

Twisted Rose

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Chapter One

Ian was sound asleep when his cell phone rang, immediately snapping him awake. As a vice detective he could hear his phone's ringtone even in his dreams.

Reaching blindly he batted his hand around the top of the nightstand. His fingers brushed the plastic case moments before he heard it hit the floor.

Ian leaned over the side of the bed stretching his body towards the small black case reaching...reaching.

"Ahhh!" With a loud thump he hit the hardwood floor.

"Maybe I should've invested in some carpet." He muttered to his cat who looked at him curiously from under the bed. Henry purred and brushed his long fur up against Ian's face. Ian snorted the fluffy strands of fur from his nose, grabbing his cell phone as it started to ring again.

"Hello."

"Ian." A familiar voice on the phone sobbed. "Gary left me."

"Good."

Ian disconnected and laid his cheek against the cool wood looking idly under his bed. Damn there was a dust bunny revolution going on.

He made a mental note to hire a housekeeper to come in regularly. It was a luxury but he didn't have a lot of time or energy to spend his salary so he might as well make sure the dust bunnies didn't eat his cat.

The phone rang again.

A glance at the readout told him it was his friend Keith again. What the hell did Keith want? Ian wasn't known for his empathy and he'd always hated Gary anyway. To his logical mind it was a great solution to a bad relationship. Ian sighed and flipped open his phone. As he lay there he could feel particles on the floor pressing into his skin. He definitely needed a housekeeper.

"Yes."

"You hung up on me!" Keith said. There was a slur to his voice that told Ian his friend had definitely been drinking.

The detective in him went on alert.

"Where are you?"

"At the club."

Even with Ian's well-renowned detective skills that wasn't enough information.

"Which club?"

"The Twisted Rose."

Ian bit back a curse. The Twisted Rose was the biggest BDSM club in the northwest. Keith didn't make the best decisions sober, god knew what he would do drunk in a bondage club while sinking in self-pity.

"Be careful not to get over your head with some big leather daddy." Ian cautioned. He hated to ask, "Do you need me to come get you?"

Keith sobbed into the phone. "Please."

Ian sighed. This was why he kept to himself and didn't make very many friends. Friends are too much fucking work. "I'll be there in a few. How do I get in?"

Keith had told him in the past that the club was private and didn't let anyone in without a membership or exclusive invitation. As far as he knew Keith had been a member since it opened three years ago.

"I'll leave your name at the door as my guest."

"Great."

Ian hung up not bothering to say goodbye.

Sleeping in the nude made it easier to get dressed quickly. Thinking he would be returning in an hour or two Ian didn't bother with underwear as he slipped on his favorite worn denim jeans with a hole below his ass and a few rips on his inner thighs. Shivering in the morning air, Ian completed the outfit with a tight red tee that outlined his muscular chest. As a cop, Ian kept himself in peak condition. The sight of the older cops with their desk job stomachs hanging out was a flashing caution sign to him that he needed to stay in shape. Luckily once he worked to reach his top physical condition it was relatively easy to maintain.

Glancing at the mirror he ran his fingers through his thick auburn hair, grown straight and long from his last undercover job. He pulled it back with a rubber band exposing the thick rings piercing through both of his ears.

He sighed at his reflection. Dark circles underscored his bloodshot blue eyes and his two-day old scruff was a testimony to his exhaustion. Luckily he could get away with that kind of shit in Vice.

Fuck he needed more sleep.

Groaning in disgust, Ian grabbed his keys and headed out the door.

* * *

The club was right where he remembered it. Ian had busted drug dealers in this part of town more than once. For a club with such an upscale reputation it was located in a questionable neighborhood. But you probably couldn't plant a BDSM club in the ritzier part of town without local residents raising a stink.

It took Ian a moment to find a place to park on the street. He eyed the people milling about as he parked hoping his truck would still be there when he returned. His truck was old but dependable and it would suck if he had to replace it. Ian walked into the entrance with a careful eye out for trouble.

The tasteful painted sign over the metal door had spiked Ian's curiosity more than once just by the pure artistry of it. The words *Twisted Rose* were intertwined with a pair of handcuffs, a rope and a bullwhip. It was so cleverly done that only a discerning observer could make out the individual components. From a distance they looked like decorative swirls.

Ian checked the knob, locked. Tired and grouchy he banged on the door with his fist.

The large man who answered the door had so many muscles they probably had their own zip code. He was too muscular for Ian's taste, but he admired the smooth naked chest shining in the moonlight. The bouncer glared at Ian. The glare only lasted a moment before turning warmer as his appreciative gaze looked Ian up and down.

"Can I help you, handsome?"

Ian was startled for a moment. The muscle bound ape's voice was a nice deep baritone that probably made more than one twink cream his pants.

“I’m here to get my friend. I’m Ian Stiller.”

“Please come in.” The bouncer said moving back with the elegance of a trained butler. Nodding to the man, Ian walked through the door. Passing through the entryway he was taken aback at the beautiful surroundings. Decorated in art deco style the entryway had an elegant grace to it, enhanced by rich polished wooden floors, colored-glass light fixtures and an old-fashioned hatcheck station at the far side of the room.

“You’ll need to check in at the counter.” The muscular doorman said, smiling wide. Ian’s instincts went on high alert as he walked to the check station. He knew he wasn’t going to like this by the sparkle in the bouncer’s eyes.

A boy and a girl stood behind the long wooden counter wearing very little clothing. The young man was wearing blue body paint instead of a shirt and the tightest pair of white leather shorts Ian had ever seen. Ian would have to give the kid a ticket for indecent exposure if he spotted him outside the club. The girl wore a skimpy pink outfit made out of some sort of shapeless mesh material that stopped an uncomfortable margin below her crotch. He sent a swift, silent prayer that she didn’t bend over while he was there.

Some things should remain a mystery.

The pair watched him with heavily made up eyes and disturbingly identical expressions of lust.

“May we help you?” The girl asked licking her lips.

“I’m here to see a friend. The bouncer sent me back here.”

“That’s because you can’t enter the club with a shirt.” The young man smirked.

“What?” Surely he’d misunderstood.

“Your shirt.” The young man repeated. “Club policy. Men can’t wear shirts.”

For a long moment Ian thought about walking out and leaving Keith to his own fate. But he couldn’t do that. He couldn’t leave a friend in trouble, but Keith was *so* going to pay for this.

“Fine.”

Ripping off his shirt he handed it over to the boy who made no motion to take it.

“I thought you wanted my shirt?”

“Oh, right.” The kid blinked a few times before reaching out a shaky hand to grab Ian’s shirt. Ian frowned. He hoped the boy wasn’t on drugs. A quick glance showed the kid had clear eyes even if they were a little fixated on Ian’s naked chest.

“Are you a dom or sub?” The girl spoke into the sudden silence.

“What?”

“Do you top or a bottom. Do you prefer girls or guys?” The male clarified.

“I like men and I like to do both.”

What the fuck business was it of theirs?

“Wear a green band.” The girl pulled out a green cloth band with a snap closure from a basket behind her. “That will tell people your preferences. Green means you’ll do either and that you prefer men.”

Ian let the boy put it on his arm. It didn’t matter. He wouldn’t be here long enough for it to be a problem.

“Am I done now?”

They nodded in freaky unison.

“Great.”

Turning he saw the door muscle waiting behind him.