as he asked, but I couldn’t rein in my grin at the sight of Braden and the dildos. “I see you’ve got the big guy too. Does that mean you wanna try him out after dinner?”

“Nope. My ass needs a break. But I’ll clean them...for next time.”

“Good idea. You can just throw them all in the dishwasher if you want,” I suggested, hopping out of bed and heading for the bathroom.

Braden followed me. “What? No way. Sex toys don’t go in the dishwasher. Ever. You have to wash them by hand with gentle

soap, like Ivory or—oh. You're joking, uh? Please say you're joking."

I busted up laughing as I turned on the water. "I'm joking. But I think you could stick them in the dishwasher or even in the washing machine...with your undies. Let's ask Sky and Colby. Maybe they know."

"Oh, my God." He tossed the double-sided dildo at me and shook his head ruefully. "Please don't."

"Do I look like the kind of guy who'd bring up sex toys at dinner?"

B raden

YES. The answer was yes. A million times over. The crazy thing was...Elliot didn't say a word.

It was Tucker. Of course.

We stood around the island in Colby and Sky's kitchen, eating appetizers and drinking beer. Their new house was awesome, but it had one fatal flaw. The flat-screen was partially blocked by a load-bearing wall. If there was a game on TV and food in the kitchen, everyone congregated in the wide doorway. The Red Wings game was on, and we all knew the world stopped when Colby's favorite team was playing.

"Tuck, move your ass. I can't see the game," Colby griped.

"Dude, chill. And knock this fucker down already. Why the hell is this wall here anyway?" Tucker asked.

"To hold up the house." Sky handed Colby a tray of nachos and motioned for him to take it to the living room.

“Can I help with anything?” I offered.

“No, thanks. The enchiladas will be ready in twenty minutes. Do you want another beer?”

“I do!” Three guys called from the living room.

Sky and I shared an eye roll. “I’ll take a few out there.”

Fun fact. I knew Sky from college. We both went to Chilton, and no joke—I’d actually had a crush on him. No one could blame me. Sky was freaking gorgeous. But in a weird twist, he was also my friend Phoenix’s boyfriend, Max’s ex. They had an ugly breakup, so I hadn’t heard great things about him initially. They’d put the past behind them and were friendly now. But I had to admit, I’d been pretty surprised when I realized Sky was Colby’s boyfriend. It could be awkward hanging with another couple, but I genuinely liked Elliot’s friends, and I loved Colby and Sky. They seemed to bring out the best in each other. I liked to think Elliot and I were the same way.

Sky handed me a bottle opener. “Can you take this too? Any second now, Colby’s gonna ask for it and—”

“Hey, babe, do you have the bottle opener?” Colby called.

He grinned. “See? Do I know that guy or what?”

“You do. Sure you don’t need any help?”

“Um, you can take these for me.” Sky propped a bag of chips into the crook of my arm. “I’ll join you in a second.”

I paused in the doorway to adjust my burden and caught the tail end of Tucker’s in-depth account of his recent date.

“...all hot and bothered and practically dragged me to my bedroom.”

“Poor Tuck,” Elliot commented sarcastically.

“She was moving pretty damn fast. And for me to say that, you know it’s gotta be true. Call me crazy, but it’s a little forward to open a stranger’s dresser to look for supplies, right?”

Colby thanked me when I handed over the bottle opener,

then glanced sideways at Tucker and chuckled. "I feel sorry for her."

I set the beers on the coffee table and sat on the love seat next to Elliot. "What'd she find?"

"Condoms, lube, handcuffs...you know the usual. But here's the best part. You ready for it?" Tucker shifted on the sofa and flashed a Cheshire cat grin. "She found the housewarming gift I forgot to give you guys last year."

"Dude, if she found it in your sex drawer, we don't want it. Thanks for thinking of us," Colby snorted.

"Fine. I'll give it to Elliot and Braden," Tucker said, lifting his beer to his lips.

Elliot chuckled. "Please don't."

"You're gonna want this." He jumped up and returned a minute later with a small gift bag. When Elliot crossed his arms and shook his head, Tucker passed it to me. "You're welcome."

"This can't be good." I peeled back the tissue paper and pulled out a square box. It took me a second to figure out what it was. "It looks like a black horseshoe."

Tucker snickered like a kid while Colby and Elliot groaned. "Not quite. It's a dildo. I saved it from my Tindr hookup, so it's all yours. Use it...often. Or not often. I don't know. Do you guys use stuff like this?"

"Uh..." My face was on fire. I could only imagine how many shades of pink I turned within a few seconds. I had didn't have to say a word.

"Give it back. You obviously already have this toy." He snatched it out of my hands, grumbled something about watching out for the quiet ones before passing it to Sky when he walked into the room.

"What the fuck?"

"Keep it, babe. We can try it out tonight," Colby suggested, waggling his brows.

“Wash it first. No, boil it,” Elliot piped in.

And me? I grabbed a second beer from the table and guzzled half the contents, hoping it would cool my flushed cheeks.

Elliot noticed, of course. He threw his arm over my shoulder and pulled me to his side. “Quit wiggling, baby. They’re on to us.”

“Oh, my God.”

“By the way, you’re the fucking hottest guy ever. And you’re extra cute when you get flustered.”

He planted a sloppy kiss on my cheek and nuzzled my neck before switching the topic to nachos. I sank into the sofa gratefully. I didn’t know what my problem was. I was half prude, half horny bastard. And now...everyone knew.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, we didn’t take Tucker’s “gift” home with us that night. There wasn’t much we could do about it when he rewrapped it and left it on the doorstep of our new place in Manhattan Beach a couple of weeks later, though.

To be honest, I’d forgotten about the toy. We’d been consumed with the move and as Elliot often said, moving sucked. It was time-consuming and messy. And for someone who obsessed about order and cleanliness, it was especially stressful. Poor Elliot.

He was so damn patient with me. He found funny ways to distract me from going over the edge when my compulsion threatened to unhinge me. Back rubs, foot rubs, laundry duty, official grocery store dude...his words, not mine. I took him up on the last one.

“You bought five kinds of salad dressing.” I lined the bottles evenly on our island and gave Elliot a sharp sideways look when he tossed his jacket on the sofa.

He rolled his eyes and hung it on the coat rack before joining me in the kitchen. “I couldn’t remember which one you wanted. Balsamic something...I blanked, and you didn’t pick up your cell, so now you’re dripping in dressing. I bought ice cream too. Rocky road, chocolate chip, and mint chip.”

“That’s a lot of...everything,” I said with a laugh. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome.” He kissed my temple and put his arms around me from behind. “How are you feeling?”

“Fine. Why?”

“Um, well...” He rested his chin on my shoulder and gestured toward the living area. “Everything is super-duper clean. It smells clean too.”

“Guilty.” I turned in his arms and smiled ruefully.

“Just don’t tell me you alphabetized the pantry.”

I winced. “A through P. But that was only pasta.”

Elliot widened his eyes comically. “I don’t even know what that means.”

“Well, capellini, fettuccini, fusilli, lasagna, linguini, penne...”

“We own all that pasta?” he asked incredulously.

“Much more, actually. I’ll save the rest for later.” I stepped out of his arms and opened my half-organized pantry to find a home for the dressing. I couldn’t remember putting it on the list I gave him. I usually made my own. I pushed the unalphabetized pasta aside and lined the dressing bottles from largest to smallest, making sure the labels faced the same direction.

“Babe?”

“Yeah?” I did a double take at his worried expression. “What’s wrong?”

“Come with me. You need a break.” Elliot held out his hand.

“Let me just finish—”

“No.”

His commanding tone brooked no argument, but I was wound pretty tight. I couldn't give in easily. "El..."

"Nope. You're done in here. Our place looks amazing. There's literally nothing else you can do to make it better. It's time to relax."

"Where?"

"In bed. You got a better idea?"

"No."

"Good. Quit sassin' me and move it." He yanked my wrist and smacked my ass before pulling me toward our room. He pointed at our new king-sized bed like a caveman and barked instructions. "Get naked. I want you on your back with your legs spread."

"Excuse me? Ow." I covered my butt instinctively when he slapped the other cheek.

"Don't ask questions. Just listen. I'll take you someplace good. I promise. You trust me, right?" He smiled when I nodded, then kissed me, sucking my bottom lip before licking it better. "Go on."

I obeyed quickly. No surprise...I was hard as a rock by the time I pulled the duvet back and lay down to wait for him. I gripped myself at the base and stroked slowly as I watched Elliot undress. He kicked his discarded clothes and shoes aside and strode toward the nightstand. I studied his muscular quads and glutes, willing him to turn around.

"Whoa. What's that?" I frowned and sat up.

"A toy. We're gonna play."

"Um...no. Is that the one Tucker—"

"No, it's ours. It's been washed and sanitized...by you. It's just gonna get dusty if we don't use it, and now is a perfect time. Open your legs. Let me see you," he ordered.

"Uh...El, that's got two sides. Are you sure you want that in...you?"

Elliot chuckled. "Sure. Here's what we're gonna do. We'll get nice and loose, and then we'll wrestle. Whoever wins gets to top. You in?"

I snorted. "Are you serious?"

He motioned toward my erection. "Your dick is doing the talking for you. He's obviously interested, so I'm going straight to the boss on this one." He climbed between my legs and licked my cock from base to tip before swallowing me whole.

"Oh...fuck, yeah."

Damn, he was good at that. No, he was excellent at it. Elliot was easily the most laid-back person I'd ever met, but he was extraordinarily magnetic too. He had a way of taking over and making me forget my name. I flattened my feet on the mattress and lifted my hips to meet his mouth. He didn't miss a beat. He sucked and licked me while he teased my hole. I had a feeling his free hand was on his cock, but I couldn't tell. He was right. I needed release. Bad. There was no way I'd last long enough to put that toy to use.

Famous last words.

Elliot sat up and reached for the lube and the dildo.

"What do you want to name it?" he asked as he sat facing me, draping his knees over mine.

"Uh? What?" I blinked wildly and tried to sit up. I couldn't. He slipped a lubed finger in my ass and repeated the question.

"Mmm, that's good."

"Kinda wordy. Let's get creative. How about Big Bonzo?"

I laughed, and then I sighed when he added a second digit. "Fuck me. That feels good."

"I'll take that as a yes," he hummed, stroking my prostate.

"Mmm. What?"

Elliot chuckled. "Shh. Just enjoy, baby."

I closed my eyes, letting his pretty sweet nothings pull me

under. He was so damn good at this. The slight twist of his wrist and a litany of “You’re so fuckin’ sexy” and “I love your tight hole” got me every time. My precum game was out of control. I wrapped my fingers around my dick when he released me, squeezing the tip to ward off coming too soon. I stroked myself while he fingered me, setting a steady rhythm. Not too fast, not too slow. So good.

Then it changed. Not in a bad way, but...different. I opened my eyes and licked my lips just as he removed his fingers and pushed the tip of the toy inside me.

“Holy shit. That’s so fucking hot.”

While I’d been lost in my own blissed-out space, Elliot must have stretched and lubed himself. He rode the other end of the toy, rocking his hips as if testing his readiness.

“I told you this had potential. I’m gonna move. Just a little. If it’s too much, tell me, okay?”

I met his gaze and nodded. I couldn’t talk. I was a ball of sexual tension on the verge of carnal sensory overload. This was a million times hotter than I’d imagined.

Elliot rolled his hips. Each thrust hit my sweet spot, sending pleasure coursing through me. I felt it everywhere. Along my spine, in my veins. Even in my fingers and toes. I moved too... tentatively at first, stroking myself, with my gaze glued to Elliot’s dick and the toy tethering us together.

“I can’t believe how fucking hot this is,” I choked. “Oh fuck, I think I’m gonna come.”

“No. Do it inside me.”

He gently eased the toy from our bodies and set it on the nightstand. Note to self...scrub the nightstand. That was my last coherent thought for a while. Elliot tossed the lube at me as he scooted to the headboard and bent over, offering me his ass. I squeezed myself at the base. Hard. I was two seconds from exploding, but damn...I had to have him.

I crawled behind him, lined my cock at his hole, and pushed. There was no reason to go too slow now. He was as strung out as I was. His knuckles on his left hand were white as he clung to the wrought-iron headboard and his other fist was wrapped around his junk. I splayed my hands over his broad back, curled my fingers around his shoulders, and thrust. And once I started, I couldn't stop. I was on a full sprint toward the finish line, pistoning my hips triple time, flying over the edge as my orgasm ripped through me.

Elliot was right there with me. He roared my name, shaking like a leaf. We didn't move for a year. Okay, it was more like a minute, but it was a long, blissful sixty seconds. Every tick of the clock drew us closer. Two heartbeats. Two souls, hopelessly bound together.

I kissed his shoulder and slowly pulled out of him. We collapsed in a heap on the bed, facing each other. I rested one of my legs over his and sighed heavily.

"I don't know if I told you this today, but I love you."

Elliot chuckled. "I love you too. Told you toys were fun."

I traced his jaw and smiled. "Yeah, but that's not it. You just... know me better than I know myself sometimes. You remind me of what matters and damn, I want forever with you."

He sobered immediately.

"I want that too. Forever." He cupped my chin and kissed me. We were quiet for a long moment. Elliot brushed his nose against mine and nipped my bottom lip. "So...Bonzo, eh? I fuckin' came like a racehorse. So did you. I need a shower, big time. What's for dinner? Do you want to pick a pasta from the Q through Zs, so we don't mess up your new shelves? I vote spaghetti. Come on, baby."

I laughed like a loon as he rained kisses all over my face; then I took his hand and followed him to the bathroom.

It was strange to think Elliot and I had started as roommates.

I never expected to meet my better half when I agreed to rent a room last year. But I did. Sure, we were young, and I knew the road wouldn't always be smooth. But he was the one. My best friend, my partner, my person. Forever.