



SHARED HISTORY



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Shared History
A Jana Downs' Free Novel
By Jana Downs

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Chapter One

Daniel shifted as he entered the already full classroom on the second floor of Mckee Hall at Bradford University. Panic immediately set in as thirty pairs of eyes regarded him with instant disdain. It was the first day of classes and he was fifteen minutes late. He swallowed past the lump in his throat and the churning of his stomach. He always hated coming into a new class. As the assistant professor in the History department he felt that he should be over some of his obnoxious social phobias after four years working at the university.

It wasn't that he wasn't attractive, just the opposite in fact. He was slender, well muscled, if a little small for his frame, and passably handsome. He had even been told his blue eyes were striking. Unfortunately, his baby face and his attractiveness tended to lead more than a few students to hit on him, which he neither wanted nor really understood.

His hands trembled as he laid his stack of new syllabi on the desk at the front of the room. "Good afternoon everyone. I apologize for being late. I was held up."

A quiet murmur answered his apology and he had to resist wincing. Undergrads were unmerciful. It was a well-known fact.

He cleared his throat and pressed on, "I'm professor Keller and I'll be guiding you through your semester of 19th century European history starting with the reign of Napoleon up until the start of the first world war."

He counted out syllabi for each row of students and handed them to the first person to pass back. "This class counts as one of your upper level perspective classes for your liberal studies curriculum. There will be four tests of equal value, a fifteen page research paper on a subject of your choice, and a creative project, again of your choice, so long as it addresses a nineteenth century issue."

A lone hand rose from about midway from the front. Daniel followed the line of the arm downward and found his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth. There had been many, many beautiful men walk through the halls of the university but Daniel had to admit, the student in front of him was really something else.

Reluctant attraction squeezed his balls in a vice. The student was slender, but in a way that bespoke of good genetics and sinewy muscles rather than a devotion to regular gym visits. He thought he remembered someone from his undergrad days calling the boy's type a swimmer's build. Even slim, the man had firm muscles, all elegant masculine lines. A firm jaw saved the

guy from looking too feminine, though his mouth was definitely luscious enough to be considered pouty. Coupled with those sky blue eyes and surfer-boy blond curls, he was a walking wet dream.

Wow. It was all too easy to imagine those sweet lips wrapped around parts of his anatomy. He swallowed. *What is wrong with me? I never look at my students like that.* He had trained himself not to after a few years of dogged practice. Twenty-eight, gay, and definitely not dead meant that he could appreciate a fine male form, but he reserved those sorts of thoughts for the men who frequented the university's gym who were definitely not in his classes.

“Y-yes?”

“This creative project, can it be something really artistic? I'd really like to combine it with my senior exhibition project.” The student's voice was a gravel filled rumble.

Jesus, since when do twenty year olds have that much sexy timbre in their voices? Usually his undergrad classes were just out of the voice-cracking stage.

When the guy continued to stare at him for a long, awkward pause, Daniel realized he should probably say something in reply. “Senior exhibition project?”

That at least explained his come-screw-me-stupid voice. A senior in his freshmen classes wasn't unheard of. Some undergrads put off the class until the last minute. Doing a quick mental calculation, the man was probably around twenty-two. Six years age difference.

Who the fuck cares what the age difference is? He's a student!

The man smiled slowly revealing sparkling white teeth to go with those luscious lips that Daniel couldn't stop thinking about. “Yeah.” He pushed back the blond surfer hair out of his face. “I'm an art major and I'd really like to incorporate a romantic era painting in my exhibition. If I could use it for this project as well it'd save me a lot of time.”

Project. Right. Come on, Daniel. Get a grip. He was proud when the lustiness didn't cause his voice to rasp. “I'd have to go over your plan with you and see if it meets the requirements set forth in the syllabus. Just shoot me an email to set up a one-on-one meeting during one of my office hours.” Images of the sort of one-on-one meeting he could have with the student made his normally anxiety induced flaccidity twitch in interest.

Christ! I am not getting a hardon in front of a room full of undergrads.

If he was drooling over some kid in his class he really needed to assess whether or not continuing to avoid intimacy was really a viable option. He winced as he recalled his last

boyfriends final fuck-you. *You're a fucking weird, creepy little bookworm. No wonder you can't get it up. The only thing you're interested in happened a fucking hundred years ago.*

The memory was sufficient enough to kill his erection. He swallowed. He dragged his eyes away from the younger man and perused the rest of his new students. They hadn't seemed to notice his general awkwardness.

"Any other questions?"

Twenty hands went up in the air.

Daniel sighed. It was going to be a long day.

Three Weeks into classes and he was ready to strangle his students. That was pretty typical considering most of them had never had to assess historical periods but it didn't mean he didn't want to throttle them into shape.

Napoleon wasn't a guy who was a legitimate ruler. He pretty much took over after the French Revolution and just bullied everyone. Daniel's hand cradled his chin as it often did when he was grading. He was about half way through the first test for his nineteenth century class and his head was starting to pound.

His pen flowed across the page in ugly red ink. *Georgia*, he wrote. *I think you're really over simplifying with this explanation of Napoleon. Where is your perspective coming from for this argument? Is Napoleon illegitimate because of the other powers of Europe's perception of him or is he illegitimate because he is inept? Think about it.*

A soft knock interrupted his rebuke. He glanced at his watch and realized the time had flowed into his office hours. "Come in!"

The golden stained oak of his door swung inward.

The young man who Daniel had noticed the first day of class stood in his doorway. "Hey, Professor Keller."

Instant unease washed over Daniel. It wasn't Kendal's fault. He had done nothing to warrant Daniel feeling like a hen with a fox in the house but his inability to conquer his attraction to his student was really starting to frazzle him.

He was taller than Daniel's own five-foot-nine frame -six-two at least, and the way he filled out his paint-streaked skinny jeans and his torn rocker tees made Daniel want to drool.

The man smiled, revealing an unfair set of perfect dimples. "I'm glad I caught you alone."

He would not read that as some sort of coded invitation. "What can I do for you, Kendal?"

Kendal was one of those people who took up all the space in a room. He entered Daniel's office as if he had every right to be there and was comfortable enough to sling his backpack on the floor by the plush green guest chair in front of Daniel's desk. He slid into the chair with more grace than any man his height had business having.

"I was in the building and figured I'd stop by your office." Kendal laced his fingers behind his head and gave Daniel another grin.

Daniel blinked. He was not the professor that students dropped by to chat with. At best, he was the nervous professor that students spoke kindly to as they passed in the hall. At worst, they whispered about his attractiveness to one another and lamented his weirdness. He wasn't the type to grab a pint with them at the university bar. Occasionally a student might form an attachment but Daniel's awkwardness and his no-nonsense sensibilities tended to stop that sort of thing before it even got going.

He frowned, floundering for something to say. "So you don't need anything?"

Kendal hesitated and he looked a little uncomfortable for the first time. Without his cockiness it was easier to see Kendal as a student and not a threat to his firm-and-ever-present control.

Daniel's frown deepened. "If something is wrong, you're welcome to talk to me about it." *There. See? I can have a perfectly logical conversation with him and not offer to suck his cock.* That thought sent a fission of shame through him. He had never once thought of himself as a lecherous man nor a very sexually deviant one.

"It's about my final project," Kendal said, swiping a hand through his riotous curls.

Relief trickled in. This was a problem he could handle. "It's a little early in the semester to be so concerned about your final project." Daniel hoped he sounded reassuring but he feared that he just sounded distracted. It was those damn lips. Those *gorgeous* damn lips.

Even when he'd been a graduate student teaching lower level classes to undergrads his own age he'd never reacted to someone like he did Kendal. He had found willing partners over the years and had even had a boyfriend or two, but he had learned early on that he didn't possess the sort of charisma to keep a man's attention. His lack of interest in the bedroom was another insurmountable wall more often than not. He didn't think about sex often and only had it when his boyfriends initiated it. Now whenever Kendal walked into his classroom he found himself thinking of sexual situations, sexual positions. Sex. All. The. Damn. Time.

He was starting to resent the younger man and it had nothing to do with Kendal being inappropriate. Kendal was a fine student, eager to learn, and respectful. Whenever the other man spoke in class Daniel found himself listening less to what Kendal was saying and more to the way the feelings he was experiencing crossed over his deeply expressive face and how those lips moved to form words that were both elegant and logical in matters of history. It was the most disconcerting thing he'd ever experienced.

"Well a painting takes me months to get done so I really need to start now," Kendal said, spreading his legs to get more comfortable.

Daniel felt like a pervert when his eyes zeroed in on the guy's crotch. What were they talking about again? Oh right. "Do you have a plan for this painting? A sketch or brief write-up that shows me that you know what you're getting into and that it covers the subject matter?" Daniel dragged his gaze away from the other man's body and turned his attention to his wall of books. Nothing sexual about his books. Nope. There was no sex in his colleague's new book on Gladiatorial Rome or the book of maps from nineteenth century European cities.

"I've got something. I just don't want you to freak."

That got his attention. Reluctantly, he tore his gaze away from his bookshelf and looked into Kendal's glittering blue eyes.

He swallowed as his erection went from half-mast to full-on in a matter of seconds. Thank god his desk was in the way of Kendal's view. "Freak? Why would I freak?"

"I brought a couple pages for you to look at." Kendal broke their eye contact and started rummaging around in the backpack at his feet in search of what he wanted. He continued to talk as he rummaged. "I want to do something that's sort of reminiscent of the sophistication of the upper classes in European courts. Like a masquerade or something with a midnight rendezvous theme, maybe with a hedonistic twist."

Daniel had no idea what that even meant. He wasn't an artist. He wasn't even a little bit creative. It was probably best Kendal had something concrete to show him because he was definitely not understanding what Kendal was trying to convey to him.

Kendal finally extricated some papers from the backpack and handed them over the desk to Daniel. He smiled encouragingly -at least he hoped it was encouraging. Then he happened to glance down.

And choked.

“What the hell is this?” Daniel gasped, his gaze devouring the page in front of him.

Even if he knew nothing about art, he had seen himself in the mirror enough times to know his own reflection when he saw it. He saw himself in profile, just the hint of a mask drawn over to obscure the features of his face, but it was recognizably him. His shirt was parted revealing a tantalizing hint of flesh underneath and he had a soft smile on his lips. His hand extended outward to cup the cheek of another naked male. Kendal.

Daniel's cock jerked and he knew precum was smearing the inside of his underwear.

“It's just a sketch.” Kendal's voice was incredibly soft, nonchalant, as if he presented portraits of this variety to his professors every day. “I won't know how it'll look fully cast until I have some models for it.” He paused and his eyes sparked with a deep-seated lust that terrified him. “I was hoping you'd help me out with that professor.”

Daniel's body flushed hot and cold in rapid succession at the throaty suggestion. “I think you need to leave.” His voice sounded weak to his own ears. “You're my student. I can't get involved in anything like this with you.”

When Kendal stood he almost called him back. His heart tripped over itself when, instead, he shut the door. He enclosed the two of them in his office, cutting them off from the rest of the world.

His mouth went dry, unable to speak or mutter a word of protest.

Kendal looked defiant and a little dangerous standing in front of him, blocking the only entrance in or out of the room. The telltale hard length of the other man's arousal was pressed against the seam of his blue jeans in a blatant display.

“Don't pretend you haven't been eying me all semester. You practically pant whenever I come into the room.” Kendal stated, crossing muscled arms across equally muscled chest. “You

felt it from day one, just like I did. Come on, Keller. Give me a break. I'm just trying to show you how I feel."

Daniel held up the sketches which displayed them in subtle variations of the pose that Kendal had depicted them in from the first picture. "This is how you show me how you feel? By giving me pornographic images of you and me?"

Kendal rolled his eyes impatiently. "You don't get it. You inspire me. Ever since I first saw you something sparked inside of me. My muse just won't shut up about you. It's like thoughts of you are the only fuel I can use to build the fires of creativity within me. Hell, without you, I would've never been able to even begin my senior exhibition this year. I was lost until I saw your face."

"Woah!" Daniel protested. He stood, ignoring the evidence of his attraction to Kendal that protruded from below his belt, and circled around the desk to face the other man head on. "What are you talking about? I just met you three weeks ago!"

Kendal's eyes widened as if he'd been struck. "You don't remember me do you?" He whispered softly. He turned abruptly on wooden legs. "Never mind. I thought... just never mind. Forget it." He took a step towards the door and Daniel grabbed his arm to turn him around.

"What am I supposed to remember? Come on, Kendal, talk to me." He demanded, staring up into Kendal's deep chocolate brown eyes. "What is this about?"

Instead of answering the other man leaned forward and captured Daniel's lips in a kiss. Daniel groaned at the sensation of the soft luscious lips on his own. His eyes slid shut in bliss. *Holy shit*, nothing had ever felt so right. *Christ*.

Kendal's mouth was demanding and his tongue traced Daniel's bottom lip seeking entrance. With a sigh Daniel acquiesced and welcomed the soft muscle into his mouth. Their tongues met. Tangled. He tasted like mint and something just a little spicy. Daniel shuddered in want.

They shouldn't be doing this. There were rules. There were... Kendal's arms wrapped around him, one hand guiding his head to a more compliant position the other gripping his backside so that their twin arousals were grinding in the space between them. Daniel gasped into the cavern of Kendal's mouth and was rewarded with a moan in return.

Suddenly, they broke apart like two ends of a piece of fabric in a storm. They stared at one another, both softly panting. Kendal straightened and stared a hole through Daniel's soul.

“I can’t believe you don’t fucking remember.” He growled, grabbing his backpack up and slinging it over his shoulder angrily. He offered another glare at his professor before turning on his heel and storming out the door. It slammed shut in a deafening cacophony of the drama that had played out between them.

“Remember what?” Daniel asked the room in bewilderment.

Daniel sighed and clenched his fist on the handle of his briefcase. His steps echoed off the now empty halls of Mckee. He was late again. It wasn’t because he’d got caught up grading papers or had simply lost track of time. No. He was late because he was a coward. His heart pounded as he walked through the open door to his classroom. This was the first day of class since Kendal and his encounter in his office and he wasn’t afraid to admit that he was nervous as hell to see the other man again. *Stay calm*. His palms slicked with sweat at the sight of Kendal lounging casually in his desk.

“Afternoon everyone,” he greeted. He sat his briefcase on the desk up front and opened it. He withdrew the graded tests and started passing them back. “Over all, you did well. There were a few problems but I made note of them in the margins of your papers. Please, read the comments and think about it before cornering me in my office.”

He came to Kendal’s paper and hesitated. He swallowed and walked towards his desk. He extended his hand with Kendal’s paper clutched in it. Kendal reached up and grabbed his wrist.

“I need to talk to you after class,” he whispered, too low for his classmates to hear.

What choice did he have? He nodded and drew his wrist firmly back. They did need to talk.

The rest of the class Daniel studiously avoided glancing in Kendal’s direction. He glanced at his watch at the conclusion of class and his stomach twisted in anticipation. His hands began to tremble again. The students filed out as he dismissed them. A few lingered to ask last minute questions but it was all too soon that they were, once again, blissfully alone.

They regarded one another. Each unwilling or unable to start the conversation. Finally Kendal sighed.

“Do you remember Kevin Augustus?” he asked.

Daniel blinked. Remember him? He was the guy that he'd been in love with in graduate school! They'd lived together briefly before the jackass had cheated on him with Daniel's then best friend Aaron.

"How do you know about Kevin?" Daniel asked, his eyes narrowing as he thought of all the possibilities of how the undergrad could've found out about Kevin. Had Kendal been stalking him or something? Kevin's sneer was perfectly memorable in his mind. *You're a fucking weird, creepy little bookworm. No wonder you can't get it up. The only thing you're interested in happened a fucking hundred years ago.*

Kendal sighed, looking a little self-conscious. "Kevin is my older brother."

If Kendal would've kicked him in the nuts it would've been less effective at completely disarming him. He felt like he had swallowed a baseball.

"We met that weekend that you and Kevin came to our family's home in Connecticut." He rubbed his temples as if he was getting a headache. "You really don't remember me at all?"

Daniel shook his head and strained his memory trying to recall the details of that trip. He had been a nervous wreck going up to see Kevin's well-to-do family in their upper class gated community in northern Connecticut. On top of the stress of meeting the potential in-laws Kevin had been texting and talking to someone else on the phone the entire trip down and refused to tell Daniel anything about it. It had unnerved him and, looking back, Daniel could've said he was having suspicions about Kevin's fidelity almost from the beginning.

"Kevin had gone out for drinks with a couple of his buddies and had left you at home with the family," Kendal supplied. "It was late and mom and dad had already hit the sack when I came in from a friend's house. You were sitting there in the dark, a half drunk glass of dad's bourbon in your hand, staring out the window. You were so lost in thought that I stood there staring at you for almost five minutes before you even noticed I was there."

Daniel blinked again getting the impression of the memory. He studied Kendal's face trying to glean a glimpse of familiarity. Vaguely he recalled the darkened room with the Christmas tree shoved in one corner and an interruption from his melancholy thoughts.

"You were a little heavier then," Daniel said, giving Kendal's lean, muscled frame a once over. He swallowed. Yeah, nothing imperfect about Kendal's frame now.

"Yeah and you were drunk," Kendal said, leaning back to display the loving line of his chest. "I helped you up to the room. You were so upset over Kevin leaving you there alone." He

paused, anger coloring his face. “I was pissed at him. You didn’t deserve that. *You* especially didn’t deserve that. You were so good to him and he was just an ass.”

He stood and Daniel backed up. Kendal up close was too much temptation.

Daniel’s throat felt strangled. “What has that got to do with you drawing pictures of us together and you taking my class and... kissing me?”

Kendal took another step forward. “Don’t be dense, Keller,” Kendal murmured, crowding him. “I fell in love with you the first second I saw you.”

He blinked. “That doesn’t happen. You can’t do that. Falling in love is harder!”

“Falling in love takes a second.” Kendal chuckled. “I knew it was hopeless though. Especially since you were so hung up on Kevin. I told myself that when I went to university that I’d find a guy like you. I didn’t think I’d ever see you again after you and Kev broke up but when I saw that you were teaching here, I knew it was fate.”

“What was fate?” Daniel squeaked. Kendal was so close now that he had to look up to lose himself in those deep chocolate eyes.

“I didn’t need to find a guy *like* you. I could have *you*.” Kendal smiled. A small triumphant smile.

“You’re my student,” Daniel whispered. Even as he spoke he wasn’t able to move away from Kendal’s warmth. Love. It was something that he’d wanted forever but had been pursuing in all the wrong directions for as long as he’d been dating. He was flattered. Beyond that, he was... enchanted. He’d never been pursued with such unwavering dedication.

“Yeah and you’re my professor. It’s a little taboo but,” Kendal leaned forward and pressed a soft kiss to the other man’s mouth. “I think I can live with that. Give me a chance, Daniel. Give me a chance and I promise you won’t regret it.”

Daniel sighed wantonly and forced himself to take a step back only to bump into a wall. “It’s against school policy to date one of my students. I’m sorry, Kendal. I want to but I can’t.”

Kendal chuckled.

Daniel frowned. “What’s so funny?”

That just caused Kendal to laugh a little harder, his sides quaking with the effort to hold most of it within him. “Check your rooster, Professor. I’m not on it.”

Daniel blinked. “Huh? If you’re not enrolled in the class why the hell have you been coming and doing the work?”

“To have an excuse to see you of course.” Kendal’s smile was infectious and Daniel found himself smiling. The art student rummaged in his pockets and drew out a hand written address. “I want to see you again. I mean, really see you, so here’s my apartment’s address. If you want to explore this with me be there at seven thirty tomorrow. Wear something comfortable. If not, I won’t bug you again. I just have to try.” He pushed past the stunned history professor and threw a carefree grin over his shoulder.

“Wait!” Daniel called after him but the younger man ignored him, sweeping out of the room like a prince leaving a field of battle. Daniel sighed and looked down at the address, swallowing. Was he really going to do this? All his excuses, his protests, all of it, meant little in the face of Kendal’s neat rebuke. Daniel couldn’t deny his attraction to the younger man.

Kendal was hot and best of all he was intelligent and from his work it was evident that he believed strongly in his morals and loyalty was important to him. In any other situation Daniel would’ve jumped at the opportunity to get involved with someone like Kendal but he was his ex’s brother and a student at the university he worked at to boot. Did he really want to take on someone like that?

Even as he questioned his sanity, Daniel knew he would go. Like the first impression he’d had of Kendal, he felt like a moth drawn to some irrepressible flame. He sighed and started gathering up his papers, notes, and briefcase. It was time to brave the fire.

Daniel had fussed over what to wear despite Kendal’s command to wear something comfortable. He disregarded all of his work clothes, deeming them all too stuffy for such a virulent and creative man. He’d finally decided on a pair of dark-wash blue jeans and a tight black v-neck t-shirt.

So now he was standing outside Kendal’s apartment with a little bouquet of daisies and terror racing through his veins. The doorknocker beckoned from its deceptively relaxed place above the peephole that was the entrance to Kendal’s apartment. Located on the second floor of the student apartments ten minutes from campus, the apartments were very similar to the lodgings Daniel himself had rented when he’d been going to graduate school at Penn State.

He stared at the door willing it to open by itself. The last thing he wanted to do was knock on the door to Kendal's apartment. It would be an acknowledgment of their mutual attraction and the idea scared him to death.

"Were you planning on actually coming in or were you just going to stand there staring at the green paint all night?" An amused voice broke him from his near panic attack. He glanced up and saw that the window beside the door had opened and Kendal was standing just beyond the screen.

He shifted. "I was planning on knocking, eventually." Damn his social phobias.

"The door is unlocked. Come on in."

The sight that greeted Daniel as he swung open the door surprised him. A small eat-in kitchen led directly into the living room and from his place at the front door Daniel could see the darkened bedroom that was just a few feet away. Candles covered the sparsely furnished living room, casting the entire world in a pale golden light. On the coffee table by a couch that looked like it had once been premium leather lay a feast of every variety of fruit, cheese, and gourmet crackers. Two champagne glasses were on the table as well.

A pop like a gunshot made Daniel almost jump out of his skin.

"Jesus, the way you jump you'd think I shot you." Kendal's soothing voice washed over Daniel's nervous senses. He half turned towards Kendal to see him, a bottle of cheap champagne in hand, grinning like a fool. "I wasn't sure that you'd show."

"I wasn't either." He still wasn't sure he wanted to stay.

Kendal sat on the edge of the couch and poured the champagne into each glass before offering one up to the professor.

"For courage," Kendal toasted, raising his glass into the air.

"For courage," Daniel echoed, draining his cup in two swallows. His muscles held a fine tremor as if he were fixing to give a speech in front of a large crowd. Kendal's gaze didn't waver for a second.

"So why am I here?" he blurted, unable to hold the question back. He wasn't sure if he was asking Kendal or himself.

A slow, shy smile twisted Kendal's lips. "You're here so I can show you who I am. So that I can show you that I'm not my brother and I'm worthy of you."

“H-how do you purpose to do that?” Daniel asked. Kendal may think otherwise but Daniel was sure that he’d never mistake him for his brother. Kendal was kind, intelligent, and honest, all the things Kevin had not been.

Thinking back to the night Daniel had met Kendal, he vaguely recalled thinking as much when Kendal had tucked him into bed and smoothed his hair back from his forehead. He’d always thought he’d imagined the chaste kiss on the cheek but now that he knew Kendal had been into him, it was hard to imagine that it wasn’t actually the case.

“Let me show you something,” Kendal said, ignoring his question. He crossed the living room to the couch and extricated a medium sized canvas from behind it. “I’ve been working on this since the first day of class.” He flipped it around. The painting was incredibly well done and mirrored almost exactly the sketch he’d handed Daniel that fateful day in his office. The only thing missing in the picture was Daniel himself.

“I haven’t been able to paint you,” Kendal admitted, looking sadly at the incomplete painting. “I’ve tried. I must’ve started a thousand times. I want you to model for me. I want you to see the passion I feel when I think of you.”

Daniel’s trembling only increased at the soft words. “You want me to model that pose you showed me?” He’d never modeled anything in his life. He wasn’t a model. He was a scrawny bookworm.

Kendal set the painting down and then crossed back over to him, taking both of Daniel’s nerveless hands in his own. “I would be so honored if you would. I want you to see you through my eyes. Daniel, you’re beautiful. I’ve never seen anything as beautiful as you.”

“I-I have a phobia of people.”

Kendal kissed his cheek. “I’m not people, baby. Let me show you.”

“Is this about sex?” He had to know. He could make sense of it if it was. “I’m not good at it if that’s what you think.” Embarrassment flushed his cheeks. “I overthink it.”

His heart pounded as Kendal placed Daniel’s hands on his sternum. “I don’t need you to think. You’ll feel. You already feel more with me than you ever did with anyone else.”

How did he know?

“I feel it too,” Kendal said. “I feel everything just as strongly.”

“Sometimes I can’t,” Daniel whispered, unsure of what he was trying to say. “Sometimes I get too nervous.”

He jumped as Kendal's hand ghosted down his body and cupped his burgeoning erection. He gasped. Holy hell. He was hard! He hadn't been hard with anyone else in a while. He got too nervous.

"Pose for me," Kendal commanded, rubbing his dick unerringly through his jeans.

Daniel pushed into his hands, clutching Kendal's shirt as he rubbed him. "Kendal, please."

"Please, what? Let you come?"

He was a sucker for sexy bedroom talk. All his favorite porn always included it.

"Do it, my sexy professor. Come for me. I want to paint you with your spunk decorating your dick."

Daniel yelped and came, humping into Kendal's tight grip. He was blinded by the strength of his release. Over and over, his dick pulsed and painted the inside of his jeans. Panting, he tried to suck in enough breath to come down from the most amazing high of his life.

Kendal held him throughout, practically purring his pleasure at Daniel's release. "You okay, babe?" he asked, kissing along Daniel's jaws.

"That was amazing."

"So will you do it, baby? Will you pose for me?"

Without a word, Daniel drew his shirt over his head.

Epilogue

Two Months Later

They rolled on the mattress, hands traveling over one another's bodies. Their lips never parted as they ate at each other's mouths. "We're never going to get undressed if you keep this up," Daniel gasped, running his hands over his lover's body. It was really, *really* nice having a boyfriend.

Kendal grinned and nipped at his lips. "Can I help it that you are just too sexy?"

"Me?" he asked, voice strangled. "You're the hot undergrad."

"And you're the sexy professor."

Carefully, they stripped off the button-down shirts they donned to attend Daniel's presentation of his senior art exhibit. It had been a smash hit and jammed pack but neither had paid much attention to the attention. All they wanted was to come home and act out the scenes from Kendal's increasingly erotic paintings of the two of them.

Kendal groaned drawing Daniel's attention away from his contemplations of their evening and back onto the hot young man in his arms. Kendal growled. "Damn, Keller. Watching you walk around my art was a hell of a turn on."

His hands plunged into Daniel's slacks, drawing out his hard cock with an impatience that always seemed to surprise him. The relationship and the sex was new enough that every time they touched it held a desperate edge to it.

Daniel panted, unable to resist the sensations that crashed over him. "If you keep that up I'm not going to last long." His eyes rolled into the back of his head as Kendal rolled his wrist in a way that was sure to bring Daniel to completion far sooner than either of them truly wanted.

"Can't have that," Kendal drawled, his voice a throaty rumble as he spoke. "I want to be inside you when you fall apart."

The words only made Daniel harder and he kicked off his slacks an instant later so that he was blissfully naked. He smiled and lay on his back as he watched Kendal's expressive brown eyes darken to a shade just a little lighter than midnight. Having Kendal as a lover had only increased his confidence over the weeks. He had a way about him that enabled Daniel to feel more comfortable about himself the longer time went on.

Kendal rummaged in the nightstand beside the bed. Ripping open a condom wrapper and smoothing it over his cock before squirting a healthy dollop of lubrication onto his dark red tip.

Daniel spread his legs without prompt, using his heels to bring Kendal forward, between his spread thighs.

“I need to warm you up,” Kendal protested breathlessly as Daniel managed to grope one hard ass cheek with the tips of his fingers.

“I don’t need a warm up.” He let the passion and desire loose within him so that it filled his eyes with an almost feral light. “I need you.”

Kendal didn’t need further encouragement. They stared into each other’s eyes as he slowly pressed his hard body against Daniel’s tight entrance. Daniel cried out as Kendal sank into the tight depths of his body. Every time Kendal touched him, he lost his mind.

As their passionate cries grew sharp and Daniel’s blunt nails scored Kendal’s shoulders, the professor knew that he’d never known love until this moment, until this man. Whispered words filled the air as Daniel let them escape from the depths of his soul.

Together, they were spent.

Daniel didn’t know the future. Fortune telling wasn’t his forte. He was a history man. But he did know that he wasn’t afraid. Not anymore.

“I love you, Daniel.” Kendal’s sleepy, sated voice made Daniel smile. He sounded like a big satisfied tomcat after sex.

“I love you too, Kendal.” He kissed the other man’s chest. “I love you too.” He hadn’t needed to repeat it but it made him feel good to make the words a litany. Listening to Kendal’s soft snores he knew that his lover already knew. Daniel’s eyes slid shut. Content. At last.

End

Shared History

For other free novellas by Jana Downs, check out her site at www.janadowns.weebly.com

About the Author

Jana Downs lives in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina with three cats, one dog, several dozen fish, and a very understanding partner-in-crime who hates to read but makes exceptions for her stories.

You can usually find her either watching bad reality TV, buying way too many books on Amazon, or dreaming up another man or two to occupy her time because life is good but several drop-dead gorgeous nonexistent men is just better.