

The Christmas Tree by Xanthe



Story archived: www.xanthe.org/the-christmas-tree/

Story Notes:

This is my Xanthe Xmas offering for this year. This story is set in my **Possession story-verse**. Some allusions are made to *Possession*, but you don't have to read that to understand this.

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I don't know who made the graphic - if you know, let me know! I'd love to give credit - or if the maker wants me to take it down, just let me know and I will :-)

Chapter 1 by Xanthe

The Christmas Tree By Xanthe

Harvey woke up hazily from a dream and stretched out a sleepy hand to pull Mike in close...only to find an empty space in the bed beside him.

Harvey rolled over and glanced at the clock: 2.16 a.m. Mike often suffered from insomnia, but Harvey was such a deep sleeper that he rarely noticed. He usually only found out that Mike had been up half the night when his associate looked like he was about to fall asleep in

the middle of a meeting the following day.

They had a busy day ahead, with a lot to cram in before the Christmas break, and Harvey was determined that Mike perform as brilliantly as the senior partners both expected and demanded. His associate's performance reflected on him, and he didn't want Mike flaking out half way through the day because he'd been up surfing the net all night.

Harvey got up, feeling irritable about his interrupted sleep. He pulled on his bathrobe and strode out of the bedroom and into the living room, fully prepared to give Mike a piece of his mind...and then stopped.

Mike was sitting on the carpet, his laptop open in front of him and a half-eaten bowl of cereal beside him. He was dressed only in one of Harvey's own shirts – the one he'd worn when they'd gone out to a bar the previous evening. Mike's hair was a dishevelled mess, and he looked up when Harvey stormed into the room and gave him one of those sweet, heart-stopping smiles that always melted Harvey's heart, however hard he tried to pretend they didn't.

"It's the middle of the night," Harvey growled, attempting to find his earlier annoyance.

"I know! What are you doing up? Usually it takes something as loud as a freight train running through the bedroom to wake you up...or, you know, my mouth wrapped around your cock." Mike flashed him a grin so innocent that it was entirely at odds with what he'd just said. Damn it – that kind of grin was precisely why Harvey found it impossible to stay mad at Mike for long.

"You should be sleeping. We've got a big meeting with the Scanlon brothers tomorrow to go through their acquisition paperwork and complete the deal, and you know I need you at the top of your game for that." Harvey glared at him.

"I'm always at the top of my game. You know that." Mike gave him a sly wink. "Anyway, I couldn't sleep, so I thought I'd come out here and figure out some stuff."

"What kind of stuff?" Harvey frowned, wondering if they'd missed something with the Scanlon paperwork.

"Where to put the tree," Mike told him. "It's been bugging me. See, everything in your apartment is so neat and ordered; you haven't left room for seasonal variations."

"What?" Harvey tried to drag his mind away from the Scanlon case to fathom what on earth Mike was babbling on about.

"Seasonal variations," Mike repeated, getting to his feet. "So, I downloaded some interior design software, entered the precise measurements of the room...and voila!" He waved his hand at a corner of the room. "This is where we're going to put it."

"Going to put what?" Harvey wondered if they were talking different languages here.

“The tree!” Mike said excitedly. “Here - right here.” He jumped into the corner and waved his arms around, looking faintly ridiculous dressed only in Harvey’s black shirt, which was just a bit too big on him, the sleeves flopping over Mike’s hands in a way that was...positively endearing.

“Why do you keep wearing my shirts?” Harvey asked, suddenly realising that this wasn’t just a one-off. It had happened several times and was becoming a habit. He’d lost count of the Sunday mornings when he’d got up to find Mike sitting on the sofa, watching TV, dressed only in the shirt Harvey had been wearing the previous evening.

“I like them. So, what do you think about here?” Mike’s cheeks were slightly flushed – a sure sign that he was hiding something – but what?

“You have your own shirts,” Harvey pointed out.

“Yeah. Anyway...like I said, right here.” Mike jumped up and down on the spot.

“They’re not even clean shirts.” Harvey wrinkled up his nose fastidiously. The idea of putting on someone else’s worn shirt wasn’t appealing to him.

“They’re not dirty. I mean, you only wear them for a couple of hours when we go out, and then you put them in the laundry hamper. I’ve never known anyone wash their clothes as often as you, Harvey.”

“It’s called hygiene, Mike.”

“Or being OCD,” Mike muttered under his breath.

“What did you say?” Harvey crossed his arms over his chest.

“Nothing. Look, they’re not your work shirts,” Mike pointed out, as if that distinction was important, which, Harvey had to concede, it was. “I know those are sacrosanct and wearing them is punishable by death or something. Even if a laundry snafu means I’m completely out of shirts – even *then*, I know that the sacred Specter work shirts are not to be worn by anyone other than the great man himself. You made that oh-so-very clear last time I made that mistake.”

Mike’s eyes were gleaming the way they always did when he was needling him, and Harvey felt himself slipping effortlessly into dom mode. He liked being teased by his sub more than he would ever admit – although he had a suspicion that Mike knew it anyway.

“I’m glad that you’ve learned that lesson at least,” Harvey said, remembering the very satisfying spanking he’d given Mike on that occasion.

“Well yeah.” Mike made a face. “I couldn’t sit down for two days without wincing!”

Harvey grinned at him. He loved it when Mike talked about the spankings they both enjoyed far too much; it gave him a feeling of power that ran straight to his cock.

“That **was** a damn fine spanking, if I do say so myself,” he murmured happily. It had been a very exciting little scene. He didn’t really mind Mike borrowing one of his work shirts in an absolute emergency, even if they did look ridiculous on him, but it had made a good excuse for handing out a nice long spanking.

“Anyway...” Mike said, flushing to his ears now. “I thought here. For the tree.”

“What tree?” Harvey tried to get his mind back on the original topic of conversation.

“The Christmas tree.” Mike rolled his eyes as if talking to an imbecile. “This is the only position in the room that really works, plus it’s close to an electrical outlet.” Harvey raised an eyebrow. “For the lights?” Mike said slowly, as if he really was talking to an imbecile now.

“Ah, I see.” Harvey nodded. “And no,” he added.

“No lights?” Mike looked disappointed.

“No tree,” Harvey said firmly, and now Mike looked positively crestfallen. Harvey wondered if this was what kicking a puppy felt like; it wasn’t a pleasant sensation.

“No tree? At all?” Mike’s voice might even have wobbled a little.

“No. It’ll mess up the apartment. Everything has a place, Mike – it’s all neat and ordered, like you said, and this is the way I like it. No clutter. Nothing unnecessary.”

“You think a tree is unnecessary?”

“We seem to manage without it the other eleven months of the year, so yes.”

“It’s not Christmas the other eleven months of the year!”

“Trees are for kids,” Harvey said curtly.

Mike’s expression softened, and he put his head on one side thoughtfully. “You never had one growing up, did you?” he asked softly.

“No,” Harvey growled. Not after his mom had left anyway. There was barely enough money for food – sometimes there **wasn’t** enough money for food. There sure as hell wasn’t any for something as useless as a tree.

“All the more reason to have one now! To make up for what you missed out on as a kid.”

“I don’t think it works that way. It might have meant something when I was a kid – now it just seems like a giant inconvenience.”

“Maybe because you don’t know how much fun it is – finding the right one, bringing it home, putting stuff on it, and making it light up. It’s fun, Harvey!” Mike grinned.

“No. Having sex is fun, watching *Star Trek* is fun, and winning a really tough court case is definitely fun. Sticking a tree in the corner of the room and throwing glitter at it is stupid.”

“Tinsel.”

“What?”

“Tinsel – not glitter. C’mon, Harvey. Don’t be a Scrooge! It’s our first Christmas together – it’s a chance to create some new traditions.” There was a pleading look in Mike’s eyes. Harvey stared at him, unconvinced. “When I was a kid, my Dad used to make a big deal about Christmas,” Mike told him earnestly. “After he and Mom died, Grammy took over. We always bought the tree together, decorated it together, and ate Christmas cookies together after. It is fun, I promise. Why not just try it? If it isn’t, we don’t have to do it again next year.”

Next year. Mike said that like he was still going to be here next year. He wanted to create some new traditions – as if him being here not only next year but for every Christmas thereafter was also a given. Harvey was surprised to find that eased some tiny, insecure part of his heart that he kept walled off and armoured against the inevitable losses that he expected life to throw his way. Losing his mother had been bad enough, but losing his little brother had almost broken him. He had never expected to keep Mike forever...but maybe, just maybe, Mike was here to stay? That thought made the armoured part of his heart soften, just a little.

Mike was standing there, that hopeful look still in his eyes. His hair was sticking up in tousled points, and that shirt – that stupid shirt – was hanging too loose on his shoulders, reaching to his mid-thighs, just about covering his modesty, the too-long sleeves flapping over Mike’s hands. He looked a complete mess...and Harvey had never loved him more.

“Come here,” Harvey said, and he was surprised to find that his voice sounded particularly deep and throaty.

“Why?” Mike asked cautiously.

“Because I say so.” Harvey beckoned to him.

Mike hopped towards him, looking part-terrified and part-excited, the way he always did when Harvey took that tone with him.

“It’s the middle of the night, and you’re standing here rambling on about trees when we have a big meeting tomorrow, so clearly I’m going to have to spank you to sleep,” Harvey said firmly.

Mike's eyes flashed in eager surprise – Harvey liked to keep the timing of his spankings unpredictable, and he guessed Mike hadn't seen this one coming. He grabbed hold of Mike's wrist and sat down on the couch, then pulled Mike over his knees with one smooth tug of his hand. It satisfied Harvey enormously to see how easily Mike got into position – his sub had become so used to it that it felt like he belonged here.

“Does this mean we're getting a tree?” Mike asked over one shoulder, grinning cheekily.

“No, this means you're getting a spanking,” Harvey replied, lifting the hem of his shirt to reveal Mike's enticingly soft buttocks.

“And a tree?” Mike asked, still grinning.

Harvey just wrapped an arm around him, pulled him in close, and set about spanking his perfect white bottom. How he loved doing this! Mike's butt cheeks always quivered so invitingly under his hand, and he always squirmed so deliciously on his lap. Harvey loved the little moaning sounds Mike made in the back of his throat during the initial phase of the spanking, before it started to really sting.

Harvey knew how to warm his sub's ass gradually – starting slowly and building up to the really hard smacks as the spanking progressed, although he doubted that Mike ever noticed the subtlety. His sub was too busy screaming his head off and promising Harvey blow jobs and any manner of sexual favours if he'd just stop, even for a second. Harvey never stopped until he was finished. He never let up for an instant, and he had a feeling Mike would be very disappointed if he did. Harvey loved immersing himself in the power play with his boy, getting a feel for just how much Mike could take and just how much he wanted to hand out. It always felt so damn good.

Mike was panting now, his body twisting and turning in a pointless attempt to get free. Harvey just fastened his arm even more firmly around Mike's body, held him tight, and peppered that beautifully reddening ass with even more spanks. He didn't stop until Mike's bottom was a fetching shade of glowing red, and his sub was an exhausted wreck over his knees. Then he began slowing down, gently bringing them both back to earth.

Finally he stopped, surveying his handiwork with considerable satisfaction. Mike's bottom was so warm he could feel the heat radiating off it, and he looked completely loose and relaxed now, his body sprawled out in a pose of artless submission over Harvey's lap. Harvey reached out to brush Mike's messy hair with a gentle hand, and Mike made a mewling sound and pushed his head up into the caress like a cat.

“Yes,” Harvey found himself saying. “You can have the damn tree.”

Mike grinned, his eyes alight with that spaced out, dreamy look he always got after a spanking. Harvey couldn't believe he'd had the good fortune to stumble upon the one sub in the world who loved being spanked as much as he loved giving a spanking. Mike scrambled out of Harvey's lap and then deposited himself back on it the right way up, squealing as his hot ass made contact with Harvey's knees.

“You’ll love it,” he said, nuzzling Harvey’s face and then delivering a happy kiss to his lips. “The whole Christmas tree thing – you’ll totally love it.”

“Unlikely,” Harvey retorted.

“Mmmm.” Mike wrapped his arms around Harvey’s neck and kissed him again. When he drew back, Harvey saw that his sub’s eyelids were drooping. “Tired now,” Mike muttered into his neck. “Carry me to bed, Captain!”

“You’re far too heavy,” Harvey complained, sorely tempted all the same; an armful of freshly spanked Mike could never be a bad thing.

“You’re horny...” Mike moved his hips, and Harvey’s thoroughly interested cock lurched eagerly.

“And tomorrow is a big day, and we both need to be fresh, Pup,” Harvey said firmly.

“I’m feeling kinda fresh right now.” Mike grinned at him suggestively.

“Not that kind of fresh.” Harvey gave an exasperated sigh and got up, only to find that Mike was clinging on to him like a baby monkey – and he was far too big and heavy for that. Harvey was about to pluck him off and dump him on the floor when Mike leaned into his neck.

“They smell of you,” Mike whispered into his ear.

“What?” Harvey frowned.

“The shirts...that’s why I take the one you wore the night before out of the laundry hamper. They smell of you. Makes me feel...safe.”

Mike leaned in again, his soft hair resting against Harvey’s cheek, and really, what else was Harvey to do but wrap his arms around his beautiful, sleepy sub and carry him next door to bed?

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As it turned out, Mike performed magnificently in the meeting with the Scanlon brothers, and Harvey felt himself swell with pride – not that he’d ever tell Mike that, of course. It wasn’t as if Mike didn’t know how brilliant he’d been – he glowed afterwards with that cocky confidence that reminded Harvey of himself at the same age. He liked to think he’d toned it down into something more suave (some would say arrogant) over the past ten years, but looking at Mike’s happy, flushed face, all Harvey could think about was how good he’d looked draped over his lap in the night, similarly flushed and happy.

“We put it down!” Mike twirled imaginary pistols and then blew away imaginary smoke and replaced them in imaginary holsters. “We blew them away, Harvey!”

“Hmm. Well, the case isn’t closed until their cheque hits the Pearson Hardman bank account, but I will concede that went okay.”

“Okay? Just okay? That went better than okay! We were smokin’, Harvey.” Mike grinned at him delightedly. Then he glanced at his watch and his expression changed. “Shit, it’s late – I told Grammy I’d go visit her this evening. Look – why don’t you pick me up in a couple of hours, and we’ll go from there.”

“Go where?” Harvey said absently, glancing at the documentation the Scanlons had signed, checking through some details, just to be sure.

“To buy the tree.” Mike stood in front of him, hands on his hips, glaring at him. “Tell me you haven’t forgotten about the tree, Harvey.”

“What tree?” Harvey asked, just to be difficult.

“The Christmas tree! The one you said I could have because I look so damn adorable when I’m being spanked!”

“Ah yes, the festive arboreal torture you intend to put me through.”

“You’ll love it!”

“I’m regretting it already – although you did look good ass up over my knee,” Harvey admitted. “It’s definitely your best angle.”

“Hah!” Mike pouted, but Harvey thought he looked pretty pleased. Mike leaned in close. “It was definitely a good one – thanks, Captain. I might have been too spaced out to say that last night, so I’m saying it now. Always give thanks for the spanks.” He grinned ridiculously at the rhyme, and Harvey rolled his eyes.

“Go!” Harvey said. “I’ve got to get all this filed before everything grinds to a halt for the holidays, although why the entire place has to shut down like this every year is beyond me.”

“Aw, anyone would think you don’t like Christmas, Harvey.”

“I don’t! It’s impossible to get any work done because everyone’s away, people start kissing randomly under every stray bit of foliage they can find, and the same irritating songs are on permanent replay in every store you go into. It’s excruciating.”

“Aw, I’ll show you how to love Christmas. I’ll make it my mission.” Mike puffed out his chest importantly.

Harvey rolled his eyes. “Don’t you have somewhere else to be?”

“Yup! So – see you at the nursing home in a couple of hours?”

“Mmmm.” Harvey waved his hand at Mike in agreement and returned to his paperwork. He had to get all this done this evening as everyone would disappear for the holidays after that. He’d always hated how Christmas got in the way of his work before, but somehow, this year, it wasn’t annoying him quite as much. He wasn’t going to tell Mike that though.

As it turned out, he finished up in good time and arrived at Rickling several minutes early. He had picked Mike up from here before, but so far he’d never met Grammy. He wasn’t sure if Mike was shy about introducing him as his boyfriend – they’d never really talked about being ‘out’ as the subject never really came up for them. They worked all hours and then fell into bed for some kinky sex at the end of the day – and they hadn’t talked at any length about what that meant or where they were headed.

Harvey sat in the back of the car and texted Mike to let him know he was waiting outside – only for an answering bleep to make him roll his eyes and fish out Mike’s cell phone from down the side of the seat next to his, where Mike must have dropped it. Typical! Nine times out of ten Mike forgot where he’d left the damn thing.

Harvey glanced at the cell phone and then back at the nursing home, and then, feeling suddenly curious, he told Ray to wait for him, and he got out of the car.

He wasn’t sure what he intended as he strode into the nursing home. He definitely didn’t intend to embarrass or betray Mike’s secrets in any way. Maybe he was just curious as to what the famous Grammy was like, or maybe he wanted to know why Mike was so reluctant to introduce them – just what was he hiding? Or maybe...maybe it was just that Harvey didn’t like mysteries.

One of the staff pointed him in the direction of a big living room, and Harvey was just about to go in when he almost bumped headlong into Mike coming out...with a white haired old lady on his arm.

“Harvey...what the...?” Mike stood there, looking at him with an expression of shock on his face.

“You lost your cell phone,” Harvey said, holding it out.

Mike took it, looking confused. “Oh. Right. Um...am I late for the...uh... meeting?” he asked, glancing at his watch.

“No, I just wanted to give you back your phone,” Harvey said. “You know how I feel about you being out of contact.” He gave Mike a meaningful glare that encompassed both annoyed boss and stern dom.

“Right. Okay.” Mike just stood there, clearly floundering, mouth opening and closing like a fish.

“You must be Mrs. Ross,” Harvey said, to smooth over the awkward moment. He held out his hand. “I’ve heard so much about you. I’m Mike’s boss, Ha...”

“Harvey Specter,” she said, taking his hand in a firm grip and gazing at him keenly. “I’ve heard a lot about you too, Mr. Specter.”

“Nothing good, I suspect.” Harvey grinned at her. The Harvey Specter charm never failed to soften even the hardest corporate heart, so he felt sure this old lady would be a complete pushover. He wasn’t entirely sure why he wanted her to like him so much, but she was important to Mike, so that made her important to him too, in a way. “The associates never have anything good to say about the senior partners!”

There was no reason why she had to know about their relationship outside work if Mike wasn’t comfortable with that. He was Mike’s boss, and he was returning Mike’s phone – he had an entirely legitimate reason to be here if Mike wanted to laugh it off. “And please – call me Harvey,” he added.

Mrs. Ross gazed at him from eyes that were far shrewder than he’d been expecting. “Michael, I’m feeling quite a chill – would you go and get my shawl from my room,” she said to her grandson, who was still standing there, looking both furious and upset at the same time. Harvey could have kicked himself; it seemed that Mike really wasn’t happy about him meeting his grandmother.

Mike looked as if he’d rather be Louis’s personal slave for a week than leave Harvey alone with his grandmother for a few minutes, but he didn’t really have a good reason to refuse her. So, with a flash of his eyes in Harvey’s direction, clearly mutely pleading with him not to say anything too revealing, he ran off.

“I’m so sorry for intruding, Mrs. Ross. Mike is a good employee, and I just wanted to make sure that he got his cell phone back,” Harvey said smoothly, obeying his sub’s unspoken wishes, giving no hint of their personal relationship.

“Nonsense.” The vehemence of her tone made him take a step back in surprise. “I’ve been wondering when I’d finally meet you – I figured Michael would introduce you in his own time, but I’m guessing you lost patience and decided to see for yourself what the old girl is like.”

“Uh...” It was one of those rare times in his life when Harvey was completely lost for words.

“Well, I’ve been wondering what you’re like too, Mr. Specter,” she continued, flashing him another one of those shrewd looks. “See, sometimes when Michael talks, I think you’re good for him. But other times, I worry you’re too slick, too arrogant, and that he’s just too dazzled by the looks, and the charm, and the fancy suits.” She waved her hand at Harvey’s pale grey suit with dark purple tie, each designed to perfectly complement the other. “Don’t get me wrong – I’m very pleased you offered him a job and got him out of that no-good life he was leading. But...” She paused, gazing at Harvey critically. “I’ve often wondered if it

wasn't a case of out of the frying pan into the fire."

Harvey rocked back on his heels, reassessing this little old lady. She clearly wasn't the type to be easily charmed – she was far more formidable than he'd expected.

"I knew Trevor wasn't any good for Michael, but I had a suspicion that you might be even more dangerous, in your own way, Mr. Specter," she continued.

"And now that you've met me?" he asked.

"Now that I've met you, I know I'm right." she replied. "You *are* dangerous. You're everything I was afraid of, Harvey Specter."

"Good," Harvey said, nodding slowly. "You're right to be afraid, Mrs. Ross. I could chew Mike up and spit him out."

"That's what I thought." She gave him a dark look.

"But I won't," Harvey told her honestly.

"How do I know that?"

Harvey paused. Nothing they'd said so far went beyond his role as Mike's boss, and he didn't have Mike's permission to reveal anything more than that.

He didn't know how to explain to her that Mike would always be safe with him. He couldn't tell her how it felt to have someone trust him so completely that he could haul them over his knees and spank them so hard their ass glowed, and for them both to love it so much that they wanted to keep doing it – over and over again.

He couldn't tell her about nights spent on his couch, Mike resting between his open legs, a bowl of popcorn on Mike's lap which they both devoured as they watched movies together.

He couldn't tell her how fantastic it felt to hold Mike's wrists in his hands and pin him to the bed while he slowly made love to him, with Mike offering everything up, holding nothing back.

He couldn't tell her that Mike's amazing brain turned him on as much as his adorably bad impersonations, or how much he loved it when his brilliant associate brainstormed with him, both of them on fire, firing ideas back and forth at each other. He'd never met someone who was so much his intellectual equal before, not even Jessica, and he loved it.

He couldn't tell her that he loved Mike's body almost as much as he loved his mind. He couldn't divulge how kissable Mike looked when he'd cycled half way across town to meet him, his cheeks flushed and rosy, and his hair tousled and messy.

He couldn't explain how it made him feel when Mike looked up at him through his eyelashes

and threw out some sly, cheeky comment that made Harvey itch to grab him and spank him right there and then. He couldn't reveal that he'd never had this with anyone else, that they fit together, and that Mike was the perfect sub for the kind of dom he was.

Mike wouldn't want her to know any of this, so he couldn't tell her any of it. Hell, he hadn't even told Mike any of this. Harvey knew he'd fallen in love with Mike a long time ago, and he wasn't too proud to admit it – but only to himself, not to anyone else. Not to Mike and definitely not to this shrewd old lady standing here, who was the only other person in the world who loved Mike Ross as much as he did.

He cleared his throat and was about to make some attempt at a reply when she gave a little start.

“Oh,” she said suddenly, and those blue eyes of hers were as sharp as her grandson's when he was in pursuit of some legal truth buried in a mountain of paperwork. Her expression softened. “Well then, that's different,” she said, patting Harvey's arm.

“I didn't say anything.” Harvey frowned.

“Yes, you did. Look, I'm not a fool, Harvey. Michael's talked about you non-stop for months, and after a while I figured it went beyond the hero worship of a young lad for his hotshot boss.” Harvey gave a wry smile at that. “What I didn't know was whether it was one-sided or not, which is why I've been so keen to meet you, so I can see for myself.”

“And have you?”

“Yes.” She tucked her hand in the crook of his arm and began walking alongside him. “And I have one thing to say to you: don't ever hurt him, Harvey Specter, or you'll have to answer to me.”

Harvey looked down on her. “I won't,” he said honestly, all attempts at charming her gone in the sure knowledge it wouldn't work with this strong old lady. “I couldn't.”

“Does he know?” She glanced up at him, squeezing his arm with her hand.

“Know what?”

“That you're in love with him?”

Harvey felt the breath catch in his throat, but he had no intention of issuing a denial that wasn't true. “We've never talked about it,” he replied.

“You're afraid that he doesn't feel the same way,” she said, accurately. “Hmm, you're an interesting man, Harvey. So strong and self-assured – some would say arrogant – and yet there's some inner core of vulnerability, isn't there? Oh, you do your best to hide it under all this.” She waved her free hand at his suit. “But it's there. I wondered what Michael saw in you – I felt sure my grandson wasn't the type to be dazzled by all the money and power and

that sharp tongue I know you possess. I hoped not anyway. I hoped Michael wasn't just taken in by the flashy exterior, and I can see now that he wasn't. You have a lot more going on underneath than you want anyone to know, Harvey."

"And you don't beat about the bush," Harvey replied, feeling winded by her analysis.

"When you're as old as I am, you don't have time."

"Oh, come now. You aren't that old." Harvey smiled at her. She didn't smile back; she just squeezed his arm urgently.

"I'm old enough not to have a whole lot of time left, and I want to know that when I'm gone Michael will have someone who loves him with all their heart, the way I've always done, and who'll look out for him and care about him until the day he dies. Is that person you, Harvey? If not, then get out of his life and let him find someone who is."

Harvey paused, staring straight ahead, unable to make an answer for a moment. Then he pulled himself together and nodded, looking down on her again.

"I could be that person," he said quietly.

"But?" She raised an eyebrow.

"Is that what Mike wants? I don't think he ever exactly considered himself to be gay before. Maybe he wants something more traditional – a wife and family?"

"Maybe he does. Or maybe he just wants a great affair of the heart that will be with him all his days. Only he knows the answer. You should ask him." She shrugged. Then she paused and looked at him sharply. "Oh, I see. You're afraid. I took you for many things, but not a coward, Harvey Specter."

"I'm not a coward," he snapped back, just as sharply. He hesitated for a moment, but there was no escaping this woman's perceptive gaze, so finally he sucked it up. "I lost someone once," he told her. It still hurt when he thought of his little brother's death. Patrick had been his whole life when they were kids, and there was a big hole in his heart that still ached.

"So did Michael," she replied softly, patting his hand. "That's why you understand each other so well. You know, I wondered why he didn't bring you along to meet me, and now I can see why."

Harvey raised an eyebrow. "Why?"

"That's something else you need to ask him too. Dear lord, you boys really need to talk!"

"We do. All the time." Harvey grinned at her.

"Not being smart with each other and showing off – not that kind of talking. I mean talk

about what's going on in here." She placed her hand on his chest, over his heart. "Where it counts. You're both scared because you both know what it's like to lose people you love. You're both terrified of experiencing that loss and pain again – I understand that. But at the end of the day, I think you're crazy about each other, and you're both just too chicken-shit to admit it."

Harvey laughed out loud at her choice of language. It was an odd juxtaposition coming from such a refined-looking old lady.

"What's the joke?" Mike ran up, clutching his grandmother's shawl, an anxious look etched on his face.

"Your grandmother was just amusing me with her insights." Harvey grinned at him.

"You've been charming her," Mike said accusingly.

"On the contrary – she's been charming me – I feel quite disarmed by her." Harvey gave Mrs. Ross a quick little smile.

"We should be going," Mike said, glancing at his watch, clearly eager to get Harvey out of here as quickly as possible. He placed the shawl around his grandmother's shoulders and then gave her a hug and kissed her cheek. "Bye, Grammy!"

"Goodbye, Mrs. Ross." Harvey held out his hand, but the old lady ignored it and drew him into a hug too.

"Come and visit me again soon," she told him loudly. "And next time don't wear the suit," she whispered into his ear. "I can see through it anyway."

He gave a little laugh and drew back, ignoring Mike's startled look at the hug. "Next time then, Mrs. Ross."

"Next time?" Mike hissed under his breath as they walked back towards the car. "I didn't ask you to come along *this* time. Why the hell do you think there will be a next time?"

"You heard your grammy – she likes me. She wants to see me again." Harvey gave him a smug smile, preening just a little.

"Oh just shut up and get in the car."

"So, I'm thinking now would be a bad time to spank you," Harvey said as they got into the waiting car. He liked spanking Mike in the car; he liked how deliciously embarrassed Mike was by the fact Ray could hear everything that was going on. It made Mike very amorous when they got home – that kind of embarrassment always made him horny.

"A very bad time!" Mike growled. "Don't even think about it. Damn it – why did you show up like that, Harvey?"

"I don't know." Harvey glanced out of the window. "I suppose I just wanted to meet her. She's so important to you, and it's not as if you haven't met someone important to me – and within 24 hours of us sleeping together the first time. At least I had the decency to wait a few months before paying *your* nearest and dearest an unexpected visit." Harvey gave Mike a little glare, and Mike took a deep breath and sighed.

"Okay. True," he conceded, and not for the first time, Harvey wondered what exactly Bertha had told Mike about him. He'd tried to pump them both for information, but they were as tight as clams. He knew that she'd told Mike some things about his difficult youth, but he wasn't sure which details Mike knew. There was one thing in particular he wasn't sure if Mike knew, but it was too big and too dark a secret for Harvey to broach it, if Mike didn't know about it already. He wasn't sure how Mike would react, and he dreaded that it might cause him to lose Mike's respect and affection. Besides, he'd worked damn hard to put that particular part of his past behind him, and he didn't want to dredge it all up again.

"But you meeting my grandmother is a big deal, and we should have talked about it first," Mike said firmly.

"We don't though, do we?" Harvey glanced at him sideways. "Talk? Not about the big, important stuff anyway."

Mike flushed and dipped his head to look at the floor of the car. Harvey continued gazing at him until Mike glanced up again.

"What do you want to talk about then?" Mike asked sullenly.

"Why didn't you want me to meet your grandmother? Are you ashamed of this? Of us?" Harvey paused. "Of me?"

Harvey knew Mike hadn't identified as gay before they'd started their relationship. Maybe he was having second thoughts. It was certainly a big deal for him to come out to his grandmother – maybe he intended to get Harvey out of his system and then return to a straight life with some sweet, pretty girl, like Jenny, and leave his kinky streak behind for good.

"It just wasn't the right time." Mike shrugged, clearly unwilling to discuss the matter further. Harvey wondered if it would ever be the right time.

He glanced out of the window – it had been trying to snow for days but it either fell as sleety rain, or a few flakes drifted down and melted upon hitting the ground.

"Okay," Harvey said. It was cold out there – and it was in here too, but he was too used to this particular chill to want to breach it. It felt familiar and safe. "Talk over. Let's have some fun now!"

"Aye aye, Captain! So, are we going to go buy the tree now?" Mike changed back into his

lovable sub again in a heartbeat, clearly just as relieved as Harvey to move out of such dangerous waters.

“No need.” Harvey took out his iPad with a flourish. “I ordered one earlier; I thought it’d save time.” He handed Mike the iPad, with the picture of the tree on it. It was pure white, its thin, minimalist branches glistening in the picture.

“What?” Mike looked at the picture and then back at Harvey, as if he’d gone insane.

“Problem, Pup?” Harvey asked, confused. “What’s the matter? I thought you’d be pleased. This is a good tree – it’s the most expensive one I could find online. It also comes pre-decorated, so we won’t have to waste time doing that. And it has fibre optic lights on every branch – they sort of glow. I know lights are important to you for some reason. I thought it was very elegant and tasteful; it’ll look nice in the living room.”

“No.” Mike handed him back the iPad and turned to face him. “No, no, no, no, no, Harvey.”

“I think I might be hearing a ‘no’ here.” Harvey frowned.

“NO!” Mike practically shouted it. “No, Harvey. This isn’t something you acquire, like all your baseballs and basketballs and records! You don’t choose the most expensive, beautiful one you can find, just so you can show it off and have people envy it. Damn it, this is so fucking *you*. I’m surprised the tree doesn’t come encrusted with Swarovski crystals on each branch.”

“Do they make trees like that? Sounds nice,” Harvey mused. “So, what’s wrong with the tree, Pup?”

“It’s too perfect! And you don’t buy them online pre-decorated! Where’s the fun in that? No. Cancel that order. You, Harvey Specter, are going to come with me, and we are going to do this together. I will make you get into the spirit of Christmas, if I have to force you!”

“Ah, peace on earth and goodwill to all men.” Harvey sat back in his seat, rolling his eyes. “I’m beginning to see why so many people commit suicide over the festive season.”

“And I’m beginning to see why so many people murder their partners.” Mike gave him a death stare.

They looked at each other for a long moment, swapping glares of dark intensity, and then they both burst out laughing. “Okay, Mike.” Harvey sighed. “Let’s go buy this tree then.”

~*~

Mike directed Ray where to go and then got out of the car eagerly, a few blocks from Harvey’s apartment. Harvey sighed heavily before getting out and going to his doom. He leaned forward and told Ray to wait, getting a sympathetic look in reply.

“My wife’s the same, Harvey,” Ray said. “It’s easier if you just go along with it – less painful too in the long run.”

Harvey perked up at the realisation that Ray thought of Mike as the girl in their relationship. He’d have to find a way to mention that to Mike; he loved it when his sub spluttered in indignation.

He found Mike amid what looked like a miniature forest. “These are all real,” Harvey said slowly, looking around. There wasn’t an artificial tree in sight. “You aren’t seriously suggesting we drag a real tree back to my apartment, are you? Won’t it smell?”

“It will! Of nice things, like pine forests, and Christmas.” Mike grinned at him.

“But won’t it shed?” Harvey ran a hand over a nearby branch and winced. “It prickles!” He hastily pulled on his pair of expensive black leather gloves to protect himself.

“Yes, it’ll shed – that’s what vacuum cleaners are for, and yes it prickles – that’s part of the fun.”

“You keep mentioning this being ‘fun’, and yet so far we don’t seem to be having any.”

“That’s because you’re a miserable, miserly bastard with no Christmas spirit,” Mike replied.

“Miserly? I just tried to spend hundreds of bucks on a tree for you which you threw back in my face!”

“I take back the miserly. You’re going to have to work on the Christmas spirit thing though.” Mike winked at him. “C’mon – I’ve seen one I like!”

He grabbed hold of Harvey’s arm and dragged him through the throng of trees to one that looked just like all the rest.

“This is it?” Harvey asked dubiously.

“Yes!” Mike circled it happily, stroking its branches.

“May I ask why this one?”

“The shape! It’s perfect. And the height!”

“It’s certainly big.” Harvey circled it too, more warily. The tree was bigger than him, broad and densely pined.

“We’ll take it!” Mike beckoned to the vendor, and Harvey got out his wallet – only to find that Mike had beaten him to it. “This is on me. So if you don’t like it, you can’t moan you had to pay for it,” Mike said tartly.

“How the hell are we going to get it in the car?” Harvey asked as Mike finished paying and grabbed hold of the middle section of the tree.

“We aren’t! It’ll never fit.” Mike laughed happily. “We’ll have to carry it home – c’mon, Harvey, we should be able to manage it between us – it’s only a few blocks.

“I’m not dressed for lumber work,” Harvey said, pointing to his black cashmere overcoat.

“You’ll be fine.” Mike rolled his eyes and began dragging the tree behind him up the street. Harvey considered getting in the car and having Ray drive him home, leaving his wayward sub to carry the tree home alone, but in the end he decided it was too dangerous to the general populace of New York to let Mike loose on the sidewalks with a big tree all by himself. So he told Ray he could go and set off after Mike.

“Still not having fun,” Harvey mentioned fifteen minutes later, through a mouthful of pine needles. He was hot and sweaty, and it wasn’t a good hot and sweaty, like after a workout at the gym or following some hot sex with his boy. Usually those activities didn’t involve being pricked and scratched, or the overwhelming scent of pine.

“Aw, you’re just resisting on purpose. Give into it, Harvey,” Mike threw over his shoulder. “What could be more fun than this?”

“Lots of things,” Harvey replied dubiously. “And if I get any dirt on my clothes from this tree, you’re paying for the dry cleaning.”

“How’s that Christmas spirit coming along?” Mike asked, with maddening cheerfulness.

Harvey stopped and dumped the end of the tree on the ground. “Would *now* be a good time to spank you?” he demanded. “Because I’m really in the mood right now.”

Mike just laughed. He picked up the tree so it was standing upright, grabbed Harvey’s hand, and shoved it into the depths of the tree, making him hold it.

“Wait there!” Mike said, and then he dashed into a nearby shop, leaving Harvey alone with the damn thing.

Harvey stomped his feet, feeling cold and disgruntled. A woman came by with a little girl.

“My, that is a fine tree!” she said, giving it an admiring glance. “What a beauty!”

Harvey straightened up; if there was one thing likely to restore his spirits, it was having something that everyone else admired. “It is! I chose it myself.” He preened a little, tugging on the branches with what he hoped looked like an expert touch.

“Are your pants on fire, Harvey?” Mike’s amused voice whispered in his ear as the woman disappeared into the shop. “Liar, liar...”

“Shut up. I’m only doing this because of you – I’ve got to get some pleasure out of it,” Harvey growled. “What did you buy in there anyway?”

“More tinsel. We’ll need a lot – it’s a big tree.”

“More tinsel – implying we already have some?” Harvey raised an eyebrow.

“We do – Grammy gave me her Christmas ornaments bag.” Mike gestured over his shoulder at his bulging backpack.

They arrived back at Harvey’s apartment, and with the super’s help they somehow managed to manoeuvre the tree into the elevator.

“Never known you bother with a Christmas tree before, Mr. Specter,” Jeff commented.

“Well, things change.” Harvey glanced at Mike, who gave him a big grin.

“For the better I hope,” Jeff said, as the doors began closing.

“The jury’s out on that,” Harvey said darkly, and Mike rolled his eyes.

“Of course for the better! Definitely for the better!” Mike yelled as Jeff disappeared from view.

Harvey felt like he’d done a two hour workout at the gym by the time they got the tree in situ in his living room. Mike shoved it into a bucket, and they both took a step back to admire it.

“Look!” Mike pointed.

“I know! It’s crooked, and there are pine needles all over my carpet.” Harvey gazed at the greenery covering his cream carpet in dismay.

“No...look! It’s beautiful.” Mike put an arm around Harvey’s shoulders and squeezed. “Look – really look, Harvey.”

Harvey tried, he really did, but all he saw was a big tree in a bucket, lurching over to one side like it was trying to make a crazy dash for the window and commit suicide; which would at least be preferable to the slow death it was going to get in here, at the mercy of central heating and the contents of Grammy’s ornaments bag. Harvey shuddered.

“We’ll get you there,” Mike said, in a patronising tone of wise sympathy. “We’ll break you into the joys of Christmas eventually, Harvey Specter Scrooge.”

“Ha ha.” Harvey glared at Mike and then at the tree. “Now what?” he asked.

“Now the fun really starts!”

“May I remind you that you said it’d be fun choosing it and bringing it home, but it wasn’t?” Harvey pointed out.

“Well this **will** be fun. I promise.” Mike grinned at him, and then he opened up his bag and emptied a multitude of baubles, tree lights, and tinsel all over Harvey’s cream coloured sofa.

“I never knew Christmas was so...messy.” Harvey grimaced, itching to clear it all up.

“Leave the OCD behind, Captain, and let’s get decorating.” Mike slapped his hands together cheerfully.

Harvey had to concede that there was a certain kind of enjoyment to be had in watching Mike scramble around the tree, adorning it with lights and wrapping tinsel around its branches, fixing baubles to it, and generally making it look ridiculous.

“The ornaments are important,” Mike told him. “Some of these are ancient.”

“They look it.” Harvey tried hard not to wrinkle up his nose at a decidedly worse for wear fairy with a bent wand. He hoped it wasn’t a metaphor for where his relationship with Mike was going.

“She belonged to my mom,” Mike said, taking the fairy and placing her reverently on the tree. “All the ornaments have some kind of personal meaning. This one was given to my mom when she was a little girl. And this...” He picked up a battered Yoda, wielding a light sabre. “Belonged to my dad. He loved *Star Wars* – he could be a big kid some times, but he was always rock solid when you needed him. You’d have liked my dad, Harvey.” Mike shot him a little smile and put the Yoda ornament on the tree. “*Do, or do not – there is no try,*” Mike said, in a very bad impersonation of the great Jedi Master. Harvey winced.

“Then there’s this.” Mike rummaged around and pulled something out of his bag.

“Another old family treasure?”

“No. This one is new. I bought it for you.”

“For me?” Harvey didn’t think there was a single Christmas ornament in the world that would mean anything to him, but it turned out he was wrong because Mike was holding a little tableau of *Star Trek* characters. There was Kirk in a gold shirt, Spock in a blue one, and a doomed red shirt standing next to them on tiny transporter pads.

“Watch,” Mike said, pressing a button. The entire tableau lit up, shimmering, and the familiar sound of the *Star Trek* transporter beam filled the air. Harvey watched, mesmerized, and Mike laughed at the expression on his face. “Having fun yet?” he asked, pressing the ornament into Harvey’s hand.

Harvey pressed the button and the transporter lit up again. “Getting there,” he said softly.

Mike looked pleased. "As this one's yours, you should put it up." He gestured at the tree.

Harvey hung the ornament on the edge of the tree nearest the sofa, so he could press it whenever he went past and have the mini-transporter beam spring into life.

When they were done, Harvey sat on the sofa and enjoyed the view as Mike scrambled around on his hands and knees, ass in the air, trying, without success, to correct the tree's lurching gait.

"Left a bit, right a bit..." Harvey said, enjoying the way Mike's ass moved in time to his commands.

Mike emerged from under the tree, a little sprig of silver tinsel and a lot of green pine needles festooning his hair. "Are you just ogling my ass, Harvey?"

"Yes," Harvey admitted shamelessly. He glanced at the tree, which was still careening dangerously over to one side. "Looks good."

"The tree or my ass?"

"Both." Harvey grinned.

"Time to turn on the lights." Mike said it as if it was a grand opening ceremony for a prestigious new building, not some tree lights.

Harvey rolled his eyes. "Fine..." He got up to flick the switch.

"No!" Mike threw himself at him and grabbed him in a tackle around the waist. Harvey stopped, wondering what on earth he'd done wrong now. "We have to do it properly!" Mike exclaimed.

He ran over and turned off the main lights, plunging the room into darkness, and then ran back to Harvey's side, picked up the electric cord, and wrapped an arm around Harvey's waist.

"One, two..." Mike chanted, and then he flicked the switch on the cord and the lights on the tree glowed into life. "THREE!"

It was pretty, glistening and shining in the dark room; Harvey had to concede that. There was nothing either tasteful or minimalist about this tree; it was a gaudy concoction of reds, golds, greens and blues. It looked all wrong to Harvey's eyes, and yet it made the place seem warm and homely.

Mike still had his arm wrapped around Harvey's waist. "You like, Captain?" he asked.

Harvey cleared his throat. "I like, Pup," he replied.

He pulled Mike close and brushed the piece of tinsel and a handful of pine needles out of his hair. Then he leaned in and kissed his boy on the lips. Mike's mouth opened for him immediately, as warm and welcoming as always. Harvey slid his hands down to rest on Mike's ass as he kissed him in the dark room, with the tree lights gleaming in the corner. After a good long time kissing his sub, Harvey drew back, moving his foot – and heard a rustling sound.

"Damn it." Mike leaned down and picked up a short length of silver tinsel. "I missed this bit. Where shall I put it?" He began walking over to the tree, but Harvey pulled him back.

"I have a better use for it," he said, taking hold of Mike's wrists and pulling them together in front of his body. Mike's teeth gleamed in the dark room as Harvey wrapped the tinsel around his wrists, immobilising him completely. When Mike was safely trussed up like a turkey, Harvey began unbuttoning his boy's shirt. "Looks like you can't move, or resist me," he said in a dark voice. "So I guess I'll be able to do what I like to you."

"Mmmm...guess so." Mike's grin broadened in anticipation.

Harvey grabbed the soft fleece blanket from over the back of the sofa and threw it down on the carpet under the tree, and then he manoeuvred Mike down onto it.

He straddled Mike's prone body, spread his shirt wide, lowered his head, and flicked his tongue over Mike's exposed nipples, making his sub mewl with pleasure.

"Good boy...all tied up, waiting for Santa to deliver his present." Harvey smirked, his hands going to his own fly.

Mike snorted. "Oh God – that's bad! If you make any jokes about whether I've been naughty or nice, I swear I'll..." He didn't finish that sentence because Harvey pressed his hard cock into his mouth, and Mike sucked down on it eagerly.

Harvey loved having his submissive, compliant boy trussed up underneath him. It made him horny as hell. He loved the way Mike looked when he was tied up, all helpless and squirmy and totally at his mercy. Most of all, he loved the dreamy, bewitched expression in Mike's eyes as he went into his subspace, obeying every order Harvey gave him.

"That's it...that's good." Harvey stroked his boy's hair as Mike sucked down on him. Then he drew back and undid Mike's fly. "Move your hips." Mike jerked his hips up, and Harvey removed his pants and threw them to one side. Mike's boxers went the same way, and Mike's hard, swollen cock immediately rose up and hit his belly.

Harvey ignored it, concentrating instead on removing all his own clothes. Then he went into the bedroom to retrieve the lube and a condom and returned to the living room with them. He paused to drink in the sight of his nearly naked sub, lying beneath the brightly lit tree with his wrists tied together with silver tinsel.

“No jokes about stuffing the turkey!” Mike pleaded as Harvey knelt down between his open legs.

“I wouldn’t dream of it. I might though, be forced to mention that Santa’s little helper is going to be rewarded with a very big Christmas sausage.” Harvey smirked.

Mike’s snort turned into a sigh of pleasure as Harvey breached his hole with a lubed finger. “Oh shit, Harvey...that feels so good.”

“Mmmm...” Harvey gazed down on his boy, loving the way the tree lights cast a colourful pattern over Mike’s pale body. He reached for the condom.

“Don’t,” Mike said.

“You don’t want me to fuck you?” Harvey asked in surprise; Mike never usually turned him down.

“No...don’t use a condom,” Mike said, gazing up at Harvey. There was an expression of anxiety in his eyes, combined with a typically Mike Ross kind of stubborn steel. “I’m clean, and I’m positive you are.” Mike snorted again and waved his bound hands at the tidy apartment. “You’re kind of the definition of clean. Let’s do this without. It’s time...neither of us is fooling around with anyone else, and besides...”

“Besides...?” Harvey gently touched Mike’s face with his fingers.

“I want to feel you in me. Bareback,” Mike said, with a trace of defiance in his voice.

Harvey leaned down and kissed his boy on the mouth. “Okay, Pup,” he said softly as he drew back.

He felt himself shaking with excitement at this new development. He longed to feel Mike without the thin covering of rubber, to really *feel* him as he fucked him.

He leaned over Mike, enjoying his boy’s naked vulnerability, and positioned himself between Mike’s thighs. He was used to how it felt to push into Mike’s body, but this was so much better that it took his breath away. He could feel Mike’s hole give way, relax, and open up, welcoming him in, and he hissed from the pleasure of all that tight heat.

“Oh shit, that’s good.” Harvey slid in all the way and then paused, savouring the moment. It felt more vivid, intense and pleasurable without a condom. Mike was looking up at him, his tinsel-tied hands resting on his belly, just above his hugely erect cock. He knew he wasn’t allowed to touch his cock – he needed Harvey’s permission for that.

“Please, can I...?” Mike panted.

“No...I want you to hold it,” Harvey said, enjoying the sensation that display of power gave him. Mike moaned and quivered beneath him, and Harvey moved his hips, adjusting his

position, making Mike accept his dominance.

Mike gazed up at him from wide, pleasure-filled eyes. "Feels so good...wanna touch..."

"Not yet. It belongs to me." Harvey moved his hand to brush Mike's cock, making his sub cry out. "You belong to me. Say it."

"I belong to you, Harvey," Mike whimpered. "Please...oh God...please..."

Mike liked being teased, and Harvey sure as hell liked teasing him, so he thrust in again, looking down the entire time, brushing Mike's cock again as he thrust in, making his sub scream out in need.

"Only when I'm done," Harvey told him firmly. "First I get to use this tight little hole." He thrust in harder this time, making Mike squeal, "And come deep inside my sub's body, and then, if I'm feeling generous, I might let you come."

"Yes, Harvey," Mike said obediently, and his cock practically went into spasm, so Harvey knew his words were turning him on.

"Because you're mine...and I can fuck you hard...and you just have to take it..." Harvey punctuated his words with several deep thrusts that made Mike quiver and tremble. Mike's hard cock was leaking pre-come, and Harvey knew he was so turned on that it wouldn't take much to tip him over the edge. "You're so close," Harvey teased, rubbing Mike's cock again. "Can you hold it, Mike? If you can't, I'll have to punish you. Not one of those nice spankings you like so much – but a hard strapping and a week in a cock cage. You won't like that."

"No, Harvey...but please...I'm so close...if you keep doing that..."

"I've ordered you to hold it, so you will," Harvey commanded, taking hold of Mike's cock and running his hand along the entire length of the shaft.

"I can't if you keep doing that!" Mike screamed. "Shit...please..." He thrashed from side to side, looking completely beautiful and abandoned in his struggle to stay in control.

"Ssh." Harvey bent his head to kiss him, and Mike gradually calmed down, opening his mouth eagerly to let his dom in. "Good boy," Harvey murmured as he drew back. He liked how it felt to take Mike's freely offered submission, to tease and torment his boy until Mike was flying in his subspace. Harvey stroked Mike's cock again, and Mike positively sobbed from the effort of not coming.

"Aw, poor boy. But, see, I've finally found that Christmas spirit you keep going on about." Harvey grinned wickedly and released his hold on Mike's cock. "I'll leave it be until I'm done. Call it a gift. Thank me."

"Thank you!" Mike cried out, panting with relief.

Harvey laughed and began thrusting in earnest. He rode his boy hard, enjoying every single whimper and moan. He liked how Mike's tied wrists rendered him completely helpless. He couldn't do anything except lie there and take everything Harvey handed out to him. His submission was intoxicating, and Harvey dominated his boy completely, demanding Mike's total surrender to his will.

The tree lights glowed steadily as Harvey enjoyed his boy, making love to him hard and fast until he came with a shout of pleasure, deep inside Mike's body.

Without a condom to contain his come, he knew he would be leaving it behind to slowly trickle out of Mike's hole. His spent cock gave a little spasm of appreciation at that thought, and Harvey was surprised to find just how much it turned him on. Mike really had given him a special kind of gift this Christmas.

He slid out of Mike's body and then, in one swift move, bent his head and took Mike's rigid cock in his mouth. Mike screamed loudly, his body convulsing in pleasure as Harvey sucked down hard. It only took a minute or so, and then Mike was coming. Harvey didn't draw back – he wanted Mike's come in him, the way he'd left his own in Mike. It felt raw and primal, an exchange of something that went deeper than words.

He swallowed Mike's salty come, and then Mike flopped back on the blanket, looking completely wanton and sated in the tree-light.

Harvey grinned and dropped down beside him. He gathered his exhausted sub in his arms and held him tight, pulling the blanket around them to keep them warm as the sweat cooled on their skin. Mike's hands were still tied, the tinsel brushing scratchily against Harvey's bare flesh.

"That was so good, Harvey," Mike murmured into his neck. "Not sure what the hell I did to deserve that, but it was damn good."

"Mmm...looks like someone **was** nice then," Harvey replied. "And naughty too; always naughty." He pinched Mike's ass, making him squeal, and then they both laughed.

"And it looks like you found that Christmas spirit," Mike said, glancing at the tree above them. "See, I **told** you this would be fun."

"It was, Pup. It was," Harvey admitted. "I'm a total convert to the joys of Christmas now."

"Usually after decorating the tree, I have some hot chocolate and Christmas cookies, but this was definitely more fun than that." Mike looked down on his bound hands with a grin.

"Well, you did say you wanted to start some new traditions," Harvey said slyly, untying the tinsel from around his sub's wrists.

He freed Mike and then pulled him close, and they dozed off together, under the tree, wrapped up in each other's arms.

~*~

When Harvey woke up a couple of hours later, Mike wasn't there. The tree lights were still twinkling merrily, but there was no sign of Mike in the living room.

Harvey got up and went into the bedroom, but Mike wasn't in there, either. Harvey pulled on his bathrobe and glanced outside, to see Mike standing out there on the deck, wearing Harvey's discarded shirt from the night before – and nothing else.

Harvey grabbed the blanket from under the tree and went outside onto the deck.

"Idiot. It's freezing out here," he said, throwing the blanket over Mike.

"Sorry. Yeah. I know." Mike leaned forward and put his arms on the balustrade, gazing out at the brightly lit city beneath them. Harvey stood close behind him, warming him with his body heat.

"I didn't want to introduce you to Grammy because I wasn't sure what we have," Mike said suddenly. "I mean, is it just about the kinky sex – is that all it is? I know we like each other, that we have a good time together, and that you wanted more than a one-shot deal when this all started. I know I'm your sub, your boy, and hell, you've even called me your boyfriend. But what is this?" He glanced up at Harvey over his shoulder. "Not a one-shot deal, but is it a forever thing, either?"

Harvey wrapped his arms around his sub, lacing his fingers over Mike's chest. Overhead, the sky was an ominous shade of cloudy grey-black.

"Look, Harvey, it's a big statement to introduce a *man* to Grammy, to put her through all the drama that goes with that, if you're going to stride out of my life the same way you strode into it, leaving me..." Mike shrugged. "I dunno – to go back to the way I was before? To go back to girls? And that old vanilla life." He gave a little bark of incredulous laughter.

"Well, first of all, technically speaking you strode into *my* life," Harvey said. "That day at the job interview at the hotel."

"Yeah, but you kind of strode into mine when you invited me back here that time and seduced me for all you were worth," Mike replied.

"You could have said no."

"No. I couldn't. You're a hard man to refuse, Harvey Specter," Mike said softly. He broke free of Harvey's embrace and turned around, so that they were face to face, still standing close.

"Do you regret it?" Harvey asked quietly, his heart thumping almost painfully in his chest.

Mike laughed. "Never." He shook his head. "Damn it, Harvey – how do you do that?" He reached out to touch Harvey's cheek.

"Do what?"

"Manage to look so fucking vulnerable when you're the most self-assured man on the face of the planet?"

"Don't tell anyone." Harvey grimaced. "I don't want them to know where to press until it hurts." He gazed at Mike thoughtfully. "But you know where it hurts, Mike; you know exactly where to press."

"Yes." Mike nodded. "I know. Is it just the kinky sex games?" Mike asked quietly. "Is that all we have, Harvey? I'm not saying that's not good, but is that all it is? Are you going to waltz off with some hot girl one day, to settle down and lead a straight life? Is that the plan?"

"No," Harvey said firmly. "No, Mike. I'm not. Are you?" He felt so achingly vulnerable as he asked that; his whole life hinged on the answer.

"Do you really need to ask?"

"Yes. Like you said – I'm the one who seduced you. You were never homosexual before I put my hands on you."

"I don't think I am homosexual; I think I'm Harveysexual," Mike replied.

"Hah – and you were telling me off for the bad jokes."

"Your jokes *are* bad." Mike grinned.

Harvey gazed at him, feeling a little knot of anxiety forming in the pit of his stomach. He wrestled with himself for a short while, but then he decided he had no choice; he had to get his secret out in the open, regardless of the consequences.

"Before this conversation goes any further, I should tell you something," he said.

Mike's eyes flashed in alarm, and Harvey could see him almost visibly wondering what was coming next.

"Is it something bad?" Mike asked anxiously.

"You might think so, yes," Harvey replied. "I killed a man once, Mike."

Mike's face relaxed. "I know that, Harvey."

"You do?" Harvey felt the anxiety in his belly ease a notch.

“Yeah – you told me to do due diligence on you when we first got together, and I did. Bertha told me. She also told me it was self-defence, and you were protecting Patrick.”

Harvey nodded. “It was, and I was. But...” He paused. “Look, I didn’t take any pleasure in it, but I can’t say I’ve lost any sleep over it, either. He was a low-life scum. He pulled the knife on me – there was a struggle, and...” Harvey shrugged.

“That’s pretty much what Bertha said happened.” Mike was gazing at him intently. “Did you think it might scare me off?”

“I wasn’t sure, but I thought it was something you should know if you were going to make a decision about...” Harvey waved his hand in the air vaguely. “In case it had some bearing on that decision. I want to be honest, Mike.”

“Thank you, Harvey.” Mike blew out a deep breath, and the air in front of him clouded immediately. “I appreciate that, but like I said, I already knew, and I’m fine with it.”

That knot of anxiety disappeared from Harvey’s gut, and he wished he’d had this conversation with Mike a long time ago.

“So, what do you say, Captain? Are we...is this...?” Mike waved his hand in the air too, mirroring Harvey’s recent gesture.

“For life? It is for me.”

Mike looked so relieved Harvey thought he might pass out, and he put his hands on Harvey’s chest for support. “Thank God! I wasn’t sure if I was reading it wrong, and I didn’t want to screw up. Damn it, someone has to go first and it might as well be me: I love you, Harvey Specter, and I want to spend the rest of my life with you.”

Harvey felt an immense sense of relief. He pulled Mike close and kissed his forehead, his eyelids and his nose, and then moved down and claimed his mouth too. He closed his eyes as they kissed, then opened them again, surprised, as something wet landed on his eyelashes. He blinked away a snowflake and looked up. Snow was falling all around them; big, fat white flakes, dancing their way downwards.

They stood, side by side, as the snow fell on the city that never slept below.

“It’s beautiful,” Mike said, his eyes gleaming.

“Yes, it is,” Harvey said, but he wasn’t looking at the snow. “You know, you should give your grandmother more credit. I think she’d be fine with this – with us.”

“How do you know? Did you say something to her earlier?” Mike gave him a suspicious look.

“No, but that old lady is not stupid. She’d already figured it out.”

“Grammy knows?” Mike’s look of astonishment made Harvey laugh.

“Yes, she knows. Look, Mike, she just wants you to be happy. She told me that she’s worried about what’ll happen to you after she’s gone; that she wants you to find someone who’ll love you as much as she does.”

“And what did you say?”

“That you have.” Harvey smiled at him, and Mike’s eyes lit up happily in response. “It’s Christmas Eve tomorrow; let’s go visit her again then,” Harvey said. “Properly this time; as who we really are – no more hiding.”

“Sounds good to me, Captain.”

Mike wrapped an arm around Harvey’s waist, and they stayed out there together, watching as the snow fell around them.

After a while, Mike shivered. “I’m cold. I need warming up.” He shot Harvey a sly little grin. “You know, Harvey...now would be an excellent time for that spanking.”

Harvey gave a little laugh and held out his hand, and Mike took it. As they walked back into the apartment together, Harvey thought that maybe Christmas wasn’t so bad, after all.

The End

**Merry Christmas, Everyone!
Friendly feedback adored :-).**

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