

Dave and Jessie: Healing
(ENGLISH EDITION)
Book Three in the Kyle and Jason series
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And, last but not least, warm thanks to Jeff for working with me again!

Introduction:

When David Hanks meets the physiotherapist, Jessie DeMozza, he immediately turns his head in a way that he is no longer able to think straight. But as fascinated as he might be by Jessie, he has to admit that he is afraid of taking the next step. Dave has spent years as a Dom in the hard BDSM scene and wants nothing more than to turn his back on it. A date with Jessie means virgin soil for him, even though his best friend Jason and Jason's lover Kyle have shown him a new direction. In the end, the desire for love and a true relationship is greater than the fear of his emotions.

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Chapter One:

Tub with Backsight

David Hanks was standing in his big modern kitchen, and got himself a sports drink from the refrigerator, which he emptied half in a few big gulps. His whole body was coated with sweat after his hard workout.

He had been running for an hour, went through his long stretching program, worked with weights, and did his karate routine. At the end, a punching bag was due since he wanted his body to finally calm down.

At least he had managed to block out the intense events of the past few weeks for three hours.

His gaze fell on the clock on the wall. It was half past 5:00, and he still had enough time for an extensive bath before he went to the party of his best friend, Jason Montgomery, which meant the joyful end of their past three day long and very sportive firm outing for their staff.

Jason and he owned three martial arts studios in which they offered karate, taekwondo and jujitsu, and which were rather successful also due to their additional offering of professional physiotherapy.

Dave threw his sweaty workout clothes in the laundry basket, and filled the big, stand-alone tub with warm water.

After he had gotten himself a bottle of mineral water, he got into the tub and closed his eyes while the hot water surrounded his well-trained, tattooed body.

But instead of calming down, his brain immediately started to work overtime.

Somewhat irritated, Dave squinted. Damn it, why was he not able to get some peace and quiet after all?

Where the hell was the pause button?

Where was the stop button?

Why could he not pull the plug?

Finally he admitted that he couldn't avoid that one image after the other started to rise, followed by emotions. In the end he gave up, and let the movie run. He turned off the water, leaned back, and journeyed back in time.

How much more simple his live had been a few months ago.

He worked hard; made a profession of his hobby. He was a karate coach and sports teacher at a private college, at which he gave, together with Jason, sporadically courses in the various martial arts.

Since he had been abused for two endless miserable years by the best friend of his father while still a child, he had packed all kinds of emotions-good ones as well as bad ones-into a steel safe with impenetrable steel walls. He never again wanted to feel something in his life. He didn't care that by doing so he also blocked out all good feelings. To block out the pain had been more important than anything else. It had been essential to survive.

Back then, his hard-working father had only caught on by accident after two years of torture and had saved Dave by shooting his tormentor. After that he had shot himself, and left Dave alone. Dave's mother hadn't been alive, either, since she had died in a plane crash when he was eight.

His uncle Martin had taken him in and saved him from going off the rails; he had also introduced him to martial arts.

Sports were his life, and specifically karate had saved his life.

Never ever would he let another person close to his body.

Never ever would he let another person touch him.

His tattooed body was the best proof of that.

Dave wasn't only a sports teacher but also a guidance teacher at the college where he taught. He could tell himself umpteenth times that he wouldn't give a damn about emotions, and still he had uncovered various deficiencies in some families. His courage to get involved had most likely multiple times prevented worse. He had an incredible feeling for justice and injustice.

Of course, he also had sex; somewhat different sex than most people.

Dave was gay. He was an impressive man, a fighter, a rather impressive appearance if he wanted.

For almost 20 years he was in the hard BDSM scene. If he wanted sex, he went to one of the well-known, respective clubs, sat at a certain table, and most of the time it didn't take long until the men came to him all by themselves. He drew them like moths to the flame.

Or, if he was interested, he would chat someone up directly.

Dave was always the Master, always the Dom; never a Sub, never passive; always active. And he always made it quite clear what he wanted: explicit, unmistakable submission, corporal punishment, bondage. He wanted to see the men crawl, hear them beg, hear them plead. If they were good, he might let them come.

Dave was well-known, and very much in demand.

It had taken years until he stopped seeing his tormentor in front of him to which he was doing these things. By now, he could do quite well without those images. But every now and then they came up, and he wasn't able to do anything about it.

If something like this happened, he increased his daily training, and worked himself into the ground more than usual. Most of the time it helped.

Everything had been fine in the same old way until Jason had come up with this crazy idea to get himself a very young lover, and asked him-of all things him-to join him!

Dave had filmed the two-at their own wish-while having sex.

For about seven years, Dave had his own production firm in the porn business, as a second job to fall back on. At least it was a good paying side job.

At first, Dave had thought that the thing with Jason and this young guy would be over in no time, but he had been wrong! Rather the opposite was the case: After only a short amount of time it had turned serious. Fooling around had turned into love.

And then something had happened that Dave had never counted on. He had been turned on while filming, and that alone had stunned him. Let aside the fact that he hadn't been aroused much since years when filming sex scenes.

Jason's boyfriend, Kyle Brennon, was only 18, and he thought the two of them were made for each other. With an age difference of 23 years, Kyle could have been Jason's son, and still the whole thing worked in a crazy way.

At the beginning, Dave hadn't taken Jason seriously, but in the meantime, he thought otherwise. How else should he explain that he had stepped on virgin soil with the two of them during the last few weeks?

For the first time in his life he had had normal sex.

Jason and Kyle had invited him to a sporadic threesome, and although he had turned it down, scoffing at the beginning, it still had happened eventually.

Apparently, Jason had never given up hope that he would come around at one point, and, thus, would have the chance to a normal life with normal sex and all too human feelings. This was something he dearly wished for his best friend. They had known each other already for 20 years, but until a short while ago they never had sex for apparent reasons.

Dave opened his eyes, and drank some water. Maybe his mind would calm down if he only kept his eyes open. He knew only too well what kind of a roller coaster ride of emotions he had been through because of those two.

He thought about Jason's party and smiled. He was looking forward to it. Finally he forgot what he had planned on, and closed his eyes again.

Immediately his mind continued.

He ran his hands over his face as the emotions welled up that the first touches by Kyle and Jason had triggered on his year-long isolated body.

By now he knew that he was able to allow being touched, except that it probably triggered ten times more intensive emotions than with anybody else. Dave had never before been so mentally exhausted than over the last few weeks. It had bothered him day and night, if he wanted or not.

None of his Subs he had every really caressed -touched and grabbed, yes; caressed in the pure sense of it, no-; but Kyle and Jason he did.

It had worn him down to watch the two of them having sex, and not only fucking each other senseless, but making love. Deep inside it had woken emotions that he had blocked out. It had woken an incredible desire he didn't know existed, and he wondered if he should allow it or not.

They had been on the right track, had had a lot of fun together and hot sex, until this disastrous day on which the accident with Kyle had happened.

Like several times before, the three of them had woken up in Jason's huge bed, and started the day with sex. Everything had been wonderful, and he had enjoyed what Kyle had done to him, until he had kicked Kyle panic-stricken with a reflex-like kick from the bed. In his mind he still saw Kyle lying unconscious on the bedroom floor. Kyle had fractured two ribs, and partially fractured one.

Pure horror had shown on Dave's face, and made him feel an incredible rage at his tormentor.

Shortly after, they had left Kyle for observation purposes at the private hospital of Jason's friend Sid Becker. His aggressions against himself and his torturer had almost made him lose it. He had been completely taken aback after Jason had shown him the ridiculous dildo, which was just as long as a finger, and which had apparently triggered his panic attack.

Jason had immediately felt guilty, and was of the opinion that they might have wanted too much in a too short amount of time. Back then Jason thought they should have started it differently to show Dave the other, gentle side, and Dave had only stood there for a long time and stared out into Jason's vast garden in despair.

At this moment it would have been so easy to simply turn around and walk back; back into his dark, lonely life; back into a life without any emotions. But then those intense moments between Jason and Kyle had surfaced again in his mind, intense moments he had witnessed which had touched him deep in his soul.

For the first time in his adult life he had been in tears. He had knelt in front of Jason and cried. And although he had knocked out Jason's lover, he was still there for him, and vowed to him that he would accompany him further, if he only wanted it. He knew that Jason dearly hoped that Dave would walk through the right door, namely the one Kyle and he had opened for him, and not through the dark, heavy steel door through which he had come.

At least Dave had taken Jason's advice and turned to a trauma psychologist, although with a heavy heart, who would be at his side on this difficult path of allowing emotions.

Kyle knew about his past since he had answered his questions honestly, after Jason had urged him, about how he had ended up on the hardcore side of BDSM. Since Kyle hadn't told him before that he was about to use a dildo, he wasn't holding a grudge against Dave.

Thus, Kyle and Jason had continued with him after the hospital, and Dave had managed to exceed his own expectations while doing so. For him it was unforgivable what he had done to Kyle, most of all because he felt absolutely safe with him. He didn't see any threat in Kyle. For the first time in his life he was able to allow the closeness of another person, and in this specific case of even two persons.

The more often he witnessed intimate moments between Kyle and Jason, the more he wished for it in his own life. He had tasted blood, and knew that he might be able to succeed one day.

And then came this damn firm outing.

Dave opened his eyes again. He pleaded with his brain to give it a rest. He knew what had happened. But his brain was merciless.

He tilted back his head, as he saw the face of the man in front of him who had turned his life upside down, so he wasn't able to think straight. And in the next instant, his nose filled with his incredible scent of vanilla, cinnamon, tobacco, and sex. Never before in his life had his body reacted to the scent of a man. At least not like this.

He moaned softly when he got an inevitable erection. His hand went to his cock, which filled steadily and grew bigger.

In his mind he could see himself park his Harley Davidson together with all the other vehicles of their staff in the parking garage of the sports resort, and almost automatically scanned the garage for the passengers of a certain Jeep. He took off his helmet and ran his fingers through his hair, when his gaze got caught at Jessie, who fought his way on crutches out of the car, wincing painfully while doing so.

For a split second, Dave saw Jessie's pain-stricken face before his inner eye, however, at a quite different and extremely intimate situation, namely, while having sex while he, Dave, was about to conquer Jessie's body for the very first time.

The next moment, another scene shot through his head, only for a split second: Jessie gasping lustfully underneath him, after the pain had vanished.

He forcefully tore away from this image, closed his eyes, agitated, and ran both of his hands over his face, groaning.

"Everything okay with you?" he heard Kyle ask very close to him.

He gave a start, and looked up. "Eh... yes. Everything's okay. I just had something like a vision," he grumbled.

He saw Kyle's gaze wander to the Jeep, and he felt a hot surge shoot through his body as he noticed it.

"A rather yummy vision, huh?" he grinned, mischievously, and tapped his thigh.

"What's up?" Jason asked, surprised, as he saw his dumbfounded face.

"Nothin'," he replied, and dismounted his bike. While he placed it on its kickstand, he said distracted, "Haven't been riding for three hours in a long time."

"Why didn't you say something? We could have taken turns."

"Maybe we can do that on our way back home."

"Okay... are you getting old?" Jason joked.

"Could be." Dave hurried to fish his duffle back from the trunk of the Aston Martin.

Kyle had a small roll-on luggage, and, thus, was able to manage despite his fractured ribs, which seemed to suit him quite well.

He stared at Kyle, wonderingly, but he ignored him.

Before they could walk inside, he held him back at his sleeve, and hissed, "You scared me, Brennon!"

He saw Kyle grinning, smug, while walking on without further comment.

Dave felt again the jolt of adrenaline shooting through his body as he became aware that Kyle had apparently noticed that he had thought about Jessie.

Although Jessie was actually hired as a physiotherapist, a colleague had talked him into a taekwondo lesson during his first week after starting work, which unfortunately had ended in a torn ACL. Of course, he was invited to join their firm outing despite the injury, and as Jason had introduced them before taking off, he had gotten the shock of his life.

Jessie DeMozza wasn't anything like his usual prey, and the more surprising was his bodily reaction to this man. His usual partners, or better, sex partners, were usually older than he was, bald, tattooed, and slimmer than he was.

Jessie wasn't anything of it. He was 28 years old, almost as tall as he was, well-trained, with black, short, unruly hair, which gave him a boyish appearance. He had greyish-blue bright eyes, dimples, and an open smile.

Dave didn't get at all why this guy confused him so much, and still it was a fact.

He had shared a room with Jason and Kyle at the sports resort, and the first night Jason had found him in bed moaning. During the first day Dave had managed to hide his feelings from Jason, and Kyle had promised to keep his mouth shut. But now Jason had no longer any doubts that something was going on.

Dave still felt Jason's hand on his soaked through boxers. He had come twice in his sleep, and now Jason was lying next to him, and he stuck his cock ring under his nose, which he hadn't taken off once in 15 years.

At these memories, his fingers jacked his by now stiff cock harder.

A bit later, he had asked Kyle to find out more about Jessie. He could still remember vividly this scene and the feelings rising within him, as he had asked Kyle about it.

"You gotta find out something for me, Kyle."

Kyle grinned.

"I mean it!"

"Fire away."

"Find out before the end of the firm outing what this damn ring means!" Dave said, and his tone was almost pleading. "Find out if he's gay! He likes you. He watches out for you. Maybe something will come up."

Kyle's grin widened. "That's going to be damn expensive, Dave."

"I'm ready to pay any price."

"Any?"

"Any!"

"Wow," Kyle mumbled. "You're digging this guy, huh?"

"Kyle, even if this is completely out there - it shows me that I can think about something other than the sex I had up to now. I never ever thought about another man like I do now. Find out for me, and you may work my ass with a real dildo!" He was aiming at the night before, when he was at least able to allow a small one.

Kyle looked at him for a long time, and was about to retort and tell him that this wasn't good enough. Then he remembered that Dave wasn't Jason, and he should not push it too far. Dave was on the right track.

"One, which will prepare me for your hot cock."

"What?" Kyle gasped, stunned.

"That's worth it for me! No matter the outcome, Kyle! I gotta know! Will you do that for me?"

Kyle looked him in the eyes for a few seconds, and finally said, "Yes."

Ever since, Dave had been a complete wreck.

Kyle had already found out on the second day of the firm outing that Jessie was gay like himself, and single.

And at least if one wanted to believe Jason's observations on their last day of the firm outing, it seemed that Jessie was quite as interested in Dave as Dave was in Jessie.

Dave had just lived through these emotions when even more intense images appeared from last night... Kyle's reward for finding out the desired information about Jessie. It was an extremely intimate reward. First dildo games, then Dave's very first time. It should become Dave's breakthrough.

Kyle had been sensible, cautious, but also persistent. Of course, Jason had been present as the two of them had sex.

He hadn't forgotten the possibility that it might come to another panic attack from Dave, but nothing of the like had happened. Rather the opposite. Dave hadn't only completely enjoyed it, but also experienced his first orgasm by Kyle's skillful massage of his prostate with a dildo, an orgasm, which had been so strong he had been completely taken aback.

Jason had been quite shocked as it became apparent that Dave had brought this orgasm to many men, but never before had felt the pleasure himself.

If Dave had known how great this felt, he would have never waited for 20 years to give it a try.

Even after the dildo action, it wasn't over yet for Dave, since he had promised Kyle a real fuck.

Because Kyle was injured, there was only one single position in which this might work, namely Dave above Kyle. Thus, Dave had it in his own hands, and he had managed to also bring this act to a positive end.

In his fantasies Kyle and Jessie had mixed, like the days before, but it all showed him that he was able to think about different, so to say normal sex, and this gave him incredible strength to follow his goals.

Dave almost felt yesterday's penetration if he only concentrated strong enough. He felt the lustful feeling of how Kyle's cock had felt inside his body.

He jacked faster, fantasized while doing so intensely, and noticed eventually that the inevitable came closer. Shortly later, he released, growling into the hot water with several jets. Then he rested his head on the rim of the tub.

Dave almost felt panic when thinking of going further, since he knew that it was actually too early. But this wouldn't keep him from trying to get to know Jessie better. And Kyle was right: Since Jessie wasn't his usual prey, it might have something to do with the fact that he was about to change.

As the orgasm slowly subsided, he washed up thoroughly, rinsed off, and finally stepped out of the tub. He looked at his face in the mirror and started to trim his goatee, and shave.

He had only grown it over the last two weeks, and it suited him so well that he didn't feel like going without. The beard made him look even manlier.

He already decided that he wouldn't go back to the nerdy, boring Dave, when he returned to school the following Monday. He would style his hair discreetly, and refrain from presenting himself with nerdy suit pants and buttoned up polo shirts.

How did Jason put it? The teachers might faint at first, but your students will surely think it's cool. Well, Jason had a point.

In the future there would be only one Dave, and only the heavens knew how Jessie DeMozza would react to his advances.

Chapter Two:

Party and a Date

Around a quarter after 7:00, Dave got into his Benz and drove over to Jason's estate. Usually he would have taken his motorbike, but since he was dressed for a party, and had styled his hair, he didn't feel like wearing a helmet. He was a bit vain after all. It was only a ten-minute drive, but a third of it was up the hill from the secured gate to the house.

Jason owned a huge estate which was topped with a villa with a studio. Furthermore, Jason owned about 80 Health & Power fitness studios besides the three martial arts studios he ran together with Dave. There were several alone in this city.

The party started at 8:00, and almost on time the house was packed.

Everyone had shown up, and it was a blast. There were almost 90 guests partying in the 3300 square foot house.

There was a big catered buffet, live music, and several waiters who made sure everybody was cared for. The mood was great.

Dave had been pleased that Jessie arrived early. His worries that he might chicken out were gone, although Jason had told Jessie at the firm outing that he

would only accept him canceling with a doctor's certificate. Dave's knees almost buckled when he saw him.

Jessie was wearing khaki summer pants and a black shirt, along with black shoes, and despite his knee brace and crutches, he simply looked sexy, and apparently, he was in high spirits.

Kyle was walking Jessie around, showing him everything, as he and Jason greeted further guests.

But the evening went by without Dave having a chance to talk to Jessie longer than a few minutes, and he almost gave up hope for more.

It was around 11:00 when Jessie took the liberty of sneaking into the adjacent sun room. It was dark, and only the moonlight was shining through the windows.

He needed a few minutes to himself, and sat down sighing softly on one of the comfortable rattan chairs. He pulled up another one, and propped up his hurt leg. Then he closed his eyes and leaned his head back.

Dave, who was sitting unnoticed two chairs down, had literally frozen when Jessie had entered. In no way did he want to scare him off.

Apparently, Jessie hadn't noticed yet that he wasn't alone. Most likely his ears were still ringing from the music, the laughter and the bubble of voices, and Dave assumed he had ended up here for the same reason he did.

Dave couldn't help but inhale him, and although Jessie was sitting two chairs down, he was able to smell him. He smelled like a mixture of tobacco, cinnamon and vanilla, paired with a wisp of whiskey, and definitely sex. Irresistible. It went right to the core.

Jessie jumped when he heard a sound to his left.

"Don't get startled," he heard Dave say hastily, "It's only me."

Jessie recognized his voice immediately. "Sorry, I didn't mean to disturb." It was too dark to see much, but he assumed that Dave was not alone. Why else would he be here? He was about to rise again when Dave said, "Stay, you're not disturbing anyone. I only longed for some minutes of peace and quiet."

"Oh man, same here." Jessie sighed. "I'll only say one word... Susie."

Dave laughed. "Oh my."

"She's really nice, but..."

"...doesn't stop talking?" Dave finished his sentence.

"Um, yes."

"You've just got to time your escape, which apparently you managed."

Jessie couldn't help but laugh. "Yep, as you can see."

They fell silent for a while.

"Ah," Jessie said. "This is like heaven."

"I agree. Why don't you have anything to drink?"

"I was on the run," Jessie reminded him.

“Shall I get us something?”

“Would be great.”

Dave stood. “What would you like?”

“A beer would be great. I guess Jason also got some from England?”

“He does. I’ll be right back.”

Dave returned with two ales, and placed one in front of Jessie.

“Is it okay to keep you company?”

Jason grinned. “As long as you don’t tell me your middle name is Susie.”

Dave laughed. This guy was quick, but he already knew that from him being a judge at the firm outing. “I swear!” He grinned and turned on a lamp at the back wall, which shone indirectly at some plants. Thus, it was at least no longer pitch black in here.

“How come there was no light in here?” Jessie asked. “That’s a wonderful room!”

“Because Jason’s staff had to fish all kinds of things... including used condoms... out of the plants back there. I’m almost surprised he didn’t lock the room, although I’m quite relieved about it by now.”

Next, they were sitting across from each other and chatting. It was helpful for their first private talk that everything happened in the semi-darkness.

Two hours later, they were still at it.

By now, there was a trolley-table next to them with snacks, a container with ice cubes, a bottle of whiskey, Coke, and some cooled mineral water.

They laughed a lot, talked about all kinds of things... workouts, the past firm outing, Ireland, rugby, football, and learned in a short amount of time that they were on the same wavelength.

They sat opposite each other, interested, forearms and hands on the table. They were facing each other.

Jessie, who had his leg partially again under the table, listened to Dave’s stories, which mostly ended in a funny punch line and made both of them laugh.

Then it was Jessie’s turn again, and he was just as good as Dave when it came to storytelling.

Afterward, there was a little, not unpleasant pause, and then they went on to the next topic.

The looks they gave each other were rather explicit, and by now there was a noticeable tension in the sun room.

But eventually, Dave did it again. He couldn’t help it. He inhaled Jessie.

Jessie blinked. He had noticed it already three times, but every time he had glanced somewhere else, and didn’t pay any attention. But this time it was obvious.

“What the heck are you doing?” he asked Dave quietly.

He froze, and swallowed. "Sorry... I" Dave ran his hand over his beard distractedly. Finally, he seemed to gather his courage and looked Jessie directly in the eyes. "You simply smell incredible." His voice was trembling.

Jessie swallowed hard, and fell silent. Then there was a commotion outside that made both of them jump.

"Dave?" he heard Jason yell, a bit stressed. "Can you lend me a hand?"

"Fuck!" Dave cursed, jumped up, and ran outside, where an argument between two guests seemed close to getting out of hand, and Jason was busy cooling heads.

Meanwhile, Jessie sat thunderstruck in the sun room. Dave's words echoed in his head, and he couldn't believe it.

They had just been laughing, and then... then this incredible guy inhaled him. That had never before happened to him. He knew Dave had done it unintentionally, since the look on his face had been one of shock as Jessie had asked him about it. The other times he thought he had been wrong. But this time he had been a hundred percent sure.

Jessie closed his eyes.

Dave would return.

But Dave did not return.

The commotion was long gone, and cheerful party laughter, paired with music, was now again the usual buzz sound.

As Jessie was still sitting in the sun room after a few minutes, he picked himself up. He had to find Dave. But he couldn't find him anywhere, and before he looked further, he needed to smoke first.

He went out on the patio, pulled his small cigars from his pocket, and lit one. After inhaling deeply, he calmed down a bit. He smoked only half, stubbed out the rest, and walked back inside.

Dave couldn't have just vanished!

And finally he saw him as he came out of the men's room. Jessie had no idea that Dave had been inside since they broke off the argument.

Dave was completely confused, and couldn't believe that Jessie had noticed what he had done.

"Dave!"

He whirled around and stared at Jessie.

"Is there a damn place where we can talk in private, undisturbed for once?" Jessie asked him bluntly. He looked like he would not let him off the hook once more. So it was now or never.

"Give me a minute, okay?" Dave asked.

Jessie nodded.

"Wait here."

Shortly after, he was back. "This is crazy," he said somewhat angrily. "There are still people everywhere. The only place I can think of is outside the front door." He looked at Jessie inquiringly.

"Let's go," he said, and followed Dave on his crutches to the exit.

"You're leaving us already?" Mel asked Jessie.

"No, Mel, we only need a bit of fresh air, and some peace and quiet," Dave replied.

"Oh, all right."

The butler opened the door for them, and as he closed it back up, it finally became quiet.

"Oh God, yes," Jessie mumbled, turned a few feet to the left, and stopped at a pillar.

Dave slowly came after him. He had to apologize to him, no matter what the cost. Jessie probably thought he was a complete weirdo. He stopped close to Jessie as he started to talk.

"You don't really think you can throw something like that at me, and then simply chicken out?"

Dave swallowed. He couldn't tell if Jessie was angry or not. He lifted both hands defensively, and said soothingly, "Listen, I'm really sorry for putting my foot in my mouth."

Jessie, who by now had both crutches in his left hand, stopped Dave in the middle of the sentence by simply grabbing his left wrist and pulling him closer.

Dave blinked, quite stunned, as Jessie said softly, "Please stop apologizing, Dave. That was the... the absolutely hottest compliment I've ever received in my life."

Dave felt a heat wave shooting through him, as he caught the dimension of those words.

"Never before had someone said something like that to me."

The fact that Jessie had pulled him even closer almost drove him insane. They looked into each other's eyes for seconds.

"You... you aren't mad at me?"

"Mad?" Jessie shook his head. "No. Why should I be mad?"

Dave swallowed again. Jessie was still holding on to him.

"Listen... I sure hope I don't say anything wrong," Jessie said, and briefly cleared his throat. "But I really wanted to finally speak with you in private, and ask you if you feel like grabbing a beer someplace with me."

He let go of Dave and looked at him wide-eyed.

"That'd be great," Dave replied, and Jessie's knees almost buckled.

He had to ask one more question. Maybe he would find some sleep after that. "Are you seeing someone right now? I mean, are you attached?"

Dave shook his head. "No... you?"

"No," Jessie replied, and pulled something from his pants pocket.

Dave didn't believe his eyes as he pulled out a folded note and gave it to him. He took it and opened it. There were Jessie's cell phone number and his name. Dave couldn't help it, but he had to shake his head.

"What?" Jessie asked, apparently confused.

Dave looked up. "Great minds think alike," he said, smiling, and before Jessie could say something, he dug into his shirt pocket and pulled out his card.

Jessie seemed to forget the sentence he was about to say, as he looked at the card. David Hanks, business address karate studio, business telephone numbers.

"Turn it over."

Jessie glanced up briefly, and did so. There were Dave's private cell phone number and the words: Jessie, please call me. Dave.

Dave saw a relieved smile scurry across Jessie's face as he looked up, shaking his head.

"We were sitting inside in the sun room and talked two hours about all kinds of things," he sighed, "and I honestly have no idea how much longer it would have taken me to ask you for a date."

"Then we should say thank you to those two arguing, right?" Dave noticed, and looked him directly in the eyes.

He could see that Jessie's pupils dilated. And it was bright outside, not dark. They were definitely dilated from arousal, and it turned Dave on. He couldn't help it, and inhaled him again.

Jessie closed his eyes, and leaned his head against the pillar. It was the most erotic gesture he had ever experienced, and his erection was so strong it almost hurt. How often had he satisfied himself over the last few days because of this guy? But he never before had been so hard. After all, he never before came so close to Dave.

"Sorry," Dave whispered, "I can't help it."

"Please never apologize for it again," he mumbled.

Again they looked into each other's eyes.

Dave's gaze went to Jessie's slightly parted lips. He was standing so close he only had to slightly bend forward.

Jessie lifted one hand and delicately touched his beard with his fingertips. "It's so damn sexy," Jessie whispered.

Dave sighed softly and came toward him. Then the front door opened, and loud laughing guests walked outside. He hastily turned around, and Jessie disappeared to the other side of the pillar.

Jessie's heart was racing. He didn't make it all up. He tried calming down, and finally succeeded. With trembling hands, he fished a small cigar from the pack and lit it.

Jason had stepped out, too, to say goodbye to his guests. "Dave, what the heck are you doing out here?" he asked, surprised, as he walked toward him to also say goodbye.

A taxi van drove up the driveway, and the guests got in.

Jason looked Dave up and down. He looked quite... He didn't exactly know what.

Dave put a warning finger to his lips, and Jason cocked his eyebrows.

"Are you coming inside?" he asked him silently.

Dave shook his head, and Jason saw the crutch peeking out from behind a pillar.

"Wow," he mumbled, "Then I'd better go now, huh?"

He winked at Dave and disappeared inside.

Dave ran his hands over his face, and turned around. Slowly he walked back and rounded the pillar.

"Sorry, bad habit." Jessie smiled apologetically, inhaled once more, and stubbed it out with his shoe.

Tobacco, vanilla, cinnamon.

"I don't mind."

"I don't smoke very often. I do it for pleasure, after a meal... after..." He broke off, but Dave could guess he almost said sex. "Or, when I'm a bit wired," he added.

"You've got some time for me next week?" Dave asked, and was almost surprised how easy the sentence came from his lips. To be on the safe side, he left some more distance between him and Jessie.

Jessie smiled. "Sure. I guess my schedule is much less packed than yours."

"Monday at... let's say 8:00. I'm off. Unless that's too late for you?"

"No. Don't worry. Where?"

Dave shrugged. "Any idea?"

"A block from my house there's a small Irish pub. Something like my hangout. I can walk there."

Dave cocked his eyebrows. "So I assume being gay is no problem there?"

"No. Don't worry," Jessie assured him.

"Okay. Love to. At 8:00?"

"Yep." Jessie smiled. "Sounds great. The pub is called Liam's."

Dave nodded, and for one last time looked him directly in the eyes. "I hope we hear from each other before that."

Jason nodded. "Same here."

"Good. Shall we go back inside?" Dave asked a bit reluctantly.

"I guess so."

An hour later, around half past 2:00, there was only a group of ten people left. As the staff cleaned up unnoticed, Mel served coffee and apple crumble à la Louis, who was Jason's cook.

Jason saw Kyle grinning. He was sure Kyle was really dead tired, but he apparently had woken up again.

As the chat continued while they had apple crumble, he nudged Kyle lovingly while he ate his dessert. He hadn't missed Kyle going through some ups and downs. The whole evening long he had been depressed again, since he had become aware of the end of school holidays, and Jason hadn't had time yet to tell him something positive.

"Jessie," he said.

Jessie, who was sitting opposite him, looked up.

"I haven't told Kyle yet about our deal. May I do it now?"

Jessie grinned. "Sure."

Kyle was talking with his full mouth to Marie, and Jason waited until he was done and had swallowed.

"Honey," he said, and Kyle looked at him. "I would like to tell you something which hopefully might cheer you up a bit."

"Um... okay."

"How about if I agree that you start working out a bit starting Tuesday, as long as Sid is agreeable?"

Kyle's jaw dropped.

"I'm talking about the gym."

"But I thought you were of the opinion that was not a good idea?"

"How about Jessie being your personal trainer for the time being?"

Kyle looked at Jessie. "That would be great. You think it'll work?"

"I wouldn't have suggested it if I had thought otherwise," he replied, smiling.

Dave, who had listened as well, was deeply moved.

"Jessie, that would be awesome," Kyle mumbled.

"Gives me something to do, and I'm quite familiar with something like that, you know. I'm going nuts at home, and I'm still off for two or three weeks. I worked in a team of physiotherapists attending to a rugby team in Ireland, and I really know such injuries," he explained to him. "So, if you agree, then..."

"Agree? That's ingenious!" Kyle beamed. "You're awesome, Jay!"

"Thanks, honey, you deserve it."

Kyle looked at Dave. "How about you? Cool, huh?"

Dave nodded. "I like your initiative," he said, and looked at Jessie. "I really like the idea."

"Those were my words. I like his initiative."

"And you think this'll work with your leg?" Dave asked somewhat concerned.

"I won't do any exercises. I will only tell him what to do. That'll work. Kyle's a pro."

Dave saw Kyle sending up a prayer. "Wow, Sunday couldn't start any better... apple crumble and personal trainer."