

# Bare Ben Book 5 - Family Values

by Gareth Walton

## Characters from Books 1 to 4

Ben Cook – circumcised without medical need just before his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Richard Cook - Ben's father, uncircumcised.

Carol Turnbull - Ben's mother and Richard's ex-wife.

Rory Cook – Ben's son, bris circumcision.

Bella Cook - Rory's wife.

Noah Cook – Rory and Bella's son, uncircumcised.

Rebekka Rosenbaum - Ben's ex-wife and Rory's mother.

Freddie and Henry – Rebekka's twin sons with her second husband, un-brissed, but their current status unknown.

Gemma Whittington - Ben's old classmate, now his fiancé.

Christopher Hilton-Smith - Ben's best friend from university, routinely circumcised as an infant.

Mark Burns - Christopher's husband, uncircumcised.

James Hilton-Smith – Christopher's nephew and Rory's best friend, circumcised without medical need and against his wishes as a teenager.

Leyton Taylor – James' partner, uncircumcised.

Mike - the nurse who assisted at Ben's circumcision, subsequently becoming his friend. Circumcised in boyhood, then recut as an adult by Dr McGraw.

Roger Turnbull - Carol's second husband, circumcised without his consent by Mike whilst in prison for fraud.

Dr McGraw – surgeon at The Woodlands Clinic, founder of "CIG" (The Circumcision Information Group) and its circumsexual spin-off CIG+, uncircumcised.

# Prologue

Summer 1999

"Wha'?" Sam grunted, his eyes not wavering from the screen.

Domenic looked at his son with something approaching despair - his hunched, uncouth sprawl, the inevitable Gameboy console in his hand, more underwear artfully displayed than covered by his sloppy tracksuit.

"The word is what, Sam," he said, exasperated. "What. With a t."

"Wha'ever," Sam replied, knowing he was pushing his luck.

Domenic made himself let it go. He couldn't allow himself to get distracted. Having started such a tricky conversation, he had to see it through.

"Your foreskin, Sam," he said, getting back on track. "I asked you if it's tight."

Still staring at the screen, Sam smiled as he savoured the memory of the previous Saturday afternoon. Jodie Leigh certainly hadn't said anything about it being tight then, though her eager fingers had only just closed around his erection when his father had come home early from his police officers' conference and nearly caught them at it. It would have almost been worth it if he had, Sam thought, just to have seen the look on his face. Even so, he'd gone into enough of an epi just over her being in his room. He wasn't entirely sure about his foreskin though. It certainly did the business when he needed a wank, but he didn't really know what it was supposed to be like. He'd noticed that he had more on the end of his cock than any of his mates, but did that mean his was tight? He had to hold it back when he remembered to give it a token wash too as it never stayed put, always rolling forward again by itself. Was that supposed to happen, or was it another sign it was tight? He just wasn't sure.

"Dunno. Might be. A bit, p'raps," he muttered, trying hard to look as if he was concentrating on machine-gunning the last man standing on the screen. Why was his old man asking anyway? Surely the clue was in the name - weren't they supposed to be private parts? He'd never had any of the cringemaking "we need to have a little chat about keeping clean" stuff that others had had from their fathers, so why was his old man suddenly so bothered? Then it struck him: had his dad copped a look when he'd caught him trying to get off with Jodie and seen that something wasn't right?

Domenic was appalled that Sam had invited such a cheap-looking girl round, but what could you expect from someone who had so little self-respect as to spend his evenings hanging round the bus shelter, coming home reeking of smoke and cider. There had been those magazines under his bed too, let alone his constant, never-ending cheekiness. He'd genuinely been wanting to do something about his son's behaviour for a while, but there had recently come to be more at stake than just that though. The girl really was the last straw, but Domenic was actually pleased that she was the way in which Sam had finally gone one step too far. Nearly catching them at it meant he might have seen his penis. He hadn't - they'd been too quick for that - but he could have, and Sam wouldn't know for sure if he had or not. That, he'd realised, was his way in.

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The seed of Domenic's obsession had only recently been sown. It had happened on the night when his best friend Richard had called from Australia, clearly distressed. He'd just heard from his ex-wife Carol that Roger, her new husband, had vanished, taking all the family's savings with him. That was bad enough, but Domenic sensed that there was something else bothering his friend - something he seemed to be finding hard to say. When, though, Richard finally came out with what it was - that Roger had arranged for his son Ben to be circumcised shortly before he disappeared - Domenic had laughed.

It had been a purely involuntary reaction, but Domenic still felt guilty about laughing as he thought things over later. Richard had pulled him up straight away, saying quite rightly that he wouldn't have been if it had been Sam, not Ben. But circumcision was just such a weird thing, he thought, trying to justify himself. It was a taboo for sure, but one that it was just about acceptable to mention as a joke, so wouldn't most people have laughed, even if rather uncomfortably? It was nothing to do with normal people like him - something only done for strange religious reasons, or perhaps because of an embarrassing, almost shameful problem down below. Whatever the reason for it, it left the unlucky few set apart in a way that no man would ever wish to be.

Domenic pulled a few strings at work the next day, making sure that he was the Detective Inspector assigned to investigate Roger's disappearance. That done, he set out to interview Carol, troubled to think that he was making the familiar journey to her home as a police officer rather than as a family friend. With his mind full of all the troubling implications of Carol having been left alone and penniless, it was only when Ben answered the door to him that the shocking reality of the rest of the situation hit him full in the face: the shy, kind-hearted, good-looking young man standing there who he'd known since he was a baby no longer had a foreskin.

When he and Carol had finished going over Roger's sudden departure, Domenic was shocked to hear more about what had happened to Ben. Despite Richard's obvious upset, he'd just assumed that there had to have been something regrettably amiss with the lad's foreskin, and he was appalled to learn that there hadn't been any need for his circumcision at all. The thought of being without a foreskin horrified him. There was more to it than just the sheer physical discomfort of something so sensitive being left unprotected - a glans was meant to be kept modestly hidden away. He'd always felt uneasy seeing some men pull back so openly when peeing in public, apparently unconcerned about revealing the part of them that others just weren't supposed to see. For him, a penis with the head covered head was a purely practical appendage but, with it exposed, it became something very different. Flaunting a glans in other than the most intimate of settings was plain vulgar at best but, at worst, there was a brazen, immodest, sexual connotation to it, and it appalled him to think of a nice, ordinary lad like Ben having no choice but to do just that.

After his talk to Carol and then a trip to Roger's workplace that hadn't got him much further in his investigation, Domenic planned on heading next to The Burden Park Clinic - the place where Ben had been circumcised. With few leads so far, he reckoned there was a chance that his visit might lead to him learning something pertinent to Roger's disappearance but, more importantly, there was the action that needed to be taken over what had been done there to Ben.

Driving to Burden Park, Domenic wondered what kind of a place it would be - a set-up prepared to perform needless, disfiguring surgery on young men. With what had happened to Ben being a new situation for him to deal with, he'd checked with his senior officer over the appropriate way to proceed when he got there. To his dismay, his Super had told him that any parent or, like Roger, someone *in loco parentis*, was actually fully entitled to request that their son be circumcised, even without medical need. With Roger within his rights and the Clinic having done nothing wrong, he was

shocked to think that what had been done to Ben might somehow be considered acceptable. He just couldn't imagine why any parent would actually want their lad's glans stripped bare, his penis left ugly, scarred and mutilated as a result. He found it impossible to think how any man with a foreskin could wish that on anyone, and one who was circumcised himself would surely want others spared from the same misfortune at all costs.

When he got to Burden Park, everything there actually seemed very ordinary. He even found Dr Argent - the surgeon who had done the deed on Ben - to be pleasant, helpful and open. Although keen to stress that nothing actually illegal had happened, the man was fully prepared to admit that the Clinic might need to look again at their protocols, concerned that Ben hadn't been aware of what Roger had requested. Despite that, Domenic got the impression that Argent didn't really understand why anyone might actually lament the loss of their foreskin. The ashen look on Ben's face that morning had, though, told a very different story - a look he'd seen again on the faces of the young men waiting outside Dr Argent's consulting room as he left.

It was something he'd never had reason to consider before, but now - now that he knew that someone as normal as Ben from an ordinary family very much like his own could have his foreskin taken from him - Domenic found that he couldn't stop thinking about the consequences that circumcision brought in its wake. Apart from the physical change that would so profoundly affect a young man's pleasure, there was the pure embarrassment of having been made so different to others in such a humiliating way. Always very aware of his own barely-average size, he'd never forgotten the irony of Richard once casually mentioning how self-conscious Ben was about having, as he put it, "an extra-large portion." Poor Ben would feel even more embarrassed now, he thought, now that he was so conspicuous in another way too. He'd have to live with the curious, pitying attention that his penis would inevitably attract, reminded of his loss and forced immodesty every time he saw others discretely retracting for a quick wash in the showers at the swimming pool. Or changing for football, sensing the rest of the team's distaste at the blatant lewdness that he had no choice but to display in front of them. Or at the pub with mates, braced for the evening to be spoilt by one of them making some kind of crass, drink-fuelled blokey joke about his difference when standing in a line at the urinal. Or getting down to business with a girl, dreading seeing her shocked reaction when revealing his maimed state could be put off no longer. As he was genuinely sorry for the lad, what Domenic really couldn't understand was why thinking about Ben's plight made his cock so hard.

Over the days ahead, new scenarios about life for a young man after circumcision just kept coming to Domenic, all of them strangely erection-inducing. After a while though, he was seriously unsettled to realise that something in the cock-hardening scenes that so often played out in his mind had changed. At first, it had been Ben who he'd picture as the newly-circumcised protagonist in them. Now, it was Sam.

Though he was never exactly sure why, Domenic knew how significant it would be for any man to know that he was the father of a circumcised son. That significance, whatever it was, it would be even greater for one who had just decided that his son's foreskin should be taken from him. He found that he kept imagining how it would feel to be one of those fathers himself. Seeing Sam at breakfast, he found he couldn't stop himself wondering what it would be like to know that his son's glans was exposed under his school uniform trousers. In the evenings when Sam had come home and changed, he'd imagine being able to see that his helmet was bare from the outline of his penis that was always so distastefully obvious in his trackies. At night when he'd gone up to his room, he'd picture him having to struggle for the relief that came so easily to most young men but which - although Domenic wasn't exactly sure how it might be done at all - would be so much harder for him to attain with a stark, stripped-back erection in his hand. Having such weird fantasies was disturbing enough, but they were

made all the more alarming by knowing that he had the power to make them a reality. He just couldn't forget what his senior officer had told him: "The NHS won't touch it, but if you go private, all you have to do is sign the form and pay the money. They won't even ask why you want it done."

Although the idea would once have appalled him, simply by imagining so often that Sam was circumcised, the pure unthinkability of it somehow started to chip away. He had never been particularly spiritual in his outlook, but he sometimes wondered if the universe had made him aware of what had happened to Ben as a way of revealing to him a choice that he'd be fully entitled to make for Sam too. Had the possibility actually been shown to him for Sam's own good? Was it exactly what his increasingly-wayward son needed to give him pause for thought and bring him up short over his challenging behaviour? Would having him circumcised be a sign of authority over him that would somehow make him take stock of himself as he moved into manhood? In his heart of hearts though, Domenic knew that there was no reason at all to have Sam circumcised - no need to do it, no rational way to justify it, no excuse for it, no way that it would actually be better for him. Yet, despite all that, he knew that he was going to do it anyway.

Coming to own his decision was one thing, but Domenic was realistic enough to realise that the practicalities of actually bringing about Sam's circumcision would be far from easy. It never once crossed his mind just to ask him if he'd actually prefer to be circumcised - what young man would ever think that? He knew that he could just insist on it, wielding the last of his parental power to make it happen, but he also knew Sam well enough, and how trying to make him do anything at all these days only led to him stubbornly digging in his heels and resisting whatever it was on principle. Finding a way that avoided any question of a battle of wills would be much simpler, and he came to have a grudging admiration for Roger and how cleverly he'd set things up for Ben to be circumcised during what he thought was just going to be a routine check-up. It would have been so easy to arrange the same for Sam but, ironically, thanks to his own investigation, he knew that Burden Park would now be very much on its guard against exactly that kind of duplicity.

When a means to the end struck Domenic, everything suddenly seemed very straightforward. He'd always been vaguely aware there were a few unfortunate young men whose foreskins became troublesome as they grew and who were genuinely better off without them, so he realised that he could simply lead Sam to believe that he was one of them. He knew how eager his son would be to avoid any issues when it came to girls and what he might want to get up to with them, so he could purport to notice that there was something about Sam's foreskin that would spoil his pleasure and - more importantly - put girls off. Keeping from him the fact that his circumcision was purely elective could be tricky, but Sam might even turn out to be naively touched by what he'd take to be his father's well-meant concern and glad of his forthright, man-to-man intervention regarding his "problem." He relished the thought of his son agreeing to submit to something radical just because his father thought it would be in his best interests. If he played his cards really cleverly, Sam might even be pleased to think that he'd finally been treated like an adult when it came to such a "blokey" issue. Facing up to it together could be just what they needed to bring them closer together again, and Sam need never know that the thing that led to a new bond between them had actually been totally unnecessary. Despite all that, Domenic knew that there was still one problem though: he would need to have seen Sam's foreskin before being able to claim that something wasn't right with it.

The days of Sam wanting them to go swimming together now over, it had been a long time since Domenic had even caught a glimpse of his son's penis. He knew that engineering a way to make it happen would be tricky, but he could perhaps badger him into a game of squash at the Leisure Centre, where there were open, communal changing rooms. Or perhaps he'd fall in more willingly if he offered to buy him a couple of illicit, underage pints at the pub, where there would be the potential

for a joint trip to the gents. If all else failed, he'd just have to "accidentally" barge in on him when he was in the shower and forgotten to lock the door. An opportunity would come eventually. He'd just have to be ready to grab it when it did.

In the end, it was easy. So easy, in fact, that Domenic could almost allow himself to believe that fate had indeed taken a hand and that he was justified in what he was doing - that his son had somehow brought circumcision upon himself through the unacceptable way he'd chosen to behave. Everything just fell into place when, unwittingly playing right into his father's hands, Sam brought home that girl.

# Part One: Family Values

## Chapter One: A Chip Off the Old Block

Summer 2026

"So any news of Bella?" Mike asked, snatching a rare chance to call during a bank staff stint in A&E.

"Yeah, there is, actually," Rory replied. "I had an email from her yesterday. She'll be back within the next couple of months. Sooner if she can wangle it."

"Wow, great news mate! And how are things looking then? If you don't want to talk about it then just tell me to shut up, yeah?"

"No, I'm glad to," Rory replied, "but I'm not sure how things stand, to be honest. She wants us to meet as soon as she's back as things have changed for her and we need to talk. I'm not sure what that means, but...." He trailed off.

"But you'd want to make a fresh start if she did too?" Mike asked, filling the silence.

"Well, it's her call," Rory replied. "She was the one who said things weren't right before she left, but I'm still finding it hard to get how she could go off and leave Noah when he was still so small, and ....."

"Fuck, yes," he went on a moment later. "Of course I would. I'd have her back like a shot. I mean, I've never stopped loving her for a second. It was just that – well - things just weren't right somehow. Not since Noah arrived. Not since she changed her mind about ....."

"Well, best of luck to you both, mate," Mike said, after another moment's awkwardness. He suspected that he knew what Rory meant, but this was tricky territory that was probably best left until there was time to talk about it properly. "You two are so made for each other," he went on instead. "Noah needs his mum too, so I really hope you sort yourselves out. But listen, I've not got long - what are you up to at the weekend? My nephew Lloyd's down your way staying with his new bloke, and I'd love the two of you to meet."

"Sound's cool," Rory said.

"You'll like him, but I'm sure you wouldn't be surprised if there turned out to be a bit more to it than that, eh!"

"Yeah?" Rory said, smiling. "A chip off the old block then, by any chance?"

“Well, like I said before, I reckon it must be in the genes in our family,” Mike said, laughing. “I’d have loved to get him to ClG, but he’s always lived way up in Scotland so it’s never worked out. We’ve chatted a bit of course, but I’m his uncle so it’s a bit, well – you know.”

“I get you,” Rory said, “and happy to oblige.”

“I knew you would be, mate” Mike said. “I just hope you can bloody understand him - talk about a Scottish accent! I mean, it’s not what you expect from a black lad, is it.”

“So is he...?” Rory asked.

“Sorry,” Mike said. “Got to go – just been beeped. I’ll give him your number and hope you have fun. Speak soon, mate.”



## Chapter Two: The Policeman's Helmet

Other than explaining that she'd always wanted to do a stint as a voluntary worker with UNICEF and that a last-minute opportunity had come up, Rory had said little about Bella's sudden and unexpected departure for Africa. There was clearly more to it than that though, and Ben was very troubled by it all, and especially with Noah still so small, but he'd quickly realised that the exact reasons for Bella's decision and the implications for their marriage were topics that his Rory just didn't want to discuss. When, though, it became clear that childcare was a big problem for him with Bella gone, Rory had been delighted when Ben had risked suggesting that he and Noah move in with him whilst she was away.

For Rory, having others on hand to help with Noah had come as a welcome relief. Despite his concerns over the reason why, Ben loved having his son and grandson around too. He'd known that the other members of his household - Leyton and James – would enjoy Rory's company, but he was pleasantly surprised to see how much they enjoyed caring for Noah, and just how good they were at it too.

Although Ben was pleased by how well things were working out overall, there was one minor niggle for him and, that morning as usual, he'd had to work hard to keep his thoughts to himself when Rory came down ready for his daily pre-breakfast run. The issue for him was his son's skimpy, clinging shorts, which did nothing at all to hide the shape and considerable bulk of what was so very obviously hanging free inside them. Even before he reached the bottom of the garden path, Rory realised that it was too hot to be wearing a tee-shirt. He'd taken it off and was hiding it behind the wheelie bin to save the bother of unlocking the front door and putting it in the hall when he noticed the scruffy little man sitting in the bus shelter on the other side of the road again. He was intrigued by the co-incidence. It perhaps wasn't so strange that the man had been there on the previous few mornings, but he'd also been sitting on a bench outside the faculty building when he'd left work the previous couple of evenings too.

When he'd finished his pre-run stretches, Rory was surprised to see the man was still at the stop. Only one route went along the road and a bus had just gone past, so it was strange that he hadn't got on it. Perhaps he was waiting for someone, or it might be too early for him to be able to use his free pass, Rory wondered, but he thought no more about it as he got into his stride and jogged off into the park across the road.

Rory always did four circuits of De Quincey Park – along the path by the stream, uphill through the woods, then back past the playground before starting over again. To his surprise, he saw the man yet again on his last round. It was unusual to see anyone else in the woods at that early hour, but there he was yet again, sitting on a fallen tree along the side of the path. Suddenly, as Rory levelled with him, the man stuck out his walking stick. Rory had no time to react. He tripped over it and fell heavily, feeling a sharp pain in his ankle as he went down. He lay stunned for a second or two but, as he rolled over and made to get up, the man was standing over him. To Rory's amazement, he had an ugly-looking knife in his hand.

"Don't move," the man said, "and don't have any doubt that I'll use this if you do."

He held the knife close to Rory's face for a second before suddenly and very deliberately pressing it to the side of his neck. It was only a nick, but more than enough to show that he meant business. Rory's mind was working fast. He realised that the best thing to do was nothing - at least until he'd worked out exactly what was going on. The man somehow seemed an unlikely mugger, but no less dangerous a one for that. He looked deranged, and that made him unpredictable.

"I don't have any money on me," Rory said.

"I don't want your money," the man said. "Pull down your shorts."

Rory was taken aback, and not at all sure how to play the situation. Although the man looked no more like a sexual predator than a mugger, he was seriously worried. He was an old man, but an old man with a knife in his hand and a mad look in his eye.

"I said pull them down," he said again angrily, putting the knife back to Rory's neck.

Rory thought fast, weighing up his options. It struck him that his running gear might have given the man ideas about what was inside, so perhaps a quick flash would satisfy him if he was just a pervert. Still unsure what to do though, he did nothing. A second later, the man had the point of the knife inside the waistband of his shorts, and the sound of them ripping from top to bottom as the blade sliced through them seemed unbelievably loud in the silence of the woods. The knife, Rory realised, had to be seriously sharp. With his genitals now fully exposed, he registered what looked like a look of total astonishment on the man's face. Surely the size of his penis couldn't have given him that big a shock, could it? Or was it because of his PA? He might never have seen one before. Or, as he'd shaved that morning, was it just the total baldness of his pubes that had somehow thrown him? Strangely though, despite his racing thoughts, there was one other possibility that just didn't occur to him.

The man looked somehow deflated as he stared at Rory's crotch, a look of amazement still on his face. He suddenly looked old and frail and, despite the knife, vulnerable. Rory grasped the moment and punched him hard in the stomach. As he folded, Rory grabbed his arm and twisted the knife from his grasp. Within seconds, naked apart from his trainers, he had him down flat and was sitting on his chest, pinning him to the ground. He reached for the tattered remains of his shorts, very glad that he'd happened to put his phone in his pocket that morning.

Ben got the call from Timperley Police Station just before he went into a meeting. It was a shock, but the desk sergeant was at pains to assure him that Rory had nothing wrong and was only slightly injured. It puzzled him though when she added that he was ready to leave, but needed someone to bring him something to wear first. Ben was home in ten minutes, found some jeans and a Tee shirt in Rory's room, grabbed a second crash helmet from the garage and got back on his bike.

When he reached the Police Station, the woman on the front desk buzzed through for someone to come up and collect the clothes that Ben had brought with him.

"Is he OK?" he asked when an officer appeared a moment later.

"Yeah, he's fine," the man said as he took the bundle. "He'll be glad of these though," he added, smiling. "All he was wearing when he got here was trainers and a police helmet - but not on his head!"

Rory appeared a few minutes later, limping slightly and a plaster on his neck, but otherwise seeming none the worse for wear. Seeing him, the woman on duty behind the desk quickly suppressed a giggle.

"I got a peek," she whispered, clearly relishing answering her colleague's puzzled, enquiring look. "Just a flash, as he was getting out of the car when they brought him in, and let's just say, it was a good job that the plod they sent out to him happened to have a very big head!"

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"So that's about it really," Rory concluded after telling Ben his story over coffee at the café next door. "It's all just so weird. The man has to be a total nut job." Suddenly, he laughed.

"What's so funny?" Ben asked.

"Well, it wasn't so funny at the time, I can tell you, but there was this woman there in the park, and the look on her face when she saw me getting into a police car, bollock naked apart from a policeman's helmet over me nads! I dread to think what she thought I'd been up to in the woods."

"I bet you made her day!" Ben said, laughing. "Going back a bit though, describe the man to me – five foot nothing, no great beauty, Brummy accent?"

"God, yes!" said Rory. "But how on earth did you know that?"

"Well, this is going to sound totally random," Ben said, "but I strongly suspect that you've finally met your ex-step grandfather. I'd lay odds it was that bastard Roger. This is going to sound even more random, but I suspect that if you hadn't had the very good sense to deck him, then, if you hadn't already been circumcised, then you would be now."

Ben left Rory open mouthed, saying he'd answer all his questions in a minute. He went back to the police station with the offer of some possibly useful information. The investigating officer was able to confirm that the man was indeed Roger Turnbull, who was out on parole from his most recent stint in jail. Ben filled in just enough of the family history to explain why Roger might have wanted to harm Rory but, by going along with the officer's assumption that ripping Rory's shorts was just an act of humiliation, he managed to keep the subject of circumcision out of it. Ben was, though, firmly convinced that the attack was actually an attempt by Roger to deprive Rory of something that he would have assumed he still had, inflicting revenge on the next generation of the Cook family by the taking of another foreskin. When the officer said that Roger's behaviour meant he'd broken his early release conditions and would now have to serve the rest of his sentence, Ben said that he was sure that, under the circumstances, Rory would be happy not to press charges.

Ben returned to the café, thinking that it was perhaps the one time ever that he'd actually be pleased that Rory was circumcised. If he hadn't been, then the damage Roger might have done in taking his foreskin from him with a kitchen knife just didn't bear thinking about. He braced himself as he ordered a second round of coffees, knowing that the time had finally come - it was only fair to explain to Rory why Roger had acted the way he had. He felt a feeling of intense release as he told him the full story from the very start – the rivalry between Roger and Rory's grandfather Richard, their love triangle with Carol and how it had all led to Ben's own unwanted and unneeded circumcision as Roger's twisted revenge for Richard having taken Carol from him, and for his comments over Roger's less than impressive endowment.

As Ben enjoyed the relief of finally letting it all out, Rory was feeling very uncomfortable. He'd rarely ever been less than truthful with his dad about anything and, sensing just how much it was costing his father to tell him his story, he hated having to pretend that he hadn't already heard it all from Mike.

## Chapter Three: The Odd One Out

"Well, it's like when I was a bairn - th' only black kid in the school, in a kilt, doing Scottish country dancing."

Rory was a bit perplexed. Lloyd's reply really didn't seem to have anything to do with the question he'd just asked him.

"I'm always th' odd one oot," he was saying.

"Even in ma family. Amongst the men folk, that is," he added a moment later.

It was only then that realisation dawned for Rory: this had to be Lloyd's way of trying to move things on. They'd been chatting agreeably for a while but, with both of them wary of making the first move, the topic that they knew was the reason for their meeting had become an elephant in the room.

"But you'd rather not be different? To the men folk, I mean," Rory asked slightly cautiously, even though he was sure that he understood what Lloyd was implying.

"Aye," Lloyd said, relieved that Rory seemed to have picked up on his lead. "I'm pretty set on it. I just kinda know how I want to be. Does that sound weird?"

"No, I get you. I've heard other blokes say that," Rory said, thinking of many meetings of CIG, the Circumcision Information Group where he'd heard very similar things said.

"I wan' ta know more about it though, but nae one ever talks about it, do they," Lloyd said. "You just kinda are or you aren't, end of. As if it's no big deal. That's why I was real pleased when Mike let slip that he knows a bit about it 'cos of his work."

That settled it. They were on track, Rory thought, wondering just how accidentally Mike might have made that particular slip in what had probably started out as an equally guarded conversation as the one he'd been having with Lloyd up to now.

"It was great finding that out," Lloyd was saying, "but when I twigged that he's actually – like, into it too, I was, like, wow! I'm not the only one after all!"

"It's such a relief finding that out, isn't it," Rory replied, recalling his own first life-changing chat with Mike, and glad that the gloves finally seemed to be off between him and Lloyd.

"Yeah, but it felt weird talking to him," Lloyd said. "I mean, he is ma uncle after all. We had ta pretend we had nae noticed that the other had boned up!"

"Awks!" Rory said, smiling at the thought of it.

"He told me about you though," Lloyd went on, "and that you were well into too, and that you know your stuff, and ... well.....that it might be easier for me ta talk to you instead a him."

"Well it's something I'm always up for talking about it," Rory said, hoping that Lloyd had no expectations of anything more. "So what got you into it all then?"

“Long story,” Lloyd said. “It started way back, and I think it was thanks to ma cousin Theo.”

“So is he....?” Rory asked, somehow finding he was reluctant to be the first to actually say the word.

“Well, he is now, but he was nae, and I reckon that’s what did it,” Lloyd said. “I used ta share a room with him when we went ta London ta visit ma folks. He was nae a shy lad, and I reckon he enjoyed giving me a good old flash o’ his big willy as much as I liked seeing it, but then one time we went down ta stay and, well, .....

“Go on! Rory said, intrigued.

“Well, there was me thinking that it’s like the colour of ya skin,” Lloyd went on. “I’d always reckoned that you’re just born with one way or t’other, and his had been like mine before, but..... well, when he saw me looking with ma gob wide open that time, he told me his da had just sat him down one day and told him he was getting ta be a big boy so it was time for him ta get his skin cut off.”

“Blimey!” Rory said.

“I just nae had any idea that was what happened,” Lloyd went on. “Nae born that way, but made that way! Finding that out just blew me away.”

“I bet, it was exactly the same for me,” Rory said, feeling a familiar sensation as he recalled the day when, to his total astonishment, his friend Leon had relished telling him exactly how boys like them came to be the way they were.

“But the real weird thing was,” Lloyd was saying, “I knew straight off that that was how I needed to be too.”

‘Needed,’ Rory thought, intrigued to hear the word – one he’d heard several men use at CIG meetings.

“After that, I just felt so wrong with all the junk hanging off th’end a mine,” Lloyd was saying. “It was like it was a mistake, that is just should nae be there.”

“Have you got much, then?” Rory asked, always fascinated by just how different foreskins could be.

“Aye, a real old tassel, mores the pity,” Lloyd replied.

“And it all, well, works OK?” Rory asked.

“Aye, there’s no problems with it, just that it’s there,” Lloyd replied. “I kept waiting for ma own da to tell me it was time to get rid of it. I was shit scared by the thought of losing it at the same time as wanting it so bad, but it just nae happened anyway. I was glad in a way though. I mean - I’d already got enough ta contend with, what with being th’ only black kid around, and I really did nae fancy the idea of having ta go back into school and them seeing I was even more different.”

“Yeah, I get that,” Rory said. “Not a nice prospect, having to do the big reveal.”

He was lying. Although he would have hated it at the time, he often masturbated over the fantasy of exactly that, thinking of the attention that his size meant he’d got at school being renewed and re-focussed if he’d had to go in one day with his big cock newly de-hooded.

"Then, when I was a bit older, I got heavy into wanking," Lloyd was saying. "I seriously did nae want anything ta spoil it, but I'd always be thinking about how amazing it would be ta be doing it with nae skin. But then I discovered there was more ta life than just rubbing one out, and then I got so I did nae care so much about being different, and then I met Jaycon and ..."

"And is he...?" Rory interrupted. Somehow, he still hesitated to use the word that neither of yet had.

"He is," Lloyd replied, in no doubt about what Rory meant.

"Is that just what happens in his culture?" Rory asked, wondering what it would have been like to grow up being normal.

"Yeah, he's from The Ivory Coast and they all get done there. He says I should get maself done too, but should I though? He says it's way better but, I mean, how does he actually know?"

"Well, that's the 64 million one, isn't it," Rory replied. "Who can say, but you're the one who knows what's right for you."

"Aye, but it's just so hard ta be sure. Jayce's is the only guy that way I've ever been with, and I've nae even seen many others apart from ma family, but....,"

He paused, suddenly looking awkward.

"Well, Uncle Mike....," he went on, suddenly coy. "Nae pressure, of course, but he said that yours is a real classic, and that if I asked you real nicely, then perhaps you'd ....?"

"Well, praise indeed, coming from Mike," Rory said, smiling. "I mean, he's seen enough in the line of duty."

"Like I said, nae pressure. Just to learn more about it, like. And, ...." Lloyd said, starting to burble.

"Well, after Mike's rave review .....,," Rory interrupted. He left his sentence unfinished, but his fingers were already at the buttons of his 501's.

## Chapter Four: A Married Man

"Fuck!" Lloyd said, his eyes wide. "Mike did nae tell me you were so hung!"

"Oh, I think he's much more interested in 'cise than size," Rory said, trying to sound modest but as pleased as ever to get that kind of reaction.

"And pierced too! I was nae expecting that either," Lloyd added. "Ya ring looks real braw."

"Well, he's not actually seen it since I got the metalwork," Rory said, pleased again.

"Can I take a proper gander?" Lloyd asked, silently intrigued by how his uncle had actually got to see Rory's cock.

"Be my guest," Rory replied. "But just a look, eh."

"Sure," said Lloyd. "No funny business. I know you're a family man. Mike made that plain."

"Thanks for getting it," Rory said, glad that that issue was out of the way without any awkwardness.

"That bell end - it's massive!" Lloyd said, moving in closer. "Is that why you were done then? Nae easy to imagine any skin going over that thing too easy."

"No," said Rory. "It was a religious one for me, actually. At the time, anyway."

"Yeah?" said Lloyd, obviously curious.

"Long story," Rory said, noticing Lloyd's eyes flick to the cross on a chain around his neck that Ben had given him on the day of his baptism. "Technically, I was born Jewish 'cos my mum is. But I'm not now. I never was really, but I got properly baptised a few years back, so now I'm a good Catholic boy!"

"Yeah? And a married one too?" Lloyd said, amused. "So how does that fit then? Straight, but so interested in cock?"

Rory smiled awkwardly. It was the issue that always worried him. He'd never come close to resolving it, but just tried to accept he was the way God had, for whatever reason, made him.

"Well," he said, wondering what to say. "Aren't all men interested in cocks to some extent, even if they pretend not to be?"

"Aye, fair enough," Lloyd said. "Just that there's no many o' the straight ones prepared t'admit it. So have you ever.....? With a guy, I mean?"

"No, never," said Rory. "It's hard to explain, but I'm definitely not gay. Guys as guys just don't do it for me, but cocks as cocks – well, that's different somehow."

"And what about being religious?" Lloyd asked. "That's no what I'd expect for a guy so into cock."

"My faith's genuinely important to me," Rory said, "but, well, God gave us cocks for our enjoyment, didn't he?"

"Well he sure gave you plenty t'enjoy!" Lloyd said, smiling. "But I mean, do ya actually enjoy having to have ya bell out the whole time?"

"That's always the classic question!" Rory replied, smiling. "I've never known anything else, though."

"I mean, always feeling it rubbing on your keks?" Lloyd went on. "Does it nae drive you mad? Jayce can nae see why I'm worried about it, but I am."

"I don't even notice," Rory said. "I can see it must take getting used to if you get done as an adult, but it just feels normal to me. I could ask you how you cope with yours being covered all the time - all that squishy stuff round your knob, all moist and clammy? I think that's what would drive me mad. I can't see why anyone would actually prefer it."

He knew he was being disingenuous. Much though being circumcised aroused him, he was well aware that the alternative status might have its positives. He'd never forgotten feeling the soft, nurturing flesh of James' foreskin over his glans when they had, so briefly, docked in France all those years ago, nor the fascinating, easy slide of his foreskin when his friend had let him explore it - the only time he'd ever actually held another cock.

"Yours is so neat," Lloyd was saying. "Jayce's is a bit of a mess, ta be honest. You can tell he's had something done t'his, but yours looks like you were born that way. There's just that wee line there."

Lloyd's hand, Rory thought, was perilously close to his cock as he pointed to his neat, thin scar. He loved it when Bella ran a fingertip round it and, for just a second, he wondered what it would be like to have another man do it.

"Have you still got ya fren?" Lloyd asked.

Glad of the distraction, Rory used his PA to lift his cock to show him the answer. For a moment, he was alarmed when Lloyd suddenly dropped to his knees, though he quickly realised it was only to be able to take a closer look.

"Wow, Jayce still got a wee bit left in there, but yours is real empty!" Lloyd said. "He loves me licking it, but would you feel anything, what with having nothing in there at all?"

"Oh it's a sweet spot alright," Rory replied, very aware of how close Lloyd was to his cock and just how easy it would be to let things get out of hand.

"Your helmet," Lloyd was saying. "It looks amazing - so kinda dry. Dark too, nae pink and shiny like most white guys. Is that true that ya dinna feel so much from it after it's been bare a while?"



“Well, I’ve got no complaints,” Rory replied. “I’ve heard uncuts say they can’t even touch their bellends, and that doesn’t sound much fun to me. I mean, having a wank and not being able to work your helmet?”

“Well, I guess wanking is the one thing a skin might be good for,” Lloyd said, smiling.

“Perhaps,” Rory replied, rather unsure. What actually masturbating with a foreskin might be like was something that had deeply intrigued him since he’d had the brief, tantalising experience of his glans being inside James’ all those years ago.

“That’s what’s always had me wondering – what it’s like having ta rub one out with ya foreskin gone,” Lloyd said. “Jayçon says it’s only boys and losers that wank, but everyone does, don’t they. So do you lube up for it, then?”

“I do. I can just about go dry if I have to, but it’s much better lubed,” Rory replied.

“Mmm, I bet,” Lloyd said, grinning leerily as he pictured Rory’s hefty cock glistening with lube and ready to be worked. “I can just imagine. Nothing moving over ya bone apart from your slippery hand. Everything pulled tight on ya shaft, nae wrinkles, nothing bunched up. Full, long strokes along your stalk, feeling the rim of your bell end running through your fingers with nothing in the way, knowing that you’ve actually had something taken off ya ta make it feel so good. Just pure, unadulterated, bare cock in ya hand wi no extras. I mean, Fuck!”

‘Spot on there,’ Rory thought but didn’t say. To his alarm, he realised that what Lloyd had just said had made him start to chub up.

“It must feel so amazing,” Lloyd was saying, “but it must feel even more amazing when someone goes down on ya.”

The thought of how incredible it felt when Bella had done just that made Rory harden more - how slowly and skilfully she’d worked when her lips took him, seeing her use her fingers to pleasure herself as she lapped all the way round the ridge of his helmet, her tongue finding his circumcision scar or his fren groove, then finally teasing the most amazing sensations from his inner skin. Suddenly, Rory realised that his hand had dropped to his crotch and that Lloyd, his eyes wide, had noticed. Rather awkwardly, he made a show of scratching his balls, but the pretence was futile. There was no hiding the fact that he was now very hard.

For a long moment, there was silence. When Lloyd finally broke it, Rory was relieved that he chose to change the subject rather than making any reference to his very obvious erection.

“So, is it true that you circumcised men last longer?” he asked.

Finally. The word. Circumcised. As always, hearing someone say it gave Rory a familiar feeling in the pit of his stomach. There was such power in the word, and especially when spoken aloud. He was a circumcised man. It was as simple as that. A man who had no foreskin. The circumcision he’d undergone had removed ever shred of his. He was in no position to know if it was better or worse to be that way, but that was irrelevant. He’d known nothing other than being circumcised, and it was part of who he was. His circumcision defined him and, in that moment, he owned that identity completely. It was somehow overwhelming, made and even more powerful by knowing that the uncircumcised man to whom he was talking understood the implications of it all so completely. Much

though he embraced and welcomed his status, it was still somehow an endorsement to hear a man with a foreskin relishing the prospect of becoming a circumcised man himself.

"I'm not sure, but I think we do actually last longer," Rory said, working hard to pull himself together enough to give Lloyd a coherent answer. "I suspect we're all different, skin or no skin, but I reckon there's something in it."

"Jayçon says it's cos he's cut that he's such a good top," Lloyd said. "He sure goes at it, not that I'm complaining, but he's always got to work real long and hard to actually get himself off."

Rory always liked hearing that he wasn't alone in needing a lot of effort to cum. He'd heard some circumcised men say that they hated it - that they thought they'd been done over by the loss of their foreskins, their pleasure made so hard-won as a result. He, though, loved to think that his modification made a better lover. Uncut men might be able to relieve themselves quickly when they wanted, but what was that compared to the satisfaction of knowing that you had the staying power to satisfy a partner so fully?

"Nae complaints from the missus then?" Lloyd asked, grinning cheekily. "Keeping her waiting, I mean?"

"Not so far!" Rory replied, thinking of how much he enjoyed knowing that Bella had always orgasmed several times over before he finally got there himself.

"There's something I've always wondered, though," he went on, genuinely curious. "Can you tell if a man's got a skin or not when he's doing you? I mean, does it actually feel any different inside you?" The idea that might aroused him, and he really hoped that Lloyd would say that it felt much better to be fucked by a bare-headed man.

"I dinna really know," Lloyd replied. "Ta be honest, Jayce is the only guy who's ever done me..... so far."

His tone had been innocent and his face blank, but the split second's delay before Lloyd had finished his sentence made Rory wonder if it might just have been a come-on.

"My wife says she can tell," he said.

Rory didn't actually know if she did or not, but he wanted to respond in a way that affirmed his status as a straight, married man - perhaps as much for himself as for Lloyd. At that moment, there with Lloyd and with Bella so far away, he wasn't totally sure that he was actually either of those things. He'd been resolutely celibate since Bella had gone, the hope of a reconciliation always in his mind, but it suddenly felt like a very long time since he'd had sex. It alarmed him to wonder if he'd actually be able to resist a come-on if it came from a woman rather than a gay man.

"Well lucky her, having one as handsome as yours all ta herself," Lloyd was saying.

Rory was relieved, but his relief was tempered. Lloyd's comment seemed to confirm that he hadn't been making overtures, but what might have happened if he actually had been? Would he have been tempted to finally find out what it was like to push his cock into the tightness of a man? Would it actually count as being unfaithful in quite the same way if he, a straight man, fucked another man just for the simple relief of having a fuck?

"I know Jaycon is all for it, but what if you move on from him one day?" Rory said, changing the subject in an attempt to distance himself from worrying thoughts. "You might find that your next lover isn't so keen that you're a rare breed. I mean, I've seen a few startled faces in my time!"

"I'm no surprised, when they see how massive you are!" Lloyd said.

"Perhaps! But that's not what I meant," Rory said, smiling as he accepted what he took to be a compliment. "I'm assuming men are the same here, but women certainly aren't used to circumcised guys. It freaks some of them out - you can see it on their faces, even if they don't say anything. They just don't know how to handle you either. I'm always - well, I was before Bella anyway - having to show them, and it can get frustrating when you just want to get on with the job."

"Aye, I get that," Lloyd said. "Some American guy groped me in a club once; way too rough, yanking ma skin back real hard to get it out o' the way, then grinding at ma bell end. It was nae much fun."

"Well, you'll have the opposite problem if you do get done - you'll be telling them to work you harder!" Rory said, smiling. "It's like they're worried they're going to hurt you. They just never dare go near your helmet. Then the scar line - it's like they think it's going to burst open if they're too rough. Then they're so determined to get something to move when they try and wank you when there just isn't anything that does - at least not in my case."

"I was gonna ask you about that," Lloyd said. "I mean, how tight I should get ma self done?"

"Well, the tighter the better, I reckon" Rory said, "but I know others think different."

"Then there's how high or low," Lloyd added. "Fuck, it's all so confusing! Yours is high, isn't it? So is it best to go for that and keep your inner, or go full Monty and get it all taken out? I was thinking I'd get done real low like Jayce, but I'm nae so sure, not now I've seen how brow yours looks - that Yanky porn star look."

"Yeah, it's a tough call," Rory said. "I suppose it comes down to how you want to look, and how much feeling you're prepared to risk losing to get it."

"I've heard some sub guys want to go real low 'cos it makes them better bottoms if they dinna feel so much themselves afterwards," Lloyd said.

"They do," Rory replied, wondering if Lloyd might be one of them. "Each to their own, I suppose. Actually, I can kind of get the buzz of going to extremes if you're getting done just 'cos you want to be. If you're going to do it, then I suppose you might just as well have the head fuck of really going for it."

"Well, the whole thing's just a total head fuck all round, isn't it," Lloyd said. "Not even going to the max, I mean, but just being cut at all. Glad ya been made different, even if it worked fine before. Knowing you let someone take a knife to ya cock, glad ya skin was cut off, having ya bell end made bare, no choice about everyone seeing it all so exposed and how different you are, so aware of it rubbing all the time so you can never forget just how exposed you are, everything out in the open and having everyone seeing. Then feeling it all so tight under ya hand when ya boned. Even loving seeing the scar that was put on ya knob 'cos it proves that something's been taken off it. Knowing everyone will stare at ya bare bell end in the gym, perhaps even feeling sorry for ya and wondering what it feels like and how you manage a wank. Even just being able ta look someone in that face and say 'I'm

circumcised.' I'm so looking forward to that. God, I don't know why it's all so incredibly fucking horny, but it just is, isn't it."

This time, it was Lloyd's hand that had gone to his crotch, the hardness of his cock showing through his trackies. Again, the room suddenly seemed very quiet. It took Rory a very long time to reply, suddenly very aware of the danger that hung in the air.

"It is," he said finally. It was all he could find to say. His blatant erection made it futile to pretend otherwise.

For a long time, neither of them said anything, and this time it felt tense. They were both somehow frozen - locked in a long, possibility-filled silence which neither of them knew how to break. Both of them were very aware that this was the moment when things could go in two very different directions.

It was Lloyd who cracked first, finally realising that Rory wasn't going to give any sign that he wanted things to go in one of those two directions. He dropped his hand from his cock and made himself move his eyes up from Rory's crotch. He knew that the only way out of their awkward impasse was for one of them to wind back in their conversation to before the pivotal moment.

"Aye, it's a tough one for sure," he said, as if the last few minutes had just never happened. "I really dinna know whether a high or low cut would suit me best."

Rory knew exactly what he should do. He should show that there was no ill feeling by staying for a few more minutes of safe conversation then say he had to go, making some vague promise of meeting sometime for a drink. But he hadn't.

"Well, I'm no great expert when it comes to styles," he said instead, "but would you like my opinion?"

## Chapter Five: Compare and Contrast

Rory really wasn't sure if he was relieved or disappointed that Lloyd was flaccid by the time he pulled down the front of his trackies. After his earlier reaction to his own size though, he was surprised to see just how long and thick Lloyd was hung himself. As with Leyton and James, it struck him how strange it was that some bottom guys were hung and some tops weren't. Thinking more about his two friends and how, with one so camp and the other so straight-acting, most would jump to the wrong conclusion about which way round they were, he wondered too what it was that made most men so certain about their role. He found himself wondering if Lloyd would actually want to fuck him, and if he might actually enjoy being fucked if he did.

"That's a handsome cock," he said, pushing his thoughts away.

"Yeah?" Lloyd said, rather uncertainly. "Even with all th' ugly skin?"

"Well, it just isn't, is it!" Rory replied. "Ugly I mean. If I had a foreskin, that's just the kind I'd want."

"But you da nae want one though, do you!" Lloyd replied, smiling. "And neither do I!"

"You got me there!" Rory said, laughing, "and yours would still be a handsome cock, even with without the skin."

"Nae would be, will be," Lloyd said, sounding much more definite about his want than before.

Thinking back to a CIG meeting where someone had talked about body dysmorphia, Rory wondered if Lloyd's perception of his cock perhaps didn't match the reality. From his earlier "tassel" description, he'd been expecting to see a long, unattractive nozzle - perhaps even one of the thin kind that his school mates would have called a "worm". It wasn't though. The skin contoured perfectly over the helmet, nearly an inch of overhang closing in a neat, shapely bud that clearly wasn't tight. The whole thing was really rather beautiful.

So what do you look like with it pulled back then?" Rory asked, genuinely curious.

The whole process so alien to him, Rory was always mesmerised by seeing a man retract. He found it fascinating that a cock could have two such different settings and the mechanics of changing between them deeply intriguing. He'd seen some men struggle as they pulled back, the helmet reluctant to free itself from its cover, the skin stretching uncomfortably before the head finally popped out, and always wondered why those men put up with something so troublesome when it was an issue that it was so simply fixed. Lloyd's skin, though, seemed to operate perfectly. The bud of the overhang opened easily, his sheath gliding back over his helmet with no restriction at all. A beautifully shaped glans emerged, the texture of it smooth, shiny and somehow much fresher-looking than his own.

"Well, clearly no operational difficulties there then!" Rory said, smiling. "Can you get it any further back than that, or is that it?"

Lloyd had gone back enough for his skin to be bunched behind his corona, but Rory had learnt that most, but not all, men could do more than merely uncover their heads. He wasn't surprised then to see Lloyd's inner skin start to reveal itself as he retracted more, but he was amazed to see him keep of going, his skin moving back more with no difficulty, his inner quickly and easily exposed until all of it was finally laid out totally flat in a wide band from the ridge of his corona to almost half way back along his long shaft.

"Fuck!" Rory said, astounded. "That's amazing - all that inner skin! And so smooth too – not a wrinkle in sight. I've not seen many that go back as flat as yours."

"How do you think it looks?" Lloyd asked, wondering just how many cocks Rory had seen and under what circumstances.

"Incredible!" Rory replied. "If I'd just seen you like that, I'd have assumed you were cut. It's hard to believe you've actually got a foreskin there."

"Yeah?" Lloyd said, smiling.

"With it pulled back like that, you can really see what you'd look like with a nice high and tight," Rory said.

"You think I'd look OK circumcised then?" Lloyd said, fishing unashamedly.

"Oh, much more than just OK," Rory said. "You'd be a natural. I mean, don't get me wrong, your foreskin looks great, but you can easily see how good you'd look cut."

"That's so good to hear," Lloyd said, revelling in Rory's approval.

"Your fren doesn't pull when you're back that far?" Rory asked. He had none at all and was never really sure what their purpose might be. He knew too from CIG that some men had troublesome, short ones that stopped them being to attain the amount of exposure they wanted, and that there were even those who had resorted to taking theirs out in order to be able to retract more. It seemed incredible to him that Lloyd could retract quite so far without his causing any restriction.

"No, I reckon I struck lucky with mine," Lloyd said, lifting up his cock to show Rory his underside. "There's enough of it, and it's real stretchy."

"What happens if you let go?" Rory asked, as intrigued as he was aroused to see how Lloyd's skin functioned.

When Lloyd took his fingers away, everything stayed as it was for a second or two. Then, though, things slowly started to move. A roll of foreskin quickly formed again behind his corona, his glans still exposed.

"It'll just stay there," Lloyd said, "unless ...."

He just gently nudged at the back of fold with a fingertip and, as if spring-loaded, it suddenly snapped back over his helmet, a bud of overhang instantly re-forming.

"Fuck, that's amazing!" said Rory, "Show me again."

Lloyd did just that, loving seeing just how fascinated Rory was by something he thought so unremarkable himself. He wondered if Rory realised he'd taken hold of his cock as he watched, or if it had just been an unconscious instinct. Either way, it was good. It struck Lloyd how extreme the contrast between the two of them was - his own cock covered so generously, Rory's as starkly bare as a penis could be made. Enjoying seeing Rory so captivated by their difference, he just kept alternating between full cover and extreme retraction.

"It's just so clever the way it works, isn't it," Rory said. "Not that I'd really know, but I reckon there aren't many guys around so well engineered."

Hearing that, Lloyd couldn't stop from putting on a real performance. Blatantly showing off, he put his foreskin through as many paces as he could. At first, he just edged the flesh back and forth over his helmet, taking care not to expose any of it. Then, he pulled a little further back, making sure that Rory saw how readily the pucker at the end of his overhang opened and closed as he took up the slack in his skin but still without revealing his glans. Next, he pulled his skin as far forward as he could, ostentatiously rolling the empty snout of overhang that he'd formed between thumb and forefinger. Then, stretching his skin wide open, he made sure that Rory could see the glans protectively nestled inside. Rory was clearly very aroused by it all, but it was only when Lloyd pushed his thumb deep inside his foreskin, covering it right over, that his hand actually went to his erection.

"Fuck, that's amazing!" he said again, to Lloyd's delight. "Doesn't it hurt though, having something in there?" He'd never forgotten seeing James's skin stretched by his own big bell end when they'd docked all those years ago and, just as he had then, he found it hard to believe that it wasn't at least an uncomfortable thing to do.

"Not a bit," Lloyd said, showing off more by ostentatiously rolling his thumb around inside his skin. Realising that he'd found something that really captivated Rory, he decided to play to it. Despite how plain he'd made it earlier that he wasn't up for anything hands on, Lloyd was still hoping that Rory might yet weaken, and perhaps this would be the thing that might cause it to happen. Pulling forward to give himself the longest overhang he could muster, he pushed not only his thumb but a finger inside and used them to stretch his skin wide, keen to show Rory how easily it gave. Leaving just his thumb buried, he began wanking backwards and forwards over it, hoping that it might send out a clear enough signal to Rory about what he so badly wanted to happen – that they docked.

Lloyd had realised he had the perfect set up for docking as soon as he'd discovered that it was actually a thing. He knew that he'd easily be able to take another glans inside his skin, even as big a bell end as Rory. It was something he'd always wanted to experience, but even more so now that he'd decided it was only a matter of time before he no longer had a foreskin. He'd been disappointed to find Jayçon completely uninterested in doing it, but the idea of seeing his hood grotesquely distended by Rory's big mushroom with the outline of his thick PA showing through the skin, was even more erotic than the thought of having his partner's very average sized head in there. As well as that, Jayce couldn't see any worth at all in a foreskin, so it would be much more arousing to have his used by a man who was clearly so intrigued by what it was like to have one.

Despite his best efforts to reel him in, Lloyd was disappointed that Rory seemed content just to watch his thumb docking, so he'd decided to try another tack in his attempt to reel him in.

"I know this is the way I should be, though," he said, retracting even further back than he had before and stretching his inner skin to the max. The slight discomfort of it was worth the satisfaction of seeing Rory's face redden.

“Fuck, I just can’t get over all that inner!” he said. “I thought I had a lot, but that’s incredible.”

“It’s real sensitive too,” Lloyd said, “but I suppose that will damp down when I’m cut.”

“A bit, probably,” Rory said, “but it would still feel amazing. It would be perfect for wanking, once you’ve got used to doing it a different way.”

“What, like this?” Lloyd said, his spare hand going to his taut inner skin. “It’s a bit intense though,” he went on, his face flinching as he rubbed rather gingerly. “I can nae believe how you guys can do it so easy.”

“What, like this?” Rory said, mimicking him. It was he that was blatantly showing off now, his fist tight round his inner skin and gripping hard as he rubbed.

“Fuck!” Lloyd said. “That’s amazing. No way could I do that!”

“Yeah?” Rory said, pleased to get exactly the response from Lloyd he wanted. “Not even if you’re lubed up?”

“I din nae know. I’ve never tried,” Lloyd lied.

“No! I can’t believe that! Rory said.

“Would that make it easier then, ya reckon?” Lloyd asked, despite knowing full well that it did.

“God, you really need to try it!” Rory said. “I can’t believe you never have. You’ll love it. Have you got any?”

“Lube? What do you think!” Lloyd said, smiling leerily. “But I’ve nae used it for wanking!”

“Sorry, silly question!” Rory said. To his disquiet, the intriguing thought came to him again of how it would feel to push his cock deep into Lloyd’s well-prepped hole.



## Chapter Six: Lube

With Lloyd out of the room for a moment, Rory thought about their earlier awkward moment and how getting past it had actually made things feel easier between them. The way Lloyd hadn't pushed things when he might have somehow made it feel safe for him to be completely open - as much with himself as with Lloyd. Now, they were two men who understood each other, able to enjoy the pure eroticism of their shared interest in a safe way and without the difference in their orientations being an issue. Had he allowed himself to weaken earlier though, how might he be feeling now? Not for the first time, he wondered if life would actually have been easier for him if he actually had been gay, or even just bi. He knew for sure that he wasn't either, but why was he always so aroused by things that straight men just weren't supposed to find horny?

Lloyd was quickly back with a tube in his hand, the cap already open. Seeing him, Rory wondered how he would be feeling if they both knew that he'd gone to fetch lube in order to be fucked. In a way, it was frustrating that he could see objectively just how attractive Lloyd was and how enjoyable sex with him might possibly be yet still know for certain that it wouldn't be right for him. Or would it? Might he actually never know for certain unless he tried?

"Show me how you normally do it first," Rory said, pushing his thoughts away again and trying to focus instead on the opportunity of being able to see up close how a man used a foreskin to pleasure himself. Lloyd needed no second invitation. He'd loved seeing how deeply intrigued Rory was by his foreskin so, fisting his cock and starting to wank, he was determined to use it to arouse him even more. There was, he thought, still just a chance that Rory would weaken. He could imagine just how much a tightly circumcised man might want to know what it was like to feel loose flesh in his hand and to feel what it was like to move it backwards and forwards over an erection.

"Fuck, I just can't imagine what that must feel like," Rory said, mesmerised by seeing how Lloyd was able to wank so fully yet without uncovering his head at all. "I can see it must be good, but it's hard to believe how, with all that stuff in the way."

In reality, it had been a very long time since Lloyd had actually used his foreskin to wank with. He'd long realised that he much preferred the feeling of going retracted and lubed, his mind full of the thought of what it would be like to be tightly circumcised and feel nothing moving inside his fist as he worked, but he certainly wasn't going to let that on to Rory though, not when seeing a foreskin used might just lead him drop his 'mister straight guy' guard. Sadly though, Rory still seemed content as a voyeur.

For Rory, seeing Lloyd working really brought home to him how different wanking would be for an uncut man. It seemed incredible that a cock could be pleased in such a different way, making him wonder again how different and, just possibly, how much better the sensation might be. For Lloyd, seeing Rory so intrigued by how a foreskin was used was arousing enough, but the thought of feeling Rory's hand close around his cock to do it for him was overwhelming, and it made him even more determined that Rory's curiosity would get the better of him.

"So, are you going to give me a tutorial on how to do it your way, then?" Lloyd asked when he'd finally given up hoping that Rory's curiosity would get the better of him and that he'd ask to try

wanking him with his foreskin. Playing the innocent over using lube might at least lead to him getting to see Rory wanking seriously himself under the guise of it being a demonstration and, once he was seriously horned, he might yet give in.

Rory had said nothing but, to Lloyd's delight, picked up the tube of lube. Lloyd was pleased too that Rory didn't back away when he moved as close to him as he dared under the pretence of learning how to wet wank. He loved seeing him smear the gel across his wide band of inner skin and helmet, but then wondered if Rory would actually make it mere technical demonstration, perhaps just showing how to set things up for a lubed wank but then stopping after a few token strokes. He hadn't, though. As soon as he began working his coated cock, it was obvious that he was enjoying it for real, his hand sliding along his long length from root to glans and rubbing with intent. Playing the innocent, Lloyd lubed up too and mimicked him, his spare hand holding his skin back as tight as he could. Their two fists pumped in unison, Lloyd making all the right noises over how good it felt to feel lube on his inner skin as if he really was experiencing it for the first time.

Five minutes later, Lloyd was very aware that his orgasm was perilously close. It was partly due to the pure physical and mental intensity he always felt when wanking lubed and with his inner pulled taut, but he was also deeply horned by seeing Rory working on his big cock. Although more than ready to cum, he was determined to hold back until Rory was ready to unload too. Rory, though, was still trying hard to get himself over the edge - moaning softly as he rubbed furiously, alternating between working hard at his nipples and twisting the PA in his slit. For Lloyd, the temptation to reach out and pleasure his thick nips for him was almost irresistible, but he fought it off, not wanting to overstep the mark and cause Rory to back off. The thought of having to put in as much effort to cum as Rory clearly was as scary as it was arousing. Orgasm had always been so quick and easy for him to attain, and he knew that opting out of that would be one sacrifice his circumcision meant he'd have to make. He wondered how it would be when Jaycon fucked him once his foreskin was gone, his sensations damped down by his circumcision so that he no longer had to hold back in order for them to reach orgasm together - not that Jayce actually cared much about that, nor indeed about his partners' pleasure in general. Would being able to last longer make him an even better bottom, or would he actually be less of one? With his current ability to cum quickly and easily compromised, would he'd focus less on his partner's pleasure if it meant he could to wank himself as long and hard as he liked whilst he was on the receiving end of one of Jaycon's ferocious fucks?

Lloyd noticed that Rory had changed tack in his effort to cum. Now, he was rubbing hard at his scar, so he followed suit, working at the base of his inner skin where he hoped that his own cut line would one day be. He followed again when Rory started grinding his helmet in his fist, all the time saying how amazing it felt as if, thanks to the lube, it was his first experience of being able to work directly on his glans. The stimulation of that soon became uncomfortably intense though so, not wanting to be seen to ease off and break the mood, he let his foreskin slide forward so that the stimulation was safely diminished. He'd hoped that Rory wouldn't notice, but he did and, rather to Lloyd's surprise, seeing him wanking with his head covered somehow seemed to make him rub himself even harder. Changing over to wanking with his skin and Rory not minding made Lloyd realise that he'd actually been given an entrée into what he wanted to happen most of all - that they docked. He didn't want to risk Rory declining if he suggested it outright, so he knew he'd have to be clever if he was going to get the ultimate satisfaction of having Rory using his foreskin to wank with. Daring to move in closer still to Rory, he pulled his foreskin right forward, gathering as much overhang as he could. Then, he lined up the heads of their cocks in a way that he hoped would make his intention plain. Rory still didn't bite, but neither did he back away, so Lloyd risked being even more overt, pushing his thumb deep inside his skin and wanking over it. It was now or never, he thought. The time had come to be totally brazen, planning on stretching his foreskin wide open to signal that he was both capable and willing to take Rory's bell end in there. They were now so close together though

that, as he edged even closer to Rory, the long, empty nozzle of foreskin that he'd formed somehow brushed across his glans. Rory moaned as he felt the touch of it on his helmet, his back arching, so Lloyd did it again, but deliberately this time, enjoying feeling the rough texture of Rory's helmet on the opening of his skin. Rory moaned more, and Lloyd could tell that he was obviously very aroused. The next time, he ran the tip of his empty snout along the line of Rory's circumcision scar. Suddenly, Rory jerked, then exploded, shooting full and hard over Lloyd's cock. Instantly, Lloyd had his foreskin pulled right back, his mind full of the knowledge that he was using Rory's cum as lube, feeling again the amazingly strong sensation that came from rubbing hard on his taut, exposed inner skin, thinking that that was how it would always be for him when he'd finally been made permanently and irrevocably bare. Seconds later, imagining knowing that he'd never experience the feeling of a foreskin over his glans ever again, his first shot of his cum fired right into Rory's face.

## Chapter Seven: Standby Mode

Lloyd had fully thought that it would be a case of mop up and go. His expectation was that Rory, having cum, would start to feel guilty and want out of the situation as soon as possible. He was wrong though. Rory actually seemed very relaxed, even about the cum still on his face. As they recovered from what had been very intense orgasms for them both, he even pulled Lloyd in for a long, tight hug. When, though, they finally released from their clinch, Lloyd was a bit disconcerted by Rory's chuckle.

"Sorry," Rory said, seeing the puzzled look on Lloyd's face. "It's just that I didn't realise that that's what happens."

Seeing his still-bemused expression, he pointed at Lloyd's shrinking cock. "That says it all really, doesn't it."

It was such a normal thing for Lloyd that he'd never thought about it before, but now though, it was as if he was suddenly seeing things through the eyes of a circumcised man: his foreskin was slowly creeping forward, his helmet already half covered. Somehow embarrassed by it, he quickly pushed it back out of the way.

"Don't do that!" Rory said. "It's cute seeing it sort itself out."

"It just kinda happens," Lloyd said, dismissively. What he wanted was to share being bare headed with Rory, not discuss his foreskin.

"It's like it knows what it's there for and where it's supposed to be," Rory mused. "I'd always thought you actually had to put the cover back over, but it actually just gets on with re-setting itself."

"Perhaps, but that does nae mean you have to let it," Lloyd said, rather defensively. It was only recently that he'd finally overcome the instinct to cover his helmet as soon as he'd cum, and he was still rather proud of it.

"That's nature for you," Rory went on, clearly intrigued by his new realisation. "Your helmet's meant to be kept covered when you're not using it, so it's like it's putting itself back into standby mode. Clever really," he went on, musing aloud, rather to Lloyd's irritation.

"Yeah, I suppose so," Lloyd said, rather perturbed that Rory suddenly seemed to be so positive about having a foreskin. Somehow, that wasn't what he wanted to hear at all.

Noticing that Lloyd's skin already trying to creep forward again made Rory wish that he'd paid more attention at the CIG meeting when there'd been a presentation on techniques for uncut men to stay retracted. It had, of course, seemed totally irrelevant to him at the time, but it struck him now that it was something that Lloyd should try before he decided to make his bareness permanent. Perhaps living that way for a while, and not just when he was feeling horny, might make him think again. Although discussing permanent exposure with Lloyd had been arousing, he was now feeling awkwardly aware that their talk that afternoon could perhaps encourage Lloyd to make a half-informed, irreversible choice that he might regret.

A few minutes later, Rory worried more as he showered, concerned by the responsibility of perhaps having egged Lloyd on towards circumcision, even if only tacitly. Much though it aroused him to be circumcised, he knew that there were positives to having a foreskin, and what had happened that afternoon had brought them home to him. Apart from that, he thought how the downsides to circumcision might be all the more apparent to someone who had grown into adulthood with a foreskin. He was very aware that he hadn't really voiced any of that though, carried along by Lloyd's obvious arousal at the thought of being made bare. It was when he'd finished washing Lloyd's cum from his hair that he knew he had to say something, if only to salve his conscience – moving on to soaping his cock, he suddenly realised what a very different process it would be for anyone with a foreskin.

Whilst Rory showered, Lloyd was thoughtful too. He'd been pleasantly surprised that Rory had just shrugged off rest of his clothes and left them in a pile on the living room floor before heading off to shower, totally at ease with being completely naked in front of him. He'd enjoyed the chance of getting a proper look at his body - lean and tight, but in a natural, un-worked on kind of way, his arse full and firm, his crotch shaved smooth, his heavy balls hanging full and low. His handsome cock was still thick and long, even when completely flaccid, the hefty PA sitting in the large mushroom head that had such a deep ridge to the corona. As well as all that, Rory was not only a very good-looking and attractive man, but a clever, kind and thoughtful one as well. He was bound to be a good lover, and a considerate one too- as concerned about his lovers' pleasure as his own, unlike Jayce. He was straight though. Or was he? Could he be, after what had just happened? Might there be a glimmer of possibility? Somehow, even though he'd always thought things were good enough with Jaycon, Rory was the epitome of everything that Jayce just wasn't.

Rory looked serious when he re-joined Lloyd in the living room. "I've been thinking," he said. "Seeing how your skin was so determined to reset itself made me realise what a huge change it would be for you to suddenly be bare all the time. Look, are you really sure you want to have a one-setting one like mine? I know it's right for me, but ....."

"Aye, I'm totally sure," Lloyd interrupted, replying with no hesitation and surprising himself that he was suddenly so certain. It was usually just after he'd cum that his doubts about circumcision were at their strongest. "The way it puts itself away – you're right, that says it all," he went on, retracting as he spoke. "It's kinda like you're supposed to forget your helmet's there when you're nae using it, but I din nae want to be like that. I want nothing kept under wraps. Out and proud all round, that's me!"

Rory was thoughtful as he drank the tea Lloyd had made for him before heading for the shower himself. He was only slightly reassured by Lloyd's certainty. Apart from the worry of having edged him towards a circumcision that he might well regret, there were also the troubling implications over what had happened earlier, let alone what he might so easily have let happen too. It wasn't the moment to ponder those though, and he was glad that the afternoon had given him much else to think about instead. Seeing how Lloyd's foreskin worked and the potential for pleasure it offered had not only given him an unusual niggle of loss for himself but also a feeling of regret over what Lloyd might soon lose too. Learning so much about Lloyd's foreskin made him think again about what his own might have been like, and how he might have felt about having it. Although there was such a deep eroticism for him in having no choice but to be bare headed, would it have been even more arousing for him if he wasn't always that way? Would he have enjoyed being able to choose when to uncover the part of him that just wasn't meant to be kept exposed? Might he have enjoyed the mystique of it being a positive choice to reveal something that was supposed to be kept protected and private, rather than it just being a default setting? He never really had before, but he could see now why some men at CIG knew so certainly that they didn't want to be circumcised yet always kept their

foreskins retracted. It struck him too that when he'd imagined his foreskin before, it had always been one as perfect as Lloyd's, but it might not have been. Had it been problematic, then how willing would he have been to accept that he might actually need to be circumcised? Would it have been a big deal, or might he have hated the idea? Would he have preferred to put up with a faulty skin rather than being without one? It was just so hard to know. Even if his skin had given him no problems, might he have been like Lloyd and, for whatever reason, welcomed the prospect of shedding it? Would he have grown up wondering why he was different to his dad, and would that have bothered him? If he'd been brave enough to ask why they were different, then what would it have been like to hear his father explain circumcision to him? It struck him that he'd never thought before about what it would have been like to have had the chat with his father that he assumed all uncut boys had with theirs - how would he have felt hearing Ben explaining to him about retracting and keeping clean? Had he missed out on a special moment, that chat somehow acknowledging that a father knew his son was on the way to becoming a sexual being? He could imagine just how tricky that conversation would be for many fathers, but he just knew how brilliantly his own would have handled it. Would he have just left it as a chat though, or would his dad perhaps have wanted to check that his skin was actually retractable? Was that something that fathers did? What an amazing moment it would have been to have shared exposing his glans for the first time with his dad. Even though he'd so recently cum, the thought of what that might have been like was so powerful that Rory felt himself start to harden.

Whilst Rory was deep in his thoughts, Lloyd was in an agony of indecision as he showered: should he get dressed or not when he'd finished? If he didn't but Rory had, then the thought of them being in a dressed man/naked man situation when he got back to the living room had its appeal, but the idea of them spending more time comfortably naked together was somehow even more pleasing. He was still unsure what to do as he dried himself, but it occurred to him that he could creep back along the corridor and take a sly look to see if Rory had dressed or not before deciding what to do himself. Peeking into the living room a moment later, he was pleased to see that Rory was indeed still naked. He was amazed though to see that he was lying back on the settee, his eyes closed, and working very intently at an erection.

Rory had hardened even more when it struck him that Ben, perhaps sensing his hesitation at doing something so significant yet scary, might even have helped him retract his foreskin that very first time. How amazing that would have been, he thought. He could imagine just how kind and reassuring Ben would have been - like the times when he was little and got a splinter in his finger, going to his dad for him to take it out and having total trust in him, even though he knew it was going to hurt. His hand went to his erection at the thought of how comfortingly firm but gentle Ben's fingers would have felt as, so slowly and carefully, he edged his foreskin back for him. He could imagine the reassurance of seeing his dad smiling that amazing, shy smile of his as he eased his helmet from its protective cover, both of them seeing it emerge that first time, so pink, fresh and shiny. Already deeply aroused, it was when his next thought struck that Rory found himself reaching for the lube that Lloyd had left behind. Perhaps, just perhaps, he thought, his father might have left his foreskin back after retracting it for him. Perhaps he might even have wanted to prolong the moment of them sharing something so special. He imagined his helmet left bare as his dad pulled him in for a hug, whispering in his ear just how proud he was of him for having been so brave and how very much he loved him. That possibility was amazing enough, but Rory felt his balls pull up when it struck him that his dad, just perhaps, might even have told him just how cute he looked with his little acorn out on show.

## Part Two: Terms and Conditions

### Chapter One: The Old 'uns

Their living room was spotlessly clean but overheated and cluttered, the mismatched patterns on the curtains, carpets and furnishings all somehow fighting each other in their gaudiness. Rory made a show of sipping his coffee, unpleasantly surprised to find that some people actually still drank instant. He been down south for a couple of days for a university friend's wedding and was now rather regretting that he'd guilt-tripped himself into making a side trip to Hendon to visit his great aunt and uncle on his mum's side, taking Noah with him to meet them too. Luckily, being back in touch with Bella and the prospect of a reconciliation on the cards meant he didn't feel too guilty about keeping quiet about their separation when Auntie Ellie proudly presented him with a belated wedding present. He managed to make all the right noises when he unwrapped it too, though very deliberately avoided his cousin Dan's smiling eyes when his worst fears over the taste and usefulness of the contents of the parcel were fulfilled.

"I'm so glad you like it!" Aunt Ellie said. "We're sorry we couldn't get to your wedding to give it to you on the big day. We love a good family do, but it's a long old journey at our age and...."

"I remember your bah mitzvah. Now that was a good do," Uncle Maurice interrupted. Rory was surprised to hear him chip in as he'd seemed to be sound asleep for the last few minutes.

"Shush, Maurice!" Aunty Ellie replied, embarrassed. "He never had one, remember?" she added in a very-audible whisper.

"Well it must have been his bris then," Maurice continued, un-shushed. That's the important one. They don't what they're missing, the goys. A bris is a man's true blessing."

"Perhaps, uncle, but I'm not so sure everyone thinks so," Rory said, surprised to find that he somehow needed to disagree. "It might be OK here in Hendon, but it can be a bit tough when you're the only one around."

Auntie Ellie got in before Maurice could reply. "So lovely Noah, has he been ....?" she said, a meaningful sideways twitch of her head euphemistically finishing her question. "I know your lovely wife isn't of the faith, but you are raising him as one of us, aren't you?"

Rory, suddenly remembering the cross he always wore on a chain round his neck and hoping that it was hidden inside his shirt, was hugely relieved when the doorbell rang at precisely the right moment to save him from having to reply. With their aunt out of the room to answer it, cousin Dan looked at their uncle to check that he actually was asleep.

"Don't let on," he said quietly, "But I'm the opposite to you. I got my Bah, but I never got, brissed. My mum and dad didn't see the point, no pun intended, but the old 'uns would freak if they knew."

"Wow! So how have you got away with that then?" Rory asked, genuinely surprised, especially as Dan was more or less kosher and usually wore a skull cap. "

"Well, everyone just assumes, don't they," Dan said. "If anyone's likely to see, I just push it back out of the way and hope for the best. If your bell end's showing, that's enough. No one's gonna look too closely, are they."

"That's true," said Rory, although thinking of the many times when others had actually seemed very keen to have a closer look at his.

"If I ever get married, then perhaps I'd get it done," Dan was saying, "but I don't see what all the fuss is about really. I mean, how does having a little bit extra make you any less Jewish?"

There was the sound of effusive greetings from the hall. "That's strange," Ellie was saying, "We were just talking about you!"

"Really? All nice things I hope!" whoever it was replied. "I was just passing so I thought I'd drop you off some fliers for the bake sale."

"Well, as you're here, come in and say hello to my sister's grandson," Ellie replied. "He'd love to meet you, I'm sure."

Rory's heart sank at the prospect of yet more polite conversation. He'd rather been hoping for a quick exit sometime soon.

"I really can't stay," the new arrival said, clearly no more enthusiastic about meeting than Rory. "I'm running late, as usual!"

"Oh, just a moment won't hurt," Ellie insisted. "Come on in." You've met him before, but he's changed a bit since!"

"Rory, this lovely lady is our rabi, Emma," Ellie said, ushering the new arrival into the room. "Not that you'll remember, but it's her who made it such a nice day for us when she did your bris."

Rory felt like he'd been punched in the stomach. He forced himself to smile, his mind reeling. It unsettled him even more when he noticed Emma's eyes flick briefly but unmistakably to his crotch.

"Well, very nice to meet you again, Rory," she said. "It's been a while – obviously!"

He saw her eyes flick down again as she extended her hand, burbling something as he put out his own. Her skin felt clammy, her handshake weak and held for slightly too long. His mind was racing, trying desperately to get his head round a situation that he'd just never anticipated. It was enough just to meet the person that had actually circumcised him, but he'd always somehow assumed that it would have been an elderly man in a skull cap. For some reason, it was overwhelming to find out that it had been a woman - and a young one at the time too.

"I remember now – you had to go out to the car to get a bigger thingy for him. You said you'd never needed one that big before," Maurice said, to Rory's mortification.

"That's nice!" Emma replied, blandly.

Rory wondered if she'd actually taken in what Maurice had said, but her face had coloured and, yet again, he saw her eyes flick.

"And this is your lovely little boy?" she said, bending down. Rory fought an instinct to grab Noah before she could touch him. It was rare for him to feel such a strong aura from anyone, but he felt there was something just overpoweringly repulsive about her.



He heard the crackle from her thick tights as she sat down. He tried not to look at her but failed. Her blouse was surprisingly low-cut, and he was appalled to see that she'd caught him noticing. He wondered if she knew that she'd run her tongue over her gaudy lipstick as, again, her eyes found his crotch.

It was fifteen minutes later, after what seemed like hours of thoroughly desultory conversation, when Rory felt he could justifiably make a move to go. When he came back in from his first trip out to load up the car, Aunty Ellie and Emma were fussing over Noah and, from their sudden awkwardness, he had the distinct impression that he'd got back just in time to stop them taking a peek inside his nappy.

"Rory love, you won't mind running Emma home, will you," Ellie said. "She only lives just off the bypass so it won't be out of your way."

## Chapter Two: The Tissue

Their awkward, forced conversation had finally dried up a mile or so back. Rory disliked the woman intensely, and the overpowering, clawing smell of her perfume that filled the car was the last straw. Finding that he had been circumcised by a woman had, for reasons he really didn't understand, knocked him sideways. If he had known that before, there might possibly have been some eroticism in it, but his fantasies certainly wouldn't have involved that woman being so thoroughly unlikeable, dumpy and unattractive. What made it all so much worse was the way that her eyes kept going to his crotch. It never usually bothered him in the least - quite the opposite in fact – but now, with her, it did, and intensely so.

"If you come off at the next exit and take the first left, then we're just three houses along," Emma said. "Thanks again for running me back."

Again, he noticed her eyes go to his crotch and stay there - almost as if she was getting her fill of it while she still could. They'd been on a stretch of dual carriageway for a mile or so, the suburbs just starting to give way to the first scrappy fields of countryside. He could see the junction she meant a few hundred yards ahead. Just before it, there was a long lay-by along the side of the road, empty apart from a white van at the far end. Suddenly, Rory knew what he was going to do. Instantly decisive, he yanked hard on the wheel.

"No! Not yet!" Emma said, gripping the door as the car slid alarmingly sideways for a moment as he pulled off the road and stopped in the lay-by. He said nothing until he'd pulled up the handbrake much more violently than normal and turned off the engine.

"Right," he said, angrily as he turned and looked her full in the face. "You've been constantly staring me in the crotch for the last hour, so I'm going to give you what you obviously want, OK?" His hands were already at the buckle of his thick leather belt.

"Sorry?" Emma said, flustered, but with her instantly-flushed face at odds with her attempt at an innocent tone.

"There's no point in pretending," he said, starting on the buttons of his 501s. "You've been staring at it since we met, so I'm going to show you properly. You do want to see it, don't you. My cock, that is. It's obvious you do, so I'm only going to be giving you exactly what you want, right?"

Before she could say anything, he'd ripped the remaining buttons open. With nothing on underneath as usual, his cock was instantly exposed.

"There it is," he said, opening his jeans as wide and possible then putting his hands down by his sides. "My cock. Fill your boots. Go on, take a good, close look at it. Is it how you've been imagining it? I want you to see exactly what you did to me - what you did to small, vulnerable me, before I could have any say. I want you to see what you did when you took a knife to my cock when I was even smaller than Noah is now."

"I....," Emma started, but Rory cut across her.

"Did you honestly think you were giving me a blessing? Did you think that you were helping me make a sacrifice for my eternal good by fucking up my cock? So how did you feel as you tore my

adhesions then? What was it like knowing that your fingers were the only ones that would ever pull my foreskin back? And what about hearing me scream as you pushed a knife into it and sliced it off? Did you enjoy that? So what do you make of your handiwork now, then? Are you pleased with yourself?"

She said nothing. There was total stillness in the car for a long moment, the silence only broken by Noah's gentle snoring from the baby carrier on the back seat. Then, to Rory's amazement, she moved. He thought for an instant that she was making for his cock but, before he had time to react, she'd grabbed his balls. He winced as she took them in her fist, his eyes closing as she began gradually but intently to increase the pressure. Despite the intense pain, he was amazed to find that his cock was rigid. She kept going, squeezing until it was nearly unbearable. It would have been easy enough to pull her hand away, but somehow he didn't. Then, she was coming towards him, her mouth open and her intention clear. Suddenly, he had a vision of what it would be like after he'd let her take him in her mouth – how her thick, gaudy lipstick would leave a circular ring around his shaft, a line as red as the blood that seeped from the wound she'd made when she pushed the blade into his foreskin and run it round in the act of permanent severance. The image repelled him, yet at the same time, it made his balls churn. Just before her lips made contact, he came - squirting thick and heavy right up into her face.

Neither of them said a word. They just sat for a moment in shocked silence. Finally, Rory started the engine and put the car in gear, his shrinking cock still exposed. With his head running down her face and starting to drop onto her blouse, she was rummaging in her handbag. He saw she'd found a tissue but, to his astonishment, she didn't lift it to her face. Instead, she reached fussily towards him, making as if to mop him up in the way she might a child's snotty face. Disgusted by the thought of her touch, he pushed her hand away.

## Chapter Three: Mummy and Daddy

24 years earlier

"Hi love. You're back early! Another ten minutes and he'd have been out for the count. I'm just going to change him - again! It's the fourth time since you left, the little monkey."

Emma dropped her bag in the hall and went upstairs to join her husband.

"How did it go then?" Neil asked. "Nice do?"

Nathaniel whimpered a little, flat on his back in his cot. As Neil dropped the used nappy in the bin, his wife took a new one from the pack.

"I'd leave him, love. He'll be OK like that for a bit. He's just dropping off at last, so come and sit down."

"Actually," said Emma, joining him on the bed, "it was a bit of a funny one this morning. It was grandma that had arranged it all, and the mum....well, she was a bit weird about it to tell you the truth. When I got there, she said that she didn't want him done, but it all sorted itself out in the end."

"...and then you sorted out his end, eh! Boom-boom!"

"Ha, ha," said Emma. "They say the old ones are the best."

"It all went smoothly though? After you got the mum straightened out?"

"Yeah, she just sort of dropped it eventually, and I gave him a nice neat job."

"Another one upgraded then," said Neil. "He'll thank you for tidying him up. And his missus when the time comes."

"Of course. He was a big little boy too - the biggest one I've done yet. Not like someone else I could mention," she said as she reached across and squeezed Neil's crotch. "Mmm," she went on, "and it feels to mummy that daddy's nice neat tiny one might just want to come out to play, and mummy loves daddy's little bare acorn SO much more since she tidied him up, doesn't she."

"Yes mummy. And I think mummy deserves a treat too, after working so hard doing all that tidying."

A minute later, their eyes met as she prepared to straddle her husband, who was flat on his back in a pose that somehow mirrored Nathaniel's as he lay nappy-free in his cot. Neil winced but

moaned softly as she slowly ran a sharp finger nail round the scar line on the shaft of his small penis, then along the groove where his frenulum had once been.

"Daddy was so naughty to expect mummy to put up with his nasty, dirty willy, wasn't he," she said.

"Yes, he was a very naughty boy."

"What did you say?" said Emma, firmly. Her hand was round Neil's scrotum, her fingers gradually tightening on it.

"He was a very naughty, dirty little boy to have a nasty, dirty willy," Neil muttered through his discomfort.

Her fist closed suddenly, and Neil squirmed.

"Say it again, but properly this time, so mummy can hear you," Emma said, firmly.

"He was a very naughty, dirty little boy to have a nasty, dirty willy."

"He was a DISGUSTING little boy, wasn't he? Having all that horrible skin."

"Yes mummy. He was disgusting."

"Enjoying playing with it with its nasty skin on it when his little willy should just be there for mummy's pleasure."

"Yes, I was a naughty boy to enjoy it when it should be there just for mummy."

"And what did mummy do to teach him a lesson?"

"She cut all that nasty, dirty skin off it. She taught me that my willy was just there for her pleasure, not for mine."

"Mummy wasn't going to something as nasty and ugly thing go inside her either, was she?"

"No mummy."

"And what do you say?"

Neil squirmed as she squeezed his balls harder still.

"Thank you mummy."

"Thank you for what?"

"Thank you for cutting all the skin off my willy, mummy."

Neil released his breath as her hand finally eased on his scrotum.

"That's better. I thought I was going to have to teach you another lesson then, but I think daddy's neat little willy has earned its reward now."

## Chapter Four: The Email

Autumn 2026

*Hi mate,  
Just to let you know you can take your time. There's been a pile-up on the M1 and McGraw's stuck behind it, but everything's set up ready to roll for as soon as he gets here, so that skin's deffo still coming off the lad today!  
See you when you get here,  
Mike*

Ben smiled as he began reading, slightly surprised but rather tickled by the way that Mike had addressed him. The rest of the email was a puzzle though - it just didn't mean anything to him at all. Then, suddenly, it hit him: had Mike made the classic error? Was the message actually meant for Rory?

It was something they both knew they really should sort out but had never actually got round to doing: with both "brcook" and "rbcook" in so many people's contacts lists, he and Rory were well used to forwarding mis-addressed emails to each other. Ben knew that Mike and Rory had met of course, but he had no idea that they were in touch, let alone on 'mate' terms. If the message was meant for Rory, then a horrifying scenario was possible. Ben had had a niggling worry for a while, and the message seemed to make it clear that he'd been right all along. He'd been delighted when Rory had told him that he and Bella were working towards getting back together, but that there were a few things they needed to sort out first. It had felt painfully familiar when Rory let slip that one of the issues between them had been that they'd not been able to agree about having Noah circumcised. Ben had assumed that it was Bella who wanted it to happen, perhaps buying into the old trope that fathers and sons should match, so was it one of her conditions that Noah be done before she would consider coming back to them? He thought back to that morning and how Rory had been unusually vague about what he was doing that day, saying that he wouldn't be back until late. Unusually too, he'd said that he'd collect Noah from nursery and take him to Bella's mum's for the night. Then, it struck him, what if he was wrong and it was the other way round? Could Rory be stooping so low as to make it a done deal – having Noah circumcised before Bella was around to stop it happening? Either way, it wasn't good at all. He reached for his phone and tried Bella's mum, but it went straight to voicemail. She and Noah could just be at the park of course, but what if Noah wasn't actually with her? He tried Rory next, then Mike, not actually knowing what he'd say if they answered, but again he just got voicemails. Going back to the email to look for any clue that he might have missed, he saw that it had only just been sent. Mike's flat was on the Manchester side of Nottingham so, if he pushed it, he could make there in under a couple of hours. There might just be time, he thought, as he grabbed the keys to his bike.

## Chapter Five: Terms and Conditions

"No coffee, I'm afraid," Mike said, taking Rory's jacket and rucksack and hanging them up in the porch. "I can't use the kitchen - it's all scrubbed up and prepped."

"McGraw's just rung," he went on. "They've cleared the pile-up and he's moving now, so he shouldn't be too much longer."

"Are the other two here yet?" Rory asked.

"Yeah, they're upstairs. They might be a while though," Mike said. "Lloyd's having his last fuck with a foreskin."

From what Lloyd had told him, Rory very much doubted that he would actually be the one doing any of the fucking, but he kept the thought to himself.

"By the way, a word to the wise just so you don't get freaked later," Mike was saying. "One of McGraw's bloody conditions was that Lloyd went cold turkey for it. Fuck that, though. I know I'm bad, but even I have my limits, so I've just jabbed him up with a shed load of local on the quiet."

"Blimey! I'm pleased you told me that!" Rory said, wincing at the thought of being circumcised without any anaesthetic, even though he knew that that was exactly what some of those at CIG wanted. "I just hope the boy's acting skills are up to it when the knife goes in then," he added.

"Oh, don't you worry! He'll give it big when the time comes, the drama queen, and won't McGraw just love that!" Mike said, "In the meantime, I just hope Jayce is enjoying getting it extra long and hard, 'cos I doubt Lloyd will be feeling too much from that cock of his by now."

"I still can't get over McGraw," Rory said. "All those bloody terms and conditions - what a bloody operator!"

"Yeah, that's him all right, the bugger," Mike said. "He was in there like a shot with 'em soon as I'd asked him if he was up for doing the job. Trust him to make sure he gets exactly what he wants out of it, the pervy bastard."

"Well at least he's doing it for nothing, and we know he's bloody good at it too," said Rory.

"True, but it's just like him to play the alpha and dictate terms so he gets to live out a load of his kinks," Mike said. "It was damn hard negotiating him down to just giving you a quick grope, mate, but he did, so you just tell him to fuck off if he oversteps the mark, OK?"

"Thanks again for that, Mike," Rory said. "And I will."

"You do that," Mike replied. "I know him when he gets within sniffing distance of a big, tight-cut one like yours, the fucker. I've seen him ogling you at CIG, and he'll chance his arm if you give him an inch - especially once he's seen quite how many inches you've got!"

"How's Lloyd, anyway?" Rory asked, keen to change the subject before he started thinking too deeply about the possible complications of what was ahead. Gina being away in the Algarve with her sisters had meant it was a perfect opportunity for Mike to host the kind of event that had so long

been the stuff of fantasy for them all, but a full-on “scene” circumcision was new territory for Rory, and, now it was actually about to happen, the reality of it was starting to feel edgy.

“Nervous as fuck, of course, but excited too under it, I reckon,” Mike replied. “Jayce is being Jayce about it all. At least he’s saying all the right things. Well, some of them anyway.”

“He’s totally sure? Lloyd, I mean,” Rory asked.

“Yeah, I reckon so. He’s been taped back for a couple of weeks. He said it felt really weird going back to covered when he took it off yesterday. He reckons his helmet’s really toughened up, and that Jayce reckons it’s made him into an epic fuck stud.

Rory didn’t say anything, but wondered again why Lloyd seemed to want so badly to mislead his uncle over him actually being a complete and total bottom.



## Chapter Six: Assessments

When he finally arrived, Rory soon decided that he really didn't like Dr Heston McGraw. He'd been a slightly aloof presence at CIG meetings, but that was understandable - he had, of course, to be very cautious over his professional reputation when things got beyond the pure "information" stage and into blatantly circumsexual territory. McGraw made straight away for the kitchen to check out the arrangements – the table and surfaces thoroughly scrubbed, all clutter cleared out of the way and a camera set up on a tripod. After laying out the tools of his trade that he took from a smart leather case, he made no attempt at all at small talk and just looking at his phone whilst they waited for Lloyd and Jaycon to appear.

When the two of them eventually came down, Rory could see just how nervous Lloyd was. His eyes widened as he took in the scene of everything laid out ready in the kitchen, making Rory really hope that he wasn't having last-minute doubts but feeling that it was too late to back out and let everyone down. Lloyd was wearing just a dressing gown but, surprisingly, Jaycon was in his usual designer suit and tie, briefcase in hand. When he introduced himself to McGraw, Rory was amused to see his property developer's over-matey patter cause the doctor to turn on the same calculated professional charm that he employed with potential punters at CIG. They were, Rory thought, very similar and equally unlikeable types.

"All good, mate?" Rory asked Lloyd, taking him aside for a quiet word.

"Aye, I reckon so," Lloyd replied. "Nervous as fuck though, of course."

"I bet. You know it's not too late, though," Rory said. "I mean, I know it would be awkward, but I'd back you up totally if you're having any doubts. They'd understand. You've really got to be totally sure."

"Thanks pal. I appreciate it, but I know what I want," Lloyd replied, smiling shakily. "Look – I'm all prepped up ready."

He opened his dressing gown, showing Rory his pubes shaved smooth in readiness. It struck Rory again that Lloyd's foreskin - long and shapely and closing in a loose bud past the end of his glans - would clearly never have given him any problems and really was rather beautiful. He fought back the feeling that it was actually a shame to mess with something so perfect. Rarely for him, he wondered if - in some parallel universe where he hadn't been circumcised before he'd even known he had a foreskin - he'd ever have wanted to part one that looked as good. Damping down his doubts, he smiled and patted Lloyd on the shoulder.

"Well you look great now mate," he said, "and you'll look differently great once it's done. You know how you want to be, and you couldn't be in better hands to get it, so I hope it brings you everything you want."

"....and it shows how much I love him," Jayce was saying as he looked across at Lloyd, his voice suddenly raised to play to the room and making sure that Lloyd heard. "I don't know how I've put up with it this long. I never have before. I usually move on fast if they've still got a boy cock, however good a shag they are."

When Jayce came over to him, Rory was surprised to hear what he whispered in Lloyd's ear: "Be ready for me again later, eh?" he said. "I always need a good fuck after landing a deal." Then, after just a very token kiss, no word of encouragement or wishing of luck, he headed for the door.

"He's about to sign off on some really big contract he's been after for ages," Lloyds said, breaking the uneasy silence that Jaycon had left in his wake, clearly feeling the need to try and justify his partner's behaviour - to himself too, Rory thought. Both he and Mike could see the hurt on his face but, whereas Rory's heart went out to him, Mike was secretly relieved to see Jaycon go. He hadn't been sure just how much Lloyd had said to him about how they planned things would pan out that afternoon, and he'd been worried that it might not turn out to be to Jayce's taste. From the off, he'd been surprised that Jayce hadn't questioned why Lloyd was going to be circumcised somewhere other than in a clinic. Then, though, he'd realised that perhaps circumcisions done at home on the kitchen table might even be the norm in his culture. Even so, with Jayce out of the way, at least they all had free reign for things to happen in the way the rest of them wanted.

"So, I need to know how to cut you," McGraw asked rather brutally, either oblivious to Lloyds clearly anxious state of mind or more likely, Rory thought, just not caring.

"Very high and very tight" Lloyd said, confidently.

"You're totally sure about that, mate?" Mike asked him. "You'd have no slack left to play wiv at all. It's a big change to make."

"Aye, Jayce and I have discussed it. We think it's best," Lloyd replied.

Rory wondered exactly how deep that discussion might have been, but he was pleasantly surprised that Jayce hadn't turned out to be the kind who thought that every man should be cut in exactly the way they were themselves. He seriously doubted though that he would have much expertise on the subject.

"I know it would look great with all your inner, but Mike's right - it'll be really different for you," Rory said, feeling uneasy as he looked again at Lloyd's very generous cover. "You're really sure?"

"OK," said McGraw, before Lloyd a chance to reply. "So I'll preserve as much inner skin as I can and, to use Mike's favourite if rather non-medical term, do it fuck tight. That will, of course, necessitate an initial total frenectomy. So, gentlemen," he continued, his hands already loosening his tie, "with that decided, I think it's time that we make a start on the agreed preliminaries, yes?"

None of them had raised any concerns over McGraw's stipulation that everyone be naked for the proceedings, but it somehow felt awkward now it came to it. As McGraw moved on to unbuttoning his shirt, Lloyd took off his dressing gown. Standing there totally naked in front of them, he looked rather uncomfortable. Sensing his awkwardness, Rory took pity on him and quickly made to undress too, Mike following his lead.

When McGraw dropped his designer silk boxers, Rory saw how right Mike was when he'd once described his penis as "not a thing of beauty." His cock would always have looked small and insignificant compared to the others in the room but, after thinking earlier that perhaps he wouldn't have wanted to lose a foreskin as handsome as Lloyds, seeing how long, tapered and wrinkly McGraw's was somehow repulsed him. Would many men think that having a foreskin as ugly as that was better than not having one at all, he wondered.

After Rory had unbuckled the thick leather belt on his 501s, he noticed the doctor's eyes blatantly latch firmly and greedily onto his crotch as he started unbuttoning the fly. Normally, seeing

someone do that would have given him a glimmer of an erection, but now he felt nothing other than awkwardness. Very unusually, once he'd stepped out of his jeans, he even found he had to fight the instinct to use his hands to protect his modesty. There was, so far at least, certainly no sign of the eroticism in the event that he'd been anticipating.

"So, matching numbers then," McGraw said, looking leerily at them in turn once they were all naked. "Two with the procedure already performed, and two not yet circumcised - and both of those with considerable amounts of redundant flesh."

"For now, anyway," he added after a moment, looking straight at Lloyd. Rory got the impression that the man was very much enjoying being the one in control.

"Time, though, for a closer inspection, as agreed," he went on, looking meaningfully at Rory in a way that made him uneasy and wonder if being there was going to turn out to have been a big mistake.

"I know this one of old, of course," McGraw said, turning from Rory to Mike.

Mike's face stayed blank as McGraw took his cock in his hand. He seemed so unconcerned that Rory wondered if this might be a regular occurrence when they worked together.

"A good length. Cut moderately low. A reasonably tight cut - just enough give left in the remaining shaft skin to allow for some movement during masturbation," McGraw said, his hand closing around Mike's shaft and moving the flesh backwards and forwards a little.

Rory noticed that, even though McGraw had erected, the man's foreskin still more than covered his glans. It struck him that it might actually be tight.

"Characteristically dry texture of the glans penis due to advanced keratinisation," he said as his fingers moved to Mike's helmet. "Clearly though, there's still some remaining sensitivity there."

Rather to his surprise, Rory saw that Mike had started to erect.

"The frenulum is still in place, and we see that it also offers some sensation," McGraw went on.

With the man's fingers stroking at his fren, Mike was hardening fast.

"Perhaps a centimetre of residual inner skin, which we can see is obviously very responsive."

Mike was now very erect indeed. To Rory's surprise, his head had dropped back and his eyes were closed.

"Overall, a handsome-enough penis with a perfectly satisfactory circumcision."

Just when it seemed that he'd finished his assessment and was going to move on, McGraw suddenly dropped to his knees, instantly taking Mike deep into his mouth. Rory was astonished, but then even more surprised to realise, from the low groans he'd started to make, that Mike actually seemed to be enjoying it. After a moment, McGraw seemed to take no offence when Mike suddenly and rather brusquely pushed him away. The man simply stood up and crossed to Lloyd.

"So," he said, "on to the penis that brings us here."

Lloyd had his hands behind his back in a somehow-subservient way. Like his uncle, he looked strangely impassive as McGraw began his inspection.

“A very good-looking penis,” he said. “Very sizeable too – perhaps in the top 10% of the size bracket. At first sight, the foreskin looks pliable and loose. Certainly no obvious indications that circumcision would be indicated on medical grounds. There is, of course, a considerable amount of redundant flesh that might be removed were one to be performed electively.”

McGraw’s pompous tone was starting to annoy Rory. Lloyd, though, seemed to be revelling in his examination. He hadn’t erected though, even when McGraw took his penis in his hands and began rolling his overhang between his thumb and index finger.

“No constriction at all. No adhesions. All totally loose and malleable. Still no indication that a circumcision would provide benefit of any kind.”

He tugged the foreskin forward, stretching it out to an extent that alarmed Rory. Lloyd made a small noise at the back of his throat, but it was impossible to tell if it was one of pleasure or discomfort. Rory was amazed at just how elastic Lloyd’s skin seemed then, a moment later, how quickly it resumed its original shape when McGraw let it go.

“Yes, a very considerable amount of removable redundant flesh indeed.”

Holding it forward, McGraw slid his thumb inside Lloyd’s foreskin, which accommodated it with ease. With the man’s thumb covered completely, Lloyd squirmed as he began rolling it round inside, the sensation clearly too intense for comfort.

“Characteristic hyper-sensitivity of the glans of an un-circumcised man, but let us examine it in its exposed state. Perhaps that might give some indications that a circumcision might actually be considered desirable.”

With Lloyd’s hands still submissively behind his back, McGraw began to retract him. He did it deliberately slowly, repeatedly easing him back little by little, each time going just a little further, then letting go so that the skin reset itself. Rory realised that McGraw knew exactly what he was doing, playing Lloyd by delaying the moment of exposing his glans for as long as possible. It seemed an eternity before any of his glans appeared, and even longer before his corona was finally revealed.

“Again, no indications of any constriction or inflammation,” McGraw announced. “The glans penis can be easily exposed. No sign of any shortness of the frenulum causing restriction – quite the opposite in fact as it’s a remarkably elastic one. Again, there really is no need at all for a circumcision to be performed.”

McGraw resumed his manipulation, now pulling the skin back behind the ridge of Lloyd’s helmet. As before, Rory saw again just how easily it retracted and just how much of his inner skin could easily be laid out flat on the shaft, and with no bunching at all.

“It’s an unusually malleable foreskin. Few men could retract quite as easily. A remarkably large area of sensitive inner skin is shown, going almost half way back along the shaft. Many would surely be glad to have a foreskin such as this. That inner skin is, I assume, very sensitive.”

As his fingers went to it and began stroking, Lloyd started to erect. He’d shown no sign of it before, the atmosphere in the room far from erotic. As McGraw continued his stimulation, his thumb now on Lloyd’s inner skin and his fingers underneath on his frenulum, Lloyd began to moan quietly.

“So we see that the frenulum is also very sensitive. The resultant erection gives us a chance to assess the need for circumcision in the tumescent state.”

Suddenly, he pulled Lloyd back hard, the skin instantly stretched tight. It was somehow shocking to see him do it so decisively after his previous, slow manipulations. Again, Rory thought how the man knew exactly what he was doing. He wondered if McGraw's punters in more legitimate settings were treated to anything like the same amount of exploration as part of their pre-circumcision consultations. It struck him that the man was almost like a fisherman toying with a catch, slowly playing his victim before finally reeling him in.

"Absolutely no signs of constriction," McGraw said. The frenulum is lengthy and flexible and allows for very full retraction with ease, allowing too for a remarkable amount of inner skin to be exposed. This, of course, might be retained with a high circumcision but might be completely excised with a low one."

Even though he'd clearly explored enough to make his diagnosis, Rory noticed that his fingers were nevertheless still working at Lloyd's inner skin.

"This really is an example of the ideal foreskin, both in looks and function," McGraw said, looking Lloyd straight in the face. "Most people would find it impossible to understand why anyone with a foreskin so perfect might want it removed so, in view of my professional assessment, do you still want me to circumcise you?"

Lloyd just nodded, clearly in some kind of inner turmoil.

"Say it!" McGraw said, his tone suddenly sharp.

"I do," Lloyd mumbled.

"Say it properly!" the man almost shouted. "Tell me you want me to circumcise you!"

"Aye, I do. I want you to circumcise me," Lloyd said, his hand dropping to his cock. McGraw's fingers had moved to his corona and were stroking gently round its deep rim, but Lloyd's fist went to the shaft behind and pulled his foreskin back hard on his very erect cock. "Fuck. Just circumcise me. Please. I just want to be circumcised, OK?"

"That's better," McGraw said, instantly dropping Lloyd's cock as if he'd suddenly lost all interest in it. "There's a few more agreed preliminaries to be gone through first though," he added, turning somehow meaningfully to Rory.

Even though he'd agreed, via Mike, to McGraw's pre-conditions for him being there, Rory knew that he could still just leave. He might have too, had he not been naked, but the embarrassment of the time it would take to get dressed with the atmosphere in the room soured by his choice to opt out was just too much to contemplate. Apart from that, opting out might also be enough to cause McGraw to decide to abort the whole proceedings, leaving Lloyd in a limbo state after having so obviously psyched himself up to lose his foreskin. So, Rory braced for what was to come. After all, he thought, McGraw had agreed, thanks to Mike's negotiations, to do nothing more than hold his cock for long enough to examine it, and Mike would back him up if he objected, should McGraw try and overstep the mark.

"So, clearly a very sizeable penis indeed," McGraw said, staring Rory directly in the crotch. "And, on first impressions, circumcised to perfection too. Cut very high and tight. Done freehand by someone who clearly knew their craft well."

Rory had to stop himself from flinching as McGraw reached towards him. His fingers though, were warm, his touch gentler than he'd expected. They went immediately to his underside, feeling for

the wide empty groove there that had once held a frenulum. To Rory's surprise, it felt not unpleasant as McGraw explored in there - the pressure perfect, his instinct for finding the most sensitive place spot on. To his surprise, the last thing that had Rory expected started to happen – he began to erect.

“As usual with such a radical procedure, the frenulum has been totally excised,” McGraw said. “And very tidily too,” he added, after lifting Rory's cock to look there.

As he spoke, McGraw's thumb began to rotate Rory's PA a little in his slit. Rory wondered if he should stop him, not sure if the man was already over-steeping the agreed mark or not, but he kept quiet. Again, to his surprise, it actually felt good. The man was doing it rather skilfully, and in a way that suggested it wasn't the first time he'd pleased a man who had one.

“A very well-shaped and exceptionally sizeable glans penis,” McGraw said. He began rubbing across it with his thumb, and Rory's eyes closed at his touch. It felt amazing, especially when the man's fingers went behind the deep rim of his glans and found sweet spots there that he'd just not been aware of before.

“Typically advanced keratinisation of a man circumcised in infancy,” McGraw said, not pausing from his stroking.

Somehow, he was using the perfect pressure. Although Rory often felt his glans to be inert, the sensations the man was drawing from it were exquisite.

“A large amount of preserved inner skin,” McGraw said, his fingers moving there. Rory was amazed when they started caressing it, coaxing feelings there of an intensity he'd never experienced before.

“A narrow, even and very neat scar line. Just a slight elevation of the flesh at the point of severance” McGraw said, his fingers running round it.

Rory's scar line had always been one of his favourite places, but it had rarely felt as good being worked there as it did now. Although he hated to admit it, there was no doubt about it - the man, thoroughly unpleasant as he was, really had a magic touch. The surprising way Mike and Lloyd had responded to it earlier now made sense. Remarkably quickly, as he usually needed a lot of hard work to get there, Rory was alarmed to realise that he was already feeling the first sign of approaching orgasm.

“Assessed visually, there's a perfectly-judged amount of slack in the remaining shaft skin,” McGraw said.

Not wanting to cum under his touch for all sorts of reasons, Rory was relieved that the man had suddenly moved his fingers away. A second later though, they re-engaged - this time with his whole hand around Rory's shaft. Again, his grip was perfect, the pressure ideal, his fingers each seeming to know where best to place themselves. After a second, they were moving - stroking backwards and forwards with, for Rory's taste, exactly the right amount of friction on the shaft.

“Manually too, the tension allows perfectly for easy stimulation. No redundant flesh to engage at all, yet without undue tightness,” McGraw said.

To his alarm, Rory felt his balls start to pull up. The sensations that McGraw were drawing from his cock were overwhelming and, despite himself, a part of him didn't want it to stop. He knew, though, that he was dangerously close to cumming. As well as that, he was alarmed by the knowledge that he was actually allowing another man to pleasure him. It went against his every grain. He

shouldn't be enjoying it yet, somehow, he was. It knew it was going to be hard enough for him to have to face the fact that he had allowed another man to manipulate him, but it would be far harder to know for the rest of his life that he'd allowed that man to bring him to orgasm. There was something even more disturbing about the prospect of that man having been someone as repugnant as McGraw. Finding his resolve, Rory quickly moved the man's hand away, very aware that, after only seconds more, he would have cum.

## Chapter Seven: The Old Routine

"So, now your assessments of mine," McGraw said, seeming, to Rory's relief, to have taken no offence over having been brushed off again.

Although he knew from Mike that one of the man's conditions for agreeing to circumcise Lloyd had been his examination and assessment of all the penises in the room beforehand, Rory hadn't expected McGraw to want them to assess his. He had made himself not look too closely at it so far, but he did now, and it really was a very ordinary penis. It made him wonder, if he really had to, what he might find to say about it. Then, though, looking closer, he noticed that there was something unusual about the end of the foreskin. The flesh around the tip of the short overhang seemed different to the rest - somehow damaged-looking, perhaps even scarred. There were faded marks on his cock too, and especially on the foreskin. Right in the very centre of it, over the top of the glans, there was a discoloured patch. Horrific though the idea was, something about the size and shape of it made Rory wonder if it might be a cigarette burn. It was somehow more regular than that though, and it looked almost like a brand.

"I don't know how you've got the nerve," Mike said, breaking the silence in the room. "That dirty, fuckin' foreskin."

Anticipating an angry reaction from McGraw, Rory shot an alarmed look at Mike, hoping that he'd see sense and shut up. Mike, though, just winked back at him.

"Filthy disgusting thing," he went on. "No man needs a pile of gunky waste hanging off the end of his dick, just getting in the way. The stink off 'em is enough to put anyone off. I mean, why would you want such an ugly thing as that stuck on the end, and why would anyone who wants banging allow all that wrinkled junk to get pushed up inside them when they could get a proper fuck from a sleek, neat cock of a real man, not some boy cock that no one ever cared enough about to bother sorting out?"

Despite his wink, Rory was alarmed by what Mike was saying and worried how McGraw would respond. Then, though, he saw just how hard the man had boned and that his hand was tugging at his foreskin. There wasn't much of it – not nearly as much as Lloyd – but he had it stretched right out, twisting it hard between his fingers in a way that Rory thought must surely hurt.

"That's it - treat that rubbish the way it deserves," Mike said. "It's not fit for nothing, filthy fuckin', vile thing."

Seeing the look on McGraw's smiling face, it suddenly struck Rory that this wasn't the first time that Mike had verbally abused him, and that it might even be a common routine for them.

"If only those lads you cut knew your dirty little secret when they're struggling to rub one out after you've done 'em," Mike was saying. "After you've done 'em all fuck tight, after you telling them how much better it will be for them too, how they'll love it, how good it will feel. If only they knew how fuckin' two faced you are with all that filthy, ugly skin still on yours. You should be ashamed of yourself, carrying that mess of a cock around when it would be so easy to get clipped neat and tight



like you do them lads. But if you really want everyone feeling sorry for you and your disgusting, deformed mess of a cock, then up to you mate – there's no helping some poor sods, putting up with a fuckin' filthy piece of second-rate junk like that."

During Mike's volley of abuse, McGraw had reached for his leather case. Rory had been surprised to see him take a Gomco clamp out of it, as Mike had told him that the man was going to give Lloyd a freehand circumcision. Lloyd had obviously seen too and, from the look on his face, was clearly worried as well but, when Mike noticed his anxiety, he hastily made to reassure him.

"Don't worry, matey," he said, putting his arm round Lloyd. "It's not for you - it's for him!"

"Let me do the honours," he continued, taking the clamp from McGraw. "I've done it enough times for you after all, you pervy cunt. If those guys at the clinic only knew they were being clipped by a doc with a Gomco on under his scrubs and his filthy skin was clamped down as hard as their own. That's not in your glossy brochure, is it, eh!"

McGraw said nothing but smiled, somehow smugly. As he spoke, Mike had undone the screw on the clamp and released the dome. Perhaps deliberately roughly, he'd pulled McGraw's skin right back hard. Rory saw that there was another mark in the centre of man's glans - one that looked very similar to that on his foreskin. This one was a bit clearer though and looked as if it might be meant to be an acorn. Whatever it was, the marks were so alike and the matching position of them seeming so calculated that, to his disquiet, Rory wondered again if the man had somehow been branded. After sliding the Gomco dome that he obviously already knew was the right size over McGraw's glans and fitted the rest of the clamp onto it, Rory admired Mike's practiced skill as he somehow just flicked the screw so that it spun and quickly took up the slack. With the plate resting on the surface of the man's skin, Mike was about to start turning more on the screw when McGraw put out a hand to stop him.

"No, you do it," he said, turning to Rory.

Rory was taken aback. He caught the nod that Mike gave him though and, rather reluctantly, reached out, careful to take hold of the metal of the clamp rather than the man's cock, then gave the screw a rather token turn.

"More," McGraw said, commandingly.

Rory found himself complying. To his surprise, he found that feeling the resistance of the man's flesh as the plate began to push down into it made his cock start to harden.

"Now you," McGraw said, turning to Lloyd.

Lloyd's hands were shaking slightly as he reached for the screw and turned it tentatively.

"More!" McGraw said, forcefully, and Lloyd complied, but still rather gingerly.

Looking exasperated, McGraw reached for the screw himself.

"Pussies!" he muttered as he turned it very decisively several more times. Rory flinched as he saw how deep the plate had pushed into his foreskin. Wondering just how much it must hurt, he was amazed that McGraw remained fully boned in spite of it. Rather against his will, his own cock hardened more at the sight. Although it was clear that it was nothing new for McGraw, he wondered how long a foreskin could survive being clamped that hard without there being lasting damage.

“Right then, gentlemen, with the preliminaries over, I think it’s time to proceed,” McGraw said, his business-like tone surreally at odds coming from a naked, erect man with a circumcision device clamped down hard onto his foreskin.

Looking rather ashen, Lloyd was soon sitting on the edge of the kitchen table. As Mike to set to work on him with an antiseptic wipe, Rory noticed again how submissive Lloyd looked. His hands were behind his back and his legs spread in anticipation, somehow showing that he was just passively going to let what was coming be done to him.

When Rory saw McGraw open the seal on a bag containing a disposable scalpel, he wondered again if he was going to have to opt out. Suddenly, it was real. It actually was going to happen. Lloyd was about to be circumcised. This time it wasn’t an anonymous person at CIG+, but someone he knew and liked, someone he’d seen enjoying using the perfect foreskin that was about to be taken from him. Again, he wondered guiltily if he’d played a part in tacitly encouraging Lloyd to do something that, however horny it had been for him in the imagination and anticipation, he’d come to regret,

## Chapter Eight: The Cold Caller

Lloyd looked terrified as things started to get serious. Rory was uneasy too, having realised that his promise to Lloyd that he'd be there for him made it impossible to opt out of the situation and let him down. They'd all donned surgical masks and McGraw had set the camera on the tripod rolling, Rory wondering if he could trust McGraw's promise that the video would be for his eyes only. The man was manipulating Lloyd's skin, and rather more harshly than during his earlier examination. Rory noticed Mike mouthing something at Lloyd over the doctor's shoulders and, when Lloyd suddenly winced and made a few slightly theatrical grimaces, he realised that it had been to remind him to pretend that he could actually feel what was going on. When he saw Mike's hand reach round McGraw and go to his crotch, Rory realised that it was to tighten the clamp even more on the man. As he saw McGraw adjust to what must surely be the pain of it digging into his foreskin, he wondered if, like the verbal humiliation earlier, this was something tried and tested between them or if there might be hidden agenda about to emerge. Had Mike actually misled him? Was he about to witness McGraw finally circumcising himself after having circumcised Lloyd, or was Mike perhaps going to cut him? Neither idea appealed. He saw that Mike was now somehow managing to masturbate the man's foreskin over the hard steel of the gomco bell, his other hand working at his own erection. McGraw was now clearly ready, a scalpel in his hand. Lloyd had seen too, his eyes wide. Rory instinctively went to him, taking his hand and squeezing it hard.

It was then that the doorbell rang. It was so unexpected that they all froze. The sound of it was shocking, breaking the tense atmosphere in the room.

"Just ignore it," Mike said. "They'll go away."

They didn't though. The bell just kept ringing. Whoever was out there kept their finger firmly on the buzzer for a very long time. When it finally stopped, a frantic banging on the door started instead. After a moment, there was angry shouting too. To their horror, both Rory and Mike recognised the voice.

"What the fuck?" Mike said.

After a frozen moment, Mike moved, suddenly decisive. Opening the door of the washing machine, he pulled out the scrubs he'd put in there after his last hospital shift and quickly had them on.

"Just keep cool, yeah?" he said, his voice surprisingly calm. "I'll sort it."

Mike shut the kitchen door very firmly behind him. A moment later, the three of them Mike had left behind could hear voices. It was hard to make out what was being said, but it was clear that Ben was overwrought. It shocked Rory; he'd just never heard his father sound like that before. After a minute or so, the voices became clearer – Mike had obviously had to allow Ben into the living room.

"Look, you know me. You know I wouldn't lie to you," Mike was saying. "I don't know where you got that idea from, and it's not that at all, I promise."

"But It all fits," Ben said. "Rory was so edgy this morning and now he's gone awol, and I can find out where he is, and Noah too, so I'm worried sick. I just couldn't bear it if ..."

"Look, on my life, I promise you it's not what you think," Mike said. "Fuck, look. I'll be honest with you. I'm helping do one, but it's not Noah, OK? It's a bit of a dodgy one, right. That's why I was being a bit cagey. We shouldn't be doing it here at all, but it's a favour for a mate - saving him a few quid by bypassing the clinic and their rake off, yeah?"

"But..." Ben started, then stopped. He'd seen the kitchen door opening. Through it, he saw the lower half of a black man laid out on the work surface, naked apart from a cover - Gina's favourite table cloth, which McGraw had found in the washing machine and spread across Lloyd's midriff. What Ben couldn't see was Rory out on the kitchen balcony, pressed against the wall, still naked under the bath towel that had been in the washing machine too, and which he'd hurriedly wrapped round himself.

"Is everything OK here?" McGraw asked from the doorway, his surgical mask high on his face and hiding his features, a scalpel in his rubber-gloved hand. Had Ben not been so wound up, he might have noticed that the scrubs that the man had also retrieved from the machine were far too big for him.

"Yes. I'm Sorry. It's just that ....." Ben said, the wind knocked from his sails. "Look, I'm so sorry Mike," he went on, desperately trying to pull himself together. "My bad, obviously. Look, I'll....well, I'll leave you to it. Sorry."

It was just as he was leaving that Ben noticed. He said nothing, just relieved that he'd got it so wrong about Noah. In a way, he didn't actually want to know for sure, but it did make it seem that he'd been right in thinking that something troubling was going on, even if it wasn't what he'd thought. Had it been just one of them, he probably wouldn't have realised, but seeing the two of them together made it very hard to believe it was just a co-incidence: both the jacket and rucksack hanging on a hook in Mike's hallway looked very much like Rory's.

## Chapter Nine: Balm

“OK mate?” Rory asked, but Lloyd only nodded in reply.

No one had said anything at all about the interruption. Mike had come back and scrubbed up again after letting Rory know that it was safe to come in from the balcony, reassuring him that Ben was safely off the scene. Somehow, they all knew that it wasn't the moment to talk about what had just happened. Finishing what had been started had to be the priority.

When McGraw made the first cut on Lloyd's frenulum, his yelp was so convincing that Rory wondered if, despite the covert anaesthetic, he actually was feeling what would surely be a searing pain.

“Easy there, mate,” Mike said, moving in with a swab. “This is the worst bit. Just go with it, eh. It'll be over soon.”

Transfixed as he saw McGraw work, Rory's cock was hard as he realised that he was seeing something done that had once been done to him. As the man took out every shred of Lloyd's frenulum, Mike swabbed expertly with one hand, his other working McGraw's erect cock when he could safely reach it or his own when he couldn't. Lloyd soon gave up his pretence of flinching aloud in pain, just moaning quietly and looking as if he'd just opted out from the situation and somehow managed to put his mind into a totally different place.

Soon, McGraw paused for a second as if taking stock of his work. Lloyd's underside already looked transformed. The frenulum groove was now stripped completely bare, the shreds of what had so recently filled it lying rather surreally on a floral-patterned saucer that Mike had taken from a kitchen cupboard.

“Your frenulum is now fully excised,” McGraw said, looking Lloyd straight in the eye. “This is your last chance to change your mind, should you wish. Are you certain you wish me to proceed and complete your circumcision?”

Rory was disgusted. He knew that the man was only delaying the moment, asking just to add to his own smug feeling of power. He was pleased that Lloyd's response this time was terse and annoyed: “Just do it, he said.

To his surprise, Rory saw that Mike was loosening the gomco on McGraw. When it came off, there was an angry looking red line round the man's penis. Rory was amazed to see just how far back along his shaft it was, and just how much skin he would have lost had the clamp actually have been used. The man had shown no signs of finding it uncomfortable but perhaps, Rory thought, Mike knew well enough when the time came to take it off before it did any lasting damage. Mike picked up a tube of something from the counter and smeared some of its contents generously over McGraw's cock. Surprisingly tough things that he knew them to be, Rory could see that some kind of balm might still be needed on a foreskin that had just endured such harsh treatment.

Rory didn't think anything of it when, obviously knowing that the moment was about to come, Lloyd lay down flat on the kitchen table. He knew that some men circumcised at CIG+ meetings were keen to see every detail of what was being done to them, but not all, and he could totally understand

that Lloyd might be one that didn't. When Lloyd was on his back, McGraw pulled him forward, adjusting his position so that his buttocks were right at the edge of the table. Then, he lifted Lloyd's legs and carefully position them wide apart, his feet down flat. Rory was puzzled. It seemed a rather awkward position for a circumcision, and not one he'd seen at CIG+. Knowing that the pivotal moment was soon to come, he moved in closer to Lloyd, taking his hand and squeezing it tight in silent support. Lloyd's face was unreadable as he braced himself for the inevitability of what was about to happen.

"Knowing that I have your total consent, I'm about to perform the act of circumcision on you," McGraw said pompously, making Rory think that he was trying to sound like a high priest about to perform a sacred rite. Was it actually something like that though he wondered. Were he and Mike actually there to witness it because they understood its significance and that, for some men at least, a circumcision was so much more meaningful than what most would consider to be just a minor medical procedure? He thought how important it was for some to be circumcised by a man who understood that significance and, wondering if that might be the case for Lloyd, he was glad that McGraw, with all his obnoxiousness, so clearly did. The man was very erect, his cock glistening with whatever it was that Mike had rubbed onto it. Scalpel in hand, he stretched Lloyd's foreskin right out and edged in closer to him. Then, though, he stood completely still for a long moment.

It came as a shock to Rory when that stillness suddenly broke. Things moved so quickly and in such an unexpected way that it took him a moment to realise what had actually happened. Mike's gloved hand had taken hold of McGraw's cock and guided it towards Lloyd. Then, with no hesitation, the man had thrust it deep into Lloyd in one harsh shove. Lloyd's back arched as he took the sudden, brutal penetration, but McGraw allowed him only a second to recover before he pushed the scalpel into his foreskin as assertively as he'd pushed his cock into him. He yelled and bucked at the cut, but then only moaned softly as McGraw, despite the constraint of having his cock inside Lloyd, worked fast and confidently. The man had run the blade round within seconds, severing the foreskin in one go. Then, the separation complete, McGraw began to fuck hard, thrusting savagely, his gaze darting between Lloyd's shocked face, his freshly exposed glans and the scalpel with the severed foreskin hanging from it that he held aloft like a trophy. After a few moments of McGraw's intense ramming, Lloyd's foreskin fell from the blade and landed on his stomach. Rory was amazed to see just how much of it there was. It seemed impossible that so much could be taken from a man, however generous his foreskin had been. Seeing it there, McGraw pulled his cock out of Lloyd and began furiously rubbing, his foreskin forward over his glans. Mike was already wanking hard too and, despite his shock, Rory found that he was doing the same. He saw, to his amazement, that Lloyd, blood seeping from the raw slice around his cock, was as erect as his three onlookers. Closing right in on him, McGraw fired long and hard, his emission aimed at the severed skin on Lloyd's stomach. Within seconds, Rory and Mike had added to it, the pile of dying flesh covered with three heavy loads. Lloyd's fingers went instantly to the pool of cum, then to his mouth, lapping greedily at his covered fingers. Then, groaning loudly, his back arched and he ejaculated.

## Chapter Ten: Tea and Biscuits

Ever practical, Mike was quickly back in professional mode. After squeezing Lloyd's hand and reassuring him that all was well, he reached for a swab and began mopping at blood and semen running down his cock. Acting as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened, McGraw had unscrewed a tube of surgical glue and was preparing to close Lloyd's wound.

Within minutes, the whole procedure was complete. Mike was fussing over Lloyd, but now in an avuncular rather than medical way, and Rory thought nothing of it when he saw McGraw pick up the scalpel that he'd just used, assuming that he was making a start on clearing away his equipment. The man caught him looking and gave him a rare smile, but then held eye contact in a way that somehow made Rory feel uneasy. He could tell that McGraw somehow wanted him to see that he was pulling his foreskin right forward, gathering as much overhang as he could muster. There wasn't much of it, and certainly nothing like Lloyd's had been, but then, to Rory's astonishment, he suddenly pushed the scalpel into it. For a moment, Rory thought that his suspicion had been right all along, and that McGraw was about to circumcise himself. It amazed him, thinking that that man would, of all people, wanted the moment to be given its full significance. Then though, he realised that he had done no more than cut a nick in the end of his overhang. Still smiling, but somehow now just to himself, McGraw just swabbed a small trickle of blood, then reached for the glue and sealed the edges of his self-inflicted wound closed, no longer seeming to care if Rory was looking or not.

Ten minutes later, with McGraw upstairs in the shower and Mike finishing clearing things away in the kitchen, Rory was glad to have a moment alone with Lloyd as they sat, still naked, in the living room.

"You OK?" he asked, rather unsure if Lloyd was or not. He was looking rather stunned.

"Aye, I think so," he replied. "I mean... he seemed lost for words, his gaze constantly darting to the bare head of his penis sticking out from the neat gauze wrapped round his shaft. "I mean – fuck - did that all actually just happen?"

"Yup, for real," Rory said. "But well-done mate – you're circumcised! Did you enjoy it, if that's the right word?"

Fuck! I don't know. I mean - well – it was just like we'd discussed so much, exactly how we wanted it to happen, but ...."

"Look, I really I need to know," Rory interrupted, sounding worried. "McGraw. When he – well, when he fucked you? Did you know that was going to happen?"

Lloyd looked embarrassed. "Terms and conditions," he said simply. "That was always one of them, but I asked Mike to nae tell you. I really wanted ya ta be here, and I was worried that that might be one kink ta many and put y'off coming."

"Phew. Thank God," Rory said. "I'm relieved. I was worried he'd taken a liberty there. But even so!"

"Don't worry," Lloyd said, "I was well lubed up for it, and I'm used to Jayce nae being too gentle on the way in. McGraw's not exactly in your size league either is he, so I reckoned it was a price worth paying ta get what we wanted."

"Well, I suppose the main thing is, now you're foreskin free," Rory said, only slightly reassured, and a little perturbed by the way Lloyd had said "we", not "I". "Now you can sit back and enjoy it - well, the thought of it at least. You'll be able to enjoy it for real in a month or so when it's all settled down."

When McGraw, still naked, had rejoined them after his shower, Mike appeared from the kitchen and put a tray down on the coffee table. Along with four mugs, there was a plate on it too, but the colours somehow matched so well that it was a second before Rory realised that it wasn't just biscuits on it. In the centre of it, framed by a ring of milk chocolate digestives, was Lloyd's foreskin.

"Fuck!" Lloyd said. "Am I tripping? And was that thing really a part o' me?"

Rory was amazed when McGraw reached forward and picked the "thing" up, lid it over his erection and began wanking with it. The big sleeve of flesh covered almost all of his cock. Rory realised that it was possibly another of his many terms and conditions, but it seemed plain tacky now the heady eroticism that they had all felt earlier was no longer in the air. Rory knew he'd never be able to bring himself to do it but, despite his distain, he was still intrigued by the thought of being able to feel a foreskin around his glans without the complications of it actually being attached to man. Lloyd seemed unconcerned, just sitting there and looking as if his foreskin was just no longer anything to do with him. Mike, though, was feeling very ill at ease.

Mike had put the skin on the plate as kind of gruesome joke, but realised now just what a big mistake it had been. It was an open secret between them that McGraw often made use of skins he'd taken at the clinic, but Mike had never anticipated that he would feel comfortable doing something so edgy with an audience, let alone in front of the man whose skin it had been. The man, though, was clearly enjoying having them looking at him as he wanked with it. The black on white contrast of the flesh tones was so clear that guilt came flooding back for Mike as he thought of having done exactly the same thing with Ben's freshly severed skin all those years. He'd tried so hard to bury the memory of enjoying the skin of a man whose circumcision he'd played a part in, only learning later how much that man hated having been made that way - hating it so much, in fact, that he'd gone to such desperate measures that afternoon when he thought he needed to save his grandson from the same fate. His guilt was all the greater because that that man had later come to be such a good friend. Somehow though, it made it worse still that, at that moment, that man's son was there, circumcised too, his tightly-cut cock hard in his hand.



## Chapter Eleven: Ground Zero

The time he had to spend being out of action turned out to be a period of deep reflection for Lloyd. Things hadn't started well with his new life. When he got home after his circumcision, he'd been touched to see a bottle of champagne in a bucket on the living room table. Soon though, it became clear that Jayce had got it to celebrate the deal he'd pulled off at his meeting that afternoon, not his lover's new status as a circumcised man. Jayce had only shown a token interest in how it had all gone, much more concerned to tell Lloyd every detail of the amazing contract he'd managed to seal. Things didn't improve when they went to bed. Jayce was less than gracious when Lloyd, who was far from in the mood for sex anyway, said he was too sore to lie face down to be fucked from the rear in the way that Jayce always preferred and had asked to be taken flat on his back instead.

Lloyd's first weeks of enforced abstinence were made harder to bear by the way Jayce found it no reason at all to ease up on their twice-daily routine of copulation. Always complaining that he could never get in deep enough when Lloyd was flat on his back, it never seemed to occur to him that he might be frustrated by not being able to cum himself. He rarely asked him how he was healing and, when he did, it seemed that his interest was driven mostly by a concern about when Lloyd would finally be ready again to be taken in the position he preferred. There was worse than that, though. When, six days in, the time had come for Lloyd to soak off his bandage in the bath, his anticipation was almost unbearable as the gauze began to loosen. When it finally floated free though, he felt as if he'd been punched hard in the stomach. He just couldn't believe what he was seeing. The wide band of exposed inner skin that he'd expected just wasn't there. His cut line was neat, thin and even, but it was just millimetres behind the rim of his corona.

Jayce had just mocked Lloyd's devastation over his outcome. For him, a circumcision was a circumcision. Even though it wasn't at all what he'd wanted and expected, Lloyd's result was at least neat, and he managed to half convince himself that perhaps it wouldn't be so bad, and that sacrificing so much sensation might actually re-focus the pleasure he got from being a bottom. When, though, the time came when he could safely use his cock again, Jayce's attitude was the last straw. Lloyd had been looking forward to the amazing moment when he and Jayce could first share being a matched pair of circumcised lovers with a whole new array of sensations to explore, thinking that that it might perhaps be made even better by the way their circumcisions had actually turned out to be so similar. It ended up, though, being just another of fuck, cum and run for work. Jayce hadn't touched his cock, or even made any reference to his circumcision. Left sitting on the bed with his erection, Lloyd felt frustrated and angry, realising that having, partly at least, sacrificed his perfect foreskin to please his lover, it actually meant nothing to Jayce. He'd thought that him being circumcised too would change things between them for the better, but it was suddenly clear that it would make no difference at all. With Jayce's load fresh inside him but still with a raging erection, he reached for his phone.

"Hi Rory," he said as the call connected, working hard to try and sound more upbeat than he felt.

"Lloyd!" Rory replied. "I was going to call you, mate! It's ground zero day for you, isn't it?"

"Aye, it is! Sweet you remembered," Lloyd said.

“Well I hope you’ve been a good boy and waited. How was your first one, then? Pretty mind blowing, I’d imagine, especially after all that time off,” Rory said, the memory of witnessing James’ first circumcised wank still clear in his mind.

“I have been, and I haven’t - yet!” Lloyd said. “So I’m sitting here with a tightly circumcised boner in ma hand, very blue balls and raring ta go, but Jayce has had ta rush off though, so I don’t suppose you are at a loose end? I’d love ta have someone ta share the big moment with. Do ya fancy coming round to help mark th’ occasion?”

## Chapter Twelve: Re-union

"I did them for three weeks," Bella went on, "but then I just couldn't do it anymore."

"Sorry, how do you mean?" Rory asked, puzzled. It was their first meeting since Bella had got back from Africa. Things had been very awkward at first, but they'd been talking for a while and it was just starting to get a little easier.

"Well, I've never believed all that stuff they spout about it preventing AIDS," she said. "I hated having to pretend that I did, but it was more than just that though - much more. I mean, it's amazing cutting a guy like at CIG when he really gets it and know why he wants it, but all those lovely smiling men turning up at the clinic there, innocently trusting the crap they've been fed, thinking they're doing it for the best - it's just so wrong."

"I can see that," said Rory.

"There was this one lovely young guy one day, brought in by his dad. You could tell he just didn't want to be done, but his dad kept on and on and the doctor kept pushing it so hard. Then the guy finally gave in, and they took this beautiful, perfect skin off him. They made a right mess of doing it too, and that was the last straw. Seeing him totally done over for no good reason made me so sad. I just knew I couldn't be part of it anymore."

"I can see that," Rory said again. "Poor you."

"I felt so guilty for going there thinking I was going to enjoy doing it," Bella said. "They were royally pissed off with me when I told them I wanted out of the circumcisions' team, but then someone on the inoculations project got ill and had to come home early, so they agreed to move me over, and that's what I've been doing since - something actually useful."

"I get you," Rory said, risking taking her hand and delighted that she let him. "I mean, we both know how amazing it can be, but - like you said - only when guy knows exactly what's what, and how he wants to be."

"I'm so glad you understand," Bella said. "I wasn't sure if you would."

"I really do," said Rory. "I'm in no position to say which way is best, but it's so wrong to push it to guys who are happy the way they are. I mean, you know I get off on it all as much as you do, but I'm under no illusions."

"There's nothing wrong with having a skin if that's how you want to be," Bella said, rather surprised to have heard Rory suddenly sound so open-minded about the best way to be. "I know some of the guys spout total crap about it all, but are we right to let them? That's really been bothering me lately."

"Yeah," Rory said, worrying again about Lloyd and how much he might have influenced his decision. "Look," he continued after a moment's thoughtful silence, "There's something I need to tell you."

"OK," she said, looking concerned.

"This is hard, and I know you won't like it, but I'm sorry – and it won't happen again, ever," he said.

He meant it. Somehow, he tried to tell himself, it had been an aberration - perhaps just because Bella had been away and it had been so long since he'd had sex of any kind that his balls had overruled his head.

"Rory, just tell me. Whatever it is," Bella said, looking truly worried.

As he braced himself to tell her, Rory was so pleased that he'd had the strength of mind to put a stop to things before they'd got out of hand. It had taken all of his willpower, but he'd managed to say no when Lloyd had asked him to share his first wank as a circumcised man, both of them knowing that it would inevitably lead to more, and – just perhaps – to them going further than they had the time before and into really dangerous territory.

"OK," he went on, "the thing is, when you were away... well, I went to a circumcision, and it wasn't..... well, it wasn't a straightforward one. Not even one like at CIG."

To his amazement, Bella burst out laughing. "The look on your face, Rory!" she said. "I've missed that look so much! I wondered when you'd come clean – I knew you would sooner or later!"

"Sorry?" said Rory, totally confused. "Like, you knew?"

"Yes," she said. "McGraw. He just couldn't wait to tell me, of course. You know what he's like."

"Bella, I..."

"Don't worry my love, it's fine. He also told me what a lucky woman I am, and that you wouldn't touch him or let him do anything with you, and that you were..... well – you were just my lovely Rory, weren't you!"

"Bella, I'm..." Rory said, fully prepared to tell her that McGraw hadn't actually given her the full story, but she interrupted him.

"Rory, listen. I'm no saint here," she said. "When he told me, it made me so wet thinking of you being there, and how much I'd have loved to be there with you too. That kind of thing is so different to what I was doing in Africa - he understood and knew what he wanted, and you helped him get it in the way he wanted too, so that's good."

"Yeah?" Rory said, rather stunned.

"What is it, Rory?" Bella said, seeing his face suddenly cloud.

“Nothing,” he said, not sure what to say, but then he went on, struggling to get his thoughts together about what had happened between him and Lloyd. “But – well, is it different when it’s just men there? Like, does that make it, well, gay?”

“Rory!” Bella said, laughing. “Don’t worry - I get it. I know it goes way beyond all that. I know you aren’t gay, but we’d love each other just as much even if you were. We don’t need labels put on anything, do we – not us. And we don’t need to worry about what other people think either. Can’t we just enjoy it all for what it is - but together? That would make it even better, for me anyway.”

“God, I’d so love that,” Rory said, “but...”

“I’d love you seeing me take the foreskin off a guy who really wanted it,” Bella interrupted. “I mean, you can’t believe the buzz of pushing a blade into someone who really wants their skin gone, knowing you’re giving them what they want - that they’ve thought about it and know how they want to be, even if they know they’re actually fucking themselves up. But only when they really know; not that they’ve just convinced themselves that it’s better because of what others have said.”

“Yeah?” Rory said again, not sure what else to say.

“It was so wrong to cut those guys in Africa for the wrong reasons,” she went on, “but it doesn’t mean I don’t want to be a part of it when it’s different. I’d love to be able to share all that with you too - not just the cutting itself but, well the whole thing about guys getting modded. I really wanted to say that to you before I went off, but I thought you’d lost interest in it all.”

“No way!” Rory said, “but I thought you had, so I just backed off.”

“Well, perhaps my head just wasn’t in the right place for it for a while,” Bella replied. “I mean, giving birth really knocked me sideways, and when you wanted Noah done, I just couldn’t bear the thought of it.”

“I know,” Rory said. “I was so wrong to push it. I realise that now.”

“Don’t be hard on yourself,” Bella said. “We should have talked about it before I even got pregnant, but we didn’t. We both just assumed, but assumed wrong.”

“I can see that now,” Rory said. “Just because it’s right for me and a kink for both of us doesn’t mean it’s right for everyone. It should be his choice, of course.”

“Actually, if we had discussed it before he arrived, I think I’d have agreed with you,” Bella said, “but it felt so different when he was there in my arms – a real person, our lovely, perfect little boy. I just hated the thought of someone taking a knife to him, him so small and vulnerable, putting a scar on him without him having a say.”

“Are we agreed, then?” Rory said. “We just leave him to make his own mind up? No pressure either way?”

“We are,” Bella said. “We’ll always be honest with him if he asks questions, but we won’t ever suggest it to him, or even drop hints - totally his call?”

“Totally,” Rory said. “And if he doesn’t want in, that’s fine with me. I mean, he might hate the idea, and fair enough. Actually, I’m not sure now how I’d feel if he ever did say he wanted in. Funny, isn’t it – it would probably end up with me trying to talk him out of it!”

As they kissed, their hands were soon exploring greedily. Rory was truly urgent in his need to make love to Bella, overwhelmed with the relief that things were OK again and that they would spend the rest of their life together after all. Despite that, he found he was fighting off a nagging glimmer of regret for the experiences he’d let go whilst they were apart, and especially knowing that he’d missed the one chance he might ever get to perhaps find out who he really was. Later, as even though his heart was so full of love for her, it alarmed him to find just how hard it was to stop himself imagining what it would be like if it wasn’t Bella he was about to penetrate with his big, tightly circumcised cock, but Lloyd.

## Part Three: Two Weddings and a Blessing

### Chapter One: Mark's Journey

January 2027

Mark only started to relax when he finally made it onto the M6. The traffic had been horrendous all the way from home, but then the road was suddenly clear and it was a relief to finally get into top gear and put his foot down. As he edged up past 80 and with his mind able to go into auto-pilot rather than focusing on the traffic, he started thinking about the day ahead. He was sure he'd find Leyton in a total state when he got to Timperley. He daydreamed enjoyably, imagining himself as the hero of the hour - arriving and calming Leyton down, then rolling up his sleeves, getting stuck in and saving the day. He'd miss Chris there of course, but it would actually make things easier - he would have tried to help, but only ever got in the way at times like that. Mark was convinced it would all have been too much for Leyton. He'd laughed when Ben had told him that he was making Carol's wedding dress - that was a massive task in itself, but when Ben had gone on to say that he was making the wedding cake too and doing some of the other catering for the reception, Mark was sure that he would have whipped himself up into a frenzy of camp hysteria and need his mature, calm help to get him through. He couldn't have been more wrong, though - when he arrived at Ben's, Leyton seemed serene itself when he answered the door.

"How are you, and how are the grooms?" Mark asked as they hugged.

"I'm good, thanks, and they're totally disorganised, of course!" Leyton said. "You should have seen the awful shirts they were proposing to wear tomorrow - typical hopeless straights. I packed them off into town to get something decent, though God knows what they'll come back with. I think you'll enjoy Rory's wedding suit trousers though."

"Oh, do tell me more!" Mark said. "Nicely tailored?"

"Well, if you mean tailored as in fit to burst, then very nice indeed, I'd say," Leyton replied.

"Oh good!" Mark replied, glad as ever that Leyton understood. "Bella hasn't objected then?"

"Well, she went to the fitting with him. It's hard to believe she didn't notice, so I assume she doesn't mind all his goods being on display - as usual. I really thought him getting back with her might have toned him down a bit, but no way. He's got even more metrosexual lately. I mean, he even made James take him to a gay sauna last week, and I dread to think what they got up to. Anyway, how's poor old Chris doing?"

"He's OK, thanks, but feeling very sorry for himself," Mark replied. "He's only got himself to blame. I mean, a man of his age on a kid's trampoline! It's such a shame he won't be there for the big day though."

Chris was more or less confined to bed, his badly-broken leg in a frame after a nasty fall the previous week when he was playing with his Goddaughter. There was certainly no way he could have travelled. Had it been just Ben and Gemma getting married, they would have postponed so that Chris could be best man as planned, but it was more complicated than that. It was always going to have been a double ceremony with Richard and Carol re-marrying alongside Ben and Gemma but, with Rory and Bella now joining them to renew their vows when the newly-weds went for blessings in church after the registry office weddings, it was all just too much and too complicated to re-arrange. So poor Chris was at home with just a carer for company, but with a promise that he'd be there for it all on Zoom.

"Well, you're looking very relaxed! I was expecting you to be in a total lather with so much to do," Mark said, hoping he was hiding his disappointment that he wasn't. "How's it all going?"

"All well under control," Leyton said. "Actually, it's nearly all done. Wedding dress finished, eight quiches in the oven, more assorted savouries than I can count in the freezer, wedding cake iced, sixty cupcakes cooling on the rack. All good."

"Leyton, you're a total marvel!" Mark said, kissing him. "You'll make someone a lovely wife one day, as they used to say."

"Well, to be honest, I deployed my secret weapon," Leyton replied. "Come and meet her."

Although he wondered from its uniform shade that hers might perhaps have been a little "assisted", the first thing that struck Mark about her was how similar her long, luxuriant chestnut hair was to Leyton's.

"It's all natural," she said, before they'd even said hello. "No little grey visitors yet."

Mark was mortified. She must have seen him looking and somehow read his mind. He very relieved to see her smile as she spoke, clearly no offence taken. She wiped her hand on a tea towel before extending it. For practicality over the cooking, both she and Leyton had their hair tied back in long ponytails. If he'd seen them together on the street, it would have been their body language as much as their matching looks that would have led him to assume them to be a younger brother and older sister rather than mother and son. They looked - as Mark's Granny Burns might have put it - "the very head off each other."

"Hello, I'm Lynn," she said as she resumed drying up. "Nice to meet you. I'm always hearing about Mark and Chris, but I never remember who's the posh one and who's the Irish one."

Mark laughed out loud. He'd taken to her straight away. "Well," he said, reverting to the brogue of his childhood, "t'isn't that the two are actually incompatible, to be sure!" But you can't be Leyton's mum," he continued, back in his usual accent. "You're just not old enough!"

"Ooh here we go!" Leyton said. "This'll be good! Clash of the Titans - Ireland's champion charmer versus Britain's best bullshit beater!"

"Shut up, you," said Lynn, smiling. "Well, I was a young mum alright," she continued. "A very young one."

Her accent was pure Eastenders. Mark laughed to himself at the thought of her sharing the top table with Ursula and Charles should Leyton and James ever got married, but he already knew



whose company he would enjoy the most. "So why did you call him Leyton, then?" he asked. "I've always wondered."

"Well, you'll think I was the biggest slapper going, but that's where 'e was conceived - down the alley between the tube station and the kebab shop. Simple as that. No point pretendin' otherwise. I never knew 'is dad, but he's been the best son I could ever wish for, and 'e's never given me a moment's bother, bless 'im."

"Oh gawd," said Leyton. "Pass me my violin. And the puke pot while you're at it."

"In fact," Lynn went on, not missing a beat as she expertly flicked him with her tea towel, "sort of son, daughter and a best friend all rolled up into one. That's what 'e's been like, ever since 'e was little."

"And just look at him now!" said Mark.

"Yeah, I haven't changed much, have I!" said Leyton, tossing his long hair and flapping his pinafore, rolling pin in hand.

"Yea," Lynn went on. "My little baby's all grown up now. And 'im wiv his degrees and lovely boyfriend, good job and posh friends too - who'd 'ave thought it, eh. And now 'e's going to make me a grandma on top!"

"What?" Mark said, taken aback.

"Oh there she goes! Old blabber mouth strikes again," Leyton said, obviously delighted that she had blabbed. "Well, we were going to keep quiet about it until the others had had their big day, but yes - our big news!"

"Leyton! That's just wonderful!" Mark said, getting up to hug him. "Tell me all!"

"Well, don't get the knitting needles out just yet," Leyton replied. "It'll take ages for anything to happen, but we've had the first meeting with the social workers and they've approved us, so we're going to be some poor brat's double-daddies, God help 'em!"

## Chapter Two: Take As You Find

In keeping with the nature of the day, the hens and stags were travelling separately to their respective pre-nuptial celebrations. Bella and Gemma were already on their way to rendezvous with Carol and the other ladies at the posh hotel just outside Spalding where they were going to spend the night. Kicking off with a full-on afternoon tea, the plan was to follow it with an indulgent evening of treatments in the spa, then round the evening off with drinks and canapes in the bar. The boys had something rather less sophisticated planned - what Richard called a "full monty" curry, followed by a pub crawl round town.

Mark got up early to drop Lynn at Chorlton Street for her coach to London. As soon as he got back to Timberley, the stags began loading up his SUV. After stowing the suit bags and Tupperware boxes full of food for the reception, they carefully lay Carol's wedding dress on top and set off. It was a slow, cross-country journey. Somewhere near Worksop, they were all badly-enough in need of a break to risk stopping at an un-promising looking roadside café. As Rory, James and Mark ordered coffees at the counter, Leyton went to the gents and Ben headed off to grab somewhere for them to sit. It was busy, and the only option was a large table with someone already at it.

"Help theeself, me love," she said when Ben asked if she minded sharing. "Busy, i'nt it. Thee off anywhere nice then?" she asked as he sat down.

"Well, to my stag night, actually!" Ben said, rather enjoying hearing himself say it.

"Oh congratulations, my duck!" she said, beaming at him. "I hope you're going to behave thee self though- ya don't want no thick head for the big day, eh? Going to be a big do, is it, the wedding?"

"Well, kind of. It's a double one actually, so I suppose so," Ben said, finding just how good it felt to share his happiness with a complete stranger. He was about to say more when Mark arrived, bearing spoons and sugar sachets. Ben saw a look pass across the woman's face when Mark sat down next to him, but it was a moment later - just as Rory and James arrived and sat down too - when it dawned on him just what that look had been.

"Ooh a double wedding!" she said. "That's properly lovely! About time too, isn't it - that you boys can get proper married, I mean. Is this your lucky fella then?" she said to Ben, nodding towards Mark.

Mark had his mouth open to put her right, but Rory got in first.

"And don't they make a lovely couple!" he said, winking meaningfully at his dad. "It's about time they made honest men of each other."

Mark closed his mouth again, a strange expression on his face.

"Better late than never, isn't it darling," Ben said, feeling rather naughty but enjoying himself, squeezing Mark's hand and plonking a noisy kiss on his cheek.

"And you two are the other happy couple then?" the woman asked, turning to Rory and James.

"You can tell, can't you," said Ben, getting into his stride. "Don't they look so in love! They're just made for each other."

"Oh we so are," Rory replied, putting his arm round James' shoulder. "Aren't we, darling."

"A match made in heaven," James replied, grinning. "At least we have been since....well, since I had the operation anyway."

"You'd never know, would you," Rory said, turning to the woman, his voice dropped to a conspiratorial whisper. "Just a couple of years back she was a trainee florist, but now he's a top-flight professional wrestler. Just goes to show, doesn't it."

"It does indeed, me duck," the woman, taking, to Rory's total amazement, what he had said at face value. "But I take as I find," she went on. "Live and let live, I say - so long as you don't do no one no harm. That's me motto."

"Good for you! I just wish there were more like you around," Rory said, meaning it.

"Your other friend - the one with the lovely long hair," she went on, her voice now conspiratorial too. "She's really a he then? In the middle of changing over, like? I did wonder as soon as I sen 'im."

"Oh you're a smart one!" Ben said, struggling not to laugh. "Not much gets past you, does it."

Just then, as Leyton arrived with a tray full of mugs, the woman stood up to make way for him.

"Anyway, me loves," she said, "here's your lovely lady friend with your drinks, so I'll leave you to it. Me 'usband will be wondering where I've got to. I hope you have a lovely day and I wish you all t'happiness in the world. Ta-ra me ducks."

"Lady friend?" Leyton said, frowning as he put down the tray and sat in the woman's place. "OK, so what's being going on then, you naughty school boys? I might have known you'd get up to mischief as soon as my back was turned. I thought you'd have known better though, Mark, but what exactly's put that big fat smirk on your face then?"

### Chapter Three: Carol's New Friend

"Come on girl, time to get your sling backs in gear," Leyton said to Carol. "We'd better get started if we're going to get you all glammed up in time."

They'd only just cleared away the lunch that Carol had ready for them when they arrived, and Leyton had suddenly realised that the cab to take her to the hotel for the hen do would be there within the hour. With him being, as she always said, "like the granddaughter she'd never had," no one had been surprised when Carol had told them that Leyton was going to do her hair and makeup for the hen night.

The occasional screech of raucous laughter from upstairs as the others just sat and watched the football, realising that it would be wise to rest after the journey and before the long, heavy night ahead of them. When Carol finally came down again, she looked radiantly happy, dressed to kill, and beautifully made up. As his father got up and went across to kiss her, it was with enormous pleasure that Ben saw the look of total love and admiration on his face.

"Wow mum!" Ben said, "you look just amazing!"

"Thanks love," she replied glowing. "It's all thanks to the lovely friend who's been helping me get ready. She's just on her way down now to meet you all, but she's a bit shy, so you will be nice to her, won't you."

They were all puzzled, not having heard anyone else arrive. Then, though, a moment later, four mouths dropped in amazement as she came in to join them.

"Fuck me!" James said. It was very rare for him to swear, and his astonished eyes were wide in total disbelief.

Tall, willowy and elegant, she really was rather strikingly beautiful. Her chestnut hair beautifully coifed and her make up immaculate, she walked in confidently and elegantly on her high heels.

"Hello boys," she said, her voice low and sexy, "I'm Carol's friend, Leytoinette. I'm very pleased to meet you all as I've heard so many nice things about you."

After a moment, the mood of silent astonishment broke when Richard threw back his head and roared with laughter.

"Hello gorgeous," he said, leerily. "Always nice to meet a friend of Carol's, and especially such a very lovely lady as you."

"Leyton – for God's sake!" James said.

"That woman in the café – she's got a lot to answer for," Rory said.

"Actually, you do look rather sumptuous," Mark said. "Amazingly so, in fact!"

"Are you going to give us all a good time then, you sexy minx?" Richard said.

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure," she replied. "A room full of real gentlemen like you - I expect you all know how to treat a lady, you handsome beasts! You won't be too rough with me, will you though? I'm really rather innocent when it comes to the ways of men."

"Yeah, right!" said James.

"So what kind of knickers have you got on then?" Ben said, instantly rather surprised at himself.

"Oh you saucy thing! What a question to ask a lady!" Leytoinette replied, feigning horror.

"Now now boys, decorum please when there's ladies present!" Carol said, laughing. "We women-folk never like to reveal the secrets of our foundation garments."

"Well, if you really want to know," Leytoinette said, batting her eyelids coyly, "my lingerie's very dainty, of course. I'm wearing a teensy-weensy lacy thong, and you can see just how very sheer my stockings are too," she continued, running a hand suggestively from her knees up under her dress."

"Well you've got a great pair of pins there for sure," Richard said.

"She has, actually," Mark added.

"And of course I have a suspender belt on too," Leytoinette went on, giggling. "I know how you gentlemen always appreciate that."

"So what kind have you really got on?" James asked. "Not that I'm sure I really want to know. It might put me off my curry."

Well, actually, I am just being a tease," Leytoinette replied. "Carol's been kind enough to lend me a pair of her big comfy ones."

"Woah! Too much information!" Ben said.

James suddenly realized how quiet Rory had been through it all. Looking over at him and seeing a look on his face that he knew of old, he suddenly reached across and made a grab for his crotch.

"Thought so!" he said, turning to the others. "He's absolutely rigid, the perv!"

"Now now, boys," Carol said again, trying to sound stern but not able to help smiling. "Keep it clean please - you're not on your stag night yet!"

"It's the lacy knickers," Mark said, authoritatively. "It never fails with the straights. They're just so predictable."

Like a flash, James moved again, but in the other direction this time, his hands up under Leytoinette's dress before she had a chance to react.

"It's OK," he said. "Sorry Rory, but it's trunks. And he's certainly not boned, and thank God for that too."

"Shush now, boys!" Carol said. "Behave yourselves, please! The important thing is that I'm delighted to say that Leytoinette's just accepted my invitation to join us hens for our ladies' afternoon tea at The Grange. Won't that be nice!"

## Chapter Four: The Stags

When the stag group finally left the curry house that evening, the pressing question was which pub they should go to first to continue the evening's entertainment. Especially with a trio of his dad's old friends as part of the party, Ben was amazed when Richard suggested that they went to The White Heart. It was certainly nearest but, as Ben was sure his father must have known, it was also Spalding's one gay bar. No one had demurred but, unsure if his dad's guests actually realised the nature of the place to which they'd agreed to go, Ben was uneasy.

Leyton and Mark being at their most amusingly outrageous over the meal and with Rory, after several bottles of Cobra, not far behind them, hadn't caused any raised eyebrows. They'd all laughed heartily too when Leyton had told them about his dragged-up afternoon tea with the hens, how well he'd got away with it, despite the agony of high heels, and how he'd actually got worried when he thought the cab driver had started to hit on him on the way home. Even so, Ben really didn't want any unpleasantness to cloud such a special evening, and going to a gay bar seemed to him to be an unnecessarily edgy move.

Ben was relieved when no one seemed remotely concerned when they went into the bar and the nature of the place became plain. Trying to reassure himself, he thought that having straights in the majority would make it a case of safety in numbers. Richard got a round in and, settled at a table in the corner, no one seemed uncomfortable or made any reference to the other punters, some of whom left little doubt about what kind of pub it was. It was only after the third round of drinks, by which time even Ben was relaxing into the evening, that the trouble started. Surprisingly, it arose out of the most innocent of questions.

"So Rory, are you having another honeymoon then?" Richard's oldest friend John asked. "I was wondering if that's what people do after renewing their vows."

"Yeah, we are," Rory replied, "but just a weekend in Berlin this time."

"So what will happen at the airport, then?" Mark asked, genuinely curious. "Will you have to take it out before you go through the scanner thing?"

"No," Rory replied, clearly understanding what Mark meant. "I'll just tell them why if it goes off. It's no big deal these days."

"Sorry, you've lost me there," John said.

Clearly glad to, Richard replied before Rory had a chance. "His piercing," he explained, "He's got a PA."

"Blimey!" John said, wincing.

"So you think they'd just take your word for it?" Leyton asked. "Not that you'd actually mind showing it to them if they didn't, knowing you."

"That's my boy!" Richard said. "If you've got it, flaunt it, I say - and you've certainly got it where it counts!"

Ben felt a flicker of familiar worry. He knew all too well how surprisingly willing his normally staid father was to talk cock, even without having had rather a lot to drink.

"Well, I wouldn't be surprised if they did actually want to check," Richard continued, to Ben's dismay. "I mean, who'd believe how far down south it's hanging if they saw it on a screen?"

"Dad, please!" said Ben, appalled, but trying hard to smile.

"Well, he's got a really big 'un, hasn't he," Richard replied. "No point denying it. At least I managed to pass some good genes down the family line in that respect if nothing else."

"Thanks grandad. Good work there!" Rory said, clinking his glass against Richard's. His speech, to Ben's further dismay, was more than slightly slurred. "We're lucky boys aren't we, eh dad?" he went on, turning to Ben.

Leyton saw the look on Ben's face and sensed that he might be glad to be saved from answering that particular question.

"So when are we going to get our PA's then, Ben?" he asked, saying the first thing that came into his head in his hurry to get in and save him. "I've always liked the look of a bit of genital jewellery, so I will if you will. You up for it too, James?"

"Well, if you lot are getting them, I will too," Richard said. "Shall we all go together?"

"I think mum and Gemma might have something to say on that score!" Ben replied, amused. Despite his unease, that his father had actually taken the idea seriously.

"I've always wondered what it must be like having a ring through your dick," said Domenic, Richard's past and future best man.

"Yeah," said Nigel, Richard's fellow oboist from his days in the Halle Orchestra. "I kind of get it, but I don't think I'd want one myself."

"Surely it's uncomfortable?" John asked, looking at Rory. "Isn't it annoying, like having it rubbing on your foreskin?"

Ben's heart sank. His mouth opened to get in and divert the topic, but he wasn't quick enough to beat Rory's reply.

"Well, that's never actually been a problem for me," he answered, smiling.

Ben braced himself. He was dreading that Rory, his tongue loosened by a lot to drink, might add "and it wouldn't be for dad either." To his immense relief, he didn't.

"Yeah?" said Nigel, "So does your skin sort of go over it then?"

Ben's heart sank more. It was partly because he had a vision of how the conversation might progress, but mainly because there it was yet again - that assumption that everyone had a foreskin, that it was the way everyone was, that no one ordinary and normal could possibly not have one. He braced himself again for what Rory might say next. For a moment, he was relieved that he stayed quiet, but then, to his horror, saw that Rory's hand was toying with the zip of his trousers. He wasn't the only one who had noticed.

"Ooh, show time!" Leyton whispered conspiratorially to Mark as he kicked James under the table.

"Dear God – just how much has he had to drink?" Mark whispered back.

"Enough, obviously," Leyton replied. "This will be interesting! Brace yourself."

Rory had eased the zip down just a couple of inches and spread his legs a little. Commando as usual, a glint of metal showed in the gape of his fly, just the ball on his PA poking out. Ben was mortified, alarmed to see that his father had seen too, but, before he could say anything, Rory had reached inside his trousers. Although his cock stayed hidden, he hooked out the ring.

"Rory..." Ben said, appalled.

"Blimey Rory! That's a thick old piece of kit you've got in there!" Richard said. "I'd always thought they'd need to be thin."

"Rory..." Ben tried again. It was no good though. After looking round to see that no one outside of their group was close by, Rory was easing his fly open just a little more.

"Bugger me! I see what you mean, Richard - that's a big old mushroom and a half he's got there!" Nigel said. "So where does it come out underneath, then?" he asked, clearly fascinated and edging in for a closer look.

Ben tried again to stop him, but it was too late. Rory had freed his glans from his fly, then tipped it up so that Nigel could see the ring emerging through the middle of his empty fren groove.

"Handy you've not got anything in the way where it comes out," John was saying.

"Yeah, it meant it could go in nice and central," Rory said.

"And I see now why there's no foreskin problem either!" John added.

"Yes, must make it easier all round. Being cut, I mean," Nigel said.

Cut. As usual, Ben winced inside at hearing the word. Domenic, though, felt like he'd just been punched in the stomach. He'd noticed the bareness of Rory's helmet but assumed that he'd just pulled his foreskin back to show them his PA more clearly. It hadn't even crossed his mind that Rory was actually circumcised. Clearly remembering Ben's deep trauma at the time of his own needless circumcision, it stunned him to think that he'd actually gone on to inflict the same thing on his son. Despite his shock and disappointment in Ben, he was amazed to find that his cock had hardened. He tried to stop himself looking at Rory's crotch, but couldn't. He'd caught glimpses of a couple of Muslim officers in the communal showers in police stations over the years, but they were always mercifully and tactfully discrete. There had been just a couple of others - regular, white men like himself - who had amazed him with their brazenness and lack of shame in not hiding their bareness, but Rory's was the first circumcision he'd seen close up. The reality of it shocked him to the core. It looked to him like a mutilated, grotesque version of a cock - the scar line, the unmitigated, stark bareness of the helmet, the complete lack of any cover or any potential for modesty. Apart from that, the sheer, basic crudity of what Rory had been left with could surely offer so little potential for pleasure. With a feeling of overwhelming shame, he thought how close he'd come to having his own son made that way.

Domenic found it hard to believe just how much he had actually wanted Sam to be circumcised. It had taken every bit of his willpower to fight off the compulsion to bring it about. He'd tried hard to bury the memory of how close he'd come to actually making it happen, but the guilt was still there. It had come flooding back when Sam had gone to university, when he'd realised how awful it would have been for him to be braced for the moment when his new circle of friends first noticed his difference. Then again on the day he'd seen Sam so radiantly happy when he'd brought his



girlfriend home to meet them for the first time, saying that he'd found the women he wanted to spend his life with. He'd been overwhelmingly relieved then that he hadn't inflicted such an awful disfigurement on the terrible teen that had become the fine man he loved so much. It would have meant that he'd have had to have the awkwardness of explaining to the woman he loved that he was different to other men and seeing her shocked reaction. It had happened again when he'd seen Sam and Claire so proud of their new twin sons, thinking how hard it would have been for Sam to have to explain to them one day why they differed. Thinking back, he just couldn't understand what had possessed him. How awful it would be now, he thought, if he'd not eventually seen sense. It would be unbearable to have to face up to the guilt of knowing that it was purely his fault that Sam was as maimed as Rory. Yet, despite all that, why had learning that Rory was circumcised made his cock so hard?

To Ben's enormous relief, one of the bar crew had appeared to clear the forest of glasses on the table and, although for a moment, he had considered leaving things as they were, Rory's zip was quickly back up.

"So how's your B&B, Nigel?" he asked, trying to divert to conversation back to safe territory, but it was no good.

"I've always wondered what it must be like not having one – a foreskin, I mean," John said before Nigel could reply to Ben's question. "I mean, I can see how it could be better."

"Well, it has to be cleaner, doesn't it," Nigel said. "Stands to reason." I'm never really sure what they're there for anyway. Even so,...."

"Well, I've always found mine's rather handy when the wife's away!" Domenic chipped in, glad to find something to say, conscious that he'd been deep in thought for the last little while and hoping that no one had noticed how quiet he'd suddenly gone.

"Well, they're not exactly things of beauty, are they," Nigel added. "Funny, wrinkly old things really. I've always thought it looks nice and tidy without one."

"And sometimes they're tight too, of course, and that can't be much fun," John added. "Remember that boy at school, Richard? The one who we laughed at in the PE showers 'cos he could never get his back?"

"I'm not sure how I'd find always being uncovered, though," Nigel said. "Suppose it depends what you're used to. Perhaps if you just don't miss it if you've never had one."

"Yes, perhaps that's best. Keep it simple - just get them taken off early before lads know any different," John said.

"Yes, that's probably the best way," Nigel said. "Just have done with it. Save a whole lot of bother. And I agree - it does look nice and neat too."

Suddenly, Ben couldn't take it anymore. His chair fell backwards onto the floor as he got up suddenly and headed for the door.

Richard was shocked. He'd assumed that hearing so many positives coming up un-prompted in the conversation would have been something that Ben would have been pleased to hear, but clearly not.

"Oh dear, what's got into him?" John said after a moment's awkward silence.

“A bit of a sensitive topic, actually, but you weren’t to know,” Richard said. “I’ll go and see if he’s OK.”

“No, grandad,” Rory said. “I’ll go. It was my fault.”

## Chapter Five: Heart to Heart.

Ten minutes later, when Ben and Rory still hadn't reappeared, Leyton used the pretence of a trip to the gents to go and see if all was OK. Opening the door that led out into the pub car park, he saw the two of them standing deep in conversation. He hung back in the shadows for a moment, trying to hear what they were saying, unsure if it would be wise to intervene or best just leave them to it.

"But how can I help Noah when we don't match?" Rory was saying, his voice clearly anguished.

"Rory, it's not exactly rocket science, and do dad's ever say anything anyway?" Ben replied. "Your grandad never said anything to me and I worked it all out OK. I'll always be there for Noah if he does need any help though. God knows, I've never forgotten what it's like to have one. James will be the same, and Leyton still has his, doesn't he? We'd all be there for you, not that you'll need us. Boys just get on with it."

"But what will he think, seeing I'm different to him?" Rory said.

"You can just tell him that you were born Jewish and that was part of it," Ben said. "They'll do all that stuff at school."

"Yeah, I was SO Jewish wasn't I!" Rory said, suddenly sneering. "The judge saying that I should live with you during the week so I could go to synagogue with mum on Saturdays - well, we went twice ever, and that was only because nan was there for the weekend. And then Freddy and Henry - she never bloody got them done, did she, and they were just as Jewish as me."

"Well he'll just accept it anyway," Ben said, hoping that it was true. "Kids just do. You can explain it all to him properly when he's old enough."

"What, like you did - not!" Rory replied, sounding really angry now. "The only thing you ever said to me was in France that time, and that was only that you'd have preferred it if I'd had a choice. So how was that supposed to make me feel? You saying that just made think that I must be missing out on something - that it must be better to be the other way, but not knowing why. You never said anything to make me feel good about the way I was, and silence spoke volumes there, loud and clear."

"Rory, I'm sorry. I can see now that I should have," Ben said, really taken aback by Rory's upset. "I really regret that I didn't, but I just couldn't. I thought then and think now that it's wrong to do it, but you're right: I should have done my best to make sure you were OK with it, and I'm sorry I didn't."

"So why didn't you stop it happening if you think it's so much worse?" Rory said. "You did nothing to stop mine, but you were in there in a flash, running to the rescue when you thought I was having Noah done, weren't you."

Ben's face fell. He didn't realise that Rory knew what had happened that day. Mike had obviously told him, or else his suspicions were right and Rory had actually been at the scene he'd burst in on. Either way, the implications of it were troubling, but it wasn't the moment to consider them.

"I've never told you this before, but I had no say. It was a done deal," Ben said simply, putting consideration of those other issues aside and trying to focus on putting things right with Rory.

"Yeah, like you'd have no idea I was going to be brissed!" Rory snapped back angrily. "A mohel just appeared out of nowhere in a puff of smoke, cup of wine in one hand and a knife in the other? Yeah, right."

"Rory," Ben said, trying to keep calm. "I know how just hard this all is, but actually that's not too far from the truth, believe it or not."

Clearly unconvinced, Rory muttered something that Ben couldn't make out.

"We'd agreed, your mum and I," Ben went on. "She wasn't particularly religious even then, but she wanted you to be aware of your heritage, and fair enough. I had no issues with that, but we'd agreed we'd leave it for you to be old enough to decide for yourself which way you wanted to go when you were old enough to understand. I knew how much I'd hate it if you ever did decide to get done, but I'd have understood. You are Jewish - technically. I mean, I know you aren't now, but, by birth....."

"Yeah – me the brissed Catholic!" Rory said. "And how do you think that makes me feel? Taking communion, there on my knees, supposed to be thinking about the body and blood of Christ, but all I can think of is how bare my helmet is."

"Rory, I know your faith is as important to you as it is to me," Ben said. "It's what you believe that counts, and it wasn't your choice to be brissed, and it certainly wasn't mine."

"So what happened then?" Rory asked, his anger starting to be tempered by curiosity.

"Well, basically, it was a set up on your gran's part," Ben said. "I was away for work, so your mum had gone to stay with her. She had it all arranged, and your mum - well, she just took the easy option and caved in. I truly had no idea until it was too late. Believe me, I'd have stopped it in an instant if I'd had any idea, but I just didn't."

"Really? Shit," said Rory, suddenly deflated. "I always thought you must have agreed to it. That you wanted me to be like you. That you'd have had me done anyway, even without the Jewish stuff."

"No, never!" Ben replied vehemently. "I'd never have wanted that! I was devastated. That phone call when your mum told me what had happened was one of the worst moments of my life. I think she actually regretted it too, but she wouldn't admit it. You know what she's like - how pig headed she can be about being in the wrong. I just hated what she'd let happen and - well - it was the start of the rot."

"Sorry?" Rory asked.

"Well, it was the start of the rot that split us up. I just couldn't look her in the eye after what she'd allowed to happen to you, my lovely perfect boy," Ben said, his voice cracking.

"So you really didn't want me done?" Rory asked, his tone very different now, almost childlike.

"No. I hated that it had happened with all my heart. I still do," Ben said. "I'll never forgive myself."

"It was so tough, Dad," Rory said. All the fight was gone from him and he sounded close to tears. "It was horrible. They'd all start on at me at school, making comments. I never knew what I wanted. Sometimes I wanted them to pick on me for being big so they didn't say anything about me being cut, then other times I wanted them to tease me for being cut rather than for being big. I could have coped with one or the other, but both? I just felt like some object – like I was just some huge, freaky cock that just happened to have a boy stuck on the other end of it."

"It must have been awful. I'd have hated that too," Ben said. "I think I convinced myself that you were OK with it, but I can see it was just wishful thinking."

"There was nothing you could have done, dad," Rory said simply.

"I wish you'd told me, though. At least we could have talked about it. I'm so lucky that I missed all that - over being circumcised at least. But if it's any consolation at all, I know just what you mean about being teased. I had all that too - over being big, I mean. I know everyone thinks we're lucky, but it's not as simple as that, is it. Certainly not when you are a kid and just want to be like everyone else. Later though, once you get past all that, it's not all bad, is it? I mean, not that I've been some Lothario who's always putting it around, but they do seem to like it, don't they - the ladies, I mean."

"Well, that's true I suppose," Rory replied. Ben was relieved to see the hint of a familiar smile cross his face.

"And you must have seen the guys looking too," Ben continued, pleased to have found something positive to say to move things on a little. "Like Mark does. He thinks I don't notice, but Chris put me wise to that one years ago. And, well, if you don't mind me saying so, you don't exactly do much to hide what you've got, do you!" Ben said, daring to risk a smile. "You never did! There were so many times when you were a teen when I had it on the tip of my tongue to say something to you about going out with all your goods on display!"

Rory couldn't help but smile back, the anger gone from him. "Fair cop, dad!" he said. "I reckon I just came to think that if I couldn't hide it, then I might as well flaunt it. Kind of brazen it out really - over being cut as well as hung."

"Well good for you, I suppose" Ben said. "I wish I'd been able to be like that, but I just couldn't. You know I hate being circumcised, but you heard what the others said about it earlier – not everyone thinks it's bad."

"Yeah, perhaps," Rory said, slightly uncertainly. "When I'd got used to the teasing, I did kind of start enjoying being different in some weird kind of way."

"Well good for you," Ben said again, pleased that the worst of Rory's distress seemed to be over. Then, though, he saw his son's face suddenly cloud.

"But then I got this bloody ring put in it and made myself into a freak all over again," Rory said. "God, what's wrong with me, dad?" Suddenly, he burst into tears.

"Did I ever tell you my school nickname?" Ben said, releasing Rory from a tight hug once the worst of his anguish had finally subsided. His nickname was something he'd managed not to think about for a long time but, to his amazement, he found himself smiling as he recalled it.

"No, what was that?" Rory asked through his sobs, glad of the distraction as he fought to regain some control.

"It took some bright spark about five seconds to come up with it the first time we got changed for PE," Ben said. "No great originality involved though. I was 'Big Ben'."

"Yup. I suppose that was pretty inevitable!" Rory said, smiling. "Bastards, aren't they, boys."

"Yeah, they really are!" Ben said. "I was stuck with that bloody name for six whole years until....."

"What is it, dad?" Rory asked, suddenly concerned to see his father's face shadow as he broke off.

"Well, then though, just for the last few weeks after I was..... well....circumcised, it changed," Ben said. "No one ever said it to my face, thank God, but I heard them behind my back."

"Go on," Rory said. "What was it?"

"They started calling me 'Bare Ben' instead," he said. "And that really hurt. It was like my size suddenly didn't matter to them anymore - not once I'd been circumcised. It was suddenly like that was all that mattered - that it defined me."

Leyton jumped as he felt a hand on his shoulder. It was Mark. "What's the score?" he asked quietly.

"Hard to say," Leyton replied. "Some real heart-to-heart stuff's been going on, but I think the worst's over. Rory's just had a good cry, so time to reel them back in, I think. You gonna do it, or shall I?"

"Oh, I think an old queens comedy double act always does the trick at times like this," Mark replied. "If we play our cards right and camp it up enough, Rory won't be able to resist joining in too, so ready for show time then, sister?"

## Chapter Six: No Big Deal

With the hens staying over at the hotel, it was just the stags and their guests back at Carol's house after their night on the town. To everyone's relief, Rory and Ben seemed fine together after their upset, the atmosphere relaxed and a convivial. Richard broke out the whisky and, much to everyone's surprise, Domenic produced a jiffy bag of something that smelt rather fragrant. As he skilfully began rolling joints for them all, he told them that he'd had great pleasure in taking it off a "skanky wannabe hard boy" in the town earlier, who'd looked terrified when he'd flourished his long-expired Detective Inspector's warrant card and said he'd let him off with a verbal warning this time if he handed his stash over "for destruction."

They picked things over pleasantly as they drank and smoked, enjoying talking about the evening they'd had and big day ahead. Ben wasn't the only one to be relieved that the topics of conversation stayed safe, the earlier upset in the pub not mentioned. Finally, in the small hours, Richard's chums Nigel and John said they'd better call it a day and rang for taxis. It was only one drink later when Domenic said that he'd better make move too and rang his son, who'd offered to come and collect him.

Twenty minutes later, Sam wasn't surprised to see Domenic a bit unsteady on his feet as he emerged from the Cook's front door. It genuinely amazed him though to see his dad be quite so affectionate and huggy, laughing out loud at the incongruity of seeing him actually kiss them all goodnight. It made sense though when the smell of weed hit him as his father finally got rather awkwardly into the car.

"Dad, you're stoned!" he said. "You stink of it!"

"Well, it was a special occasion," said Domenic, dismissively. "Thanks for turning out to collect me anyway – much appreciated."

"Well, fair's fair - you did it often enough for me when I was a terrible teen," Sam said as they pulled away," but I expect you'd have had plenty to say if I'd smelt of weed! You had a good night then?"

Domenic belched loudly. "Oops, pardon," he said. "The best, mate. Just the best."

"Nice that your Richard's best man again," Sam said, "though kind of funny it's with the same bride as before."

"Well it's just so good to see 'em all so happy again," Domenic said.

"They had some big upset years back, didn't they?" Sam asked.

"They did," Domenic replied. "Nasty stuff. The bloke Carol married on the re-bound from Richard was a total piece of work. He did a runner on her, taking her savings with him. Left her saddled with his pair of 'orrible sons too."

"Ouch. Nasty stuff indeed," Sam said.

Domenic knew he should leave it at that, but couldn't stop himself. After what had happened earlier, he somehow needed to hear Sam's horrified reaction.

"And that," he continued, "was on top of setting things up so that Ben got a circumcision he didn't need."

"Yeah? Sam said, simply.

That wasn't the response Domenic had expected at all. "What, the poor lad left with no cover on his todger?" he went on, surprised by Sam's lack of horror.

"Well, I do remember worrying about that," Sam said, "but it's no big deal."

"Sorry?" Domenic said, puzzled.

"Not having a cover on your todger, I mean" Sam said. "Didn't I ever tell you? I got done when I went to uni."

Sam's tone was so casual that Domenic was dumbstruck. Instantly, he felt sober, trying to get his head round hearing something so significant being talked about as if it was hardly worth mentioning.

"What, you mean you got circumcised?" he asked in disbelief.

"Yeah, you'd got me worried when you asked me that time," Sam said.

Domenic was amazed that Sam even remembered that conversation. Although there had been so much about it going on inside his head, it was actually the only time he'd ever mentioned the subject to Sam, and he'd truly not gone any further than asking him if his foreskin was tight. That first chat was going to be the first – an initial broach that, had the reality of guilt over what he was planning not finally got the better of him, would be followed by more that would gradually soften Sam up and lead him to believe that he actually needed to be circumcised,

"To be honest," Sam was saying, "I suppose I was just a horny teen who didn't want anything spoiling the fun I was planning on getting up to, so I went to see the campus doc. After you'd asked, I wanted it checked out just in case. I was worried what all the hundreds of girls I was hoping to shag might say if something wasn't right - not that that ever happened, I hasten to add!"

"What did the doc say, then?" Domenic asked, trying to keep his voice even and to hide his urgent need to know, after all his guilt about almost having had Sam circumcised needlessly, if he actually had needed to be done. It had, after all, been a long time before that chat since he'd seen Sam's penis, and he knew that some lads' skins did actually get tight as teenagers.

"Well, I was dead embarrassed, of course," Sam replied, "but he didn't turn a hair. He just said he had freshers coming in worried about it every year, and that experience had taught him that it was best to be on the safe side if they had any concerns at all. He didn't even look at it – just booked me in for the chop. I had it done a couple of weeks later, no big deal. We had the boys done last year, actually. Claire wasn't too convinced, but I thought it was best if it was something they never had to think about."



## Chapter Seven: Bedtime

With all the guests finally gone, the others agreed that they'd better be sensible and turn in. Despite that, nobody actually stirred. Nor did they demure when Richard suggested one last drink to toast, in its various forms and degrees, the ending the three stags' bachelor status. It was very late when finally, after several more "last" drinks, they did actually head to bed. Wisely, they'd thought to organise the sleeping arrangements earlier - Leyton and James in the spare room, Mark and Rory in Ben's old room, and Ben doubling up with his father in the master bedroom.

Ben was keen to be safely under the covers before Richard finally stopped fussing in the kitchen and came up to bed. The two of them sharing what was going to be Richard's marital bed again from the next night felt more than slightly awkward. He undressed quickly and put on his dressing gown, planning on as quick a trip as possible along the hall to the bathroom. Still rather spaced out by the weed and preoccupied with the thought of sharing a bed with his father, he got a shock though as he pushed open the bathroom door: Rory was in there, standing naked in front of the washbasin.

"Sorry!" Rory said, seeing Ben's shocked face reflected in the mirror in front of him. "I thought I'd locked it."

"God, you made me jump!" Ben said.

"Well, we're all boys tonight anyway, aren't we," he said, turning round as he put the cap back on his toothpaste.

Ben took him in. It had been a very long time since he'd seen Rory naked. He felt a sudden rush of pride in seeing just how good he looked - a man who really was in his prime. Rory somehow seemed totally confident in his nakedness too - at ease in his own body in a way that, since his circumcision, Ben had never been able to be.

There was silence for a moment, Rory aware that Ben looking at him but unsure what the enigmatic look on his father's face meant.

"Look, about earlier" he said, starting to feel uneasy "I'm.... well, I don't know exactly what I am after all that weed - but we are good aren't we, the two of us?"

"Of course we are," Ben replied, smiling. "We've always been good, and we always will be. But actually, I think we're even gooder now than we were before. It probably wasn't exactly the ideal time to clear the air, but - well, we should have talked about all that stuff years ago, and now we have."

"I'm glad too," Rory said, relieved. "And it feels right that it happened today, what with tomorrow being the start of such a new chapter for all of us."

Ben pulled him in for a hug. They just held each other tight, Rory's head on Ben's shoulders. After a moment though, Ben became aware of movement.

"God, I'm so sorry," Rory said, his face red, "It must be all that weed."

"Don't worry," Ben said, ruffling Rory's hair as they broke from their hug and noticing just how thick and strong it was. He smiled as he looked down at Rory's erection.

"I'm very glad to hear that's what causes it," he said, smiling as he opened his dressing gown to show Rory that he was equally hard. "I was wondering!"

There was a long silence, both men just looking down at their erections, unsure what to say in such unfamiliar territory.

"Your PA...", Ben said eventually, then stopped.

"Yea?" Rory said cautiously, worried about what might be coming next.

"Well, it does look pretty amazing actually," Ben said.

"Yea?" Rory said again, surprised by the unexpected approval.

There was more silence for a moment before Ben went on.

"Would you mind if I...?"

With Ben's hand already extending towards him, Rory just nodded. His eyes closed as he felt the brush of his father's fingers on his glans. A moment later, he felt the thick ring being rotated very gently in his slit. When Ben dropped to his knees, Rory knew exactly what was going to happen, surprised to realise just how much he relished the prospect of it. He was wrong though. All Ben did was place the gentlest of kisses on Rory's circumcision scar – just the sort he'd used when Rory was little and had needed a scratch or a bump "kissed better."

"My lovely Rory," Ben said, looking up at him. "I..."

They both jumped as someone knocked on the half-open door. "Anyone in there?" Leyton asked from the corridor.

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"So were you serious earlier?" James asked Leyton as soon as he got back from the bathroom.

"Sorry love?" Leyton said, yawning.

"PA's," James replied. "Was that just you being you, or did you actually mean it about us getting them?"

"Oh, I don't know – ask me again when I'm sober," Leyton said. "Rory's looked good though, didn't it, but I'd be worried about ripping your insides to shreds if I got one."

"Well, that's true enough, knowing the way you go at it," James said, smiling. "But things aren't going to be so simple in the future, are they," he continued, his tone suddenly serious."

"What do you mean?" Leyton asked.

"Well," James replied, "if we're lucky enough to actually get a kid and it's a boy, then what would we say when we take him swimming and he sees that we've got rings through our dicks? I mean,

the poor kid's going to have enough to cope with at school over having double dads, let alone if anyone sees us at the pool with pervy piercings too."

"Well, there's other stuff we'd have to explain before that anyway," Leyton replied.

"Yea? Like what?" James asked.

"Like about us not matching," Leyton replied. "It hadn't struck before all that chat in the pub earlier, but would you want him done so he'd be like you?"

"Fuck, Leyton! No way!" James said, appalled. "How could you even think that?"

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"This takes me back," Richard said when he got back from the bathroom. "It's a long time since we bunked up together."

Ben's heart sank. The last time they had had been at the hotel in Manchester all those years back when he'd joined his father after his concert there – the night when Richard found out that Ben had been needlessly circumcised through Roger's duplicity and learnt just how much he hated it. Ever since Carol had sensibly suggested that the two of them sharing would be the easiest way of accommodating everyone that night, he'd been dreading that it might prompt his father, however well intentioned, to bring that evening up. Richard actually raising the topic was made even worse by what had happened earlier at the pub, and that particular incident was clearly something that was on Richard's mind.

"I'm so sorry about earlier," he said to Ben's dismay, "I should have..."

"Dad, don't worry. It's fine," Ben interrupted, hoping to draw a line under things and just get to sleep.

"No, I was wrong, and I'm sorry. I should have shut them up," Richard continued.

"It's not your fault," Ben said. "They're entitled to their views, and they weren't to know that....."

"It's more than that though," Richard interrupted. "I'd really hoped that you'd got over all that years ago, but I saw tonight that it's still raw for you."

"What's done is done, and all water under the bridge," Ben said, realising how just how bland he sounded, unsure too how well it reflected his actual feelings on the matter.

"It was so long ago, and I've always hoped that you didn't mind so much these days – perhaps even come to think it's actually better," Richard said, "but. ..."

Ben made no response; he just didn't know what to say. He certainly didn't think it was better in any way at all.

"I mean," Richard went on after a moment, "I even thought you might like hearing what they said - that it's OK, that some people actually think it's an improvement. I mean, Rory – he seems more than fine with it all, and..."

"Dad...." Ben interrupted, hoping again to put a stop to things.

"I've never forgotten that night in Manchester," Richard continued, ignoring him. "Seeing you so distressed, feeling so powerless, knowing that it was all my fault too. When push comes to shove, if I hadn't been so bloody childish and teased Roger about his tiny cock then perhaps... Me and my big, cock-obsessed gob."

"Dad, don't think that for a second!" Ben said. "It was down to Roger, full stop. There's no way you can blame yourself for any of it."

"Well I do," he replied. "And I'm truly sorry."

"Well, thank you, but it's fine – honestly," Ben said.

There was silence for a second. Ben hoped that that was it, but it wasn't.

"Look, Ben, there's something I've never told you," Richard continued. "That time - when I found out. Knowing that we didn't match any more, seeing how you hated being different, knowing how few others like you there were around – well, it set me thinking. When I got back to Australia at the end of that tour, I started noticing. I'd never really thought about it before - not any more than just vaguely knowing that some guys are and some guys aren't, but – well - after you'd been done, I was much more aware of it. I noticed there were a lot more guys that way in Aus than there are here, so I thought, well, it can't be that bad or else they just wouldn't do it, would they. Sorry, I'm burbling here – it must be the dope – but, well.....

To Ben's amazement, Richard's hands were at the fly of his pyjamas. Before he could react, his father had reached into the fly and hooked out his penis. Despite his shock, Ben felt an immediate stab of regret on seeing it; his father's cock looked so much like his own might have, had it been left intact. It was a handsome penis for sure. The foreskin extended a little past the helmet and closed neatly in a loose bud - exactly the same as Ben remembered his own had. For just a second, he felt the muscle memory of what it was like to hold his uncut cock in his hand, the loose, supple movement on the skin and the way the foreskin opened so easily when he began to retract. Suddenly, he knew again just how good it would if he could still work his skin backwards and forward over his glans, his sense of regret over his loss as raw as it had ever been. He wondered though why on earth his father wanted him to see his penis though. It was only then that he noticed: an inch or so behind Richard's corona, there was a faint brown line around the shaft.

"I was going to get myself done too," Richard was saying, "so that we'd match again. I thought it might perhaps help you somehow - show some solidarity, make it so you knew you weren't the only one. Pathetic really, as I wasn't exactly around for you in those days - on the other side of the world just when you really needed me as you grew up. I thought that I'd at least know what you'd had to go through and understand what it was like for you. I wasn't sure if I'd like it or not. Actually, part of me really hoped I wouldn't – that it would be some kind of punishment for letting you down, not having being there when you needed me to protect you, but..."

"Dad, that's....." Ben started, but trailed off, just not knowing what he felt or what he wanted to say.

"It felt so weird going to the doctor," Richard continued. "I was sure he'd just say I was mad and send me away, but he didn't. He actually said I was wise - that it's so much better without one. I wasn't sure if I believed him or not, but it made me feel better. It helped me try and convince myself that Roger might actually have done you a favour - that the rest of us were missing out on something

good, and you'd come to think that yourself when you'd got over the shock. Anyway, he booked me in without even examining it, but then, when it came to it – on the day, I mean.... Well, they'd got me all prepped up. I'd never had an op before -the nearest I'd come to it was having a wisdom tooth out, and I was really freaked out by it all. It was bad enough just having the jabs. I'd thought they'd knock me out for it, but they said there was no need – them all smiles and jokes, the nurse joshing about better late than never, no more eating sweets with the wrappers on, how my missus would thank me for it. But then they put this thing on me and started doing it up. I tried so hard, but I just couldn't do it. I just panicked. I told them to stop; to take the damn thing off me. But they said they couldn't – that it would be too risky. I was so pathetic. I started struggling, trying to get the thing off myself. Anyway, in the end, it was just in time. Another minute and it would have been past the point of no return, they said. They told me there'd always be a mark there though and - well – there it is, as you can see. Serves me right. It's always there to remind me how I let you down, how I just wasn't there for you and..."

Suddenly, he burst into tears. Instantly, in a massive outpouring of grief, relief, anger and love, Ben did too. He got out of bed and went to hug his father, for once totally unconcerned about his nakedness.

"I'm just not sure what to say," Ben said after the worst of it had abated for them both. "You were totally bonkers to even think of it, but wonderfully so. Thank you, but I'm so glad you saw sense."

"I should have gone through with it, but I was just too weak," Richard said, trying to pull himself together. "And then tonight, I let you down all over again, and I realised that I've let you down all through the years – never asking you about it, how it was, how you felt, never...."

"Dad, there's really nothing to forgive," Ben said, painfully aware that he'd done exactly the same with his own son. "I'm just so glad you didn't go through with it -that would have made it even worse. Apart from anything else, it would have meant that Roger had won, but that you even thought about doing it for me, that was such an amazing thing, and it means a lot."

"Well, think of me tomorrow night," Richard said, laughing and crying now at the same time as he pulled Ben in tight for another hug. "I've been trying to think of a way of explaining to your mum why I've got a ring round it that wasn't there the last time we – well...."

"Oh just tell her it's some man-trouble thing!" Ben said, laughing as he imaged just how much his mum wouldn't want to hear the details of anything along those lines. "Like dodgy prostates - something that just happens to blokes as they get older. She's not going to care anyway, she's just so glad to have you back."

"And I'm so glad to have her back too," Richard said. "I was totally mad to leave her in the first place, and it means so much that we'll be a proper family again - even though you're a grandad yourself now!"

"Well that's the same for all of us, and especially me," Ben said. "Us all being properly back together again is the important thing, but it's the last nail in the Roger coffin too. He won one battle, but he lost the war. We're finally rid of him, once and for all."

"And good riddance to the bastard," Richard said. "His shadow's hung over all of us for long enough."

"Look though, optional extras aside, we do match, actually." Ben said, smiling. They'd released their hug enough for their penises to be hanging side by side and, apart from their almost-identical

size and shape, Ben had noticed something else. "So Rory might beat us both in a willy waving contest," he explained, seeing his father's confusion, "but he's not got a funky brown line round his like we have, has he!"

When Richard looked down, he saw what Ben meant. Although his was on his foreskin and Ben's was on his shaft, the brown lines there were more or less the same thickness and almost exactly the same distance behind their coronas.

"God, this must be the weed talking," Ben went on, smiling, "but it's just struck me - tomorrow at the weddings, we'll both share rings with our wives as a symbol of love, won't we. Well, from now on, every time I see that ring on my todger it will be a reminder of how much you love me too!"

"Well, the weed must be helping here too, 'cos I actually get you!" Richard said, laughing. "But it's a bit of a weird thought though – you thinking of me every time you get it out to take a leak!"

"Well, that's true!" Ben said, laughing too. "So perhaps we'd better not think too much about it the other times - when.... I mean, Gemma and I and you and mum....God, sorry! Too much weed and too much information! Time for bed, I think, dad!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"So, ready for the big day tomorrow?" Mark asked as he flopped down on what had once been Ben's bed. He'd just got back from the bathroom and Rory was already tucked up under the duvet on the futon.

"Yeah. I'm just so pleased we'll all be back how we should be," Rory replied. "Bella and me properly together again, gran and grandad too, and that dad's finally found someone at last. It's going to be a very special day, everything coming right again."

"And you and your dad? All good there?" Mark asked slightly warily, wondering if his famed skills of diplomacy might be needed to ease the situation between them in the morning.

"Yeah, all good there too, and I'm really sorry about earlier. We had a good chat at the pub and cleared the air about some stuff that we should have sorted out years ago. My dad – well, he was pretty amazing about it all actually."

"Well, he is pretty amazing, isn't he," Mark replied.

"Yeah, that's him – pretty amazing indeed," Rory said.

"I'm so pleased he's finally found someone to love him," Mark said.

"But you always have, haven't you," Rory asked after a moment, although it wasn't really a question. "Loved him, that is. And more than just as a friend, I mean. I think I've always kind of known, but I saw the way you looked at him in that café when we were letting on that you were a couple, and then I knew for certain."

"I....," Mark said, his face red, unsure how to respond.

“Don’t worry, I totally get it,” Rory interrupted, “and of course your secret’s safe with me.”

“I’d hate him to know,” Mark said after a moment, realising that there was no point in dissembling, “and especially for it to make things awkward. I mean, always he’s been such an amazing friend to Chris - and to me too, of course.”

“Yeah, and I know dad and Chris love each other as well, but in a different way – just as best mates. Not like you do,” Rory said.

“Don’t get me wrong, I really do love Chris,” Mark said. “He’s my soul mate. He makes me laugh so much, even when he’d driving me mad, and we’ve had the loveliest life together and I wouldn’t change that for the world, but your dad – well, I think he’s the nicest, kindest, sexiest, most wonderful man I’ve ever known.”

“Well he just is, isn’t he,” said Rory. “All of those.”

“I know it will never, ever happen,” Mark continued, surprised how glad he was to finally be able to talk to someone about it, “but much as I love Chris – and I really do - if Ben ever so much as gave a hint that he.....well,...”

“Yes,” Rory said, “I get you. Poor you feeling that, and knowing nothing will ever happen. He just has no idea how special he is, does he, which makes him all the more special still. Lucky Gemma – I hope she realises how lucky she is.”

“Oh she does,” said Mark. “And she’s perfect for him, and him for her.”

“Yes, it’s sweet really - childhood sweethearts finally getting it together,” Rory said.

“It would have meant we wouldn’t have had you, of course,” Mark said, “but what a shame they didn’t realise back then how right they are for each other. She told me she’d always had the secret hots for him when they were at school.”

“But you’re a bit of a one for your secret hots too, aren’t you,” Rory said, grinning. “And not just for my dad?”

“Sorry?” said Mark. He knew straight away what Rory was hinting, but wondered if he had actually forgotten the drunken chat that the two of them had had at his wedding reception that, mercifully, had been interrupted before it got very far.

“France? The cow shed? Teen-aged me in skimpy, skin-tight Lycra cycling shorts in front of my bedroom window?” Rory replied, smiling teasingly.

“I.....” Mark said, blushing, lost for words again, not sure how to play things, unsure if their previous aborted chat had either gone from Rory’s mind or if he was actually wanting to continue with what was perhaps still unfinished business for him.

“Don’t worry! I’m only teasing you. I’ve always thought it was flattering, actually,” Rory said.

“Rory, I’m so sorry if...” Mark replied, ready to repeat the previous embarrassed apology he’d given at the wedding reception. He was saved, though. Rory interrupted him.

“OK Mark,” he said. “Look, I can’t imagine there will ever be another time where we’re both totally mullered, stoned and sharing a bedroom, and I’m renewing my wedding vows in the morning too, so I reckon it’s now or never, OK?”

“Sorry?” said Mark, genuinely puzzled.

“No touchy, no feely,” Rory continued. “We’ll never mention it again, and no telling anyone. Not ever. Not even Chris. In the morning, it was just a wet dream, OK?”

Confused, Mark started to burble something, but soon stopped, amazed to see that Rory was slowly moving his duvet down towards his feet. By the time Mark finally got over his total discombobulation and actually manage to make himself speak, it had gone far enough down to reveal the root of Rory’s cock.

“Rory, I don’t think....,” he said.

“So do you like what you see, then? Rory interrupted, the whole of his long, soft cock now on show. “No touchy-feely, remember, but why don’t you come and take a proper look? You know you want to.”

With the duvet now all the way down to his feet and his knees up, Rory looked Mark straight in the eye as he opened his legs wide and patted the space between them invitingly. Mark found that he couldn’t stop himself. He moved to sit on the end of the futon, acutely aware that he was only inches from Rory’s cock.

“So what do you think then?” Rory asked. “Like what you see?”

“It’s just .....well, it’s so beautiful,” Mark replied, unable to think of what else to say. “That’s the only word for it.”

“Go on,” said Rory. “You must have more to say than that! You’ve ogled my packet enough over the years and you must have wondered about exactly what was making it, so I think you need to tell me what you think, now you’re finally seeing it properly. Is it as big as you’d imagined then?”

“God, yes – bigger! I knew you had to be pretty huge,” Mark said, “but it’s ... well....,”

“Thick too, isn’t it,” Rory said.

To Mark’s horror, Rory was clearly starting to stiffen. He couldn’t help but wonder if Rory was going to turn out to be a shower or, hard though it was to believe, that he might actually be a grower.

“Yes, I mean.... Well, Bella!” Mark said, despite himself. “I just can’t....”

“Yeah? Do you think she’s lucky then,” Rory interrupted, “or do you feel sorry for her? Do you think a man would ever be able to manage to take it?”

“God, I know many a man who’d be very pleased to try!” Mark said. He was aware that Rory didn’t seem to actually need his questions answered but couldn’t stop himself replying anyway, even though he knew he shouldn’t. As he spoke, Mark saw that Rory had begun to twirl a finger and thumb round his scar line.



“Does that include you, then?” Rory asked. “Do you think you could take it up you? And what about my balls?” he continued, again not waiting, to Mark’s great relief, for an answer. “Big, aren’t they. Do you like the way they hang so low? No one ever seems to notice them ‘cos they’re always so busy staring at my cock. Do you liked them being shaved smooth? I did them this morning ready for Bella to have a good suck on tomorrow. Would you like doing that? Bella does. She loves having her mouth crammed full of them as she wanks me before we.....”

“Rory, I don’t think you should be...” Mark said, thinking of what it would be like for him to have to look Bella in the eye the next day, and that this was all getting into dangerous territory in so many ways.

“And do you like my big, bare mushroom head? Rory said, starting to grind it in his fist as he spoke. “It’s a nice shape, isn’t it. How do you think it would feel having it slide up inside you?”

“Dear God, I can only imagine,” Marks said, rather against his better judgement but unable to stop himself. Rory was brazenly stiffening now.

“And how about my PA? Do you like it, or would you prefer me plain?” Rory said, idly turning the ring inside his slit. “Come in closer and have a proper look. I could see you wanted to in the pub.”

“Do you think I should get a bigger ring?” he continued. “I’ve wondered about getting one that really keeps my lips open. Should I?”

Again, he didn’t wait for a reply, rubbing harder now at what had become a very erect cock.

“Anyway, do you like how bare I am? We’ve just been talking about how massive it is, but you haven’t said anything about how tight and sleek it’s cut. Do you like that on a man, or do you prefer them with skin?”

“Well, yours is honed to perfection, I’d say,” Mark said, thinking of Chris’s loose and rather untidy circumcision that, in comparison to Rory’s complete make over, made his cock neither one thing or another.

“Do you like that then, or would you like it even more if it had a foreskin on it? A nice long one perhaps? Big enough for a guy to stick his bell end into and wank off with? It’s hard to imagine mine with a skin on though, isn’t it, but perhaps you think it looks better being so bare and exposed. And here, underneath – where my fren used to be. Do you like how empty and smooth it is there?”

“Rory,...” Mark tried again, but it was no good.

“See my scar line?” Rory interrupted, running a finger round it again. “Nice and smooth and even, isn’t it. Can you imagine what it would be like to have your hand round it?” he added, rubbing harder now. “Feeling just how thick I am? And how rock hard it gets? And just how tight it was cut. And....., aw fuck!” Suddenly, caught unawares by it, he came explosively. Four heavy ropes of cum sprayed across and hit Mark full in the face.

As he went back to his bed to get a towel, Mark, ever practical, cupped his hands over his face to stop Rory’s thick load from running down and dropping on to the carpet. When he’d wiped it off, he turned back to pass the towel to Rory so that he could clean up too, but then saw that he was already fast asleep. Mark wondered briefly about mopping him up, but worried about waking him, wondering too if his kindly intent might then be mistaken for breaking the “no touchy” injunction.

Instead, in the way he might have done for a small child, he cautiously started to edge the duvet back to cover Rory up. Then, though, he thought better of it. Instead, he lay awake on Ben's bed, just looking over at Rory as he snored gently. His long, thick cock was flaccid now, but it still reached far enough to rest on his stomach. Mark just sat looking at him for a very long time. Still rather spaced out by the weed, he was somehow transfixed by the way that the ring in Rory's helmet rotated very slightly inside his slit as he breathed in and out.

## Postscript

There was one last gathering at the house. It was on the morning after the weddings - the day they'd all come to refer to as "recovery day." Carol had said she'd do a late breakfast for everyone before they all headed off to resume their normal lives or to start life in its new normal. But, when Ben, Gemma, Rory and Bella arrived from their hotel, she was sitting at the kitchen table and holding court, mug in hand, looking very relaxed and extremely happy. It was Mark and Leyton hard at it at the stove.

"Good morning, misters and missuses Cook new and old!" she said, beaming. "How are we all? Coffee in the pot, breakfast coming up thanks to the two lovely lads, and aspirins on the dresser if anyone's got a thick head."

"Oh, I think they probably found something better to do than drink last night," Leyton said. "I assume you did anyway, Carol, seeing as you're so bright eyed and bushy-tailed this morning!"

"Now you! Just behave yourself and get on with your frying, eh!" Carol said, clearly delighted to be teased so saucily.

Ben tried not to, but caught his father's eye. He was very relieved to see him smile and give a discrete thumbs up in return.

They enjoyed picking it all over again as they ate: what a lovely day it had been, how smoothly everything had gone off, the wedding outfits, how well Chris's best man speech had worked over Zoom, what a strange coincidence it was that Mark had been at school with Father O'Leary, the priest who had done the church blessings after the registry office ceremony.

"Bekki was on good form," Richard said when they'd moved on to the stage of going round each guest in turn and picking them over in detail.

"Yes, she was, wasn't she," Ben said. "Nice she got on so well with Gemma, but it must have been a bit of a weird one for her."

"Well, if we're talking weird, what about Freddie and Henry!" Bella said.

"Freddie and Henrietta, you mean!" Rory replied. "One in a skull cap and gartel, the other in a dress and heels! I mean, I know they've always been a bit odd, but.....!"

"I thought they'd read the invitation wrong and come in fancy dress," Mark said.

"Do you reckon they're for real?" Gemma asked.

"You just never know with those two," Rory replied, "and they're so alike that I bet they take it in turns and no one notices!"

"Yes, perhaps it's Fredrica and Henry today!" Richard said, thinking it best to suppress the joke he'd been tempted to make about them somehow taking it in turns being circumcised when it was their day to be Jewish.

"Don't mock them, you rotten lot!" Carol said. "Those poor boys. Just count your blessings that we're all so normal."

"Yeah, right!" Leyton and James said in unison.

"You've got some post, by the way," Ben said. He'd picked it up off the front door mat on the way in but then forgotten about it. It was all obviously delayed wedding congratulations cards, and Carol and Richard started opening them and reading the messages aloud. It was when Richard opened the last one that Ben saw his face fall, suddenly looking ashen.

"Dad, what is it?" he asked, concerned.

"Nothing," Richard replied. "Just – well.... I wasn't expecting this one. It's from Roger."

"Well, that's nice, isn't it?" Carol said, although her tone was uncertain. "Shows there's no ill feeling, doesn't it. I wonder how he found out though."

"Anyone for more coffee?" Richard said. Ben noticed that his father hadn't actually read out Roger's message nor put the card out on the dresser with the others. Instead, he'd put it back in its envelope and crammed it into his pocket.

It was later while the others were washing up that Richard caught Ben's eye. From the look on his father's face, he could see that something really wasn't right and, reading the inclination of Richard's head that indicated he wanted to talk to him in private, Ben joined him in the hall when he slipped away a moment later.

"OK, what's up then?" Ben asked. "I can see something's wrong."

Silently, Richard handed him the card.

*"Dear Richard, Carol, Ben and Rory," it read. "My invitation must have got lost in the post, so I was sorry not to be with you on such a significant day. It just goes to show that those prepared to wait always get what they want - eventually. Regards, Roger"*

"I'm not saying I'm delighted to hear from him," Ben said after he'd finished reading, "but perhaps mum's right and it's just him trying to be nice for once? It's a bit of a weird message though, isn't it? What do you reckon he means by that 'prepared to wait' stuff?"

"I don't know, but that's not the worst of it," Richard replied, grimly. "These were in the envelope too. I'm sorry - you won't like it one bit, but you need to see them."

Richard was holding two photos. From its square shape, of one of them was un-mistakeably a polaroid. It was clearly old, the paper starting to yellow, and this was the one Richard that handed over first, clearly reluctant for Ben to see it but knowing that he must.

With a sickening feeling, Ben instantly knew what he was looking at. The duvet cover in the photo looked dated now, but he remembered how mature he'd felt going into town and choosing it for himself when, as a teenager, the time had come to discard his childish ones with pictures of superheroes and trains on them. He knew straightaway that Roger had crept into his bedroom and taken the shot on the night of his circumcision, pulling the duvet off him whilst he was out cold thanks to the anaesthetic, as the objects showing at the edges of the picture were his French horn case and a CD rack - the things he'd used to keep the duvet lifted away from his sore, fresh wound. In between them, dead centre in the shot, his glans poked surreally from a gauze bandage. What, more than

anything else, made Ben feel like he'd been punched in the stomach was seeing just how pink and shiny it had once been.

"There's worse, I'm afraid," Richard said, handing over the second picture. This one was obviously recent. Ben felt pure panic as he looked at it. It was slightly blurred, perhaps having been taken from some distance away with a zoom lens, but he could tell that it must have been taken within the last few weeks as, in the picture, sitting smiling in his pushchair in the park, Noah was wearing the new outfit he'd got for his birthday. Whoever had taken it had clearly held the camera with one hand, their other holding something at arm's length in the foreground of the shot. Although it was far from in focus, there was still no mistaking what it was: a razor blade.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Author's Note

My thanks to those who have been kind enough to say that they have enjoyed the “Ben” stories - their appreciation encouraged me to carry on and make it into such a saga! With the series now concluded, my sincere thanks go too to those who helped so much by discussing ideas, reading early drafts and making so many helpful, ingenious and horny suggestions. My particular thanks go of course to Ric Pollard, with whom I worked on what was originally going to be a short story but which turned out to be just the first book of 5 (and a half!) It was enormous fun developing the main characters with him, and I thank him in particular for so wisely disagreeing with my initial conviction that Ben would quickly come to love being circumcised!

One of my aims in the Ben series was to explore the range of attitudes to circumcision in the UK through the views, pre-conceptions and experiences of the characters. As a typically uncut British man, I have always been fascinated by what life must be like for circumcised men in a country where they are so rare and their status so little understood. Here, and especially away from the big cities, circumcision inevitably makes you conspicuously different. That difference is something rarely talked about though and largely, I suspect, because it is felt to be unkind to draw attention to what most would consider a misfortune. That lack of discussion makes it a much-misunderstood topic, with many circumcised men left to wonder what others think about them, usually assuming that it won't be positive, and braced for a shocked reaction when their status is revealed. Few here realise that elective circumcision is even a possibility. Fewer still would understand why anyone might actually choose to be circumcised. Some like me, and Domenic in the story, find that learning that there doesn't have to have a religious or medical reason for circumcision leads to it becoming an obsession, and especially when you discover that some actively choose to be circumcised despite having trouble-free foreskins.

Some circumcised men here think that they are the lucky few (Charles: “It has to be best, obviously.”) whereas others really wish they weren't. There are many who, like Ben (“I hated it then, I hate it now.”) resent their circumcision and wish they were intact and “normal”, thinking they've been deprived of something that would have increased their sexual pleasure and, perhaps even more, hate having been marked out as different. Others again think it's neither better nor worse, but just the way they are, like Chris (“I've never known any different, but I'm happy how I am”) and even James. (“I would never have chosen it for myself, but I suppose it's OK once you get used to it.”) There are those too who, deep down, actually regret their circumcision yet have learnt to cope with it by convincing themselves that it has to be better (could that possibly be Rory?) Others, for whatever reason, have actively chosen to be circumcised, like Ben's school friend Dave (“I knew my foreskin wasn't right, so it just wasn't an option to keep it,”) and Lloyd (“I just knew how I wanted to be”) as well as those few, as at CIG+, who want to be circumcised for purely erotic reasons. Although Rory might possibly come close, there is one other type of circumcised man missing from the Ben stories, and there perhaps should have been a character who resents his circumcision yet, perhaps as a way of coping, has come to find the eroticism in what was done to him without his consent, and who revels in being different and conspicuous - and perhaps even in being pitied and humiliated for it.

Circumcision is something that most uncut British men just choose not to think about. When they do, it is often thought of as just a joke topic and nothing to do with them, as it was at first for Domenic. If they are made to think more seriously about it for whatever reason, their thoughts would vary enormously. Reaction like Richard's (“ouch! The poor man.”) and Ben's school friends (“I'm bloody glad I'm not like that, and I know I shouldn't laugh, but...”) would probably be typical. Others

would be like Mark and Patrice (“a nice cock is a nice cock,”) and just a few would be like Roger (“It’s shameful. Only losers are circumcised.”) Very few would be like Richard’s friends. (“I can see how it could be better,” or “it has to be cleaner, doesn’t it,” or “I’ve always thought it looks nice and tidy without one.”) Very few of those, though, would accept a routine circumcision were it offered to them. There are many too who would genuinely be better off without their problematic foreskins yet would rather put up with them than be circumcised. There are, of course, also those of us for whom learning that there are two types of male out there (and that one of those types can be made into the other, either with their consent or against their will) leads to it becoming an erotic obsession - often, as in my case, as a way of coping with a deep-seated horror of the thought of being “othered.”

Women’s attitudes are only touched on in the Ben stories, but Carol’s (“I don’t really understand what difference it makes and I’m not bothered either way”) and Gemma’s (“It’s the rest of the man that really counts, but I know what I prefer”) are probably typical. Just a few, like Bella, are aroused by the BDSM aspect, and especially by how a man’s sexual pleasure might be tamed by his modification.

I would be very interested to hear others’ thoughts on the above. I’m always very glad to hear readers’ feedback on my stories too, and to get their suggestions for future writing. Although it feels that the Ben’s stories have reached a natural conclusion, it feels sad to be saying goodbye to the characters and, who knows, someone out there might have some intriguing thoughts about what happens next in their lives!

Gareth Walton, London, July 2026

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## Deleted Scene: To be sure!

Mark had grown up surrounded by girls. His father had died when he was small, his only male cousins were much older and had long emigrated to England or the States, and there were generally few men around in his life. His four older sisters always treated him as if he was a fifth girl and, in fact, his earliest memory was of being paraded around dressed up as one to the delight, it seemed, of everyone at that day's family gathering. As St. Finbarr's College was for boys only, going to school meant a sharp learning curve regarding their ways. The thing that had come as the biggest shock had been break times. It wasn't only the rough play that the teachers did nothing to stop, but the playground talk too - all bum, poo, and – most intriguing of all but, even then, never spoken about except in the most euphemistic ways – willy. Mark had always known he had one of those, of course, but the thing that made him different from his sisters had always been a bit of a mystery to him. His Granny Burns had been obsessed with not seeing it at bath time, making it plain to him that it was a “dorty sinful ting” which should always be kept hidden from view and never spoken of. On the rare occasions when anyone referred to boys' members at all, it was always as “fagin”, “the little feller,” or simply and coyly as “down below.” It was a very long time before he even heard the word “penis”. Its functions other than as a device to pee through were never explained. It was as if this was something that he was supposed to understand without ever being told. The parish priest had added to the sense of mystery and taboo in his addresses to the boys after weekly mass in the school hall. His chats on the subject seemed generally to echo Granny Burns' sentiments, but it was more confusing than helpful that he always seemed fixated with mentioning the very thing that should never be mentioned. It was, he said, “a thing never to be touched unnecessarily or played with,” but that somehow made Mark all the more inclined to do exactly that. In the playground, he had sometimes heard intriguing stories of big boys doing rude things with theirs behind the bike sheds but, being a good boy, the details of what those things might be had just been left to his imagination.

Secondary school was a little easier. It was mixed, and girls were something that Mark knew much more about than most of the rest of his sex. He had found few new friends amongst the boys, but soon found that he was popular with the girls and had the knack of winning them over - he had charm, and somehow understood how their minds worked. So, although he had no sexual interest in them at all, it was easy to convince everyone that he did and deflect any possible suspicions that he might be one of the “vile kind of men” that he'd sometimes heard hinted about in the most disapproving kind of way. He'd had token girlfriends, but always knew that that was only a cover. The odd fumble in the back row at the cinema had only happened because the girl seemed to expect it, and there was no pleasure in it for him. He could only go through the motions and hope the girl wasn't “red” enough to grope him and find a distinct lack of arousal in his trousers. What he wanted was cock. He rarely even got to see one other than his own, let alone do anything with one. There was no communal changing or showering at school, and it was a rare man who didn't take care to hide his penis from view with his thumb under it and four fingers covering the top of it when using the public toilets that Mark liked to frequent in the town. Summers on the beach were about as good as it got, with the chance of seeing the odd man in revealing Speedos, or, on a particularly lucky day, getting a quick glimpse when one of the more liberal-minded summer visitors from the city changed on the beach and the wind, for a split second, grabbed their towel.

Nothing was ever said, but Mark knew he wasn't completely alone. Fergal O'Leary was two years above him at school – tall, good-looking and serious. Somehow, Mark just “knew” and sensed that Fergal “knew” too, but their tacit acknowledgement of each other went no further than the odd



moment of guilty eye-contact. Mark ran into him once years later at Dublin airport and somehow wasn't surprised to see his priest's black shirt and dog collar. Embracing celibacy and denial by entering the priesthood was one of the ways of coping with the feelings that he and Fergal shared and, although Mark had indeed considered the possibility of it for a while, in the end he had chosen the other path and became determined to leave small town life behind him. Getting "t'England" as soon as possible meant that he'd be able to live life as his true self in a way that he never could at home.

Within days of getting to Nottingham University, he had started on his new course in life. Even though he wasn't quite sure what it was all about at first, he had been a quick learner. Quickly discovering that going to the quiet area on the top floor of the library and taking one of the desks next-door to the gents meant there might be sideways glances from some of those going in and out, his books were soon often left unattended on the table whilst he furthered his education in other ways. Then, after the library had shut for the night, the canal tow path that ran alongside the university sports fields was there for meeting like-minded lone gentlemen strollers.

It was a month or so into term and several adventures down the line when Mark first noticed him for the first time - tall, very good-looking, and with a shy smile that lit up his handsome face. Well-dressed too, although it was disappointing that he always wore trousers much looser round the crotch than the prevailing fashion. Even so, you could still tell he had an amazing body. He was in the refectory with a funny-looking private school-type who, Mark thought, urgently needed someone to take him round Topman to update his wardrobe. Clearly in his element, posh boy was holding forth at length to the group around him, whatever he was saying causing them all to laugh uproariously.

After that, Mark had seen them both around campus a few times, so often together that he started to wonder if they were actually a couple. When, though, Molly on his corridor in the halls of residence said that she'd finally got herself a boy-friend and it turned out to be posh-boy, that seemed to explain why neither of the two men had seemed to notice when Mark had idly tried throwing the glad eye in their direction.

He'd ended up having a couple of pleasant evenings with Molly and posh-boy, who he now knew was Christopher, when they'd happened to be cooking meals at the same time in the communal kitchen. Christopher turned out to be a bit pompous but fun somehow. Strangely sexy somehow too, once you got to know him, but definitely guilty crush territory. Somehow, there was always the nagging thought in the back of Mark's mind that Molly might perhaps be in for a bit of a surprise one day, especially when he realised that Christopher never stayed the night with her.

After the Summer vacation, Mark had run into Molly in town and she told him that she and Christopher had split up over the summer. Then, one night the following week, there he was – on the tow path. Mark had almost walked straight into Christopher when he'd emerged from a clump of bushes. As he'd been preceded out of the undergrowth by an older man who was rapidly hitching up his trousers, there seemed little possibility that Christopher was just out for an evening stroll. It was an embarrassing encounter; they knew each other just well enough to make it impossible to pretend that they didn't, and there was no point in trying to pretend that they didn't both know why they were there. He and Christopher had sat on a bench by the canal and talked for a long time, both of them enjoying chatting, only half-heartedly watching the lone men who passed and re-passed them on the cruising circuit. When it started to rain, Mark had asked Christopher if he'd like to come back to his room for coffee, not sure if that was all he intended to offer or not.

They did, amazingly, actually have coffee. For both of them, the connection between them seemed strong, but it was only after a long, late chat about nothing in particular that Mark's body

language suddenly told Christopher that a kiss might be in order. One thing had led to another, and Mark had quickly found himself wanting to Christopher to know just how good his lips could feel when applied to another part of his body too.

Mark, thinking about it later, supposed later that, by the law of averages, he probably had come across a circumcised man before in his adventures, but that the finer points of the construction of their penises hadn't been high enough on his list of priorities for him to have noticed. It was dark on the towpath and hard to see details, and he could easily have assumed that men in the library toilets had just skinned back so, in his eagerness to get down to business in either location, he perhaps just hadn't realised what he had come up against. Somehow, circumcision was something that had he'd never really thought about – it was just a word in the bible that it wasn't encouraged to ask about, something that happened to other people like Jews and Muslims, something that wasn't anything to do with him. It was a big shock for him when the reality of it hit him full in the face, and his first evening with Christopher ended disastrously as a result.

After Christopher had gone off in high dudgeon, Mark was angry with himself that he hadn't managed to hide his reaction. When he'd first seen Christopher's penis, at first glance he was just a bit surprised that Christopher had retracted as he got hard. But then he saw that there was more to it than that, and his face must have shown his shock. Of course, it never occurred to Christopher that there was anything remarkable in being circumcised. He was upset and hurt by the way that Mark was so taken aback by what he saw, and his assumption was that it could only be to do with his size. Confusion reigned for a moment or two.

"Well I'm sorry that I'm such a disappointment," said Chris, hurt. "I know I'm not massive, but I you must have struck very lucky before if you think ..."

"No, no – it's not that," said Mark, "I'm sorry. It just surprised me. Seeing your head just sticking out at me like that. I've never seen one like that before and it just looked a bit, well, ...rude."

The initial shock over, and gathering his wits a little, his next words didn't help:

"Did you get it caught in your zip or something? Come here and let me kiss it better."

The mood well broken, Christopher was soon on his way back to his digs, leaving Mark cross with himself but still rather shocked by his first encounter with a circumcision. Perhaps it hadn't helped by the outcome of Christopher's circumcision not being one of the best - if it had been Ben's he'd seen as his first, then Mark's reaction might possibly have been more positive. As, miserably and half-heartedly, Mark masturbated before he went to bed, he did it with an awareness and appreciation of his generous foreskin that he'd never had before.

Mark was sure that his gaff was a deal breaker. Christopher had seemed so insulted that it was hard to imagine him wanting them to meet again. Mark ducked into the bookshop the next week when he saw Christopher coming towards him on campus but then changed his mind - if he didn't do something about it then, it would lead to awkwardness for the rest of their time at Nottingham, and Mark couldn't face that. He followed Christopher into the coffee shop where, luckily, he was sitting alone in a booth with a book open in front of him.

"Christopher – look, I'm really sorry. I made a prize bastoon of myself and I wanted to apologise for my rudeness," he said. "It's just that –"

He wasn't actually sure what to say next, and Christopher neither spoke nor smiled. He really hated himself for resorting to it, but he decided to play a card that he knew usually worked. The accent

he adopted was that of the old farmers who only ever left the mountains to come into his home town for the monthly cattle market.

"Look Sir, I'm just a simple Irish boy from the back of beyond – 'tis more used I am to the fold of the mists on the mountains as we cut the turf and tend the cattle rather than the fancy ways of the fine English gentleman. 'Tis sometimes such a wondrous t'ing to behold the like of them that, to be sure, t'would sometimes put the words of the very devil himself into our ignorant mouths."

There was silence for a long moment, and Mark really thought that even his cheap trump card had fallen flat. Finally, Christopher spoke.

"If you really are going to insist on telling me exactly how things are in Glocca Morra, then I think you'd better get me another coffee to help get me through it," he said. "Cappuccino – no sugar. I assume that a simple Irish boy like you knows what one of those is? Or is it," he went on, attempting to copy Marks brogue, "only a heat of the tea that you are after having with your potatoes and cabbage back in the Emerald Isle?"

It was only then that he smiled.

An hour and a half hour later, they were still there as the staff ostentatiously put chairs on tables around them and started mopping the floor. The air was clear though, and Mark's apology had been accepted easily enough. He'd explained that his shock was just over it being a new thing for him. Mark had come clean too, confessing that a sexual life was still all new stuff to him, and that perhaps he had a bit of learning to do too as he was beginning to realise that he was actually something of a rare breed and might need to come to terms with being a first for many, and that perhaps they might need to be convinced that it was actually better.

"To be honest," Christopher said when Mark returned with drinks, "I got a shock too, but I was perhaps a bit better at hiding it."

"How come?" said Mark, suddenly worried.

"Well, when I saw that you've actually got quite a nozzle. I know I've been with few enough men, but I've not seen a skin quite like yours. My first reaction was probably the same as yours – 'the poor man'. I panicked rather, and wondered if I could cope with it, but then when you seemed to think yours was OK but mine wasn't, then well...."

"I admit that I've got a bit of a teat, but no one's ever said anything about it before," Mark said, worried. "Do you think it's abnormal then? I've seen a couple of others like it, but...."

"Well I must admit I'm no expert," said Christopher. "Does it retract? I mean, there is so much of it, and it looks tight. I think I was worried that it was going to be – well, sorry to say it, but we are being honest here – a little 'messy' under there. It just amazed me that you hadn't thought you'd be better off with it tidied up."

"Tidied up"! Mark threw back his head and laughed then, adopting his brogue again, said:

"T'is as fresh under there as the morning dew, sir, to be sure!"

Back in his normal voice, he continued.

"OK, I'm not saying it doesn't sometimes get a bit clammy on really hot days, but there's nothing there to gross you out. And if you don't like it, then you can just push it back out of the way and", in brogue again, "pretend that the little people have taken it clean away."

“Oh for God’s sake stop it!” said Christopher, laughing. “That bloody Oirish nonsense is an even bigger turn-off than a smeggy foreskin.”

“Look,” said Christopher, suddenly serious, “perhaps we both have a bit to learn. And perhaps we might rather enjoy educating each other?”

Later that evening, their second try was altogether different. After a very long snog they suddenly both stopped, looked each other in the face and burst out laughing.

“God,” said Mark, “we’re both so scared of what we’re going to find that neither of us is daring to move to the next level. Open minds here? Learn from each other?”

“To be sure!” said Christopher.