

Disclaimer: If you are underage, or if homosexual content offends you, or if it is illegal to view homosexual content in your country, do not read this. Otherwise, enjoy!

Austin and I  
Chapter 4

‘Tara! You’re here!’

To my annoyance, Austin leaped upright and kissed her on both cheeks.

‘Sorry I’m late. The traffic was absolutely – oh hello!’

Tara was looking at Derrick, Wes and me. Austin hastily began making introductions.

‘Tara, this is Derrick, Wes and Bradin. You guys, this is Tara.’

We said our polite hello’s, mine being a little reluctant. We drew up an extra chair, and Tara plopped down in it.

‘Wow, I see that you’ve ordered already.’

Without waiting for a response, she heaped her plate with pasta and pizza and began eating. We stared in amazement.

‘She has a big appetite,’ Austin said to me.

‘Yeah, I can see that,’ I replied. When he heard my tone, he gave me a sideways glance but said nothing. I was pissed at him. Pissed at him for being straight and having a girlfriend. As if he’d read my thoughts at that moment, Derrick asked:

‘So, Tara, are you and Austin an item then?’

Tara looked up, her third slice of pizza halfway to her mouth.

‘Me? With Austin? You’ve got to be kidding me!’ she exclaimed. ‘No, the closest thing we had to a romantic relationship was when I first met him a few years ago. I asked him to go out with me.’

‘And he refused?’

‘Of course he refused! He’s about the pickiest guy I’ve ever known when it comes to dating! No, we’re just friends right now, nothing more.’

I sat back in my chair, relieved.

‘Well, that’s nice.’

I mused over the latest turn of events. Maybe, just maybe there was still a chance that Austin wasn’t straight. I hoped that he was at least bi. I bit my lip to stop myself laughing. ‘When did I ever become that desperate for him?’ I asked myself.

‘Bradin, I know you’re full already, but can you help us finish this?’

I looked up and saw Austin waving a slice of pizza at me.

I gave him what I hoped was a coy smile.

‘All right, but if I get sick, you’re gonna have to be the one to take me home.’

God, if only that came true...

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Wes leaned back in his seat, a wide smile pasted across his face.

‘Man, that was good.’

‘Definitely man,’ said Derrick as he licked cheese from his fingers.

I looked up impatiently – I’d been waiting for half an hour for the meal to end. I’d already considered pretending to be sick and making Austin be the one to take me home, but I’d decided that it was too risky. I mean, what were the chances that someone gets sick right after he talks about it?

I called out to a passing waitress.

‘Could I have the check, please?’

‘No problem.’

While we were getting up and putting on our jackets, I felt someone put a hand on my shoulder. I turned around, trying not to stare into Austin’s beautiful brown eyes.

‘Yeah?’ My voice came out as a hoarse whisper.

I tried again.

‘Yeah?’

‘Hey listen,’ said Austin. ‘Tara’s birthday’s next Saturday, and I was thinking whether you guys wanted come to the party.’

I whirled around to face Tara.

‘Seriously? Your birthday’s next week?’

‘Yup,’ she laughed. ‘And since my house is renovating, Austin here -

She gave him an affectionate shove.

‘ - agreed to organize a party at his house. It’s gonna be so much fun! Can you guys come?’

I glanced at Wes and Derrick. They looked a little uncertain. Evidently, they still remembered the gay rumors.

‘Sure,’ I replied loudly. ‘We haven’t got anything to do next week anyway, have we guys?’

Derrick gave a non-committal shrug of the shoulders, so I said:

‘What time’s the party?’

‘It’s gonna start at eight, maybe eight-thirty. Austin’s parents are away, so we’ve got the house to ourselves.’

‘Wow, that’s so cool man,’ I said to Austin. ‘And who’s coming?’

‘Loads of people from school, some cousins of Tara’s, people like that. No adults though.’  
He gave a wide smile. I had to look away to stop myself from kissing his soft lips right there and then.

‘All right, I can’t wait,’ I said, fighting to keep my voice even. ‘So, we’ll see you at school on Monday.’

‘Yeah, see you guys.’

‘Okay, bye now!’

I could hardly contain my excitement as I walked away.

‘Dude, I can’t believe that we’re going to Tara’s party next week! You guys are gonna have to help me choose what to wear and what to -’

Wes cleared his throat.

‘Actually Bradin, I’m not sure if I’m gonna go or not.’

I looked at him, crestfallen.

‘But why?’

‘Um, my grandparents are coming in from Boston next week, and I think I’m gonna have to...’

‘Dude, you’re not still thinking about the gay thing, are you?’

‘Hey, what if they’re true?’ Derrick interrupted. ‘Remember, all we’re trying to do is to protect you. It’s you that Austin’s supposed to have a crush on.’

‘Look, if you guys don’t wanna come, that’s fine. But I’m definitely going. And anyway, they’re just rumors, right? And when are rumors ever accurate?’

Damn, how I wished that those rumors were true.

Wes sighed.

‘Okay, well I’ll think about it. Anyway, I saw this really cool ad for a movie that just came out a few days ago. You guys wanna go down to the cinema now and see it?’

‘Cool, yeah!’

‘Definitely!’

And so we trundled to the cinema, all thoughts of Austin temporarily gone from our minds.

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Monday. I stood there, leaning against the doorway of the school entrance, watching the multitude of students rushing here and there to their lockers and classrooms. I gave a huge yawn before I

finally let myself join crowd in the corridors. With my eyes drooping from tiredness, I managed to find my way to Wes and Derrick before following them to philosophy.

I collapsed into a seat and put my head in my arms, almost falling asleep again.

‘That tired, huh?’ asked Wes.

‘Yeah,’ I mumbled. ‘Didn’t sleep well last night.’

A loud, sharp bang caused my head to jerk up. I scanned the room and groaned. One of my classmates had dropped a book on the floor.

‘Hmm, it looks like you’re not the only tired one this morning.’

I opened my mouth to answer, but stopped when someone walked through the door. The only person in the world who could take my breath away and leave me speechless. As usual, the girls ducked behind their books and started giggling to each other. And as always, he looked perfect, like a god. His skin was radiant and his hair was styled just perfect. Austin caught sight of me and flashed me one of his legendary smiles. I managed to grin back.

Unfortunately, since he was one of the last to arrive, there weren’t a lot of available seats left. He took one far off to the side of the room, but I still couldn’t un-glue my eyes from him..

‘All right, class. Listen up. I’m going to divide you into pairs to work on an assignment. I’m going to give out a list of topics for you choose from, and then I want a written paper from every pair to be handed in this Friday. So, just to keep things simple, I think I’ll sort all of you into pairs by alphabetical - ’

‘Yes!’

The teacher looked up to face me.

‘- order. Is there a problem, Mr Kerr?’ he asked.

‘Uh, no. Sorry,’ I stammered.

‘Well, as I was saying, I’ll sort you by alphabetical order, so... Austin Robinson, you’ll go with Bradin Kerr. Catherine Bell, you’ll be with Colin Hunter. Derrick Hamilton, you can go with...’

There was a great deal of jostling while everyone began moving around to join up with their assigned partners. After my outburst a few moments ago, I decided to tone it down a little by letting Austin be the one to make his way to me. He dropped his books onto the desk that Derrick had just left.

‘Morning. How’s it going?’

I stifled a yawn.

‘Not good. I’ve no idea how to get through today without collapsing. Plus, I *hate* philosophy.’

He laughed.

‘Same here! Anyway, you wanna choose the topic, or do you want me to do it?’

I picked up the sheet of paper and scanned it.

‘Hmm, let’s do something interesting. "The Importance of Ethics" should be quite fun, but loads of

people are probably gonna choose it... Hey, let's do "The Differences between Love and Lust"!

He gave me a sideways glance.

'Yeah, that sounds good.'

'Cool,' I smiled at him. 'I guess that's settled then. When do you want to do it?'

'Well, I wanna get this over with quickly so I can spend the rest of the week getting the house ready for Tara's party. I still haven't asked my parents about it yet. Hey, tell you what, I'm free tonight, what about you?'

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My brother Ethan looked up when he caught sight of me coming over to the car.

'Hey. What're you in such a hurry for?'

'I'm going over to Austin's house for a project,' I exclaimed as I dumped my bag in the back seat. 'I told him I was gonna drop off my stuff at home first. I'm meeting him in half an hour, so I gotta take a shower, change, and then you have to drive me to his-'

'Whoa, whoa, slow down there bro! Who's this Austin guy?'

I looked at him, trying to hide my excited grin.

'Just this guy I'm doing a project with.'

My brother gave me a look with raised eyebrows.

'You've got the hots for him, haven't you?'

'Dude, he's so...' I threw up my hands, unable to find a suitable word. 'He's just the perfect guy, Ethan! I mean, if you saw him, you'd realize that he's the most gorgeous, handsome guy that I ever-'

'Hey, I'm straight. Why tell me about it?'

'Oh, come on. Straight guys like you can at least admit it when a guy's hot, can't you? I mean, girls do that about other girls all the time!'

'Yeah all right, let's change the subject,' said Ethan hastily as he started up the car engine. 'So you want me to drive you to the guy's house? Where does he live, anyway?'

I had to speak loudly so that he could hear me above the roar of the convertible as it shot down the road.

'Well, he just lives a few streets down, actually. You know the place where...'

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The car slowed to a halt next to the pavement.

‘Good luck, bro. And remember: no naughty stuff.’

‘Right,’ I snorted. ‘You weren’t even a virgin any more when you were my age. You’d already been with what? Three girls already by this time?’

‘Yeah well, it’s different. I was much more mature than you are now.’

I rolled my eyes.

‘Whatever. See you later.’

I walked up to the house. It looked way nicer than mine. The roof was made from red-brown tiles, just like the ones you found near the Mediterranean. There was a large garden out in front, and I could see the water sprayers lazily squirting water onto the grass. The lights were on, which made the windows glow with a soft yellow light. God, I was jealous of his house already.

I strode up the path between the grass and pressed the doorbell. I quickly checked my appearance. I’d changed into a shirt (leaving the top two buttons open, of course!) and a new pair of jeans. I’d also sneaked into my brother’s room and ‘borrowed’ some of his cologne. Hey, I gotta do what I gotta do, right?

Okay concentrate, I told myself sternly. Just stick to the plan, and he should be in your clutches in no time!

(The plan was, by the way, had been hastily formed only fifteen minutes ago on how to seduce the boy of my dreams – imagine my confidence!)

And then the door opened.

‘Heey Austin,’ I said, giving him a coy smile.

‘Um, hi Bradin,’ he replied, sounding a little breathless.

‘Are you okay? You sound kinda weird,’ I gave a laugh. Damn, how fake was that?

‘No. I mean yeah, I’m fine. Please, come in.’

I stepped through the doorway, remembering to ‘accidentally’ brush up against his body.

‘Oops, sorry.’ Did I feel him tremble when I touched him?

‘Uh, no problem. Anyway, this is the living room, and that’s the dining room over there.’

I looked around, studying the decor appreciatively.

‘Wow, this really is a nice place.’

He laughed.

‘Thanks. My parents have a friend who works as an interior designer, so he did our place free for us.’

Then we went upstairs and found his room.

‘Oh my god, I love your room. This is amazing! You’ve got an Xbox 360, Halo 3, and just look at the view from here! You can see the sunrise and sunset from this window!’

I rushed around, blabbing excitedly about all the good stuff about his room, all thoughts of my plan having gone straight out the window. When I finally stopped, I looked at him and I saw that he seemed a little embarrassed.

‘Sorry, I just get a little worked up sometimes.’

‘No no, don’t worry, it’s no problem. And besides, I’m glad you like the room,’ he gave a shy smile. I had to hold on to the corner of his desk to stop myself from jumping him right then.

‘So, you wanna get to work?’

‘Yeah, why not? Then we can play some Xbox later.’

We sat down and looked at the sheet in front of us: The Differences between Love and Lust.

‘All right,’ he began. ‘I’ve done a little brainstorming on the subject, and I was thinking that we should focus on...’

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‘Finally,’ Austin groaned. ‘We’re done. Could you read it over again and check for any mistakes?’

I picked up the sheet and began to read. It was about two pages, just barely long enough to get the teacher off our backs.

‘...in conclusion,’ I recited. ‘we feel that lust is centered primarily around the physical aspect between two people, but love is concerned only with the spiritual aspect of a relationship. The End.’

He laughed.

‘It’s not a story, you know.’

‘Well, it feels just like a great big fairy tale for me. Like life.’

Austin slowly sat up and looked into my eyes.

‘Is that what life seems like to you? Like a fairy tale?’

I stared into his eyes for a few moments before forcing myself to tear my gaze away.

‘I’m not sure, actually. I mean, I hope that-’

‘So you think that there’s someone out there? Waiting for you, so that you can fall in love with one another?’ His voice was now a hoarse whisper.

That someone’s sitting right in front of me, I wanted to tell him.

‘Well, I hope so. I mean, that’s what everyone wants, isn’t it?’

There was a minute when neither of us said anything. The silence hung over us like a blanket. My

back was facing him and I was looking out the window, but when I finally opened my mouth to say something, Austin beat me to it.

‘Can I ask you a question?’

‘Yeah,’ I whispered.

‘We wrote that when you lust after someone, it’s physical, and when you love someone, it’s spiritual.’

‘Yeah, we did. So?’

‘But what if you feel both? What do you call that? When you’re lusting after someone *and* you’re in love with them?’

I raised my head and turned towards him.

‘Well, I guess we’d call that-’

He grabbed my head and pressed his lips over mine. My eyes sprang open in surprise. I could see that his were half closed, as if he was savoring the kiss. I could feel his tongue darting in and out between our lips, teasing me. I fell backwards onto the bed, and he fell on top of me. I kissed him back with all my force, pushing myself up against him. I felt him kiss me back with renewed vigor, desperately locking his lips with mine as if his entire being depended on it, deeper and deeper and deeper -

I was running out of oxygen, and I reluctantly pushed him away as I panted to catch my breath, like a swimmer who’d just done twenty laps at full speed without stopping. I gazed across the bed at him. I could see his torso heaving up and down as he tried to catch his breath as well. When I had finally pulled myself together sufficiently, I crawled over to him. Austin looked up at me, his eyes glistening with happiness.

‘God, you’ve no idea how much I’ve wanted to do that,’ he said hoarsely.

I didn’t respond. I just placed my head on his chest, listening to his heartbeat.

‘I’ve been dreaming about you every night for the past year, you know that?’ he murmured. ‘God, I never even imagined that you’d have any interest in me, let alone be attracted to me. I gotta say, this is the most fun philosophy project I’ve ever done.’

I shoved him playfully in the ribs before sighing and putting my head back on his shoulder.

‘I’ve felt the same way about you since like forever, you know? Haha, you should have seen me when I was getting ready at home. I was gonna go mental because I had no idea what to wear, what to say, what to-’

Both of us jumped when there was a knock at the door.

‘Austin, are you in there? Can I come in?’

I shot up, staring at Austin in alarm.

‘It’s my sister,’ he hissed urgently. ‘She’s home. Quick – get off the bed!’

I did as he said, scrambling upright and tidying my hair as best I could.



'Yeah sis, you can come in,' he said loudly.

The door opened.

'Austin, why haven't you – oh, hello.'

'Oh, um... Samantha, this is my classmate, Bradin. Bradin, this is my sister Samantha.'

'Hi, nice to meet you.'

'Good to see you too.'

Samantha looked at me for a second before turning back to her brother.

'Um, Austin, I just wanted to tell you that mom and dad called. They're coming home now.'

'Okay, thanks.'

Samantha gave me a quick smile before closing the door behind her. As soon as the door was closed, I gave a nervous laugh.

'That was our first kiss, and we nearly got caught already.'

'Yeah... Hey, listen. My parents are coming home now, so...'

'Oh. Okay. No problem. I'll see you at school then.'

I began getting my things, slightly disappointed at the turn of events. I was almost at the door when Austin called me.

'Bradin?'

'Yeah?'

He pressed my back against the door and we locked lips again. This time, it was more gentle and more intimate. We playfully tongue wrestled each other before we broke apart again to surface for air.

'I just want to tell you, Bradin, that I think you're the most incredible person ever. I mean, you're the hottest guy in the school, and you're caring, funny, witty...'

'Hey, you're one to talk. You're the one who the girls all go crazy over.'

He blushed when I said that.

'Well, it's not like I'm gonna go out with them or anything, right?'

I laughed.

'Yeah. Anyways, it's getting late. Why don't I'll see you at school tomorrow?' I said, giving him a seductive smile as I turned to go.

'And Bradin?'

'Promise me you won't freak out on me tomorrow. Don't come to me and say that today was a mistake and that you can't do this anymore. Please. I don't want my heart broken. Not by you.'

I gazed at him for a moment.  
'I promise.'

I opened the door.  
'Bye, sexy.'

He grinned, bashfully leaning against the door.  
'Bye.'

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Sorry for the long wait, but you'll notice that this chapter's longer than the other ones. If you want to send me feedback, email me at:

[bradin\\_k@hotmail.com](mailto:bradin_k@hotmail.com)

If you're concerned about privacy or anonymity, just tell me in your emails to send them to the bin after I've read them. See ya!