Storyid: 4688523
FanFiction.net
Name: Summer Camp
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Chapter: 1

SUMMER CAMP

Author's Note: This fic takes place about three weeks after the end of The Slytherin Hufflepuff. It was written over the summer for The AS/S Carnival on Livejournal to a varied assortment of prompts...

Al thought the place looked brilliant, but he could tell that Score was less than thrilled with the accommodations. The horrified sneer on his friend's face was a telling clue.

"What is this hideous place?"

Al tried to placate him with reason. "Well, back in the 60s some hippies came here and turned this place into a commune. You know, sex, drugs, and debauchery."

"Apparently they had little time left for cleaning," Score said, ignoring Al's suggestive tone. He made a strangled noise. "Look! I've got dirt on my sleeve and I haven't even touched anything!" Scorpius cast a Cleaning Charm and followed with several more to scour everything within reach. Al danced away to avoid being a target of said Charm. He leaned out of a square opening that served as a window and surveyed the place. The complex was made up of structures similar to small cabins, but set high in the treetops and connected by rope bridges.

"It's not my fault yellow is a dust magnet," Al said and waved at Amber and Zephyr Abbott, who stood on a rope bridge nearby. They did not wave back as they were busy holding on and screaming. Hugo Weasley occupied the other end of the bridge. He was leaping up and down to keep the thing rocking precariously. Al grinned.

"Well, black is no better, Shadow. Look at you. You're filthy."

Al did not bother to take in his appearance. He knew Score liked him better without clothes,

anyway. He turned back and enveloped Scorpius in an amorous embrace.

"Maybe you can give me a bath later," he murmured against Score's neck. A cold sluice of water poured over Al's head, drenching him. Scorpius leaped back with a laugh to avoid getting wet. Al spluttered and blinked water from his eyes. "What was that for?"

"These ridiculous cabins have no doors, in case you haven't noticed. We haven't a jot of privacy."

"So? No one can see us unless they climb up here," Al complained. He yanked out his wand and cast a Drying Spell just as Lily's head appeared in a window opening.

"Hey, I figured you two would be lip locked by now. What's wrong?" she asked.

"Score is being modest," Al explained. "How did you get up here?"

Lily rose higher to disclose the broom she rode. "I'm supposed to make sure everyone Portkeyed in okay and made it to the proper cabins."
"I'm not being modest," Score snapped and turned his Cleaning Charm on one of the four cots that lined the vaguely hexagonal room. "Not everyone is as accepting of our relationship as your family, Albus. I am trying to avoid adverse attention."

Al rolled his eyes. Ever since they had become lovers, Score acted like a complete prat in public. They had spent six of their school years fairly wrapped around each other, albeit in a mostly platonic fashion, and Score had never objected. Now he avoided Al like the plague in public, not seeming to realize his behavior drew more notice than their old easygoing affection.

Lily caught Al's eye and gave him a commiserating eyeroll. "Malfoy and Potter. Check," she said and took off.

"Will you at least rub some sunscreen on me?" Al asked and produced a tube of lotion from his robe pocket.

"Oh, for Merlin's sake, Al."

Albus glared at him, wondering if the blond planned to act like a tetchy prat for the next two weeks. "Fine. I'll get Ethan to do it," he snapped. He stalked through the door opening and one the first rope bridge, ignoring Score's attempt to call him back.

Al avoided Score until later that afternoon when they were all required to gather in the Hub, which was a magically expanded edifice high in the branches of an oak tree. It was also in a wretched state of disrepair, festooned with cobwebs and animal nests.

"I think this place hasn't been used since the 60s," Hugo said and nudged Al.

Rose piped up. "Actually, it was last used in 1987. The Harrisons' purchased it and set it up as a

summer camp for Hogwarts students, but when their children died in a horrible accident, they closed it down completely. Ramona Harrison died earlier this year and apparently her will decreed that it be donated to Hogwarts and restored. Don't any of you read the Daily Prophet?"

"Why should we when we have the Encyclopedia of Rose?" Hugo asked sardonically.

"Well, I think it's perfect," she continued. "They have allowed upcoming seventh year students to earn extra credits as Guidance Counselors. It's an excellent summer job."

"I'm glad I didn't sign up for that duty," Al muttered. He had agreed to come to camp mostly to give his father some kid-free time to heal from a paralyzing injury. Rose gave him a chastening glare for his implied laziness and flounced away to give "guidance" to some third year Ravenclaws.

It wasn't long before the Counselors forced them all into teams in order to clean and repair the Hub. Albus volunteered for cobweb removal and pest extermination, mostly in order to wander the crowded room and hunt for Scorpius. He could not stay mad at the blond for long and already missed him terribly.

Al found him in the center of the room, selling lemonade by the glassful.

"You're supposed to be cleaning," Al complained.

"Malfoys don't do house-elf work. Besides, my father wanted me to get a summer job. Do you want a glass or don't you?"

Albus refrained from mentioning that Draco Malfoy probably would not consider a lemonade stand worthy of job status. Al coughed up the necessary coins, knowing that being Score's boyfriend did not gain him any special privileges when cold hard cash was involved. Albus tipped his head back and drank slowly, intentionally allowing a droplet to escape and trickle down his chin and throat to disappear beneath the open collar of his shirt. He watched through his lashes as Score's grey eyes followed the path of the drip. The blond's mouth parted slightly and his tongue flicked out to touch his lips. Al suppressed a wicked smirk and handed the empty glass back to Scorpius.
"Thanks," he said huskily and wandered off to eradicate more pests.

The Hub was completely renovated in time for the evening meal. Albus found it interesting that the campers gravitated toward the same groups they frequented at Hogwarts. Score sat like a golden king in the midst of his Hufflepuff followers, including Al, of course, although Albus was careful not to snuggle against Score's shoulder as he used to. The Gryffindors held court with Rose Weasley and Jason MacMillan acting much as they did at Hogwarts—domineering and loud. There were exceptions, of course. The Ravenclaws were primarily loners and they were scattered throughout the room. Only a few Slytherins were in attendance, including Angelica Parkinson. The Slytherins all looked carefully bored to tears. Hugo sat with the Hufflepuffs—sandwiched between Amber and Zephyr Abbott. He acted like a Kneazle with a

pot of cream.

After a dinner of assorted barbequed selections—Al suspected the adults had Hogwarts house-elves squirreled away in order to prepare food—they were introduced to the Chief Councilor, who was none other than Oliver Wood. The famous Quidditch player sauntered into the room and waved to the gleefully cheering students. Wood wore nothing but a pair of Quidditch trousers and dragon-hide boots.

"Welcome to the world of scantily clad celebrities," Hugo muttered and held the near-swooning Abbott girls tightly.

"He's so handsome!" Zephyr cried.

"He's older than your dad," Scorpius said and snickered.

"I don't care, he's still gorgeous," Amber said with a dreamy sigh.

"What do you think, Al?" Scorpius drawled and Al grinned at him mischievously.

"He's pretty hot," Al admitted and winked.

Score's gaze turned frigid for a moment and then he switched his attention back to Wood, who divulged planned camp activities in a loud voice, pausing when whistles and applause interrupted him. Al wasn't interested in games. He was here for the sole purpose of shagging Scorpius Malfoy under the stars.

After the announcements, the Hub was deserted as the students flew, Levitated, or climbed down to the central grassy sward beneath the trees where a huge bonfire had been lit. Apparently it was a common practice at camp to gather round a fire and sing songs, so the adults forced the unwilling children into doing so. Albus thought the singing would have gone over much better after copious amounts of alcohol consumption. Unfortunately, alcohol was banned from the camp.

Al refrained from singing and instead spent nearly an hour trying to coax Score into the dark forest with suggestive glances. Unfortunately, Score was either playing stupid or being an obstinate arse. Al finally admitted defeat and stood up.

"I'm going to bed," he said to Hugo, who barely grunted in acknowledgement. He was busy comparing the taste of Amber Abbot's neck to that of her sister. It seemed to take quite a lot of tasting and involved an excess of giggling on the part of the girls.

Al cast one last glance at Scorpius, who seemed to be engrossed in conversation with Rose Weasley—probably talking about some complicated Arithmantic theory—and did not even glance in his direction. Albus made his way up to their cabin, finding it somewhat difficult to navigate the rope bridges in the dark. He lay awake on his cot for what seemed forever until he

finally heard the sound of Score's. Al's heartbeat quickened and he wondered if Score would come to him or if he would be forced to seek out his reluctant boyfriend and coax him into some amorous activities. Given Score's behavior, the latter seemed most likely. Al didn't mind.

He froze when he heard the sound of voices.

"Thanks for letting me bunk here tonight." The voice belonged to Randall Deakes, a Slytherin of all people. "Twigs wanted to be alone with his Betts. I offered a threesome, but she's not the adventurous type."

"No problem," said Scorpius. Al heard undressing sounds and then two cots creaked at different sides of the room. "Goodnight, Randy. 'Night, Al." There was a long pause and then Score repeated, "Al?"

Albus glared into the darkness and pretended to be asleep. Damn Scorpius for inviting Deakes here when he knew damned well that Al planned for them to sleep together. What was his fucking deal today?

"Hey, Malfoy?" Randall asked after such a long time Al had nearly fallen asleep for real. He roused himself briefly to hear the question.

"Hmmm?" Score murmured.

"Are you and Shadow Potter… you know… boyfriends?"

There was a long silence and then Scorpius said quietly, "No. No, of course not."

Al could hardly breathe for a moment at the confession. He wondered if Score would have changed his mind if he thought Al was awake.

"Huh," said Deakes. "It doesn't matter. I just wondered."

Shit. Suddenly Al hated summer camp. He wanted nothing more than to leave his not-boyfriend here and go home.

PART TWO

Al slid his feet onto the chilly floor and rubbed his lower back. Sleeping on a cot left something to be desired. His eyes went to the strip of blond hair visible between the blanket and pillow on the cot opposite his. His eyes went to the other cot, but only jumbled blankets met his eyes. Deakes must be an early riser—he was gone.

Al sighed. So much for his grand plan to spend quality time with his boyfriend. Or my not-boyfriend, he thought with a renewed flare of annoyance.

Score rolled over and his face emerged from the covers. The grey eyes blinked open slowly and focused on Al. A soft smile curved Score's lips and Al felt his irritation melt away in a familiar rush of emotion. Merlin, he loved it when Score woke up with that drowsy tousled look. At home, Al would slide his hand over Score's abdomen and lean in for a lingering kiss…

"What time is it?" Score asked and flipped the blankets over his head. "It's bloody freezing! Can't you cast a Warming Charm?"

Al took his wand from beneath the pillow and cast a few spells. "It's just after eight."

Score groaned. "Wake me when it's noon."

"Can't. We're supposed to meet in the Hub at nine for some activity Oliver cooked up."

"They can start without me."

Al shot a spell toward Score's bed and the blankets tore away from the Hufflepuff and tumbled to the floor.

"Hey! Damn you, Al!" Score reached for his wand.

"*Accio* wand!" Al yelled and Score's slender length of chestnut flew across the room into Al's hand. He laughed at the glare he received in accompaniment to his prize. "I'll give it back… for a price."

"What price?" Scorpius asked peevishly. He was so not a morning person.

Al shrugged. "Just a kiss."

Score's gaze flicked to the open doorway and back to Al. "All right."

Al grinned wolfishly and sauntered across the room to join Scorpius on the cot. The prat looked as tense as a hyena surrounded by a lion pack. Al leaned over and pressed their lips together gently, just a tease, a bit of pressure with a delicate suction. He refrained from bringing his tongue into play, even though the simple fact of Score's nearness made his heart jump erratically. He quelled the need to shove the blond down on the mattress and force a response. He knew Slytherin tactics worked better on his not-boyfriend.

Al sat back and held out Score's wand. "Here you go," he said. Score watched him suspiciously as he took the wand, obviously expecting Al to pounce. Instead, Al got up and walked to his trunk where he pulled out a set of clothing. Keeping his back turned to Scorpius, Al pulled off the t-shirt he had slept in. "It's actually quite warm outside, despite the clouds. I'm wearing shorts and sandals, I think."

He shucked his pyjama bottoms and pants and then made a show of looking in the trunk for

replacement undergarments. He could practically feel Score's eyes boring into his naked backside and struggled to suppress a chuckle.

"Al," Score said, sounding a bit strangled. "What if someone comes in?"

Al stood and faced his friend with one hand cocked on his hip. "Well, I suppose they'll get a show, won't they?" Al shimmied suggestively and Score's eyes went exactly where Al hoped they would go. A faint flush tinted Score's cheeks, making him look even more fuckable. Al's cock twitched and started to rise, so he turned away and dragged on a pair of briefs and some shorts.

He sat on the cot and dangled his shoes. Score had not moved, although his expression bordered on petulant. Al nearly laughed. Malfoys hated to be ignored. It was some sort of universal law or something. He asked, "Will you help me fasten my sandals? I hate these stupid tiny buckles—I always have a charley horse by the time I get them done up."

"Can't you spell them?"

Al gave him a look and Scorpius sighed heavily. He made his way across the room and Albus allowed himself to admire Score's boxer-clad form, especially when it knelt at Al's feet and picked up a sandal. Al slowly tucked his foot inside, knowing Score had a strange weakness for his feet. Al intentionally spent extra time getting pedicures from the Malfoy house-elves so that his toenails were pristine and nicely shaped.

Score tried not to touch him. He held the leather straps and buckled them around Al's ankle, but Al jostled him, sliding his bare skin against Score's fingertips as if by accident. The blond bit his lip and quickly fastened the buckle.

The second sandal went nearly as smoothly, until Scorpius looked up and met Al's smile. He was certain it reflected the blissful devotion he felt watching Score perform such a trivial, domestic task. Score looked away, but his fingers curled over the arch of Al's foot. Al reached down and slid his fingers over the edge of Score's jaw, urging the soft grey eyes back to his.

"Albus," Score said with a whisper of sound that Al recognized as capitulation. He dropped to his knees, joining the blond on the floor and capturing his lips in the kiss he had denied them earlier. Score moaned into his open mouth and his hands curled into Al's hair.

Al eased him back onto the wooden floor and stretched out over Score's lean body. The erection he had tried to suppress burst into full bloom and he pressed it against Score's crotch with a huff of desire. Score groaned and lifted his hips to return the favour, building the friction between them as their kiss deepened.

"Score, I missed you," Al panted when he came up for air.

"It's only been one day," Score said dryly, but his hands slid over Al's back to hold him closer as

they rocked together, lost in pleasure.

"Oi, Blondie! Shadow!" The loud voice boomed in the room.

Score shoved Al away with an oath. Al's elbow scraped across the floor when he landed and his chin barely missed whacking the hardwood.

"Bloody hell, Score, it's only Hugo!"

"I was right, though, wasn't I? We have no privacy at all!"

"You guys making out?" Hugo asked as he sauntered in and perched cross-legged on a vacant cot.
Al groaned. Normally he adored his cousin, but he could cheerfully have throttled him at that moment.

"Hey, no need to stop on my account," Hugo continued. He paused to take a slurping bite out of the ripe peach in his hand. "I've seen you snogging before. It's kinda hot, actually."

Al buried his face in his hands, having no desire whatsoever to know when his cousin had previously spied on them. Another slurp made him look up to see juice dripping down the chin of the red-haired boy.

"Where did you get that?" Al asked, suddenly craving peaches.

"Nicked it from the supply room. There's a whole box in there."

"Isn't the supply room locked?"

Hugo twirled his wand like a Muggle cheerleader. "Your point?"

Al had no comment. He figured his trespassing, kleptomaniac cousin was headed for a bad end, but it was Uncle Ron's problem, right?

"I'm going out," Score snapped. Al rolled over to see the blond fully dressed. He glared at Al and stalked outside.

"Got a bee up his arse, eh?"

"Yeah, or a whole hive."

"So, what's his problem?"

Al shrugged and got to his feet to make his bed with a flick of his wand. He made Score's bed, too, although he knew it would never be acknowledged. "I don't know, I guess maybe he's not

ready to be another gay Malfoy, especially after the field day the press had with our dads." The Daily Prophet had been downright vicious, showing little sympathy for the Auror whose wife had died "so tragically". They had gone so far as to malign Draco Malfoy for taking advantage of Al's father's grief and debilitating injury.

Al knew his dad worried about it, but Mr Malfoy seemed to think it was hilarious. He eased Al's dad out of every newspaper-induced snit.

"Yeah, that's enough. I think you've just thrown him for a loop, Al. You know you've wanted him for years, right? But for Score it's only been a few weeks. He'll go publick when he's ready. Maybe you should trust him and give him some space."

"I do trust him. But the space thing is harder to deal with."

Hugo grinned. "You're lucky. I have a hard time trusting people. I just never wanna jump unless I'm sure somebody's gonna catch me."

"Oh, I'll catch you. And if I miss for any reason, I'll sit by your bedside and nurse you back to health. Or scrape you into a bucket."

"I can always count on my relatives. Thanks, Al."

Al decided to take Hugo's advice, which unfortunately became a lot easier later that day. A sprinkling rain began to fall, cancelling the planned outdoor activity, much to Oliver Wood's disgust. While he and Albus thought there was nothing wrong with playing broom tag through the trees in the rain, Angelica Parkinson went into a veritable frenzy at the idea, stating that her hair would be simply ruined. Al wasn't sure how a little water could ruin hair, since she apparently washed it in water on a daily basis, but he was smart enough not to ask. She might have been ignored if seven other girls (and two bookish boys) had not sided with her.
Al went back to his room, looking forward to seeing Score alone finally, but wondering how he was supposed to keep his hands to himself and giving the blond some space.

Except that Score was not alone. Al entered their room to find a reedy blond boy seated on Score's bed. They seemed to be discussing Arithmancy and the boy was hanging on Score's every word.

Ravenclaw, Al thought in disgust.

Score smiled at Al. "Hi, Albus. This is Zebulon Smith. I offered to explain Tembold's Theory of Mystical Numerology to him."

"Why?" Al burst out. He tried not to sound accusatory, but Score seemed to be going out of his way to avoid being alone with him.

"What sort of question is that?" Smith demanded.

Score chuckled. "You'll have to forgive Albus. He does not have much interest in the fine art of Arithmancy."
Smith sneered at Al as if he were the lowest form of life. Al sneered back. "Sorry to disappoint you, Zeb."

The thin boy glared. "That's Zebulon, not Zeb. My father is Zacharias Smith. He is a very important man at the Ministry. Perhaps you've heard of him?"

"I'm afraid not. My father is Harry Potter. Perhaps you've heard of him?"

Score gave him a disapproving look and Al was instantly ashamed. He hated using his father's name to impress people, but the pompous little pissant had deserved it.

"Forget it," Al muttered. He threw himself onto his cot and pretended to read a book while tuning out the most boring discussion in the whole of Britain. It was so mind-numbing that Al fell asleep.

Al sat up with a gasp when a horrendous crack shook the room. Al's wand was in his hand instantly.
"What—?"

Zeb Smith snickered. Al glared. Score and his little lapdog were playing Wizard's Chess. Light flared and thunder crashed through the room. Al glanced at the window to find a veritable downpour outside.

"It looks like you won't be going anywhere for a while, Zebulon," Scorpius said. "Perhaps you should spend the night. We have several open cots."

Zeb's little piggy eyes lit up and Al got to his feet. "Fuck this," he said angrily and headed for the doorway.
Score's eyes narrowed. "Where are you going?"

"Out," Al snapped. "It's bloody obvious I'm not wanted here."

He stepped into the rain and was immediately drenched. I probably should have cast an Umbrella Charm, he thought belatedly, but it took both hands to maintain his grip on the slippery rope bridge. The dark downpour suited his mood, anyway. He cringed at every lightning strike and made his way slowly to the Hub.
A group of students were huddled around Oliver Wood, who was cavorting like a wild man while he told Quidditch stories to his rapt audience. Hugo sat near Rose, who had her face buried in a book. Hugo gave him a thumbs up and Al suddenly remembered the peach his cousin had eaten earlier. Al had not been in much of a mood for lunch, so he was quite hungry, even though dinner was scheduled to be delivered to the individual rooms before long.

Al cast an Umbrella Charm and slipped back into the storm. The Locking Spell on the storage room was almost ridiculously easy to disarm—Al figured it would keep out the first and second year students, but not many beyond that. Several boxes of fruit were stacked inside along with assorted snacks. Al selected a few choice peaches and tucked them into his shirt before returning outside. He thought Score might like one, and possibly Score's new best friend. Sometimes Al wished he were better at holding grudges.

As he made his way over another rope bridge, he though he heard someone yell. He paused and looked around carefully, straining his ears to hear over the pounding rain.

The cry came again and then Al noticed a nearby set of ropes that dangled almost to the ground—one of the bridges had broken. Al cast a Levitation Spell on himself and dropped over the side of his bridge. Mud squelched over his sandals when he landed and he wrinkled his nose in disgust.

"Help me!" he heard, so he ignored the ruination of his shoes to trot toward the voice, which came from a pit in the ground. Albus edged close and peered inside. A dark-haired boy stared up at him with large frightened eyes. "Oh thank Merlin!"

"Hey!" Al called. "How did you get down there?"

"The bridge broke and I fell. When I started walking the ground just collapsed. Can you get me out?"

"Yeah, sure," Al said and stepped closer to the edge for a better view. He raised his wand to cast, but his feet suddenly whooshed out from under him as the ground disappeared. He yelped as the brief sensation of falling ended in a bone-jarring thud.

"Ouch!" The brown haired boy stared down at him. Al climbed to his feet in annoyance. Shit, he had mud all over his arse.

"Now you are stuck down here with me," the boy said sadly. Al looked him over curiously. He looked randomly familiar. Slytherin, Al thought, although it was hard to tell with the muddy trousers and formerly beige shirt the boy wore.

"Not to worry," Al said. "I'll get us out. I'm Al Potter."

"I know," the boy replied. "Everyone knows that. I'm Jacob Nott."

Al remembered him then. Definitely Slytherin and a year younger than Al. He was a strikingly handsome boy. Rumour had it that his mother was part Veela, which accounted for his delicate features and huge blue eyes.

"Well, Jacob Nott, let's Levitate you out of here. Why didn't you just do that to begin with? I know you learned that spell in first year."

The boy launched himself at Al, crushing the wand between them. His eyes were wide and terrified. "No! No flying!"

"What? Look, it's barely two metres." Al gestured to the opening above them. It's hardly flying, more like… floating."

Jacob did not release Al. Instead his muddy hands clenched even tighter. "No flying or floating! I know it's stupid, but I can't help it! My father says no Slytherin should have such a stupid fear, but…" Tears welled in the blue eyes and Al felt a rush of pity. He patted the boy's shoulder awkwardly and wondered how to detach himself.

"All right, we'll think of something else. How about I fly up and grab a rope—?"

The panicked grip tightened until Al found it hard to breathe. "Don't leave me! I've been down here forever shouting for help! What if you don't come back?"

Al gnashed his teeth. For a Slytherin, Jacob Nott certainly was a bundle of kittenish terror. The other Slytherins probably teased him mercilessly. Or they would if he weren't so cute.

"Okay, okay. Unhand me and I'll try to think of something else."

Jacob reluctantly let go and looked at him warily, as if expecting Al to fly out anyway. "Why are you all lumpy?"

Al grimaced and realized he was covered in peach juice as well as mud. He pulled a couple of the peaches from his shirt and offered Jacob the least damaged one.

"Hungry?"

"Merlin, yes!" The boy fell on the peach like a starved animal while Al explored their prison. It was not much of a pit. Water pooled on the floor and dripped from above. Al tugged hard at a tree root, wondering if they could climb it. It gave a bit, so he yanked harder and suddenly a huge portion of the wall tumbled down in a shower of dirt, rocks, and mud.

"Hey! A passage!" Al said. He lit his wand and stepped into the dark space. A rocky, root-filled passage stretched beyond the light from his wand.

"Are you sure you should go in there?" Jacob asked.

"Either that or you let me Levitate you," Al said. Jacob nearly ran Al down shoving into the passageway next to him, which was fine with Al. He hated to let a perfectly good secret corridor go unexplored.

The perfectly good corridor turned out to be perfectly boring. It was a warren of corners and

dead ends with nothing at all of interest. Al began to wonder if a pack of giant rabbits had made the insane maze. Jacob seemed close to hyperventilation the longer they were underground, sticking closer and closer to Al until he was nearly plastered to his side.

"You don't act much like a Hufflepuff," Jacob said after Al scrambled up a pile of debris to poke at the ceiling, hoping to find a way out.

Al laughed. "Yeah, I probably should have gone to Gryffindor. It was Score's idea to be Sorted into Hufflepuff."

"What do you mean? You get Sorted wherever the Hat puts you."

"Not if you argue with it," Al assured him and slid down the pile. He batted at the dirt on his buttocks, realizing he was utterly filthy.

"Score is Scorpius Malfoy, right?"

Al nodded.

"I've been to his house. His father and mine went to school together."

"So did his father and mine."

Jacob smirked. "Yes, I heard about that."

Al looked at him sharply. "Does that matter to you?"

Jacob shrugged. "Why should it? Purebloods always do what they want when it comes to that sort of thing. I'm sort of surprised at your father, though. Big hero and all."

Al tried not to think about his father's relationship. He was glad his dad was happy with Mr Malfoy, but he did not want any details. He started down another passage.

"We can't always choose who we fall for," he said.

"Like Scorpius Malfoy?"

Al grimaced. "Yeah, like Scorpius Malfoy."

"So you're gay, then?"

The corridor branched. Al lifted his wand and looked down two identical passages. Right or left?
"Yes. Definitely gay."

"Scorpius, too?"

"You'll have to ask him," Al snapped more sharply than intended.

"So," Jacob asked after Al chose the right hand fork. "What kind of homosexual are you?"

Al debated hexing the Slytherin to shut him up. "The kind that fucks men," he said peevishly.

Jacob snorted a laugh. "I know that. I meant do you prefer to top or bottom?"

Al stared at him. "What sort of question is that?"

Jacob nodded. "Top, I'll bet."

"Can we talk about something else?"

"I plan to have sex with a guy one day," Jacob confided. Apparently no subject change was in order.

"With anyone in particular?" Al asked absently and froze when he sensed something different. What was it?

"Maybe," Jacob said cagily.

Ah, the air was fresher. Al quickened his footsteps.

"Come on, Jake, I think there's a way out."

"Good. I feel like we have been down here forever." Al heard him cast a Tempus Charm. "Bloody hell! Three hours!"

"No wonder I'm tired and starved."

The passage sloped upward and finally allowed them to shove through a tangle of brush and into the fresh air. Night had fallen some time past.

"Hey, it stopped raining!" Jacob said. Al though he was very odd for a Slytherin.

Al cast a Directional Charm to seek the camp and resigned himself to more walking. There was no telling how far they had wandered.

They reached the camp an hour later and walked into the Hub gratefully. Al was surprised to see a large group gathered. He had expected most of the campers to be in their beds. Rose saw them first and launched herself across the room with a shriek.

"Albus!" she shouted. "We were so worried! We were just organizing a search party!"

Al's eyes swept the crowd and latched onto Scorpius, who pushed his way forward.

"It was great!" Jacob cried. "Albus saved me! Just like a true hero. Hooray for Albus!" The boy jostled Rose aside and took her place in Al's arms right before he planted a kiss on Al's lips. There was stunned silence throughout the room. Jacob stepped back quickly, possibly fearing Al's reaction, but Al's eyes were one Score, who had stopped moving forward. The grey eyes raked over Al's dishevelled form and his glare became positively glacial.

Oh fuck, Al thought.

PART THREE

Al let the water sluice over his head, rinsing the suds from his hair. The amount of mud that had accumulated there was quite remarkable, considering he had only fallen in it once. He sighed heavily, not looking forward to the trek back to his quarters. Score had stalked off without even greeting him after Jake's irritating manoeuvre. Jake had been hustled off by his group of worried cronies, so Al had not been able to strangle some answers out of the brat.

As he shut the water off and climbed out, he wondered if Zeb was still sharing their cabin. Not that it mattered at this point. For certain Al would be getting the silent treatment, something Score excelled at when he was enraged. Still, Al wouldn't be Al if he didn't at least try to explain. He dragged on the pair of pyjama bottoms Hugo had brought for him and made his way outside to navigate the slippery path to his cold bedchamber.

The lights were out, so Al cast a dim Lumos as he made his way to Score's bedside. He was not above grovelling at this point, despite the fact of his innocence.

Score's bed was empty. Al stared at it in shock for a moment and then noticed the bedside table had been cleared of Score's most precious items—such as his emerald-encrusted silver comb. Al quickly spelled open the trunk at the end of the bed. Empty.

Fuck.

Al nearly broke his neck racing across the rope bridge to Hugo's room. The Gryffindor boy had managed to acquire a cabin all to himself—probably with the intention of using it as some sort of love nest of debauchery, knowing him.

"Hugo!" he yelled. "Score is gone!"

Hugo sat up in his bed, grumbling. "First one of you and now the other. Can't you just stay in camp like normal people?"

"He can't have gone far, unless he got his hands on a Portkey."

"Yeah, Rose told me the anti-Apparition wards extend to the edges of the property. That's what… at least an hour's walk in any direction?"

"He might have taken a broom."

Hugo shook his head. "Oliver locked them all up after a homesick second year tried to fly home."

"So he's walking. I've got to go after him."

Hugo sighed, but he reached for his clothes. "I'll go with you."

"No, we're going to be in enough trouble. No need to drag you into it."

"Forget it, cousin. Your brother would have my bollocks for potion ingredients if I let anything happen to you."

Albus scowled, but he knew Hugo feared no one except James Potter.

"Well, let's look on the bright side. Road trip!" Hugo yelled suddenly, opening his trunk and tossing items haphazardly into a knapsack. "You'd better put some clothes on. And don't try to leave without me, or you'll regret it."

Al nodded and hurried back to his cabin.

At least the Directional Charm seemed to be working. Al and Hugo trudged through the forest, guided by the dim light of their wands. Hugo sang snatches of a song while they walked. "*I feel alive, I feel a love, I feel a love that's really real. I feel alive, I feel a love, I feel a love that's really real. I'm on sunshine, babeeeeeee! Oooooooh! I'm on sunshine baby, ooooooooh! I'm walkin' on sunshine, wooooooooah oh!*" Al ignored him, intent upon reaching his stubborn not-boyfriend. Hugo began making up his own lyrics after a while.

"*Aaaaaaalbus Severus Po-o-otter, Aaaaaalbus Severus a-and Scorpiuuuuuus. Star-crossed lovers tiiiiiiiiill the end, oh Aaaaalbus*… Dude, your initials together totally spells ASS." Hugo snickered.

"Thank you, Hugo. I wasn't depressed enough."

"Always glad to help. ASS." He laughed. Al rolled his eyes.

After an hour Al was nearly staggering with weariness. It had been a long day trekking through the tunnels with Jake and now he was walking again. If it were anyone but Score, he would have given up.

"I think someone is following us," said Hugo. "Why don't you rest here for a second and I'll go check it out?"

"Wait, I don't think we should split up," Al said, but it was too late. Hugo had disappeared into the darkness. Al leaned against a tree and rubbed his eyes. When they caught up to Scorpius, Al was going to wring his neck.

Hugo returned with someone in tow. As they entered the circle of light cast by Al's wand, he saw that it was Jacob Nott. Irritation twisted in the pit of his stomach.

"What the hell are you doing here, Jake?" he demanded.

"I wanted to find you and apologize. I was just trying to help you out… you know, before. But Scorpius seemed pretty upset. I got to your room just as you and Hugo were leaving, so I followed you."

Al sighed. "Maybe you should take him back to camp, Hugo."

"No way! I'm not babysitting this little demon!"

Jake glared at him. "I don't need a babysitter!"

"Oh just come on!" Al snapped. "We'll never catch up to Score at this rate!"

Jacob's presence at least put a damper on Hugo's need to sing, so it was in relative silence that they continued their trek.

"I'm really sorry, Albus. Do you forgive me?" Jake asked and turned the power of his adorable gaze on Al, who was largely immune.

"Yeah, whatever, just don't do it again. You can explain it to Score when we catch up to him."

"Who's there?" someone snapped. Al restrained himself from racing forward and flinging himself on Scorpius, knowing that jumping out of the forest was a good way to get hexed into a mass of pain.

"It's me!" he yelled.

He heard a growl of disgust and then he did throw himself forward and launched himself at the blond. He pressed kisses against Score's face and ignored the efforts of his not-boyfriend to detach him. "What are you doing here, Albus? Get off of me. I'm angry at you."

"You have no reason to be angry at me. I came to find you and give you a proper hex or two for being a total prat. Lucky for you I'd rather do other things." He whispered the last two words into Score's ear and grinned mischievously when the blond stopped trying to push him away.

"How did you find me?"

"It wasn't hard. Hear this now, I'll always come for you," he intoned solemnly.

Score snorted. "Right. How can you be sure?"

"This is true love. Do you think this happens every day?" Al drew back and tilted his head for a kiss, but Scorpius gasped and pushed him away forcibly.

"You came to find me with *him* in tow?" Score snarled.

"No. He followed us."

"Us?"

Hugo stepped forward and waved. "Hey, Score. I couldn't let my cousin wander off alone."

"Were you camping?" Al asked, looking around. Score had set up a tent.

"I obviously wasn't going to make it beyond the wards before morning. I did not expect you to follow me.

Al glared at him. "You didn't expect me to follow you?"

Scorpius looked away and Al felt a surge of vindication. Score had known Al would come for him. He had probably just expected Al to come alone and, once again, Al had botched it.

"We didn't bring tents," Al said lamely and tugged at his hair.

"But we brought provisions!" Hugo said and dangled a bag of marshmallows.

Score shook his head in disgust. "I'm going to build a fire and pretend none of you are here."

Hugo skewered marshmallows and dangled them over the fire.

"Why are you doing that?" Jake asked.

"It's a Muggle tradition." When he judged them appropriately toasted, he handed a skewer to Al. "Here, try it."

Al grabbed a warm marshmallow, but the toasted skin peeled away from the melted centre, leaving a gooey string to connect them. Al nibbled his way up the string and then bit daintily at the crispy bit. He noticed Jake watching him with a rapt expression and stopped, wondering if his marshmallow eating technique was too much for the boy. He nearly swore off eating the sweets until he glanced at Score only to find the same expression on the blond's face. Al's eyes narrowed and he licked the inside of the marshmallow seductively before putting the whole of it into his

mouth and then sucking on his fingers. Score's jaw hung open before he closed it with a snap.

Hugo threaded another marshmallow and handed it to Jake before leaning back and crossing his arms behind his head. "Ah, it's good to be here, under the stars."

Al lay back, too, but he was not feeling content at all. He had envisioned himself stargazing with Score, cuddled together, preferably unclothed. Instead, he was with the bristly hedgehog version of Score, fully clothed, and in the company of his chatty cousin and an unwelcome guest. He knew Score would not even dream of kissing him while Jacob was with them.

Jake's marshmallow caught on fire. He leaped to his feet and danced around, waving the flaming object while squealing in alarm, until the burning missile shot from the stick and splattered against a nearby tree. It continued to flame there malevolently while Jake looked at the others sheepishly.

"Yeah, they're flammable," Hugo commented.

"Good thing it didn't fly off and land in my hair or something else would be burned to a crisp tonight," Score muttered.

Jacob instantly skewered another and set about making marshmallow torches. Hugo sat up with a gasp. "I almost forgot! Today is the fifth anniversary of the death of my third hamster!"

The others looked at him blankly.

"What? I just remembered. We need to observe a moment of silence." Hugo bowed his head and a look of great sadness came over his freckled features. "Oh, Scampers, how we miss ye. Thou wert a fine pet and finer tormenter of Rose. We shall miss her screams most of all as we remember ye tangled in her hair prior to that terrifying moment when ye shuffled off this mortal coil."

Al rolled his eyes, but Jake giggled.

"Enough grief!" Hugo cried. "Tonight we shall celebrate! Let us dance around the fire like the natives of old!" He leaped to his feet and took off his shirt with a flourish before cavorting around the fire, whooping like a banshee.

"Um… Hugo?" Al asked.

"Yes, Albus?"

"Why do you have glitter on your stomach?"

Hugo stopped dancing for a moment and grinned widely. "One of the Abbott twins wears glitter lipstick."

Jake cocked his head. "Then why is it on your stomach?"

Hugo waggled his eyebrows and Jacob gasped. Scorpius burst out laughing.

"Bloody hell, Hugo, you work fast."

"I'm irresistible. What can I say? Now, who is going to dance with me?"

Al shook his head. "No dancing. I'm exhausted. In fact, I'm going to bed." He looked hopefully at Score, who seemed to be lost in thought, staring into the fire.

"Me, too!" Jake piped up. He nearly trod on Al's heels as they entered Score's tent. Al tried to ignore his crushing sense of disappointment. The tent was a generic summer camp version—one room only. Al had hoped it was one of the multiple room types, but no such luck. Not surprising, considering his luck had been fairly shite lately.

Several sleeping bags were tucked into a cabinet on one wall, so Al grabbed one and rolled it out, followed by his new best friend. He sighed.

"Jake, you *are* planning to tell Scorpius that your kiss didn't mean anything, right?"

"Sure, Al! I'll tell him in the morning. I'm too tired right now."

With that, the Slytherin leaped into his blankets and seemed to fall instantly asleep. Al cast a glance at the doorway, but Score seemed perfectly content to stay up all night chatting with Hugo. Al crawled into his own sleeping bag, tossed a few times, and fell asleep.

PART FOUR

Al woke up wondering where the hell he was, which happened far too frequently these days. He blinked at the ceiling for a moment and then turned his head to see a brown-haired boy snuggled against his shoulder.

Ah damn. Jake. He sat up quickly, not caring when Jake's head thumped against the ground. Al looked around for Scorpius, but he was nowhere in sight. Neither was Hugo. Surely they didn't stay up all night?

"Albus?" Jake murmured sleepily. Al ignored him and got to his feet. He hurried to the door and peered out. Two sleeping bags flanked the dead fire pit. One disclosed Hugo's red hair and the other showed the silver blond of Scorpius. Al sagged in relief. He had been afraid Scorpius would continue his trek and leave them before dawn.

He shivered, suddenly noticing the chill. He dressed, retrieved his wand, and went outside to stoke the fire. The flames were blazing high when Score finally stirred. Al had settled himself

close to the blond. He smiled down at him and was rewarded with a sleepy smile that made his heart lurch.

"Morning," Al purred and wished he dared to lean down for a kiss. "Want me to warm you up?"

The smile widened and then the grey eyes blinked and grew shuttered. Score's head disappeared beneath the blankets. He muttered something unintelligible and Al sighed. A pebble bounced off Al's chest and he glared at Hugo, who grinned at him from beneath his own covers.

"Thanks for giving us some heat, cousin. Got anything to eat?"

"You're the one who brought provisions, remember?"

"I think Jake burned all the marshmallows last night."

"That doesn't sound like a good breakfast, anyway."

"Probably not," Hugo muttered and copied Score's turtlelike motion by disappearing beneath the sleeping bag. Jake wandered out of the tent.

"You guys slept out here? That's nuts."

Scorpius threw back his covers and crawled out of the cocoon before marching past Jake and into the tent. Al figured the blond would have a shower and briefly entertained the notion of joining him. The knowledge that he preferred to keep his testicles intact kept him where he was. Scorpius was obviously still fuming over the Jake situation. Al gave the boy a glare. Jake grinned sheepishly and settled himself close to Hugo.

"I need to convince Scorpius to return to camp with us," Al told them.

Hugo's head popped up again. "Already done."

"What? How did you do that?"

Hugo grinned. "I have to have some secrets, Albus. Let's just say I can be very persuasive." His tone was suggestive and Al immediately pictured Hugo in a compromising position with Scorpius, Hugo's smirk was too crafty to entertain that notion for long.

"Prat," Al snapped.

Hugo laughed. "Hey, Al, I set him up for you. It's your job to knock him down. Like that Muggle game. The one with the funny bottles."

Al didn't bother to ask what Muggle bottle games had to do with winning Scorpius back, but he was grateful to Hugo, regardless. Jake looked disgruntled.

"I'm hungry," said the Slytherin.

"You should have thought of that before following us into the wilderness."

"And torching my provisions," Hugo muttered as he crawled from his blankets and tugged on his trousers.

Scorpius strolled out of the tent, looking impeccable in mustard yellow, a color he only wore when he was irritated. Al frowned. Scorpius said, "All right. I'm leaving now. Anyone coming along is welcome to try and keep up."

A quick spell collapsed the tent, shrank it, and popped it into Score's backpack. Without a glance at Al he strode into the forest.

"I guess we're leaving," Hugo quipped and drowned the fire with a deluge of water from his wand.

The storm from the previous day had dissipated completely, leaving the sky clear and cloudless. They had apparently gotten a late start, because the temperature quickly rose until they were all sweltering. Score grew even testier, threatening to turn Hugo into a birch tree if he sang one more bloody song.

Jake, apparently tired of Al ignoring him, made his way up to walk with the blond. Soon the two were chatting like old chums. Al watched them suspiciously, not trusting the little Slytherin any farther than he could toss him without the aid of a Weightlessness Charm. He hoped the brat was explaining yesterdays' misunderstanding to Scorpius, but when the boy looked over his shoulder at Al with a calculating grin, he doubted it. Jake was likely making things worse.

Hugo glanced at Al. "So. What's your plan?"

Al snorted. "Plan? Do I look like someone with a plan? Score won't even let me get near enough to apologize. Not that I have anything to apologize for." He shook his head, frustrated. "My life is a mess."

"At least you're pretty."

"Yeah, well pretty don't pay the rent," Al muttered and then glared at his cousin. "Will you shut up?"

"Bu you don't pay rent!" Hugo pointed out. "You still live at home."

"Reprise the bit about shutting up."

Hugo stuck out his tongue, but managed to keep quiet for another quarter hour. By then they

were nearly back to camp. Al recognized a landmark as they approached. He cast a worried glance at Scorpius, who had foolishly worn a short-sleeved shirt. Al could see a hint of pink on his upper arms and knew the pale-skinned boy would likely have a sunburn if he didn't get under cover soon.

Loud screams alerted them of the presence of the camp before they reached the boundary. Al was alarmed until he heard the sound of laughter mingled with the shrieking.

They strolled into the clearing to find it transformed into a makeshift beach complete with sand and a decent-sized body of water. A group of young children ran past them spraying water at each other from their wands. A huge sprinkler had been rigged at one edge of the clearing and it drenched giggling children in large wet passes. The Abbott twins were building an enormous sandcastle.

Al and the others stared for a moment, transfixed. Lily spotted them and ran over quickly. Al frowned when he saw the skimpiness of her pink bikini. She glared at him.

"You guys are bloody lucky I covered for you. No one noticed you were missing. Except that baby Slytherin's friends have been wandering all over looking for him." She gestured to Jake, who shrugged.

"Shove off, baby Slyth," Hugo said and nudged Jake ungently. The Slytherin glared at him, but walked away and waved to his mates.

Hugo's jaw dropped and Al followed his gaze to see Oliver Wood clad only in a black Speedo. He was surrounded by a gaggle of admirers, most of which were female. Bloody hell, but the Quidditch star was fit. Al thought if he were a few years older, he would certainly think about chatting up Wood. But only if Scorpius were out of the picture, of course. No one could hold a candle to him.

Hugo snorted. "I can do better than that." Hugo cast a spell and was instantly dressed only in tiny white swim trunks adorned with strawberries. He waved and bellowed loudly, "Oh, Amber! Zephyr! Over here, girls! Did you know my fruits are edible?"

He wandered toward the pool and the Abbott twins squealed and raced for him, quickly creating a Hugo sandwich. Al laughed and shook his head. He turned and grinned at Scorpius, who met his amused gaze for only a moment before marching toward the Hub.

Deep freeze it is, Al thought morosely as he followed his not-boyfriend. He thought maybe he should have been the one to keep walking last night and go home.

The round tables were still in place in the Hub and laden with all types of breakfast food. Al quickly threw himself into a chair and loaded a plate. Scorpius seated himself on the other side of the table, not surprisingly.

Al slathered a piece of toast with raspberry jam and wolfed it down before picking up a succulent-looking banger and taking a blissful bite. Food was good. He was lost in a reverie of culinary delight until he heard a throat-clearing noise and glanced over at Score, who was glaring at him.

"You have jam on your face."

Al immediately stuck out his tongue and licked the corners of his mouth to locate the offending bit of raspberry. Score blanched. Al raised a brow and Scorpius nodded before turning his attention back to his plate. His cheeks were pink and Al wondered how much of it was sunburn. Al shrugged and resumed sucking the innards out of his banger. Another throat-clearing noise drew his attention.

"What? Did I miss a spot?" he asked.

"Do you have to fucking do that? Can't you just eat it like a normal human being?"

Al looked at him blankly.

"You're a sucking on that like it's a… a…" Scorpius drew his lips into a thin line and his grey eyes flashed.

Al smirked wickedly and bit delicately into the sausage before deliberately licking his lips suggestively. He then licked his fingers one at a time and sucked on the tips. He spied a bowl of sliced peaches and reached for one. He ate it as suggestively as possible without taking his eyes from Scorpius, who had given up eating in order to watch him with what seemed rapt attention.

"Not fair, Albus," the blond hissed.

"All is fair in love, Scorpius," he retorted sharply.

Al bit into the last bit of peach and the juice dribbled from the edge of his lips to trickle down toward his chin. Scorpius growled and stood so fast his chair threatened to fall over. Al sat up in alarm, expecting the blond to storm out of the room, but instead Scorpius rounded the table in a rush and gripped the collar of Al's shirt.

He hauled Al to his feet and planted a hard kiss on his lips. Al sucked in a startled breath and then relaxed against his not-boyfriend. The tension that had been choking him melted away and his arms slid around Scorpius's waist to pull him closer.

"Score," he murmured as the blond pulled away to suck at the peach juice near Al's mouth. "I've missed you so much. I swear there is nothing between Jake and me."

"I know. He's a little Slytherin prat," Scorpius said. "Hugo told me the little monster is trying to break us up."

"He is?"

Scorpius pulled away long enough to scowl at him. "Albus, can you get any more clueless?"

"Maybe."

"Shut up and kiss me, all right?"

PART FIVE

Al knees nearly buckled when Scorpius pulled him into a passionate kiss. Bloody hell, it seemed like weeks had passed since Score had given him any sign of affection. Scorpius was not at all gentle, plundering Al's mouth as if staking his claim. Al held back nothing, trying to make it clear that he belonged to Scorpius alone. His hands explored his lover's shoulders and neck, hating the barrier of clothing between them. It had been too long since they had shared true intimacy. He felt Scorpius caress him, sliding his hands over Al's ribs and pulling him closer.

A startled squeak from the doorway made Al want to scream in frustration. He fully expected Scorpius to push him away and resume his former cold stance, but the blond simply broke the kiss without releasing his grip on Al, who didn't bother to see who had interrupted them. He wondered if he could hex them without his wand—sometimes wandless magic worked, if a person got angry enough.
"Um… I just came to get something to eat."

The voice made Al even more determined to hex the intruder. Bloody damned Jacob Nott! Had he been placed on the planet to fuck with Al's life?

"Perhaps you should come back later," Scorpius suggested coldly. "I would like a few private moments with my *boyfriend*."

Al's heart almost stopped. He gaped at Scorpius and turned to see Jake doing the same. The Slytherin boy recovered quickly and glared at them. "I thought he wasn't your boyfriend. Randall Deakes has been telling people that Albus is fair game."

Al cocked a brow at the blond, trying to keep the smug expression from his face as Score's words came back to bite him in the arse. Scorpius flushed.

"I was in a bit of a snit when I said that. I didn't mean it. Of course he is my boyfriend. I would never, ever let go of my adorable little Albus." To emphasize his words, Scorpius moved his hands over Al's back again and then downward to cup his arse. Al gasped and Scorpius smiled wickedly. "Now fuck off, Nott."

The Slytherin spun and stalked out, muttering.

"You're awfully sexy when you're possessive," Al purred.

"If you were a bit cleverer, I would accuse you of setting up that whole situation merely to make me jealous."

"You think I—? Hey! I'm clever!"

"No, you're not, but I love you anyway," Scorpius said and kissed him again. Albus decided he could put up with any number of insults as long as they were followed by molten kisses and a declaration of love.

"So you're officially my boyfriend now?" Al asked when he could breathe again.

"I suppose."

"Will you tattoo my name on your arse?"

"Don't push it."

Al chuckled and Scorpius continued, "However, that does not mean that I plan to engage in public displays of affection, so you can forget about shagging until we get back home."

Al scowled. "But that's days away!"

"I am certain you will survive."

"You are a cold, cold man, Scorpius Malfoy."

"Thank you. Now can we finish our breakfast? Without you getting pornographic with the food?"

"No promises," Al warned, but he took pity on his boyfriend, content to bask in the warm glow of Score's perusal as they ate, as well as a soft touch on his arm or shoulder now and again.

They returned to their hut after breakfast and Score went off to have a shower. A piece of parchment floated in the center of the room, announcing the day's activities, which included Oliver Wood's postponed broom tag, a rousing game of bingo, and a cookout. Al tossed the flyer on Score's bed and grinned at the thought of what he would say about the activities. Albus could think of a dozen better things to do and all of them involved Scorpius in various states of undress.

His boyfriend returned from the shower with gleaming wet hair and his t-shirt clinging damply to his skin. Al watched from a cross-legged perch on his bed as Scorpius dragged a brush through his hair for what seemed a ludicrous amount of time. His blond hair was fully dry by the time he set the brush aside and then peered into the mirror to check on the perfection of his eyebrows. Al shook his head in bewilderment.

"Look, I'm just curious. How many hours a day do you spend grooming yourself?"

Scorpius met his eyes in the mirror and smirked. "Some people are not lucky enough to be as naturally adorable as you are."

"Stop it. You're making me blush," Al said sardonically, but it was true, his cheeks warmed when Scorpius let his gaze slide over him and apparently liked what he saw. Al looked away, feeling suddenly overcome with the need to touch him. Bloody hell, he was going to have to move to another room to keep from shagging Scorpius in the middle of the night.

He was thankfully distracted by a large red, yellow, and blue beach ball bouncing into the room. It ricocheted off the wall and ceiling a couple of times before exploding in the centre of the room with a shower of confetti.

"Damn it!" Scorpius swore as he shook the multicolored bits from his hair. "Now I have to brush it again."

Al laughed and levered himself off the bed to catch the sparkling card that hovered in midair. Gold writing gleamed upon it.

"It's from Hugo."

"There's a fucking surprise," Score muttered through a curtain of hair.

"We are invited to a party in his room. Apparently he was unimpressed with the entertainment our fine counselors have contrived."

"Oh, Merlin. Knowing Hugo there will be alcohol and Spin the Bottle."

"Does your rule against public displays of affection include party games?"

Scorpius frowned. "I will not engage in any foolish, naked party games with Hugo Weasley. Frankly, the thought of seeing those freckles unclothed makes me a bit nauseous."

Albus laughed, but he was secretly relieved by Score's words. If anyone had enough charisma to charm Score away from him, it would be Hugo. Not that his cousin had ever expressed an interest in boys, but one could never be too careful.

"All right. I don't really want you kissing the Abbott twins, anyway. You might be tempted to switch back."

Scorpius sniffed. "Those girls had six years to coax me away from you, Albus. Their time allotment has expired."

Al enveloped Scorpius in a happy hug and then offered to brush his hair for him. He would have to send Hugo a note of thanks for the confetti. He loved touching Score's fine, beautiful hair. "We are still going to the party, though, right?"

"I suppose. Regardless of the debauchery level, it will still be better than watching the girls ogle Oliver Wood's bare chest."

They arrived at Hugo's hut at the appointed time and were surprised to find it dimly lit with no one in attendance but Hugo, who stood in the centre of the room fondling a bright yellow Frisbee. He smirked when he saw them.

"Are we early?" Scorpius asked.

"Did I forget to mention that this *party* is only for you two?" Hugo said innocently. Al laughed happily and Scorpius raised a pale eyebrow. Hugo used his Frisbee to gesture around the room. "You will note the dim lighting, the romantic music, and the fine selection of stolen food for your dining pleasure. Additionally, I have provided a cooler full of Fortescue's finest ice cream, artfully borrowed from Oliver Wood's private stash and kept cold with a superior Cooling Charm cast by yours truly." The Frisbee made one final flourish as Hugo indicated the last and most prominent item in the room.

"The hammock is for you to figure out."

"What about the Frisbee?" Albus asked, nearly speechless and trying to cover his amazement with inane babble.

Hugo smiled dreamily and caressed the yellow disk. "Oh, this is mine. I have so many good memories associated with this… and a bucket of strawberries and some chocolate syrup… I'll never part with it." He coughed. "But I digress. I'm locking the door behind me. The Abbott twins don't know it yet, but I'm spending the night with them. See you in the morning."

Hugo's brow wrinkled suddenly and he yanked out his wand to tap the Frisbee. It Transfigured instantly into an inflatable beach ball. Albus blinked at it. "What happened to never parting with the Frisbee?"

"Those were yesterday's memories. Time to make new memories. 'Night!"

The door slammed shut and a tingle of magic announced the Locking Charm. Al turned a predatory gaze on Scorpius, whose grey eyes widened slightly.

"Alone at last," Al purred. "How do you feel about private displays of affection, Scorpius, darling?"

Score backed away slowly, looking nervous. Albus advanced, making a mental note to buy Hugo the most extravagant gift on the planet for his next birthday.

"Now, Albus, don't be hasty, you know how your cousin loves to pull practical jokes. How do you know this is not—?"

Al pounced. Score leaped backward and his head hit the curved wall of the tiny cabin. Albus did not bother to apologize. His lips fastened greedily on Scorpius's and he heard a low growl. It took him a moment to realize it issued from his own throat.

"Albus, you…" Score trailed off in a low moan when Al's lips moved to his delicate collarbone. His tongue flicked over the ridge and into the dip behind it, loving the taste of the blond, as always.

"…have waited long enough," Albus finished for him. His fingers unbuttoned Score's shirt and his mouth followed the line of flesh revealed. Score's hands moved into Al's hair, but they made no attempt to pull him away. Instead, Scorpius sighed softly and then gasped when Al's mouth fastened greedily on one nipple. He teased it with his tongue and teeth, feeling a surge of lust when it hardened in his mouth, knowing something else would be hardening soon, if it wasn't already. He slid his hand down to verify.

Oh Merlin, yes. Scorpius length strained at his trousers, tight and throbbing beneath Al's palm. He pressed gently and earned a moan from his boyfriend. Albus wasn't sure how long he could hang on-his cock felt harder than he could remember and he practically quivered with the need to feel Scorpius. He did not particularly care whether he was inside of Score or Score was inside of him, so long as someone was inside. He stroked Score's lovely prick through his trousers and groaned aloud when the blond rocked forward against his hand. *Fuck*.

"Albus," Scorpius whispered.

Al slid to his knees and moved his hand lower, cupping Score's testicles as he pressed his face against the hardness, kissing and biting Score's cock through the cloth barrier.

"Fuck, Albus." Score's voice was a husky rasp and Al thrilled to hear it. There was nothing better in the world than the heady sensation of causing his cool blond boyfriend to come undone.

"Love you, Scorpius," Al replied, raising his hands to tear at the erotic lacing of Score's trousers. He insisted on wearing traditional wizarding clothing in large gatherings, something Albus could hardly fault him for, because it was hotter than hell. Score's cock practically leaped free when the binding separated and Al felt heat surge straight to his groin when he realized Scorpius wore no pants. "You are a fucking tease," he muttered.

"It's more comfortable," Scorpius insisted, meeting Al's eyes for a moment. His long fingers tightened in Al's hair and he tugged, not quite subtly, begging for Al's mouth, but Albus had recovered his wits slightly-he suddenly did not want it to end so easily. Instead of granting Score's unspoken wish, he lurched to his feet. A frown marred the blond's beautiful mouth and Albus grinned at the flash of annoyance that crossed his boyfriend's features.

"Hugo mentioned ice cream," Al said and left Scorpius leaning against the wall, looking sexier than any human being had a right to. It took every iota of Al's willpower to keep walking toward the plastic cooler near the hammock.

"What? *Now?*"

"There is always time for ice cream," Al replied with a grin. "Come here."

He heard a growl behind him and then a rustle as Scorpius shoved away from the wall. Al glanced over his shoulder to see the blond fidget with his clothing and reach down to grip the waistband of his trousers, obviously intending to replace his erection.

"Leave that out," Albus demanded with an edge to his voice that made Scorpius's silver eyes shoot to him and widen in surprise. Al smiled wickedly and Scorpius blushed, but left his beautiful cock on display. Albus touched the tip of his tongue to suddenly dry lips as he let his gaze wander over his disheveled boyfriend. Scorpius was unbelievably gorgeous and he was Al's. The thought made him want to launch himself across the room and pounce, but he dragged his eyes away and knelt to open the cooler. The blast of cold released when he opened the lid was a welcome sensation on his overheated skin.

"Chocolate, vanilla, or persimmon?" Al asked, surveying the contents of the freezing box.

"Persimmon?" Scorpius asked in disbelief.

"It's Hugo. You'll have chocolate, of course." Al jerked his head, not quite trusting himself to look at Scorpius again. "Get on the hammock."

"You can't be serious."

Al shot him a look and was quite surprised and pleased when Scorpius rolled his eyes, but obediently walked over and threw himself into the knotted rope hammock. It swayed for a moment before stabilizing. Albus made his selection and then approached the hammock. He stared down at Scorpius, who looked like a sexy sailor with his shirt and trousers open, exposed from neck to groin. Albus began to have second thoughts about taking his time. He wasn't sure he had the ability to wait.

A seductive smile curved Scorpius's lips-the bastard knew damned well how he must look. Albus upended the ice cream and dropped it onto Score's navel. The hammock rocked dangerously as Scorpius yelped and threw Albus a glare. "Damn you, Albus!"

Albus made up for it by leaning over and licking a stripe through the melting chocolate, dipping his tongue into Score's navel. His left hand drew a trail with the ice cream, up and over Score's sternum to circle one nipple and then the other. Albus followed the path with his mouth, unsure whether the confection tasted better than Scorpius, but finally decided they were both brilliant.

"Merlin, Albus," Scorpius breathed with a moan when Al once again laved eagerly at Scorpius's nipples. He knew they were crazily sensitive and always had the blond panting within minutes. He often thought about bringing Scorpius to orgasm just through toying with his nipples, but now was not the time. He dragged the melting cone downward, slashing it over Score's skin and stopping at the base of his cock, touching it only lightly with the cold substance.

Without warning, Albus dragged the slick ice cream straight up over Score's cock, earning a strangled cry from the blond. Al chuckled wickedly and erased the stripe with his tongue, causing Scorpius to issue a few choice curse words, but his hands twisted pleasantly in Al's hair and his quivers belied his angry words. When the sticky sweetness was gone, Albus focused his attention on Score's throbbing hardness in earnest, the cone in his hand falling to the floor, forgotten. He had something better to taste now.

"Albus, I think I'm going to—"

Al stopped immediately and looked at Scorpius, who nearly screamed in frustration. Albus appreciated that his boyfriend always announced when he planned to come in order to spare him the shock, but sometimes his consideration worked against him. "Not quite yet," Albus said huskily, his voice rasping slightly from the pounding his throat had taken when trying to swallow Scorpius whole.

"You're getting even, aren't you?" Scorpius growled. "Sometimes you act like a bloody Slytherin, you know that?"

"I'm a Hufflepuff and proud of it," Al said. "I want to fuck you."

"Bloody hell," Scorpius said with a moan. "Come here, then."

Albus first divested Scorpius of his shoes and trousers, although he left the shirt on. It always turned him on to see the blond half-dressed and utterly debauched. It made Albus feel strangely powerful to put him in that state. He tore off his own clothing in record time, enjoying the gleam of silver eyes watching as he did so.

He tried to climb into the hammock with disastrous results. First the thing dipped nearly to the floor, causing Scorpius to yelp and grab for the ropes. Albus let go immediately and it righted itself with a perilous swaying.

"Albus, maybe we shouldn't…"

"I know, I'll jump on," Albus said and leaped.

For a moment it seemed to have worked. His weight settled onto Scorpius with a thump and a double-whoofing of breath… and then the rocking hammock flipped over completely, depositing Albus on the floor with Scorpius atop him.

"Ouch," Albus said, finding the wooden floor painfully hard against his backside. Scorpius smiled down at him, looking something like a snake ready to pounce on a hapless rat.

"Well, well, well, Albus. Isn't this fortuitous?" he purred.

Feeling Scorpius's hardness against his own seemed quite fortuitous indeed, so Al merely nodded. He felt a soft sigh against his face and then Scorpius's lips pressed gently against his own, carrying tenderness the blond seemed to have difficulty conveying with words. The kiss deepened and Albus wrapped his arms around Score's neck, pulling him closer and arching his body up to extend the contact of skin on skin. Scorpius seemed determined to eradicate the taste of chocolate from Al's mouth, scouring every last nook with his tongue.
Al's hands were beneath Score's open shirt, touching him from neck to arse and back again, adoring the feel of the hot flesh beneath his hands. He wanted more. He cupped Score's fine arse with both hands and rocked his hips upward, grinding their erections together.
Score tore his lips away from Albus and they both gasped for air for long moments until Albus metered, "Lube."

Scorpius stretched out a foot and snagged his forgotten trousers to drag them closer. He fumbled through the cloth for his wand, gasping when Al's questing hands delved into the curve of his arse to drag his fingers over his balls.

The instant Score's wand was in hand, he cast several Charms and Al grinned when he felt the near-painful effects of the Stretching Charm until it was partially soothed by the Lubrication Spell. Scorpius was getting damned good at those. He never missed any more.

Al's legs fell open wider when Score shifted. A moment later he felt the pressure of Score's hardness against his hole, seeking ingress. No fingers today, his lover was in a hurry, apparently. Albus only smiled and shoved his arse forward, impaling himself and causing Score to cry out—he wasn't the only impatient one.

"Fuck me now," Albus ordered and Scorpius complied. All tenderness had evaporated, leaving only urgency and frenzied passion. Score slammed into him over and over, driving Albus into the hard floorboards. He didn't care. His fingers gripped Score's hips tightly, urging him faster and deeper.

Al's eyes were half-lidded, open only far enough to admire the concentration on Score's face as gasping breaths panted through his partially-open, kiss-reddened lips. Score's fingers held him just beneath his ribs, gouging painfully, using Albus for leverage. It was blindingly brilliant, especially when Score began to graze that wonderful spot inside that made Albus see stars with every thrust. His aching cock began to weep with anticipation and his balls tightened. He was close, so very close…

Scorpius cried out and froze, pausing as shudders wracked through him. Albus opened his eyes and watched, enthralled as he always was when ecstasy shattered Score's perfect control, leaving

him completely open. He looked like perfection. The sight was enough to trigger Al's orgasm and he came without being touched, even though he knew Score would have taken care of it if he had held on a bit longer.

Scorpius smiled gently down at him. "Albus," he said tenderly.

Al swallowed hard and let go of Score's hips to cup his face with both hands. His lover sagged slightly against him, covering Al's twitching cock with his warmth.

"I love you, Albus," Scorpius said.

Albus pulled his face down for a sweet kiss, a gentle play of tongue and lips against raw flesh, bruised from the urgency of previous kisses. "I love you, too," Albus replied softly.

"Did I hurt you?" Score asked.

"I think I have thirty splinters in my arse and my shoulder blades are bruised, but other than that, I'm fine," Al replied jokingly.

"Well, let's roll you over and see to those splinters, shall we?" Scorpius purred.

"You just want to get your hands on my arse," Al said with a chuckle.

"Because it's such a nice arse," Score said and kissed him again.

"Can you please Transfigure something in to a bed first?" Al asked. "I think the hammock is beyond use."

"Maybe we just need to practice?" Score suggested.

Albus grinned. "That might take some time."

"We have all night," Scorpius replied. "I think I'll start with some ice cream. Do you prefer to wear vanilla, chocolate, or persimmon?"