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*Ménage Amour*



FORBIDDEN  
DESIRES

Stormy Glenn

# **FORBIDDEN DESIRES**

*Tri-Omega Mates 2*

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**MENAGE AMOUR**



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## **DEDICATION**

To Amy, thanks for trying to keep me sane, girl, even if it didn't work. But if I were going to lose my mind with anyone, it would be you. I'm just glad you're as deranged as I am. You're the best.

# FORBIDDEN DESIRES

*Tri-Omega Mates 2*

**STORMY GLENN**

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## Prologue

*Six years earlier...*

“I’m telling you, Jake, I heard something coming from over here,” Gregory said as he led the way toward a small valley between their ranch property and the neighbors.

“What exactly did you hear, Gregory?” Jake asked as he followed.

“I heard a car door slam and then someone was moving around. Then the door slammed again and the car sped off. But I know there’s something here. I can smell it. Can’t you?”

Gregory watched his pack alpha, Jake, lift his nose into the air, sniffing. After a moment he shook his head. “I don’t smell anything, Gregory.”

“Fine, you go back to the ranch, but I’m having a look around. I know something funny is going on.”

“Maybe somebody just stopped by the edge of the road to take a piss or something.”

“Maybe, but I still want to check it out,” Gregory said as he continued into the small valley.

“Fine, you go check it out. I’m going to stay up here with the horses.”

Gregory rolled his eyes, but nodded his head anyway. He knew he heard something besides a car door slamming, but he couldn’t quite put a name to what he heard, and that drove him nuts.

He didn’t like not being able to put a name to something that was nagging at him. He preferred knowing exactly what he was dealing with at all times. He liked all the facts right there in front of him in black and white. There wasn’t much room in his life for gray areas.

Moving further down the small hill he was on, Gregory let his senses go, sniffing in the cool night air. He stood still, letting his hearing pick every little sound in the area. His eyes went lupine black, seeing far more in the dark than the human eye.

There, it was a sound, a whimper. Gregory carefully inched his way toward the sound, his eyes, ears, and nose zeroing in on it. The closer he got, the louder the moan became until he could hear it resonating through his head as if someone was yelling in his ears.

So intent was he on the sound that Gregory almost tripped over the battered and bruised body before he could stop himself. Falling to his knees beside the small body, he began to quickly check for signs of life.

Carefully turning the body over, he paused. It was a young boy, probably no more than ten or eleven. He had been beaten so badly, Gregory nearly jumped out of his skin when he moved. He was surprised that he was even alive, let alone moving.

He leaned down close to the young boy’s ear to whisper, “I’m here to help you. Can you hear me?”

The boy nodded, his swollen eyes opening and moving up toward Gregory’s face. He slowly lifted a hand toward him, his bony fingertips grazing the side of Gregory’s face. “Who?” his scratchy voice asked.

“My name is Gregory.”

## Chapter 1

### *Present Day...*

Gregory stood in the doorway to the tack room watching Ryland shovel hay in the side horse pen. He had to take a deep breath as he watched the afternoon sunlight glisten off the sweat dripping down his tanned muscled body.

His life at this moment would be so much easier if Ryland would stop working outside without a shirt on. Looking out at his perfect little body he wondered if even that would be enough tonight. His cock was so hard in his pants that he was pretty sure he was going to have zipper marks.

*Oh, sweet hell!* He groaned to himself as Ryland bent over. His faded blue jeans were straining across his tight little ass. Gregory reached down and rubbed his hand across his aching cock, feeling a small damp spot appear.

Ryland really needed to stop. It seemed that every time Gregory turned around he was doing something that had him all tied up in knots and hard as a rock. Today was no different.

He quickly averted his eyes when Ryland turned in his direction. It wouldn't do to let Ryland see him drooling. He might get it into his head to do something even more aggressive—like drop his jeans. Gregory could always hope anyway.

“Hey, Gregory, I didn't know you were out here.” *Yeah, right!*

“Hey, Ry. I was just cleaning up some of the tack and heard some noises out here. You about done here?” Gregory prayed that his voice

didn't betray the arousal he was feeling. It wouldn't do at all for Ryland to figure out how much he was turning him on.

"Almost. I have a little more to do then I'll be done. Jake wanted both pens cleaned up today but I already got the other one done. Why? Did you need me?"

Oh, that wasn't nice! But if Gregory wasn't mistaken, there was a clear invitation in Ryland's voice, one that was very hard for Gregory to ignore.

"No, I just wondered how much longer you'd be. I wouldn't want you to fry out here in the sun. It's a little warm today," Gregory replied, pulling at the collar of his blue cotton shirt.

Warm was an understatement. It was blistering hot and not because of the bright afternoon sun shinning down on them. It was the perfect little body standing right in front of him.

Gregory just couldn't take it any more. He was going to go into town and find someone to relieve the ache Ryland was creating in his pants. He would rather just claim his mate but Ryland still wasn't old enough, not for him. Not for what Gregory wanted from him.

"Look, Ry, I need to go. I have some stuff to do. Don't stay out here too long," Gregory said quickly as he looked away from the tempting chest in front of him.

Gregory turned and shut the tack room door and headed for the house. He needed to go get ready. Get a shower, some clean clothes, and maybe a little cologne. It had been so long since he had tried to attract someone, that he wondered if he even remembered how it was done.

With a little chuckle, Gregory walked into the house and headed for his room. Maybe tonight was just what he needed to get him through the next couple of years until he could claim his mate.

\* \* \* \*



Ryland watched Gregory walking into the house. *Now where in the hell was he going?* Ryland had specifically waited until Gregory came outside to take his shirt off. He was sure that Gregory would see him, maybe want him. Maybe claim him.

He had been waiting nearly two years for Gregory to claim him. He knew Gregory was waiting until he was old enough. He even respected the boundaries that Gregory had set down.

He had still looked forward to his eighteenth birthday with anticipation. He had been so sure that Gregory would finally claim him. But the day had come and gone, along with a lot of others. And still Gregory made no move toward him.

He had tried everything he could think of to let Gregory know he was ready, baring telling him to his face. Nothing seemed to work. Maybe he should just tell him. Maybe that's what Gregory was waiting for.

Ryland shook his head, laughing quietly to himself as he thought about how he might have been able to skip the last two years of longing and misery just by talking with Gregory.

Setting his shovel against the side of the barn, Ryland grabbed his shirt and pulled it on, leaving it unbuttoned. He just needed to go talk with Gregory and they could get this whole thing worked out.

He didn't know why he hadn't thought of this before. It made perfect sense. Gregory had always been so patient with him. He must be waiting until Ryland felt that he was ready before claiming him.

With a little spring in his step, Ryland made his way into the house and upstairs toward Gregory's bedroom. He would just go in and tell Gregory he was ready to be his mate and everything would be okay.

Walking to Gregory's door, he knocked, waiting for a reply before he opened the door. His eyes immediately moved to Gregory standing by his dresser searching around in a drawer. Ryland had to take a deep breath when he realized that Gregory had just gotten out of the shower. He was dressed in nothing but a towel around his waist.

“Uh, hey, Gregory. I was thinking maybe we could go to the lake or something,” he stammered, his eyes glued on the small furring of hair on Gregory’s abdomen, just above the edge of the towel. *Hot damn!*

“Sorry, Ry, not today. I’m heading into town. How about tomorrow?” Gregory replied.

“Maybe I can go with you? We can stop in someplace and get a bite to eat, maybe catch a movie,” Ryland said eagerly as he watched Gregory pull a white shirt out of his dresser and set it on the bed.

“Today wouldn’t be a good day, Ry. How about we do something next week, huh?”

“Oh, yeah, sure. Next week would be fine, Gregory,” Ryland said as he shoved his hands in the pocket of his jeans and looked down at his feet.

He was making such a mess of this. Why couldn’t he just tell Gregory he was ready and be done with it? Why did he have to act like such an idiot? Gregory was his mate. He was waiting for Ryland tell him he was ready.

“Gregory,” he tried again, gathering up as much courage as he could.

“Was there something else, Ry?”

“Well, I’m—I just wanted to say that, well, you and I, well, we’re—we just—” Ryland stammered, his face burning red.

“Just spit it out, Ryland,” Gregory said as he sat on the side of the bed and pulled on his sock.

“I just wanted to say that I’m old enough now, Gregory.”

“Old enough for what, Ry?” Gregory asked as he reached for his other sock.

“For you. I’m old enough for you to claim me now, and—”

“What in the hell are you talking about?” Gregory shouted, his head coming up to look at Ryland in shock, his gaze intent on him.

“I know you’ve been waiting for me to tell you when I felt I was ready and I am, ready, I mean,” Ryland said quickly, confused by the shocked look on Gregory’s face.

“Ryland, you’ve been out in the sun too long. You’ve fried your brain. Why don’t you go take a shower and cool off,” Gregory chuckled as he got to his feet and reached for his shirt, pulling it over his head.

By the time he had the shirt pulled down past his face, Ryland was kneeling at his feet. He put his hands on Gregory’s thighs, pausing briefly to glance at the hard muscles under his hands. *Damn, he was sexy.*

“Ryland,” Gregory began.

“Gregory, I haven’t been out in the sun too long. I’m serious. I’m ready for you to claim me.”

“Ryland, I can’t claim you. You’re not—”

“I am your mate, Gregory. You know I am. Why won’t you claim me?” Ryland cried out, suddenly terrified that Gregory was denying their bond.

“It doesn’t matter, Ryland. You’re not—”

“It doesn’t matter? How can you say that? How can you deny what we have? If you would just claim me, we could—”

“Enough!” Gregory shouted as he pushed Ryland back away from him. He grabbed his jeans off of the bed and stalked over to the bathroom door. Pausing in the doorway he turned to look back at Ryland.

“I am not going to claim you, Ryland. You’re too young for me. I don’t want to discuss this with you again. Do I make myself perfectly clear?”

Ryland stared at Gregory, his mouth hanging open in shock. Gregory was denying their bond. He really didn’t want him. He hadn’t been waiting for Ryland to be ready. As far as he was concerned, Ryland would never be ready.

He slowly climbed to his feet, suddenly feeling very old despite Gregory's opinion. He stared everywhere around the room except at Gregory, wiping his hands on his jeans. He didn't know what to do, what to say.

Walking across the room, he paused in the door. "I'm sorry, Gregory. I won't bother you again."

"Ry, Ryland, damn it, Ryland," Gregory said as Ryland walked through the door ignoring his call.

"Fuck!" he growled as he punched the wall next to him.

\* \* \* \*

Ryland didn't know how he made it back to his room or how much time had gone by when he heard Leyland's soft voice calling to him through the door. He got to his feet and crossed the room, opening the door just enough to look out at Leyland.

"Hey, you coming down for dinner?"

"No, I'm not feeling very good. I thought I'd just go to bed," Ryland replied.

"Not feeling good, huh? Have I mentioned that I can tell when someone is lying to me?" Leyland asked, one eyebrow raised.

Ryland closed his eyes briefly before looking back at Leyland. "I'm just not hungry right now and I don't feel like being around people, okay?"

"Well, at least that's the truth," he chuckled. "Okay, you get yourself to bed and I'll make your excuses."

"Thanks, Leyland," Ryland said as he started to close the door. But a sudden thought came to him. "Hey, has Gregory come back from town yet?"

Leyland eyed him briefly before shaking his head. "No, but if you're really worried about him, I believe you can contact him. I can always tell where Jake and Lucas are. You can do the same thing with Gregory."

“How?” Ryland asked, confused.

Leyland shrugged. “I’m not real sure how it’s done. I just think about them real hard and I’m there. I think all mates can do it. It’s worth a shot anyway.”

Ryland nodded his head. “Thanks, Leyland.”

“No problem. Hey, you want me to send Gregory up if I see him?”

“No.”

“Liar,” Leyland chuckled as he turned and went back down the hallway.

Ryland shut the door and walked back over to his bed and sat down. He was just supposed to think about Gregory and he would know if he was okay? *Was it that easy?*

He knew Gregory said they didn’t have something together but he needed to connect with him, even if it was just for a few minutes. No matter what Gregory said, they were mates. They belonged together.

Climbing back onto his bed, he stretched out, closing his eyes and concentrating on Gregory. He thought about the way he looked, the way he smelled, the way he made Ryland feel. He thought about the love he had for Gregory and the love he wanted in return.

At first, he felt nothing. He was about to give up when a shock went through him like a lightening bolt. He cried out as he was suddenly filled with a rush of images and emotions coming from Gregory.

So much was coming through so fast he had a hard time filtering them all. But, one by one, he began separating the emotions and images that were coming to him. Gregory was obviously in a bar somewhere. The smell of the smoke and alcohol filled his senses.

But he wasn’t alone. Ryland could smell the cheap cologne of another man. Tears started to form in his eyes as Ryland realized part of what he was feeling from Gregory was arousal. He was doing something intimate with this man.

He desperately tried to shut down the link he had established with Gregory, but it was like the floodgates had been opened and couldn’t

be closed. He could feel every touch of the stranger's hands on Gregory, every little kiss.

What was worse was that he could feel Gregory touching him back. He wasn't being forced to be with this man, this stranger. He was there of his own free will. He wanted this man to do what he was doing.

As the man wrapped his hand around Gregory's hard cock, Ryland began to cry. His hands clenched in the hair on the side of his head as he tried to block out the images coming in. He couldn't see this. The agony of watching his mate being intimate with another man was just too much.

With a loud scream, Ryland ripped the link between them apart. He felt like his head was going to explode from the backlash. The throbbing was so bad, he saw spots of light and his vision began to fade.

He heard his bedroom door slam open and Leyland speaking to him a moment later, but it took him a minute to figure out what he was saying.

"Ryland, what happened? What did you do?" Leyland asked, concern in his voice.

"It doesn't matter, nothing matters anymore," Ryland whispered as he rolled away from Leyland and stared at where the wall should be, but all he could see was blackness.

He was right, though. Nothing mattered. Gregory refused to claim him. He didn't want him because he was too young. Instead, he went into town and betrayed the bond that they had. Ryland wondered how many times he had gone to someone else?

*What did it matter?* He could continue to go to others as much as he wanted. Ryland was done. He wasn't going to chase after someone that clearly didn't want him. He had been stupid to think that Gregory wanted him in the first place.

He had seen the guy he was with. He was Ryland's total opposite. Ryland was only five foot ten. This guy was closer to six foot two.

Ryland had short blond hair. This guy had black hair. Ryland was young. This guy was closer to Gregory's age. They couldn't have been more different.

To top it all off, this guy had Gregory's attention. Ryland certainly didn't have that. Until today, Ryland wasn't even sure Gregory even knew that Ryland thought of him in an intimate way. *Oh, he was so embarrassed. How was he supposed to see Gregory every day now?*

Ryland couldn't believe he had spent all of these years waiting to be old enough for Gregory and none of it mattered. He would never be good enough for Gregory. It made perfect sense to him now that he thought about it.

His family hadn't wanted him. They had taken him out into the woods, beaten him up, and left him for dead. His mate didn't want him either. He would rather go into town and be with a stranger than be with his mate. He had made that perfectly clear.

Basically, no one wanted him. Why would they? He apparently wasn't attractive, he certainly wasn't strong, and he wasn't that smart either. He couldn't even shift into a wolf like the other members of his pack. He really had no redeeming qualities.

He wondered if anyone would ever want him?

## Chapter 2

Gregory walked into the large room the held the kitchen and the dining room just as Jake started chuckling. His eyebrows nearly shot through his forehead when Leyland burst out laughing as well. What had he walked in on?

“Possessive behavior, my ass. More like juvenile behavior,” Leyland said.

“Leyland!” Jake admonished.

“Oh please, you and Lucas are fighting over me like a dog with a bone. I know I’m cute, but there is a limit.”

“You know, Jake, it’s nice to see you with your mate. I don’t know about the rest of the pack, but I’ve always thought that nothing could ruffle your fur. You’re little mate there seems to do nothing but,” Gregory chuckled as he sat down next to Ryland.

His eyes darted quickly to Ryland. He had been trying to get him alone to talk to him for days, but Ryland seemed to slip past him at every turn. Maybe he could pin him down now.

Despite how hard it was on him, he missed Ryland flaunting his sexy little body around him all of the time. It was everything he could do to stay away from him, to give him the time he needed to grow up before Gregory claimed him as his mate, but he still missed being with him.

No one could have been more surprised than Gregory when he had discovered the young Ryland, battered and bruised, all those years ago. The moment he had rolled him over and Ryland had opened his swollen eyes to look up at him, Gregory had known that he was looking at his future mate.



In the beginning, Gregory had just wanted to care for the injured boy that he had found. Over time, he had become his friend and mentor. He had been thankful that Ryland seemed to understand the boundaries that Gregory had set up in their relationship.

That had been six years ago. Gregory had spent that time slowly going out of his mind. With each day that passed, Ryland was getting sexier. The last two years had been the hardest. Ryland was now old enough to be claimed by pack law.

Since Ryland had turned eighteen last year, however, he had become more aggressive in his pursuit. He seemed to be around wherever Gregory was, usually in some state of undress. His tight muscular body seemed to brush up against Gregory's at every opportunity. Ryland had even started coming to Gregory's room late at night to *talk*.

Gregory wasn't sure how much more he could take before he cracked. The moment that he had discovered that little Ryland was his mate, he had given up being with anyone else. It would be a betrayal of their bond. It had also meant six years of no sex beyond what he could do for himself.

The idiotic trip into town that he took had brought home to him that he needed to start considering claiming Ryland as his mate. As young as he might be, they were still mates.

"Gregory," Jake growled at him, dragging his attention away from Ryland's still form.

"Be nice, Gregory, or I'll sic Leyland on you," Lucas growled, sending Leyland into peels of laughter.

"Oh yeah, I'd like to see that," Gregory laughed, puffing out his chest. "I think I could take the little squirt."

He liked Leyland. For one, he was making Jake and Lucas happier than they had been in months. For two, he made Ryland laugh again. He hadn't realized that he hadn't seen Ryland laugh for awhile until he heard him laughing again.

"Gregory," both Jake and Lucas started to say at the same time

“Oh, you’re absolutely correct, Gregory,” Leyland replied as he wiggled his fingers in the direction of the kitchen.

Gregory watched with astonishment as the fridge door opened and a soda can came out, floating across the large open room to land on the table in front of Leyland.

“I’m sure a big, strong, wolf like you couldn’t possibly be beaten by little old me,” Leyland said as he reached down and popped the top of the soda, pouring some in his glass before wiggling his fingers again. The soda can rose in the air again and floated down the table to land before Gregory’s astonished face.

“Thirsty?” Leyland asked innocently as if a can of soda had not just floated around the room. “Can I get anyone else anything?”

Gregory lifted his shocked face to Leyland’s, then Lucas and Jake.

“Did you know about this?” he asked.

Jake nodded. “He’s got a lot of tricks up his sleeve, hence, the two mates. Apparently it takes two mates to keep him grounded and safe. One, as you can imagine, is just not enough.”

“I’m not sure two will be enough,” Gregory said, his face still looking stunned. “What else can he do?”

“*As I told my mates, I can do a lot of things, Gregory,*” Leyland said into Gregory’s head. “Would you like to see what I can do?”

Gregory stared at Leyland for several tense moments before shaking his head. “No, I think telling me would be better. I’m not sure how many more shocks I can take today.”

“Well, to be honest, I’m not even sure what all I can do. I know I can move things with my mind and I can talk telepathically. I can also tell if someone is lying to me. “

Leyland glanced at both of his mates. “Remember that,” he chuckled.

Jake and Lucas both rolled their eyes. “Well, shit. That’s going to make our lives interesting.”

Leyland laughed again. “Like your lives would be anything but, even if I couldn’t tell if you were lying. You’re both mated to me and

to each other. You're life couldn't get any more complicated. You might as well hang on and enjoy the ride because I can promise you, boring it will not be."

"What do you mean you don't know what all you can do?" Gregory heard Ryland ask. He turned his eyes to look over at his mate. He looked tired. There were little gray bags under his eyes.

"Leyland?" Ryland asked, when Leyland didn't immediately answer him.

"Sorry, Ryland, just warning the big guys of what they have to look forward to," Leyland chuckled. "I don't know all of what I can do because not all of my abilities have manifested themselves yet. That only happens after I've been claimed by both of my mates."

"Great, let the fireworks begin," Gregory drawled sarcastically.

"Gregory, I didn't ask to be born this way any more than you asked to be born below an alpha ranking. We are born to be who we are and nothing can change that. Our only choice is how we use what we have been given."

"And how would you use the ability to float soda cans across the room? Throw a tea party?" Gregory just couldn't see how this—ability of Leyland's would be a good thing.

"Gregory, you will not disrespect my mate," Jake growled angrily, getting to his feet.

Gregory watched Leyland quickly jump to his feet and grab Jake's hand. "It's okay, cowboy. He has the right to ask these questions, even be skeptical. Would you have believed me if you hadn't seen it with your own eyes?"

He watched Leyland push Jake back until he was sitting down in his chair again before he turned his gaze back to look at Gregory.

"Look, everyone is born with some ability. As the alpha, you have the ability to rule this pack. Lucas, as your beta, is the voice of reason for you, cause let's face it, cowboy, you have a temper."

Lucas started laughing. "He so has you pegged," Lucas said, getting a snarl from Jake.

“Gregory has his own ability. He doesn’t believe in things he can not see or touch. While that can be a blessing because no one is able to fool him, it can also be a hindrance. He doesn’t believe in anything that is not tangible.”

“Like the Easter Bunny or Santa Claus?” Gregory chuckled. *He had an ability? Really? Since when?*

“And?” Jake asked.

Leyland chuckled, patting Jake’s arm, then walked around the table to stand behind Gregory, each of his hands placed firmly on Gregory’s shoulders. He was making Gregory very nervous

“As I told you before, Gregory, there are a lot of things I can do,” Leyland whispered into his ear. “For example, *I can tell you how much your little mate, Ryland, loves you and wishes that you would claim him,*” he finished mentally for Gregory’s mind only.

Gregory nearly jumped out of skin when Leyland began speaking into his mind. He had heard of mates being able to do this, but he had never really seen any evidence of it. Until he could prove it, yeah, he was skeptical.

Which was why Leyland was starting to freak him out, especially when he started talking about Ryland and his feelings toward Gregory.

“*He thinks you don’t care for him because you won’t claim him, that you are disgusted by his youth and eagerness. Eagerness he uses to hide the fact that he is trying to please you, to get you to notice him,*” Leyland continued as he reached over to place his hand on Ryland’s shoulder.

“*Can you hear what is in his heart? I can. He’s crying out for you, despondent because he can feel your mating bond, but doesn’t think you will ever love him the way he loves you. Can you hear it, Gregory?*”

Leyland let go of Ryland’s shoulder and grabbed his hand, bringing it up to press against Gregory’s, wrapping his own two hands

around theirs, bridging the mental gap between them. Gregory inhaled deeply as the mental bridge between Ryland and himself opened up.

He could hear the panicked thoughts running through Ryland's mind. Everything he was thinking and feeling was coming through to him. Gregory could swear he could see right down into Ryland's heart.

Ryland was afraid that Gregory would know his deepest secret—the love he had kept hidden for so long. Gregory could feel his heart pounding in his chest as he realized what Ryland had been going through.

He had known when Gregory went into town and started fooling around with some guy he found. He had felt it through their mating bond. Loving Gregory as he did, it had been such a deep betrayal.

Gregory could feel Ryland's anguish when he decided that Gregory didn't claim him because he didn't want him. Going into town like he did had only reinforced that misconception. No wonder Ryland had been avoiding him. He was heartbroken.

The silence in the room was deafening as Gregory took in everything Ryland was feeling. Then suddenly Ryland, tears in his eyes, jumped to his feet and ran from the room. Gregory watched him go, his chest heaving, his eyes filled with anguish at the heartache he had inadvertently caused his mate.

*“He's your mate, Gregory, and it's time that you claimed him. But only if you're willing to accept all that entails. He's just like me, Gregory, and if you can't accept that, let him go. If you can, then he's waiting for you,”* Leyland whispered.

Without a word, Gregory jumped to his feet and ran from the room after Ryland so fast that Leyland ended up on his ass on the floor. He had to find Ryland and let him know how very wrong he had been. He was going to claim his mate and to hell with giving him more time. Ryland was his and it was time for him to stake his claim.

\* \* \* \*

Ryland ran from the room, tears streaming down his face. He couldn't believe how Leyland had betrayed his friendship the way he had. He had no right to share his deepest darkest secrets, his hidden desire for Gregory.

When Leyland had started doing what he did, Ryland hadn't realized that Gregory was going to be able to tell everything that was in his heart. These were things that he kept hidden deep within him, things that weren't meant to be shared.

Now that Gregory knew how Ryland felt, he was going to hate him. He had made his feelings more than clear. He wanted Ryland in his life, but only on his terms and his terms meant no heavy emotional stuff, not mating, and no love.

Ryland ran into the barn, quickly finding a clean empty stall and throwing himself down in the corner. He pulled his knees up to his chest and wrapped his arms around them. He let the tears flow down his face as he dropped his head onto his knees.

He had wondered if his life could get much worse. Now he knew that it could. He had thought knowing Gregory was with someone else would destroy him. But having Gregory hate him was way worse. He realized that he would have taken even Gregory being with someone else if it meant he could still have Gregory in his life. He would give anything to have Gregory in his life.

Deep sobs of sorrow started shaking Ryland's body as he realized that now he really had nothing, no family, no pack, no mate. After what Leyland had done, he didn't even have any friends. He wished that his family had killed him that night six years ago.

\* \* \* \*

Gregory followed the sweet scent of his mate into the large wooden barn. Once inside, he tilted his head, listening. His eyes

closed briefly as he realized that he could hear Ryland crying in one of the horse stalls.

He had done this. He had made him so miserable that he was crying his eyes out. He would deserve it if Ryland never had another thing to do with him. He wouldn't blame him in the least. But he still had to try.

Walking quietly through the barn until he reached one of the empty horse stalls, he looked around the edge. His heart contracted with pain as he saw Ryland curled up in one corner on the straw, his face buried in his knees as sobs shook his entire body.

He knew he probably wasn't welcome, but he didn't care. He had to try. Walking into the stall, Gregory crossed the small room and sat down next to him. He wrapped his arms around him, pulling his smaller body up against his.

"Ssshhh, Ry. Stop crying, baby, please?" he whispered against his hair.

"Go away," Ryland begged, burying his face deeper into his knees.

"No, I'm not going anywhere."

"Then I will," he replied as started to climb to his feet so he could escape.

"Oh, no you don't," Gregory replied as he grabbed at Ryland, pulling him back down to the straw before rolling his smaller body underneath his larger one. He settled himself over the top of him, holding his hands over his head.

"You're not going anywhere either," he said as he looked down at Ryland's tear stained face. He switched his hands so that he was holding both of his smaller hands in one of his. Reaching down with the other, he wiped the tears from his cheeks.

"Gregory, please don't, I'm sorry. You weren't supposed to—" Ryland pleaded, his words broken by the sobs coming from his chest. He turned his shamed face away from Gregory, trying to hide it in his arm.

“Ssshhh, baby, it’s okay,” Gregory responded, his words soft and meant to comfort. “Look at me, Ry, please?”

Ryland slowly turned his face to look up at Gregory, stunned at the tender look on his face. He didn’t understand why Gregory was looking at him the way he was. It was almost like he really cared. But that couldn’t be right.

“Gregory,” he whispered.

“It’s time for me to claim my mate,” Gregory said, reaching down with his hands to frame Ryland’s face.

“But, I’m your mate,” he replied, confused.

“I know.” Gregory grinned just before he lowered his lips to his, kissing him for the very first time. He was instantly overwhelmed by the sweet taste. He tasted like honeyed wine and Gregory wanted to taste him for the rest of his life.

Ryland’s hands clenched in his shirt as he explored the depths of his mouth. He ran his tongue along his lips, feeling his strong canines drop down. Ryland groaned when Gregory ran his tongue quickly across them before diving into his mouth.

“Ry,” Gregory murmured when he finally lifted his head. He opened his eyes to look down at him, chuckling at the stunned look in his light blue eyes. “You said you were ready for me to claim you. Are you still ready?”

Gregory could see him swallow as he looked up at him, considering his words. Ryland held the power of the world in his hands at that moment. He would do whatever he wanted. As much as he hoped that his mate would accept him, after what he had done, he wouldn’t be surprised if he told him to go to hell.

He was never more grateful as when Ryland nodded his head, giving his accent. Lowering his head, he once again claimed the swollen lips below him. He wasn’t going to give him a chance to change his mind.

Moving his hands further down Ryland’s body, he pushed them up under the edge of his shirt, feeling the smooth muscled skin



underneath. But it wasn't enough. Grabbing the edge of his shirt, Gregory pulled, ripping the thin shirt down the middle.

He looked up when he heard a soft laugh. His face turned a little red as Ryland looked down at the torn shirt in his hands. "A little eager, are you?"

Gregory shrugged, then grinned. "I've been waiting six years to claim you. Six years of dreaming of no one but you. I think saying I'm a little eager is an understatement."

"But you, the other night you—" Ryland stammered, tears coming back to his eyes as he remembered the pain of feeling Gregory being intimate with someone else. He couldn't go through that again.

Gregory shook his head. "I couldn't go through with it. I'll admit I tried. I've been waiting six years for you. I haven't been with anyone since the day I found you. It was all getting to be too much for me. But, I didn't go through with it."

"But—"

"No, baby. I swear I didn't. I wouldn't lie to you. I made a mistake. I'm not infallible. I make as many mistakes as the next guy, and I'll admit that was a pretty big one. But then I started thinking about you and I just couldn't do it. The guy wasn't real happy about it, but I left anyway."

"Do you really think I care whether he was happy about it or not?" Ryland grumbled, dropping his eyes so that Gregory couldn't see the anger and hurt in them.

"Ry, I'm sorry. You'll never know how sorry I am. I never expected you to know what I was doing. I—"

"You never expected to get caught, you mean?"

Gregory took a deep breath, letting it out slowly. He knew that Ryland had a right to be angry with him. He had been an idiot for even thinking about being with someone else, especially when he had someone so special waiting for him.

"Baby, all I can do is tell you that I'm sorry. It will never happen again. I swear. Beyond that, you have to decide if you forgive me or

not. You don't even have to decide now. But don't throw away what we could have because I did something stupid."

"I felt it all, you know, every time he touched you, every kiss, everything. I even felt him put his hands on your—your—I knew exactly what was going on, Gregory. How would you feel if I went out and let somebody else fuck me and you could feel it all happen?"

"I think I would probably have to kill someone," Gregory growled fiercely through gritted teeth.

"You think?" Ryland asked, glaring up at Gregory's angry face. "Imagine how I felt, especially after you told me you didn't want me. I was your mate and you turned me down to go be with some stranger. How could you? How could—"

Gregory felt all his anger slip away when he saw the tears slipping down Ryland's face. He had known that Ryland knew he had gone into town, but he had no idea that he had felt everything that had happened. He never felt more ashamed than he did at that moment.

He reached down and caressed the side of Ryland's face, wiping the tears away. "I'm sorry, baby. I will never be intimate with another man as long as I live. Only you, I swear."

"Or a woman," Ryland murmured.

"Or a woman," Gregory agreed, smiling down at him "No one but you, baby."

"Fine, but if you ever—" Ryland warned.

"Not going to happen, Ry. Besides," Gregory said, gazing down at his naked chest with hungry eyes, "with you to keep me occupied, when will I have the time? I don't plan on letting you get away from me for a long, long, time."

"Oh yeah? And just how am I supposed to keep you occupied during this long period of time?" Ryland asked, a mischievous little glint in his eyes.

"I have a few ideas." Gregory chuckled as he bent his head to lick at the golden skin between his neck and shoulder. As he swiped his tongue over the sensitive flesh, he felt the body beneath him shudder.

“Care to share them with me?” Ryland groaned as he arched his neck, giving Gregory better access to his throat.

Gregory scraped his teeth gently across a small patch of skin. “This is where I’m going to bite you when I claim you, Ryland,” he whispered, his hands moving down his chest to the buttons of his pants.

He quickly freed Ryland’s cock from his pants, rubbing his hand briefly over the hard flesh. As his thumb skimmed across the top, smearing pre-cum in its wake, he scraped his teeth over his neck again.

“Do you want me to claim you, Ry?” he whispered.

“Yes,” Ryland hissed. His hands came up to grab Gregory’s head, his fingers fisting in his hair as he pulled his head down to his neck. “Now, Gregory, do it now!”

Gregory tightened his fingers around cock in his hand, quickly stroking him as he sank his teeth into his neck. His eyes drifted closed as he savored the sweet taste of his mate, now his forever. Ryland tasted just as he did when Gregory had kissed him, like sweet honeyed wine. It was a delicious flavor that he knew he would be obsessed with for the rest of his life.

He opened his eyes as he lifted his head, looking down in astonishment as Ryland cried out. His hips lifted frantically, pushing against Gregory as he came, covering Gregory’s hand with shot after shot of pearly white seed.

“Fuck!” he whispered vehemently, feeling his own cock throb against his zipper. That was the sexiest thing he had ever seen. He lifted his hand to his lips, his tongue darting out to lick at some of the seed on his hand.

*Oh Fuck!* Even this tasted like sweet honeyed wine, just a bit more tangy. He was doomed. Everything about his mate said that he was going to quickly become an obsession, if not a downright need—like breathing.

“Sorry.”

Gregory's eyes fell down to Ryland's burning face at the softly spoken word. He was avoiding his gaze, his face filled with embarrassment. He was upset that he had come so quickly, Gregory realized.

"I'm not. That was hot. I plan on seeing that look on your face again at least once more tonight." He chuckled before he licked the rest of his hand off.

"You're not upset?"

"Why would I be upset?" he asked curiously.

"Because I, because I came so fast?" Ryland murmured, his face burning even more.

"Hell, no. Do whatever feels right. Tells me I'm doing something right." Gregory grinned as he scooted down his body. He pulled his jeans down his legs and tossed them over his shoulder. Scooting up between Ryland's legs, he looked up at his stunned face, wiggling his eyebrows.

"Let's see if we can get you to do it again."

A moment later, Ryland was crying out again as Gregory took his still sensitive cock into his mouth, his tongue cleaning up any remaining seed as he licked him up one side and back down the other, like an ice cream cone.

"Gregory," Ryland groaned, his hands grabbing at his hair. "Wait, wait, what about you?"

"Oh, believe me, baby, I'm gonna get mine. Don't worry about that. This is a long process. It's not just a *wham, bam, thank you, man*. This takes time, consideration, planning. You can't rush these things," Gregory said, chuckling.

"Wham, bam, thank you, man? Are you serious? Where do you get this shit?" Ryland laughed as he lifted his head and looked down his body to Gregory's grinning face.

"It just comes to me. Must be a gift."

"Gregory, you have a lot of other gifts. Stick to those." He laughed, dropping his head back down to the straw covered floor.

Gregory climbed his way back up the smooth body beneath him until he was straddling his abdomen. He planted his hands down, one on each side of Ryland's head, and looked down at him. "Just what other gifts are we talking about?"

"Well, if I remember correctly, you have an amazing chest. Of course, it's hard to tell with your shirt on."

Gregory grabbed the hem of his shirt and pulled it up, whipping the shirt over his head and sending it flying across the stall. "This help?"

"Oh, yeah," Ryland whispered, his eyes taking in every inch of Gregory's thickly muscled chest. He had a light spray of brown hair covering the top and moving down his stomach in an arrow shape, ending somewhere under the waistline of his jeans. "This is much better."

His hands trembled as he reached up and placed them against Gregory's chest just below his nipples. He had waited so long to be able to touch Gregory like this. Now that he had the opportunity, he wasn't sure what he wanted to do first.

"Ry?" Gregory asked after a moment when he didn't move.

"Huh?" Ryland said, his eyes moving up to Gregory's worried face. "What?"

"Are you okay?"

Ryland blushed a little, a small grin coming to his lips. "Yeah. I'm just not sure where to start." His eyes dropped back down to scan Gregory's chest. "I've waited so long—"

"How about here?" Gregory asked as he grabbed Ryland's hands and moved them up to his light brown nipples, hissing softly when nimble fingers grabbed his nipples, pulling at them gently.

Ryland paused, his eyes darting up to Gregory's. Seeing the half-lidded look Gregory was giving him, his lower lip caught between his teeth, one long canine sticking out, he grinned, pulling harder.

He watched with fascination as Gregory's head fell back on his shoulders and his hands began to rub and down Ryland's arms. He

suddenly felt the need to have his lips on Gregory's nipples. Grabbing his arms, he pulled until Gregory fell forward, his hands landing on each side of his head.

With Gregory's body leaning over his, he leaned up and stuck his tongue out, circling one taut nipple before sucking it in between his lips. He almost smiled when Gregory groaned.

Instead, he pulled the nipple into his mouth and gently bit down. It was like turning on an electrical switch. Gregory went wild. His hips began grinding against Ryland's hard cock. The harder he bit down, the wilder Gregory became.

Ryland reached down with his hands and quickly unzipped Gregory's pants. He had barely pulled Gregory's cock free when he was crying out his name, shooting into his hand, covering him with his release.

He barely had time to move his head before Gregory collapsed down on him, his head buried in the straw next to him. He continued to stroke him, Gregory's body shuddering, until he began chuckling.

"Well, that certainly worked well," Gregory said as he sat back, grinning down at him.

"I thought you said this was a long process. That didn't seem very long to me," Ryland replied, chuckling himself.

"Yeah, well, it's supposed to be. I just wasn't expecting you to immediately zero in on my nipples like that."

"Hey, you started it," he countered. "If you didn't want me to touch your nipples, you shouldn't have moved my hands there."

"I wouldn't say I didn't want you to touch my nipples. But biting them was your idea. So, you started it. I thought I could handle you playing with them. Biting them is all together something different. My nipples are a hot spot for me. They are very sensitive."

"I kind of got that." Ryland laughed, his hands reaching up to graze over Gregory's nipples before pushing Gregory over onto his back. He grabbed the legs of his pants and pulled them down before crawling over Gregory, straddling his body.

“I think we should find out what else might be sensitive,” he murmured just before lowering his mouth to Gregory’s nipples again. He was rewarded with a deep groan from Gregory as he nipped gently with his teeth.

Gregory ran his hands down Ryland’s back to grab his ass, gently massaging him with his hands. *Damn!* He must have been working out, a lot. His ass was nice and tight. He gently swatted him.

“Turn around, baby.”

Ryland lifted his head, and raised an eyebrow in query as he stared down at him. Gregory couldn’t help but grin. He pointed down toward his newly inspired cock. “Head down there, ass up here.”

He helped his mate turn around until he was straddling his head. As he opened his mouth and swallowed Ryland’s cock, he realized that Ryland was a quick study. He already had his lips wrapped around Gregory’s cock, his tongue stroking over the head and the glands just beneath.

*Damn!* He was good. Gregory wasn’t sure how long he was going to be able to hold on. Ryland was lavishing his cock like he had been doing it for years. Knowing he would just get better with time was almost scary.

Not to be outdone, considering he was the one with all of the experience, Gregory began his own exploration, starting at the top of his cock and working his way up to his balls. His hands moved up to caress his ass, moving down between his cheeks and the small hole waiting for him.

He could feel the body above him tremble as he swallowed his cock and pushed a finger deep in his ass at the same time. No sooner had he pushed a finger in when Ryland began humping his hips back for more. Seems Gregory wasn’t the only one with a hot spot.

Gregory moved his head back, dropping the cock from his lips and moving up to the tight puckered hole above. Pulling Ryland’s cheeks apart, he dragged his tongue slowly over the area.

“You like that, baby?” he asked as he heard a long moan. He reached over with his hand and pushed in two fingers, dragging another moan from Ryland. Oh yeah, he liked that. Gregory grinned. Just wait until he found his sweet spot. He was going to explode.

Gregory watched eagerly as his stretched his lover, taking special note of what seemed to make him squirm. He certainly liked Gregory’s tongue on him. Two fingers seemed to be better than one. On a hunch, Gregory inserted a third finger, moving them around together.

Ryland gave up any pretence of trying to suck Gregory’s cock and just started moaning. He couldn’t believe how good Gregory’s fingers felt in his ass. Sure, he had played around with his ass before, but it was so much better having someone else do it for him, especially his mate.

And his mate certainly seemed to know what he was doing. Every move he made seemed to heighten his arousal even more. Gregory said that he wanted him to cum again tonight. If he kept doing what he was doing, it wasn’t going to be a problem.

“Gregory,” Ryland groaned, “you have to stop. I’m gonna—”

“Okay, baby, swing around,” Gregory said as swatted Ryland on the ass again, pulling his fingers free.

Ryland closed his eyes briefly at the tender swat. He might have to ask Gregory more about that later, much, much later. He quickly turned around so that he was facing Gregory, his legs straddling him.

“You ready, baby?” Gregory asked. At the quick nod of accent he received, he grabbed his cock. “Okay, you’re in charge here. Take it as slow as you need to.”

Ryland lifted himself up so that Gregory could place his cock against him. He looked down into Gregory’s eyes as he slowly lowered himself until he was fully impaled. He could see Gregory’s beautiful brown eyes getting darker with each inch he took.



Once his body was flush with Gregory's, he paused, savoring the feeling of having his mate deep within him for the very first time. It was better than anything he ever imagined, and he had imagined a lot.

"Ry, baby? You ready?" Gregory asked.

"Yeah."

"It's just like riding a horse, baby."

"Okay," Ryland started to laugh, "you really need to not make me laugh right now. I'm trying to concentrate here."

"Ry, this doesn't take much concentration. Just do what feels good."

"Oh, you mean like this?" Ryland asked as he put one hand on either side of Gregory's head, resting on his arms as he began moving his hips.

"Oh yeah, just like that," Gregory groaned as his mate began riding him. A little twinkle in his eyes, Gregory moved his hands up to Ryland's chest, his fingers going to his nipples, pulling and pinching gently.

"Tha—that's good too," Ryland replied.

"How about this?" Gregory asked as he reached down and palmed his cock. He began stroking him to the same rhythm Ryland was humping his hips against his groin.

"That's better," Ryland cried out, his movements beginning to become frantic.

Gregory knew he wasn't going to last much longer. The tight feeling of his mate wrapped around his aching cock was driving him out of his mind. He wanted to let Ryland control their first time together, but he didn't think he could.

Quickly rolling them over, he lifted Ryland's legs and pushed them back against his chest. As he started thrusting deep inside of him, he grimaced down into the dazed face staring back at him.

"Sorry, baby. I couldn't wait. You're just so damn tight, Ry. I'm not gonna last much longer."

“Sookay,” Ryland groaned as he wrapped his legs around Gregory’s waist and his hands around his neck, pulling him down until their bodies were pressed together. As soon as their lips met, he moved one hand down to begin pinching at Gregory’s nipple.

Gregory moaned into his mouth, his thrusts becoming rapid and ungraceful. As he felt himself getting closer to release, he turned his head, baring his neck to his new mate.

“Ry,” he whispered desperately.

Without even being asked, Ryland’s canines sank into the soft skin between his neck and shoulder. As Ryland drew in his taste, Gregory climaxed, sending spurt after spurt deep inside of him.

The moment Ryland lifted his teeth, softly licking him, Gregory turned his head and sank his own teeth into the spot he had bitten him before. He continued to thrust into him until he heard him cry out, feeling his hot seed splash between them.

Licking the bite mark closed, he lifted his head and looked down at sweet face bellow him, noting his closed eyes and heavy breathing. “You’re mine now, baby, and I’m never letting you go.”

### Chapter 3

Ryland rolled over in bed, reaching for Gregory. His hand came up empty. Lifting his head, he looked around. White walls and oak furniture. Okay, he was definitely in Gregory's bedroom. He was lying in Gregory's large bed naked, and he had a delicious ache in his ass. He was pretty sure he hadn't been dreaming.

"*Gregory*," he called through their mating bond. He waited several seconds for him to respond, but got nothing. "*Gregory?*" he called again. Still nothing. Why wasn't Gregory answering him?

Sitting up in bed he looked toward the bathroom when he heard the shower come on. *Was he in the bathroom?* Jumping quickly from the bed, he padded into the bathroom. He could see a body behind the steam in the shower.

Gregory jumped when Ryland pulled the shower door open. He turned, smiling when he saw his mate. "Morning, baby. Did you sleep okay?"

Ryland stepped into the shower, his hands immediately going to Gregory's chest. "Why didn't you answer me?"

"Huh, sorry, Ry. I didn't hear you."

"How could you not hear me?" Ryland asked as he pressed his body against Gregory's.

"Well, I was in the shower." Gregory chuckled as he wrapped his arms around Ryland's waist.

"Gregory, you still should have heard me," Ryland complained. "That's what the mating bond is all about. I can talk to you, you can talk to me. It doesn't matter where you are."

"Ry? Why are you getting so upset? I just didn't hear you."

“*Can you hear me now?*” Ryland asked through their bond, looking straight into Gregory’s eyes. He waited for some sign that Gregory had heard him, but Gregory just leaned in and started nibbling at his neck.

“Gregory, stop,” he whispered.

“What?” Gregory harrumphed, lifting his head to look at him.

Ryland grabbed the sides of Gregory’s face, looking right into his eyes. “*Can you hear me now?*” he asked again.

When Gregory didn’t answer him he started to get worried. “Did you hear me?”

“You didn’t say anything, Ryland,” Gregory replied, starting to get angry.

“Yes, I did. We’re supposed to have a mental bond. All mates have it. That way we can talk to each other without anyone hearing us. I’ve used it several times, but you’re not answering me.”

“You’re talking about the mating link. Yeah, we have it. But I haven’t heard you say anything,” Gregory replied.

“Say something to me.”

“*You have the sexiest body I’ve ever seen,*” Gregory replied, using their link. He waited for Ryland to say something, or even blush a little, but he didn’t. He just stared at him as if he was waiting.

“Well?” he finally asked, his heart sinking a little when Ryland shook his head.

“All mates are supposed to have this, Gregory. What if we’re not really mates?” Ryland cried out, his eyes filling with dread at the thought.

“Don’t say that!” Gregory yelled.

“But—”

“No! I don’t ever want to hear that come out of your mouth again. You’re my mate and I am not giving you up. There has to be some sort of explanation. We just have to figure out what it is. I’m your mate and you’re mine. We both know it. This doesn’t mean anything.”

Gregory turned off the shower and pushed the door open, pulling Ryland out with him. He tossed him a towel and grabbed his own, quickly drying off. Tossing the towel in the hamper, he grabbed Ryland's hand and pulled him into the bedroom.

"Come on, baby. We're going to get dressed and go talk to Jake. I'm sure he can tell us what's going on."

Ryland nodded, grabbing his jeans and pulling them on. He turned a little red when Gregory handed him a clean blue shirt, remembering that his was in tatters in a stall in the barn. With a grin, he pulled the shirt over his head.

Just as they reached the bedroom door, Gregory stopped Ryland, one hand on Ryland's arm, the other lifting his face up.

"No matter what, you are mine and I will not give you up. I claimed you, just like you wanted. You're mine now. Understood?"

Ryland nodded, a small smile crossing his lips. "I hear you, Gregory."

"Good," Gregory replied. He leaned in and gave Ryland a quick kiss before opening the door and pulling him out by the hand.

It took them just a moment to get down the stairs to Jake's study. Knocking softly, they waited for Jake to tell them to come in, opening the door when he did. Gregory pulled Ryland in behind him, their hands still clasped together.

"Hey, guys, what can I do for you?" Jake asked as he looked up from the papers he was reading over.

"We might have a problem and we were hoping you might be able to help," Gregory said as he sat down in a chair across the desk from him. He refused to let go of Ryland's hand when he sat down, letting their hands swing between the two chairs.

"You know that Ryland and I are mates," Gregory began.

"Yes, I've known for some time. Even if I didn't, Leyland told me that you were. I assumed he knew what he was talking about. Why?"

"I claimed him last night."

“Yeah, I kind of figured with the way you tore out of here last night. Congratulations. I hope you have many years together.”

“Huh. Yeah, thank you. But that’s not why we’re here. We seem to have a small problem,” Gregory replied.

“Problem?”

Gregory nodded. Ryland just looked worried. “We can’t talk to each other.”

Gregory knew he wasn’t explaining himself very well when Jake folded his hands together and raised an eyebrow at him.

“Not like that, Jake. We can’t talk to each other through our mating bond. He doesn’t hear me and I don’t hear him. I know he’s my mate like I know that I was born a man. It just is. I have never questioned it. But, we should be able to talk to each other.”

“Your link is broken.”

Gregory and Ryland turned to see Leyland walk into the room and go to sit down in Jake’s lap. He quickly settled himself in Jake’s arms, giving him a small kiss before turning to look at them.

“When Ryland tried to connect with, well, when Gregory went into town and—”

“It’s okay, Leyland. I already know about that, as does Gregory. We’ve already worked that out. He knows what will happen if he ever does that again.”

Leyland nodded. “Sorry, I didn’t want to go somewhere I wasn’t wanted.”

“No, no, it’s okay. We’ve already talked about that. Gregory knows that I’ll feed him his balls with a spoon if he ever plays around with anyone again.”

Both Jake and Gregory winced, sending Leyland and Ryland into peels laughter.

“Do you have to be quite so graphic?” Gregory asked, squeezing Ryland’s hand to let him know he was just joking.

“Yes!”

“Alright, alright, so Ryland has set down the rules. As for the bond, it’s broken.”

“What do you mean broken?” Gregory asked, clearly confused.

“That night when you went into town, Ryland was worried. He asked me about you and I told him that, as your mate, he could connect with you and see if you were okay.”

“That’s when he—”

Leyland nodded. “I assume so. Anyway, I was downstairs when I heard Ryland scream. By the time I got upstairs, it was too late.”

“What was too late?”

“From what I can tell, the pain of seeing you with someone else was too much for Ryland. In his bid to get away from it, he severed your bond. If it’s any consolation, I don’t think that was exactly what he was trying to do. He just couldn’t handle what was going on.”

“Can—can it be fixed?” Ryland whispered hoarsely, devastated beyond what he could verbalize.

“I honestly don’t know, Ryland. I’ve never run into something like this before. I can talk to my mother if you would like. She might know.”

Ryland nodded, feeling tears come to his eyes. He had just wanted to get away from the pain of watching Gregory being with someone else. He hadn’t meant to sever their bond. But if their bond was severed, what did that mean for them?

“Are we still mates?”

“Of course. That can’t change. You just won’t have that part of your bond. Not unless we can figure out how to fix it.”

Ryland was silent for several moments. So silent, Gregory began to get worried. “Ry?”

He raised his tear filled eyes to Gregory’s. “I’m sorry,” he whispered, the pain and anguish sparkling bright in his eyes for Gregory to see.

Gregory quickly moved to kneel at Ryland’s feet, wrapping his hands around his face. “Oh, baby, it’s not your fault. If anyone is to

blame here, it's me. I never should have done what I did. If I had just stayed home, this never would have happened."

"Remember that, Gregory," Leyland said, as if from far away. "There are always consequences for the choices we make, good or bad."

Gregory and Ryland both turned to look at Leyland in confusion. His eyes were an eerie pale green and he seemed to be staring off into space. Gregory raised an eyebrow in query at Jake, who just shrugged his shoulders.

Suddenly, Leyland shook his head, his eyes turning back to their normal vibrant green. "Well, that was weird."

"What was that all about, baby?" Jake asked as he rubbed Leyland's back.

Leyland just shrugged. "You got me, but if you suddenly get the idea to go on a vacation, I suggest you go."

"A vacation? What in the hell are you talking about?" Gregory asked, even more confused now than he had been a moment ago.

"I just have the feeling that you're both going to be going somewhere soon. More than your bond will be tested, Gregory, so remember what I said. The choices you make will have deep consequences, so think before you act."

Gregory remembered the day before when Leyland had talked to him in his mind and floated a soda can across the room. It kind of gave him the creeps. He wasn't sure he really wanted to know what he knew.

"Come on, baby, let's go down to the lake for a swim," Gregory said as he stood to his feet, pulling Ryland up with him.

"That sounds like a great idea," Leyland said, jumping to his feet. "Maybe we can all go. I'll see if Lucas wants to join us. We can pack a lunch or something."

Ryland nodded. "Sounds good to me. I'll go ask Thomas and Daniel if they want to go and see what we have in the kitchen."



“I just have to finish this real quick and then I’ll be up to change,” Jake added.

As Gregory followed Ryland out the door, he wondered how a romantic trip to the lake for two had turned into a free for all picnic for everyone? Oh well, maybe they could bring a blanket with them and have a *little nap* off alone together

\* \* \* \*

Twenty minutes later, Gregory was coming down the stairs to join Ryland in the kitchen when he heard a loud banging at the front door. He walked over, wondering who was pounding so loudly.

He didn’t recognize the men standing their, but he did scent that at least one of them was an alpha. He just wasn’t sure which one. Both of them were looking angry.

“Can I help you?”

“I want to see my son,” the first man demanded.

“I’m happy for you,” Gregory replied as he started to shut the door. Damned if he was going to stand there and listen to someone who was being rude. He had much better things to do. All of them involved getting his baby naked.

“Now, see here—” The man yelled as he pushed against the door.

“Look, buddy, I don’t know who you are or what you want, but you’d better let go of this door,” Gregory said as he pushed back against the door. He could hear Thomas and Daniel coming up behind him, shifting into wolf form.

Out of the corner of his eyes he saw Ryland walk around the corner from the kitchen. Great! Now his mate was in the room. His protective instincts brought his hackles up. No one was going to get in where his mate was.

Gregory redoubled his effort push the door closed. He suddenly felt a hand on his shoulder. Turning his head, he felt some relief when he realized that it was Jake, his alpha.

“Gregory? What’s going on here? Who is this?”

“I was—” Gregory began just to be interrupted by a loud voice yelling over the two of them.

“Where in the hell is my son?”

“Daddy?” Leyland squeaked, stepping out from behind Lucas and starting towards the door.

“Leyland?” the man at the door yelled.

“Lucas, stop that. That’s my father.”

“Leyland, stay where you are,” Jake commanded, stepping in front of Gregory to face Leyland’s father. “Now, see here—”

“I want to see my son!” the man yelled again, trying to push past Jake.

Gregory watched with astonishment as the man took a swing at Jake.

“Alright, that’s enough!” Leyland yelled from behind him. Suddenly, Gregory couldn’t move a muscle. The only thing he could move were his eyes. He watched with shock as Leyland pulled his arm from Lucas’s grasp and walked towards the front door.

Stopping beside Jake, he carefully pushed him back, then pushed his father out of the way. “Mom?”

“Yes, Leyland,” came an exasperated voice from beyond the door.

“Would you like to come in? Maybe have some tea?”

“That would be lovely, dear.”

“Ryland, would you go put some water on for tea, please?” Leyland asked, turning his head to look at Ryland.

Gregory could see the astonishment on Ryland’s face as he ran from the room. He could also see Leyland lean up and kissed Jake on the cheek as he walked past him. “I’ll be right back, cowboy. I’m just going to sit my mother down in the dinning room then you can beat each other bloody all you want.”

Jake was livid. Lucas wasn’t much better. He couldn’t blame them. It was infuriating to be paralyzed when he should be protecting his mate. If Jake and Lucas didn’t do something about their little

mate, he would. No one had the right to keep him from protecting what was his.

\* \* \* \*

Ryland's hands sweated as he turned the water on for tea. He couldn't believe what Leyland had done. Jake, Lucas, Gregory, hell everyone, was going to be so pissed. He sure didn't want to be in their shoes when Leyland finally released them.

He looked up when Leyland walked in, escorting an older woman to the dining table. He gave her a quick hug before sitting her down. "Ryland, why don't you keep my mother company while I go let the cavemen loose?"

Ryland nodded, his eyes still wide with wonder, but he quickly sat down next to Leyland's mother and offered his hand, introducing himself. "Hello, I'm Ryland."

"Mom, why don't you explain the whole tri-omega thing to Ryland? I think you will both find it an interesting conversation. I think I'm going to be a little busy for the next few moments."

"Leyland, he won't hurt you will he?"

"Jake? God, no. He wouldn't hurt a hair on my head. That's not to say he won't be upset with me for awhile. I don't think Lucas is going to be much better. But neither of them would ever hurt me. They love me, Mom."

"Are you sure?" she whispered quietly.

"That they love me or that they won't hurt me?"

"Either? Both?"

"Yeah, I'm sure. But thank you for being concerned." He raised his voice a little so that the others eavesdropping in the other room could hear him. "It would have been nice if everyone in my life had been so concerned for my welfare instead of acting like animals, but what can you do, huh?"

As Leyland smiled at his mother and walked back into the living room, Ryland looked across the table at his mother.

“So,” he began after a small amount of silence. He could hear Leyland in the other room giving all the others a good chewing out. He sounded pissed and not one bit sorry that he had immobilized them.

“Leyland wanted me to talk to you about tri-omegas.”

“Yeah, he kind of explained what that was, but I’m still not quite sure I really understand it.”

“Well, you’d better learn, Ryland. You’re a tri-omega.”

“I’m a tri-omega? Are you serious? I don’t have any special abilities. I can’t even talk to my mate through the mating bond,” Ryland scoffed.

“Oh, you’re definitely a tri-omega. I can feel it. I don’t rightly know why you can’t talk to your mate, but you haven’t come into your abilities yet, and you won’t until you are claimed by your other mate.”

“My other mate?” Ryland croaked. “I already found my mate, Gregory.”

“Honey, tri-omegas have two mates. You’ll have two just like Leyland has Jake and Lucas. You just haven’t found him yet. But you will. You have to. Tri-omegas have to have two mates, Ryland.”

“I don’t have another mate. Gregory is my mate and I think it’s mean of you to say otherwise,” Ryland shouted as he jumped to his feet.

“Ryland? What’s wrong?” Gregory asked as he walked into the dining room, quickly crossing over to hug Ryland.

“She’s saying that I’m a tri-omega like Leyland and that I have to have two mates,” Ryland cried out.

Gregory turned to look at Leyland’s mother, his curiosity warring with his concern for Ryland. “Why would you say something like that to him? He already has a mate. Me!”

“Because I can feel it. You already know he’s an omega. You can smell it in him just like you can smell the alpha in Jake. If you look deeper, you will be able to feel the power just under the surface. Ryland is a tri-omega just as Leyland is. And he will have two mates.”

“Why? I don’t care about his abilities. He doesn’t need them. He needs me. I’m not going to just turn him over to someone else,” Gregory argued.

“Oh, you won’t be turning him over to anyone. He’ll need both of you to survive,” she said.

“What the hell are you talking about?” Gregory yelled.

“Ryland has to have two mates to survive. It would have been different if you had never claimed him, but now that you have, the process has already started. If he isn’t claimed by his other mate, and soon, he will die.”

Gregory stared at Lilla in horror. “What do you mean he will die?”

“It’s very simple, Gregory. Ryland now needs you to survive. If you don’t claim him on a regular basis, he will die. If he doesn’t find his other mate, and his other mate doesn’t claim him on a regular basis, he will die.”

“But, who is his other mate?”

Lilla shrugged. “I couldn’t tell you. Only Ryland can tell you that. But I do know you need to find him soon. Most times, a tri-omega waits until he has found both his mates before allowing them to claim him. That takes care of the whole time table thing.”

“But, we didn’t know.” Gregory could see the sympathy in Lilla’s eyes as she looked at him. “How much time do we have?”

“That’s hard to say. When did you claim Ryland?”

“Yesterday.”

“Then you probably have a little more time. It could be a year, a few months, or even a few weeks. If he starts getting too tired, or

looking rundown, you will know his time is running short. The quicker you find his other mate, the better for Ryland.”

“Gregory?” Ryland asked in a small fearful voice.

“It’s okay, baby, we’ll find your other mate and you’ll be fine,” Gregory assured Ryland, hoping it was true.

## Chapter 4

Gregory stared out over the churning blue water as the ferry cut through it. They were headed to Vourdala Island. After hearing about it, Jake and Lucas had both suggested that he and Ryland go there for a few days to get away.

Apparently, Vourdala Island was supposed to be the new hot vacation spot for shape shifters. Everyone that lived on the island was either pack or related to pack. Visitors to the island could be themselves without worrying that someone would discover that they were wolves.

While Gregory thought a small vacation was a good idea, the constant worry about Ryland's health was beginning to take its toll on him. He could barely stand for Ryland to be out of his sight, afraid that something would happen to him.

Ryland didn't seem to be doing much better. After waiting so long to be claimed by Gregory, he had been devastated to find out that he had to have another mate. Gregory wasn't too thrilled with the idea himself. Ryland was his. He didn't want to share him.

On the other hand, he would do whatever he had to do to keep Ryland strong and healthy, even if that meant sharing him with someone else. He just hoped when the time came, he could actually follow through with it.

"Gregory?"

Gregory turned his head to see Ryland coming up behind him. He opened his arms, wrapping them around Ryland when he walked into them.

"Hey, baby, how are you feeling?"

Ryland rolled his eyes. “I’m fine, Gregory. I wish you’d stop asking. I’m not going to die right this minute.”

“Let’s not talk about that right now, okay? We’re here to get away for a few days, just the two of us. We’re going to just enjoy ourselves and we’ll worry about all of this later when we get back home.”

“I’m sorry, Gregory. If I had known, I never would have—”

“Ssshhh, don’t say that. I don’t care who I have to share you with. You’re mine and I’m keeping you. I’m glad that I claimed you. I just wish that we had known about the tri-omega thing. We could have tried to find your other mate before I claimed you. I worry that we won’t find him in time.”

“Are you so sure it will be a him? What if my other mate is a female?”

“Now, there’s a horrid thought,” Gregory chuckled.

“I’m serious. What if my other mate is female?” Ryland asked again, looking up at Gregory.

“Then we’ll deal with it. As long as you and I are together, there isn’t anything we can’t deal with, Ry.”

“Gregory, I’m not sure I can be with a female. Hell, I don’t really want to be with anyone except you, but at least with another man there’s a hope I could get it up. A female—I don’t really think so.”

“Don’t worry, baby, I’ll help you get it up,” Gregory said, grinning and wiggling his eyebrows until Ryland started laughing. “If you’re really good, I might even help you keep it up.”

“Speaking of keeping it up,” Ryland murmured, his face blushing, “there was something I wanted to talk to you about.”

“Oh yeah? And what would that be?” Gregory asked. His curiosity was peeked by the blush covering Ryland’s cheeks and the way he avoided looking at him in the eyes.

“Well, you know when we were in the barn that first night?”

“Yeah?” *This could be interesting.*

“And you remember how you wanted me to turn over?”

“Yeah?” *Just say it!*



“Well, you remember when you, well, you—”

“Ryland, just say it. You’re driving me nuts here.”

“I thought that maybe we could, that you could—” Ryland stammered.

Ryland looked so embarrassed. Gregory felt for him. They had been pretty good friends for several years, but the sexual side of their relationship was a new one. It was never easy to ask for something if you weren’t sure your partner would be into it.

“Baby, listen to me. There isn’t anything you can’t ask me about. If there’s something you want to try, ask me and we’ll try it. Barring serious pain or humiliation, I’m pretty much up for anything.”

“I want you to spank me,” Ryland said quickly, his forehead buried in Gregory’s chest.

*I want you to—* “You want me to spank you?” Gregory asked quietly, a wicked grin starting to cross his lips. Well, this idea certainly had possibilities. Who knew his little man would be into something like that? *Hot damn!*

“Yes,” Ryland squeaked.

“Hey,” Gregory said, lifting Ryland’s burning face to his. “First off, nothing between us is taboo. If you want to try something, we’ll try it. Second, don’t be embarrassed about wanting to be spanked. Did you know that both Lucas and Jake spank Leyland on a regular basis? He loves it. Hell, for that matter, so do they.”

“Leyland likes to get spanked?” Ryland asked, his mouth dropping open in astonishment.

“Haven’t you heard Lucas and Jake talking about punishing him?”

“Well, yeah, but I thought—”

“Baby, they’re talking about taking him into their bedroom and paddling his ass. It’s sexual play for them. They’ve never hurt him, mind you. Spanking isn’t about that. But I have seen him having a hard time sitting down once or twice.”

“So, you don’t mind that—it doesn’t bother you that, I mean, you’d—” Ryland stuttered.

“No, baby, I don’t have a problem with it,” Gregory assured him.

“Then, do you think maybe we could go back to our cabin and discuss it further?” Ryland asked, peeking up at Gregory through his eyelashes.

“I think that’s one of the best ideas you’ve had yet,” Gregory chuckled, grabbing Ryland’s hand and walking him toward their cabin. He was so aroused by the idea of paddling Ryland’s ass, it was all he could do not to start running.

As soon as their door was closed, Gregory began working on the buttons of Ryland’s jeans, quickly pulling them down his legs and tossing them on the floor. He had Ryland’s shirt pulled over his head just as fast.

“Okay, baby, I want you to go lay down on your stomach on the bed. Hands over your head,” Gregory directed. He watched Ryland comply, his face still burning with embarrassment. As Ryland grabbed the headboard with his hands, Gregory started taking his clothes off, his eyes never leaving Ryland’s beautiful naked body.

Once he had taken all of his clothes off, he slowly climbed onto the bed, straddling Ryland’s legs. He finally settled himself down over Ryland’s thighs, his perfect tight ass right in front of him.

“If I do it too hard, you need to tell me, baby. I don’t want to hurt you or do anything that makes you uncomfortable. Okay?”

Ryland nodded his head, never lifting it from the pillow it was buried in.

Gregory lowered his hands, gently massaging each beautiful globe several times. Ryland had the perfect ass as far as he was concerned. Tight and rounded with just the right amount of curve to it to make a pair of jeans look like a priceless piece of art.

With a lust filled grin, Gregory lifted his hand and brought it down on Ryland’s tight ass. Looking down at the nice red handprint on Ryland’s ass, Gregory could feel his cock throbbing between his legs. Apparently he really liked this. He hoped Ryland liked it just as much.

He smacked him again, lifting his eyes to see Ryland's reaction. "Baby?" he asked after a moment when he got no response from Ryland.

"Harder," Ryland murmured.

*Harder?* Gregory brought his hand down again, a little harder this time, then again and again until Ryland's ass began to glow. *Damn that was hot!*

Pausing briefly, he grabbed his cock and pressed it down between Ryland's cheeks. As he swatted at Ryland again with one hand, he used his other hand to rub his cock up and down against Ryland's puckered hole.

Suddenly, Ryland scooted up. Gregory stopped, afraid that he had hurt him. But Ryland merely pulled his knees up under his chest, pushing his ass out, his legs settling down on each side of Gregory's thighs.

Even while he was grinning, Gregory brought his hand down on Ryland's ass again, a little harder this time. "I thought I told you to lie down on your stomach, Ry. I don't remember telling you to move. I just may have to punish you for disobeying me."

He watched with a great deal of satisfaction as Ryland pressed his chest down to the mattress and reached his hands over his head to grab the headboard. His ass was still nicely pointed back towards Gregory.

Gregory brought his hand down on Ryland's ass again, swatting him, then gently massaging the reddened area before letting his fingers trail down between his cheeks. He paid special attention to the little rosette that quivered at his touch.

"You know you've been a very bad boy, Ry," Gregory said as he swatted at him again. "I told you to do something and you disobeyed me."

As he swatted him again with one hand, he used his other to push a finger deep inside of him. He moved his finger around until he

could add another, which he did as he swatted at Ryland's glowing ass again.

"You know what happens to bad boys, don't you, baby?"

Ryland shook his head rapidly.

"They get punished," Gregory said as he moved his fingers around until Ryland's body suddenly stiffened. *Ah yes, there it was.* Now, Ryland's lesson in punishment could begin. As Gregory brought his hand down again and again on Ryland's ass, he used his fingers to stroke the sweet spot inside his ass.

Within moments, Ryland was yelling into his pillow, his ass pushing back against Gregory's hand. He couldn't believe how the feeling of Gregory's hand coming down on his ass was turning him on.

His cock was so hard he could have pounded nails. It seemed that the harder Gregory whacked him, the harder he got. He was still embarrassed that he wanted Gregory to spank him, but at the moment, he could not have cared less. It just felt too damn good.

"Gregory," he cried out, lifting his head, "you, Gregory, I need you."

"For someone that's being punished, you sure are making a lot of demands, Ryland," Gregory chuckled.

"Please."

"Well, since you asked so nicely," Gregory replied, quickly replacing his fingers with his cock. He pushed into him just as quickly, pausing when he felt his balls press against Ryland. He had to take several deep breaths to keep himself from releasing his load right there and then.

Finally, when he was in a bit more control, Gregory began moving. He set a rapid pace, pounding himself into Ryland's tight grasp. At the same time, he alternated between massaging his ass and spanking him.

When Ryland's body suddenly stiffened and he lifted his head to cry out, Gregory reached around and grabbed his cock, milking his orgasm until he could feel himself about to release too.

With a loud growl, he bent over Ryland and he sank his teeth into Ryland's neck. Just as the honeyed taste of his mate filled his mouth, he came, pumping himself into Ryland, filling him with his release. He continued to thrust into Ryland until there was nothing left to give.

Collapsing down beside him, he wrapped his arms around Ryland and pulled him over. He buried his face in the hair at the back of Ryland's neck, inhaling the sweet scent of his mate even as his hands gently massaged his chest.

"You okay, baby?" he finally asked when he could talk.

"Yeah," Ryland whispered back, his hand coming up to grab one of Gregory's, holding it to his chest. "That was, well, that was just—"

He turned his head to look back over at Gregory, a grin crossing his lips and he started to laugh. "I think I may be getting into a lot of trouble in the future. You might have to punish me a lot."

\* \* \* \*

"Hurry up, Gregory. I want to get checked in and see what this little island has to offer," Ryland said as he carried his bag off the ferry. He had been pretty depressed since Lilla had told him he needed a second mate. He just wanted Gregory.

After their little episode in their cabin, and now that they had finally arrived at Vourdala Island, he was suddenly feeling very excited. Contrary to what Lilla had said, he felt more alive than he had in days.

"I'm coming, baby. Don't get your pantyhose in a bunch," Gregory laughed as he caught up with Ryland. "Where is the hotel anyway?"

“Well, according to the map, it should be right up the street here,” Ryland replied, briefly looking down at the map in his hand. Lifting his head he looked around. “Maybe we should ask for directions?”

“No, that’s okay. We’ll find it.”

“You don’t want to ask for directions? You are such a man!”

Ryland laughed.

“I didn’t hear you complaining earlier.”

“Hell, no. I’m damn glad you’re a man. I just can’t believe you won’t ask for directions. I would if I was lost.”

“I am not lost. I just don’t know where the hotel is,” Gregory growled.

“Honey, I hate to say this, but that means you’re lost,” Ryland laughed, leaning up to kiss Gregory’s grim look away.

“Can I help you find something?”

Ryland and Gregory turned to see short honey blond haired man standing off to one side of them. Just behind him stood a very tall, very dark haired man. The only thing that didn’t make Ryland run in fear of him was the tender look he was giving the smaller man.

“Hi, I’m Ryland and this is my mate, Gregory. We’re looking for the hotel,” Ryland quickly replied, holding out his hand.

“Which hotel are you looking for? In the last year since we opened the island to tourists, we’ve had three open up. The Vourdala Inn, The Main Street Hotel, and funny enough, The Lupine Lodge,” the little man laughed.

“The Lupine Lodge? Are you serious? Someone actually named a hotel the Lupine Lodge?” Ryland asked in disbelief.

The little man nodded. “Yeah, the town council was against it, but what can you do? This is specifically a vacation spot for shifters. It’s actually a nice place, very rustic looking. However, the name—”

“Is hilarious,” Ryland laughed. “We would have booked in there if we had known about it. That place sounds like a hoot”

“Where are you staying?”

“The Main Street Hotel.”

“Well, it’s just up the street here. You can’t miss it. It’s a big blue building. However, if you’re really interested in staying at The Lupine Lodge, we can have you transferred over there. I’m sure that Michael wouldn’t mind.”

“We wouldn’t want to put anyone out. We’ve already booked our room at The Main Street Hotel. It seems rude to change hotels once we’ve already booked into one,” Ryland said.

“Oh, I’m sure it would be no problem,” the man countered.

“What would be no problem, *Majiktoka*,” the taller man asked as he walked up and wrapped an arm around him, planting a small kiss on his upturned lips.

“Ryland and Gregory here booked a room at the Main Street Hotel. I was telling them about the Lupine Lodge and they expressed an interest in staying there, but they don’t want to be a bother to anyone since they’ve already booked their rooms.”

The man lifted his head to look at them. He paused briefly to sniff the air, a confused frown coming to his face. Ryland began to get a little nervous when the larger man pulled the smaller one back closer to him.

“My name is Vadim Miroslav and this is my mate, Sasha. I am the alpha of Vourdala pack.”

Before Ryland could reply, Gregory stepped forward and shook the hand the man was holding out.

“Gregory Avano and this is my mate, Ryland. We are of the Wolfrik Pack. You may have met our alpha and beta at one of the pack meetings. Jake McAlester and Lucas Jones?” Gregory replied.

“Can’t say that I have, but I’m new to the alpha thing. I was my father’s beta before I became the alpha here.”

“Did you chall—ouch, that hurt, Gregory!” Ryland replied, rubbing his arm where Gregory has pinched him.

“It’s not polite to ask how an alpha gained his position, Ryland,” Gregory admonished.

“Well, how was I supposed to know that? The only alpha I’ve ever met is Jake and I can ask him anything.”

“I see your alpha is very wise, Ryland,” Vadim replied. “It’s always a good thing to answer the questions of those in your pack. And I became alpha here after I had to defend my mate from his alpha. Unfortunately, during the fight, I also killed his two betas. So, I was then responsible for the pack.”

Ryland turned wide eyes to look at Sasha. “Your alpha tried to hurt you?”

Sasha nodded. “Yeah, besides the fact that he was a grade A asshole, he didn’t like the fact that I mated without his permission. I’m an omega and he wanted to keep me for himself. Needless to say, the big guy here didn’t agree with him.”

“Wow! Besides Leyland, I’ve never met another omega before. Are you a tri-omega or just a regular one?”

“A what?” Sasha asked.

“Tri-omega, *Majiktoka*. Tri-omegas are usually only born once a generation. They’re a little more special than regular omegas.”

“Are you saying I’m not special?”

“Definitely not. No one is as special as you, however, being a tri-omega has its benefits and its downfalls. A tri-omega will have special abilities, but only after he or she has met and been claimed by both of his or her mates.”

“Both mates? As in, more than one?” Sasha exclaimed.

Ryland nodded his head. “Yeah, and it sucks. Leyland, our pack omega, seems to be okay with it. But he’s mated to both our alpha and our beta and they’ve been in love with each other for years, so it all works for them. I don’t want two mates.”

“You’re a tri-omega?” Sasha asked in wonderment.

“I thought there was something different about you,” Vadim murmured.

“If you’re a tri-omega, where is your other mate?”



“I haven’t found him yet. At least, I’m hoping it will be a him,” Ryland grimaced.

“Is that why you’ve come to our island? To find your other mate?” Vadim asked.

“No, Ryland and I needed a little time away. We didn’t know when we mated that he was a tri-omega. We didn’t find out until the next day. Now we’re kind of on a—” Gregory replied, wrapping his arm around Ryland’s shoulders.

“Time crunch? How could you not know, though?” Vadim asked, confusion on his face as he stared from Gregory to Ryland.

“We’re a pretty small pack. Until Leyland arrived, we didn’t even know about tri-omegas. We didn’t find out about Ryland until it was too late. I had already claimed him.”

“Too late? What do you mean too late? Are you saying you wouldn’t have claimed him if you had known he was a tri-omega? He’s your mate,” Sasha exclaimed.

“No, I would have claimed him no matter what. He’s mine and I don’t ever plan on giving him up, but if I had known he was a tri-omega, I would have waited.”

“Sasha, most tri-omegas wait until they have found both of their mates before being claimed. Once claimed, they can’t survive without them. Now that Gregory has claimed Ryland, they have to find his other mate right away or—”

“Or what?”

“Or I will die,” Ryland replied quietly.

“You’ll die? Are you serious? Maybe this is none of my business, but what in the hell are you doing on vacation when you should be out looking for your mate?” Sasha asked, his eyes as wide as saucers.

Ryland shrugged. “Leyland told us that we needed to go on this trip and we trust what he says. He’s already come into his abilities now that he has both of his mates. It’s actually a little weird, but he seems to know what he’s saying. So, here we are.”

“I’m really sorry. If there’s anything I can do to help, just let me know. Anyone can find me. Vadi and I live up at the alpha compound, along with our inner circle. If you need anything, just ask for me and someone can point the way.”

“Thank you,” Ryland replied with a large smile. “I would really like to see this Lupine Lodge, if you don’t mind. It sounds fascinating.”

“I do have to make a small stop off to check in on the cubs and let Mary know where we will be, but we would be happy to show you the way,” Vadim replied.

“Cubs?” Ryland asked curiously.

“Oh yes, Vadi and I have two wonderful boys, Ivan and Marika, and a girl due any day now,” Sasha replied happily as he and Ryland began walking side by side into the main part of town. Gregory and Vadim trailed after them, indulgent looks on their faces.

“This may be a stupid question, but if you’re both men, how do you have cubs?”

Sasha laughed. “Well, Vadim had the most to do with that. Ivan is his biological cub that he had with a dear friend before we were mated. Sadly, Ana passed away right after he was born.”

“Oh, that’s horrible.”

“It was, but he has a lot of family here to love him. Viktor, Ana’s brother, is one of Vadi’s betas. He’s a great guy. Gregory and him would probably get along famously. They have the same type of *can’t ask for directions* mentality.”

“And your other cub? Is he your biological son?”

“No, Marika was the son of Vadi’s best friends. They were killed and Vadi took him in to raise as his own.”

“You keep calling him Vadi. I thought his name was Vadim?” Ryland asked, confused by all that he was being told.

“Oh, it is. I’m the only one that calls him Vadi. It’s my name for him.”

“Oh, I get that. Gregory calls me Ry when everyone else calls me Ryland.”

“Yeah, just like that.”

“So, this daughter of yours—”

“She’s my biological cub. Vadi wanted a daughter with my eyes. We used a surrogate. Once the cub is born, she becomes ours.”

“Won’t the mother want to keep her?”

“Vadi says that not everyone wants cubs and not everyone is cut out to be a parent. It doesn’t mean that they’re bad or anything, just that they aren’t meant to be parents.”

Ryland nodded his head. “Yeah, I can see that. My pack took me out to the woods when I was thirteen and beat me up, leaving me for dead. If it wasn’t for Gregory finding me, I don’t think I would have made it through the night.”

“I’m sorry. I know what it’s like to not have parents. Mine were killed by my old alpha when I was just a small cub.”

“The same alpha that your mate fought?”

“Yeah, one and the same. He was a real piece of work. Vadim is still trying to dig us out of the hole he got us into. Between the killings, the illegal dealings, and stealing from our pack, he had this place pretty messed up.”

“Makes you kind of glad that Vadim took him out of the picture,” Ryland laughed.

“Yeah, although there have been a few times we have wanted to perform a voodoo ritual so that we could dig him up and kill him again. The man was a sadist and a psychopath. He really got off on hurting people. I don’t know what I would do with out Vadim around.”

“Yeah, my Gregory’s like that. Once he found me, he became my best friend and mentor. He never pressured me into the mating thing just let me grow up at my own pace. We both knew we were mates, but he still let me grow up first.”

“Sounds like a good man,” Sasha replied.

“He’s the best. This whole *two mates* thing has been really hard on him. That’s one of the reasons for the vacation. We needed a little time for us. We always thought it would be just the two of us. Now, however—”

“Now, you find out that you have to be shared between two men?” Sasha asked sympathetically.

“Yeah. I love Gregory. I’ve always loved Gregory. He’s all I’ve ever wanted in life. I’ve never even had sex with anyone else. I never wanted to. What if I’m not attracted to my other mate or he’s a bad person, like your old alpha? I just don’t know what to do about it.”

Sasha stopped, grabbing Ryland by the arm. “I know what to do about it. You’re here on vacation to forget for a little while and spend time with your mate. I say that’s exactly what you should do. In fact, I think you and Gregory should stay with us at the alpha compound. Don’t you, Vadi?”

Sasha turned to look back at his mate. Ryland could see him stare at Vadim for several moments. He knew from the grin that was coming across his face that they were talking to each other.

Feeling suddenly sad because he couldn’t talk to Gregory the same way, he turned and walked back to him, wrapping his arms around his chest. He felt Gregory’s arms instantly wrap around him and a small kiss land on his head.

“It’s okay, baby, we’ll figure this all out,” Gregory murmured back.

“I didn’t say anything to upset him, did I?” Sasha asked, walking up behind Ryland.

“No, it’s not you. Ryland and I are—unable to communicate through our bond due to a small accident. I think that sometimes it makes him sad. But you didn’t do anything wrong, Sasha,” Gregory replied, patting Ryland on the back.

“I think that Ryland and Gregory staying with us at the alpha compound would be a great idea, Sasha. Then, you could show him and Gregory all around town tomorrow. And I’m sure that Ryland

would like to meet our cubs. I know you'd at least like to show them off. You always do."

"Hey, they're cute!" Sasha exclaimed with a small giggle.

"You weren't saying that last week when Marika used your best leather boots to play in the mud," Vadim chuckled.

"Those were great boots."

"Stop complaining, *Majiktoka*, I bought you more."

"Just for that, I think you need to buy me another pair. Then I'd have a spare." Sasha giggled back.

Ryland lifted his head to watch the interchange between the two, wondering at how Sasha could seem to stand up to a man that was not only his alpha, but stood about a foot taller than him. But Sasha seemed to have the big man eating out of his hand.

He couldn't help it. He began laughing. Sasha was standing there with his hands on his hips, looking up at Vadim, who had his arms crossed over his chest. They looked like they were getting ready to fight, but the sparkles in Vadim's eyes said that he was just about ready to pounce on his mate—and not in a bad way.

"So, about this alpha compound—"

## Chapter 5

Ryland walked down the wide staircase heading for the study, his gaze intent on the beautiful surroundings of the alpha compound. Sasha had told him some horror stories of what this place looked like before he had decorated it, but it was hard to imagine. It was now very homey and welcoming.

The off white walls were covered in colorful artwork that seemed bright and cheery. Here and there were nice pieces of solid wood furniture, some with colorful cushions, others with vases of fragrant flowers. The place had a classical but comfortable feel to it.

He could imagine living here if he didn't already have a home. Everyone he had met so far had been so welcoming. Just the people that lived in the alpha compound made him feel like this was his second home.

Gregory and Niko, Vadim's beta, had hit it off like old friends and were even now off talking with Vadim about pack stuff. Ryland hadn't met Vadim's other beta, Viktor, yet. He had been away on pack business and was due back on the ferry today. Ryland hoped he was as nice as Niko and Vadim.

"Well, hello there."

Ryland turned to see a man standing at the entrance to the study. He was astounded by the sheer sexual magnetism of the man. He was gorgeous. He stood about six foot two, had collar length dark brown hair, and the palest blue eyes Ryland had ever seen.

"Not going to answer me? I like the silent type," he mused as he walked around Ryland. "I like a lot of things. Should I show you?"

Before Ryland could answer him, the man leaned down and kissed him on the lips. It was a soft kiss, no other touching involved, just his lips gently meeting Ryland's.

Ryland leaned back from him, holding his hand up to ward him off. "Don't," he whispered, still reeling from the feel of the man's lips. He had never kissed anyone except Gregory. It was just as hot, just as sensual, but different, too. He couldn't quite figure out why, but it was.

"Who are you?" the man asked, crowding him back against the wall.

"Ryland."

"Do you know who I am?"

Ryland slowly nodded his head. He didn't exactly know his name, but he knew who he was.

"Good," he replied, a wide grin crossing his lips. "That makes this a lot easier, don't you think?" he asked as he reached for Ryland.

"Don't please," Ryland said as he tried to scoot away from him. Suddenly he felt an arm grab his, pulling him away. He looked around to see Gregory standing between him and the handsome man.

"Hands off!" Gregory yelled.

"Excuse me?"

"I said hands off. He doesn't belong to you," Gregory replied, still yelling as he took up a defensive stance.

"He's my mate!" The man roared, taking a threatening step toward Gregory.

Gregory stopped. "Ryland?" he asked without turning his head away from the staring contest he had going on with the man.

"Yes."

Gregory closed his eyes briefly at Ryland's softly spoken response before opening them and turning around to wrap his arms around Ryland. Holding him close to his body, he rubbed his back with one hand, his other held softly in his hair.

“It’s okay, baby. We’ll work this out, I promise. And everything will be okay. You’ll see,” Gregory whispered against Ryland’s hair.

“Get your hands off of my mate,” the man growled, gaining their attention.

Gregory turned to look at the man, his arms still wrapped around Ryland. “Who are you?”

“Viktor Stylianos. I’m the beta of the Vourdala Pack. Who are you?”

“My name is Gregory Avano. This is Ryland Stearns. We’re both of the Wolfrik Pack,” Gregory replied.

“And you’re—a relative of Ryland’s?”

“No, I’m his mate.”

“No! He already said I’m his mate,” Viktor growled, taking a step toward them.

“Hold on,” Gregory said, holding his hand up to stop him. “Before you get all bent out of shape, you need to know that Ryland is a tri-omega. You and I are both his mates.”

“I will not share my mate.”

“You will if you don’t want him to die,” Gregory replied angrily.

“Die?”

Ryland lifted his head from where it was buried in Gregory’s neck at Viktor’s softly spoken word. He could see the anger and horror in Viktor’s face. He wished that he could just sink through the floor.

This was all because of him. Two men, two men that should have had their own mates, were going to have to share him. They never asked for this and Ryland wished that it had never happened.

“Maybe we can go somewhere more comfortable and private to discuss this?” Gregory asked.

Viktor stared at them for several moments, then nodded his head, leading them down the hallway toward the study. He opened the door and ushered them in, finding a comfortable chair to sit in. Gregory led Ryland into the room and sat down on the loveseat, pulling Ryland down next to him.



“Do you think you could get your hands off of my mate while we—discuss this?” Viktor growled as he stared across at them.

“No. This is hard enough on Ryland as it is. And before you start getting all possessive and shit, you need to know that I’ve already claimed him. He belonged to me first and I think that supersedes your claim.”

Viktor started to get up, a low growl coming from his clenched teeth when Ryland suddenly jumped to his feet and ran from the room. Gregory tried to stop him by grabbing his arm, but Ryland just shook him off and ran out the door.

“Just perfect!” Gregory said, running a hand through his hair.

“Would you mind telling me what the hell is going on here?”

“Do you have anything strong to drink?” Gregory said as he sat back down on the loveseat.

Viktor got to his feet and went to the side table, pouring two small glasses of whiskey. He handed one to Gregory and took the other for himself before sitting back down in his chair.

“When Ryland was thirteen, his birth pack tried to kill him. They left him for dead in a ravine near my ranch. I found him. I knew immediately that he was my mate. But he was way too young. So, I waited, biding my time until he was old enough.”

“They tried to kill him? Why?”

“I don’t know. I’m not even sure Ryland knows. But that’s beside the point. A couple of weeks ago, I finally claimed him. The next day we learned that he was a tri-omega, but by then, it was too late.”

“Too late?”

“Do you know anything about tri-omegas?” Gregory asked.

“Not really. I’ve heard of them, but it’s more like a fairytale myth than anything.”

“Well, I can tell you, they’re not myths. Ryland is a tri-omega. Because of his abilities, when he’s mated, he has to have two mates to keep him grounded and safe. Without two mates, he will die.”

“You said that before. What do you mean he might die?”

“Apparently there is some sort of additive in our saliva. Once it’s introduced into his system, he can’t live without it. If he’s not claimed on a regular basis by both of his mates, he will die. Believe me, I know what I’m talking about. My alpha and beta are mated to the same tri-omega. They almost lost him because they didn’t claim him regularly.”

“So, you’ve claimed him. He should be fine, right?”

“It’s not quite that easy. I didn’t know he was a tri-omega when I claimed him. I thought he was just my mate. The only thing that will save Ryland now is if you claim him, and then we both have to claim him on a regular basis.”

“Look, I’m not sure how much of this I believe, but I do know that he’s my mate. I won’t give him up,” Viktor said.

“Neither will I,” Gregory said.

“I don’t want to share. I never planned on sharing my mate.”

“I don’t want to share him either. I’m perfectly happy having just Ryland in my life. He’s all I ever wanted. Hell, I went without sex for six years just because of him. However, I will do whatever is needed to keep him alive, even share.”

“Assuming I believe this, how is this supposed to work? You get him three days a week and I get him the other three? We can flip for the fourth day? You don’t even live on Vourdala Island.”

“I don’t have all of the answers, Viktor. I’m basically winging this. What I do know is that Ryland is the most important thing in my life and I will do whatever I have to do to make sure he is happy and safe. Do you understand me?”

“Fuck! This really sucks,” Viktor said, rubbing a hand down his face.

“Yeah, I’ve had that thought once or twice myself,” Gregory said chuckling.

Viktor stood to his feet and put his glass back on the side table. He walked over to the window to look outside, his eyes spotting Ryland

sitting in the garden. He watched him for a few minutes before turning back to look at Gregory.

“Can I go talk to him?”

“Yes. You have as much right to him as I do. Just don’t hurt him. He’s had enough shit shoveled in his direction to last four lifetimes. This whole tri-omega thing has really rattled him. Since the night I found him six years ago, we always knew we were mates. Knowing that he has to be with someone else, well—”

Viktor nodded. “I understand. I won’t do anything to upset him. I just want a chance to talk to him.”

“Viktor—”

“Vik, please. If we’re going to be sharing a mate I think you can at least call me Vik.”

“Vik then. None of this is Ryland’s fault. I hope you know that. Once you get to know him you’ll see that Ryland is a great guy. I’m just thankful that his mate wasn’t a woman. We both had fears about that.”

“Oh, yeah, that would have been a problem.” Viktor chuckled.

“You have no idea.” Gregory laughed. “Just go easy on him. This has been really hard on him. I think he’s worried that we’re going to blame him for this.”

Viktor nodded as he headed for the door.

“Hey, Vik, one more thing. Take the intimate stuff slowly. Ryland was a virgin until I claimed him two weeks ago. He’s still getting used to this mating thing.”

Viktor turned back to look at Gregory, confusion and disbelief on his face. “I’m having a hard time understanding why you are being so accepting of this. You haven’t said one word about me not being intimate with Ryland, just to take it slow. Why?”

“Simple, really. I love him and I can’t live without him. If having you means that he lives, so be it. I don’t like it and I don’t want it. But I’ll accept it if it means he lives. The better you and I get along, the

happier he will be. And that's more important than my wants or needs."

"Fair enough," Viktor replied before turning and heading out the door. As he walked outside, he wondered how much his life had just changed in a matter of moments. He never thought when he came home today, he would find his mate in his very own home—and now to learn that he had to share him.

He wasn't sure what shocked him more, finding Ryland or finding out that his mate already had a mate. He had to give it to Gregory. He was being very understanding considering the circumstances. Viktor wasn't so sure he would have been as understanding. He wasn't sure he could still be as understanding.

Spotting Ryland sitting on the ground, he walked over and sat down next to him. He watched him pulling up blades of grass one by one, not acknowledging his presence.

"Ryland, do you think we could talk?" he asked quietly.

Ryland just shrugged his shoulders, not really answering him.

"Gregory explained things to me." Okay, that at least, stopped Ryland from pulling up blades of grass. Viktor could see his hand tremble a little as he wrapped it around his shins, resting his head on his knees.

"I'm sorry," Ryland whispered after a moment.

"It's not your fault, baby. You didn't choose to be a tri-omega. You were born this way, just as I was born a beta. We just work with what we have."

"Leyland said the same thing once."

"Leyland? Who's Leyland?" Viktor asked.

"Leyland is a tri-omega like me. He's mated to my alpha and beta. He said that we don't get to choose what we're born as, but it's up to us as to how we use it."

"He sounds like a very wise man."

"He told Gregory and me to come on this trip."

“I’m glad he did or else we never would have met and then I wouldn’t know that you’re my mate. Then where would I be?”

When Ryland didn’t answer, Viktor heaved a little sigh. This wasn’t going all that well. He didn’t know exactly what to say to Ryland.

“Can I hold your hand?” he tried.

He was overjoyed when, after a moment’s hesitation, Ryland laid his hand down on the ground, palm up. Viktor slowly reached over and grabbed it with his, enjoying the soft silky feel of Ryland’s skin beneath his.

“Did you know that I wasn’t born here? I was born in the Miroslav Pack. Ivan Miroslav was my alpha before Vadim. When Vadim became alpha, he asked me to be his beta. I don’t mind much being a beta. It’s kind of like being someone’s personal assistant and bodyguard all rolled into one.”

“Aren’t you like his second in command?”

“Sometimes. But there are two of us. I share my duties with Niko, Vadim’s younger brother.”

“Oh yeah, I met Niko at dinner last night,” Ryland responded.

“Oh, and what did you think of him?” Viktor asked curiously.

“He seemed nice, kind of—stand-offish, but nice.”

“Stand-offish? How so?”

Ryland shrugged his shoulders. “I don’t know. I don’t think he takes Sasha very seriously. He treats him like a child and he’s older than I am. Maybe it’s Sasha’s small size or something. I know Sasha jokes around a lot and stuff, but I just think he’s trying to bring a little laughter into Vadim’s life. I’d bet it’s not easy being an alpha.”

Viktor nodded his head as he thought about what Ryland was saying. He was probably right. He wondered if he treated Sasha like a child, too? *Could he be blamed for it, though?*

Sasha was always interrupting their meetings by just walking in and plopping himself down in Vadim’s lap as if he didn’t care that they were in a meeting. He was constantly doing everything he could

to make Vadim laugh, even stupid stuff. But was he really doing anything wrong? Or was he just trying to make his mate's life easier?

Would Ryland behave like Sasha? Would he seek him out for love and affection, trying to make him laugh? Would he interrupt him during the day just to get a kiss? Would he leave him little love notes and arrive in a room full of people dressed in nothing but a blanket? Hell, Viktor hoped so!

"Hey, Ryland?" Viktor began, looking over at him. "Do you think you could come over here and sit with me? I'd like to get to know you a little better. Maybe we can talk a little more?"

Ryland glanced over to see Viktor pointing to the spot between his legs. Oh boy! Viktor wanted him to sit really, really close. Ryland didn't know if he could. He was already attracted to Viktor, not so much because of his sexy good looks, but because he was naturally drawn to his mate. Sitting that close to him would be too tempting... and he didn't want to hurt Gregory.

"Where's Gregory? I need to talk to Gregory," Ryland said, suddenly getting to his feet as he looked around for his other mate. Spotting him coming down the walkway, he ran in his direction.

"Hey, baby, what's wrong?"

"Viktor, he wants—he—and you—" Ryland stammered.

Gregory grabbed Ryland's face, tilting it up to his. "What is it, baby?"

"He wants me to sit with him," Ryland murmured, his eyes unable to meet Gregory's. He felt so embarrassed. He wanted to sit with Viktor but he felt like he would be betraying Gregory if he did.

"Would that be so bad? He just wants to get to know you better. You and I knew each other for six years before I claimed you, Ry. He deserves the same consideration."

"But, you're my mate, Gregory," Ryland said, raising his confused eyes up to him. He didn't understand the feelings he was having. He knew he loved Gregory but the overwhelming attraction

he felt for Viktor confused him. He hadn't felt that way about anyone but Gregory.

"He's your mate too, baby, and he deserves the same chance you gave me. Now, I want you to do something for me, okay?" Gregory said as he cupped Ryland's face gently in his hands. "I want you to go give Viktor a kiss."

"You want me to do what?" Ryland squeaked, his mouth dropping open in surprise.

"I want you to go give Viktor a kiss, just like you'd give me. Stop looking so surprised. He's your mate just as much as I am. And I know from talking to him that this has been a huge shock to him. He doesn't know if you're going to accept him or not and he's very afraid of losing you."

"But—"

"Think of it this way, Ry, how would you feel if you just found out that I was your mate, but you didn't know if I was going to accept you. Can you imagine how you might feel? You are the one meant for him. He doesn't want to lose you or make you upset."

"How can you be so, so—don't you even care that—you want me just to go over and kiss some other man? Some man I just met? Don't you care about me?" Ryland cried out, tears coming to his eyes.

"Of course I do, baby. You're the very air I breathe. I can't live without you. That's why I accept it. I also know how I'd feel if I had just found you and I didn't know if I was going to be able to keep you. It would be devastating. So, if I support you in this, if I'm there for you in this, it's not because I don't care, but because I do."

"I don't want to lose you, Gregory," Ryland whispered desperately.

"Not going to happen, baby," Gregory replied as he used his thumbs to wipe his tears away.

"Even if I'm—intimate with Viktor? You know that I have to be for him to claim me."

“I know, Ry, believe me. I’ve thought a lot about how I would feel if you were intimate with another man. If it was anyone but your mate, I think I would probably kill him. But he is your mate and I have to face that fact. As long as we don’t hide it from each other, I think we will be fine.”

“I don’t know if I can kiss another man in front of you, Gregory,” Ryland admitted, his cheeks growing red.

“Would you rather that I kissed him first?” Gregory joked.

“Yes,” came the quiet response.

“Wha—are you serious?” Gregory asked in shock. “Ryland, I promised you that I would never be intimate with another man. I meant that. I won’t break my promise to you.”

“I’m sorry,” Ryland murmured, pulling away from Gregory and turning away from him.

“Don’t be sorry, baby. I just don’t want you to think that I’m going back on my promise to you. I would never break a promise to you. You have to believe that.”

Ryland turned back around, his hands going to grab at Gregory’s shirt. “I do believe that. I know you would never break your promise. But this isn’t about that. Neither of us knew when you made that promise that we would be in this position. And I’m not asking you to have sex with Viktor. I just need you there with me. I need to know that whatever happens between Viktor and me, I won’t lose you.”

“Ryland, you’re never going to lose me, no matter what. I wouldn’t care if you fucked a hundred guys and televised it.”

At Ryland’s upraised eyebrow, Gregory began to laugh. “Okay, I’d care, but you know what I mean. Being intimate with your mate, does not mean you are being unfaithful to me. It’s just what is.”

“Will you at least go with me?”

“Yeah, I’ll go with you. But remember that Viktor is in this with us. He deserves your love and attention just as much as I do. If you want to kiss him, kiss him. If you want to cuddle with him, cuddle with him. It’s natural for you to be attracted to him. But he needs you



just as much as I do, and because I understand that need, it makes Viktor and I allies in this.”

Ryland looked over his shoulder to where Viktor was sitting, a sad little look on his face as he watched them. “So, I’m just supposed to go over there and kiss him? Just like that?”

“Yeah, pretty much. He looks pretty sad to me. How much do you want to bet that he’s feeling miserable right now because you’re here in my arms after running from him? How much you want to bet he wants to take my head off right about now?”

Ryland’s eyes widened. “You two can’t fight over me. I couldn’t live with myself if one of you got hurt because of me.”

“Then show him that you can be with both of us. Take a card from Leyland. He has two mates and they are perfectly happy sharing him. You can be, too.”

“Yeah, but Jake and Lucas were lovers for years before Leyland ever came on the scene. They all share each other. We don’t have that type of thing going on here. It’s me being with each of you, not all of us together.”

“No, we don’t and that’s okay. We can still make this work. We have to.”

Even as Gregory said the words, he wondered if a relationship between the three of them might work. It wasn’t like he wasn’t attracted to Viktor, because he was. Who wouldn’t be? The man was gorgeous.

Having two men to make love to certainly had a fantasy feel to it. Gregory knew it had always been a fantasy for him. Even more, he would love to have someone help him in making love to Ryland. That would really blow his mind. Maybe Viktor and him needed to talk.

In the meantime...

“Come, on, baby. Time to go let your mate know you accept him. I think a good kiss will get that sad look off his face, don’t you?”

He watched Ryland glance back over his shoulder. He had his own sad look when he turned back. "He does look a little sad? Are you sure about this, Gregory?"

Gregory leaned down and kissed Ryland lightly on the lips. "Yes, baby, I'm sure. Now go give Viktor a kiss and don't worry about me. I will be right behind you. And remember, this is all okay with me, but just with Viktor. Okay?"

Ryland nodded his head, turning to walk back over to Viktor. He stood over the top of him until Viktor turned his face up to look at him. As soon as he did, Ryland scooted between his legs and sat down in his lap.

Viktor looked confused until Ryland wrapped his hands around his head and pulled him down for a kiss. The moment their lips met, Viktor wrapped his hands around Ryland, pulling him close to his body as he began to deepen the kiss, exploring Ryland's sweet honeyed taste.

Feeling a presence next to him, Viktor raised his lips from Ryland's, looking over to see Gregory sitting down beside them, his shoulder brushing against the top of Ryland's head. He started to get alarmed, since he essentially had Gregory's mate in his arms and was kissing him, until Gregory began to chuckle.

"See, baby, I told you a kiss would get that sad look off of his face."

"Uh uh," Ryland murmured, his dazed eyes still on Viktor's lips.

"You told him to kiss me?" Viktor asked in shock.

"Yes. Look, Viktor, this is real simple. Ryland belongs to both of us and if we don't come to some kind of understanding, it's going to destroy him. He needs both of us, but not as much as we need him. We have to share him."

"You told him to kiss me? Seriously?" Viktor asked again, making Gregory chuckle.

“Dude, snap out of it.” Gregory laughed as he reached over to tilt Ryland’s head back, leaning down to kiss him. He raised an eyebrow, lifting his head to look over at Viktor when he heard a low growl.

Gregory had no idea what came over him. He just leaned in and kissed Viktor, feeling his shocked response in the sudden stiffening of his body. Gregory was probably as shocked as Viktor had been when Viktor’s body softened up and he leaned into the kiss, exploring Gregory’s mouth with his tongue.

By the time Viktor lifted his head, they were both breathing heavy. Gregory just stared at Viktor, not sure what to say, assuming he could gather together two intelligent thoughts to say something. He was so dazed by the power and sensuality of Viktor’s kiss that a marching band could have passed by and he wouldn’t have known it.

“That was so fucking hot!”

Gregory and Viktor both looked down in surprise to see Ryland staring up at them, a wide grin on his face.

“Can I see it again?”

Gregory’s eyebrows shot up in astonishment before he looked up at Viktor in query. Shrugging his shoulders, Viktor grabbed him by the back of the neck and pulled him in for another long kiss.

Pulling his lips from Viktor’s a few moments later, he looked down to see Ryland’s reaction to him kissing another man. His eyes were still intent on them, but his hand had sneaked down into his pants where he was quickly stroking himself.

“Don’t stop now,” he whimpered.

Gregory chuckled as he looked back over at Viktor’s awe struck face. “You’re going to want to see this,” he said as he reached down and unzipped Ryland’s pants, pushing them down enough that they could clearly see Ryland stroking his hard cock.

“Turn him on his side,” he encouraged as he pushed his hand down the back of Ryland’s pants, pushing between his cheeks with his fingers until he found his eager little hole. The moment Viktor had Ryland on his side, he pushed two fingers deep within Ryland’s ass.

Viktor looked dazed as he watched, his tongue coming out to lick at his lower lip. Gregory felt some hope for them when Viktor reached over and lifted Ryland's leg, giving him better access to his hole.

"You really want to see him lose it?" he asked, his voice husky and filled with lust. Viktor didn't even lift his eyes from Ryland as he nodded. "Paddle his ass."

Okay, that got him. Viktor's head snapped came up, his mouth dropping open as he stared at Gregory. He raised an eyebrow, his gaze curious. Gregory just nodded, watching with fascination as Viktor brought his hand down on Ryland's ass.

Ryland started moaning, his body twitching as he pressed his ass back toward Gregory's thrusting fingers and Viktor's hand paddling him. Gregory couldn't decide what was turning him on more. Ryland finding his pleasure or the look of pure lust on Viktor's face.

"Now, kiss me Viktor," Gregory ordered, leaning toward him. Viktor leaned towards him, their lips meeting in the middle. Gregory continued to thrust his fingers into Ryland as Viktor swatted him.

The moment Gregory felt Ryland's muscles tighten around his fingers, he pulled his lips from Viktor's, gazing down at Ryland. "Watch our baby, Viktor. He's so beautiful when he comes."

Moments later he was proven right when Ryland cried out, his back arching as he shot ropes of white seed over his hand and Viktor's stomach. Gregory continued to pump his fingers into Ryland as he lifted his other hand, scooping up a bit of seed on his fingers, holding them out for Viktor.

Just as Viktor leaned in to take a lick, Gregory stopped him. "Be sure you want to do this, Viktor. Once you taste him, you're not going to want to give him up, ever. He's addictive. But understand that this is a package deal."

His eyes intent on Gregory's, Viktor didn't even hesitate as he leaned in and sucked his fingers into his mouth. But then his eyes closed in ecstasy at the sweet taste of Ryland. He was sweet and tangy

at the same time, and in that moment, Viktor knew he would do anything for more.

“Fuck!” Viktor groaned as he opened his eyes to look at Gregory in shock.

“Told you,” Gregory chuckled as he pulled his fingers from Ryland. Pulling his shirt over his head he quickly used it to clean himself up, then handed the shirt to Viktor so he could clean up Ryland and himself.

“Uh, Gregory?” Viktor asked a moment later, nodding his head down to Ryland.

Gregory looked over, laughing when he saw Ryland’s closed eyes. He hadn’t even dropped his hand from around his cock.

“Oh yeah, now he’s going to go to sleep. He usually does after he’s had a good orgasm.”

“What do I do with him?” Viktor asked.

“What do you want to do with him?” Gregory responded as he rolled his shirt up into a ball.

“I have a few ideas, but I was kind of hoping he’d be awake for them,” Viktor chuckled.

“Give him an hour and he’ll be back for more. I’ll say this about him, he does have youth on his side. I think the boy is hard ninety five percent of the day. Having two mates may not be a bad thing. It may be the only way we can keep up with him. He’s always horny.”

“Is he always like this?”

“You mean does he always come like that?”

“Yeah,” Viktor replied in wonderment.

“Pretty much. You have to remember, he was a virgin until about two weeks ago. He apparently feels he has a lot of time to make up for,” Gregory said as he stood to his feet, holding out his arms for Ryland’s sleeping body.

“Two weeks? And you already have him into spanking? Don’t you think that’s a little early?” Viktor asked as he lifted Ryland up into Gregory’s arms then stood up himself.

“The spanking was his idea. He wanted to try it. Since we’re mates, I feel that nothing is taboo to ask about. We’re not into serious pain or anything, mind you, but it never hurts to ask if you want to try something. Ryland asked, we tried it, and as you may have guessed, he liked it—a lot. Does that bother you?”

“No, I just don’t want to go anywhere he’s uncomfortable with,” Viktor replied as they started walking back towards the house.

“So ask him. Communication with Ryland is very important. I know that he’s very nervous over this whole mating thing. He’s afraid of losing me. Once he decides to keep you, he’s going to be afraid of losing you, too.”

“He won’t lose me. I think you and I can work this out.”

“That’s what I told him. He really doesn’t want to hurt you, you know. That concerns him a lot. But he’s afraid.”

“I don’t think he’s anymore afraid than the rest of us, Gregory.”

“You’d be surprised. When I suggested he go kiss you he would only do it if I agreed to be there. He actually asked me to kiss you first,” Gregory chuckled.

“Seriously? He wanted you to kiss me?” Viktor asked as he opened the door on the alpha house and held it for Gregory to carry Ryland through.

“Yeah. I think he’s really turned on by seeing us kiss,” Gregory replied as he waited for Viktor to shut the door.

“Do you think he’s going to want us to—” Viktor asked, stopping suddenly.

Gregory shrugged his shoulders. “I don’t know. That has to be up to him. Obviously, I’m attracted to you, but I won’t do anything Ryland doesn’t want me to do. I did that once and almost lost him. I promised him it wouldn’t happen again, so it has to be up to him.”

“But, if he said it was okay, would you—?”

“Hell yes! It would be even better if Ryland joined us. That’s what my alpha has with his two mates and I don’t see them complaining. I think the three of us could effectively set the sheets on fire.”

“Oh hell yeah,” Viktor groaned. “Are you sure he was a virgin two weeks ago?”

“Yep, positive,” Gregory replied.

“He’s going to kill us,” Viktor whispered.

## Chapter 6

Ryland felt hands softly caressing his chest even before he opened his eyes. Turning his head, he saw Viktor stretched out on the bed beside him. He was leaning his head on one hand, the other hand stroking Ryland's naked chest.

"Hey, you" Ryland said quietly.

"Hey, back," Viktor replied as he leaned down to give Ryland a soft kiss on his lips.

Ryland looked up at him curiously when he lifted his head. "Where's Gregory?"

Viktor smiled. "He's downstairs. He thought it would be a good idea for us to have some time alone together. Why? Do you want me to go get him?"

"No, no, that's okay. I was just wondering," Ryland said as he rolled onto his side, their chests pressing together. He reached up and ran his finger down Viktor's nose, over his lips, to his chin.

"You're very handsome."

"More handsome than Gregory?"

Ryland's eyebrows scrunched together in thought. "Yes and no, I think. You're both very handsome, but in different ways. But this isn't a contest, Viktor. You and Gregory are both vastly different people. You each have things that are uniquely yours."

"Oh? Like what?"

"Well, Gregory has light hair and brown eyes. You have dark hair and blue eyes. Gregory has hair on his chest. You're all smooth skin. Gregory has light brown nipples. Yours are dark brown. You're



both—” Ryland let his eyes stray down Viktor’s chest, taking a deep breath. “You’re both very sexy, but in vastly different ways.”

“So, we’re nothing alike?”

“I wouldn’t say that, exactly. You’re both gorgeous as hell and you both have very dominant personalities. I imagine that both of you are going to try and run my life. Gregory already does now. I don’t see you being much different. You’re too used to getting your own way and making decisions for people because you think you know what’s best.”

“Somehow, Ryland, I think you’re going to have both Gregory and I wrapped around your finger before you know it.” Viktor laughed.

“I’ll believe that when I see it.” Ryland chuckled. He turned his face into the hand that Viktor brought up to caress the side of his face, inhaling his deep heady scent. “You smell good, too.”

“I do?” Viktor asked in surprise.

“Yeah,” Ryland whispered, taking another deep breath.

“Does Gregory smell good, too?”

Ryland rolled his eyes, scooting back to sit up against the headboard. He folded his hands in his lap and stared at them for several moments before raising his eyes to look at Viktor.

“Look, Viktor, you need to stop trying to compare yourself to Gregory. I’ve already told you that the two of you are very different men. There is no comparison. I see you as individuals, not grouped together.”

“I’m sorry, Ryland. I guess this whole sharing thing is just a little hard for me to deal with. I didn’t even know who you were twelve hours ago and now I find that I have to share you. It’s going to take me a little while to get used to this.”

Ryland reached over and laid his hand on Viktor’s arm. “How do you think I feel? I’ve known for six years that Gregory was my mate. When he finally claims me I find out that not only do I have another

mate waiting for me, but if I don't find him, and soon, I'm going to die."

"Yeah, I guess that would be a little daunting," Viktor agreed, covering Ryland's hand with his own. "Does it bother you that much, having another mate, I mean?"

"No, not really. I know things would have been less complicated if I only had one mate. I would only have one mate to worry about, to care for. But that's not my reality. My reality is that I have two mates."

"What about the sex part of things?" Viktor asked softly. "Does that bother you?"

"A little. You're not Gregory so I imagine that things will be different with you. You're not going to have the same responses that he does, or be turned on by the same things." Ryland started laughing. "And I was just getting used to him."

Viktor rolled over to settle his body between Ryland's legs. "Well, we could always start with what turns you on. But you're going to have to scoot down a bit first."

"I think I can do that," Ryland laughed as he scooted his body down until Viktor was leaning right over the top of him. He looked up at Viktor, wondering if he was going to be able to satisfy the big man.

As handsome as Viktor was, he was sure to have had a lot of lovers. Two weeks out of the gate, so to speak, Ryland didn't know if he had the experience to satisfy him. It was especially hard considering he had never been with him. At least with Gregory, they had been together for awhile.

"What's wrong, baby?" Viktor asked as he looked down at Ryland's anxious face.

"I don't know if I can satisfy you," Ryland whispered, a little blush filling his cheeks.

"You're my mate, Ryland. That already makes you special to me. The rest we'll figure out as we go along, okay? And I think we should start right here," Viktor said as he lowered his lips to Ryland's.

Ryland closed his eyes, wrapping his arms around Viktor's neck. He opened his lips, allowing Viktor entrance, their tongues twining together. He let his hands roam over Viktor's naked back and shoulders, loving how strong and wide they were.

He moaned softly when he felt Viktor's hands begin to caress his chest, his abdomen, and hips. It wasn't until he felt Viktor's hands dip below the sheet and brush against his hardening cock that he realized that he was naked.

"Uh, Viktor? How did I get naked?"

"Gregory and I undressed you," Viktor replied as nibbled on Ryland's neck.

Ryland moaned as Viktor licked over Gregory's mating bite, tilting his head back to give him better access. Every time Viktor's tongue swiped across the small bite, shivers shot straight down Ryland's body to his cock.

"Don't...don't you think you should be naked too?"

"I think that would be a very good idea." Viktor chuckled. He squirmed around a bit until he could push his pants down his legs and pull them off of his feet. He tossed them over the side of the bed, grinning down at Ryland as he began to pull the sheet separating them down.

As he pulled the sheet all of the way down Ryland's body, he paused to gaze down at him, his eyes roaming greedily over his body. "Damn, baby, you're gorgeous," he said with a bit of awe.

Ryland could feel his cheeks light up as Viktor looked down at him. He was a little embarrassed at being naked in front of someone he had just met that very day. But Viktor was staring at him with such hunger in his eyes, he just held his arms out to him.

"All yours," he whispered.

"Not quite," Ryland heard Viktor say under his breath just as he leaned back down to lay his body over his. He briefly closed his eyes, wondering if it was always going to be this way.

*Would Viktor always bring Gregory up when they were together?* Why couldn't he just appreciate the fact that they had found each other, that they were together? Would Gregory be the same way once Viktor had claimed him?

"Where'd you go, baby?"

"Huh? Oh, nowhere. I was just admiring the view," he hedged.

"Do you like what you see?"

"Oh yeah." Ryland grinned. "I'd like to see more."

"I think that can be arranged." Viktor chuckled as he grabbed Ryland around the waist and rolled them over until Ryland was straddling his legs, Viktor's glorious body laid out on the bed before him.

"Oh, this is much better," Ryland said as he leaned forward and placed his hands on Viktor's collarbone. He let his hands slowly move down his chest, over his tight nipples, and on down to his abdomen.

As Ryland's hands moved down past Viktor's bellybutton, he could hear his deep inhale. Ryland smirked quietly, his hands drawing several circles in Viktor's skin before moving on down. Apparently, he had a hot spot, too.

As he reached Viktor's cock, he paused to admire his beautiful cock. It really was awe-inspiring. Long and thick, the drops of pre-cum glistened on the brightly on the large head. He couldn't wait to fill it pounding into his ass.

With a mischievous little grin, Ryland scooted back and leaned down to engulf Viktor's hard cock, his tongue quickly licking up the drops of liquid on the head. He moaned softly at his sweet tangy taste, smiling when Viktor groaned, his hands clenching in Ryland's hair.

This, it seemed, remained the same. Using his tongue to caress the sides and the small slit in the top, Ryland tightened his lips around Viktor, his head beginning a quick up and down motion.

As more pre-cum was released, Ryland licked it up, moaning at Viktor's delicious taste. As he did, Viktor's hands clenched into fists

in his hair. His hips began thrusting up, pushing his cock deeper into Ryland's mouth.

"Baby, you have to stop. It feels too good. I'm going to blow my load before we even get to the good stuff and I don't want to stop before I get a piece of your gorgeous ass," Viktor groaned.

Ryland gave Viktor's cock one more long swipe before lifting his head, chuckling down at Viktor's strained face. "Where's your lube?"

Viktor quickly pointed to his nightstand. Ryland was still chuckling as he leaned over and pulled the drawer open, grabbing the bottle. He almost dropped it when he felt Viktor's hands caress his ass cheek, his fingers delving between them to graze across his sensitive hole.

"Viktor," he groaned as Viktor began to softly caress him there. One lone finger began pushing gently against him until Ryland's muscles loosened enough to allow him entry.

"Hand me the bottle, baby," Viktor demanded.

Ryland turned to hand him the bottle only to receive a small slap to his ass.

"Uh uh, stay right where you are. Just hand me the bottle," Viktor said as he grabbed the bottle and flipped the lid open.

Ryland watched over his shoulder as Viktor poured some on his fingers, closing the lid and dropping the bottle on the bed before reaching back for Ryland's ass. His eyes closed in ecstasy as Viktor coated him with the lube before slowly pushing one finger back in.

Viktor moved his finger around for several moments before adding a second finger, scissoring them back and forth. He began to chuckle at Ryland's deep moan.

"You really like this, don't you?"

All Ryland could do was nod his head. He was way beyond speech at that point. He moaned in protest when Viktor pulled his fingers free.

"Swing your legs around, baby. I want your ass up here where I can see what I'm doing."

Ryland glanced back at Viktor in surprise, but did as he asked, swinging his legs around so that he was straddling Viktor's chest, his ass right in front of his face. Okay, that was a little embarrassing.

Ryland's embarrassment soon disappeared when Viktor pushed two fingers back into his ass. He thought he was going to lose his mind when Viktor began gently swatting his ass as he thrust his finger in and out. *Damn, he had forgotten that Viktor knew about that.*

"Viktor," he groaned as his cock began to throb, his balls drawing up tight against his body, "harder."

The next thing he felt was Viktor's hand coming down on his ass. This swat was harder than all the other he had given him. He was sure he was going to have a hand print on his skin for a few hours to come. But damn, it felt good.

"Viktor, I'm gonna—"

"Not without me, you're not," Viktor growled as pulled his fingers from Ryland and pushed Ryland forward and climbed out from beneath his body. He quickly replaced his fingers with his hard cock, groaning deeply as he slowly pushed into Ryland's tight grasp.

As soon as he was fully engulfed, he started slowly thrusting. The tightness of Ryland's grip on his cock had him moving faster and faster with each thrust.

"Fuck, baby, you're so tight," he groaned as his movements became wild.

Ryland pushed back against him each time he pulled out not wanting to feeling of being so full to go away. He was so close. Reaching underneath his body, he grabbed his aching cock and began stroking himself to match Viktor's movements.

His movements became frantic when Viktor began paddling his ass in between thrusts. It was all too much. With a loud cry, he came, ropes of pearly white liquid shooting across the mattress and covering his hand.

As he stroked the last few drops out of his cock, he heard Viktor roar out his name, thrusting deep inside of him. He felt his seed spurt

inside of him, filling him, even as Viktor's canines sank into the soft flesh between his neck and his shoulder.

As Viktor collapsed down on him, Ryland chuckled quietly to himself. Viktor had bitten him in the opposite shoulder from Gregory's claiming bite. He now had a mating mark in both shoulders.

When Viktor pulled from him and rolled over onto his side, Ryland rolled over and scooted back, cuddling into his larger body. He sighed contentedly as Viktor's arms wrapped around him.

He could feel the bond between him and Viktor connecting them together. He could feel Viktor's happiness and contentment flowing through their bond. They were mated now, never to be separated.

He was amazed by the feelings he was receiving from Viktor. The mating bond was truly wonderful. He wondered if Viktor could feel his emotions the same way. He had never experienced this with Gregory since their bond had been broken.

Thinking of Gregory suddenly made Ryland want to check on him, to make sure he was okay. He knew that Gregory had left them alone so that Ryland could spend some time getting to know his new mate. But was he okay?

"I need to go find Gregory," Ryland whispered softly.

The silence in the room was deafening after his statement. Then suddenly, Viktor rolled away from him to sit on the edge of the bed, his back to Ryland. His shoulders were hunched together, his hands fisting in the blankets.

Ryland sat up, reaching across the bed to put his hand on Viktor's back in concern. What was wrong? Why was Viktor suddenly so angry? Ryland could feel the anger and disgust coming through their mating bond.

"Viktor?"

He jumped when Viktor suddenly pulled away from him, cringing when he growled at him, never turning his head to look back at him.

"Don't touch me!"

“Viktor—” he said in a shocked whisper.

“Get out!”

“What? Viktor, what—”

“Get the hell out of my room, Ryland,” he yelled, jumping to his feet to stalk away from the bed.

“You don’t mean that,” Ryland whispered in horror. *This wasn’t happening.* Viktor had just claimed him, just made love to him. How could he be now ordering him out of his room? What had he done wrong?

“Get the hell out, Ryland. Now!”

Ryland stared at Viktor for a moment, watching his tense back before reaching for his pants and pulling them on. He didn’t even take the time to find his shirt before rushing towards the door.

Turning one last time to Viktor, he tried to form the words to mend whatever had happened between them. “Viktor—”

“GET OUT!” Viktor yelled.

Ryland felt tears start to fall down his face as he walked out of the bedroom. As he closed the door behind him, he heard a loud yell and something crashing against the wall. He stared at the door for a moment before turning away.

In a confused and pained daze, he walked downstairs to find Gregory. Maybe he could tell him what had just happened. He still didn’t understand why Viktor was angry with him. But he was definitely angry. Enraged might be a better word.

“Gregory?” he called out as he walked into the study. He instantly spotted him sitting on the couch reading a book. Rushing across the floor he threw himself into Gregory’s arms, burying his face in Gregory’s neck.

“Ryland? What’s wrong?” Gregory asked, his arms going around him.

Ryland just shook his head. He felt Gregory’s hands gently caress his back, and the hair on his head. He didn’t know what had happened



with Viktor, but at least wrapped up in Gregory's arms he knew everything would be okay.

"What happened, baby?"

"I don't know. Viktor and I, we had just, well, we—and then he got so angry," Ryland murmured against his neck. "I don't know what I did."

It took Ryland a moment for Gregory's stillness to sink in. He lifted his head and looked up at him, confused by the fierce look on Gregory's face. "Gregory?"

"You've mated with Viktor? Already?" he asked quietly.

"Yes. Wasn't I supposed to? Wasn't that why you left us alone?"

He was even more confused when Gregory picked him up and sat him down on the couch, standing to his feet before walking away.

"Gregory?" Ryland called out right before Gregory reached the door. "What—"

Gregory turned to look at him, his face filled with fury as he held up his hand for Ryland to be silent. "Not a word!" he growled before walking out of the room, leaving Ryland sitting on the couch wondering what in the hell had just happened.

*Great!* Now both of his mates were angry with him and he still didn't know what he had done. It was obvious that it had to do with his mating Viktor. Or maybe it was because he had mated Gregory?

Ryland was confused. He just didn't understand. Gregory had told him over and over again that he needed to give Viktor the same consideration that he had given him. So why then, was he angry that he had mated Viktor?

And Viktor knew that Ryland was mated to Gregory, that Gregory was very much a part of his life. Why was he so angry that he wanted to check on him and make sure that he was okay? Wasn't he supposed to be concerned about his mates?

Hearing the front door slam shut, Ryland jumped to his feet and ran to the window. He watched Gregory walk into view and began pounding on the window to get his attention. When Gregory looked

over at him, he mouthed the words, *I love you*, only to watch with a sinking heart as Gregory turned and walked away with no response.

Watching Gregory walk away from him after he told him he loved him was probably the most painful thing that Ryland had ever experienced. It hurt even more than when Gregory had been with that stranger before they were mated.

Tears falling silently down his cheeks, Ryland watched his mate leaving him, wondering why he had ever wanted to be mated. He never imagined that it would be this complicated, that it would hurt this much. Was there actually an upside to being mated?

Turning away from the window, Ryland slowly made his way upstairs to his room. His mind in turmoil, he lay down on the bed, rolling onto his side to stare out the window. The more Ryland thought about his mates being upset with him, the angrier he got.

He hadn't done anything wrong! Gregory and Viktor were both his mates. They needed to learn that he belonged to both of them, not one or the other. They could either accept what could not be change or he was going home alone.

Ryland sat up on the side of the bed, wiping the tears from his face. He needed a plan. It was time for his two obstinate mates to learn who was really in charge because he was tired of being treated like a child.

It was time for him to set down some ground rules. The first being that they couldn't get angry at him because he was doing what came naturally to a tri-omega.

Grabbing a quick shower, Ryland changed into a pair of clean jeans and a shirt. With a small snicker on his face, Ryland grabbed his suitcase and packed up his belongings before setting the suitcase next to the door.

Walking to the nightstand, he picked up the phone and dialed Jake's cell phone, waiting for him to come on the line.

"Hello?"

“Jake? This is Ryland. Is Leyland around? I need to ask him a couple of tri-omega questions.”

“Sure, he’s right here,” Jake replied. *Big surprise there!*

Ryland heard him say something to someone then Leyland came on the line. “Ryland? What’s up?” he asked.

“I need to ask you some questions concerning tri-omegas and mates.”

“Shoot.”

“How often do my mates need to claim me to keep me reasonably healthy?” Ryland asked.

“Mates? You found your other mate?” Leyland asked excitedly.

“Yes. His name is Viktor Stylianos. He’s the beta here on Vourdala Island.”

“Oh, Ryland, I’m so happy for you. I was worried you wouldn’t find him in time. So, tell me, what’s he like?”

“A pain in my ass! Viktor and Gregory can’t seem to get past the idea that they have to share me and they’re taking it out on me, so I’m going to see if I can move into my own room. If not, I’m already packed to come home.”

“Oh. I’m really sorry, Ryland. Believe me, I know what you’re going through. Jake, Lucas, and I had a pretty rocky start, if you remember?”

“Yeah, I do. I’m actually hoping that things work out for us like they have for you. I think that if Viktor and Gregory would just get their heads out of their asses and see what the three of us have together, our lives would be much easier.” Ryland chuckled lightly.

“You’re hoping for a relationship like I have with Jake and Lucas?” Leyland asked, his surprise making his voice rise.

“Why not? I mean sure, Viktor and Gregory aren’t in love like Jake and Lucas, but they could be. They’re certainly attracted to each other. God, Leyland, you should see the two of them kissing. It’s probably the hottest thing I’ve ever seen.”

“Okay, I want all of the details later.” Leyland giggled. “For now, let’s see about answering your questions. Why do you want to know how often they need to claim you to keep you healthy?”

“Because right now, they’re both angry with me. Viktor, because I wanted to check on Gregory after he claimed me. I needed to make sure he was okay. Gregory’s angry with me because I let Viktor claim me. I’m telling you, I just can’t win with these two. So, they’re getting cut off, but I still need to know how often they need to claim me.”

“Maybe I shouldn’t tell you this, Ryland, but you do know that you don’t have to have sex with them in order for them to claim you, don’t you?” Leyland asked.

“Oh really? Then how do they claim me?” Ryland asked curiously.

“They bite you. Simple as that,” Leyland laughed.

“How often?”

“Every day would be best, but no more than three days. At three days, you’re going to start feeling the effects. Four days, you’re going to be down. Five days could be life threatening. After that, well—“

“And all they have to do is bite me? I don’t have to have sex with them?”

“No, but I don’t see why you wouldn’t want to combine the two. That’s one of the best things about being a tri-omega.” Leyland laughed.

“Because they need to learn a lesson in how to treat their mate. I didn’t ask to be a tri-omega anymore than I asked for two mates. They need to learn to share and get along. In the meantime, they get to find out what life would be like without me,” Ryland replied vehemently.

“Ryland, this might backfire on you. You do know that, don’t you?” Leyland asked seriously.

“Yes, I do. But I don’t know what else I can do. Gregory wouldn’t even talk to me after I told him that I loved him. Both Viktor and

Gregory assured me that they could share me, that they cared enough about me that they would put aside their jealousies. They lied.”

“Okay, Ryland, if you think this is best. Just be careful. I don’t want to see something bad happen to you.”

“Well, if I show up on your doorstep, you’ll know how things went. Until then, I still have hope that my mates will get it together.”

After a few more pleasantries, Ryland hung up the phone and went searching for Sasha. He needed to implement the next stage of his plan. Sasha wasn’t hard to find. He was usually wherever Vadim was. Walking into the dining room, he spotted Sasha sitting next to Vadim, feeding him bits of fruit.

“Good day, gentlemen, having a good lunch?” he asked as he sat down across from them.

“Ryland, how are you?” Vadim asked as he looked over at him.

“In need of a favor.”

“A favor? What kind of favor?” Sasha asked quickly, looking at him curiously.

“I’m not sure if you’ve been informed yet, but it turns out that Viktor is my other mate. He claimed me a little while ago,” Ryland replied, feeling his face blush a little.

“I was not aware of this. May you have many years together,” Vadim replied, giving the formal words of congratulations to a newly mated werewolf.

“Yeah, well, it’s not turning out to be a bed of roses. Both Viktor and Gregory are having a hard time accepting the fact that they have to share me and I’m getting the brunt of it. Frankly, I’m tired of it. I didn’t choose to be a tri-omega. I was born this way. It’s time that they understood that.”

“Is that where the favor comes in?” Sasha asked quietly.

Ryland nodded. “Yeah. If it’s possible, I would like to move into my own room, one I don’t have to share with either Viktor or Gregory. If not, I’ll have to move to one of the hotels or something.”

“I’m sure we can find you a room of your own, but are you sure that’s what you want to do, Ryland?” Vadim asked, his voice laced with concern.

“Honestly? No. I would much rather share a room with both of my mates. However, it doesn’t look like that’s going to happen. I’m pretty mad with both of them because they each told me that they could share me and when the time came, they got angry with me.”

“Hmmm, it does sound like you have a problem. What do you plan on doing about it?” Vadim asked.

“Simple really. I need both of them to claim me on a regular basis to live, but no one said anything about sex being involved. So, basically, except for the claiming bite, they’re both cut off. If they want to treat me like I’ve done something wrong, they can both learn what life will be like when I’m not intimately involved with them.”

“You said that you would rather share a room with both of them,” Sasha said curiously. “Does that mean you want to have both of them, at the same time?”

Ryland shrugged his shoulders. “I’ve thought about it. Who wouldn’t? They’re both gorgeous men and I’m mated to both of them. Why wouldn’t I consider having them both at the same time? Besides, if we were all involved with each other, I think the jealousy thing would go away.”

“So, why don’t you tell them this?”

“Because they didn’t ask. They didn’t even give me time to talk to them about it. One minute everything is all peaches and cream, the next moment, they’re both yelling at me for doing what comes naturally. So, as far as I’m concerned, they’re both on their own.”

“Well, I guess I should show you to your room then,” Sasha said as he got to his feet.

“I really appreciate this. I know I’ve brought these problems into your home. I apologize for that. If there was any way to—“

“Don’t worry about it, Ryland,” Vadim replied as he stood up beside his mate. “Since you’re mated to Viktor now, you’re family.

Your problems are our problems. And I, for one, can't wait to see Viktor get himself out of this mess. He was very—patronizing when Sasha and I were first mated. He needs to be put in his place. Somehow, I get the feeling you're just the man to do it."

"Yes," Sasha added with a little laugh, "anything we can do to help, please don't hesitate to ask."

"Mainly, I need my own room. After that, we'll see," Ryland chuckled as he followed Sasha out of the dining room.

## Chapter 7

Ryland laughed at the embarrassed look on Sasha's face as Vadim told another story about his mate. He didn't look too embarrassed though, just a little. Sasha seemed to really enjoy his larger mate, hanging on his every word.

He stopped laughing when Viktor walked into the room and sat down across from him. He watched him fill his plate and begin eating, not even sparing Ryland a look or an acknowledgement.

Gregory soon followed him into the room, sitting a seat away from Ryland. He too ignored Ryland, filling his plate and eating without acknowledging him.

"Viktor, Gregory, I'm glad you could join us for dinner," he said, looking at them both.

Viktor lifted his head to look across at him. He looked like he was going to say something until his eyes strayed to where Gregory was sitting. Without a word, he bent his head back down, putting another bite into his mouth.

Gregory didn't say anything either, just glared across the table at Viktor.

If this was the way they wanted to play, so be it. Ryland stood to his feet, nodding at Sasha and Vadim. "Thank you for dinner. I'm going to head to bed now. Sasha, I'll see you in the morning, right?"

Sasha nodded his head, a confused look on his face as he observed Viktor and Gregory giving Ryland the silent treatment. "Yes, I'll see you in the morning."

Ryland nodded, then walked out of the room and headed upstairs. He passed by Viktor's room, then Gregory's, before coming to his. It



wasn't as large as the room he had shared with Gregory, or even Viktor's room, but it would do for now.

Closing the door behind him, Ryland pulled his clothes off, folding them neatly and putting them on a chair before climbing into bed. He pulled the covers up over his head, hoping that tonight, he would be able to fall to sleep fast. It was a hope anyway.

\* \* \* \*

Gregory rolled over in bed, his hand automatically reaching for Ryland before he remembered that Ryland wasn't in his bed tonight. He was in Viktor's. Just the thought alone was enough to wake him up the rest of the way.

Since the night he had claimed Ryland they hadn't spent a night apart. He didn't like it, not one bit. But he guessed he was going to have to get used to it. Ryland didn't belong just to him anymore. He was Viktor's, too.

He had thought that he could get used to sharing Ryland. He now knew differently. He couldn't believe how angry he had gotten when Ryland had told him that Viktor had claimed him. The rage had been overwhelming.

He knew he had hurt Ryland's feelings, leaving him the way he had, but he had been afraid of what he might have said. Leaving had seemed like the best course of action at the time.

Turning away from Ryland when he had whispered that he loved him through the window had been one of the hardest things he had ever done. He just couldn't be near Ryland without smelling Viktor all over him.

Why was this so hard? It wasn't supposed to be this way. Finding his mate was supposed to be one of the happiest times of his life. He was miserable and he didn't see anyway out of his situation.

He knew that he loved Ryland. There was no doubt about that. He also felt that Ryland loved him. He just didn't know where Viktor fit

into all of this. How was he supposed to share Ryland knowing that another man was touching him, loving him?

Every time he saw Viktor, he was imaging what he and Ryland had done together in bed and it was driving him crazy. What was worse was that he was also fantasized about what he would do with Viktor if he had him in a bed, or any flat surface.

He felt like each fantasy was a betrayal of the promise he had given to Ryland. How could he even contemplate having someone else in his bed? Ryland was his mate, not Viktor. He understood that Ryland didn't have a choice, but he did. So, why then, was the thought of having sex with Viktor so much in his mind?

Rolling to the side of the bed, Gregory grabbed for his pajama bottoms, pulling them on before he grabbed his robe. Maybe he just needed something to calm his nerves. If he remembered correctly, there was a nice bottle of scotch in the study. With a small smile, Gregory left his room and headed downstairs.

\* \* \* \*

Viktor took another sip of the golden liquid in his glass. He coughed softly as it went down, burning a little. Sitting back in the chair he was sitting in, he stared deep into the fire, wondering when his life had gotten so messed up.

In the matter of several hours his life had gone from that of a single carefree man to one mated to a tri-omega and sharing his mate with another man. Never once, in all of the years he had imagined his mate, had he thought he would have to share his mate.

The moment he had spotted Ryland coming down the stairs, he had been filled with elation unlike anything he had ever felt before. Ryland was stunning, all five foot ten inches of his beautiful body.

Even if they hadn't been mates he would have been attracted to him. Ryland was gorgeous from the top of his wavy blond hair to the

bottom of his delicate little feet. All of the tight muscles and smooth skin in between just added to his allure.

Claiming him had been, well, it had been unbelievable. Except for the two mates thing, Ryland was perfect. Viktor just couldn't believe he was mated to a man that had another mate. He had never believed the rumors about tri-omegas were true.

Now look at him. He was sitting in the study drowning his sorrows in a glass of scotch because his mate was in another man's bed. A man he himself wouldn't mind having in his bed. Gregory was just as sexy as Ryland was, but in a completely different way.

Gregory was tall, strong, untamed—and Viktor wanted to be the man that tamed him. He laughed bitterly to himself as he considered the directions his thoughts were going. He thought the need for someone else was supposed to go away once he claimed his mate, but he couldn't get Gregory out of his thoughts—or his fantasies.

Even as his body had been recovering from claiming Ryland, his thoughts had strayed to Gregory and what it would feel like to have him in bed with them. He had felt so guilty about it that when Ryland had mentioned his name, he had come unglued.

Viktor knew he shouldn't have yelled at Ryland. It wasn't his fault that Viktor was having sexual fantasies about Gregory. He just couldn't seem to help himself, to stop thinking about the taller man.

Of course, Ryland shouldn't have brought Gregory up the minute they had been done. He knew he had to share Ryland. That didn't mean he wanted it rubbed in his face. Ryland could have at least waited to talk about Gregory until they had gotten cleaned up and dressed.

Hearing the door open, Viktor turned his head, surprised to see Gregory walk in. He raised an eyebrow when Gregory paused after seeing him, then closed the door and walked over to the sideboard and poured himself a drink.

He watched Gregory curiously until he sat down in the chair across from him. Gregory took a long drink of his scotch, then rested

the glass on his leg as he lifted his head to look across at him. Viktor could see a puzzled look on his face.

“Long night?” Viktor finally asked to break the heavy silence in the room.

“Something like that. But, I’m surprised to see you down here. I’d think you’d have better things to do with your time,” Gregory replied.

“Like what? Tossing and turning in my bed?” Viktor asked, his voice laced with sarcasm.

“Not used to having someone sleeping in your bed?” Gregory asked dryly before taking another sip of his drink.

“Sleeping in my—that would be pretty hard to do considering that my bed is empty right now!”

“Empty?” Gregory nearly shouted as he sat forward. “Where’s Ryland?”

“In your bed?” Viktor asked.

“I haven’t seen Ryland since he walked out of the dining room last night. I thought he was sleeping with you tonight,” Gregory replied as he jumped to his feet to begin pacing across the room. He stopped in mid stride to look over at Viktor, a little frown on his face.

“That was the last time I saw him, too. When he didn’t come to my room, I figured he was sleeping with you tonight,” Viktor replied “If he’s not in my bed and he’s not in your bed, whose bed is he in?”

“I don’t know, but I think we need to find out.”

“What if something happened to him?” Gregory asked as he followed Viktor out of the study.

“Nothing has happened to him. I’d know it if it did,” Viktor replied as he started up the stairs.

“How?”

“The mating bond. Can’t you feel it?”

“Ryland and I don’t have a bond,” Gregory replied sadly, bumping into Viktor when he stopped suddenly and turned around to stare at him in shock.

“You don’t have a mating bond? Why not?”

Gregory took a deep breath as he rolled his eyes. “Just before I claimed Ryland, when I was still denying him, I went into town to—relieve my itch, so to speak. Ryland felt what was going on and severed our bond. Hence, the promise I made to him to never be with another man.”

“Damn! So, you can’t feel him at all?” Viktor asked in a soft whisper, suddenly feeling very sad for Gregory. Even if they weren’t talking to each other, he could still feel Ryland in the back of his mind.

“No. Leyland said we might be able to repair it some day, but with the way things are going right now—” Gregory replied, shrugging his shoulders before starting up the stairs again.

Viktor caught up with him in a couple of steps, walking beside him as they began to check each room. With each empty room he found, he began to get more worried. What if something *had* happened to Ryland?

Opening his fifth door, Viktor heaved a huge sigh of relief as he saw a small body sleeping in the bed. “Gregory,” he whispered softly, “I think I found our wayward mate.”

“What the hell is he doing in here?” Gregory whispered back as he pushed past Viktor to walk into the room. He stopped next to the bed, staring down at Ryland’s sleeping form. Even asleep, he was gorgeous.

“So, why do you think he’s in here when he could be sleeping with one of us?” Viktor asked, looking up from Ryland to Gregory.

“I’m pretty sure I know why he’s not sleeping with me. I got angry earlier today and took it out on him. He’s probably still upset with me,” Gregory replied.

“You didn’t—you didn’t hurt him, did you?” Viktor asked, clenching his fists at the very thought that Gregory might raise to Ryland.

“Not the way you think. I would never lay a hand on Ryland, but I did yell at him. It was wrong and I know that, but at the time I was too angry to care. Looks like I have some apologizing to do.”

“You’re not the only one. I got angry with him earlier, too,” Viktor said regretfully.

“I know, he told me, although I still don’t quite know exactly what happened.”

“Look, why don’t we go back down to the study? We know where Ryland is now and I don’t want to wake him up.”

Gregory nodded, following Viktor out of the room, back downstairs to the study. He sat down in a chair as Viktor poured them both another glass of scotch. Taking the glass Viktor held out to him, he watched him sit down in the chair across from him, curiosity burning a hole in him.

“So, what did happen between you two? When Ryland came downstairs he was pretty upset. He mentioned something about you two—about your claiming him and I pretty much lost it after that,” Gregory said.

Viktor took a deep breath, thinking back to the hours before. “Claiming Ryland was—“

“Out of this world? Phenomenal? Unlike anything you ever experienced before?” Gregory chuckled.

“Yeah, something like that,” Viktor laughed quietly before getting somber again. “I had just gotten done claiming him. I’m not even sure our heartbeats had slowed down yet and he suddenly wanted you.”

Gregory could see the agony and hurt in Viktor’s eyes as he turned them to look at him. “Do you have any idea how that felt? I get it that we’re supposed to share. I don’t like it, but I get it. But for him to immediately want you after—you can imagine how I felt.”

Gregory nodded his head. “If it’s any consolation, I don’t think he meant to hurt you. If Ryland cares enough about you to let you claim him, he would never knowingly hurt you.”

“How could he care about me after only a few hours? That’s certainly not enough time to get to know someone. Maybe he was just letting me claim him so that he wouldn’t die,” Viktor replied bitterly.

Gregory shook his head. “No, he wouldn’t do that. Luckily for you, Ryland believes in love at first sight. He also would never be intimate with someone that he didn’t care about. He’s just not built that way.”

“How can you know that?” Viktor cried out, desperately wanting to believe Gregory.

“Because I’ve known Ryland for a long time. I know what he’s like. If he let you claim him, then he cares about you.”

“And how do you feel about that?” Viktor asked quietly after a few moments of silence.

“Truthfully? I hate it. Why do you think I got so angry with Ryland when he told me that you had claimed him? I knew that it meant he had given you part of his heart. It meant that he wasn’t just mine anymore. Kind of brought that reality to the forefront, you know?”

Viktor was silent after that. He just didn’t know what to say to Gregory. He was elated that Ryland might actually care about him. He wasn’t sure that he believed it, but he was still happy with the possibility.

Still, that didn’t explain why Ryland had talked about Gregory so soon after they had made love. But, if Gregory was right, Viktor knew that he had a lot of making up to do with Ryland. That was assuming that Ryland was even willing to talk to him.

“I really screwed things up with him, didn’t I?”

Gregory laughed. “We both have, Viktor. We’ll be lucky if Ryland gives us the time of day.”

“I was kind of thinking that very thing.” Viktor chuckled caustically as he ran a hand through his dark brown hair. “We are so fucked!”

Gregory laughed again as he stood to his feet. “Come on, let’s go climb into bed with our wayward mate. If nothing else, we might get a good night sleep if we know where he is.”

Viktor nodded, getting to his feet. He started to follow Gregory out of the room when Gregory stopped and turned around suddenly, causing Viktor to run into him. Viktor grabbed onto his waist to keep himself from falling, the breath leaving his lungs as his body pressed against Gregory’s.

He looked into Gregory’s eyes for several tense moments, watching heat fill them, turning them dark brown even as he felt Gregory’s cock grow and press against him. Viktor inhaled deeply, the scent of Gregory’s arousal filling his senses.

“Gregory,” he whispered just before he pressed his lips against his. It came as no surprise to him when Gregory pressed back, his hard cock brushing against Viktor’s. He could hear a low moan come from Gregory as his hands began to explore the soft skin beneath Gregory’s robe.

Viktor pushed Gregory back until he was pressed against the door before stepping between his legs, spreading them more until his body rested fully against him. Dressed as they both were in pajama bottoms, their cocks were free to rub against each other, separated only by two thin pieces of cloth.

But Viktor wanted more. He wanted to feel Gregory’s skin stroking his. Reaching down with one hand, he pushed Gregory’s pants down enough to free his cock, then his own. When he moved back to rub against him, both men groaned out their pleasure as their skin met, their cock rubbing together with nothing to hinder them.

Viktor moved his lips from Gregory’s mouth, down his cheek to the soft skin at his throat. As he licked at the skin between his neck and shoulder, he felt an uncontrollable need to sink his teeth into Gregory.

He wanted to claim Gregory just as he had Ryland. The need was almost as fierce. As he let his teeth scrape over the tender flesh, he



reached around behind Gregory and pushed his hands under the waistband of his pajama bottoms, cupping his ass cheeks in his hands, pulling his body closer as he began humping his hips against him.

He could hear Gregory's harsh moans in his ear, feel his chest rising and falling rapidly as his hands roamed over his back. Viktor let out a deep moan when Gregory scraped his nails down his back, the small bite of pain setting him on a road he never imagined going down.

With a loud growl, Viktor sank his canines into Gregory's neck. His thrusts became frantic, wild, and savage. His fingers dug into the tight flesh of Gregory's ass as he lifted him up and pushed one finger into the small puckered hole between his cheeks.

As the sweet taste of Gregory's blood filled him, he heard him cry out, filling the space between them with his warm essence. Lifting his teeth from Gregory's neck, Viktor roared out his release, his seed joining Gregory's, spreading between them.

Viktor rested his head against Gregory's shoulders as air began to return to his lungs. He let Gregory's legs slide to the floor, feeling him slump back against the door, before lifting his head to stare down into his dazed face. He smiled when he saw that Gregory's eyes were still unfocused, his mouth hanging open.

*"What the fuck just happened?"*

Viktor lifted one eyebrow high on his forehead when he heard Gregory's voice in his head. He didn't think that was supposed to happen. Only mates had the mating bond, the mental link between them. But Gregory had just spoken to him in his mind.

*"Gregory?"* he asked back, using the same mental link he had head Gregory on. He watched Gregory's jaw drop down, an almost frightened look coming into his eyes.

*"I can hear you in my head. Why can I hear you in my head, Viktor?"* he asked nervously.

Viktor's eyes strayed down to the red bite mark on Gregory's neck. He smiled, raising his eyes back up to Gregory's confused ones. "I think I just claimed you, Gregory."

"But, how? We're not mates. We share a mate, but we're not mates. How can you claim me?" he whispered.

"I don't know, Gregory." Viktor looked deep into Gregory's brown eyes, lowering his head to give him a quick kiss on the lips. "But, I'm not sorry it happened. I've wanted you since the moment I saw you."

"Viktor," Gregory whispered, leaning up into Viktor, pressing his lips back against his. Kissing Viktor was so, so, intense. At that moment, he didn't know if he could continue if Viktor didn't kiss him back.

He moaned softly when Viktor wrapped his arms around him, pulling his body away from the door and up against his. He could feel Viktor's hands roaming his back, down to grab his ass.

He desperately wanted to feel Viktor's cock in his ass, his hands on his body. He wanted Viktor pounding into his ass as he bit into his neck again. He wanted to feel Viktor come inside of him, filling him up.

The need was so overwhelming, he almost gave into it, almost begged Viktor to fuck him. But the promise he had given to Ryland hammered into his head, preventing him. He couldn't break his promise to Ryland.

"Viktor, wait," Gregory groaned as he pulled his lips from his, pushing back against his shoulders. Looking into his eyes he tried to convey his need, his regret as he pulled away from him, jerking his pants back up over his hips.

"Gregory?"

"I can't, Viktor. I made a promise to Ryland. No matter how much I want to, I can't do this."

Viktor stared at him for several moments before nodding his head, reaching down to pull up his own pants. As Viktor looked back at him, Gregory was afraid he thought he was being rejected.

“I want you, Viktor. I want you very much, please believe that. But I can’t, not unless Ryland says it’s okay. I can’t break my promise to him,” Gregory said as he tried to explain to him his reluctance.

He wondered if his message had gotten through to Viktor as he watched him move swiftly to the door and pull it open. He knew it hadn’t when Viktor looked back at him over his shoulder, an anguished look in his eyes.

“Just once it would be nice if someone that professed to care about me would put me first. But it seems that in our three way relationship, you and Ryland will always care more about each other than me.”

“Viktor, no,” Gregory cried out as he stepped forward to grab his arm, but Viktor just pulled away, walking out of the study and down the hallway. Gregory watched in the doorway until Viktor disappeared up the stairs.

*Well, hell!* Gregory walked back into the study and grabbed his glass, quickly swallowing the golden liquid in one swallow. That had gone so well. Now, Viktor was just as upset with him as Ryland was. How did he keep getting himself into these messes?

To top it all off, if Viktor was right, he had just claimed him. How was that possible? Sure, he had been incredibly attracted to Viktor since the first time he had seen him, but he never imagined that they were mates.

Gregory knew of only one person that could answer that question for him. Walking over to the desk, he sat down in the chair and reached for the phone. As he dialed home, he prayed that Jake forgave him for calling so late, but this was really important.

“Hello?” a groggy voice asked.

“Jake? It’s Gregory. I need to ask you something.”

“Do you have any idea what time it is?” Jake growled into the phone.

“Yeah, it’s early, I know, but this is important, Jake. Really important,” Gregory replied.

“Fine, what do you need to know?”

“Ryland’s found his other mate, a man named—“

“Viktor, yeah, I know. He called earlier.”

“He did? When?” Gregory asked, surprised.

“Gregory!” Jake growled again. “What’s your question?”

“Sorry, Jake. I, um, I need to know if it’s possible to have more than one mate if you’re not a tri-omega.”

“What?”

“Okay, look, Viktor has already claimed Ryland, but this evening, he, well, he—I think he claimed me, too. He bit me and now I can talk to him in my head, like mates are supposed to be able to, but he’s not my mate, Ryland is.”

“Wrong! He is your mate. Your bond with him won’t be as strong as your bond with Ryland, but he is still your mate. Do you really think fate would be cruel enough to make you share your mate with someone you weren’t mated to?”

“So, he really is my mate? He did claim me?” Gregory asked, stunned by the possibility.

“Hell yes. You’re mated to him as much as he is mated to you. Why do you think Lucas and I are able to share Leyland so easily? We’re mates, too, and have claimed each other.”

“You know, it would have been really nice if someone had explained all of this to us in the very beginning. Maybe you should think about publishing a fucking how-to manual,” Gregory yelled before slamming the phone down.

He stared down at the phone for several moments before a soft chuckle came out of his mouth. It quickly turned into an all out belly laugh, then slowly into sobs as tears fell down his face. Why couldn’t anything ever be simple?

## Chapter 8

Viktor stared out his bedroom window, watching Ryland walking with Sasha. He was laughing and gesturing around him like he didn't have a care in the world. *Lucky him*. Viktor, on the other hand, felt like the weight of the world was pressing down on his shoulders.

It had been two days since he had claimed Gregory, three days since he had claimed Ryland. He hadn't spoken to either of them since. He had two mates and he still felt like he was all alone.

Claiming Gregory had answered a lot of questions for him, though. The main one being why he was so attracted to the man. He had been attracted to other men before, but he had never felt an obsessive need to claim them, not until Ryland and Gregory.

Even after claiming them both, though, he was in no better boat than he had been before. After he had claimed him, Ryland's first concern had been for Gregory. After claiming Gregory, his first concern had been the promise he had made to Ryland.

Neither man seemed to be able to put him first. Just once he wanted to matter to someone, to be the most important person in their life. He had thought he had found that when he had found Ryland. How wrong he had been.

Gregory had prior claim on Ryland. They had known each other for years before they had mated. What did Viktor have to combat that? He hadn't even spent more than a few hours in Ryland's company, or Gregory's.

He was never going to have the relationship with Ryland that Gregory had. They had more years together, more time to get to know

each other before and after they had become mates. Viktor had the last three days.

As for Gregory, it looked like his love for Ryland would always outweigh what he could feel for Viktor. Oh, Viktor understood the need to keep one's promises. A man was only as good as his word, especially a promise made to a loved one. Still...

Viktor turned away from the window and walked back to his bed, stretching out with his hands behind his head. As he stared up at the ceiling, he wondered if Ryland and Gregory would ever love him as much as they loved each other.

\* \* \* \*

Ryland looked up toward Viktor's room, watching as he turned away. He had known Viktor was there the moment he had come outside. He also knew that Viktor was watching him. He could feel Viktor's deep yearning coming through their bond.

The funny thing was that he had started feeling Gregory through the bond a couple of days ago. The first time had totally confused him. The second time he had felt Gregory through the bond had been a little less shocking. After the third time, he had begun to look forward to it.

He just wished that he had never severed the bond between him and Gregory. Now that he knew what it felt like, he missed it. He missed both Gregory and Viktor. Being without them was parallel to torture.

His plan to teach them a lesson in the caring of their mate had seemed like a good one when he had made it. Now, he wasn't so sure. It wasn't so much the sex that he missed, although that was mind-blowing, rather the contentment he felt when wrapped in their arms.

He missed going to sleep with Gregory, waking up in his arms. He missed the way that Viktor seemed to devour him with his gaze every

time he looked at him. He missed feeling their bodies pressed up against him.

Maybe it was time to revise his plan. The only question was how? It was clearly time for him to put his foot down with his mates. Ignoring them wasn't working. He seemed to be no closer to getting them back or getting them to get their heads out of their asses than he had been before he had started all of this.

"What are you thinking about so hard, Ryland?"

Ryland turned to look over at Sasha's smiling face. "My mates. What else?" he laughed, gesturing up towards Viktor's bedroom window.

"Plan not working quite like you had hoped?"

"Not exactly. I wanted a little space from them. I got my wish. Now Viktor and Gregory are both ignoring me. I haven't even seen Viktor in three days, much less Gregory. Pretty soon it's no longer going to be up to any of us. If they don't claim me soon, I'm going to start getting sick."

"Sick? Because of the tri-omega thing?" Sasha asked.

Ryland nodded his head. "Leyland told me that it would be best if they claimed me once a day, two at the most. He said three was pushing it. I'm already starting to get tired. If I go to four days, I'll be in bed. Five days could be life threatening."

"Damn, that sucks! What if one of them gets hurt or something?"

Ryland shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know. You'd think fate would figure something out. I just don't know what it is, and hopefully, I never find out. I'm mad at the guys. I don't want anything bad to happen to them."

"So, what are you going to do? I mean, about them claiming you?"

"I'm thinking on it. So far—" Ryland said, shrugging his shoulders.

Ryland clasped his hands behind his back as he walked silently beside Sasha, trying to figure out what to do about his mates. *What*

*exactly did he want from them?* To treat him like an adult? To admit that the three of them had something together? What?

“Ryland? Can I ask you a question?” Sasha said, breaking the silence.

“Sure.”

“A couple of days ago you said that you would rather share a bed with both of them, correct?”

“Yeah.” Ryland chuckled.

“Did you mean just the three of you together or would it be okay if they were together sometimes without you?”

“Well, as long as they didn’t ignore me or try to hide it from me, I wouldn’t care if they were together, too. I watched Leyland and his mates a lot when we were back home. The three of them are very happy together. That’s what I want for us.”

“So, it wouldn’t bother you if you walked into a room and Viktor had Gregory bent over the couch?”

“Oh, I’d probably want to join in, but no, it wouldn’t bother me. If it were someone else, someone not in our little—three way, I’d probably kill them all. But if it was Viktor and Gregory together,” Ryland chuckled as he shook his head. “That’s pretty hot!”

“So, why don’t you make it happen then?”

Ryland lifted an eyebrow. “You have a plan?”

“I just might,” Sasha giggled. He wiggled a finger at him. “Come with me, my friend. *We* have some plans to make.”

Slightly confused, but willing to try anything, Ryland followed after Sasha, wondering what his devious little mind had come up with. “What’s going through that little head of yours, Sasha?”

Sasha giggled, a devilish little glint in his eye as he looked back at Ryland. “Have you ever walked into a room full of people covered in nothing but a blanket?”

\* \* \* \*



Gregory flopped down on the couch next to Viktor, resentful that Vadim had ordered them to come to his study for a *discussion*. Besides that fact that he was still upset with Viktor for leaving him hanging and refusing to talk to him, he was so turned on by the sight of him that his cock throbbed between his legs.

He had been thinking about nothing but his two mates for the last two days. He was going out of his mind. No matter what he did, he couldn't stop thinking about them, how they smelled, how they felt, how they both said his name. If something didn't happen soon, he was going to scream!

"You called?" Gregory said, trying to keep the sarcasm he was thinking out of his voice.

"I have a situation I need your help with. Viktor naturally has to be here as he is my beta. Since you have some experience being in charge of things, I thought you might be able to help me."

"Very well. What is this situation?"

"As you know, we opened up our island as a shifter vacation spot a little over a year ago. In that time, it has become a great success. Unfortunately, it has not all been good. We are pretty much unable to screen our guests."

"Screen your guests? Why would you need to screen your guests?" Gregory asked, confused by Vadim's statement.

"Well—" Vadim began only to be interrupted by the study door opening.

Gregory looked up to see Sasha walking into the room covered in a blanket. It didn't surprise him. He had heard rumors of Sasha showing up in a room full of people, covered in nothing but a blanket.

As Sasha walked past him to sit down on Vadim's lap and whisper in his ear, Gregory wondered if he really was naked under his blanket. He raised a curious eyebrow when Sasha looked over at him and Viktor, a small giggle escaping his lips.

A moment later, Vadim stood up, Sasha in his arms, and walked toward the door. “We need to shelve this discussion for now, gentlemen. I’ll call you later.”

Gregory couldn’t help but chuckle as Vadim quickly carried his little mate out of the room. From the happy grin on Vadim’s face, Gregory had no doubt where they were headed. He was sure it would be a couple of hours before Vadim tracked them down to finish their discussion.

That just left him and Viktor in the room. Just as Gregory started to look away from the door to Viktor, the door opened up again and Ryland walked in. Gregory nearly swallowed his tongue when he realized that Ryland had a blanket wrapped around him. Was he naked underneath it?

“Ryland,” he whispered as his little mate walked over to stand in front of him and Viktor. The next moment, the air rushed from his lungs as Ryland dropped the blanket from around his shoulders, baring his naked body to both him and Viktor.

Placing his hands on his hips, Ryland glared down at both of them. “Viktor, Gregory, you’re my mates. Both of you are responsible for taking care of me and lately you’ve been doing a very bad job of it. Now, I’m horny. Fix it!”

“Fuck!” Gregory heard Viktor swear next to him. He fully agreed with him. *Fuck!*

“Well? Do I have to stand here and play with myself or are you two going to fix this?” Ryland asked as he gestured down to the hard cock jutting out from his body. “I’m waiting.”

Gregory jumped to his feet and began rapidly pulling his clothes off. Hearing the deep inhale of Viktor’s breath next to him, he turned to see him standing a couple of steps away, pulling at his own clothes. Within moments, both men were as naked as Ryland, their cocks pointing out from their own bodies.

“Well, that’s more like it,” Ryland chuckled.

As Gregory and Viktor began to reach for him simultaneously, Ryland held up his hands to ward them off. “Ah, ah, ah. First, we’re going to set down a couple of ground rules. Rule number one, no more ignoring Ryland. I’m tired of it. You are either mated to me or you’re not. If not, I’ll go home, alone. Got it?”

Both Viktor and Gregory nodded their heads in agreement, neither of them sure where this was going, but more than willing to play along.

“Rule number two. No more getting angry with me for doing something that is natural to me. I care about both of you and I will always worry that you’re okay.”

Ryland turned his eyes to Viktor. “If I bring Gregory up in conversation, it is not to make you jealous, Viktor, but because I am concerned about Gregory. This is especially true where he is concerned because I do not have a mating bond with him like I do with you. I can’t ask him if he’s okay unless I go talk to him in person. Understood, Viktor?”

Once Viktor nodded, Ryland turned to look at Gregory. “The same goes for you. Viktor is my mate just as much as you are. I have a right to be with him anytime that I want to, just as much as I have the right to be with you. You, however, do not have the right to get angry with me for being intimate with my mate. Understood?”

Gregory could feel his face heat up as he nodded his head. Boy, had Ryland got that one on the head. How had he known that was what had happened?

“Rule three. We are in this together, just the three of us. It is not Viktor and I, then Gregory and I, or vice versa. It is Gregory, Viktor, and Ryland together. No more trying to separate us into little groups of two because there’s three of us in this relationship. Clear?”

Gregory looked over at Viktor, noticing the confused, but hopeful look on his face, before turning back to Ryland and nodding his head.

“Rule number four, and the most important rule. If either of you ever turns your back on me again, especially when I tell either of you

that I love you, you will never hear it again. Is that clearly understood?"

After Viktor and Gregory had nodded their heads, Ryland crossed his arms over his chest, raising an eyebrow in query as he looked back at them. "Any questions?"

"I just want to clarify a few things. You know, so that I don't break any rules," Viktor said.

"Look, before we get into that, would you mind if we cuddled on the couch under the blanket? I'm getting a tad cold in the nether regions," Ryland said as he bent down to grab the blanket.

Viktor and Gregory both quickly sat down on the couch. Making room for Ryland between them. Once Ryland had sat down, Gregory pulled the blanket up over all three of them, tucking the edges down around them.

Ryland smiled up at Viktor, turning his head so that he could look at him. "Okay, what's your question?"

"When you brought up Gregory right after I had claimed you, it wasn't because of what we had done? It wasn't because you suddenly needed to be with him instead of me?"

"God, no! Whatever gave you that idea?"

"Well, you did bring him up not minutes after we had sex, Ryland. I'm sure you can see my confusion," Viktor replied.

"No, it wasn't that at all, Viktor. When our mating bond kicked in I could feel your contentment, your peace. I needed to know that Gregory was feeling the same thing. Because our bond is broken, I couldn't just ask him. I had to go see him."

Ryland reached over and grabbed Viktor's hand, giving it a small squeeze. "I'm sorry if my words hurt you. I didn't mean to. But I care about both you and Gregory. I needed to make sure he was okay. That's all, Viktor. I wasn't going from your bed to his."

"I guess my reaction wasn't much better," Gregory said softly.

Ryland turned to look at Gregory. He smiled up at him as he grabbed his hand and squeezed it too. "No, it wasn't. You hurt me a

lot, Gregory. I went to you for comfort after Viktor got so mad at me. You turned on me for doing something that I was supposed to do. You can't dictate my relationship with Viktor."

"No, I guess not. It was just such a shock to me, Ryland. I knew you were going to mate with Viktor, that was a given. I guess I just wasn't expecting it so soon. I knew once you let Viktor mate you, it meant you had given him part of your heart and I wasn't ready to give it up."

"Viktor has a right to a piece of my heart, just as much right as you do. But giving him something doesn't take it away from you, Gregory. I have enough love for both of you. Besides, I think that the more love we give, the more we receive. So, hopefully, the more love I give you two, the more I'll get back."

"You love me?" Viktor asked incredulously.

Ryland turned back to look at Viktor, a confused look on his face. "Of course I do. Why do you think I let you claim me?"

"Because if you didn't, you'd die?" Viktor replied dryly.

"I'd rather die first!" Ryland replied vehemently, trying to pull his hand from Viktor's. But Viktor refused to let go. Instead, he brought Ryland's hand up to his lips, placing a small kiss on the palm.

"I'm sorry for doubting you," he whispered, letting Ryland see the thankful tears in his eyes.

"Viktor," Ryland murmured back. As Viktor started to pull Ryland towards him, Ryland placed a hand on his chest, pushing back a little. "Wait, there's one more thing we need to discuss."

"Another rule?" Viktor chuckled.

"No, this isn't a rule, more like a suggestion. Look, I've seen the way the two of you look at each other. And I—"

"Ryland," Gregory began.

"No, please, let me finish. I want what Leyland, Jake and Lucas have together. I've seen how the three of them love each other and I believe we could have the same thing. If you two truly don't want to be together, I'll understand, but I'm hoping you will."

“You want us to be together?” Viktor exclaimed.

“Well, yeah. I don’t mean that I want you to be together at the exclusion of me, but yeah. I hope that the two of you can learn to care about each other the way I care about you, the way I hope you care about me.”

Gregory sat forward, resting his arms on his knees as he stared down at his hands, nervously twisting them together. He knew now was the time to come clean about what Jake had told him. He just wasn’t sure how it would be received.

“There’s something I need to tell you two. I talked with Jake on the phone a couple of days ago. He told me that one of the reasons that they all get along so well, why he and Lucas are able to share Leyland is because they are all mates.”

“They’re all mates?” Ryland whispered in astonishment.

Gregory nodded. “Jake says that fate would never be so cruel as to mate two men to the same mate without mating them together, too. The bond between Jake and Lucas isn’t as strong as it is with Leyland, but there is a bond.”

He looked up at Ryland, then Viktor. “Viktor and I are mates, too. In fact, he claimed me a couple of nights ago.”

Gregory cringed as he watched Ryland’s mouth drop open in shock.

“Did you—?”

Gregory quickly shook his head. “Not exactly. I mean, we kind of rubbed off on each other, and I really wanted to do more, but I made a promise to you, Ryland. No matter how I feel about Viktor, I can’t break that promise. If I did, how would you ever know if I would keep a promise in the future?”

Ryland stared at him for several more moments. He was so silent. Gregory had no idea what was going through his mind. Would he hold it against him that he and Viktor had made out, had rubbed off on each other?”

“I release you from your promise, Gregory, but only with Viktor. I’ll still hand you your balls if I ever catch you with anyone else,” Ryland finally said.

“Like that’s going to happen.” Gregory chuckled, lifting Ryland’s hand to his lips.

“So, you really don’t mind if I’m with Gregory as well as you?” Viktor asked quietly, drawing Ryland’s attention.

“Nope,” Ryland laughed. “In fact, I’d kind of like to watch. Seeing the two of you kissing was pretty hot. I can’t wait to see what the two of you fucking might look like. Believe me, I’ve been imagining it for days now.”

“I just need to make sure I understand this,” Viktor said. “I don’t want any—hurt feelings. I think we’ve had too much of that already.”

“Okay, so what do you need to know?”

Viktor was silent for several moments as he tried to formulate his answer. Ryland was basically handing him the best of both worlds. He could have him and Gregory, and not feel guilty doing it. But, he just needed to make sure.

“You’re saying that you don’t mind if Gregory and I are together as long as we don’t ignore you, right?” he asked as he looked down at Ryland.

“Right,” Ryland said as he nodded his head.

“So, how would you feel if you walked into a room and I was fucking Gregory without you there or without letting you know first? Are you going to get angry with us?”

“Will it hurt you?” Gregory added.

“Look, neither of you seem to be getting what I’m trying to say here. Viktor, honestly, what would be your first reaction if you were to walk in and find Gregory with his cock up my ass? And I want your honest answer.”

Viktor felt his face heat up a little at the mental picture Ryland painted for him. “Honestly? My first reaction would be to watch, then maybe— try to join in?”

“And you, Gregory?” Ryland asked, turning to look at him.

“I’d definitely try to join in.” He chuckled.

“What about being jealous or resentful because one of you was with me? So far, neither of you have been very giving on that point.”

“Because we’re not supposed to feel that way,” Viktor said vehemently. “Yes, imagining you with Gregory is the hottest thing I can think of. It would be even better if I could join in. But, you’re my mate, not Gregory. I’m not supposed to feel that way.”

“Says who?” Ryland countered. “Besides, I thought Gregory was your mate?”

When Viktor and Gregory just stared down at him, stunned expressions on their faces, Ryland began to laugh. “You’re supposed to be attracted to your mate. That’s how it works. That’s part of what makes mates—mates! And guess what, we’re all mates.”

“But, you didn’t know that, Ryland. How can you feel this way?” Gregory asked.

“Because I love you both. Why wouldn’t I want to share that love? Why wouldn’t I want the two most important people in my life to care about each other? Do you think I enjoy you two being jealous of each other? Hating each other? I’d much rather the three of us be able to do things together as a family then have to divide my time between you two.”

Ryland let go of their hands to push them under the covers, one hand landing on the naked thigh of each of them. “Besides, I imagine being loved by two men is a lot more fun than one. Just think of all of the things we can do together?”

“So, you’re essentially saying that I can be with Gregory whenever I want? And him with me?” Viktor asked as he turned toward Ryland.

“Yep, but only as long as you don’t ignore me. Look, I imagine sex with Gregory will be different than sex with me. We’re two different people. We like different things. So, if you feel the need to



be with Gregory, be with Gregory. Just don't forget to be with me too or I might start getting jealous."

"And the three of us together?" Gregory asked, his voice husky, as he too turned his body towards Ryland's.

"That's the best part. We're all mated to each other. That means we all get to be together at the same time, anytime, all the time," Ryland laughed.

"Just what did you have in mind, little one?" Viktor growled as he lowered his head to nuzzle the side of Ryland's neck where his mating mark was.

"Ohhh, that's a start," Ryland moaned. He started to tilt his head to one side, but Gregory's stopped him, moving in to nuzzle against the mating mark he had left on Ryland's other shoulder.

"That's even better."

As Gregory and Viktor nibbled on his neck, Ryland moved his hands up from their thighs to grab their cocks, his hands quickly beginning a swift stroking motion. He dropped his head back against the couch, smiling to himself when he heard deep moans come from both of his mates.

He couldn't believe he was actually here with both of them. He had been imagining this since he had first learned that he had two mates, and now, it was actually happening. He just hoped this was the first of many more times to come.

Ryland was so caught up in the feeling of having his two mates with him that he jumped when they suddenly moved, tossing the blanket to the floor. Slightly confused, he watched Gregory kneel between his legs, understanding coming to him suddenly when Gregory leaned down and engulfed his aching cock.

"Oh hell," he groaned as Gregory began sucking him, his tongue running around the edge of the head.

"Is that good, baby?"

Ryland looked over to where Viktor was watching Gregory's lips move over his cock. Only when he saw the intense hunger in Viktor's

eyes did he remember that Viktor had never felt Gregory's lips on him.

"Yeah, it's great," Ryland laughed. "You should try it. Gregory?"

Ryland watched Gregory lift his head, a wicked grin coming across his lips as he moved over to kneel between Viktor's legs. He winked up at Ryland before leaning down to take Viktor into his mouth, his tongue moving quickly over him.

"Fuck!" Viktor exclaimed, his hands instantly moving up to clench in Gregory's hair.

Ryland watched with a great deal of satisfaction as Viktor's eyes closed, his jaw clenching together as his head pressed back into the couch cushions. Yep, Gregory was really good at sucking cock. The things he could do with his tongue were magical.

A happy little grin on his face, Ryland stood up and quickly went to the desk to pull out a small bottle of lube that Sasha had told him about. Coming back around the couch, he knelt behind Gregory.

Flipping the lid open he squirted a fair amount on his fingers before setting the bottle down on the floor. Reaching between Gregory's ass cheeks, he rubbed the lube on him, paying special attention to the small puckered hole there.

As he pushed a finger deep inside of Gregory, he heard Viktor cry out. Looking up in surprise, he could hear Gregory groan around Viktor's cock as he moved his finger around. Gregory's moans were vibrating Viktor's cock as he sucked on him.

Grinning at the stunned look on Viktor's face, he inserted a second finger, moving it around several times, stretching him, before adding a third. "Like that, honey?" he laughed.

Viktor lifted his dazed blue eyes from where they were watching his cock move in and out of Gregory's mouth, to look at Ryland. Viktor nodded his head rapidly.

Ryland looked down to where his fingers were imbedded in Gregory's ass, a sudden yearning filling him. In all of the time he and

Gregory had been together, he had never fucked Gregory. He had always been on the receiving end of things.

He didn't know if that's the way that Gregory preferred things or if that's just the way it had happened. But, suddenly, he desperately wanted to know what it felt like to have Gregory's warm grasp surrounding his cock.

Not sure of Gregory's reaction, he pulled his fingers from him and grabbed his cock, pushing the head against his tight entrance. Pushing just a little, he looked up at Gregory. "Gregory?" he whispered quietly.

A moment later he was moaning softly as Gregory quickly pushed back against him. Ryland watched himself slowly sink into Gregory, astounded by the soft warm feel of him. As he felt himself press in the last little bit, his hands clenched against Gregory's hips.

The feeling of being inside of Gregory was amazing. He didn't know why he had never done this before, but he certainly understood why Gregory liked it so much. The breath hissed through his teeth as he began to pull out, then push back in again. He felt like it was his first time again. He didn't think he would last very long. It just felt too good.

"I think you like that, Ry," Viktor chuckled. At Ryland's quick nod, Viktor pushed Gregory back, staring down at him for just a moment before moving off the couch. "I think you'll like this more."

Ryland tried to see what Viktor was doing, but he couldn't seem to drag his gaze away from watching his cock move in and out of Gregory's ass. He was slightly surprised when Gregory moved, pressing his head and shoulders down to the floor, spreading his legs further, giving Ryland better access.

He jerked when he felt Viktor's hand on his back, pressing him down over Gregory's back. He leaned forward, bracing his body on his arms. He could feel his breath beating down across the nape of Gregory's neck as he moved.

Ryland heard the cap on the bottle of lube then felt Viktor's hands at his ass, spreading his cheeks as he pushed a finger into him, moving it around several times before adding a second one, then a third, stretching him.

"Viktor," he cried out.

"Just do what comes naturally, baby." Viktor chuckled as he replaced his fingers with his cock, pushing into Ryland with on swift lunge.

Ryland felt his arms and legs start to tremble as Viktor began a swift thrusting motion, moving in and out of him. Each thrust of Viktor's hips pushed in deeper into Gregory. It took Ryland just a few moments to get the rhythm, moving himself in and out of Gregory.

Within moments Ryland was ready to blow. As his cries became louder, his thrusts more savage, Ryland leaned over Gregory, sinking his teeth into the soft flesh of his neck, claiming Gregory as his mate again.

Just as he did, he felt Viktor do the same, claiming him again. The combined stimulation of Gregory wrapped around his cock, Viktor's cock pounding into him from behind, the sweet taste of Gregory as he claimed him, and the feel of Viktor claiming him again, sent Ryland over the edge.

With a loud cry, Ryland threw his head back, his movements frantic as his cock exploded, filling Gregory with his seed. Even before he could collapse against Gregory, he felt him pull away. Then Viktor pulled away.

Still dazed, and slightly confused, Ryland cried out at the loss, only to moan deeply a moment later when Gregory replaced Viktor, sinking his cock deep into him. Even as his head and shoulders sank down to the floor, he heard Gregory cry out as Viktor filled him from behind.

Ryland could only lie there as Gregory and Viktor began a rapid pace, Viktor thrusting into Gregory, Gregory thrusting into him. He

could hear the soft cries from Gregory, as his hands clenched at the flesh on his hips, getting louder and louder.

“Wait! I need to roll over. I want to watch,” Ryland called out suddenly, pulling away from Gregory. As he quickly rolled to his back, grabbed his legs and pulled them to his chest, he could see the desperation in Gregory’s eyes as he pushed back into him.

Looking past Gregory, Ryland saw Viktor’s clenched jaw, his slightly closed eyes filled with heat and desire. The moment was perfect—almost. They needed just one more thing to make it absolutely perfect.

“Claim him, Viktor, claim Gregory,” he whispered.

If he wasn’t mistaken, the heat in Viktor’s eyes burned brighter as Viktor leaned down and sank his canines into Gregory’s neck, claiming him again. Ryland moaned softly as Gregory threw back his head and cried out. The head of his cock swelled inside of Ryland even as he erupted, filling Ryland with his essence.

Moments later, Viktor was roaring out as he reached his own orgasm, filling Gregory with his release. He dropped his head down to rest in the middle of Gregory’s back, his chest heaving.

Ryland reached up to run his wrap his hand around Gregory’s head where it rested against his neck. He reached past Gregory with his other hand to softly stroke Viktor’s head, smiling to himself.

“Now, my loves, that wasn’t so bad, was it?”

## Chapter 9

Ryland opened his eyes, stretching his arms over his head. He felt wonderful. The last week had been the best that he could ever remember in his life. Every night he went to bed in the arms of his two mates, every morning waking up with the same arms still wrapped around him.

Except this morning. Ryland looked around the room. He was alone, no mates to be seen. Where the hell were they? Since they had all claimed each other, they were hardly ever apart. More often than not, they were exploring whatever flat surface they could find.

After that one special night, it wasn't uncommon for Ryland to walk into the bedroom to find one of his mates buried balls deep into the other one. Of course, he was often in the same position with one of them when the other walked in.

It didn't seem to matter who was with who. They could hardly be in the same room together without someone having an orgasm. As he climbed from the bed and reached for his jeans, Ryland remembered what had happened after he and Viktor had both claimed Gregory.

It had been all they could do to get upstairs before going at it again, this time, him and Gregory both claiming Viktor. Ryland wasn't sure what he liked more, doing the claiming or being claimed. Luckily, he had years to find out.

Zippering up his jeans, he grabbed his shirt, pulling it over his head as he walked out of the bedroom. *Time to find his mates.* As he walked barefoot down the stairs, he chuckled to himself. He had forgotten one little thing. Finding his mate wouldn't be that hard.

“*Viktor, why did I wake up alone, no mate in my bed to keep me warm?*” he asked through their bond.

“*Sorry, Ryland. We’re talking with Vadim and Sasha,*” Viktor replied, the soft laughter in his voice making it sound deeper.

“*Study?*”

“*Yes, baby.*”

With a happy little laugh, Ryland went down the hallway to the study. Opening the door, he was surprised to see Vadim, Sasha, Viktor, Gregory, and Niko sitting in front of the fireplace talking.

*They all look so serious,* Ryland thought as he closed the door behind him and went to sit down between Viktor and Gregory on the couch.

“*Viktor, what’s wrong?*”

“Sorry, baby, we should have had you join us, but you were sleeping so peacefully, Gregory and I didn’t want to wake you,” Viktor replied out loud, patting Ryland on the leg.

“What’s going on?” Ryland asked as everyone looked over at him. He could see apprehension and concern in theirs eyes. “Has something happened? Is someone hurt?”

“No, baby, it’s nothing like that. Gregory and I were talking this morning after we woke up and something came to our attention that concerned us. Once we started talking about it, we decided to come speak to Vadim about it. We thought he might be able to help us out with it.”

“What?” Ryland cried out, suddenly feeling very worried.

“It’s nothing to be so worried about, Ryland. We’re just talking about possibilities right now,” Gregory answered.

“Would someone just tell me before my head explodes?” Ryland exclaimed.

“Well, this morning I was telling Viktor that our vacation was about over with when it suddenly occurred to me that we can’t go home without Viktor,” Gregory began.

“Except that I am the beta for the Vourdala Pack. I have responsibilities here. But I don’t want to be separated from you two,” Viktor added with a worried frown.

“That’s it? That’s what this big drama is all about?” Ryland yelled as he jumped to his feet, his hands landing on his hips as he glared down at Viktor and Gregory. “You got me all worried because you can’t decide where we’re going to live? Did you two lose your minds while I was asleep?”

“Do you have a solution to this problem?” Viktor asked, one eyebrow raised up in query.

“We live here, duh!” Ryland replied, exasperated. “Viktor is the beta here. At home, Gregory and I do not hold that rank. Viktor’s ranking in his pack trumps ours. Besides, Wolfrik Pack already has a tri-omega. Vourdala Pack doesn’t, and I don’t think you’re supposed to have two tri-omegas in the same pack.”

“I already have an omega, Ryland. Why would I need another?” Vadim asked quietly.

Ryland rolled his eyes as he turned to look over at Vadim. “Because Sasha is not a tri-omega. Oh, he’s good at being an omega, very good. I can’t remember ever seeing an omega as good as he is. But he’s still not a tri-omega.”

“And what is special about you that I can’t get from my omega?”

Ryland was silent for a moment as he thought about what might make him special. “I don’t know,” he replied honestly. “I know I’m supposed to have some sort of special ability, but I don’t know what it is. I can’t levitate things like Leyland or talk into people’s heads. I really don’t know.”

“So, why should I accept you into my pack then?”

Ryland shrugged, sending Vadim a small smile. “I’m cute?”

Vadim laughed. “Yes, you are, but I don’t think that’s going to mean the same thing to me as Sasha being cute. Besides, your mates might not like it.”



Ryland slumped down on the couch between Viktor and Gregory, his shoulders slumping. “I don’t know. I just know we’re supposed to be here. It makes sense, doesn’t it? Viktor has a higher ranking than we do. He’s your beta. We should be where he is.”

“And how do you feel about moving here?” Sasha asked quietly.

“I’ll miss Leyland and all of the guys, but it’s not like we’ll never see them again. We can still go visit, they can come visit here, and there are always pack functions. Besides, leaving Viktor is just unacceptable.”

“I could always renounce my rank and move to the Wolfrik Pack with you two,” Viktor said.

Ryland shook his head. “No, you’d never be happy there. Jake already has Lucas as his beta so he doesn’t need another one, but you’re needed here more. The Wolfrik Pack is very small, Vourdala Pack isn’t. Vadim needs you more than Jake does.”

“I appreciate you looking out for me and my pack, Ryland. That kind of caring nature is one that I like in my pack members, but you understand that it’s not just my decision. If I am to accept you into my pack, there are a lot more people that need to weigh in their vote,” Vadmi said seriously.

“Like—the entire pack?”

“No, the pack will do as I say. I’m talking about the people that live here. Besides Sasha, Niko, and myself, there’s still Gregory and Mary. They are part of our immediate family, what you would consider my inner circle. They have a right to have a say in this, too.”

“So, ask them,” Ryland demanded, blushing when Vadim lifted an eyebrow at him. “Sorry, Vadim,” he quickly apologized, realizing that he had just given the alpha of Vourdala Pack an order.

Vadim nodded to him, silently acknowledging his apology. “If my inner circle decides to accept you into our pack, you are, of course, welcome to share the alpha compound with us. But that is something we must discuss between us.”

“Of course, Vadim,” Viktor said, getting to his feet. “If you don’t mind, we will go for a walk while you talk to the rest of your inner circle.”

Vadim nodded. “Sasha, would you please—“

He stopped talking when the door unexpectedly swung open, Mary rushing in. He looked up at her in surprise as she rushed across the room to whisper in his ear. He quickly got to his feet and rushed out of the room, Sasha on his heels.

Mary wrung her hands together as she looked after them, then over at Viktor. “The baby—she’s coming, but something is wrong. Karina’s been in labor for hours, but the baby’s not coming out. I don’t know what to do.”

Ryland suddenly jumped to his feet and raced out of the room, leaving Gregory and Viktor standing there stunned. Viktor looked over at Gregory in confusion. “What was that all about? Where’s he going?”

Gregory shrugged his shoulders, looking back towards the door. “I don’t know.”

\* \* \* \*

Ryland raced after Vadim and Sasha. He had no idea why but he just felt that he needed to be there. The feeling was so overwhelming, it was all he could do to stay on his feet as he ran up the stairs to the room Karina had been given a few days ago.

Sasha had explained to him that Karina was going to give birth to his daughter, then give her up and go home. Ryland didn’t understand it, but who was he to question why someone did something. That would be like throwing rocks in a glass house.

Running up to the door that belonged to Karina, he quietly opened it up and walked in. He could see Vadim and Sasha sitting on either side of Karina, holding her hands as she labored to give birth to Sasha’s daughter.

Gregory, Vadim's advisor and one of the older members of his pack, was pacing nervously next to the bed, his hands twisting together as he gazed down at Karina. "I think the baby is backwards or maybe the cord is wrapped around her neck. I just don't know, Vadim. No matter what we do, the baby will not come. And now there's so much blood."

"Vadim," Ryland said, drawing his attention.

"Ryland, you need to not be in here right now," Vadim said, turning back to Karina.

"I think I can help," Ryland said.

Ryland could see the anger in Vadim's eyes as he stood up and turned toward him. "What can you do? Have you ever delivered a baby before?" Vadim shouted.

"Please, Vadi, if he can help—" Sasha said quietly.

"Fine!" Vadim said as he stepped out of the way, gesturing for Ryland to come forward.

Ryland slowly walked forward, one eye on Viktor as he walked past him. Coming to the side of the bed, he sat down, his eyes turning to look into Karina's. "Hey, remember me? My name is Ryland."

Karina nodded her head, too exhausted to speak.

"Would you mind if I took a look at you?" Ryland asked softly.

When Karina shook her head, Ryland lifted his hands and placed them on her stomach, rubbing them up and over the soft swelling. He could feel small movements as her stomach contracted.

He didn't know what he was looking for, or even if he could help. He just knew that he needed to try. The more he stroked his hands over her stomach, the warmer they started to feel. As his hands warmed, a picture began to form in his mind, one he had never seen before.

With sudden clarity, he looked over at Vadim. "The cord is wrapped around the baby's neck and it's tearing away from the placenta. That's where all of the blood is coming through. If we don't get her out soon, they will both die."

Vadim stared at Ryland for several tense moments, disbelief written across his face. “Can you do anything?”

“I don’t know,” Ryland replied as he looked back down at Karina. “I don’t even know how I’m doing this.”

“Please try, Ryland,” Sasha asked desperately.

Ryland nodded his head before closing his eyes, concentrating as he envisioned what he wanted to happen. The umbilical cord needed to be removed from around the baby’s neck so that the baby could be born. It also needed to be repaired before the baby was born.

He jumped back out of the way when Karina let out a loud cry, the baby rushing from her body. Sasha quickly grabbed the baby and checked to make sure she could breathe. Gregory moved forward to check on Karina.

“I think we’re losing her,” he replied quickly as Karina’s eyes closed.

Ryland sat forward and placed his hands on her stomach once again, closing his eyes as he concentrated. As he felt his hands heat up once more, he could see the small tears in her womb. He once again envisioned what he wanted to happen, wanting the small tears to close up, and the bleeding to stop.

Finally, opening his eyes, feeling totally exhausted, Ryland looked down at Karina. He smiled at her as she opened her eyes—right before he fell backwards, unconscious before his body left the bed. He never saw Vadim rush over to catch him, nor the dazed and confused look he gave Sasha.

“I think it would be in the pack’s best interest to keep him, Vadi,” Sasha said as he looked down at the baby girl in his arms.

“I think you’re right, *Majiktoka*.”

\* \* \* \*

Ryland opened his eyes, at first not quite knowing where he was. As the faces of his beloved mates came into his view, he realized that he didn't really care. As long as they were all together, he was happy.

"Hey, baby, did you have a nice nap?" Vitkor asked as he leaned down to give him a small kiss.

"How long have I been asleep?"

"A little over twenty four hours. We were starting to get worried about you," Gregory said as he too leaned in to give Ryland a kiss.

"Twenty four hours? Really?" Ryland asked in surprise.

"Yeah," Gregory said as he leaned back in to give Ryland another kiss, a long passionate kiss. By the time he lifted his head, both he and Ryland were breathing heavily.

Ryland could feel his cock throbbing between his legs, Gregory's cock pressing against his hip. Viktor was pressing into him from the other side, his hard cock nudging Ryland's hip. "I get the feeling you missed me," Ryland laughed.

"Just a little," Gregory said as he scooted down just enough that he could reach Ryland's nipple with his lips.

As Gregory's lips closed over his nipple, his tongue coming out to flick the top, Ryland cried out, arching his back and pressing his nipple further into Gregory's mouth. He thought he was going to blow his load when Viktor joined him, his lips wrapping around Ryland's other nipple.

Before he could even accustom himself to the feeling of their lips on his nipples, he felt their hands move down his body, grabbing his thighs and pulling them apart. The next thing he felt was long fingers wrap around his cock at the same time two fingers pressed into his ass.

"Viktor, Gregory," he moaned as they began moving their hands in rhythm, their lips paying close attention to his nipples. Viktor pushed in as Gregory pulled down. He pulled out as Gregory pulled up. The rhythm was fast paced and frantic as their lips, tongue, and teeth stimulated his nipples.

Just as he thought he couldn't take anymore without exploding, both Viktor and Gregory scooted up to sink their teeth into his neck, each covering a mating mark. Ryland pressed his head back into the pillow as his cock erupted, covering the hand holding him with his pearly white seed.

The fingers in his ass continued thrusting into him as he rode out his orgasm, his head thrashing in the sheets as a third finger joined the first two, thrusting into him until he was whimpering.

Finally, the fingers stopped, pulling from him. Ryland opened his eyes and quickly looked down when he felt twin tongues lick at his cock. He could see Viktor and Gregory taking turns licking the seed from him.

"I guess you did miss me," he chuckled.

Viktor opened his eyes and looked up at him. "You remember that little additive you can't do without? Gregory and I have discovered something we can't do without." Viktor chuckled just before taking another swipe with his tongue.

Ryland let his head fall back on the pillow, chuckling. "You can have all you want."

He turned his head to look over when Gregory climbed up beside him. "Oh yeah?"

"Yeah, there's plenty more where that came from. Just get me some food first. I'm hungry." Ryland laughed.

"I think we can—well shit," Viktor said when a loud knock sounded at the door. He climbed from bed and reached down to the floor to grab a pair of pajama bottoms, tossing them at Ryland. "Here, put these on."

He waited by the door until Ryland had the pajama bottoms on, then opened it, admitting Sasha, Vadim, and Niko. Sasha walked up to the bed and sat on the side, a small bundle in a pink blanket wrapped in his arms.

"I thought you might want to meet Riana," he said as he placed the small bundle in Ryland's arms.

Ryland took the baby, pulling back the blanket to stare down at her angelic face in wonder. “Wow. She’s so tiny,” he whispered quietly. He stroked his fingers lightly down her face and over her chin before looking back up at Sasha.

“She’s okay?”

“Right as rain. Not a single sign that her birth was anything but perfect,” Sasha said as he grinned at him.

“And Katrina? She’s okay?”

“She’s just fine, thanks to you,” Vadim said, coming to stand at the end of the bed. “I didn’t understand the need to have a tri-omega when we talked earlier, Ryland. Now, I do. As the alpha of Vourdala pack and a father, I think it would be in my best interest to keep my daughter’s godfather as close to me as possible. So, if you’re still interested, you and Gregory are welcome in our pack.”

“Godfather? Me?” Ryland exclaimed. “What do I know about being a godfather?”

“All you have to do is love her, and I have been assured by your mates that you believe that the more love you give, the more you receive,” Vadim replied, chuckling lightly at the glare Ryland sent his mates.

Ryland raised an eyebrow at his mates. “You two *have* been busy while I was asleep.”

Viktor and Gregory blushed, shrugging their shoulders. “We had to do something while you were sleeping. It seemed kind of rude to fool around with you while you were unconscious. We prefer to do that when you can participate.” Viktor laughed as he winked at Ryland.

“I would too, but don’t let that stop you,” Ryland said as he looked back down at the baby in his arms. He was checking her over, counting her toes, feeling her small fingers grasp his finger when Viktor sat down next to him, Gregory standing right behind Viktor.

“Should we have one of these?” Viktor asked softly, brushing his hand over Riana’s soft curls.

“I don’t think I’m quite ready to give up the *baby of the family* status just yet, but, maybe some day. I’d say that the possibility is there, just not yet. You, Gregory, and I have a lot more growing up to do before we’re ready to be parents. You two are just now learning how to share your toys.” Ryland chuckled.

“Yeah, well, can you blame us? We were always taught it was wrong to share,” Gregory said as he sat down beside Viktor and leaned back behind Ryland to wrap his arms around him.

Ryland smiled as he handed the baby back to Sasha before leaning back in Gregory’s arms. He looked down as he felt Viktor move over to lay back in his lap, his head turned to gaze tenderly up at him.

He wrapped one hand around Gregory’s neck, the other caressed the side of Viktor’s face. He kissed Gregory on the cheek before bending over to kiss Viktor, too. “Nothing is forbidden between us, my loves.”



## Chapter 10

Viktor set his pen down, his gaze once again going to the window and the view beyond. Ryland and Sasha had taken the cubs outside to get a little sun. What had started out as a small little family picnic was quickly turning into a pack gathering as more and more people brought food and gathered in the alpha compound.

Ryland and Sasha seemed to have that effect on people. Every time they went anywhere on the island, people flocked to them to say hello, to chitchat, to just be near them. Viktor was beginning to think he might have to schedule time just to be alone with his little mate.

Since Gregory and Ryland had moved to the alpha compound a couple of months ago, Ryland seemed to always be on the go. If he wasn't healing someone, he was off with Sasha getting into some sort of trouble.

Those two were as thick as thieves. Viktor hesitated to think what would happen when Leyland finally came to visit with his mates. He had met the little man when they went back to the ranch for Gregory and Ryland's stuff. Leyland got into as much trouble as Sasha and Ryland did. It was sure to be interesting.

"You know you're never going to get anything done if you keep staring out the window at him. You might as well give it up now and just come outside."

Viktor turned his head away from the window to see Gregory leaning against the doorframe, his arms crossed over his chest, a wry grin on his face. He chuckled at him. "Yeah, you're probably right. I just can't seem to stop looking at him."

Gregory walked over to the window to look out at their mate. “He is pretty cute, Viktor.”

Viktor walked up to Gregory, wrapping his arms around his waist as he rested his chin on his shoulder. “He is at that,” Viktor said as he turned his head to lick at the mating mark he had left in Gregory’s neck.

“Did you ever think you’d be standing here with me like this?” Gregory asked.

“In my dreams, yes, since the moment I laid eyes on your gorgeous body. In reality, no way,” Viktor chuckled. “Seems our baby knew more about this love stuff than either you or I put together.”

“Does it ever bother you? The looks we get from other people, I mean?”

“Sometimes. I guess I don’t like feeling different, but never enough to give either of you up. Besides, who cares what other people think? We know what we feel for each other and that’s all that matters.”

Gregory turned around in Viktor’s arms to look up at him. “Do you really believe that?”

“Yes, Gregory, I do. It took me awhile to figure it all out, but now I couldn’t imagine living my life without either of you. I know that I love both you and Ryland. I know he loves both of us, and I know you love him and me. What else matters?” Viktor replied truthfully.

Gregory was silent for a few minutes before a wide grin began to pass over his face. “How fast do you think you can get Ryland inside?”

“Why?” Viktor asked, confused.

“I thought we might fool around a bit before joining the pack outside.” Gregory grinned as he began to unbutton Viktor’s shirt.

“He’s on his way,” Viktor replied a moment later.

Gregory turned to see Ryland running towards the house like the hounds of hell were on his heels. His jaw dropping open in surprise, he turned to look back at Viktor. “What did you say to him?”

“I told him we were going to try out some of those forbidden desires we were always told not to try. If he wanted to join us, he needed to get his ass in here or we were going to start without him,” Viktor replied just before he lowered his lips to Gregory’s.

**THE END**

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Stormy Glenn believes the only thing sexier than a man in cowboy boots is two, or three, men in cowboy boots. She also believes in love at first sight, soul mates, true love, and happy endings.

When she's not being a mother to her six teenagers or cleaning up after her two 70-pound lap puppies, you can usually find her cuddled in bed with a book in her hand or her laptop, creating the next sexy character for her stories.

Stormy welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website at [www.stormyglenn.com](http://www.stormyglenn.com)



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