



Any Way He Comes

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Life in the Country

Riaz was paying attention to his work. Honest. He looked at the handful of chard he'd just ripped up and stuffed it back in the ground. Whoops. It wasn't his fault Jamie was being so distracting.

Jamie was down on his knees making sure the netting to keep the rabbits from the garden was staked down tight. Down on his knees with his ass in the air. Riaz could smell Jamie's sun-warmed skin over the scents of tomato plants and basil. He stopped himself before he pulled up an innocent radish in the next row. Jamie wiggled his ass. Nice, ripe ass. Ready for biting... and other things.

Jamie stretched out to reach one of the stakes on the far side of the row, spreading his knees for balance. A low sound got his attention and he turned toward Riaz. Riaz was wearing nothing but a pair of ridiculous red board shorts with huge white palm trees printed on them. Jamie would've laughed at Riaz's taste in clothes, but he got distracted by the sight of Riaz's dark chest, bare except for the little hemp and bead choker he always wore and shiny with sweat.

Jamie caught Riaz's expression and grinned. He'd been hoping Riaz would show a little interest, one of these days. Being best friends was great, but why couldn't there be a few benefits in there now that they were older? He wiggled his ass a little, knowing the soft cotton gym shorts were damp with sweat and clung to him like a second skin.

Bastard. Riaz blinked sweat out of his eyes and wondered if the heat was getting to him. When Jamie wiggled again, on purpose, the second time, he knew he was being baited. Son of a bitch. The sun glistened on the ridges of muscle on either side of Jamie's spine, on his broad shoulders. Riaz had been such a good boy for so long, long after they'd both come out. They were friends. Sweaty ass-wiggling was not friendly.

Riaz growled and crawled toward Jamie, doing his best not to crush the romaine lettuce on his way. Fuck the vegetables. It wasn't nice to tease. As soon as he got close enough, he lunged forward and bit that sweet, ripe ass, hard. Yummy.

Jamie yelped, swinging his arm back to smack Riaz on the shoulder with one dirty hand. "Hey! That hurt!" He pouted at Riaz, rubbing the cheek of his ass. "Jackass." It didn't hurt

that much, but Jamie didn't want to admit how much of a turn-on it had been, either. His dick was already hardening in his shorts.

"You wiggle, you pay." Riaz was unperturbed. He laughed at Jamie. "I didn't even bite you that hard." Before Jamie could move, Riaz grabbed the waist of his shorts and tugged them down. The cotton shorts twisted up as they rolled down his thighs. Getting them back up was going to be impossible. "I didn't even... oops, there IS a mark." Riaz sat back on his heels and gave Jamie the most wide-eyed unapologetic look in the history of people looking at each other. Ever. Then he bit his lip.

"Fucker." Jamie scowled at Riaz. He tried to crawl backward a little so he could kneel up and get his shorts back on, but they were so tangled and tight that he didn't move more than a few inches. "It was too that hard." And then Jamie realized exactly why he shouldn't be glaring at Riaz. "Going to kiss it and make it better?"

Riaz, quite solemnly, took off the backwards baseball cap he was wearing to keep his wild black curls in check, and he hung it over a tomato cage. "I'm sorry," he said contritely. He batted his dark lashes at Jamie, then leaned in and planted a hot, wet kiss on the mark he'd made.

Jamie swallowed down a moan, but he couldn't help the way his body arched into the kiss. Maybe it was supposed to be a joke, but his dick didn't care. "Yeah," he muttered, but even he wasn't sure if it was supposed to be forgiveness or encouragement.

Riaz didn't care what exactly that noise was supposed to be. What it wasn't mattered more. Whatever it was, it wasn't 'stop kissing my fine white ass' and it wasn't 'don't slide your tongue over my silky, sweaty skin' and then after that, it sure as hell wasn't 'quit licking up the long, smooth line of my spine until you're biting the back of my neck'. It wasn't any of those things at all.

None of the noises Jamie was making sounded remotely like Riaz wasn't supposed to be doing what he was doing, or like Jamie's sleek back wasn't supposed to be sliding against his chest as Jamie pushed back against him. They were usually pretty clear on boundaries like that. Riaz licked up under Jamie's ear. "I'm sorry," he said again.

"Jesus," Jamie muttered, trying to catch his breath. His body was moving without his control, pushing back against Riaz, but he didn't care enough to stop. This was what he'd wanted. "It's okay. It is. But I'm going to be really pissed off if you stop now."

Jamie turned his head, straining to catch Riaz's mouth in a kiss. The way Riaz groaned made it sound like Riaz didn't plan on stopping any time soon. Good. Because Jamie's ass was bare and his dick was hard and Riaz's mouth still tasted of the strawberries they'd eaten at lunch.

They were really good at this communication thing. Riaz tugged his own shorts down enough to free his dick and when he pushed forward, he slid between Jamie's thighs, groaning again. After an afternoon in the sun, the sensitive flesh there was warm and damp and just slick enough for fucking. Jamie's shorts were all but tying his legs together, which worked just fine for Jamie. He liked it like this, and now it was with the guy he liked best.

The best part was knowing that Jamie liked it like this: outside, impromptu, dressed. The way Jamie whined and bucked back was just confirmation of all the stories Riaz had heard after the fact. "Who're you gonna tell about this one," he muttered as he rubbed one hand almost clean on his thigh. When he reached around and got hold of Jamie's dick, it was perfectly hot and full and heavy against his palm.

"You," Jamie moaned. "I always tell you. I'm gonna tell you all about it, when I convince you to do it all again." He rocked his hips, pushing his dick into Riaz's hand and then arching back to feel the slick slide of Riaz's cock between his legs. He kept moving, bracing his hands in the dirt for leverage. Jamie had been telling Riaz about his escapades for years now, like he'd secretly been hoping he would turn Riaz on, at least a little. Secretly, he always had.

"Rather do it than hear about it." Riaz bit him again for good measure, and then gave himself up to doing instead of talking. Jamie's thighs were so tight and his dick was so hard; it was everything he'd thought it would be. He stroked Jamie rough and fast, twisting his hand a little to bring Jamie off before he lost control.

Jamie was a screamer. Riaz knew it far too well, but hearing it on his account was incredible. When Jamie came, hard and loud, spattering the dirt with come, his thighs going tight around Riaz' dick, there was no holding back. Riaz growled and came, slicking the inside of Jamie's thighs with an orgasm that left him shaking and leaning on Jamie for support.

Jamie let his head hang down between his arms as he tried to catch his breath. "I'd rather you do it, too," he admitted, bucking back against Riaz to get him to lift up again. When

he could, he twisted back to kiss Riaz again. "You can do it again in the shower, when you help me clean up the mess you just made."

Riaz hugged him close with an arm around his chest. "Oh, man," he muttered. "This damn country life with you is nothing but chores." He grinned and then kissed Jamie hard.

The Clothes Make the Man... Crazy!

Halloween at the Tangerine Dream was a wild affair. Everyone was in costume, and the costumes were all elaborate affairs, everything from a statuesque Marilyn Monroe to a body-painted tabby cat to Little Red Riding Hood. That last, of course, was Jamie. He was all decked out in a shiny red corset and a skirt that wouldn't have even come close to covering his ass, if it weren't for the petticoats underneath.

He was over at the bar, leaning up on his toes and showing off his long legs encased in thigh-high stockings and knee-high boots. Jamie had great legs. Riaz wasn't the only one who'd noticed. There were several men at the bar vying for Jamie's attention, and Jamie was just lapping it up, laughing at everyone's jokes and letting them push his velvety red hood back from his face.

Riaz was happy for him. Friends were there to get off with when there wasn't anyone else around. Really. And there were plenty of people around. For Jamie. Riaz was feeling as dire as his wolf costume: an elegant tux complete with tails, ruffled, white shirt, and wolf mask. He tapped one polished shoe as he drank his martini -- he didn't even like martinis, and couldn't remember why he'd thought it was a good idea -- and gave up pretending that he wasn't jealous.

They were supposed to be here together. Riaz had been hoping that it was together as friends-with-benefits instead of just as friends. Looked like Jamie was getting plenty of benefits without him; one of the dozen vampires here tonight slid a finger along the top of Jamie's stocking. Riaz swallowed the rest of his drink so fast that he almost choked on the olive.

The music shifted to something he wasn't going to make a fool of himself dancing to. Fine. He got up. Two could play at that game. He started for the dance floor but when he looked over his shoulder, he saw a lion leaning in to murmur in Jamie's ear. God damn it. Riaz wheeled and headed for the bar.

"You promised me a dance," he said flatly, shouldering through Jamie's admirers. It wasn't a lie. Jamie had said he'd make sure *someone* danced with Riaz, even if he had to do it himself.

Jamie's mouth fell open; he looked as stunned as Red Riding Hood finding the wolf's sharp teeth. And then he smiled sassy and flirtatious all over again. "So I did. A promise is a promise." Stepping away from the bar, he gave his admirers a cheery wave and moved in close to Riaz. "Ta-ta, boys. Time for Little Red to go see the Big Bad Wolf."

Riaz slid an arm around Jamie's waist on the way to the dance floor, pretending that he was making sure no one ran into Jamie. Jamie's waist was small and sexy in the corset that Riaz had tightened for him at home, and fit perfectly in the curve of Riaz's arm. Maybe this was all the fault of the costume, but Riaz hadn't been this stirred up at home.

God, Jamie smelled good. Riaz could smell him over the sweat and spilled beer and dry ice clouds, Jamie's familiar scent under some sweet perfume sample he'd decided he had to wear along with the costume. Riaz had no idea what was going on in his own head, just that something about Jamie was making him feel feral tonight.

Riaz could hardly look him in the eye by the time they got out on the dance floor. But that didn't stop Riaz from pulling him close with one arm around his waist and the other resting on the upper curve of his ass. He rested his cheek against Jamie's hair and breathed in how good he smelled, then he remembered how he'd felt when he'd seen other men's hands on Jamie. He lifted his head to look around, to make sure they weren't the object of other people's eyes. Usually, watching Jamie pick up other men just made him shrug and order another beer. Tonight, he held Jamie against him and hoped Jamie couldn't feel his erection through the layers of ruffled petticoats and skirt.

Jamie didn't know what had gotten into Riaz tonight, but he certainly wasn't complaining. He loved getting attention from Riaz. If he could figure out what he'd done to manage it tonight, he'd start taking notes. Usually, flirting with other guys didn't faze Riaz in the least.

Jamie shrugged it off, for now, and focused on dancing with Riaz. That was another thing that wasn't usual. Most of the time, Jamie had to beg, bribe, or threaten to get Riaz to set foot on a dance floor. He hadn't needed to tonight, though, and he was sure as hell going to take advantage of it. He wound his arms around Riaz's neck and pressed himself up against Riaz's body, as close as he could get with all the petticoats in the way. That was a good start.

Riaz's hand on his ass slipped lower and, sure enough, even through the petticoats Jamie could tell that Riaz was grabbing his ass with one strong hand. Riaz's shirt was open at the throat -- the bowtie was missing -- but other than that he was still the image of the Big Bad Wolf from the sharp-eared, sharp-toothed mask to the glint in his eyes. The lion wasn't giving up easily, hardly paying attention to the faerie with whom he was dancing. Riaz didn't miss that and he actually growled at the man, his hand slipping down so that his fingers were pressed against the tender skin where Jamie's ass met his thigh.

Jamie purred and wriggled his ass in Riaz's grip. The lion had been charming, but given a choice, Jamie was always going to choose Riaz.

The growl turned into an answering purr and Riaz's fingers slid along the curve of Jamie's ass. "I'm not gonna tell you how hot you look," he muttered in Jamie's ear.

God, Jamie loved the way Riaz's hand felt on his ass. "No?" Jamie tilted his head back so he could see Riaz's face, giving a little pout. "You don't think I look good?"

"I don't think you need me to tell you." Riaz flashed a tight smile at him and squeezed his ass. The way Riaz's hips moved was unmistakably a grind, even if it was half-lost in Jamie's skirts.

No, maybe he didn't. Riaz was doing a damn good job of showing him.

Jamie arched into Riaz's hand and leaned up to catch Riaz's mouth in a kiss. Sure, maybe he usually waited for Riaz to make the first move, but all this touching and grinding and squeezing was making him even more breathless than the corset was. That was enough of a first move for him, for tonight at least.

Riaz kissed like a wolf, hungry and fierce, pushing his tongue into Jamie's mouth. His hand slid up under Jamie's skirts, grabbing a shameless handful of Jamie's ass, fingers pressing into the crease. His other hand curled around the nape of Jamie's neck, a strong grip that kept him steady while Riaz kept kissing him.

Oh, that hit Jamie's exhibitionist streak just right. He moaned into the kiss, moving to the music in such a way that, if anyone was paying attention, they couldn't fail to see how Riaz was touching him. He sucked at Riaz's tongue, daring him, tempting him to do more.

Riaz kissed away from his mouth, kissing his jaw and throat and up under his ear. "People are looking at you," he murmured, and then bit at Jamie's ear with a little growl. Jamie's skirts had to be riding up, the way Riaz was groping his ass, showing off his thighs and panties for everyone to see.

That prompted another moan. Jamie planted his spiky-heeled feet wide apart and arched into Riaz's touches. "Yeah?" he purred. "Gonna give 'em a show?"

"I don't give a damn about them." Riaz sounded angrier than Jamie remembered him sounding about anything except maybe the time someone was talking smack about them being fags. He let go of Jamie's neck to push his mask up so Jamie was looking at his dark, handsome face instead of the fangy wolf. "I'm not here with them."

Oh. Jamie hadn't really thought about that, when they'd come out tonight. Riaz wasn't usually bothered by him flirting with other people, but usually, Jamie wasn't out *with* Riaz, and tonight... Well. Maybe he was, tonight. "Then why don't we get off the dance floor, go someplace where they won't be looking?"

Riaz loved Jamie's exhibitionist streak but the idea that they'd just be doing something so Jamie could get off on being watched... it made something twist in his chest and ruined his temper. He changed his grip so that they were dancing again, working their way across the dance floor. God, he was being such a bastard. "I just..." He brought Jamie's hand to his mouth and kissed the palm.

"I'm sorry. I'm being a jerk." His cheeks were hot with shame. This wasn't the rules. He just wanted Jamie to actually be with *him*, not because there was no one else, not because Riaz was the only one who was willing to help Jamie put on a show.

Jamie just shook his head, looking troubled. When they neared the edge of the dance floor, Jamie kept going, catching Riaz hand and pulling him along. Was he angry? Riaz couldn't see his face to know for sure.

Jamie stopped in a dark corner, back near the hallway to the bathrooms. He turned around, leaning against the wall, but it now it was too dark to see his face, to see much of anything.

"I'm not here with them, either," Jamie said. His tone wasn't angry at all. It was smooth, serious with just a hint of seduction. "I'm here with you. I don't care if they can see me." He used his grip on Riaz's hand to draw him in, and then Jamie's lips were on Riaz's again, here in the dark where no one could see.

That helped, shamefully enough. Riaz slid his fingers into Jamie's hair and kissed him back hungrily. "I just... I'm sorry." He nipped at Jamie's lips and let go of Jamie's hand so he could slide his hand up under Jamie's skirts again. "You just look so good tonight."

It was just tonight. He kissed Jamie again, searching and hot this time. Usually, he wasn't Jamie's playmate for public shows. They got together when the mood hit and they were alone at home. He tugged the front of Jamie's skirt up so there was nothing but panties and slacks between them, groaning and grinding his hard-on against Jamie. He slipped his hand under the waistband of Jamie's panties, cupping the bare curve of Jamie's ass and pulling Jamie against him so Jamie could feel exactly how turned on he was. And they were still being watched. Not blatantly, like before, but he could feel people watching without watching, people who hadn't had enough of the show.

Jamie moaned and kissed away from Riaz's mouth to his ear. "You like it? The corset, the skirt, the boots?" He rolled his hips, letting Riaz feel his matching erection. "Tell me what it is, so I can do it again."

"Legs. Skirt. I don't know..." It was so hard to talk. Riaz let his head fall back as he rolled his hips, rubbing off against Jamie's hard-on. "You're just *pretty*. God. It turns me on. Makes me want to break the arm of anyone who touches you; it's not like me, Jamie. I didn't know." Jamie's ass was tight and hot under his hand; he pushed his fingers back into the heat between Jamie's thighs. He wanted to make Jamie as crazy as Jamie made him.

"Yeah." Jamie sounded breathless already. He stepped his feet apart and tilted his hips, opening right up for Riaz's fingers. "'s good. Want you."

"You're always hot. But now..." Riaz shuddered as his fingers slid behind Jamie's balls. "Tell me how you want it. You can have anything. There's stuff in my pocket. Inside the jacket."

Jamie pushed the jacket open, but his hands weren't searching the pockets, they were sliding over Riaz's chest. He kissed and licked his way down the side of Riaz's neck and finally dug through his jacket pockets to find condoms and lube. "Fuck me?"

Fuck. They were in the shadows, in an alcove, hidden away from anyone but the most curious observers. Riaz didn't do this kind of thing, Jamie did. But Jamie was making him dizzy, weak in the knees. "How do you want it?" he asked. His voice broke as his brain presented him with the image of Jamie with his skirts up and his ass tilted up, back arched, ready for him.

"Yeah?" Jamie sounded surprised and, fuck, so turned on. His voice was raspy with need. "Yeah. I want. From behind." While he spoke, Jamie was deftly unzipping Riaz's pants, slipping his hand into the slit and finding Riaz's hot cock with his cool fingers.

No one could see what they were doing, the way Jamie's skirts covered his hand as he stroked Riaz's cock, but there was no secret in the way Riaz moaned and braced himself with one hand. He pulled the other out of Jamie's panties and tugged them down below the perfect curve of Jamie's ass. "Now," he managed to say. He could feel the wetness he was leaving on Jamie's fingers. "Can't help it," he said shakily. "Need it, J." He had no idea how he managed to let Jamie out of the house. Denial.

Jamie rolled a condom onto Riaz's cock and slicked him with the pillow-packet of lube. The trash got tucked back into Riaz's jacket -- the drycleaners were going to love him -- and then Jamie turned around. "Now," he ground out, his own hands busy in front of him, probably sheathing his own dick in the other condom. He flipped his skirt up and braced both arms on the wall in front of him. His ass was bare and perfect, tilted up and ready for Riaz.

Oh, God. Riaz wanted to drop to his knees and worship that pretty ass. Instead, he stroked it with both hands, sliding his achingly hot cock against it, pressing in just enough to give Jamie enough to push back against. "Hottest thing ever," he whispered. He ripped open another packet of lube with his teeth, dripping it down the crease of Jamie's ass; he could barely see to know what he was doing, but he wanted to make sure he didn't hurt his best friend. He hooked his fingers in the lacing of Jamie's corset and tugged, urging Jamie to move.

Jamie's breath rushed out and he rocked back to take Riaz's dick in, making little whimpering noises as it slid inside him.

Riaz wrapped himself around Jamie from behind and crushed the packet of lube in his hand. He dropped the empty packet in a pocket and reached under Jamie's skirt to stroke his cock. "Need you," he whispered in Jamie's ear. He didn't make Jamie wait once he was inside. They might have been out of sight, and their noises were lost in the thrumming dance beat, but he didn't want

to take too long and risk getting caught. It was such a struggle between the temptation to indulge and the fear of discovery. "You make me crazy, Jamie."

Riaz wasn't the only one feeling crazy. Jamie didn't know what he'd done to get Riaz so riled up, but holy fuck, he wanted to know so he could do it again. The skirt, Riaz had said. Jamie made a mental note to do some shopping.

Riaz pushed in just right, and Jamie cried out. "Oh, fuck. Yeah, Riaz. Please."

Riaz bit the curve of his neck and moved harder and faster. "So pretty, Jamie," he panted. "So tight. So hot." His hand holding Jamie tight against him slid up and slipped in under the ruffles of Jamie's blouse to pinch one nipple. "Hottest thing I ever saw," Riaz groaned.

For Jamie, it was just a costume, just something fun to wear to get attention. But if Riaz liked it, liked the skirts and the ruffles and the pretty clothes... well, Jamie could work with that.

Riaz's hand was snug around Jamie's dick, his dick was thick and long in Jamie's ass, and his fingers were tight on Jamie's nipple. The sensations were amazing, and on top of it all, on top of listening to Riaz's groans and feeling his hot breaths on Jamie's neck, Jamie could hear the heavy beat of the music and people talking all around them. He didn't have to know people were watching him to get a thrill from fucking in public. Even without that, though, it was a thrill to know Riaz was so out of control, so undone by *Jamie*.

Jamie's breath came faster and he rocked his hips, pushing back to take Riaz in faster, deeper. Heat coiled in his belly, and his moans and cries got louder, as he slipped closer and closer to coming.

"Come." Riaz pressed rough kisses against Jamie's cheek. He was never like this, all possessive and raw and relentless, fucking Jamie hard enough that he'd feel it the next day. "Come for me, J. Wanna feel you." The music was loud, a frenzied dance beat, soaking up Jamie's cries so that no one could hear.

Jamie couldn't have resisted, even if he'd wanted to. Riaz just felt too damn good. Jamie came in a rush of heat and shivers and cries that weren't quite as loud as the music.

"Hot, so hot..." Riaz whispered as Jamie came, fucking him hard through his orgasm. Before Jamie had recovered enough to keep his balance, Riaz pulled out and spun him around so that he stumbled back against the wall with his panties around his ankles. Riaz grabbed him by the hips and kissed him hard, picking him up at the same time.

As soon as he realized what was happening, Jamie kicked off his panties and leaned back against the wall with his legs wrapped around Riaz's waist. "Fuck me," he demanded, using his legs to pull Riaz in close. "Don't stop. I want to feel you come."

Riaz lifted Jamie up and brought him down on his cock, groaning with pleasure. His eyes were wide, glittering with hunger. "So hot." His hands were rough on Jamie's thighs as he pinned Jamie to the wall with his weight and touched everywhere he could. "Fuck, Jamie, I never even thought of this." Leaning in, he kissed Jamie hard, grabbed his hips, and started to move, just as roughly as before.

Riaz's cock felt so good, pushing back into him, Jamie couldn't hold back a whimper. He wrapped his arms around Riaz's shoulders and just held on, letting Riaz have him. Every thrust sent a new wave of heat through him, drawing out the pleasure with aftershocks from his orgasm.

Riaz kissed and bit the side of Jamie's neck, shaking and making raw, desperate noises as he thrust in over and over again. When he came, his hands were painfully tight on Jamie's hips; he came long and hard, shuddering with it.

Jamie turned his head, catching Riaz's mouth with his own, and kissed him hard. God, that was so good.

Riaz clung to him for a moment and then pulled away reluctantly. Gently, he put Jamie's feet down and made sure Jamie was standing before he let go. He pulled the silk pocket square out of his jacket and then a cotton handkerchief out, handing the latter to Jamie. He looked almost embarrassed.

Jamie had to lean back against the wall to keep his feet. He took the handkerchief and cleaned himself up, tucking the used condom away inside it so he could throw it away later. As he was tucking the handkerchief into Riaz's jacket pocket, he leaned up and kissed Riaz on the cheek. "Want to come shopping with me tomorrow? I think I need to invest in more skirts."

Riaz looked up from zipping up, eyes wide. "Jamie, I, uh..." Jamie knew him well enough to know when he was all embarrassed about something, even if it was too dark back here to see the flush on his soft brown cheeks. "You want to?" he asked breathlessly.

"I want to." Jamie would do just about anything to get a reaction like that out of Riaz. "I want to know what you like."

"You." Riaz bent and picked up Jamie's panties, little ruffled white things, and spun them around one finger, looking at them. When he looked at Jamie again, his eyes were hot again already. "Us." He closed his hand on the panties and stepped in to kiss Jamie all over again.

The Gift That Keeps On Giving

Riaz looked in the mirror one more time and carefully twisted the glossy, black curl that was supposed to lie in the middle of his forehead. He looked ridiculous, but that was the point. He was all decked out in satin pantaloons and 'jeweled' satin vest, both peacock blue, with a crimson sash around his waist and red sandals. To get to the car, he'd have to put his boots on. One more touch up of the eyeliner and, bracelets jingling, dark bronze skin oiled, he was ready to go.

If there was anything Riaz did well, it was Bollywood. He'd spent until he was twelve wanting to be a Bollywood actor. After that, he'd wanted to be David Beckham. Now, he just wanted to be on time.

"Jamie!" Damn it, Jamie was worse than a chick when it came to getting to a party on time. Where was he, anyway? Riaz headed downstairs.

Jamie was waiting for him in the living room, already wrapped up in his coat. He had his boots on his feet, a little bag in his hand, and a sly grin on his face. "Ready to go?"

"Don't tell me you decided to make me look like an idiot by not wearing a costume... I hate you." Riaz pulled his sandals off, glaring all the while, and tugged his boots on. "Where's the wine and scotch I bought for Lisa and Kelly?" He shrugged on his coat, looking around for the gift bag with the familiar liquor board logo in gold holiday print.

"Um." Jamie looked around. "In the kitchen?" His tone suggested that he really had no idea where the bag was and was just throwing that idea out at random.

"Under the tree." Riaz knew he was being grumpy at Jamie and he hated himself for it. "I'd have helped you with your costume, you know." He was always in a bad mood before parties. And in the winter. Which made him a charmer before every Christmas party.

"I know," Jamie said, heading for the door. "But it's a surprise."

"Oh, mercy." Riaz had no idea what Jamie was up to. He might keep the scotch for himself, but someone had to drive. He picked up the bag and followed Jamie out. "I'll drive tonight." He could do that much to make up for being a grouch. "Come on."

They got to the neighborhood of McMansions on bare lawns studded with teeny stalks of new trees, and Riaz managed not to bitch about that. Score one for him. The driveway up to the parking lot -- apparently if you were important enough to not just have an eco-footprint but an eco-stomping-ground, you also needed a parking lot -- was half a street long. Riaz parked between a Benz and a Hummer and kept his mouth shut. Lisa and Kelly were prosperous and happy, it wasn't right to criticize it.

"Ready to go?" He got out, grabbing the gift, and waited for Jamie before heading for the arched entryway to the house. There was a riot of tacky Christmas decoration out front and Riaz could already count three Christmas trees inside before Lisa opened the door.

"Guys!" She was a tiny woman with short black hair and, tonight, she was wearing a white gown and a blue mantle. The Virgin Mary. Of course. "Come on in!" After they were kissed and hugged and the gift handed off to Kelly to open up both bottles, Lisa shooed them upstairs to leave their coats on a bed. Riaz left his boots at the door, put on his sandals, and followed Jamie up into the cool, dim second floor of the house.

Jamie had removed his shoes at the door, too, but he hadn't put anything on to replace them, so Riaz still didn't have any clues about his costume. Jamie wasn't usually very good at keeping secrets -- not from Riaz, at least -- but this costume was apparently an exception, because Riaz hadn't heard a peep about it.

Riaz opened the door to the coat room for Jamie and shrugged his old, heavy leather coat off his shoulders. "Party time," he said, turning to drape his coat over a rocking chair by the door instead of throwing it on the coat pile. He knew what people did on the coat pile and it often involved bodily fluids. Why people did things like that was beyond him.

When he turned back around, Jamie had taken his coat off, too. What was underneath was... not what Riaz had expected. Some kind of naughty elf costume, with red garters that disappeared under a tiny, fur-trimmed, red velvet skirt that flared out from Jamie's hips. There was a wide, black leather belt and a fur-trimmed, lace-up halter top. And a lot of bare skin.

Suddenly, Riaz realized exactly why people did things like... what he was about to do... in the coat pile. Jamie was adjusting the belt that was almost wider than his skirt when Riaz closed the door. God. Damn. Pale skin, muscled belly, curvy ass and thighs emphasized by the way those stockings and garters clung.

Apparently satisfied with the belt, Jamie sat down on the bed, on top of all those coats, and started pulling candy cane striped stockings up his legs. He got one all the way on, and clipped it to the red garter peeking out from beneath his skirt, and then started on the second.

Riaz wasn't thinking anything as he stepped between Jamie's knees and reached down to get a hand under each. A moment later, Jamie was on his back, stockinged legs in the air, skirt spilling up his stomach. Oh, God. Ruffled little lace-up panties. Getting a knee on the bed, Riaz let Jamie's legs fall over his shoulders as he leaned in to bite the inside of one creamy thigh with a wolfish growl.

Jamie's delighted laughter trailed off into a moan as his fingers threaded into Riaz's hair. So much for that perfectly-placed curl on Riaz's forehead. "Mmm," Jamie purred. "Like your surprise?"

Riaz growled again and dragged his mouth up until he was licking around the lacy edges of the panties, trying to sneak his tongue underneath. He would never complain again about Jamie being late. His cock was straining at his briefs under the blue satin and he stroked himself through the fabric, moaning as he nuzzled deeper under Jamie's petticoats.

"Oh, man." Jamie's legs slid down Riaz's arms and Jamie arched up toward Riaz's mouth. "Yeah, come on..."

Riaz got his mouth on Jamie's balls through the panties and tongued them enough to wet the fabric. He was about to speak when he heard laughter. Adrenaline shot through him and he stood bolt upright, managing to grab Jamie by one flailing arm before his little elf ended up on the floor on the wrong side of the bed. Riaz set Jamie upright and stepped away, pretending he was fixing his hair in the vanity mirror as the door clicked open.

"Is this the coat room?" The voice was female and nasal and shrill; Riaz was never so glad to lose an erection that fast before. Where was this woman when he was in Grade Ten?

Jamie muffled his disbelieving laughter with one hand. Holy shit. Whoever that was had *terrible* timing. And Riaz loved Jamie's costume every bit as much as Jamie had hoped.

He got his stockings settled and strapped himself into glittery red platform shoes with tall, chunky heels. "Help me stand up?" he asked Riaz, holding out his hands, as the woman and her date started stripping off their coats and throwing them on the bed beside him.

"I hope you practiced in those things." The grump was just a cover for the flush in Riaz' cheeks; Jamie knew him well enough. Riaz came over to help him up, giving Jamie a good look at his bare, glossy belly and chest, and his bare, muscled arms.

"You going to carry me down the stairs if I didn't?" Jamie teased. "So I don't break my neck?" He got up on his feet and took a few steps, fluffing out his tiny skirt and straightening his belt again. Riaz looked so good, dressed like that. But then, Riaz always looked good; It didn't matter what he was wearing.

"I'd hate to ruin this nice party, so I suppose so." Riaz looked scowlish, but then he offered Jamie his arm. "Let's go enjoy. If I'm going to have a drink, I need to have it now, so I'm a hundred percent to drive later."

Jamie had practiced, but the stairs were harder than just walking, so he leaned on Riaz on the way down.

By the time they rejoined the party, it was in full swing, and it wasn't long before Riaz was off mingling with other people. Jamie chatted with Kelly and had a few drinks, but every time he looked over at Riaz, his friend was laughing and looking gorgeous as ever, and the men he was talking to were all looking at him like they wanted to eat him up.

Jamie tried to ignore it, to let Riaz have a good time, but when one of the men -- Jamie thought the guy was maybe the one who'd interrupted them in the coat room -- started petting Riaz's arm, Jamie'd had enough. He made his way across the huge living room, past the giant decorations, and slipped up beside Riaz. "I need to borrow you for a minute," he said without preamble.

"Sure." Riaz untangled himself from the tipsy ad exec who was obviously rethinking his sexual orientation, thanks to a little too much Captain Morgan. "Sorry, Patrick, duty calls. Back soon." He flashed a grin at his friends and stepped away to give Jamie a dark look. "Something wrong?"

Jamie stepped over a string of fallen garland and caught Riaz's hand, drawing his friend along behind him as he headed for the nearest powder room. Once they were both inside the tiny room, he closed the door behind them and backed Riaz up against the wall, sliding his hands up over that perfectly smooth, dark chest. In these shoes, Jamie didn't have to worry about their height difference; he just leaned in and kissed Riaz on the mouth.

"Did you pop your bra or someth..." Riaz was saying, obviously stuck on the idea that there was a costume malfunction, when Jamie's kiss silenced him to a, "...mmph!" He caught on quickly, though, and the next moment, he had both hands up under Jamie's petticoats to grab his ass, and he was kissing Jamie passionately with a low growl in the back of his throat.

Jamie could feel Riaz getting hard in those thin, silky pantaloons. He rubbed himself up against Riaz and sucked at Riaz's tongue, arching into the hands on his ass.

"God, what are you *doing*," Riaz muttered, but it wasn't much of a protest. His hands were all over Jamie, groping, stroking, feeling Jamie's skin and the garter straps and the stockings. He kissed away, giving Jamie a chance to answer, covering Jamie's neck and one bare shoulder with hot, wet, biting kisses.

"Seducing you." Jamie'd thought that was obvious, by now. "You look so good, and... fuck, I've been waiting for hours." He let his head fall back, baring his neck for Riaz's kisses, moaning.

"Just checking." Riaz hooked a finger in the top of Jamie's fur-trimmed halter top, tugging just enough that he could get his mouth on one nipple. He bit and sucked and teased with his tongue, holding Jamie close with the other hand grabbing as much of Jamie's ass as possible.

Jamie wriggled his hand down between them, groaning when it put pressure on his already-aching dick, and worked out how to open the front of Riaz's silky pants. "Want you."

"Wench." Riaz pulled away, grabbing Jamie's wrist and tugging that hand out of his pants. Then, he spun Jamie around and pulled Jamie back against his chest. The hand that had been on Jamie's ass was on Jamie's dick and balls now, kneading gently. "Want what?"

Jamie shuddered and whined. He wrapped his free hand over the hand on his dick, pushing, making Riaz touch him more firmly. He felt breathless already, between how much he wanted Riaz and the knowledge that there were dozens of people just outside the door. Dozens of people who *weren't* about to get off with Jamie's best friend, now that Jamie had Riaz to himself. "Oh, fuck. Riaz..." Jamie arched back, rubbing his ass against Riaz's hard cock. "Let me. Between my legs. Fuck me."

"You should see yourself." Riaz nudged him forward so that he had to grab the edge of the fancy bowl sink to keep from toppling over. Now, he was looking at himself in the mirror as Riaz's hard, heavy cock slid between his thighs for the first time.

"Don't care what I look like," Jamie muttered. His cheeks were flushed almost red enough to match his costume, but the way Riaz looked was way more interesting. "I want to see *you*." Riaz's dark eyes met Jamie's in the mirror as Riaz dipped his head to kiss the side of Jamie's neck. God, Riaz was so damn hot. Honey-dark skin and full lips and, fuck, the way Riaz's cock felt, rubbing between his bare thighs and up against the satin panties that were so tight on Jamie's hard dick. "Don't stop."

"Not planning on it." Riaz got one hand in Jamie's hair, tugging his head to the side so he could kiss and bite hard enough to raise a mark. The hand on Jamie's dick moved away, but only because Riaz was tugging Jamie's panties down enough to get Jamie's dick in that hand, skin on skin. "So pretty." Riaz was watching him in the mirror, eyes hot. "Love how you look like this. Sexy."

"I picked it out for you," Jamie admitted. He was sure Riaz already knew that. After the way Riaz had reacted to Jamie's Little Red Riding Hood costume at Halloween, fucking him in the dark corner of a nightclub, Jamie hadn't been able to resist.

"Taking advantage of me..." Riaz didn't seem too upset. He'd found his rhythm, hot dick pushing between Jamie's thighs and stroking him off at the same time, his mouth moving over Jamie's neck and shoulder like Riaz wanted to devour him. His other hand slid out of Jamie's hair and down to catch one of Jamie's nipples. Riaz groaned at that and bucked against Jamie's ass, then bit him hard on the shoulder.

"Fuck, yeah." Jamie writhed between Riaz's hand, mouth, and cock, soaking up the sensations. He loved the way Riaz got so worked up. Riaz's mouth was hot on his skin and Jamie moaned louder than he should've when Riaz's fingers pinched down on his nipple. "Please."

Riaz was breathing hard now, nuzzling in Jamie's hair, having covered Jamie's shoulder with

teeth marks, and moaning Jamie's name over and over again. His hips slammed into Jamie's ass again and again and then he was coming, slicking the inside of Jamie's thighs with heat.

Oh, God. Yeah. Jamie whimpered as Riaz's hand tightened on his cock, stroking him faster, tighter, in time with the hard thrusts of Riaz's orgasm. Biting his lip, Jamie tried to be quiet, to swallow down his shout, as he started to come.

Riaz kept going until Jamie couldn't take it anymore and then he was still, holding Jamie to him and breathing hard. "You know," he murmured against Jamie's ear, "you don't have to wear a dress to get me to fuck you, right? Not that it's not really fucking hot."

Jamie was too far gone to mask his surprise when he met Riaz's eyes in the mirror. That was exactly what he'd been doing. He hadn't been able to figure out how to get Riaz to understand that wanting him wasn't just about convenience, for Jamie, and so he'd resorted to doing things -- anything -- he knew would get Riaz worked up enough to fuck him. "No?"

"Take me now, big boy' is a little tacky, but, you know," Riaz said between soft kisses on the bites he'd left on Jamie's shoulder. "Whatever makes you happy."

"You know you don't have to wait for me to ask, don't you?" Jamie countered.

Riaz paused, looking sheepish. "I think I forget," he confessed, apologetically. The dangers of dealing with a hardcore math geek; sometimes he needed a little kick in the ass to remind him that he was human, and that humans did more than eat, work out, and chase various shapes of ball around a field on weekends. "I'm sorry. I'm just used to living with your hotness with no recourse." Now he was kind of snuggling Jamie against his broad chest. "I've learned to block out the awesomeness that is your ass."

Jamie snorted and shook his head. "Dork. Let's get out of here. We can finish out the party and then you can take me home and unlearn all that by fucking my awesome ass in every room of the house."

"Glad I didn't have much to drink," Riaz said dryly. He reached for a washcloth to clean them both and came up with a red terrycloth square embroidered with mistletoe that started playing "Jingle Bells" from some where. "Whoa." He passed it to Jamie. "Merry Christmas."

Exactly Right

Jamie shoved the photos into the shoebox he'd dragged out of the closet and flopped back on the bed. Dammit. Steve wasn't supposed to up and get married like this, little gold-foil wedding announcements and everything. And Jamie wasn't supposed to be left feeling all bitter and mopey about it. He'd gotten over Steve a long time ago; he was supposed to be *happy* for Steve.

And yet, here he was, all alone and staring at old photos of them together, way back when Jamie'd still been the type to fall head-over-heels. Not that he wasn't still that type, but back then, he'd been a lot more honest about it. Now, he was stuck being head-over-heels in love with his best friend. Live-in best friend. Best friend with benefits, even, so Jamie shouldn't have had a damn thing to complain about, but he wanted *more*. He wanted the stupid fucking white picket fence and the happily ever after and he couldn't say a word about it.

And what made it all even better -- worse -- was that said best friend, Riaz, wasn't even home to notice that Jamie was moping, watching *My Best Friend's Wedding* and eating ice cream straight from the tub like a woman who'd been dumped.

Jamie was moping so hard, he must've blocked out the sound of Riaz's car pulling up, or maybe they'd lived together so long that the sound was just part of the background noise by now. The front door popping open startled him into swallowing a huge spoonful of ice cream before he was ready for it. "Lucy, I'm home!" Riaz, still out of sight downstairs, sounded cheerful as hell.

Jamie jammed the spoon into the soggy tub of ice cream and sighed, then rolled to put it on the bedside table and hit the pause button on the remote. Julia Roberts stopped mid-word and Jamie flopped onto his belly. Stupid Riaz, being all happy. It wasn't like Jamie could even tell Riaz what he was so depressed about; Riaz wouldn't understand, would just feel pressured. Besides, Riaz's idea of 'cheering up' involved football -- the kind with the round ball -- and a lot of beer. Jamie wasn't interested.

Riaz was banging around downstairs, being mercilessly cheerful, and then he rumbled up the stairs with a vague, "Hey, man," as he passed Jamie's door. Then, moments later, he went bumping back down the stairs. Jamie could see Riaz in his mind's eye: dark skin and bright eyes, black curls, broad shoulders and powerful thighs. Forget Rupert Everett and Dermot Mulroney. Jamie knew what he wanted. It wasn't a movie or ice cream or some pasty-faced Hollywood cutout. He was working himself deeper into a mournful funk when the stairs creaked again and, to his surprise, there was a little knock on his door.

"Hey. Got a minute?"

A minute, an hour, the rest of his life. "C'mon in." Jamie managed to get the lid back on the shoebox and push it under the bed before the door opened up, all without actually moving away from the mountain of pillows he'd surrounded himself with.

The door creaked open enough for Riaz to peek in. "Mandy told me about Steve," he said. He took in the scene and then shook his head a little. "I thought you might need cheering up."

Here it comes, Jamie thought. Beer and sports. And math. Mustn't forget the incredible healing powers of the cube root. "M fine," he muttered, licking a stray splotch of ice cream from his thumb. Cherry chocolate chip.

"Want me to go?"

"No." Jamie's answer came out before he could think to stop himself. He didn't want Riaz to leave. Not ever.

"Okay." Riaz gave him a smile. "Close your eyes."

That smile melted Jamie; it always did. He wondered if Riaz knew. Jamie did as he was told, though he couldn't figure out how having his eyes closed would make beer and football any more appealing. Or integrals.

There was a rustling, then the door bumped shut. A moment later, the bed dipped as Riaz sat down. Jamie felt Riaz put something into his lap, then something else. One was light, the other a bit heavy. DVDs and a six-pack of European beer? A textbook? "Open wide," Riaz said lightly.

Jamie almost didn't want to open his eyes, didn't want to spoil the pleasure of knowing that Riaz had been thinking of him with the reality of what he'd gotten. Jamie did open his eyes, though, and what he saw didn't make sense, at first. A long white box with a ribbon around it, and a giftbag with sparkly tissue paper poking out of it. "What did you...?"

Jamie couldn't resist; he burrowed into the bag first, pulling out another ribbon-wrapped box -- chocolates. Ooh. The bag wasn't empty yet, though; Jamie could feel the weight of it still. He dug down into the tissue paper and pulled out two long strips of silky... Skin-tone silk stockings. And garters. Jamie could feel the smile stretching his lips before he'd even managed to open the other box. Long-stemmed red roses. And a little card. Jamie opened up the card.

'I hope I got it right this time.'

Jamie turned his smile on Riaz, struggling up out of the pillows to fling himself at his friend. "You did. You got it *exactly* right."

Riaz wrapped him up in a fierce hug and kissed him full on the mouth.

The effort Riaz had gone to warmed Jamie through, but the kisses heated him right up. He let the

stockings slither out of his fingers and down into Riaz's lap, and tangled his fingers in Riaz's dark, silky hair instead, holding him close to keep the kisses going.

Every kiss Riaz gave Jamie was hungry and he held Jamie so close, like he was afraid Jamie would slip away from him. Riaz shuffled everything out of the way and then fell back on the bed, drawing Jamie down with him. "You're really okay," he murmured against Jamie's cheek, between soft kisses back toward Jamie's ear. "Not wishing it was you?"

"Not-- No. I--" It wasn't easy to think, to explain, to figure out what to say that wouldn't say too much, when Riaz was kissing him like that. Riaz kissed him again and Jamie said, "Not with *him*," before he'd realized his mouth was even moving again.

"Oh, *good*," Riaz whispered.

"You thought--?" Jamie used both hands in Riaz's hair to drag him up for a kiss on the mouth. "No," he muttered between kisses. "No, no. Not him. God, not him."

Riaz rolled him over in bed and looked down at him, puzzled. Jamie watched the little head-tilt and realized that -- for better or for worse -- the point had gone way over Riaz's head. "As long as you're okay," Riaz said stolidly, leaning in to kiss Jamie again.

"I'm okay. Better than okay." Jamie stretched up to meet Riaz's kisses, licking into his mouth, and then asked, "Do you want me to put on the stockings?"

"If you want to." Riaz paused and then nuzzled his nose against Jamie's, his eyes closed. "I mean, yes. I do," he said softly. "A lot. Because, God, you are hot when you're pretty. But I got them for you, to make you happy, not me. You know?"

"I know." Jamie nudged Riaz with his nose, then kissed him on the mouth again. "*That's* why they make me happy. I want to wear them for you. I want to see the way you look at me when I have them on."

"Then put 'em on." Riaz's cheeks were flushed dark and he bit his lip as he pulled away slowly. "I'll take that ice cream downstairs before it turns into a puddle." He didn't get far before he leaned back in to kiss Jamie one more time. "One for the road," he said.

That made Jamie smile. He let Riaz go, watching that gorgeous ass the whole way out of the room. Once the door clicked shut, he rolled himself up out of bed and found a spot on his dresser for the box of flowers -- he'd have to find a vase or something for them -- and then started to strip.

His legs were still pretty clean, so he didn't need to shave or wax. Oh, rolling the stockings on felt *so good*. Riaz had gone all out; these were silk, not some cheap costume crap, and they felt

like heaven against his skin. Not scratchy at all, just silky smooth and cool. He clipped them up to the garters and found a pair of platform heels in the closet. Black patent leather mary-janes, those would do nicely. He strapped them on and then stretched back out on the bed to wait for Riaz.

The familiar rumble and creak of Riaz hauling that ass back upstairs to him made Jamie shiver with anticipation. The door swung open and Riaz stepped in. Knowing what Jamie had waiting didn't spoil the surprise a damn bit. Riaz looked poleaxed. He closed the door behind him by way of leaning back on it for support and following it until it slammed into place. "Wow," he said reverently. "You are so beautiful."

Jamie wasn't ever going to get tired of that, the way Riaz reacted when Jamie got all dressed up. Or, apparently, even just a little bit dressed up. "Thank you for the stockings."

Riaz swallowed hard as he pushed away from the door. "Thank you for wearing them." His voice was thick and his words were slow; he crossed the room like he was on auto-pilot. "God, you just..." When he hit the bed, he sank down to sit and reached out to touch one strap of the garter belt with his fingertips. "You are just... I never... it is fucking crazy that my best friend is into something that I didn't even know makes me this..." The words trailed off as he bent to press an open kiss to the hollow of Jamie's hip, just under the lace of the belt.

Jamie's breath caught and he bit his lip to keep from asking Riaz to just turn his head, just a little, and put that gorgeous mouth on his dick instead. "Hot," he finally managed. "I love the way you... The way you look at me, like that. So hot."

Riaz sat up to look again. "I *love* this." He ran a single finger up one strap, across the belt, and down the other. "*This*." He covered Jamie's dick and balls with that hand, just lightly, for a moment, and then he pulled his hand away. "I want it," he said, and then his tongue snuck out to trace his lower lip.

Oh, God. That was so hot. And the look on Riaz's face... "You can have it," Jamie murmured, his hips coming up involuntarily, like his body was seeking out Riaz's touch without his permission. "It's all yours. Just... God, touch me."

Riaz touched again, his fingertips fluttering against the head of Jamie's dick, and then Riaz leaned over to lick where he'd touched, his fingers drifting down the shaft. "God," he said softly. His breath was hot on Jamie's flesh and then his mouth was even hotter, his moan muffled by Jamie's dick sliding past his lips until it was something Jamie felt more than heard.

Oh. Oh, God. Jamie fought the urge to writhe, instead focusing on the little details of how Riaz's mouth felt on his cock. Hot, wet, tight -- and, fuck, even Riaz's *tongue* was clever, seeking out all the spots that made Jamie twitch and groan.

Riaz shifted, getting up on the bed on his knees, between Jamie's thighs. When he settled back down, his hands were all over Jamie's legs and hips and even his cock and balls. His hands kept sliding over skin, slipping under the straps of the garter belt, just *touching* like Riaz couldn't get enough while he sucked Jamie off with the same intensity and hunger.

Jamie barely managed to remember to keep his hands to himself, but that meant threading his arms up between the pillows to grasp the headboard of the bed. He had to hold onto *something*. He panted Riaz's name, a quick warning, as the sensations started to overwhelm him.

There wasn't any relief from the pleasure. Riaz's strong hands opened up his thighs and held him down at once as Riaz took him in deep and moaned around him.

Jamie's orgasm felt like it lasted forever, like every touch of Riaz's tongue sparked a new wave of pleasure. Still shuddering, he pryed his hands off the headboard rails and reached down to pet Riaz's hair. "Oh, *fuck*."

Riaz finally crawled up to collapse next to Jamie and pull Jamie into his arms. "All better?" he murmured, ducking his head for a kiss.

"Almost." Jamie dodged the kiss and rolled up over Riaz, careful of his shoes, settling with his hands on Riaz's shoulders. "I don't know if you're being deliberately obtuse, or if it's just you being... *you*, but. I'm in love with you, you big idiot. *That's* why I've been moping around. Steve... Steve was just the trigger, that's all." He searched Riaz's face, hoping for something -- *anything* -- other than outright rejection.

At first, Jamie got the puppy head-tilt again. For a guy with two degrees in maths, Riaz had a lot of trouble putting two and two together some days. Before Jamie could shake him, though, Riaz blinked and said, "Because Steve's getting married and not you and..." He shook his head like a dog shedding water. "*Oh*. Not you and me."

Well. That was something. Jamie gave a slow nod.

"But we," Riaz started to say, then stopped, quite possibly saving them both the trouble of a messy homicide. "Jamie, I do love you. I love you, too," he said instead, his expression still slightly baffled. He cupped Jamie's face in his hands and kissed him gently on the mouth. "I just thought this was enough for you."

"This," Jamie said against Riaz's lips, "is sex. I want *you*."

"You have me." Riaz pulled back to look at Jamie, a frown gathering on his own face. "You never had anything to be sad about, Jamie. You're the person who makes me happy. I hope every time you go out that you won't fall for someone else. The whole idea of being just friends first and always... I did mean it. You're like a billboard about being in love and I never saw anything."

"If I'm like a billboard, you've had blinders on for months," Jamie said softly. Riaz loved him. He'd said so. "I want more. I haven't... I haven't picked anyone up in a long time. Since Lee."

"*Oh.*" Riaz let out a slow breath, like he'd been holding it for ages. "I'm sorry... I didn't... we said..." He stopped and tried again. " Jamie, I love you. Even if I'm bad at the whole knowing how you feel thing. No one makes me happy the way you do. God, I can't even look at you right now or my brain will shut off; you drive me crazy. If you want to get married... If I knew you wanted it, you'd have a ring instead of flowers."

"I just... I'm in love with you. I want there to be an us, not just a you and me. I want..." Jamie smiled wryly. "I want all the stupid bells and whistles. I want the hearts and roses and the white picket fence. And I want them with you, because I love you." God, he loved Riaz so much. Jamie ducked his head down to kiss Riaz on the mouth, soft and slow, showing his friend -- his lover, his boyfriend? -- how he felt.

"All the bells and whistles," Riaz said solemnly, once Jamie was done kissing him. "I promise that I will remember." He stroked Jamie's hair and nuzzled his nose against Jamie's. "Maybe even actual bells and whistles, if the situation demands it. You can have it all. And the picket fence."

Any Way He Comes

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