

A romantic couple is shown in profile, about to kiss. The woman is on the left, her eyes closed, and the man is on the right. They are framed by a decorative border of holly leaves and red berries at the top. Three lit candles in brass holders are positioned at the bottom. The background is dark and ornate, with vertical strings of warm, glowing lights. The overall mood is intimate and festive.

Laura Tolomei

To Seduce a Soulmate Book 2

THE PIRATE'S SURRENDER

The pirate v/s the devil: how far can seduction go?

All right, so he did it! Marin seduced me. And the sex is fantastic, blows my mind every time, no complaints there, if that thing about being his soul-mate didn't still bug me. Yet there seems no way around it except...but can I do it? Do I want to do it? No, I don't know if I'm ready to surrender. Me, the pirate, and to the blond devil, no less...talk about fucked up destiny!

Don't miss the romantic sequel to To Seduce A Soul Mate.

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The Pirate's Surrender
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The Pirate's Surrender
Book 2 of To Seduce A Soul Mate

By

Laura Tolomei

*To Cinzia, my special sun-friend, with love and thanks
for your complicated life stories, which are both
headaches and inspirations*

Chapter One

Sitting on the toilet, Drake stared at the unfamiliar bathroom. He was still groggy from a deep sleep, which could account for his forgetting where he was or how he had gotten there. The peeing was not helping either, since it kept him focused on his aching bladder, so full it actually hurt, and the terrific erection doing its best to empty it. Maybe the two contributed to clog his senses at the moment...who could tell?

Safe to say, the bathroom was nothing like his own, the piping too old and in some places too rusted to be his. The sink was also old fashioned and with two faucets, rather than the solitary modern one he had at home. Turning his head, he would have examined the bathtub, too, if the pee had not stopped its furious rush, so after a vigorous shake at what remained as rigid as marble, Drake got up and stumbled back to bed.

He did not have far to go. The bathroom adjoined the bedroom and everything he saw on his way confirmed he was not home. From the iron-wrought bed, the massive chestnut closet to one side, to the quaint wooden window shades, filtering pale, trembling light, nothing was a standard fixture of his house in Atlanta, Georgia, or in many other American homes for that matter.

But it was no use to keep wondering when light was scarce and his eyes needed to adjust to it. Instead, he crawled back to bed, curling on his favorite side. The only

thing he knew was that he had just woken up from a deep sleep with the swollen bladder and the impressive hard-on he now grasped firmly, sliding the soft skin up and down the tight stem. He did not indulge, though, just a couple of strokes before returning to the problem at hand. Where was he?

Someone stirred behind him. And with whom? Drake did not turn immediately, waiting for whoever was there to settle in a new position. Then carefully, he rolled on the opposite side, shifting the thick cock until it pressed on the other person's naked back. It was a man, no doubt, light-skinned and a lithe build smaller than his for sure. But if Drake dominated him with his more muscular frame, what attracted his attention was the sexy ass rubbing against his rigid dick. At first, Drake thought he was imagining it. Maybe he was confusing his own slide on the tempting cleft as that of the other man. Stopping for a second, though, he realized the butt was stroking the shaft of its own will, independently of Drake. Fucking arousing, no doubt, made the erection swell to a gigantic dimension, still did not give the man away. What did the trick was the flash of blond hair, short and thick like the devil's, so unlike his long black strands, which could only mean —

“Good morning, Pirate.” The heavily Irish-accented voice caught him off guard. “How was your first night in Cork City?”

Ireland! That's where I am! “Not as great as my first fuck on Irish soil.” He grinned, increasing the slide between Martin's buttocks.

“That was just the appetizer.” Rolling to face him, Martin had the same broad smile, lighting his handsome features and the startlingly green eyes. So Drake's heart stopped.

It had all happened so fast, he had not gotten used to Martin's beauty or to the fact they were actually together.

Not that it had been easy for the good-looking devil to seduce the pirate. No, not at all, despite the short time that had passed from their first meeting, since Thanksgiving to be precise.

"Now you'll be treated to vigorous sessions of Christmas fucking, which is the reason I brought you all the way over here." Stretching closer, Martin gripped the hard cock. "And since today's Christmas Eve, I might as well get started..." Cocking his head in understanding, he threw open the sheets. "Right after I've seen to some pressing matters." Then he got out of bed and moved to the bathroom.

Yes, just one short month after having sex with a man for the very first time in his life. Sure, Martin and his technique, a slow circular maneuver that replaced his initial blowjob slip, had left Drake no choice except capitulation a few days before they left for Ireland. So good was the blond devil, he had crumbled the pirate's resistance, not to mention his many objections, to the novelty of having sex with a man. Impressive, to say the least.

From the room next door, Drake heard the bladder being drained like a waterfall tumbling down a mountain. To be honest, if Drake had never considered it an option, it was not out of any prejudice, simply did not think it was something a pirate would do. Why a pirate? Because it was his alter ego, the way he saw himself since he was a little boy and growing up had only reinforced the role model to the point of creating doubts where none should have existed. Luckily, his friend Peter and the Greek philosopher Plato straightened him out on that count. "Would this qualify as my Christmas present?"

"Not entirely." Back, Martin slipped between the sheets, pressing to him again. "What you got last night was only a...first installment." His warm palms cuddling his twitching piece had a long experience. Never one to choose

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between genders, the Irishman had done his time with both, enjoying them for their differences as much as their similarities. And he was not just an expert on cocks. He loved them in whatever shape or form they came, knowing their most intimate desires and providing the comfort they needed. Like now, for instance, slipping below the covers to close his hungry mouth around the bulging head, then sliding his lips to the balls and sucking it practically to the throat. The swallowing effect drove Drake crazy, which had also been his undoing in his parents' house on Lake Lanier.

Unusual, completely unexpected and unprecedented to come so quickly and without any restraint in a stranger's mouth, for such had been Martin at the time. Women rarely, if ever, had the privilege to drink his sperm. They never seemed to hit the right spot on his sophisticated dick that did not surrender easily to a vigorous lapping, however practiced the tongue. But Martin had set a different standard from the start, bypassing all Drake's mechanisms and sucked him dry the first time around. Now it seemed no different.

Swinging his hips forward, he made Martin take more, past the tongue's blocking to reach the plunge, if a tight curl had not stopped him. Just a temporary setback, though, to allow for a gulp of air before the cheeks pressed again on all sides, while the hands took firmer control of the situation. God, he had a wonderful touch. Strong, forceful yet not hurried, it adapted to the pirate's rhythm until it was too late to contain the tide. Holding the blond head to screw it deeper, Drake shoved one last time and everything spilled out, soul included, in the warm cavity opening wider to receive it all.

Evidently unsatisfied, Martin did not let go of his prize, which explained why it did not go limp, remaining stiff and ready for more action. Despite their limited sexual activity,

the pirate already knew how insatiable the devil was and how irresistible his urgings were. And it could definitely become a problem. Already Drake could not get enough of him, whether down his throat or up his ass, Martin's mastery over his dick was something unique and seldom experienced before, like coming with a blowjob. To Martin, cocks had no secrets, none he had not discovered and put to good use, with the pirate in particular, judging from the healthy erection rising so fast after an explosive climax.

"Just love them when they're hard." Coming out from underneath the covers, the devil kept jerking him.

"So they can stick better in your ass." Chuckling, Drake toppled him, pressing his stomach down on the mattress.

"Can't wait to get it as a matter of fact." Raising his behind, the blond Irishman captured the tip of the erection in his cleft.

"Just open wide," Drake teased, poking the tight entrance. Knowing Martin, he would not need too much of a preparation, his ass always ready to receive thick pieces. The bulging head was drenched enough anyway, to have no problems breaking through and sliding up the cramped passageway Mother Nature provided.

Hell! Simply fucking delicious. The back end was Drake's favorite also with women, so at least that had not required too many adjustments. Maybe what he still had to figure out was how to handle life with a man, a prospect he really did not feel ready to face. Martin did not seem to have much experience in that department either, considering he was coming from a failed marriage.

"Fuck! You sure know how to screw an ass." Moving seductively beneath him, Martin raised his hips to get more inside, something Drake had no trouble delivering. "And to think I had to wait an entire month to get it."

"Not many resist you, eh, Devil?" It was not a question,

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merely a statement. Martin's allure was undeniable. Drake, too, had been fascinated upon first seeing him, but it could have ended there had that disturbing feeling not kicked in to change everything forever.

"No, Pirate, practically no one resisted in my entire life." Swinging faster, he accelerated the tempo. "Particularly not after one of my great blowjobs ever."

"So I'm a little slow." Long hair brushing Martin's shoulders, Drake went along, stepping up the shoves to ram the narrow hole to a pulp.

There was a moment's silence on Martin's part that Drake used to penetrate to his balls and pump with greater force. Then the blond Irishman moved in such a way the pirate had to pull back and allow him more leeway. When it became clear the man wanted to change position, Drake reluctantly left the snug confinement for the time it took Martin to lie on his back. After the change, it was only a matter of seconds to slam back in his ass, legs cradled to Drake's chest.

"No, Pirate, you're anything but slow." Now the devil caught his face between his palms. "Your only problem is that you're scared shitless."

And he was right, too. "Oh, come off it!" Shoving harder on purpose, Drake tried not to think of it. "No way am I going to be scared of a great ass like yours." Maybe humor worked better. And fucking was having its results, too. The deeper he sank, the more pressing his need to come again and forget about everything.

"You know what I mean." Arching his back, Martin brought the dick all the way inside with a suddenness that cut off Drake's breath...or rather the little still left after the devil pulled him down for an avid kiss, which blew the pirate's mind to outer space.

Martin's tongue pushed down his throat, wrapping

around his when it did not have to battle it for supremacy. An exciting addition for sure and had Drake's shaft not been stuck in Martin's butt, it might not have had any consequences. Instead, the two effects combined the second the ass squeeze became irresistible, the fleshy walls cramming it on every side. On top of it, his pounding was jerking off Martin's dick, caught between their bellies, until everything spiraled to the point he felt the wetness on his stomach before he realized the devil was coming. So he let it go, plunging with a muffled groan into Martin and bursting.

"You'll see how much better it can get once you accept it, too." Martin's voice breathed in his ear as he cuddled his head to his chest.

Right! He had almost forgotten the goddamn catch.

"Our connection, I mean."

He was his fucking soul-mate, for Christ's sake, and there seemed no way around it either.

Chapter Two

“Good morning, dear, and happy Christmas Eve.” A tall, buxom woman with a mass of grayish hair kept in a tight bun kissed Martin’s cheek. “How did you sleep?”

“Like a baby, Mom.” Catching her before she could return to her pots and pans, he gave her a big hug. “And so did my friend,” he added after placing another kiss on her rosy cheek.

“Drake, right?” Her eyes lit up when they set on the pirate entering the kitchen.

“Good morning, Missis Shaw.” He came forward and fuck, he looked positively gorgeous.

Despite Lady Luck holding out till the very last moment, Martin could never finish thanking her seeing the result. Sure, for a while he had doubted he would ever find his soul-mate, the one being destiny had reserved for him alone. Yet here he was, standing in his mother’s kitchen, so incredibly amazing, Martin did not regret his years of waiting.

“Please call me Jane.” She gave him a strong hand squeeze before turning to the stove. “You boys must be starving after all the traveling from America.” Opening the lid, she looked into the pan as a delicious smell of eggs and bacon filled the air. “And then having to get all the way over here from Dublin.”

"Yeah, it was kind of tiring." Martin stretched, then sat at the thick wooden table, big enough for ten people. "I'm just sorry we got in so late and had to wake you." If the flight from Atlanta to Dublin had taken most of the time, reaching Cork City was no short matter either. Renting a car cut down on a lot of hassle from public transportation, and it was a nice ride anyway.

"Oh, not a problem." Jane chuckled.

Which neither he nor Drake had appreciated.

"Just sorry to see you so tired, baby." She picked up two plates.

But not for the reason his mother thought. "We slept it off, took a great shower..." Together just to have more sex in spite of the cramped space. "So we're fine now." And his sore ass was proof enough. He turned a wide grin to the pirate who had sat next to him. The problem, of course, was neither one had slept a wink the two days before the plane took off, too busy with the fucking and the talking.

"We certainly are." Drake's dazzling black eyes confirmed he had loved every minute of it.

"Yeah, but one can't survive on sleep alone." Jane placed two huge platters filled with everything from eggs, bacon, mashed potatoes, biscuits and God knew what else hid beneath the top layer.

"I'd settle on getting to lunch in one piece." Drake's eyes widened at the amount of food on one plate alone.

"Shut up, Pirate, and chow down."

"Pirate?" After placing two steaming mugs of coffee next to each place, Jane sat in front of them, nursing her own cup. "I thought your name was Drake."

"It is, Mom. It's just that he..." Martin raised his gaze on the dark-haired man. "He always struck me as a pirate."

It was what had caught his attention before...well, one thing at a time. Drake's tall, muscular build, made more

imposing by the long raven-black hair coming down below his shoulders, had seemed out of place in the Seymour's house on the lake. The timing was wrong, as if Drake belonged to another era, maybe because his arresting face — so masculine with its square jaw, strong nose and full lips — reminded Martin of portraits hanging on museum walls. But physical appearance was not what hit Martin in the stomach and had him so hard, he was still struggling to recover. He was used to beauty after all, in both men and women alike, having had his share of stunning specimens in his bed. No, what had really made Martin stand up and notice Drake was the sense of recognition that suddenly emptied his lungs of air and pulverized his guts.

He had always known it would happen just like that — one look and he would have no doubts. No matter how many tried to dissuade him from giving any credit to insane theories or to books claiming destiny and fated connections existed, Martin had held on to a belief started before his age of reason had a chance to mess up his perceptions. Where did it come from? Why could he not dismiss it despite the obvious lack of confirmation? It was still a mystery to him. The only certainty was that it would come true one day, which it did with the full force of the spark lighting Drake's intriguing black eyes the second their gazes crossed. Yes, they belonged together, as sure as the sun rose every day, and the few mistakes Martin had incurred while waiting for his soul-mate to show up, like getting married, did not seem so bad in retrospect. How could they when it was the reason he had met the pirate?

"And he called me that straight up." Amused, Drake shook his head, wolfing down a generous bite of mashed potatoes. "The strange thing is he did it instinctively."

"It wasn't hard to figure out." Martin got started on his breakfast, too. "You see, Mom, he grew up on a lake —"

"Not the whole year, just the summers —"

"Right and with his wild imagination —"

"What do you know about my imagination?" Teasingly, Drake stuck an elbow in Martin's side.

"Your mother said enough for me to piece it all together."

"So you met his mom, too?" Now really curious, Jane leaned forward.

"Ah, it's not what you think." Gulping down eggs with bacon, Martin paused to take a sip of coffee. "By the way, where are Kevin and Scott?" He looked behind him at the hallway. "You told me yesterday they were here already."

"Yeah, they are, but they were up so early this morning, I sent them for some last-minute shopping." Impatiently, she shrugged, making it appear like they were really in her way. "So you were saying you met his mom." But the truth was that she wanted to be the first to hear the full story.

"Actually, we met just a month ago, at Thanksgiving —"

"Thanks to Aline —"

"Your wife, right?" His mother looked a little confused.

"Ex-wife. We're getting a divorce." No, Jane and Aline had never met nor would they ever.

Hardly surprised or sad, his mother turned to Drake. "So you know her, too?"

"I do. She was my sister's closest friend —"

"You have a sister? How old is she?"

"Mom, one thing of all at a time." Chuckling, Martin returned to his mash potatoes. "Or you'll never get all of it."

"Oh, I already got the most important thing." She took a sip of coffee before staring straight into Martin's eyes. "You finally found him."

It broke Martin's heart to hear the simplicity with which she said it. "Aye, Mom." The breadth of it, too, as if she was aware of how he felt that exact moment, like sitting on top of the world. "I guess I did." And he squeezed Drake's hand

tight. "And I still can't believe it." Impulsively, he pulled the pirate over and kissed him full on the lips.

Drake did not draw back, though evidently embarrassed.

"Please forgive us." Oddly, Martin's mother came to his rescue. "And sorry if I'm so obvious about my curiosity." Reassuringly, she patted Drake's hand. "But all Martin ever talked about was his soul-mate, how he or she existed out there." She gestured at the window, as if to make sure the pirate understood she meant the universe outside the Shaw family. "And that one day he'd find him. So when I saw you the other night—"

"You thought I was him?"

"Well, aren't you?" Perplexed, she paused to study Drake's face. "I mean why else would you be here on Christmas?" Jane's eyes did not waver. "Martin told you about our custom, right? About how we always spend Christmas together, and that each of my children is allowed to invite one guest, not just a friend, rather someone who has a special significance for them?"

Drake nodded, finishing up his bacon.

"Then he must've also told you—he's the only one who never brought a soul. The others showed up with tons of *special* people, who usually didn't last until the Christmas after." She turned to Martin. "By the way, Julia is coming alone."

"What about Bobby?"

"She said she doesn't want to be bothered by her husband while she's with us."

"Ha! I knew it!" Slapping the table, a wry smile curved Martin's lips. "I told her it wouldn't last. In fact, I didn't give it more than two years and it's been only—"

"A year and a half, I know." She made a face. "Don't remind me."

"Come on, Mom. Cheer up." Squeezing her hand tight, he

bent to kiss her cheek. "We both know he wasn't meant for her. She should've looked up some of the women I suggested, not insist with men. Some of my dyke friends would jump at the chance to have her."

"You know how stubborn your sister is." Jane grinned. "If it doesn't have a cock, she won't even look at him."

Clearly uncomfortable, the pirate shifted position. Martin was about to say something to explain it all when his mother, evidently sensing Drake's perplexity, reached out to touch his hand. "I'm sorry, have I said something wrong?"

"No, it's just..." The pirate was in deep water with no boat in sight. "I...I thought Irish folks were...that is they weren't so open-minded or so outspoken about—"

"You're right. They aren't." Jane sighed. "They are usually strict Catholics. I was no exception either until I met Martin's father, then everything changed."

"I didn't mean to—"

"No, Drake, it's no problem." Getting up, she took the coffee pot and refilled all their mugs. "My family was against him. He was English, and they couldn't stand him, while I was too young and too much in love to have any sense." After blowing on the cup, she took a cautious sip of the hot brew. "To follow him, I left everything behind and moved to London. We were poor, God only knows how much, living in a crummy flat in a neighborhood that wasn't exactly top class, but I really worked to make it my home. Too bad he didn't give a damn about anything except drinking and fucking, and he was exceptional at both." She could not help smiling, obviously remembering some of the better times. "Still it wasn't enough to keep us on our feet, particularly when the children started coming—first Scott, then Kevin, then Martin and finally Julia. The day she was born, he was out getting drunk somewhere, so I decided I'd had it and wouldn't let him back in the house again. Too bad

he never showed up."

"He vanished just like that?" The black eyes grew wider.

"The bastard didn't have the guts to face us, even if I was only three at the time, Scott nine and Kevin six." Martin spat. No doubt about it, his father betrayal still hurt deep down, a level Martin refused to acknowledge most of the time.

"He didn't want to give me the satisfaction of throwing him out." She sighed, gulping down the coffee. "Anyway, when I realized I was alone, I had to work my ass off, literally, to make ends meet, and none of my straight friends ever bothered as much as asking how I was doing. Ha! Those Catholic hypocrites! They didn't lift a finger for me. The only ones who came through for us were the gays and lesbians that lived in the neighborhood. They, and only they, cared enough to look after my children—brought them to school, then picked them up afterward and gave them hospitality, food, a change of clothes, helped them do their homework, while I was out slaving for a miserable salary. All this and more, they provided freely and with a generous heart I'm still thanking today. To them, the Shaw family owes its survival, and I can't thank them enough."

"Mom's right. If it weren't for them, we'd have never made it."

"Martin, for instance, got really close to a couple—"

"Frank and Steven, yeah, I'm still in touch with them." He cocked an eyebrow. "I'd rather call them father than that SOB that walked out on us."

"And they adored you." Jane's gaze swung back to the pirate. "Treated him like a son to the point they even paid for most of his college tuition." For a moment she got lost fixing something in midair, then returned. "Given all this, it was inevitable to know them better. To my surprise, I discovered they weren't the monsters I'd feared. In fact, they were very nice, dedicated people whose only fault was to

love someone of their own sex." She glanced first at Martin, then at Drake again. "Which is bullshit! If we're not free to love whomever we want, what's the point of having love in that first place?"

"That's why you were cool with the kiss." Picking up his cup, Drake brought it to his lips.

"From Martin, I've seen stranger things and still expect far worse." She chuckled. "When he was little, he used to bring home his best friends. Sometimes boys, sometimes girls, he seemed to make no difference between them. One time he even brought home two best friends at once, to stay for the weekend." She poked Martin's arm. "Remember, honey?"

"How can I forget?" His lips curved in a wide smile. "It was pure hell." He turned to the pirate. "Both started competing for my attention, both wanting it at once, then fighting when they didn't get it." He shook his head. "After that, I decided I'd stick to one friend at a time, never two together."

"Which didn't improve things for us," his mom was quick to add. She, too, looked at Drake. "When he was in college, every time he'd call to say he was bringing a friend over, we'd always try to guess if it was a boy or a girl. And at first, we were all amazed he treated men and women as though there was no gender difference between them—"

"My family's problem was that I did everything with my friends, including sleeping with them."

"You'll agree with me, Drake. It isn't normal for someone to act so...casually."

"Well..." The black eyes flashed at Martin. "Your son is kind of unique."

"That doesn't even begin to cover it." Jane grinned. "At least we weren't surprised when he told us he was getting married. It wasn't something we expected Martin to do, but

knowing him, we weren't at all surprised."

"I presume you never met Aline?"

"No. Never." She shrugged indifferently. "I knew she wasn't important when he didn't bring her over the first Christmas they were married." She patted Martin's back. "It's always been his problem, with relationships, I mean. They never seem to last much. Whether friends or lovers, Martin consumed them like there was no tomorrow until they either burned out or disappeared."

"It is kind of hard to maintain relationships these days," the pirate observed, glancing at Martin skeptically.

"Oh, but yours isn't a *relationship*." Jane grabbed Drake's hand off the table. "You're soul-mates. That's a whole different story."

Perceiving his lover's discomfort, Martin was about to intervene when a crash at the front door made his head spin around.

"Hey, isn't anybody home to welcome a lonely girl who made it her duty to come all the way from London to spend Christmas with her goddamn family?"

"Julia, honey, we're in here." Jumping to her feet, Jane rushed to the front door, immediately followed by Martin. But his sister was already on the kitchen's threshold, falling into her mother's snug embrace.

"Oh, Mom, it took me so fucking long to get here." Julia pulled back slightly. "It seems like everyone's on the road and..." Pausing, she glanced up and moved away from Jane. "Martin, baby, how are you?" Another plunge and Martin felt his sister's tense body pressing to his, her curves, a bit fattened since he last saw her, adapting nicely to his frame.

"I'm great, Julia." He tousled the mass of long, dark hair covering her face, smelling deeply of her perfume. Out of everyone in the family, he had always loved Julia best. Over the years, she had also become his confident, the one link to

his origins he kept most alive.

She kissed him repeatedly on both cheeks, then stepped back and saw him. "Who's this?" Without waiting for an answer, she spun to confront Martin. "Don't tell me you really found him?"

Martin nodded in confirmation.

"I can't believe it." Her eyes lit up as she turned to scrutinize the pirate. "He's gorgeous, too." Like a hawk scouting the territory, she circled him twice before reaching out to stroke the long strands down Drake's back. "And what magnificent hair." Again, she stared at Martin wide-eyed. "No, I can't believe it."

"Julia, where are your manners?" Coming forward, Jane squeezed the pirate's shoulders in solidarity. "Please forgive my daughter. She's a real —"

"Ass, I know." Smiling warmly, she extended a hand to Drake. "I'm Julia Shaw, Martin's sister."

"Drake Seymour." After a brief hesitation, the pirate took it. "Pleased to meet you...I think."

Marin laughed, Jane smiled and at least Julia had the decency to blush. "Sorry I was so rude."

"Julia, would you like a cup of coffee?"

"Yes, thanks, Mom." Plopping down on the chair next to Drake, Julia looked him over one more time. "It's just that Martin talked so much about his soul-mate..." Evidently wanting to win Drake over, she leaned forward. "That's what you are, right?" But since the pirate's embarrassment had only increased with the newcomer's arrival, the lack of an enthusiastic agreement prompted Julia to glance at Martin confused. "Otherwise, you wouldn't have brought him here today, right?"

"Yes, but maybe all this fuss is getting a bit to him." Protectively, Martin moved behind Drake and placed his hands squarely on the broad shoulders. "Right, Pirate?"

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"Pirate?" Julia flashed an amused smile. "How romantic. Or should I say incredible?" She frowned as though trying to decide between the two. "After searching for the better part of your thirty-three years, you should finally find him." With her usual brashness, she grabbed Drake's hand. "You must tell me all about it!" Her voice rose a notch. "How you met, how long ago it was, how you recognized one another—"

Another slam at the door and everyone's head turned. "What's all the commotion about?" Scott's voice—Martin could recognize it anywhere—boomed from the hallway. "On the street all you can hear are Julia's shouts."

But the first head to pop in the kitchen was Kevin's. "Hey, Scott, I think I just discovered why she's screaming like an eagle."

"Well, I'll be damned." Scott and Kevin's gazes fixed on Drake. Then Scott turned to his mother. "So that's why you kicked us out of the house." One thing about his family, they all reacted to beauty much in the same way. "You wanted to be the first to nose around Julia and her new boy—"

"No, you got it all wrong." Julia immediately shook her head in denial. "I wish he was mine, but he's with Martin."

"Martin?" Kevin's eyes widened. "You mean you actually found it?"

* * * *

"I think I owe you an apology." Early Christmas Day, Martin's chin digging in his chest, the devil raised his gaze. "My family was a bit—"

"Overwhelming..." *To say the least.* After stroking the blond hair, Drake's hand slid down Martin's naked back. Sure, sex after having opened presents—surprisingly, he got a few, too—made things a little better. Little, though, could it

do for his bewilderment at the Shaw's...hem...welcome. As if it were not enough, they also seemed to expect great things from him, something Drake was not sure he could deliver.

"At least they liked you, and that's a fact." Martin chuckled. "I mean Julia and Kevin literally drooled over you."

"That's because you encouraged them." Drake kept his tone deliberately even. His nature was fundamentally shy, so having everyone repeat over and over how gorgeous he was destabilized him, causing a predictable reaction of closure. And seeing the open rivalry between the brothers had not helped either.

"Oh, you shouldn't mind us. It's a Shaw trait, a despicable one, I agree, to pretend we fight over the people we like." Reaching upward, Martin's lips closed on Drake's for a sweet kiss. "But it's nothing, just a game between us."

"Somehow, I think it might've ended up with former lovers switching sides."

"Now that you mention it..." Martin frowned. "There was a girlfriend of mine who went steady with Scott for a while. Then Kevin tried his luck with two of my boyfriends and Julia with one, but they never lasted." He stroked a loose strand off Drake's face. "Just your bad luck this Christmas no one brought anybody along except for me."

"I doubt the result would've changed. They were all hooked on your soul-mate thing..." *Which I still find hard to fathom, much less digest.*

"All right." Evidently reading his perplexities, Martin raised his shoulders. "Listen—"

"No, you listen to me." Unable to avoid the cold tone, Drake toppled the devil, crushing him to the mattress. "This is all happening too fast for me. One moment I'm driving to my parents' house for a boring, Thanksgiving celebration.

The next, a gorgeous blond tells me I'm his missing half, and that my life's supposed to change because of it. Christ!" He pressed his weight more, the long hair falling to cover the lighter ones. "I never imagined I had a special destiny or any of that crap. In fact, I never went beyond thinking I'd find someone I liked and settle down someday. But whatever scenario, it never included a man in the picture. Damn!" The pressure increased. "Before I met you, I never even fucked with a man, much less thought of one as a possible...mate." Pulling back slightly, he eased the compression. "Which doesn't mean I won't consider it." Gazing at the brilliant green eyes, he could not help the twist of his heart. "And I'd be lying if I said I felt nothing when we first met. There was an undeniable..." *Blow to the stomach!* "Spark, a bell or...something unexplainable that probably qualifies as the moment of recognition, as you call it. But for me, it's not enough, not yet." Too fucking near for his anger to simmer, the compelling attraction for Martin, as incomprehensible as the soul-mate warning, took control, forcing him to trace the thin lips with his tongue tip, resisting the urge to plunge inside. "All I'm asking is more time to get my prospective back and reason things out without all..." The pirate's hand slid down to Martin's crotch. No doubt, the extreme closeness was dangerous, judging from the hard dick slipping into his palm. "This great sex getting in the way."

"I get it." And he did. Drake saw it from the flash of understanding lighting the intelligent green eyes. "I won't bring it up ever again, this soul-mate thing. In fact, when we return to the States, I won't phone or look for you in any way. If and when you're ready, you'll call me." Inching his hips forward, he intensified Drake's hand job. "Just know I'll always be ready for you."

"And you're willing to take the risk I might never call you again?" The pirate chuckled wanting to provoke him. "You

might lose me forever —”

“The way things look now, I’m already losing you.” Martin shrugged. “And insisting on something you can’t grasp is only going to make it easier for you to run away. So what would be the point?” His cock, now huge, stiffened to command more attention. “I’d rather we stayed...friends...”

“With or without the sex?” Obediently, Drake tightened the hold to jerk the stem more forcefully.

“It’s not required, but it’s certainly preferred.” Martin’s dick twitched in agreement.

“Mmm...so just friends from now on, no, make that—fucking-friends.”

“More or less.” The devil grinned, pushing the pirate’s head on the tip of his erection.

“Then, my fucking-friend, you’ve got yourself a deal.”

There was no point in more talk. Drake’s mouth closed on the bulging head in an effort to swallow it whole. Not his department, of course. Banging a man was a novelty he still had to master. Fantasizing about it in the past had been rare and always associated with a woman, never picturing himself going all the way with a man alone. Yet Martin made it easy, at least as far as sex went, to plunge into a vortex of new sensations as exciting as being with a woman. Maybe it was a matter of surrender, not a given between two men, which turned it into a passionate game for domination where the play became an end in itself. And drawing the rigid piece to his throat, or at least trying, was certainly part of it.

The dick had a mind of its own anyway, shoving to choke him while attempting to dig deeper. So if his tongue and cheeks failed to thwart him, it would get its wish, already forcing Drake to pull back a couple of times for a coughing spell. Still he did not mind it, too taken by the challenge to satisfy the demanding piece. Not that he was sure to

succeed. Martin was a pro in both the giving and the taking, probably used to better pampering than his own.

Drake, however, had the advantage of having guessed his lover's need to be seduced into his climax, much like the pirate himself. A straight pumping would never do the trick with Martin. He had to drown in the velvety pleasure of a wet cavity, licked on every side, a hand forcing the sperm upward with a steady motion from the balls to the top where the mouth was ready to engulf it all. And so the pirate proceeded, tightening his hold and sucking deeper before accelerating to the inescapable come.

The dense cream filling his mouth, then dripping down his throat was the white flag the pirate sought. The cock shuddered frantically, hitting his palate several times before the tide eased. After licking every last drop, it was Drake's turn, and he wasted no time in getting what he wanted. Raising the devil's legs, with a single thrust he cramped the constricted backspace, not so tight considering his repeated use. The butt welcomed him immediately, wrapping seductively around the pirate's thick shaft shoving its way to the guts. Too bad the balls could not follow or Drake would have made it all the way up. To stick his tongue in Martin's mouth was another arousing extra, to share the taste that soon became one as their tongues twisted in a fierce knot.

Like Drake was learning, with Martin it was no effort to get trapped in his alluring magic that shut out any uncertainty, focusing only on the motion of melting in his essence. The ass squeeze increased as he rammed the narrow walls senseless. Seeking more space, he increased the beat, getting more snug and hot with every heated rub of their flesh. And if Martin's ass seemingly expanded, it never lessened the iron clutch on both sides of the pirate's long cock until it crunched to pieces, literally.

With a muffled groan, Drake lost it, his soul mostly,

inside Martin's derriere, stuck to the many winding twists of the tapered passageway. He just hoped that one day soon, he would be able to retrieve it.

About the Author

Born 1965 in Rome, Italy, I grew up in Lagos, Nigeria, then moved to Atlanta, GA, to complete my studies. In Rome, I graduated in Political Science and now work in international trade.

I have always loved writing and started in college by working with Emory University's magazine *The Phoenix*. Since then I have been writing and publishing in both Italian and English, specializing in gay M/M erotica in various genres, mostly fantasy, sci-fi and paranormal, sometimes trespassing into the contemporary, not to mention my ongoing fantasy series Virtus Saga.