

The Hypermales



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CHAPTER 3: ROOMMATES & MINISTERS

MASON FINISHED HIS SATURDAY EVENING WORKOUT as usual, with a flurry of crunches, sit-ups, and other ab work. Today had been back and biceps, and his swollen muscles were hard with engorged blood. He loved the feel of the pump.

He grabbed his duffel and headed for the front door of SWAG. He rarely, if ever, used the showers at the gym. His fellow bodybuilders weren't very good at hiding their sheer awe at Mason's other-worldly build. Add to that, but when the Hypermale stripped down to shower, his endowment, which was just as other-worldly as every other part of his magnificent physique, drew so many stares and whispered expletives that well... Mason wasn't ashamed of *any* part of his body, but it was just easier to shower in private.

"See you tomorrow, Blake," Mason waved to the man behind the front desk as he opened the glass door with his other hand. Blake was on the phone, but he waved while he talked.

Mason turned the lock of his apartment door and opened it. He'd seen Jay-Gordon's rig down in the parking garage, so he was expecting his roommate to be there. Sure enough, Jay-Gordon was sprawled on the couch, watching a basketball game on the big screen.

Without taking his eyes off the TV, Jay-Gordon said, "Long workout tonight, huh?"

"Yup. Back and bi-s." Mason tossed his duffel on the floor and retrieved his sweat towel. He opened a folding closet door in the hallway and tossed the towel into the dirty clothes hamper.

"You spend too much time at the gym, man," Jay-Gordon's voice called from the living room.

Mason walked to the kitchen, just off the living area, to make a post-workout smoothie. As he passed Jay-Gordon, he said, "Says who?"

"Says me."

Mason chuckled out loud. "Well, thanks for your unsolicited opinion."

A minute later, Jay-Gordon said, "Seriously, man. You're already bigger and more ripped than anyone, probably anywhere. What do you have to prove?"

"Not proving anything, man," Mason called out just before he turned on the loud blender. When it was done, and quiet again, he continued, "What's it to you anyway?"

Jay-Gordon didn't hesitate. "It isn't anything to me. I just think you're kind of obsessed."

Mason drank his smoothie and opened the fridge to get a bowl of rice. He turned to Jay-Gordon and said, "Noted."

A few minutes later, Mason was in the bathroom, finishing up with his shower. He got out and dried himself off. *Time for more post-workout nutrition.* He wrapped the towel around his narrow waist, securing it against his hip bones, and headed back toward the kitchen. In the living room, Jay-Gordon looked up at the behemoth of fat-free muscle and his jaw dropped. He'd seen Mason naked before, but he never ceased to be amazed. Mason saw his reaction, but ignored it.

"God almighty," Jay-Gordon practically hissed. He turned his attention back to the TV as Mason rounded the corner into the kitchen.

Mason emerged a few minutes later and walked into the living room to check on the game. He held a bowl of chicken in one hand and ate as he watched. Jay-Gordon looked up at the wall of sinew, bone and muscle and said, "Seriously, you're way

over the top.” Jay-Gordon was right about Mason being bigger than pretty much any other muscle man. And right now, Mason’s workout-pumped biceps were hardened mounds of beef. The arm with which he held his food was bent at 90 degrees, and Jay-Gordon thought to himself that the bulging upper arms probably threatened the 26 inch mark when they were pumped like this. He knew that cold, Mason’s guns were 24.

Mason didn’t take his eyes off the game. “I take it you don’t subscribe to the ‘live and let live’ philosophy.”

Jay-Gordon sighed and looked back at the TV, saying nothing.

Mason continued to eat, and watch, the bright white towel hanging low on his narrow hips, flaring out where it draped over his 31 inch upper legs. As he finished his meat, he said, “I didn’t realize what a crabby ass you were, when I agreed to room with you.”

Jay-Gordon looked up and smirked. “I didn’t realize what a prima donna you were...”

Expressionless, Mason turned and left the room.

ADRIAN SHUFFLED ALONG WITH THE OTHERS, toward the aisle as the worship band sang a recessional song. The Sunday morning service had been “okay,” he thought, but the whole idea of maintaining faith in a god who was non-responsive was, for Adrian, progressing from *boring* to downright *irritating*. Especially when he tried to reconcile his sexual orientation with the unbending conservative doctrine that his church held, Adrian had started to realize that he and god just weren’t compatible.

He’d never gone off the deep end with guilt over his sexuality, like so many other conservative’s children do. Fortunately, Adrian had adopted a perspective of being an “observer” when it came to church. Sure, all of his church friends and family there were pretty gung-ho for Jesus, but he had mastered the art of lip service. He suspected that many of those with whom he rubbed shoulders this morning, as they all doddered toward the narthex, had done the same, to varying degrees.

“Yo, Adrian,” he heard a voice call from behind him. He hated when people used that hail from “Rocky.” Way overdone, and it had lost its humor after the third time he’d heard it. Now that he’d heard it hundreds of times during his 19-year life, it was his irritation of choice, for sure. Dave was the worst offender. He just didn’t get how grating it was.

He turned around slowly, and saw Pastor Dave waving from the front of the sanctuary. He pulled himself out of the queue that lead to the rear of the church, and waited for the youth pastor to get to him; the wait wasn't pleasant.

"Hey, man, good to see you," Dave said, extending a one-arm bro-hug.

"Yeah, you too," Adrian smiled. His smile was dimpled and gorgeous, and no matter how disingenuously he might offer it, he wasn't able to be anything but stunning.

"Hey, you got a minute?" Dave asked. "I have something I want to run by you." Dave was about the same height as Adrian. Black wavy hair. Hazel eyes. Nice face with a bit of black scruff. He was married, to Fran. No kids. Adrian put him at about 25 or so. Like Adrian, Dave was an ectomorph. In fact, Dave's runner's build was considerably skinnier than Adrian's—downright slight. It wouldn't surprise anyone to learn that Dave was a marathoner.

"Uh, sure," Adrian said. He checked his phone for the time. He had a few minutes, before he had to leave for his gym date with Mason. "What's up?"

"Well, the ministry team is working on a new discipleship program," Adrian said. "The pastors are all going to take on some guys and disciple them... you know, in Bible study and stuff."

Adrian's stomach wrenched.

"Anyway, I've been racking my mind as to who might want some one-on-one discipling and counseling. I think it was just the Lord's will that I ran into you at the coffee shop on Friday. I haven't been to shake you out of my mind. You interested?"

"Oh... well, what would it entail?"

"Not a big commitment. Not at all," Dave smiled. "Just once-a-week meetings. Maybe a bit of personal Bible study during the week on our own, then we hook up for prayer and discussion of the study. Maybe even get together for some fun stuff too... catch a game or something once in a while."

Sounds like a really great manufactured friendship. Adrian nodded to Dave while the pastor talked. The last thing he wanted was to engage more closely with people who needed to push their faith on him. But he said, "Yeah. I think that'd be okay." He tried to mitigate his agreement with, "Although I am pretty busy with classes at Mt. Hood. And with work."

"I understand, totally," Dave said. "Like I said, it wouldn't be a huge commitment. If you end up not having time, we can totally work something else out."

Adrian could see the excitement in Dave's eyes. The guy was sincere enough, but with Adrian, sincerity had never been a problem as far as accepting faith as a

paradigm for life. Sincerity wasn't the issue; the issue was logic and common sense. "Yeah, I guess I could give it a try," Adrian said. *Shit, I wish I could avoid this.*

"Great!" Dave's enthusiasm was annoying. He pulled out his phone, ostensibly checking his calendar app. "Are you free Tuesday evening? Say, Seven?"

Adrian consulted his own calendar. *Shit. I'm free.* "Yeah, I guess that'd work."

"Sweet. How about we meet in my study, in the church complex. At least for the first time. Later, we can hook up at Starbucks or something."

First of all, we're not hooking up, man. Do you even know what you're saying? And second, "...for the first time?" What have I gotten myself into?

—Hypermales 3—

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