

# Unexpected Affection Chapter 16-20

By BreaktheBar

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## Chapter 16

"I don't know what happened today," Hannah said as the two of you sat on her couch. Her apartment was smaller than yours but was within her price range and you had helped her back when she first moved in to get everything set up. It was a one-bedroom flat, so her exercise equipment took up about half the living room space, but otherwise, she'd turned it into a cosy spot.

"She didn't say anything, or text you?" you asked her. "I don't think I've ever seen Hikaru so worked up."

Hannah shook her head and sighed, coming over and sitting down on the couch facing you and sitting cross-legged. "Nothing. Did she give you any hints?"

"Not really," you said. "She just had a bad morning, so she took the day off from her job search. And I told her she deserved it."

Hannah tutted softly and shook her head. "It could be all sorts of things," she said. "Something like seeing someone on social media and feeling jealous when she's frustrated about life. Or maybe she's getting a visit from Aunt Flo."

"I don't know," you sighed. "It felt like more than that."

"Do you want me to check in on her? I mean, maybe it's something she wouldn't want to talk to you about, but would talk to another girl."

"That would be a big help," you said. "Seriously, Hannah. I'm worried about her."

"That's because you love her so much, and you still think of her as a kid," Hannah said, giving you a push on the arm. "She's an adult, just like us. And can you imagine that? *We are adults?*"

That made you grin a little and chuckle. "Well, one of us is. I don't know about you."

"Says the guy who plays with toys all the time," Hannah teased, falling back on one of her favourites.

“Yeah, yeah,” you said, leading into your own long-standing and worn-out joke. “At least I don’t play with balls all day.”

“Ha ha ha, so funny,” Hannah deadpanned. “Alright, I’ll give her a call tomorrow. Maybe we can set up a little girls’ outing. I’ll see if Margot can come out as well. Between the two of us we should be able to get her talking.”

“Thanks, Hans,” you said.

“Of course, Ollie,” she said, shifting to sit more next to you and hugging your arm as she rested her cheek on your shoulder. “So, are you going to give me the real full story about your date with April now?”

You started from the beginning, telling her about getting there and taking pictures with April, and how she’d been friendly and silly. Hannah grilled you on whether you’d remembered her and the others’ suggestions, and you admitted that you’d forgotten a few but got most of them right. Then you talked about going into the restaurant, and how the food was and the conversation went. You could tell a few times that you were rambling, singing April’s praises as you recounted your nerdy conversations, but Hannah was smiling and listening.

“Then she said something like how she could tell I was a good guy by how I talked about you and Hikaru and my other friends,” you said.

“Well, that is true,” Hannah grinned. “Though now I’m worried you over-sold us and we won’t stand up to the hype.”

“Never,” you said, wrapping your arm around Hannah and hugging her to you. “You’re still the best thing that ever happened to me, Hannah.”

“Thanks,” she said, snuggling in a little. “So how did you guys end up pivoting from the movie to a game store?”

You continued on with your story, and about how you found out you and April both collected Arclight minis and how she’d suggested the change since neither of you wanted to see the movie. You told her about the walk over with April holding your arm and then touring through the shop.

“We ended up buying a couple of comic books each, and she pretty much demanded I let her pay for them since I’d shown her ‘my spot,’ and then, um, that was it. We took an Uber back to her hotel and we sort of kissed, and she said she wanted to see me again-”

“Hold up,” Hannah said, sliding out from under your arm to sit facing you again. “Try that again, buddy. With a lot more details, and more truth.”

"I mean, there's not that much more to say," you said, knowing that you were starting to flush a little and trying to keep a straight face.

"Bullshit," Hannah said. "Come on, Ollie. It's me. Tell me what happened."

"Well..." you said. Part of you wanted to be the honourable gentleman. The man who would never hint that you'd gotten intimate with a woman, and you'd die with that secret. But, on the other hand, you were *dying* to talk about it with someone. And this was Hannah, for fucks sake! If you couldn't tell her, who could you tell?

"Ollie," she said, raising an eyebrow.

"She invited me up to her hotel room," you blurted out.

"She did?" Hannah asked, raising her eyebrows.

You nodded. "She told me to get comfortable while she went to the washroom, and I figured she just wanted to use a non-public restroom or something because she said she wanted to bring me somewhere."

"Oh, Ollie," Hannah said with a knowing grin. "I love you so much."

"It's not funny," you said. "So she came out of the washroom and kissed me, but like *kissed* me, not like at the game store. And then we talked a bit, and she told me that it really wasn't like her to do that sort of thing but she told me again that I'd swept her off her feet. And then we, um... made love."

"You had sex," Hannah said.

"OK, we had sex," you agreed.

"What kind of sex?" Hannah asked, chewing on her bottom lip as she frowned slightly. "Like, is she a starfish? Was it good? Did she make you do everything, or was she into it all the way?"

"She was, um, into it," you said. "She, uh, did oral on me first. And then we had sex on the bed. And then again on the floor."

"Three times!?" Hannah asked, her jaw dropping in shock. "Jesus, Ollie. You're a fucking animal."

Now you really blushed and weren't sure what to say.

"So what happened after?" Hannah asked.

“We cleaned up, and then snuggled in the hotel bed for a bit, and she told me she actually lives out in the suburbs on and off. She wants to keep seeing me, and she’s coming up with a date for us,” you said.

Hannah shook her head. “Fuck me,” she said. “Your first fucking date and it goes *that well*? Fuck you.” She laughed. “Damn. Maybe I’m a better Dating Coach than I am a date!”

## Chapter 17

Hannah couldn't believe it.

She'd wondered, but now she had the confirmation. Ollie had sex.

She was happy for him. How could she not be? It hadn't ever really been discussed between the two of them because she didn't want to embarrass him, but she'd been 98% sure he'd left high school a virgin and the same for college. She'd lost her V-card senior year of high school and had hooked up a few times in college, so she wasn't exactly an experienced slut, but she knew she liked sex and what she was looking for.

The thing that was really throwing her for a loop, though, was that Ollie had asked her for her help - he wanted to exercise.

Oliver, her Oliver, wanted to exercise.

Hannah had been trying to get him to do that for *years*. Hell, over a *decade*. She loved every inch of him, but she also worried about his health as well as knowing it would be harder for him to find someone at his size. Now he'd found April and wanted to change for her. That stung a bit, to be honest, but Hannah was willing to work with it. She'd start him off slow, of course. Her work as a trainer with the local MLS team wasn't a weight loss journey, so she needed to brush up on the latest thoughts on that. She was used to working with very fit guys who either just wanted to maintain what they had or were pushing to get leaner and faster. Soccer wasn't as much of a strength sport as it was endurance and speed.

*Then again*, Hannah thought to herself as she was getting ready for bed, *that was Ollie's goal too*.

"He had sex!" Hannah blurted out loud, still a little in shock.

She was looking at herself naked in the mirror and quirked her lips to the side, passing a critical eye over herself. She was supposed to be doing her nightly routine of positive affirmations - the fitness industry had a way of messing with her brain. She knew she was fit as hell and super cute, but always being surrounded by and comparing herself to other people was something her therapist said could be detrimental to her confidence. Affirmations had been the thing that seemed to work best for her.

"I am confident. I am beautiful. I am powerful," she said, then cracked a grin and winked at herself in the mirror. "I am sexy." She'd added that last one without the suggestion of Dr Barker since she'd been feeling down about her own love life lately. She repeated the affirmations a half dozen times as she posed in the full-length mirror, first going through some of the classic flexing that would show off her muscle tone and physique. Then one the last one she giggled through doing some more sexy poses.

Hannah's fingers found her nipples and tweaked them. She had nice tits. Sure, they weren't as big as *April's*, or Margot's or Hiakru's, but they fit her short height and didn't make her look top-heavy. And most importantly, they still looked cute and like boobs. Lots of ladies who got fit and leaned into the more muscley side of athletics lost the shape of their breasts as they grew their pecs. Hannah specifically didn't want to do that and had struck a good balance.

"Mmm," she groaned, tweaking her nipples again and then biting her lower lip. "Fuck it."

She headed for bed, grabbing her vibrator out of her dresser drawer before she crawled under the cover. It didn't take long for her to have her eyes closed as she was trailing the toy across her pussy. Her mind flickered through her usual imaginary partners. A couple of the soccer players from the team, or guys at the gym she worked at part-time. None of them were doing it for her though, so she went back to 'old faithful' - Tommy Kilpatrick, the best fuck she'd ever had. He'd been an Irish exchange student in college and had the most beautiful eyes and that *accent*.

Tommy, however, had been a bit of an asshole, and no matter how good his dick game had been her mind kept wandering to him being a dick. And then Hannah gasped lightly because she tried to think of someone who wasn't a dick and she thought of the most obvious person. Ollie.

"Fuck," Hannah groaned, her face contorting a little as she hesitated but pulled her vibe from between her pussy lips.

*That was weird*, she thought to herself, shaking her head. Hannah had never thought about Ollie that way. She loved him, but she'd never been sexually attracted to him. He'd always been her big teddy bear best friend, and he'd never shown any interest in *her* sexually either. And her mother had warned her to be careful she wasn't accidentally leading him on back in high school, so Hannah had been vigilant. But he never checked her out, and he never made jokes about them dating or any of the little signs that might have meant he was holding a candle for her.

Hannah pursed her lips. It wasn't wrong to fantasise about someone. And it wouldn't change the way she thought about him, and he was having sex now.

Cautiously, Hannah brought the vibe back to her pussy, trailing it lightly across her thighs first to tease herself.

He wouldn't be an asshole in bed, that was for sure. He'd be attentive and caring because that's how he was. He would want to know what she liked and would listen to her.

Hannah wondered how big his dick was. What it looked like.

She swallowed as she relaxed into the mattress, starting to rub the tip of the vibrators across her hole again. Sex with Ollie would be... it would be sweet. And he'd gone *three times in a row* with April! That was pretty impressive...

## Chapter 18

You felt like you were really starting to worry about Hikaru. It was Friday morning and she had gotten up to make you breakfast as usual, but she'd still had that stormcloud over her. Trying to cheer her up only managed to get you a few little smiles that quickly disappeared, and while she wasn't turning any sort of anger towards you, you were worried that she was starting to go into a depression or something.

Deciding to give her some space instead of taking the day off, since she assured you she was 'fine,' you were left with the hope that Hannah would be able to get something out of her that weekend. In the meantime, you had your own stuff going on.

Paula, as always, broke into a grin as you entered the cafe and quickly handed off the till to one of her employees so she could say good morning to you. She was wearing her usual branded apron, but it was supposed to be a scorching day so she had a loose tank top underneath and a skirt instead of shorts. She'd also tied back her hair in a ponytail that left the ragged bangs free, and her quirky grin made you smile right back.

"Good morning, Ollie," she said.

"Morning, Paula," you said, accepting her hug.

As she stepped away she gave you a curious look. "Alright, what's going on?" she asked.

"Nothing," you said, but sighed again. "Well, something."

"Lady troubles already?" Paula asked. "You just had that date!"

"No, no, not that," you said. "That's actually going really well. April wants to go out again this weekend and is setting up the date. I think she's going to keep it a surprise."

"Cute," Paula said with a small, reserved smile. "So what *is* the matter?"

"Do you have any part-time staff openings?" you asked her.

Paula raised both eyebrows. "I mean, I do, but I think you're a *little* overqualified, Ollie. I can't exactly pay IT rates."

"It's not for me," you said, knowing she was teasing you. "It's for my cousin Hikaru. She's come in a couple of times on the weekends."

“Oh! She’s been in more than that,” Paula said. “She comes in some afternoons while she’s working on job applications.”

“I didn’t realise she came in,” you said. “It’s probably good she gets out of the apartment for a bit, at least.”

“So you’re hoping I might hire her?” Paula guessed.

“I think she might be feeling like she’s not measuring up to life after college,” you said. “She can stay with me as long as she wants, but she could be feeling like she’s freeloading and I don’t want her to. It would be nice if she had something more scheduled to base the rest of her life and job hunt around.”

“That could help,” Paula nodded. “I’ll tell you what. The next time she comes in, I’ll ask if she wants something part-time. Less than twenty hours a week, but enough to give her a few shifts and some cash in her pocket. I’ve got a few students on staff who are hoping to have someone new to trade shifts with when they need to, so she can probably work as much as she wants until she finds something more permanent.”

“Thank you, Paula,” you said. “That would be amazing.”

“Of course,” Paula smiled. “Plus if you’ve rubbed off on her at all, I’m sure she’s just as sweet as she seems and will fit right in.”

“I hope so,” you grinned.

Paula gave you your coffee and a pastry, and you hesitated but took the snack. You hadn’t started dieting and exercising yet. When Hannah told you what you needed to do, then you would start gently refusing the pastries.

They were just too good to say no to yet.

It took another few minutes before Margot showed up, waving to you lightly before getting in line for her order. When she finally sat across from you she was smiling and blowing on her cup of coffee. “Morning, Ollie,” she said.

“Good morning, Margot,” you said with a smile.

Your conversation went as usual, talking about what kind of day you were expecting to have and how hot the weather was going to get. Margot was thinking of finally using her student membership at the University gym to hit their pool if it kept getting hotter over the summer. She told you a couple of funny stories about going to ‘swimming holes’ back home on the ranch in Texas when she was a teen, and even one about going skinny dipping and getting caught by the



neighbours. That got you daydreaming for a moment about Margot skinny dipping though, and you had to blink a couple of times to get that out of your head. She was wearing another one of her cute short-sleeved button-down plaid shirts tucked into her tight jeans, and even though she was wearing a white tank top under it she was still showing a hint of cleavage. That had never *tempted* you so much before, and you found yourself needing to focus just a little more on her face and not letting your eyes slip to her chest.

Sex had definitely changed how you thought about the women around you, and you weren't sure if you were happy with that or not.

"So when am I going to *meet* your new girlfriend?" Margot asked you with a teasing grin.

"We're not official yet," you said, blushing a little. "And it's just our second date this weekend."

"OK, that's fair," Margot said, reaching across the table and patting your arm. "But I'm just saying, you've got three women in your life who are *very* curious about this new girl. You know if there's something shady about her, Hannah and I will both sniff it out."

"There's nothing shady or wrong," you said. "But... Thank you. It means a lot. You know I would do the same for you."

"Oh, I know, Ollie," she said with a grin. "And if I'd met any man other than you in this city, I'd be asking you to do a deep dive on them. So just know, if she breaks your heart, I've got a couple of choice fields outside the city where I could bury a body."

That made you laugh, and she laughed as well, but there was a part of you that had a feeling she was only *mostly* joking. Margot was the most rough-and-tumble person you'd ever met, and she didn't seem to be afraid of anything.

"My question stands though," she continued. "When do we get to meet Miss April? If she's going to be stealing your time, I want to know what I'm dealing with."

"Maybe next weekend?" you offered. "As long as this weekend date goes well, I'll have her come to the apartment so she can meet you and Hikaru."

"Not Hannah?" Margot asked.

"I think Hannah will want to do her own reconnaissance," you said. "But you girls can compare notes afterwards."

Margot smirked and nodded. "Good for you," she said. "You're learning."

"Learning what?" you asked.

“That you might be the big king of the jungle, but us lionesses work together.”

For some reason, Margot calling you a ‘king of the jungle’ kept a grin on your face all morning.

## Chapter 19

It was a beautiful afternoon, and somehow you still felt like it got even better as you walked into the park and saw April waiting for you. You were downtown in the entertainment district, with lots of bars and restaurants and other places around so you had no idea what she had planned for your date, but you knew just seeing her was like a kick in the ass as your nervousness did a weird flip-flop of being relieved you weren't being stood up, but also that *oh my God* she was actually here.

When April saw you she broke into a big grin and stood up from the picnic table she'd been sitting at, coming over to you with a little bit of a skip in her step. "Hi!" she said, biting her bottom lip as she approached.

"Hi," you said, and opened your arms for a hug because you weren't really sure *what* to do. All of your 'Date Training' had been geared towards the *first date*. The second date felt different, especially considering you'd had sex with your date.

April stepped into your arms and hugged you, but then turned her face up to look into your eyes. "Kiss me, big guy," she said with a grin.

You laughed a little nervously and bent down, kissing her softly. You'd done that a lot, that first night, but it was still new to you. Still a little awkward as you tried to figure out what you should do with your lips and your hands. How quick a kiss should a Hello kiss be? You kept it short, you thought, and April looked happy as you pulled back.

"It's really good to see you again," you said.

"You too," she grinned and then took your hand. "So, I figured since we went fancy last time, this time we should go casual."

"Sounds great," you said. "And I really like what you did with your hair."

"Thanks, sweetie," she grinned. April had pulled her hair back into a high ponytail but left some curls of hair down either side of her face, framing her glasses. She'd also dressed in a cute summer dress that was black and had little spots of colour on it, and now that you were up close you saw they were planets and galaxies and other celestial bodies. It came down almost to her knees, but the much more distracting part was the cleavage it was showing. "You look pretty good, too. I like the shirt."

"Well, you did say dress down," you said and adjusted the t-shirt you were wearing. It was black as well and had a tuxedo t-shirt print on it, except the bowtie was hanging loose and the top buttons on the print were undone with blue underneath and a hint at the Superman logo.

"You've got your phone with you, right?" April asked

You frowned a little and nodded. "Yeah, of course."

"Good," she said. "Do you still have Pokemon Go downloaded?"

You chuckled. "I don't know, it's been a long time since I played."

"I figured," she said. "So that's step one of our date. I've plotted a little Pokestop tour around here until our first reservation of the afternoon."

"Sounds fun," you agreed, pulling out your phone. It didn't take long for you to re-download Pokemon Go and sign into your old account. You and April spent a little time tracking down a few Pokemon before moving on to the Pokestops. As soon as you started on your walk, April took your hand and smiled at you.

God, that felt good.

She looked pretty as hell. Not like your first date where she'd been sort of done up professionally for the photos and everything - you'd felt like you were almost on a date with a movie star at that point. Today she felt like she was normal-person pretty. She'd done her own makeup, and she looked really cute, and it was like her personality was matching with her physical vibe.

April was a nerd. A pretty nerd with great tits, but definitely a nerd.

Occasionally, as you walked around and talked about everything and nothing while telling stories about high school, you would see someone glancing at the two of you. Sometimes the person was focused on April, and you felt equal parts jealous and proud. But sometimes it was someone looking at the two of you in surprise, and that felt like shit but also steeled your resolve to actually work with Hannah on your weight issue. April didn't notice because you'd long ago gotten used to getting those looks when you were going somewhere with Hannah, and Margot now, and you'd always let it roll off your back. With April it hit differently, and you didn't want it to be like that.

You did a long tour of various Pokestops before April checked the time on her phone and said you needed to get moving. She led you a couple of blocks over and you had to stop and laugh as she showed you the destination.

"What's so funny?" April asked.

"I just think you're perfect, that's all," you said.

"Compliments won't distract me, mister," April said, smirking a little as she raised an eyebrow at you.

"I've been here before," you admitted. "A couple of times for team building events with my office, and a couple of times with Hannah and some friends. The escape rooms are really great, and it's a perfect date spot... unless I've done all the rooms."

April's smirk turned into a grin. "Well, I guess it's a good thing they just opened up a new one then, isn't it?" she chuckled. "I figured you might have been here before, Ollie. I have too. But the new room is supposed to be super tough, and it's Sci-Fi themed. I think we can take it on."

You got an urge and you went with it, bending down to kiss April. She kissed you back and you could feel her smiling into it. "Let's do it," you said.

April got you both signed in since she had made the reservation, and after just a couple of minutes you were escorted back to the Escape Room and given the little spiel from the worker, and the 'In-Game' starter script to set the mood. Right before he left he hesitated and looked at the two of you. "Are you guys on a date?"

"Yes," April said.

"OK, just so you know we *do* have cameras in there, and we are watching them. So don't get, uh, frisky in there. We've had problems in the past and have had to ban people."

"Got it," you said, chuckling nervously as you and April both flushed.

"Alright, good," the employee said. He ushered you and April into the room and shut the door saying, "You've got 50 minutes. Good luck!"

"Well," April said as she looked at you. "I guess my master plan to fuck you in a room full of puzzles has been foiled, Superman."

You snorted and she cracked a grin. "Come on," you said. "The clock is ticking, Louis Lane."

"Hey," April said, putting a hand out to stop you. "I want to be clear, here. I am definitely Lana Lang, not Louis."

"Got it," you laughed.

## Chapter 20

Victory in an Escape Room, it turned out, was a lot easier with four people than it was with two. You and April both turned out to be pretty good at the puzzles, but with two fewer sets of eyes and hands working on things it slowed you down.

Still, coming out of the Escape Room at 47 minutes was a thrill, and April's huge grin and laugh were a massive boost to your own ego. The workers congratulated you, though it wasn't like there was a prize or anything, and the pair of you headed back out of the business and onto the sidewalk it was already almost four in the afternoon as April led you down the street.

"So what's next?" you asked.

"Well, we've got a little time before I planned for us to go to our dinner spot," she said. "So we could do more Pokemon Go if you want, or we can head right there and see if there's an open table. What do you think?"

Even though it was early, you knew sitting and having a snack was high on your 'That would be nice' metre at the moment. But you also had that thing in the back of your mind that said that was the Fat You talking. "Let's walk a bit more," you said. "Hit those last Pokestops, and maybe we can find a shiny while we're walking."

"Sounds good," April said and took your hand, weaving her fingers with yours.

It was just so easy. So easy to walk with her, and talk with her. Part of you was almost sad that it had taken this long for you to meet someone who just... fit. With you, and your brain, and your hobbies, and your likes. You didn't agree on *everything*, but even the disagreements were good-natured and teasing.

After another hour of walking your feet and shins hurt and you could feel the sweat on your back under your shirt, but you didn't care. And then April led you to the Board Game Pub and you had to laugh again.

"Let me guess," she said. "You've come here before too?"

You nodded. "Not a ton, but yeah," you said. "Hannah doesn't have the patience for board games but I've come here with coworkers and some of the guys I know from the game shop."

"We could have been here at the same time," April said. "I've come here a bunch over the last few years. It's my favourite place to go out for a drink at night - I'm not big into bars or clubs or anything."

"Me neither, usually," you said. "But I'd like to go dancing with you sometime."

“You dance?” April asked with a grin, cocking her head to the side.

“I’d like to,” you admitted. “It’s not really my scene either, but with the right person...”

“We’ll go,” April said, taking both your hands. “I bet I’ll like it a lot more if I’m with you than going with a bunch of ladies and desperately cringing at random guys hitting on me and my friends.”

“OK,” you agreed. “But, I just have to say, if you had been in here when I came here, I think I would have noticed. I didn’t really mention it last time, but it’s weird if I don’t say it now - I’m kind of a fan, April.”

“Thanks, Ollie,” she grinned, actually flushing a little as she glanced away and then back to you. “I figured, since you did the whole contest thing, but you played it off well. I didn’t get a hint of awkward fanboying, and you’re much smoother than most of the guys who try to hit on me at Cons.” Then she got a naughty look in her eye as she stepped a little closer and dropped her voice. “Well, other than in the bedroom. But you definitely fixed that really quickly last time.”

That had you flushing, and you did the only thing that came to mind which was to kiss her again.

You headed into the board game pub and the waitress suggested a few two-player games, and you got through a couple of games of *Hive* before your dinner showed up. You played some *Zombie Dice* as you ate and chatted, and then once your plates were cleared you settled in with some hard ciders and tried out a couple of new games to the both of you. *Inhuman Conditions* was a fun spin on the *Bladerunner* idea of finding out if someone was a robot, and April really liked the roleplaying aspect. Then you tried out *Marvel Dice Throne*, which was a fun Yahtzee-like game but with superheroes and superpowers. April eked out a win as *Scarlet Witch*, and you ended the second game with a win as *Thor*.

Then you rounded out the night with one last cider and a game of *Battleship*, but April put a spin on it - to call out a spot to bomb on the board, you had to ask an important question. It started out light, but quickly got personal.

“How do you feel about kids?” April asked.

“I like them,” you said. “I think I’d like to be a Dad someday, though it’s hard to imagine my life like that since I didn’t grow up with any siblings.”

“C3?” April asked.

“Miss,” you said. “Do you want to be a Mom someday?”

“Yes, but not until I’m thirty,” April said. “I want to feel like I’m settled and actually an adult. My Mom keeps saying it’s easier to handle when you’re younger, and I appreciate that she isn’t like eighty while I’m twenty-five, but I still think I want time with my person before I jump into Kids.”

"B8," you guessed.

"Hit," she said, making a face as she scrunched up her nose. "Do you want to travel at all, or are you more of a settle-in and plant-roots person?"

"Well, I'm a huge nerd, so I'm kind of settled in with all my nerd stuff," you smirked. "But I'd like to travel, too. Not for like six months at a time, but vacations would be nice. I would have probably done that more already if I had someone to go with. Hannah loves the idea of travelling but she doesn't have the cash, and wouldn't let me subsidise a trip."

"That's fair," April nodded. "Life is expensive. I'm lucky I get to travel for work. G2?"

"Miss," you said. "Do I talk about Hannah too much?"

"What?" April asked, frowning. "No, not at all. It's not like she's your Ex. She's your best friend and has been for ages and ages. It makes total sense that you talk about her."

"I just worry that I'm coming across as weird or something," you said. "Talking about another woman while on a date."

"You're fine, baby," she said, reaching across the table to rub your arm. "Seriously."

"OK," you nodded. "C8?"

"Miss," she said. "Do you want to get out of here and... have fun like last time?"

"Are you asking me that because I've already sunk two of your battleships and am working on a third?"

"No," she asked, leaning forward as she moved her hand from your arm to grab yours. "I'm just thinking about how much I want to kiss you and feel these big hands on me again. And more."

"Let's go," you grinned, signalling for the waitress. April tried to pay, again, and this time you demanded to pay for dinner. She'd paid for the comic books that first night as a pay-back for showing her the shop, and then she'd paid for the Escape Room. It was definitely your turn.

"I'm just used to treating," April said as you walked out.

"What do you mean?" you asked.

"I mean, I started voice acting while I was still in high school," she said. "I was always the kid with a *job* that paid a bunch more than flipping burgers. Same with college. And then right after



college everyone else was trying to start jobs and were broke, so I got used to paying for dates when I occasionally dated someone.”

“Well, I’m established,” you said. “And, not to brag or rub it in or anything, and I don’t know what your contracts look like, but I’m doing the IT programmer dance. I’ve already jumped jobs twice since I graduated. Tech jobs, when you do it right, pay a lot. I’ll never need you to treat unless you *want* to.”

“Good to know,” she said and then sighed. “So... your place?”

You hesitated. “I... think Hikaru, Hannah and Margot are there having a girls' night to pick up Hikaru after a hard week,” you said. “And my walls aren’t thin, but they aren’t exactly that thick either. What about your place?”

April made a face. “Live with my parents because I travel so much, remember?”

“Well... shit,” you said.

April snorted and then covered her mouth as she started laughing.

“What?” you asked.

“Nothing, nothing,” April said, waving you off. “I’m just thinking it’s funny we were both talking about being responsible people with careers who can afford things, and we might end up hooking up in my car.”

“I don’t know if I can physically do that,” you frowned.

April went up her toes in her sneakers to peck your lips with a kiss. “Believe me,” April said. “We can manage.”