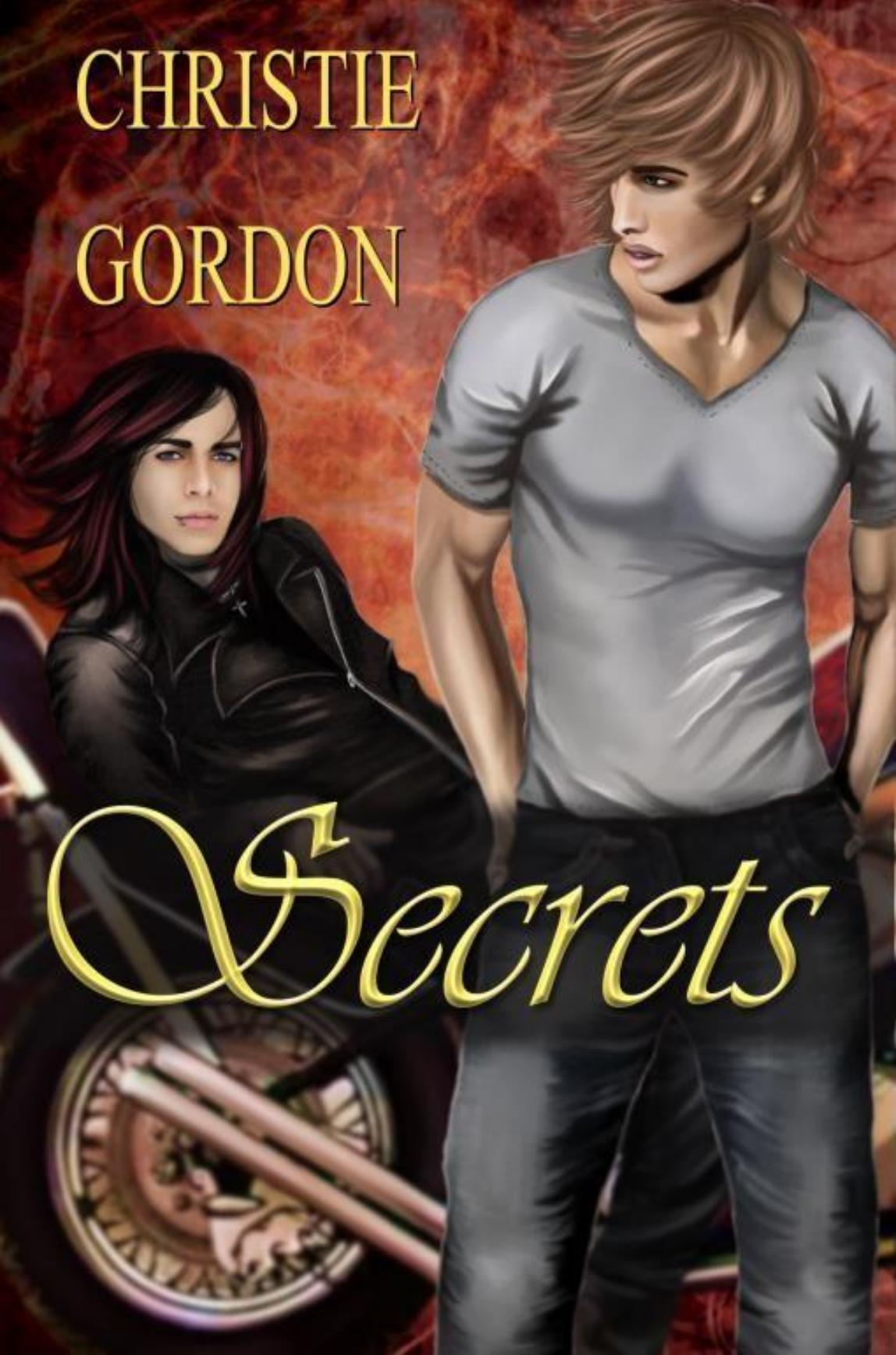


CHRISTIE  
GORDON

*Secrets*



Brokenhearted after a stolen kiss in high school, a new college graduate must overcome years of bitterness to save the now desolate young man who once shattered his heart.

Logan only wanted one thing in his life, Christian, his childhood friend. But a stolen kiss on graduation night broke Logan's heart and destroyed the special friendship they shared. Now four years later, Logan returns to his family in Santa Cruz on the verge of a new life to find Christian on a treacherous, lonely path of booze and drugs, harboring painful secrets. Only Logan's love and acceptance can lead Christian back from the brink of destruction. Can Logan put aside old grudges to save the young man who shattered his heart and in return, accept the love he's craved?

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Secrets

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# Secrets

By

Christie Gordon

## Dedication

*In loving memory of David Kerr.  
I hope you found peace, my old friend.*

Christie Gordon

## Chapter One

### Memories

“It’s about time we found the grad party. I can’t wait to see Mike play his guitar.” Christian, a dark-haired boy in jeans and a red polo shirt, turned around and glanced at Logan. “We’ve finally done it, Logan. We graduated high school.” He stood next to an old Toyota Camry in a long driveway filled with cars.

“We sure did.” Logan nodded and batted a shag of blond hair out of his eyes. He gazed up to the end of the drive. A blaze of lights illuminated the windows of a two-story farmhouse tucked into deep redwoods, looking like the lighthouse out on Point Santa Cruz. Muffled rock music and laughter rose from within. The cool breeze of a summer night on the California coast left a chill on his skin. Logan’s gaze rested again on his best friend. A familiar tightness rose up in his chest and his heartbeat quickened. *Now. I have to do it now.*

He snatched Christian’s hand and jerked him forward.

Christian stumbled and righted himself with his chest touching Logan’s. “Dude, what’s up?” A smirk curled one side of his mouth and he took a step back.

“I...” His hand tightened on Christian’s. His gaze roamed over the features of Christian’s face, from the light blue eyes with the thick black lashes and brows, to his straight nose and down to generous lips with the perfect amount of pout.

“I...”

Christian glanced at their hands. Unease flickered over his face. He tilted his head forward, leaning it against Logan’s forehead. A wide smile exposed the dimples in his cheeks.

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“Dude, you’re acting weird.” He squeezed Logan’s hand. “Why’ve you been acting so weird lately?”

Logan bit his lip. His heart pounded as if it would burst from his chest. *He has to have feelings for me. Why else would he act like this?* His gaze dipped to Christian’s chest, already wide at age eighteen. As his focus came back up, Christian straightened his head and their eyes locked. Logan gulped hard. “I...just...love you. You know?”

Christian let out a soft chuckle and took a step back. “Yeah. Love you, too, man.” His brows furrowed and a serious look swept over his face for just a moment. His smile returned. “So you going to give me my hand back, or what?” He held up their still-entwined hands.

It had to be now. He’d never have the courage again and tomorrow was that summer class at Stanford. Determined, Logan said, “Christian, I mean I really love you.” Everything around him shimmered on hope. He held his breath. His heart clenched.

Christian’s eyes widened and his lips parted as if understanding finally unwound inside him.

With a tug on Christian’s hand, Logan yanked him forward. Christian’s soft lips fell against his. The taste of beer, fries and the scent of Christian, all teenage sweat and sex, engulfed him. As his free arm wound around his best friend, a strong arm wrapped around his back. His lips crushed against Christian’s with hunger and longing. *Don’t stop. Please don’t let it stop.*

Christian’s lips moved against Logan’s in a passionate dance. He clutched at Logan’s waist and pulled their bodies flush. Their hands clung to one another as though their lives depended on it.

Logan parted his lips and entered his friend with an exploring tongue, devouring Christian’s mouth. His body

tingled at Christian's touch. His hardening groin brushed against Christian's thigh. Arousal flared inside him like wind breathing life into a fire. It was happening, finally happening. A soft moan of desire escaped him.

Christian ripped free from Logan's hold. "What the fuck?" He looked all around him. Confusion swam on his face. His feet scuffled. His attention flipped back to Logan. His fists surged up and whacked Logan's chest, flinging Logan backward into the grill of an SUV.

Sharp pain shot up Logan's back. "Ow, shit." With a groan, he straightened. He peered at Christian through a stunned haze.

Christian panted, his face contorting into clear rage. "What the fuck was that?" He stood with his chest puffed out, arms raised, legs spread.

As he shook hair from his eyes, Logan licked his lips. All hope vanished. "W-well I thought —"

"You thought what?" Christian shifted on his feet.

"W-well that you, that you —"

"That I was a fucking faggot? Are you fucking kidding me?" Fury burned in Christian's eyes. His hands fell to his hips. He glanced all around Logan as if unable to look at him.

Hurt and agony wove a painful web through Logan's body, taking his breath away. Tears welled up in his eyes. *No, this can't be right. Not after that kiss.* An uncontrollable trembling overtook him.

As Christian's gaze flicked back to Logan, one of his hands popped up in a fist. "I ought to beat the living shit out of you."

Logan held his hands out in front of him. "I thought that you, that you —"

"No, I don't. Not like that. Never have, never will."

Christian dropped his arm and turned his back on Logan.

His hands fisted and opened.

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In a broken voice, Logan said, "Please, Christian. I'm sorry. It'll never happen —"

"Shut up!" Christian wheeled around and stomped toward Logan with both arms raised to strike. He halted, dangerously close from Logan's face. Tears glittered over the fury in his eyes. In a snarling voice, he said, "I am not a fag. I'm not like you."

Logan cowered, and a tear raced down his cheek. Nausea balled up in his stomach. "No."

As Christian lowered his arms, the muscle in his jaw bulged and relaxed. He twisted back around, facing the house. His voice breaking, he said, "Leave me alone. I don't ever want to see your fucking face again."

### *Four Years Later*

Logan woke up in the dark to the growling of a loud motorcycle coming up the street. "Jesus, why the hell do people have to drive those things?"

The motorcycle pulled up to the house next door. The engine revved and went silent.

"Huh?" Logan popped up in his old twin bed at his parent's Santa Cruz home. *No one owned a motorcycle at the Foster's, did they?* The glow from a streetlight filtered in through the window. As he ran a hand through long bangs, he took a quick peek at the digital alarm clock on the nightstand — three in the morning.

Curious, he climbed out from under warm sheets and blankets to get a better look at this biker at the neighbor's house. *Christian's house.*

He placed his hand on a dresser to steady himself and righted his boxer briefs. With a smirk, he padded to the window at the foot of the bed and drew half-opened, long

draperies aside. After taking a deep inhale and straightening to his full height of five-ten, he bent over to peer down from the window at the motorcycle in the driveway.

A young man with straight dark hair, a few inches longer than shoulder-length, bent over a Harley, fiddling with something chrome on the side of it. He wore fringed leather from head to toe. A painted dragon made of fire blazed along the side of the tank and a half helmet rested on the seat. As he stood and primped his hair, he wobbled and grabbed the handlebars, almost falling. He raked his hand back through his thick hair again, wavering, and the streetlight illuminated his face.

“Oh, shit.” Logan held his breath, shut his eyes and slapped a hand over his mouth. *Christian*. His heart pounded like the bastard had never stomped on it, as if graduation night had never happened and four years hadn’t passed. He patted at his chest, willing his heartbeat to calm. But damn, Christian looked good all dressed up in black leather. He shouldn’t think like that. *Isn’t that what got me into trouble four years ago?*

He forced himself to remember the incredible pain of that night, the menacing look on Christian’s face. Slowly, Logan opened his eyes, took another peek at his old friend and arch nemesis all rolled into one. “You son of a bitch, you. Driving drunk, huh? What a stupid jerk you turned out to be.” With a soft chuckle and a sneer, he strolled back to bed, his head a little higher and his chest puffed out a little more.

With a crack, his shin smacked against the corner of the bed frame. “Shit!” Hopping on one foot, he held onto his throbbing leg.

“Logan, honey, are you all right?” his mother called from downstairs.

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"I'm fine, Mom, just fine." He sat down on the side of his bed and rubbed the aching shin. He whispered, "God damn him." *Why does that bastard always have to cause the same reaction?* He was over, way over him by now. He wasn't the same idiot anymore. He'd spent four years at Stanford getting a business degree. *And* how many boyfriends had he had? Too many to count. *And* they found him hot. Tom loved the brown specks in his hazel eyes and Michael told him he had a chiseled chest. Chiseled, that was right. Christian lost out. So why did just seeing Christian get him so flustered?

He took a deep breath. His parents had warned him Christian was still living there, but so far all the times he'd been back he had yet to see him. How he'd missed him, he hadn't a clue. *Why now?* He sighed and let his shoulders slump. Perfect. Nearly the four-year anniversary of the biggest fuck up in his life.

Logan lay back in bed, covered himself and stared up at the ceiling, listening for any sounds from the driveway. He'd only be here for another three weeks or so anyway. Then he could put this all behind him with his shiny new apartment and office in San Jose, selling networking solutions to super geeks.

He closed his eyes and turned on his side. The sound of a door opening and clicking shut outside snaked up into his bedroom. An old familiar ache reached around to gnaw at his heart. "Why now, Christian?"

Logan sat at the kitchen table in black workout shorts and a gray sweatshirt, rummaging through Craigslist postings for a couch on his smartphone and eating a bowl of Rice Krispies. The remnants of sweat still lingered after his morning run. He gazed out a set of French doors at a grassy backyard with rosebushes lining a tall wood fence. A memory surfaced of

family dinners on the patio just outside, at the four-top umbrella table. Christian was always there.

An ache filtered through his chest.

He shut his smartphone off. His gaze wandered down to the round table he sat at and the four blue captain's chairs surrounding it. "Hey, Mom?"

"Yes, dear?" His mother emerged from a carpeted hallway in her work attire with a coffee cup in her hand.

"How long have you had this kitchenette?"

She stopped and put a hand to her short blonde hair and furrowed her brow. "I don't know, since you were a baby I suppose." She walked over the tile floor and sat her thin frame down across from him to watch him eat. "Why do you ask?"

"Just wondering. Seems you and Dad haven't gotten any new furniture for a long time." He spooned cereal into his mouth.

"Well, your father and I have been putting you and your sister through school. Now that you're out, at least, I guess we'll have to redecorate. I'll start with your room upstairs. How's that?" She chuckled.

He smiled at her. "Fine. It's not like I'll be needing it. My new apartment awaits me." He looked at the old oak cabinets, the porcelain sink and the tiled counters, everything circa 1980's. "Though maybe you should start with this kitchen. It looks like something out of *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*."

His mother frowned at him and gave her head a slow shake.

He let out a soft chuckle. "Where is Dad?"

"Oh, he had to work early this morning. I guess they have an important client he needed to ready the solar lab for." She took a sip of black coffee.

He nodded and set the spoon down in his half-empty bowl. A vision of Christian primping his hair last night flickered in

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his mind. "Hey, Mom, I know you told me that Christian wasn't around much anymore, but do you know what he's doing now?"

"Christian?" She leaned back and gave him a knowing look. "I thought you didn't like hearing about him."

"Yeah, well the jerk woke me up with an obnoxious Harley last night and I just wanted to know why in the hell he was in that get up. You know, all the leathers and stuff." With a scoff, he relaxed his shoulders, doing his best to hide the ache inside him. "Besides, I know how much you like to gossip about the neighborhood." As he sat forward, he gave her his best grin. "So spill it."

His mother's eyes lit up. "You sure?" He nodded.

"Well, after you left for Stanford, he started going to the University of California here in town during the day and playing in a local band at night. I heard his band got fairly popular." Her brows furrowed. "It's called the..." Her index finger rose to bounce on her cheek. "Oh, Bloody Hole." "What? That's disgusting." His face scrunched up.

"I know." She waved her hand at him "I guess it's some sort of metal punk band."

"What does his mother think about that?"

"Clarice? Oh, she just thinks it's a phase."

"And his dad? I mean, they were close, but he was pretty strict, too." He leaned back again and smiled. Christian looked just like his father. His mind flooded with the memories of the great times they had together fishing down at the wharf. He shoved them back into a corner. He shouldn't remember such things.

His mother's face grew solemn, and she rested her hands on the table. "Logan, Christian's father died two years ago."

A sharp pain stabbed at his heart. "He what?"

"Honey, he died. It was a car accident." She gazed down at the table for a second and came back up to focus on her son. "I know it must be a bit hard to hear, but they said he went quickly. His car went off one of those nasty cliffs on Highway One late at night. They found the car upside down on the rocks in the surf."

As her words sank in, he shook his head slowly. He let his arms fall to rest across the table. "B-but you didn't say anything about it. Why didn't you tell me?"

She glanced at him with concern etched across her face. "Well, I promised Clarice I wouldn't say anything to you right away. With what happened between you two on graduation night, she didn't want you coming to the funeral. Christian was already upset enough." As she reached across the table, she placed her hands over his. "And then, well, you were away at college and time passed and it just slipped my mind, I guess."

"Oh." The ache in his heart grew. "But still, you should have told me before now." He dropped his head forward, letting his bangs cover his eyes.

"I know. I'm sorry, honey."

"Christian must still hate me." A lump formed in his throat and he gulped it down. He leaned back and let out a ragged exhale, trying to purge the raw feelings of grief and loss. "Jesus, I can't believe Mr. Foster's dead."

Her brows furrowed. "I know, I know. He was a good man and a good father to Christian and his sister."

As he raised his head, he shifted in his chair. "Tell me more about Christian. What else is he up to now?"

With a long exhale, she took her coffee mug to the sink, rinsed it and placed it in the dishwasher. "Well, apparently he quit college after his father passed and started tending bar. He plays in that band and some other one most weekend nights

at places all up and down the coast. Sometimes even in San Francisco.”

“Really? Huh.” He pondered her words. Good thing he’d never run into him. Judging by last night, he didn’t need to be reminded of Christian. “I wonder why he’d quit college like that. He was so smart. I thought for sure he’d end up being some super geek engineer or something. Certainly not a *bartender*.”

“There’s nothing wrong with bartenders.”

“I know. I just always pictured him saving the world with some invention of his.”

The tune from a cell phone rang out from down the hall. “Oh, my cell phone.” His mother darted off down the hallway.

So Christian was a bartender and a wanna-be rock star. *Nice. I bet he scores lots of chicks with that.* His heart sank and he stared at his cereal bowl, no longer hungry.

His mother came back into the kitchen. “That was your father. He wants me to make that chicken and artichoke dish you two love so much. Can you go to the store for me while I’m at work and pick up a few things?”

“Sure, Mom. Just write me a list. I can pick it up when I go to look at this couch I found.”

“Oh, let me see.” With a warm smile, she stepped to his side.

He picked up his cell phone and tapped open his Craigslist app. An image of a rust-colored, leather sectional couch appeared on the phone’s screen. “See?”

His mother grasped the phone from him and peered at it. “That’s really nice for only three hundred dollars.”

“Yeah. They’re moving in a few weeks and just want to get rid of it.” He took the phone from his mother. “I guess after they posted the listing for it, they found out they needed to

hang onto it until they move. But they said if I like it, I can put a put a down payment on it to hold it.”

His mother crossed her arms over her chest. “You think that’s a good idea? What if they just take your money?”

“Well, I only have to give them forty dollars and the couch is a steal. I don’t want someone else getting it.” He peeked at the image on his phone. “Plus it turns out they’re cousins of a good friend of mine from Stanford. So I don’t think they’ll rip me off.”

“How did you find out they’re cousins of your friend?”

“They’re last name is Hingelson. Not many of those around.” He let out a soft chuckle.

Logan dressed in low-rise jeans and a dark hooded shirt. As he grabbed his car keys from the bedroom dresser, he peeked at his blond hair in the mirror. The medium-length shag framed his face perfectly, giving him the classic surfer boy look, though he never was any good at surfing. He primped with his free hand and smiled at himself, noting the bit of stubble left on his cheeks and chin. “Christian, you had your chance.” With a chuckle, he waltzed down the hallway, down the stairs and out the front door of the house.

As he strolled down wood steps and into the sunlit afternoon to his black Audi A4 sedan, he glanced over the Harley next door. Christian was still home. A prick of panic coursed through him and his chest tightened up. He stood still and took a deep breath. The scents of the ocean and eucalyptus trees filled his nose, calming him. *Christian’s just a jerk. Remember that.*

He took a quick peek at the one-story green house next door and at the manicured lawn out front before turning to peer at his parent’s home – a two-story California bungalow, the second story added when he was in grade school. He

remembered how he and Christian loved playing like they were construction workers up there.

His gaze dropped to the generous porch along the front of the house and his mother's clay pots of gardenias lining the wall. There used to be more pots, but Christian broke one the summer before graduation. As Christian had ripped free from his tickling fingers, the pot tumbled to smash on the grass.

"Shit." He forgot the list. He had to get Christian off his mind. He shook his head and ran back into the house, grabbed a small Post-It note from the kitchen counter filled with his mother's handwriting, and bound outside again.

"Logan?" a melodic male voice called out.

Logan skidded to a halt before his Audi, his key fob in his hand, ready to push the unlock button. *Shit, Christian.* He'd know that voice anywhere. Panic wound through every fiber of his body. Sweat formed in his hands. His mouth went dry. His heart pounded.

"Hey, Logan, dude, is that you?"

"Y-yeah?" As he turned, he forced himself to look at the tall young man in leathers. His hand trembled. He fought to steady it. *What's wrong with me?*

A wide smile spread over Christian's face. "Dude, it's good to see you."

"Wh-what?" A nervous chuckle sprang from throat. *It's only Christian. Settle down.*

"I said it's good to see you." Christian frowned at the driveway and beamed when he looked back up at Logan. "It's been a long time, man." He strutted toward Logan like a rock star on stage.

Logan gulped hard, taking in the lean frame, about sixtwo, of his old friend bound in leather chaps and biker boots. The long dark locks flowed in perfect harmony around his striking face and those eyes, the light blue eyes that contrasted with

the rest of his dark appearance and stopped everyone in their tracks.

*Oh, God.* His heart skipped a beat despite himself. *But why is he talking to me?*

Christian stopped in front of Logan and gave him the once over. "You look really good." His wide smile returned and his gaze travelled to Logan's car. "Nice ride." He ran an index finger on the top, over the driver's side door.

Logan watched Christian's finger slide across the surface of the car. The way it barely touched the surface, only enough to leave a tickle, made his insides squirm and his groin ache. He licked his lips and his breath quickened. In a weak voice, he said, "Oh, thanks."

Christian's attention returned to Logan and his hand dropped to his side. "What?"

"I...I said thanks. You know, about the car and about me, too, I guess." *Quit stammering, you idiot.* As he took a deep inhale, he stared down the street at a car crossing at the intersection. His gaze flicked back to Christian and he attempted to glare at him. He should be angry after the last time they saw each other.

Christian studied Logan, as if assessing him, taking him all in. "Oh."

A silver hoop pierced Christian's left eyebrow, another in the right corner of his bottom lip and one in each earlobe. He wore a silver necklace with an upside down cross at the top of his chest, just below the hollow of his throat. The change in Christian's appearance since high school caught him off guard. Christian looked all the more sexy and unattainable. *Were his nipples pierced, too?* "Oh, nice ah, nice jewelry." He winced. That was a stupid thing to say.

"Thanks, dude." With a wide grin, Christian slapped Logan in the shoulder with an open palm.

Logan flinched.

"It was cool seeing you." Christian turned and walked his rock star strut toward his motorcycle. Once there, he grabbed the helmet from the seat and placed it over his head, letting his hair spill out underneath. He glanced back at Logan. "Later."

Logan lifted his hand for a half-hearted wave. In almost a whisper, he said, "Yeah, later." He remained next to his car, unable to budge, and watched Christian's languid movements.

After strapping his helmet, Christian flung a leg over his motorcycle, crushed the seat with a denim-clad ass, started the engine and revved it up a few times. With another quick glance at Logan, he took off down the street in a roar of noise.

When Christian's bike disappeared, Logan jerked back to life. "God damn it, what's wrong with me?" Resting under a surface of pure shock, the old loss and pain rose up inside. With precision, he morphed it into anger. As he lifted his key fob to the car, he stabbed the button with his thumb. He climbed into his car, started it and revved the engine a few times. After all, if Christian could make a shit load of noise, so could he.

He slammed the shifter into reverse and started down the driveway. "I bet he did that just to show off." He pushed the shifter into drive and sped down the street. He had to find a way to stop these old feelings. He forced the memory of graduation night into his mind. *I am not a fag. Not like you. Why is Christian being so nice? What's in it for him?* "He's probably just fucking with me."

He pushed the car radio button on and Metallica filled the car. With a wild grin, he twisted the knob to the right, turning the volume way up, drowning out tangled emotions.

## Chapter Two

### Windows and Margaritas

Logan sat at the kitchenette finishing up his chicken and artichoke dinner while he peered out the open French doors. The long shadows of evening draped over the backyard and the warm air had yet to cool. His gaze flicked from his father, to the left of him, and his mother, in front.

“So how was your day of leisure?” His father glanced up at him. The frames of his glasses created long rectangles around kind brown eyes. Short salt and pepper hair covered his head.

He gave his father a forced grin and sipped some beer from a glass. “Well, I spoke with Christian today, the first time in four years.”

“You did?” His mother shifted forward in her chair.

He glanced at her. “Yep. Seems he’s over what happened on graduation night. He thinks I look *nice* and my car is *nice* and he just seems real, I don’t know, *nice*.” The words came out more sarcastic than he intended. His gaze flicked from his mother to his father.

His mother let out a held chuckle. “You don’t sound so happy about it.”

“I’d just stay away from him if I were you.” His father’s hands lowered to the table, next to his empty plate. “I hear he’s having some issues with drugs and alcohol. Right, Mary?”

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"Really?" Logan's attention turned to his mother. "How come you didn't say anything earlier?"

His mother shrugged. "I guess I didn't think of it at the time."

His father cleared his throat. "Logan, I don't mean to pry, but you've never really told us about any other young men in your life."

"Well, there have been a few. Quite a few, actually." He gaze dropped to his plate.

"Why haven't we met any of these young men?" His mother grinned at him.

His father's brows furrowed and his gaze dropped to his plate. "Listen, I know I haven't been as understanding of your sexual orientation as your mother has, but I hope you know it's okay for you to bring them around." He focused on his son. "I do genuinely care about your happiness, and finding a partner in life is important."

With a sigh, Logan slumped in his chair. "I know. The guys I've dated just didn't last long, so there was no point in bringing them home." He glanced up and his gaze panned from his father to his mother. "Gay relationships aren't necessarily the same as yours. That's all I want to say about it. If I meet someone special, I'll let you know."

"I know, honey. Don't worry about it." His mother smiled at him. "Hey, so how was that couch you looked at today?"

"Awesome. I gave them the forty dollars to hold it for me and I can pick it up just before I head up to the Bay Area."

"So how much was this couch you found?" His father asked.

"They were asking three hundred, but I got them down to two fifty. I think they gave me an even better deal since I'm friends with their cousin." Satisfied with himself, he beamed at his father.

“That’s the way to strike a deal.” His father slapped his hands together. “Hey, the demo with my client went so well today, I’m taking the day off tomorrow. How about you and I spend some time together?”

“Sure, Dad. What are you thinking?” He pushed his plate away.

“I don’t know, lunch and maybe a few drinks in town.” He grinned at Logan.

He chuckled and shook his head. “Yeah, sure, sounds great.”

“Have your fun now, boys. Jenny’s coming home in a few days from her vacation in Hawaii with her boyfriend.” Mary stood and took a few dishes into her hand.

“It’s about time. Who is this guy sis is seeing now?” He stood and helped his mother clear the table.

“Just another hippie type from Berkeley. His name is Sean. I think when she finishes college she plans on staying up there.” She carried the plates to the sink.

He followed his mother and set plates and glasses on the counter. “Well, it suits her. Her and her vegan diet and selfrighteous *don’t-wear-animal-skin-on-your-body* crap. I can’t believe she wants to go to law school, seems kind of an oxymoron.”

His father brought the remaining dishes to the counter. “Don’t be so hard on your sister. She means well and she has very firm ideals and beliefs.”

He turned to his father. “Yeah, but someday someone’s going to slap her for telling them about how cruel their shoes are.” He let out a chuckle. “Maybe I will.”

“You will not, Logan Thomas.” As she twisted around at the sink, his mother glared at him.

“Relax, Mom. I won’t. Not this time, at least.” She reached out to slap at him with her hand.

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He shimmied out of her reach and trotted off to the stairway. "I'm going to go read for a bit."

"Okay, but come back down in a half hour so we can watch *The Daily Show* together," his father called out.

"Sure thing."

Logan sat next to his mother on the blue plaid couch in the front room. He watched *Star Wars* as it droned on in a big screen television tucked into a custom made cherry wood cabinet. He shifted his attention to his father in his favorite black leather recliner. A cracked open picture window behind the couch let the night air freshen the room, thick with the scents of the Pacific Ocean and blooming jasmine from the neighborhood.

Fatigue made his eyelids heavy. He yawned, letting out a soft sigh. "Hey, Mom, Dad, I'm going to bed." He glanced between his mother and father.

"Okay, good night, dear." His mother tucked her feet underneath her as he got up.

"Goodnight, son. We'll have fun tomorrow." His father smiled at him.

He waved and padded to the lit stairwell and up the wood steps. At the top, he took a quick peek inside a bathroom sitting in-between two bedrooms, his sister's and his own. He was too tired to brush his teeth. He ambled down the beige carpet in the hallway and gazed at a framed print of flowers in a vase before entering his room.

Once inside, he took off his silver watch and set it on the dresser, just inside the door, letting the hallway light guide him. He looked up at the wall by his bed. A poster of Green Day hung on it along with his blue and gold high school graduation tassel, dangling from a thumbtack. The memory

of that night closed in on him. *Don't think about it.* Christian was just a homophobe. That was all. He shut it away.

He turned and went to a mirrored closet door, slid one side open and looked at the pile of dirty laundry in a plastic bin on the floor. He still had to finish all that laundry he'd brought down with him from Stanford. He pulled his hooded shirt over his head and tossed it in the bin. After taking off his jeans, he threw them in and they landed on the pile and fell to one side. "Ah, fuck it." He shoved the closet door shut.

With an about face, he stretched and headed for the window to close the drapes. As he neared the window, he peeked out over the roof of Christian's house.

The light from a window below the eaves shone out onto the grass of the side yard.

His gaze caught movement inside the window. Wait, wasn't that Marla's room? Hadn't she moved out just before he left for college? As he leaned over, he peered down closer through the window.

A bed lay sideways just under the window with a brown comforter over it. Christian's dark head of hair flashed into view. His jean-clad body flung onto the bed. Bare-chested, his hairless, rippled abdomen screamed to be lusted after. Tribal tattoos covered his arms and chest with skulls and serpents.

Startled, Logan put a hand to his open mouth. "Oh, shit. Christian's in his sister's room." But oh, what a body he had. Damn him, he probably never spent a day at the gym and he still looked like that. As Logan's cock jerked in his boxer briefs, his heart pounded out of control.

His eyes took in the sight of Christian sprawled out on the bed with his cell phone in his hand and his other arm raised above his head, tucked between it and a pillow. The only things he couldn't see were Christian's calves and feet. The bed sat just under the window with the headboard at one end.

## Secrets

Christian's thumb raced across his cell phone touch screen, pulling up image after image. Finally, he settled in and pressed the center of the screen. His other arm reached down to press on his groin through his jeans.

He whispered, "Oh my God, no way." He looked closer at the spectacle and arousal ached inside him. His cock filled with heat. *Just close the drapes and walk away, Logan.* "Yeah, right. Boy would he be pissed if he knew I was watching." A full on smirk played over his lips.

He sped to the door, shut and locked it and came back to the window. *He's probably sexting some chick.*

As Christian placed steady strokes over the growing bulge in his jeans, his hips rocked up in time.

"Holy shit," Logan whispered under his breath. His cock hardened in an instant. Porn? Even better. He was definitely watching this. "Watching some chick get her rocks off on your phone?" With a grin, he leaned against the window frame and let pure lust wash over him.

A clear erection ran along Christian's left leg and he rubbed down on it, back and forth and pressed his fingers hard along its edges. His eyes shut and his hips thrust up.

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