



**RACING THE MOON**  
**B.A. TORTUGA**

Racing the Moon  
by BA Tortuga

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## Chapter One

Man, people said the city was foggy. San Francisco didn't have shit on this. MJ was pretty sure that by the time the sun burned all this away, he was going to be a big mass of bruises.

He'd managed to deliver his packages to the Greater N.C. Logging equipment sheds before the fog rolled in, then headed out on foot. That was the problem with using a Jeep to hold a metric fuckton of C-4. The damned things just never handled right after.

MJ grinned and checked his compass. A couple more miles on foot in this up-and-down, full-of-brush bullshit that he was trying to save and he'd reach the little convertible waiting to take him to Wilmington for a couple of days R&R before his next gig. Fucking cool.

He tripped over another fucking root, catching himself on a tree and scraping the living fuck out of his palm. Well, it would be cool in two hours when he could fucking see.

Of course, he didn't have to see to know what the sound coming from behind him was. The sound of a round clacking into place was unmistakable.

Fuck. Him.

He went still, sliding one hand back where the little .38 was resting at the small of his back. No way it was the loggers. They hadn't even seen the damage yet.

"Don't even think about it, buddy. Just take the piece out nice and easy and put it on the ground." The voice was about as rough as the rifle, like water over gravel. It came from just

above and to the right, telling him the guy was maybe an inch or two taller than him and banking on him being right handed.

Well, that was one lucky break. Go him.

"I don't have anything to steal, man. I'm just hiking."

"Hiking at the crack of dawn in the worst fog we've had in near a year?" Okay, there was no way that voice was local, either, at least not originally. It came from the Deep South. As opposed to hillbilly south. Because, obviously, someone like him would know the difference. Christ. "I don't think so. I know you've got a gun. Get the damned thing out and put it down."

He held up his right hand, taking a half turn toward the voice. "I haven't got any beef with you, man. I'm just passing through."

Fuck, he didn't want to start playing Shoot the Local.

A twig cracked, the sound moving to his left. Fuck, the guy was onto him. Maybe the guy wasn't a stupid yokel. "I have a beef with you. Take out the fucking gun or I'll blow your goddamned head off and leave you for the possums and the foxes."

"Fine. Fine. Keep your dick in your pants." He growled. He liked that piece. Of course, he liked his head attached to his body more. Fucker. He slipped the pistol out, kneeling down to set it on the ground, the knife strapped to his calf a comfort.

"Now up, and your hands on the back of your neck." As soon as he complied, the barrel of the rimfire pressed against

his folded hands, holding them in place. "What the fuck are you doing out here?"

"I told you, asshole. I'm hiking. Trying to get back to my fucking car so I can visit the beach." If he grabbed the barrel and tugged, he might get the rifle free, but if he didn't, he was deeply screwed. "What? Did I piss on your favorite tree?"

"No. Take three steps to your right." The barrel prodded, so hard that if he moved his hands the guy would know in a split second.

He swore, if he fucking died in fucking North Carolina...

He moved, snarling low, just itching to turn around and look at the man.

"I got a hair trigger, so watch it. Now move. Forward. And watch the rocks. Wouldn't want you to slip and fall backward, would we?" If he guy poked him again, he was going to explode.

"You watch your own footing and I'll worry about mine." God *damn* it.

"Just keep walking, buddy. We'll sort this out, but on my terms." He kept on going, because he didn't have a choice, but he was about to do something pretty stupid when he practically stumbled right into a cabin wall of split logs so fresh they still oozed sap.

He moved his hands without even thinking, going to catch himself on the wall. This was motherfucking Deliverance.

"Now, there's a door on your left. Watch your step going in. Low clearance." The gun backed off, just enough.

Rule number one. Being stuck inside sucked. Rule number two. Being stuck inside with a crazy hillbilly sucked harder.

He took the chance, feigning a move toward the door before he twirled around and got hold of the barrel, shoving it back as hard as he could while stepping toward the asshole. Couldn't shoot him if he was beside the muzzle.

To give the guy credit, the gun didn't go off. Most people would have hit the trigger out of reflex. Instead the guy let go, the heavy, solid weight of the stock dropping and pulling him off balance just enough for the redneck asshole to get a punch in that had his ears ringing as it landed square on his left cheek.

"Bastard!" He took a swing with the rifle while trying to shake the blinking lights out of his eyes. Fuck. Come on. Come *on*.

Bum rushing him, the guy smacked him up against the wall, his head flopping back like a doll's. Shit. He was gonna have a goose egg the size of a third world country. Not only that, but whatever the fuck that was hard and pointy in his backpack that slammed into his left kidney? Was so fired.

He tried to get a knee up, hands slamming the bastard on one shoulder with the rifle.

A grunt and another stunning shake were the only answer. Fuck, the man wasn't human. He'd run into Bigfoot or something, sure enough. Smashing pain broke across the bridge of his nose as he got a tremendous head-butt.

"Motherfucker. Let. Me. Go!" He was going to get back to the city and rip Arnold's fucking head off. Bigfoot. Christ.

"Shut up and get inside. If you'd fucking cooperate, it'd be so much fucking easier." They rolled to one side and he fell through a doorway, smacking his head as he stumbled in.

"It woulda been easiest to let me walk right on by, jackass." Fuck, he couldn't even see straight.

Hell, there were probably little birdies flying around his fucking head in circles. Tweet, tweet, fucking tweet.

The birds became a comet trail when the guy lit a lamp, leaving him lying on the floor. When the sparkles cleared, he could see he wasn't with Sasquatch after all. Just a guy, one who had legs up to his neck, dressed in snakeskin boots, shearling jacket and a black cowboy hat.

He sat up, counting to twenty in Japanese so he didn't puke. Kick-ass little chickie in Tokyo'd taught him that. Or was it that little cocksucker Hawaiian in Santa Barbara, that time they were all trying to get Keith out of jail...

Either way, no puking. Go him.

MJ pulled his legs up under his chin so he could reach his blade.

"Don't make me kick you, buddy. I'm already pissed." The voice matched the eyes. They were dark as pitch, watching him with the intensity of a caged animal. Or maybe a hunting dog that had his prey treed.

"Well, you know, I'm not feeling like we're the best of friends, man." Jesus fucking Christ, this was top-level fucked up.

"Neither am I, but I'm inclined to cut you a break now I've taken out some of my spleen on your nose." The man's upper lip curled up in the nastiest damned smile. "You look like crap."

"I don't see you winning Li'l Miss Appalachia. Not unless you've got some talent beyond mugging hikers."

Oh, that one was pretty funny. Probably going to get him killed, but pretty funny.

"You keep trying the hiking excuse and I *will* kick you." But the guy was starting to grin; this time the smile reached his eyes. The hat came off, tossed onto the tiny cot behind him, and the guy reached back to close the door, the .22 resting casual-like against one leg as the guy lit a cigarette. "Now. What. Are. You. Doing. Here?"

He could feel his leg start jittering as the door closed all the way. Damn. "Going to get my car. It's off Highway 52. Then I'm going to the beach, and you're not invited."

"No. That tells me what you were doing after you left here. Try again, buddy." The jacket came off, too, smoke starting to circle the guy's head.

"Well, when you attacked me, I was walking. Walking. I'm sure you learned that once you fell out of the trees. You know, stand up. Left, right, left. It's a fascinating experience."

And before that he was blowing up ten million dollars worth of logging equipment. Before that? Sabotaging a whaling ship. Being helpful.

One snakeskin boot lashed out and caught his hands, knocking them up and away from his boot, bruises blooming under the kick. "Be nice, asshole. You're the one on my land."

Oh, *Jesus* that hurt. He was about fifteen seconds from launching himself up and throttling the tall motherfucker to death. He had a date with a bottle of tequila and a \$15,000 bank draft. "There wasn't a fucking fence."

"We generally don't need them up here. Folks know that we all police our own. You're on my last nerve." The cigarettes and lighter landed at his feet. "Care to?"

"I tell you what; you keep your smokes and your last nerve. I'll leave the way I came, by noon, and we can forget we've ever seen each other."

"Can't." There was a fine tension in that long body, a tension that made him wonder if he was gonna leave there at all, ever. "Not until after tonight, at any rate. You're either stupid or unlucky, buddy."

"I suppose that depends on who you ask. Right now, I'm leaning toward unlucky." Of course, if this was it, MJ bet he could bury his knife in the son of a bitch's stomach before he died...

"Turn around and put your hands behind your back, thumbs up." The guy stubbed the cigarette out on the floor, covering it with the toe of his boot.

"No fucking way."

"We can do this easy or we can do this hard. You be nice and let me tie your hands and you can take a nap until tonight. You make me do it the hard way and you might not wake up." The guy was good. Suddenly, he seemed to be taking up twice as much space.

"I'm all about the easy." He wasn't a big man, but he was quick as shit. He got hold of his knife and launched himself across the floor, managing to catch the guy in the breadbasket with his shoulder, pushing them both off balance.

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The guy grunted, the rifle spinning away toward the wall, sliding under the bunk. Big hands closed on him, one on his wrist, the other on his throat as they struggled.

This was getting just a little old.

Really.

He fought to keep hold of the knife, fought to breathe as his free hand looked for purchase. What the *fuck* was going on? The world started to go gray around the edges as he lost air, his hand scrabbling against nothing, his fingers getting weak as hell.

He heard the guy grunt once as his knee connected with something, the huge fucking fingers loosening just enough to get one good breath in, push the knife blade against the man's thumb, before they went rock hard again.

He got a roar, but he wasn't sure if it came from his attacker or if it was just the rushing in his own ears as finally the knife fell from his nerveless fingers, the whole world going black.

Well, fuck him raw.

## Chapter Two

Sonny cursed viciously.

It had been one of the worst days in recent memory. First, he'd been out to finish gathering the latest yield from the still to pack it up for the run tonight. Then he'd damned near lost his thumb to the freaking "hiker" with the .38 and the blade big enough to skin a fucking elephant.

And then the goddamned logging shed had blown up, blocking the red dirt road he used to move the product out for a ridge run, leaving him stranded with two days of pork and beans before he had to walk it out, and a failed run that would lose him nigh on five thousand dollars.

Fuck a goddamned duck.

He needed a drink. And maybe to beat Sleeping Beauty to death. The guy was sacked out on his cot, where Sonny had dragged him despite the throbbing and spurting of his damned hand, looking like some weird, displaced surfer dude with his sun-bleached hair and tanned skin.

Sonny had to fight the urge to kick him again. Really hard.

Instead he lit a cigarette and opened a mason jar half full of 'shine, sipping as he contemplated his circumstances.

The guy's backpack hadn't offered dick in the way of ID. Information, though? Shit, yes. The son of a bitch had a fucking toolkit that was worth more than some folk's houses. Electronic gizmos. Set of throwing knives. About three days' worth of high-dollar camping shit. Maps.

A fine compass that he'd confiscated. And detonators. Imagine that. For plastic explosives. Sonny shook his head,

sucking down the last sip of 'shine, waiting until his eyes stopped watering to stand and go put a can of pork and beans directly on the burner of his camp stove.

Then he went and woke Sleeping Beauty with a love tap on the chin.

The son of a bitch came up swinging, Sonny'd give him that. Didn't wince or nothing, and God knew the man's head had to be fucking splitting open. Good thing he'd put riot cuffs on the fucker. At least that way all he could do was huff and puff and fall to his knees on the floor as Sonny backed off.

"Morning, Precious. Want one of your trail mix bars?"

"Fuck you." The guy swayed a bit, body shuddering hard as the man fought the rising of his gorge.

"No puking on my floor." But man, he had to feel for the guy, what with the nasty bruises and all. Sonny went and got some water and a couple of aspirin from the guy's own first aid kit. "Open wide."

He thought the guy was gonna growl, but that mouth opened and he popped the pills in, careful of his fingers and those teeth. The water got sipped, the wince coming when the guy tried to swallow. And did Sonny feel bad about that? Hell, no. His thumb might just have to come off, it throbbed so fucking bad. Amputation with a butter knife would be preferable to the fucking itch and burn. He hauled the guy up to sit on the cot, looking him over.

The guy wasn't big, not at all, but solid muscle, not an ounce of fat or weak on him. Moved faster than shit through a goose, too. One bright-bright blue eye glared at him, the

other swole damn near shut. Made him grin. Man wasn't so pretty now, was he?

He waited until the convulsive swallowing stopped before offering more water. "So, you the feller who blew up the logging shed, then?"

"Wha ... what's a logging shed?" That voice was as raw as just split wood.

He got a wee too much savage satisfaction out of that. "Don't fuck with me, buddy. I went through your shit. I got me a cousin in demolitions in the Navy."

He just got a stare, that eye not moving. Bastard wasn't easy to scare, that was for sure. He had time. Lighting another cigarette, Sonny listened to the beans bubble and watched the guy right back.

"I need to piss."

"Answer my question and I'll show you to your tree."

"I can piss on your bed, just as easy as not."

"You could, but I've been having a bad day. That might just push me over the edge." He pondered hitting the guy again. For fun. "Your choice, though."

"Sucks to be you, man. I was having a fine day, until you decided to get territorial."

Sonny sighed, going to get his beans and his own bottle of water. Maybe if he made enough gurgling noises the guy would give in and need to go out. The guy shifted around, back to the wall, taking everything in, from the little camp stove to the sight of all his shit strewn everywhere.

"Okay, come on." He gave up. He couldn't let the guy go until he made the run and moved the still. The least he could

do was let him piss. "But no funny business or I'll hit you again, scatter your chickens but good."

"Look. Why don't you just fucking let me go? I'm not worth dick to you and I have somewhere to be." The guy stood, rolling his shoulders.

"So do I. Too bad, thanks to you, I can't get there." He got up, too, tossing the bean can in the trash. "You can at least piss."

He'd found the Winchester earlier, and he grabbed it up, chambering a round and pointing to the door. "I'm a good shot."

"Good for you. I'm not an easy target." The tension in those shoulders eased as the guy muscled through the door, heading for the edge of the clearing, working his canvas pants open with surprising ease for a cuffed guy.

"Don't have to be." Sonny kept a close eye on the guy and on the surrounding woods, just in case the guy had someone looking.

The son of a bitch wasn't in any hurry, pissing like he had all the time in the world. Who the fuck was this asshole?

Sooner or later, though, every man ran out of territory markings, and the flow stopped. "Come on, back inside."

The guy zipped up, turned to face him, dead on. "I'm tired of following fucking orders, man. I'll get off your goddamn property, but I'm not going back in there."

Growling, Sonny shot a round a few feet from the guy's toes, his frustration boiling over. "You'll get your ass in there now or I'll fucking shoot it."

"What is your fucking *problem*, man?" Christ, the man was all fury and not a bit of fear. It was fucking unnatural. "You listen to Dueling Banjos one too many times or something? You think I'm a fucking bomber? Call the cops. You think I'm here to rob your ... Oh, fuck. That's priceless. What? I'm going to steal a motherfucking can of beans?"

"At this point, I don't give a damn what you were here for. I just wanna kick your ass again for shits and giggles. And I want you to get back inside!" He roared the last of it, chambering a new round and pointing with the Winchester toward the door. "You'll be my guest until I say you can go."

The son of a bitch walked right up to him—fucking *strutted*—before elbowing the barrel aside and spitting between his boots. "I've been threatened by better, asshole. Don't give yourself unwarranted credit."

Then the little bastard headed for the door.

Damn. Torn between laughing and using the butt of the gun to beat the man into soup, Sonny followed, closing the door behind them and latching it. He checked his watch. Fuck. He had *hours* with this shithead.

"So do you play Scrabble? Tiddlywinks? Musical chairs?"

"Are you trying to tell me you've kidnapped me because you were *bored*?"

He chuckled. "Come on, Precious, you're not that stupid. You stumbled on something you shouldn't have. Literally."

"Did you notice the fog? You know, white stuff? Hides things? Christ, five minutes more and I would have been happily out of your hair." Man, the combination of sore throat and pissed off made for one hell of a growl.

Almost as good as his was naturally. Almost.

"I did notice the fog. Only thing that kept me from shooting you outright. Still gotta keep you for at least another day though."

Just until he could move his operation. Just until they cleared the road. He'd already dismantled the stills.

"Is that when the aliens come?" That blue eye closed, just for a second. "Look, man. I don't know your business, your name. Nothing. I just want to go to the beach and not look back."

And he probably would, too, but Sonny just couldn't take the chance until he'd stripped the cabin, gotten the road open to ship the shit out, and gotten out himself. Damn it. "Soon. All right? You have my word."

"I can't begin to tell you how much better that makes me feel." The guy stood up and headed over to the disassembled pack without even looking at him again.

God, what a pushy little prick. When his head started to hurt from the way his teeth were grinding, Sonny took a deep breath and started moving around the cabin himself, rifle in the crook of one arm, the other hand busy stripping shit down and packing it up.

The pack was put back together, one granola bar left out. Then the guy settled, stared out the tiny assed little window, just as still as could be.

Tilting his head, Sonny went over, not quite close enough to be in arm's reach. "What's out there that's not in here, man?"

"I'm not the world's biggest fucking fan of being cooped up. Especially with crackhead, rifle-toting rednecks. Call it a character flaw." There was real fucking stress in the man's voice, though.

A light dawned, and he realized why the guy had been so determined to piss for an hour. Now, did Sonny torture him or help him out? Decisions, decisions. He moved around carefully and opened the window a few inches.

The stress around those shoulders eased enough that he could see it. Well, goddamn. Okay, then.

"Be nice and don't yell, hmm? Never know when some yahoo will be out ... hunting. Or hiking." Chuckling, he moved away, let the guy eat.

It was fucking creepy, the silence, the stillness. Sonny wasn't sure if the guy was sleeping or dead or plotting. Or all three.

The whole closed in space thing didn't get to him. The utter dead silence did. He broke it. "You got a name?"

"I have a number of them. MJ works."

"Yeah? What's it stand for?" Damn. Sonny usually wasn't one to chatter, but really, that was unnatural.

He got a confused sort of look. "I haven't told anyone that in twenty years. I'm not breaking my record. How about you? Should I call you something besides asshole?"

"Sonny." It was a nickname anyway, so he didn't care about telling this guy that much.

"Sonny." He'd bet if it wouldn't hurt like a son of a bitch, the bastard would've grinned. "I can remember that, Sunshine."

"You do that, Precious." Sonny sighed. He was never going to make it through the whole day without killing this guy. Maybe he *should* whap him over the head again. Give himself some peace.

"You going to take the cuffs off, man?"

He held up his hand, his gauze wrapped thumb out. "You gonna come after me again if I do?"

"You have the rifle, man. I'm a poor, unarmed beach bum."

"Yeah, yeah. I'll undo your hands, but you try to run and I'll gun you down. I just need you to be patient for a few more hours, Precious." Just a few more endless fucking hours.

"I won't run. Just undo the fucking straps."

He moved slowly and carefully, as the Winchester would do no good up close. In fact, he left it behind, taking MJ's own knife to cut the twisted plastic right down the middle, moving away quickly.

"Thank you." Those too-pretty-for-color-TV eyes lit on the knife. "That was handmade for me and I want it back."

"You can have it when you go, s'long as you don't stick it in me again." It was vicious sharp, too. It had severed skin and muscle like butter. Had to admire that.

"Fair enough." MJ stood, stretched up—well, as far up as the little shit went—bones creaking a little.

He watched, maybe admired a little. Even beat to hell the guy was not hard to look at, not one bit. And he *was* stuck there. Nothing wrong with entertaining a few fantasies. The

guy changed out his socks, the action giving him a glimpse of black ink spreading across tanned calves.

He pondered just throwing the guy down and fucking him right into the floor. It was a goddamned pleasant image, full of what his sister would call violent, territorial psychosis or something, but really, it was all about the pretty.

"So, what? Do you run a meth lab out here?" He got a look. "You don't look like a meth-head."

"I'm not." Asshole. Sonny included a gag in his little fantasy. Maybe a black leather one, like that time in Miami Beach. Oh, hell, yeah. "And you don't look like a hiker. But then again, I'm not sure you look like a demolitions man, either."

"I look like what I am. A beach baby." Uh-huh. Right. Sure. And he was the Queen's nephew. Sonny shook his head, looking out the window to check the light. Goddamn it. Oh, did he say that out loud? "You want me to go out and run around in circles? See if I can't attract whatever you're hoping to see?"

"If I was hoping for bear or man-eating mountain laurel? Sure. I'm waiting for dark, Precious." Sonny sat on a camp stool, having packed just about everything that wasn't being sat on by someone else. "Whatever will we do to pass the time?"

"You could nap. Sounds like you're going to have a long night."

"Oh, I'm sure you'll be happy to stand guard. You have any idea how many yahoos with rifles will be out combing these woods, looking for *you*?" Jesus fuck.

"Me? Now why on earth would anyone be looking for me? I'm just on a little sight-seeing tour." With explosives.

"Look, cut the crap, okay? You don't have to bare your soul, but I'm not an idiot. I told you what I found in your bag. You oughta find it ironic that you're stuck here because of it." Somehow, Sonny found himself standing, looming over the guy, hands clenched into fists.

"I'm stuck here because of you, *Sunshine*." The little guy stood right up, pushed into his space, not giving an inch. "You hadn't been a paranoid fuck, I'd be ten miles from here."

"And I'd still be stuck here with my shipment because you closed the logging road! I think it's a fine thing that I got a piece of you." He drew up even taller, just snarling. Fuck, this one got his blood up.

"You get far with that whole puffed up thing usually? Because I have to tell you, I'm feeling a lack of terror."

He drew back his fist, about to let fly, when the crackle of a branch had him turning toward the window, grabbing MJ and pulling him down below eye level. To the asshole's credit, MJ moved easy and didn't say a fucking thing, muscles beneath his fingers taut and ready to spring.

At least three distinct, separate footsteps sounded, the murmur of low voices floating in through the open window. Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck. Sonny moved low, crawling down across the floor to get the .22 and his own pack, looking at everything he was gonna leave behind. He'd have to burn the fucker down.

MJ got those boots on, backpack on his back, eyes fastened on the window the whole time.

He could hear them, wandering, looking for the shipment, looking for the still, and cursing his name.

Goddamn it. Sonny motioned to MJ, tossed the knife soundlessly to the man, pulling out the .38 next and passing it over. He might just make a run for it, or he might help. Either way Sonny would bet the man wouldn't be a hindrance.

One last look around gave him his torch. The little bit of 'shine left in the mason jar. Add a piece of cloth from the bunk and light it with his lighter? Yeah. He looked at MJ, miming what he was about to do. The man nodded, scooting toward the edge of the room. As Sonny watched, the little propane stove was turned over, that knife piercing the top, liquid fire pooling. The stove igniter was ready, just needed a click and *boom*.

Good man. Yeah. Now, they just had to slip out the back door, which wasn't so much a door as a short ... tunnel. Lord, the surf bum was gonna *hate* that. Really, it was just wiggle like a worm and pop out the other side. Surely he could handle that. Sonny made his way to the back of the cabin, moving a stack of boxes aside and jerking his head.

MJ slipped over, face going sheer, honest-to-God grey when he saw the door, head shaking just a little.

Sonny put his free hand on the man's shoulder, squeezing. It was their best chance. He'd heard Lloyd Freeman's voice. That son of a bitch's father owned the logging camp. He'd as soon shoot them as look at them.

He thought for sure the man was gonna balk, but those lips were moving, mouthing 'Okay, okay' over and over. Then

MJ moved, pushing fast like the hounds of hell were after him.

He had to trust that the man was smart enough not to pop out like a weasel and run. They needed the distraction. He made a split-second assessment. Set it before he left, or toss the cocktail through the window...? No. Set it before he left. He splashed the 'shine across the floor, using the cloth as a wire to set it off. Then he wiggled out through the hole backward, flicking his damned lighter at the very last minute.

The fucking cabin went up in a crackle and a whoosh, the surprised hollers turning to screams right off. Goddamn, but that bitch could burn. He didn't bother looking back, just followed that fast son of a bitch away from the scene.

There was no way he could get to his shipment now.

Thank God he had a reserve of cash in a safe deposit box in Asheville. He'd set up shop somewhere else. And he'd damned well take this failed mess out of MJ's hide as a reward for his good behavior.

\* \* \* \*

Goddamnmotherfuckerprick.

Asshole.

Fuck.

Fuckfuckfuckfuckfuck.

MJ moved through the fading sunlight like death itself was on his heels, which, theoretically, it was, but thinking that way blew the hell out of that whole power of positive thinking thing his mother was always going on about, and he couldn't fucking have that.

Hell, no.

Positive thinking.

He was going to get his happy ass *out* of this forest.

He was going to get to his 'stang.

He was going to run that big, pushy bastard over twice *without* damaging the axle.

Then he was going to the beach.

In Maui.

For a fucking *month*.

Positive thinking.

Positive thinking wasn't what was bearing down on his ass, though. Or what was shooting at them every so often. Thank God it was easier to run through these fucking pines than it was to ride a four-wheeler.

A pine tree branch very nearly took his head off. Sonny grabbed the back of his neck and pushed down, keeping them moving into the lower branches, which was a good tactical move but hell on the skin. Man, he'd thought working water jobs was a bitch.

Hell, if he'd planned this part of the job, he would've at least cut a fire break around the cabin. God knew how many endangered species were getting crispy-fried.

"Come on, Precious. Pick 'em up and put 'em down." Okay, shooting or no, he was going to kill this man.

The thought soothed him, from his sore throat, to his aching head, to his back. Yeah. First MJ'd beat him with a tire iron. Then the 'stang. Then maybe set him on fire. After fucking the grin out of him.

Whoa.

Where the fuck did that come from?

Okay. Okay, man. So going to Maui.

Just about the time he thought that, the world went out from under his feet and he went ass over teakettle, rolling down a pine needle and rock slope. He landed at the bottom against a damned tree. Sonny landed on top of him.

Ow.

"There is no way I'm only taking fifteen for this fucking job." He shoved Sonny off, wincing as pine shit poked him half to death.

"No, you need to get enough to pay me for my fucking shipment." Cussing up a storm, Sonny sat up, a cut on the side of his bald head bleeding freely. "You'd best have transport somewhere, Precious."

"I told you I had a car. I'm not the one who blew that place to kingdom come." Asshole. Like he was sharing his take. He was more apt to pistol-whip the bastard.

"Good." The asshole got up, and damned if he didn't go pale under the days of stubble and the tan. "Oh, fuck-a-duck."

"What?" Oh, man. He knew that look. Knew it. The bastard was hurt or he'd eat powdered rhino horn.

The expression hardened. "Not a goddamned thing. Come on, Precious. Let's go. I've got an appointment with a shower and a branch of NCNB."

"I got pain meds in here, when you get tired of faking it." He started moving again, all tall, dark and unpleasant.

"Fuck you."

Oh, he didn't think so. "I don't bottom, asshole. That's your job."

Oh, great. He was down to jabs about fucking.

"Nope. The last guy who tried to get me to ate his teeth. I top, Precious. Period."

Well, at least now he knew which way that wind blew. Leave it to him to find the only gay redneck in the forest. "Well, they taught an ape to do sign language. There's still hope for you and your ass."

Wait. Did that make sense? Shit.

Whether it did or not didn't matter when a shot pinged over their heads and dug deep into a tree about six feet away. Jesus, those assholes were determined. Sonny zipped instead of zagged, and MJ just managed to stagger out of the way as the man's left leg crumpled, sending him down hard.

Shit. Shit shit shit.

MJ shoved Sonny over, grabbing a roll of netting from his pack and draping it over the writhing form. "You fucking stay still or I will kill you where you lay."

Then he stripped off his shirt, crouched and waited, sidearm at the ready. He was not going to be taken by a bunch of fucking hillbillies. That was not how this shit was going to end. Sonny went absolutely still, not even a breath to give him away. Good. That was good.

The sound of a gunned engine came clear and angry, like a swarm of bees, and sure enough the ATV broke the ridge, bumping down toward them.

He waited for his shot, relaxed, easy for the first time in too long. The first bullet took the driver in the shoulder, the

second took the left front tire. That was all it needed. That little ATV went rolling, men looking like rag dolls as they were bumped and thrown.

Man, that was going to be sore in the morning.

He snorted. They all were. Sonny popped up from under his net like a jack-in-the-box, face set in hard lines of pain, but looking determined. "Out. Let's get the fuck out."

MJ grabbed his net and his shirt, rolling them up as they moved. "Do you know where the fuck we are? I'm parked near Stoney Creek, where 52 meets 74."

Squinting those near-black eyes, Sonny looked around, nodded. "Then we need to go about a mile and a half. That way."

Uphill. Of course.

His mother always told him he was born under an auspicious star. Unfortunately, the damned thing read, 'Fuck with me'. "Well, if you're coming with me, let's hustle."

"I'm right behind you, man. Move it or lose it."

He'd lost enough in the last twenty-four hours or so to last a while. "Be nice or I'll forget why I haven't shot your ass yet."

He fucking hated hills.

"Oh, because I *gave* you your gun back so you wouldn't be unarmed when they started shooting at us, dickhead?" The tenor of Sonny's breathing told him a lot about how much pain the guy was in, but he kept up.

"Well, if you didn't do naughty things, Sunshine, the bad men wouldn't come to shoot you."

"If you hadn't fucked up the only escape route, I would be long gone." They were going in circles. Well, at least in conversation. In their trotting, they were heading straight uphill. It took them about a half hour, but damned if they didn't make his car. Sunshine had a good sense of direction.

The 'stang was there, black and pristine and fast as anything. "Oh, that is just what I need to see."

Man. Sun. Sand. Sea. A hotel room with a hot shower and tequila from room service.

"Hell, yes. Nice ride." Sonny was drenched, pupils dilated.

"Come on, man." He shook his head. Fuck. He'd give the man a couple of Vicodin and drive a few hundred miles.

"Thanks." That was probably the most sincere thing he'd heard out of Sonny's mouth the whole time. That and the heartfelt groan as Sonny settled into the passenger seat.

He pulled out his keys and his stash, handing over three pills. "Vicodin. They'll take the edge off until I can look at it. I imagine you're not the hospital type and I'm not playing field medic with those bastards this close."

MJ didn't wait for Sonny to answer; he just turned on the radar detector and floored it.

"I'll live." Sonny nodded, popping the pills and leaning his head back, hat long gone, face looking like he'd been through a war.

"Good. Dead men are hard to explain. Even in Wilmington."

### Chapter Three

Sonny shifted, cursed the whole fucking world. He hadn't broken that ankle, but he knew a torn tendon when he felt one. His whole leg felt like it was on fire, his foot and ankle swollen impossibly.

They'd stopped in Asheville, even though he'd had to threaten MJ a little to get him to do it. But he had his new ID and his stash of money, along with a .45. As soon as they'd gotten back to the 'stang, he'd taken off his boot, so they wouldn't have to cut it off later. Nearly six hours of riding later, he woke up, groggy as hell, and hurting so hard he gritted his teeth on a moan.

"You need another pill, man?" It was black as pitch outside, and MJ's eyes were a little wild. He must've taken something to keep him running. "We'll be at the place in about half an hour."

"No. No more or I'll get all pukey. Can only take so much of the shit before I start." Damn it. He shouldn't have wasted that 'shine on setting a fire. Oh, to have that truck he'd left sitting in the woods. Ah, well, he'd call Woody, tell him where it was. If he wanted it, he could have it.

"Kay." The music throbbed, something raucous, deep and irritating. Not as irritating as the way MJ's leg jittered, over and over and over.

"What the fuck did you take, man? You shoulda woke me. I can do irritating as well as this crap music." Might as well needle the man to take his mind off the pain.

"Well I don't have Dueling Banjos on CD, so I just sort of made do with what I had."

"Oh, damn. That's my favorite." He drawled out the 'a' in 'favorite', really letting the Alabama out in his voice. Shithead. Goddamn, he hated smug, high-falutin' California boys. Even pretty ones.

"Next time? We can use your vehicle for the getaway car and you can pick the radio station." They pulled off the highway, MJ reaching over him to pull a cell phone from the glove compartment. It didn't take a second to plug that bitch into the cigarette lighter and then MJ started talking.

"Yeah. It's me. No. No, it didn't. Yeah. I want the fucking money wired and I want it now. No. Now. I'm not waiting another two days in the cottage. You have until noon tomorrow."

Nice. Son of a bitch did commanding almost as well as he did. Sonny grinned, waiting for MJ to hang up before grabbing the phone and dialing Woody's number. His own phone was crushed somewhere at the bottom of some hill in Appalachia.

"Woody. That thing in the truck I left in that place? You can go get it, make the delivery. Keep the change." He hung up after leaving the brief message, not wanting to take any chances.

"No, man. I don't mind if you borrow my phone." They slowed down as they got closer to the little beach rentals, moving right through Wilmington proper, MJ squinting. "Fuck. Which road is it...?"

"Where are we going?" He might remember, though it had been years since he'd been there.

"There's a little cabin. Not ugly. Bought it fucking forever ago ... It used to be blue." MJ kept muttering, then those eyes went wide. "Fucking A. Andover Street. Andover to Gregory."

"There. Andover. Left." One thing he could do was read signs. Sonny grunted as he smacked against the passenger door.

"Oops. Sorry. Little buzzed. Property manager broad said she'd stock the fridge, clean sheets. Towels and shit." They made the left on Gregory on two wheels. Christ.

He scanned the street, getting close to the end of town, way out. "There. Is that it?"

"Yep. Porch light and everything. We'll park in the back."

They swung around, the little carport waiting there for them. The 'stang's engine got cut and they sat there for half a minute, breathing.

He just ... man. He had to move. If nothing else, he had to pee. "Man, can you stop bouncing a minute and come help me out?"

"I'm not bouncing. Asshole." MJ bebopped out of the car and came around, pulling the door open and holding out one bruised-up hand. "Come on."

Sonny grabbed MJ's wrist and levered himself out of the low-slung car, panting a little as he teetered. Fuck. Fucking goddamned fuck. He nearly tossed his cookies, ended up standing there, head down, breathing hard.

"Shit. Breathe, man. I can't carry your ass and my equipment." MJ came up under his arm, hand wrapping around his hip. "Tell me when to go, and we'll hobble you in."

He nodded, just resting a minute, jonesing on the feel of that sturdy body against his. Then he took a couple of deep breaths through his nose. "Okay, let's go."

They moved pretty easy; MJ was stronger than he looked, steadying him as they walked through the fine sand. MJ pulled a key out, popped the door without a word, and ushered him in. Man, the place wasn't bad, wasn't bad at all.

In fact it was a fucking hot pad, compared to what it looked like outside. He got a mixed-up impression of chrome mixed with more earthy shit like willow bark and canvas before MJ plopped him down on a bright-red sofa and left him there.

Man, he didn't know how big the fucking trunk was on that Mustang, but five huge-assed bags came in, toted right down the hall without a word. Then Blondie came back with a bag, dropped it at his feet and started locking up. "You want a soda or a beer before I look at your foot?"

"I want a beer. I'd best go with a soda." Damn. They were almost being civil. Must be the drugs.

"Kay." Two Cokes came out, along with a big assed bunch of grapes in a froufy little bowl. Damn. The boy must be fucking the real estate lady. No one got that kind of service.

"Mind?" He grabbed a couple of grapes, knowing that some food would start settling his stomach.

"Go for it." MJ swiped the fucking remote and spread out on the floor, flipping until he hit a news station. Then a roll of heavy-duty Ace wrap came out, along with this long piece of curved metal. "Okay, I'm going to wrap it up. It's going to fucking hurt. Don't scream."

"If I'm a good boy do you kiss it and make it better?" Fuck, it already had him sweating.

"No, if you're a good boy I'll give you a shot of morphine and let you sleep." A quick snip with the scissors and his sock was history.

Oh, that sounded good. Course he might wake up by himself, but oh, well. He'd get all the toys.

"Lemme have it."

"Let me get you bandaged up and then you can flash your ass for the needle." The tape was wrapped around, MJ surprisingly careful, not jostling his foot too much.

It looked pretty gross, but he'd hurt himself enough to know that while it would take a few weeks to be right again, it wasn't going to have to come off. Grinning at the thought, Sonny stared at the ceiling until MJ finished, his eyes only watering up once.

"You got good hands, Precious."

"They seem to work for me. Almost done, man. Just breathe and don't puke on me."

Oh, good time for that warning. All of that sweet, gentle lead up was just a prelude to the excruciating pain that came after, when MJ wrenched his foot into a ninety-degree angle with his leg. It was like the guy in prison who kissed you nice and tender before bending you over in the shower and ramming you without any lube.

He didn't scream, puke, or hit MJ. Hell, Sonny didn't even pass out. It was a near thing though.

"Okay. Okay, Sunshine. Come on. Breathe. I'm drawing a shot for you, yeah? Just fucking breathe." He was rolled to one side, jeans unbuttoned and tugged down.

"You just ... want my ass..." He was panting, but he had to maintain his damned reputation, didn't he? Sonny clutched the couch cushions, feeling the shot start to relax him almost immediately. Morphine worked great on him. Too bad he'd wake up puking his guts out...

"You know it, man. It's a fine specimen. You can ride me tomorrow when you're sober." His jeans were tugged back up, cock tucked right in as he was zipped up.

He just shook his head, a ghost of a grin on his lips. "Fuckhead," he slurred, flopping a little as MJ got him all arranged on the couch.

"Yeah, yeah. Morphine make you sick, man? I got a patch. I don't want fucking puke on my carpet."

"Yeah. I ... makes me. Gross." Whoa. Fuzzy tongue.

"Kay. I'll patch you." Something sticky got pressed to the back of his neck. "Night, Little Mary Sunshine."

"Hold me, Precious." He laughed his way right into sleep, listening to MJ chuckle. The guy wasn't all bad.

For such an asshole.

\* \* \* \*

Dude.

Note to self. Waking up after your reds crash on you? Harsh.

MJ blinked, looking around the room at all the equipment strewn everywhere. Man, he'd been busy.

Real busy.

He logged in, checked the date (man, he'd slept eighteen hours), his bank account (\$15,000 happier), transferred funds around, and gave himself a thirty-day vacation.

Then he pulled up the weather reports for Maui, Aruba and Cozumel. Somewhere nice and sunny.

Oh.

Damn.

Sonny.

MJ got up and wandered out toward the front; hopefully he hadn't killed the man. This town was a bitch to hide a body in.

The guy was asleep on the couch. MJ could tell Sonny wasn't dead, or at least hadn't been a while ago, because he was naked, his jeans, boots and shirt strewn across the floor on the way to and from the bathroom. A little plastic-lined wicker trashcan and an empty Coke can sat next to the couch.

Jesus, the man was built like a brick shit house.

He'd take two, please.

Of course, dude, one fucked things up well enough, didn't he?

MJ spent a minute looking, long enough that his cock started to really take an interest, his fingers sliding over the soft-soft material of his shorts. Okay. Whoa. Just whoa.

Big, hurt, meth-lab running redneck.

Not a possible fuckbuddy.

Of course, the guy looked as banged up as he did, bruises blooming all over Sonny's skin, scratches on his arms and face lurid in the bright daylight.

"You gonna look all day, or are you gonna come help me unkink my back?"

"I was considering looking, then you woke up." He headed over, staring down at Sonny, enjoying being the tall one for once. "You need another shot, Sunshine?"

"No. I've seen enough of my insides, thanks." Sonny grabbed the waistband of MJ's shorts and used them to ... well, to try to pull himself up, it looked like. Too bad the man was so stiff. Yep. Too darned bad.

He sort of just stared as the waistband stre-e-e-e-e-e-e-etched, just showing off all he had. "AnA d what? Now you want to see what I have?"

"Why not? You've been ogling mine. And since I'm stuck here, I might as well." Sonny craned his neck, peering. "Nice."

He arched an eyebrow. Right. Better than nice. Hell, the ink around the base qualified for better than nice all by itself. "I didn't get your ass naked."

"I know. It was a slow, laborious process. Trust me." The man was still staring at him, licking his lips. Sonny had a fucking pretty mouth.

Uh. Okay. Hands off the shorts before he got a stiffy. Seriously. That would suck. And possibly put Sonny's eye out, as close as the man was leaning. "Okay, man. No drooling."

"Not drooling." Those eyes snapped up and met his as Sonny let go of his shorts. "Help me up."

"Say please." Oh. Ow. Elastic. Pubes. Ow.

"Oh, fuck you, man." Grimacing, Sonny pushed himself up, muscles rippling in his belly and chest, heavy cock sliding on his thigh.

"Careful." MJ reached to help, hand on the small of Sonny's back. His other hand caught the center of the man's chest, giving Sonny something to lean against.

"Thanks." Sweat popped up on Sonny's shaved head, going pale under Sonny's tan, but he held it together. Kind of like he had when Sonny had tried to bash his head in. Tit for tat.

"Yeah." This had to be the weirdest fucking situation. Honestly. Up until the whole naked-looking thing? Singapore was still at the top of the list, but now? Definitely number two.

It got even weirder when Sonny sorta ... climbed him, grabbing on to various body parts and shimmying up to a standing position, swaying against him. "Spinny."

"Breathe, and don't tear any important body parts off. I need them."

"Oh, you'll definitely need them, Precious. I have plans for them." Oh, that son of a bitch, hardly able to stand without him and making cracks like that...

"Don't make me beat your tight little ass, man. You're not in any shape to go head-to-head with me right now." He kept holding on, reminding himself that his face was fucking black and blue and his throat looked like he was a leper.

"You got a point." That voice sounded blown, rough and gravelly. Must have had a bad night. "You help me to the

bathroom so I don't have to crawl again? I'll even shut up about it for five whole minutes."

"You got a deal." They shuffle-slid to the little bathroom, MJ helping Sonny keep the weight off that foot. "You good, man? I'll go make coffee. Food. Something."

"I can take it from here." A deep bass rumble came from somewhere at belly level. "Food good."

"Yes, cave-redneck. Food good." He amused the fuck out of himself, really he did. "Maybe there's eggs."

"Maybe there's sausage." O ye hungry but hopeful. He left Sonny standing in the bathroom, batting stupidly long eyelashes at him.

MJ stopped in the bedroom and got jeans and a T-shirt on before he got to the kitchen. Burning dangly bits was never good, no matter what the freaks in the tattoo parlors said. He got coffee started and found sausage patties and biscuits in the freezer, eggs in the fridge.

Score.

He plopped the sausage and the biscuits in the microwave and grabbed a skillet to stir eggs in. See him. See him be domestic.

"God, that smells good." Hobbling out, Sonny looked down at his jeans, wrinkling his nose. "You got some sweats or something?"

"They'll be highwaters, but yeah. Gimme a second." He stirred the eggs a little and then went to find those old, thin sweats. They were long on him and would be tight on the man's ass. "So what's your plan, Sunshine? Where do you go from here?"

Taking the pants, Sonny shrugged, sitting on one of the little cane stools to put them on. "Wherever, I guess. Someplace where I can set up again."

"Good for you. World can never have enough of whatever illegal shit you're making." He rescued the eggs, plopped them down on two plates with the not-too-hard biscuits and sausage. He was going away, no question. Somewhere tropical.

"It wasn't a meth lab, you know. Kinda out of the way of the customers way out there, don'tcha think?" Leaning, Sonny snagged a plate, pulling it over and taking the cup of coffee he offered as well.

"How the hell would I know? That's outside my realm of expertise." Mmm. Cream. Sugar. Coffee. Good. Oh, he might live.

"Obviously. Lemme tell you, buddy. C-4 is a hell of a lot more dangerous than white lightning." The man could shovel down the food, no doubt about it.

"White lightning?" Some heroin thing or ... Oh. Oh, wait. That was like, booze. "That's still illegal?"

"Hell, yes. The kind I make is, anyway. Pure grain, baby, and enough to give you hallucinations." He got a wide, feral grin. "Not to mention the whole not-taxed thing."

"And people like it?" Okay. So the logic there escaped him. Hallucinations tended to suck—even those fucking peyote ones.

"Hey, I don't judge them. I just sell it to them. Or rather, to the guys who sell it to them. I'm in production and ... goddamn it! My car."

"What car?" He hadn't seen any car around that shitty cabin. Making moonshine must not pay very well.

"Fuck. My car. The one I use for runs that need interference. Woody drives the truck, I drive the car. It's in Asheville. Fuck-a-duck." Sonny smacked the counter for emphasis.

Okay. Well, he felt enlightened now. Instead of asking again, he ate a bite of sausage, a bite of egg.

"It's got a hell of a lot less play in the back end than your 'stang, a lot more stable on the road. And she's fast. A '62 Starfire. I did the engine mods myself." Grinning, Sonny shoveled in the last of his egg and then poked his fork at MJ. "You'll have to drive me back up to get it."

"I will? Dude, I'm going to the beach. I'm on vacation. Getting on a boat and getting the hell out of town." He'd have to drive. Right. Asshole.

"Sounds good. I like the beach well enough."

"What?" Had he missed something?

"I'll just get Woody to put the old girl in storage. That way we don't have to backtrack. How do you feel about Hawaii?"

While he sat there, mouth hanging open, his food steadily disappeared into Sonny's. Mouth, that was.

"Hawaii's beautiful. It's the drive to San Francisco to get a ship that's a bitch." What the *hell*...

"A ship." That finally got him a look, Sonny's brows drawing together. "What the fuck? Why not a plane?"

"I don't do planes." He didn't do enclosed places. Period. No way. No how.

"Oh-oh. That little thing about. Yeah. But you know, you can look out the window." The very last piece of biscuit went whoosh.

"I'm aware they have windows." Not that it mattered. Man, he needed to pack the 'stang.

"So what's the big deal, Precious? Or, you know, you have enough drugs for me to knock you out for at least twelve hours."

Where exactly did he lose control of this conversation? MJ got up, poured himself another cup of coffee. "It's not a big deal. I don't fly. Simple as that. My jobs are spaced to accommodate."

"Nice work if you can get it." Sonny winked, managing to look devilish as hell with the bruises and scrapes. "You want some more? I think I can stand on one leg and cook this round."

"One-legged cooking? That's either a sport or a terrible idea looking for a redneck."

"What's being a redneck got to do with it? Look, you wanna take a shower? I'll make the second course." Those eyes were wide and butter wouldn't melt in that mouth. "Oh, hey, you got a passport?"

"Yes..." Of course he had a passport. Hell, he had five of them, just in case.

"With you?" Sonny asked, popping up off the stool and doing a decent job of one legging it around the tiny counter to the kitchen.

He found himself nodding before he stopped short. "Like that's anything to you. You couldn't pass as me."

Racing the Moon  
*by BA Tortuga*

Hell, a small-time moonshiner would be a fool to try to pass as him.

"Precious, I may make a pass *at* you, but I won't try to pass for you." That drawl got deeper, just plain infuriating.

"I can't begin to tell you how comforting that is." He stood, poured another cup. That shower sounded better and better.

Shower. Jack off. Get his head on straight. Pack the car.

"I know it. Amazing what you'll do when you think someone is out to get you." Sonny gave him a wink as he limped away, starting to whistle a jaunty little tune.

Bastard.

MJ grabbed himself a couple of towels and his ditty bag. Water.

Hot water.

Then he'd get himself out of this current mess and onto a nice, sandy beach.

## Chapter Four

Sonny hummed to himself as he cooked up some sort of meat that the guy at the market had assured him was pork. He wasn't so sure, but he hadn't argued. As soon as he got it browned and got those weird banana things and the sauce in it, he'd go check on MJ.

Really, he was getting a little worried about the guy. Maybe the last time he'd given MJ a shot he'd used too much.

Could that lead to brain damage? Fuck knew if the guy could stand to lose anymore.

There. Spices. Water. That milk-like substance. It kinda looked like gravy. Sonny liked gravy way better than "sauce". Unless it was booze.

Booze. He should check in with Woody, too. He'd called his buddy before he'd stuffed MJ on a first class flight to Jamaica, claiming fear of flying and an overdue vacation when the flight attendant had asked. Woody had about shit a brick when Sonny had told him what he was doing.

But Woody'd said he would pick up the car and make sure it got stabled. And that he'd take care of finding a new location for their little business, so it was all good.

Scratching his ass, Sonny wandered back into the bedroom and looked down at MJ, who was all mussed, his mouth half open. The guy was moaning a little, making these weird assed noises that sounded kinda like pain, kinda not. Was kinda a pretty sight, though. The man was tanned from here to there, covered in big black tattoos in strategic places. Not bad. Not bad at all.

He grinned and sat on the edge of the bed so he could prop his sore ankle up. MJ'd done a pretty good job with it, according to the local witch-doctor. It was healing. Then he reached out and picked a random spot, poking MJ's hip.

MJ rumbled, brushed his hand away, turned over, giving him a nice look at that butt.

Pretty. Firm. Sonny grinned and poked that.

Hard.

"Goddamn it. Lemme *alone*!" MJ's voice wasn't doing a damn bit better after the last shot. Sounded sorta ... dry. Well, he knew he'd been dry as a bone when he'd woke up from that shot MJ had given him that first night in Wilmington. Maybe some water would help.

"Can't," Sonny said, getting up by means of putting a hand square on that sweet ass and pushing up. "Want some water?"

"Yeah..." MJ's eyes fluttered open, forehead creasing. "Shit, I got a headache."

"I can get you some..." Shit. Was he supposed to give someone who'd been drugged repeatedly aspirin? "Lemme get the water."

He hobbled out and got a glass of water and ice, stirring his ... soup? Stew? Gravy? It smelled good, just like the old lady with the weird bananas had promised. He took the glass on back, peering into the room carefully before going in. MJ had managed to sit up, head in his hands, swaying a little, breathing deep and slow.

"Hey." Man, he hoped he hadn't permanently damaged the guy. He'd just been having a little fun. "Here, drink up."

"Thanks." MJ was a little shaky, water splashing on his fingers some. "Man ... I must've slept hard, sorry."

"Yep. Like a log. You were out, man." He couldn't resist copping a feel, well, okay, more just touching that sturdy back as it flexed. Such smooth, warm skin.

"I guess. Weird fucking dreams." MJ stretched up, wincing as his arms raised. "Stiff, too. I probably just need a hot shower. You decided where you're going, dude?"

"Uh. Yeah." He grinned a little, since MJ wasn't looking. "I was thinking Jamaica. Take that vacation you mentioned."

"Good for you." The glass got drained, MJ's belly rumbling loud enough to hear. "Well, I'm willing to drop you off somewhere."

"Oh, hey, that's almost as nice as I decided to be. I have soup ... stew ... somethin' on the stove. Want some?" Gravy. Whatever.

"Yeah, I guess the eggs are cold." MJ sighed, stood ... sorta. For a second. Maybe three seconds. Then he teetered and plopped right back on the bed. "Dude."

"You okay?" Sonny watched closely. Impaired motor functions were a bad sign, right? Maybe he should get the local doctor again. He'd only cost twenty dollars American.

"Yeah. Just feeling a little dizzy. Maybe I'm coming down with..." MJ looked around the room, starting to frown.

Sonny gave him a winning smile. "Coming down with what? You're probably just suffering delayed jet lag..."

"Considering that I don't do planes, that's unlikely." The room got another look, that frown getting deeper.

"Well." He paused, pondered the distance to the door, factoring in MJ's dizziness. "You did this time."

"What?" Oh, man. Those eyes were real awake.

Real, real awake.

He backed up a step. That damned ankle had him off balance, so he needed every advantage he could get. "Well, you know how I said I thought Jamaica was a good idea? How do you feel about banana stuff with gravy?"

Damn, the man could look almost dangerous.

Impressive.

"What. Did. You. Do?" MJ stood, one hand on the bedpost, muscles tensing up.

Sonny drew up a little, knowing he could do puffy and large better than this little shit. "I took you on vacation with me."

"What?" MJ took a step toward him, a dark flush crawling up that ripped belly.

That almost distracted him. Because, damn. Sonny braced himself, good foot taking all of his weight. "You're with me. In Jamaica. It's a miracle."

"Bullshit." MJ shook his head, eyes rolling a bit, looking more than a little wild.

He'd seen that look on a fractious pony. Sonny nodded, holding up both hands, speaking calm and clear. "Look, this is the deal. I drugged the fuck out of you, bought you a plane ticket, dragged you on the plane. With a goodly bit of fine playacting and a doctor's note about sedatives, I might add. And now you're here. And I got bananas."

MJ's head tilted, sort of like a pit bull puppy looking toward a new noise. "Bananas."

"Well, they're not really bananas. They're green." Lord, the man just looked flummoxed. Sonny shrugged. "You want some more water? Some aspirin?"

MJ looked down at the glass in his hand, then back up, fingers clenching. "No. No, I don't think so."

It was pretty fascinating, how fast that little motherfucker could move.

How hard he could hit.

They hit the floor so hard the whole little bungalow shook, and Sonny's breath went out with a whoosh as he tried to pry MJ off. Without hurting him. Go figure.

"What the fuck did you do, you crazy bastard? Where the *fuck* are we?" MJ had hold of his shoulders, shaking him like a limp rag, his head glancing off the wood floor every now and again.

Finally he gave up, heaving up with his one good leg and his hips, rolling MJ off to one side. Little fucker was just damned surprising with the muscles. "I told you. I brought you with me on vacation. What the fuck is your problem? You didn't even have to buy a ticket."

He got a look, completely fucking disbelieving. "You are a fucking lunatic, aren't you?"

"No. Well, at least I don't think so. Maybe I am, since I thought it was a good idea to bring you to the beach. Sun, sand. And that was before I had even seen your ass. Which is very nice, by the way." He really liked it. Kind of a bubble butt, but with those hard muscle dimples on the sides.

MJ stared at him, that flush spreading higher and higher until he thought maybe the top of MJ's head would just come off. Then MJ stood up, sorta vibrating a little, mouth opening and closing.

Sonny rolled out of harm's way before trying to struggle up himself, his hands scrabbling at the doorframe. "Are you gonna stroke out? Because we're out of shots."

"No. I am going to kill you, whether or not you're telling the truth or fucking with me."

He snorted. "You're welcome to try, you ungrateful little prick." He'd bought goddamned *bananas*.

Man, he could hear MJ's teeth grind. Like for real.

At least he could before MJ stepped up and landed a solid fucking punch to the side of his jaw.

He staggered, tried to right himself, and went ass over teakettle, yelping as he thudded to the floor. The doorway fouled him up, too, and all he could do was pull his arms and legs in around his tender parts as MJ closed in, waiting for his chance to move.

"You *fucker*! Do you think that I'm a fucking *fool*? Out of morphine?" A sharp kick got his ass; the growled questions getting louder, getting sorta hysterical. "How long have I been out? What the *fuck* did you do to me?"

"I fucking told you!" Jesus, a man could only take so much. Sonny caught the next kick square on the shoulder as he wiggled around, launching himself at MJ's legs. He caught those tanned knees and let all of his weight tumble forward against them.

MJ went down like a lead balloon, hitting the floor with one hell of a thud, knees first, then elbows.

Sonny crawled up MJ's body, his damned ankle just throbbing like there was no tomorrow. "You've been out just over two days." He hadn't planned for the guy to be out that long. Hell, he hadn't given him that big a dose the second time, but it took days for some people to recover from the good shit.

"Two days." Those lean muscles shuddered against him, just shaking. "Why?"

"Because you're wound too fucking tight, man. You needed a vacation." Right. That was all it was. Sure. Sonny really didn't get why he'd done it himself, except it seemed like a really fucking good idea at the time, and funny as hell.

"A vacation." MJ's eyes closed. "You put me on a plane. Unconscious."

"Wasn't easy, either. They had to use a special wheelchair. Could be worse. I could have gotten you a new tattoo. Something in color."

Damn. Somehow in his head this had gone easier.

"Where's my 'stang, my stuff?"

"Your car is in storage with mine. So is most of your gear. I brought your laptop and shit, just in case you needed it." See? He'd been good. He'd planned.

He thought.

"Very thoughtful." The words were growled out. "I don't suppose you managed to get my pistol here with me?"

"No. But they're..." Well, it probably wasn't wise to tell a man who was out to kill you that you could get one for about

fifty bucks about three blocks away. Sonny sighed, gingerly rolled off MJ's legs. "You're just grumpy as all fuck. I used that patch on you. You shouldn't be feeling so rotten."

"Yeah, well. I haven't been kidnapped by you in hours. I don't know quite what the fuck to do with myself."

"Kidnapped is such a strong word." Scooting, Sonny moved until he was leaning against the bed, dropping his head back and closing his eyes. Fuck, his ankle hurt. He shoulda bought rum, too. He should go stir the gravy. Maybe he ought to get him a life, too. "It seemed like a good idea at the time."

"You took a perfect stranger, who you'd held up at gunpoint, who helped you blow up your meth lab cabin, and who was in a gun fight with three of your closest friends. You drugged me. Moved me out of the country. Stripped me. And this sounded logical to you?"

"Sure. And it wasn't a fucking meth lab." Goddamn. And he'd been about to share his supper with this fucker? "And trust me, those so-called friends were actually looking for you."

"Just so long as we're on the same page. I'd hate to be confused." MJ stood up, headed for the door.

Sonny's eyes popped open. "Where are you off to?"

"I need a shower. I stink." MJ looked back at him once. "I wouldn't come after me with another syringe, if I were you."

"I wouldn't dream of it." They were out anyway. Man, if they weren't, he'd drug the man to the gills and send him back home. What the fuck had he been thinking? Or thinking with?

Racing the Moon  
by BA Tortuga

That tight little ass swayed, heading out as MJ looked for the bathroom.

Oh.

Yeah.

Right.

\* \* \* \*

Okay.

Okay.

MJ looked out the little window by the bathtub, staring at the very-much-not-North Carolina people wandering down a very-much-not-North Carolina street.

Goddamn.

How did he...

On a plane...

Jamaica.

*Jamaica.*

He shook his head, standing under the water and feeling vaguely like he'd been...

Well.

Drugged.

Drugged and kidnapped by a weirdo redneck bastard and taken—taken *on a plane*—to Jamaica.

He could remember eating eggs. He could remember taking a shower, sort of. Then nothing until this ... afternoon? Evening? Until about an hour ago.

Christ.

Fuck.

He couldn't stay in here forever, could he? MJ's stomach made a noise like a starving tiger and he sighed. God knew when he'd eaten last.

Probably those fucking eggs.

Bastard.

"Hey, don't drown yourself or nothin'." That voice. He would hear that voice in his dreams for years after he killed that man, he'd bet on it.

He found himself growling just as loud as his stomach. Fuckwad. "God fucking knows when I had a shower last."

"I would have given you a sponge bath, but I thought you might object later. I only took your clothes off because you were lathered like a horse, sweating up a storm. You want supper?"

He opened his mouth to say no, but then his stomach clenched, trying to climb up out of his body to get some food. "Is it drugged?"

"No. I told you we were out. Sheesh." Loud, offended footsteps told him he was alone again.

Out. God. He stepped out of the shower, giving himself a once-over. Scruffy. Wet. A touch panicky-idiot. Not a great look. He needed some pants and his cell phone.

MJ wrapped a towel around his waist and went in search of his suitcase, opening doors as he went.

He couldn't find the damned thing anywhere. No suitcase, backpack, laptop case. Not even his wallet.

Fuck.

Fuckfuckfuck.

And also fuck.

He followed his nose to the kitchen. "Where's my stuff?"

"Your cup is there, and your plate is here. I'm fixin' it. Jeez." Sonny gave him the most patently false innocent look he'd ever seen.

"My clothes? My phone?" He could probably beat the man to death with the spatula...

"They're safe." He got a damned angelic grin, those dark eyes just dancing. "You want some of the greens on top?"

"It depends. Are they good?" Christ, but his head hurt. "Safe where?"

"They are. Kinda tangy but not bitter." The full plate of ... whatever it was got shoved right at him. It did smell good.

"And safe. Nearby. I just didn't want you to bolt."

"I..." He took the plate, blinking a bit. Okay. Okay, surely if he ate, his head would clear up and he could think, right?

Right?

Right.

"Come on." Sonny led the way to the little living room, plopping down on the floor in front of a rattan coffee table, plate and cup settled easily. "You'll be hungry as hell, I bet."

"Yeah." Hungry. Confused. Deeply fucked-up. There were lots of things he was.

They ate in relative silence, broken only by the clink of silverware and Sonny's occasional mumbled, 'Hey, not bad banana things'.

He ate like he was starving, every so often looking at Sonny's feet. So, the boots would be a little big, but he could manage, if he had to. The jeans would be harder.

They'd definitely foul him up if he had to run. But he could roll them ... of course, Sonny was naked, too. And he hadn't seen anyone else's suitcases either.

"So where are we? Exactly?" He'd start with the little parts and work his way up.

"Montego Bay. Always wanted to see it. I like the song." Sonny grinned a little, the look far more genuine than he'd gotten all day. "It's pretty. You'll have to see."

Well, he'd definitely be here a bit so he could plan his next move. "Now that I'm conscious and mobile, hmm?"

"Yeah. You're heavier'n you look, buddy. It was hell getting you here."

"You could have ... uh ... not."

That son of a bitch batted those too-long eyelashes at him. "I wanted to share with you. We've had so many *experiences* already."

"You know, the only reason I haven't beaten you to death is because I don't know where my pants are. That could change." Right now, in fact.

Sonny blinked at him. "You think? After I made you supper? That would be downright rude."

Rude.

"I would hate to seem rude." MJ bet, if thrown hard enough, the dinner plate could make a dent in Sonny's head. "Where are my pants again?"

"Now, don't get sore. I bet if we went for a swim and maybe fucked good and hard you'd be in a much better mood in no time." Bland as butter, that look, like every word was perfectly reasonable.

"As nice and tight as your ass looks, I'm not sure I'm up to nailing you right this second." He was not having this conversation.

Not.

"Oh, Precious, we had this discussion before. I don't bottom." He got a concerned look as Sonny cleaned his plate. "Did you get some brain damage? I was afraid you might. I don't know if I want you all broken."

Okay.

Okay.

"I want my clothes."

He was done playing. He needed his clothes, his wallet, and his laptop. Access to his money. Maybe a massage.

Head tilting, Sonny looked him over, nodding. "Okay. You go get the dishes. I'll get your shit."

Just like that. Sonny got up, headed off to the backroom, leaving him staring at long, long legs and a tight, high ass.

Thank God or whatever it was that got through to the crazy bastard. He put the dishes in the sink, eyes drawn to the water, the sand. Fuck, he did love the beach. Maybe they'd have a job for him here. If not, maybe he'd just stay anyway for a few months.

"Here you go." He heard his bag thump down on the floor and went back out. Sure enough, there was his suitcase, his backpack and his laptop bag.

"Fucking A." He pulled on a pair of pants and some sandals, digging until he found a muscle shirt. Excellent. He swung the backpack on and grabbed the other two bags,

mourning the fact that his knife and his piece would have been left behind.

Still, he had a little over \$600,000 U.S. sitting happy in the bank. He could afford more.

Maybe he'd just hire someone to shoot Sunshine.

Who just sat on the couch, smiling this weird little smile, arms crossed, legs sprawled a little. Graphically.

Not that he was looking.

Well, okay, he was looking.

It was worth looking at.

"Have a good one, man. Thanks for the ride." See him. See him not kill anybody.

Today.

"No problem. Too bad you can't stay for dessert. I'll leave the door unlocked, though." Sonny got up, scratched a little.

"Gonna go take a nap."

"Cool."

Dude. The man was insane. Really. Deeply. Terrifically. In that Singapore stalker prostitute sort of way.

MJ headed out toward the beach, eager to feel the sand between his toes and to find a spot where his cell got reception.

## Chapter Five

Sonny snuffled a little, rolling over on his side, trying to decide if he wanted to wake up, or if he just wanted to stagger out onto the porch and collapse in the hammock and sleep some more, this time in the sun. He didn't really want to get up. Maybe he'd just roll over and get the other side of his body cooled off.

He cracked one eye open and looked at his watch, which sat on the nightstand. Wow, a whole hour and a half and MJ hadn't come back and tried to bash his head in.

Moaning, Sonny rolled over on his back and gave his cock a few quick yanks. Precious was pretty when he was angry, that was for sure.

"You wouldn't want to pull it off, your BVDs wouldn't fit." Oh, there was some rage in that voice. He cracked an eye, peeking. Hadn't found a pistol yet.

Maybe he'd decided not to trade the laptop for it. It was the only thing Sonny had left in all that luggage. Driver's license, passports, cash and credit cards, yeah, Sonny had kept all those.

"Was just thinking of you, Precious."

"Were you? Funny how that works." God, that son of a bitch had pretty eyes, all blue and fiery and shit.

Sonny grinned, gave another couple of tugs, just 'cause it felt good. "Uh-huh. I was. Enjoy your tour of the bay?"

"For about twenty minutes, yes." One blond eyebrow rose up and up and up. "You seem to have misplaced some of my stuff."

"Have I?" Oh, he was enjoying MJ now that the drug haze had worn off. Much more danger man. Much more fun to play with. "Like what?"

"My phone. Wallet. Passports. Cash. Cards. ID. Those little things." MJ had a length of rope in his hands. Could be to tie him up, could be to beat the shit out of him. Could be because MJ liked the feel of it in his hands.

Fully awake now, Sonny tensed his muscles, casual-like, one at a time, getting ready for whatever MJ might have in mind. "Well, I didn't want you doing something rash."

"Rash? Now I'm not sure where you'd get the idea that I was rash." MJ shifted a little, rope twisting out in his hands, looking like it might just chafe. "In fact, if you'll just point me to the rest of my stuff, I think you'll find me almost reasonable."

"I'm not sure I want to do that." Too fucking fun. "You fail to understand a fundamental truth, Precious."

There went the other eyebrow, meeting its brother. "And what might that be?"

He rolled off the bed, trying to pretend his ankle wasn't starting to feel like little midgets were hammering at it with red-hot pokers. "I do everything the hard way."

MJ came after him, moving smooth and easy. It was like watching a big cat hunt, complete with weird-assed little growl.

Sonny stood his ground. Hadn't he proven he could to this little shit yet? He'd be goddamned if he'd back down. Luckily, his stiffy had. Backed down, that was.

"I've decided you're either stoned or insane. Makes it a shame to have to kick your ass, really."

"You just try it, Precious." Sonny sighed, his hands clenching and unclenching, ready for an attack. Man, you go someplace to relax, he thought, bring the corpse-like body of the guy you bonded with over an exploding cabin and damned fine chase scene, and all you got was shit in return.

"Why did you decide to bring me here again? You were stirring the eggs, listening to the water run, and thought, oh, man. Morphine." That little line between MJ's eyebrows was just something. Cute as fuck.

"Actually, I decided while you were talking about not flying. I mean, driving to the west coast and catching a boat to Maui just seemed wasteful. And since I needed to lay low a while it seemed like I could kill two birds with one stone..."

Damn it, it did make sense.

It did.

"And it never occurred to you to ask me? You don't have many privacy issues, do you?"

"With a guy who blows shit up for a living? No." This was getting old, running in circles. Fun as it was to argue his point, he was naked while MJ was clothed and his ankle *hurt*. "Look, if you go out where the back room meets the porch, there's a loose floorboard. Your shit's in there. Knock yourself out."

"I never said I blew anything up." MJ headed for the door, rope dangling.

"You didn't have to. How many times do I have to tell you, I saw all your shit in your bag." He followed, frowning as his

ankle tried to give out. He had to make sure MJ didn't return the favor, take his clothes and all.

"Didn't you go get your fucking ankle looked at? How're you supposed to run a meth lab all gimpy?"

He gritted his teeth. "It was fucking fine until you tackled me and knocked it out of whack. And I do not run a *meth lab*.

"It's the chance you take, kidnapping dangerous men. And it looked like a meth lab."

MJ looked fucking tickled. *Tickled*.

Asshole. Well, Sonny supposed sourly, the man did have a little right to laugh, after all he'd been through. Even if it was for his own good. "Bullshit. It looked like a storage facility for a still."

"I'm still not completely sure that's illegal, man. I mean, that's a lot of trouble for *booze*."

"Oh, for..." He sat, kinda abruptly, on the little couch against the back wall. Man. No more walking for like, a year.

Those blue eyes looked back at him, looked him over. "You okay? You want some pants?"

That was precisely why he'd brought the asshole with him on vacation. That fucking concern that MJ just couldn't stop himself from showing. Sonny nodded.

"Yeah," he said. "In the blue bag."

MJ nodded, dug out everything from the hidey-hole and found him a pair of soft-soft shorts, actually fucking helped him get them on. "Did you use all the pain pills, too?"

"No." He grinned wryly. "Didn't want both of us down, just in case..." Well, just in case someone was still looking for

either of them. Lord knew he had his share of folks who would want his head. He'd bet MJ did, too.

"You think it's broken?" MJ started digging, pulling out a fat white pill. "If it is, you'll have to go to a real doctor."

"The guy this morning said no, but he didn't exactly have an X-ray machine, or a degree on the wall." Still, he'd been pretty thorough. "Of course, that was before our friendly little good day earlier."

"Don't push, asshole. You deserved it." MJ grabbed his foot, moving it carefully. It hurt, but it wasn't deadly.

"I'm not." He really, really wasn't. Not with the guy holding his foot. Sonny put his head back, closed his eyes. What a fucking roller-coaster week. Maybe he needed Prozac. His eyes popped open. "You're not gonna drug me and leave me here."

"I'm not?" MJ looked just about surprised. "I should."

"No, you shouldn't. I took you with me, at least. Hell, I could have bolted out of that cabin and left you there to deal with those logger boys." Damn it. He'd done his good deeds. He had.

MJ nodded, looking at him dead-on. That hand was rubbing MJ's head and neck. Man must have a hellacious headache. "Yeah. Okay. I think. Damn. Take your pill and I'll wrap you up."

"You ought to take something for your head." Okay, when did they go all June Cleaver? But he dutifully took his pill, deciding he'd trust the confusion factor to keep MJ from running off while he slept. Or maybe the concern factor.

MJ shrugged him off, got him up and moving to the bedroom, where they ended up sitting hard. MJ looked a little like he'd been whacked in the back of the head with a hammer.

Sonny sorta ... flopped back on the bed, groaning. He held out his hand. "Come on, Precious. Get some sleep. I promise I won't molest you. Or even puke on you. I'm too fucking tired and hurtin'."

"Won't matter if I beat you now or later." MJ slid in beside him, groaning low. "Good mattress."

"Yeah. Yeah." He was already drifting, eyes heavy, as he rolled and snuggled right up to MJ's side, humming happily at the scent of sun and sand and man. "We can rest up, fight on it later."

"Mmmhmm. Walked for fucking ever. Tired." MJ stretched, sighed soft. "Shouldn't be, much as you drugged my ass."

"It wears you out..." The pill was kicking in, making him swirly. He put one hand low on MJ's belly, letting it anchor him. "You have to make breakfast, since I made supper."

"Shut up, Sunshine." MJ pinched him once, right on the hip. "There's bananas in there. I saw them."

"Yeah. And those are *real* bananas."

At least that's what the little guy at the market had said. Sonny grinned a little as he got settled and let it all go.

See?

Vacation was already making MJ easier to deal with. Just think what a week at the beach might do.

## Chapter Six

Mmm.

Man, he loved the smell of sea and salt and sand and shit. MJ hummed, rubbing nice and easy, images of pretty lips, nice strong hands, and tight asses passing right through his head.

Skin was nice, too.

And eyes. He liked eyes. Of course, the thought of fucking somebody without eyes was gross beyond all reason.

Blind, yes. Eyeless, no.

He groaned, shook his head a little. Come on, dude. Masturbation, not nightmares. Sexy boys with hungry little mouths and pretty asses and completely and utterly intact eyes.

Something hard and warm shifted against him, and yeah, that was more like it. The ass he needed to think about felt just like that. Hot, firm, rubbing back against him.

There. Right like that. Uhn. He pushed a little harder, liking how the tip of his prick rubbed that soft, hot skin. A little moan answered him, his fantasy man just loving it, slipping and sliding against him, thighs opening so he could press between.

Oh, yeah. That was ... Uh-huh. He cuddled right in, entire body into it, rocking and shifting and sliding, hands wrapped around sweet fucking hips.

"Mmm." That was a growl, not a moan or a groan, but a happy one. His cock rubbed against a heavy pair of balls, short hairs sliding against him.

"Yeah. Fucking hot..." The sound of his own voice was enough to startle him, his eyes flying open as the whole 'not a dream, moron' thing hit him. "Shit. Shit."

"Hmm?" Someone's hand landed on his hip when he would've pulled away. Big, square, reaching back ... it was Sonny's hand.

"I was sleeping." His hips, apparently, were still dreaming because they were moving like everything was cool.

"Uh-huh. So was I." That morning voice was rough as sandpaper. Wiggling, Sonny rolled on his back, sorta breaking the contact, sorta making a new one. A very intimate new one as that big hand settled around the base of MJ's cock.

"Morning."

"Uh-huh." This was a really, really bad idea. Really. Honestly.

Oh, fuck him, it felt good.

"You're awake." Sonny punctuated that by dragging his thumb up the underside of MJ's cock. "Right?"

His spine arched, drawn by that touch. "Uh-huh. Awake. You?"

Terrible idea.

"Hoo, yeah. Definitely, now." Thumb and fingers met again, Sonny giving him a few good tugs, some damned fine friction.

"Cool." His hand found Sonny's balls, tugging and rolling a little.

Sonny grunted, spreading for him like a two-dollar whore, pushing right up into his touch. All the while Sonny's hand

never slowed down, just got him going in a nice rhythm, up and down.

This was stupid. Really stupid.

The man was insane.

A kidnapper.

"Oh, fuck. Right there."

Okay, he could maybe worry about it in a few minutes.

"Yeah? There?" Pressing just under the head of his cock, Sonny hummed, humping MJ's hand in return. "Yeah, yeah."

MJ nodded, both of them working it. Hell, it had been fucking *days*. Weeks. Too fucking long. "Shit. Don't stop."

"Not gonna. Not..." Sonny didn't stop. Nope. He rolled closer, fucking that hand like there was no tomorrow, arm really swinging as Sonny's hand worked him. Fuck, it was hot.

They panted and grunted, getting all slick and sweaty as they pushed and pulled. MJ's eyes were rolling, balls tight and drawn up, his entire body working for it. Sonny worked just as hard, that wide chest heaving as the man panted for breath, that thick cock throbbing in his hand. Sonny gave it up first, coming hard, spunk filling MJ's hand as Sonny squeezed down on his prick, pulling, demanding.

He arched, hips jerking gracelessly as his whole fucking universe became his cock, his balls, and his orgasm.

They just laid there for a bit, until their breathing went back to normal. Then Sonny let go of him, fingers sliding away, surprisingly gentle. "Hey."

"Hey." MJ blinked, blinked again. "Morning."

He'd lost his mind.

Sonny blinked back, dark eyes sort of stunned. The man had the heaviest morning whiskers MJ had ever seen. "Want breakfast?"

"Yeah." He was starving. Starving. Pancakes. Sausage. Bacon.

Oh, man. Bacon.

His stomach started trying to claw its way out again. Stupid thing.

"Growly." Sonny's eyes started to twinkle. "All we have is bananas. If you promise to stay put I'll run down to the corner store place and get us some shit."

He snorted. "You won't run anywhere on that ankle. Didn't you get a car to use?"

"Yeah, but you try to drive on these streets. I just used it to get us here from the airport, which was ... well. So, does that mean you're buying?"

"Yeah. You lost all that cash from the exploding meth lab, after all." He fought the chuckle. He was easily fucking amused.

"If I didn't feel so fucking good I would thump the hell out of you." Sonny stretched, moaned as something popped audibly. "Oh, yeah."

"It's a stone-cold bitch, getting old." He needed a swim, maybe. Nice dip in the water, get his brain back online.

"You think? I'll let you know when I catch up to you there, Precious." The guy just never let up.

MJ watched Sonny roll to the edge of the bed and test his ankle, a line appearing on either side of Sonny's mouth.

"Be easy on it for fuck's sake. You're not eighteen." He shook his head, slid over. "I'm going to go for a swim. You want the john or the couch?"

He got a laugh, half a bark, really. "The john. There's some cash in the same bag my clothes were in. Really, go swim and then get us some grub?"

"Yeah. I'll figure it out. Where's the car keys?" He helped Sonny move, that ankle less swollen than yesterday, for sure. Christ. He was insane. Sonny was infectious. Pretty soon he was going to start watching NASCAR and spitting.

He got a look, then a shrug. "In the very front pocket of the black tool case. Your knife is in there, too."

"Yeah? You got it on the plane?" He grinned. Man, he loved that blade. "Cool. I'll go find groceries."

Lots of groceries.

He was fucking starving.

"I did. I'm good that way." Sonny grinned back, bouncing a little. "If you can find Twinkies get me some, will you? I'm craving."

"Can you buy Twinkies here?" Oh, dude. Ho-Hos. Chocolate. Cream filling. Chocolate. Hell, yeah.

"Well, there ought to be a small section of shit like that. There always is in Mexico. London, too." Grinning, Sonny hopped the rest of the way to the john with him. "Don't be long. I might get stuck."

MJ chuckled. "Don't fall, Sunshine. I'm out of morphine."

He just shook his head at himself. The logical move was to get the car and get the hell out. He couldn't just leave the guy hurting, though. Asshole.

"I'll be okay. You just bring me something sweet for breakfast and I'll make some coffee that will eat your spoon."

The bathroom door shut in his face, Sonny's chuckle coming through to him.

Because that always sounded so appetizing. Here. Drink something caustic. Yummy.

MJ rolled his eyes and went to get the car keys.

Insane. Utterly insane.

Really.

\* \* \* \*

Sonny clumped around, trying to get a few things done, like putting a plastic baggy on his ankle so he could bathe. He looked for the rest of the pots and pans in their little, rented kitchenette. Then he ended up out on the porch, in the hammock, foot up, giving him some relief from the damned throbbing. Maybe he could just chop it off.

Then MJ would *really* think he was nuts.

Scratching said nuts was getting to be a habit. Man, he should go on vacation more often.

"Dude, you got jock itch too? You're falling apart." MJ came sashaying around the corner, chocolate on his lips, hands full of bags and shit.

"Nope. Just a simple urge to do what feels good. And since I can't cut my foot off at the ankle, I'm gonna scratch." Sonny sat up, holding on as the hammock swung wildly. "What'd you bring me?"

"I found Twinkies. Got some meat and a bunch of fruit. Chocolate. Nuts. Bread. Some weird-assed nut butter that

didn't smell bad. Melons. Coffee. Some banana chips and these gizzada things."

Sonny chuckled. Nut butter. Maybe he would spread it on and have MJ lick it off. Now there was a nice thought. "You got Twinkies."

"Yeah. They had some." The box was tossed over, MJ's aim dead-on. "I don't know if they're fresh, but they're Twinkies."

"Twinkies don't have to be fresh..." He stared suspiciously at MJ's chocolate covered mouth. "What did you have?"

"Huh?" Man, butter wouldn't melt in that boy's mouth. Something did though.

"Don't be holding out on me, Precious. What did you eat that you're not sharing?" Chocolate. Mmm. Sonny rolled out of the hammock to stand on his good foot, clutching his Twinkies as he hopped on over.

MJ grinned and shook his head, stepped away. "You want a mango?"

"No. I want whatever it is you're having." He could *smell* the chocolate.

"Hmm?" Another step back, another shit-eating grin. Bastard. Little fucker.

"Oh, that's mean. Come on, give." Clomp, clomp. Sonny followed, giving chase.

"Uh-uh. Mine." A piece of something nummy and dark and sweet slipped into MJ's lips.

"You son of a bitch, come on, be nice." He grinned, closing in. "I can still kick your ass."

"With one leg? I'd like to see you try." Those eyes were just dancing.

"You're cruising for a bruising." Could you say sugar rush? That man was just *bouncing*. It was a good look for him. Sonny adjusted himself so he could make a rush if he needed to.

"Bullshit. I'd have you down on the floor before you could reach me."

"Okay, we can do that too." He chuckled at the way MJ's eyes widened. "Give me chocolate."

"Say pretty please." There was a piece right there, melting between those fingers.

He pondered that. "Okay, pretty please." That wasn't too much for his pride. He opened up, sticking his tongue out.

Oh, damn. Good. Dark. Melty. Sweet. Uhn.

"Good shit, huh?"

"Hell, yes." Sonny laughed out loud, launching himself at MJ, making them both stagger as he fought for the rest of that sweet.

MJ dropped the bags on the counter, reaching up high to keep the candy away, the chocolate starting to slide. "Mine."

"Share." Did the man forget how much taller Sonny was? He reached up, grappling.

"Make me." MJ pressed right up against him, going up on tiptoes. Fuck, the man smelled good.

They smacked back against the wall, which suited Sonny just fine as he didn't have to teeter on his good foot. Gave him leverage. His hand slid up MJ's arm, grasping at MJ's wrist to pull it down. "Want."

Strong little fucker. "Uh-uh. Mine. Have a Twinkie."

They scrabbled a little, until Sonny finally dug his free hand into MJ's ribs. He had to drop his Twinkies to do it, too. Silly asshole, thinking he wouldn't fight dirty over sweets.

"Fuck me!" MJ started squeaking and twisting, snorting and laughing hard. "Stop. Stop it, you ass!"

"Wait, do you want me to fuck you, or do you want me to stop?" Oh, that was an even better look, MJ all red-faced and chortling. Sonny didn't even think, he just leaned down and licked chocolate off MJ's lower lip.

"Don't make me hurt you, Sunshine." Man, belly-to-belly felt fine, all warm and a little hard and close.

"Oh, you never know, Precious. I might like it." He grinned, feeling fine. Just fine.

MJ snorted, sticky fingers painting melted chocolate right down his cheek. "You think?"

Oh. Yum. Sonny grabbed MJ's fingers and started sucking on them, licking the chocolate right off. Jesus, that was addictive. He did like smooth, dark stuff. And he'd always liked his chocolate followed by a little bit of salt.

"I said that was my candy." MJ tugged his head over, tongue slip-sliding over his cheek, wet and hot as all get out.

"Uh-huh. Mmm. You can eat one of my Twinkies later. I'm all about sharing, Precious." Shit, that felt good. Sonny started rocking, his hard cock prodding MJ's hip.

"Good to know." MJ pushed right back against him, giving him some good friction. Oh, hell, yes. That made him give up entirely on the tickling and the fighting for the chocolate. He rubbed, his hips rolling, and licked at MJ's chin where more of the sticky, melted sweet had landed.

MJ's chin lifted up and he got a sweet little sound, raw and rough and real. One hand landed on his hip, moving him nice and quick.

He let go of MJ's hand and reached down to cup MJ's ass, having to squeeze to get between it and the wall. He was finally holding one hard-muscled cheek, though, moving MJ along with him, biting down on the skin of MJ's throat. Listen to that pretty noise. MJ just moved like heaven against him, rubbing away with that hard prick.

He really wanted to feel it again, but that would mean he had to move, and he wasn't ready to do that yet. He'd been weaving fantasies about the ass he had a hold of and that lower lip tasted good, but he wasn't kissing. No sir. Not at all.

Those bright blue eyes weren't shy at all, just looking right into him, hotter than the hinges of hell. "Good chocolate."

"Hell, yes." The best. Sonny crawled up MJ's body a little, his leg half wrapping around one hip as far as it would go. He needed, yeah, there. That pressure, the kind that made his balls draw up.

"Uhn." That made those pretty eyes roll, MJ rippling beneath him a little, ass like a rock in his hand. His bottom lip got caught between sharp teeth and tugged a little, pulled. Damn.

Sonny grunted, hummed, needing it like he hadn't in, well, it had been a while since he and Woody'd broke up, hadn't it? Panting, Sonny tried to get closer, tried to crawl inside.

MJ's hand slipped down, tugging a little at his shorts, then tugging harder, the man hunting skin. Oh, yeah. That worked fine.

He gave it up, sucking in his belly so MJ could get inside, get to touching him like he needed to be touched. Not to be outdone, Sonny started working at the waistband of MJ's pants, trying to get to the butt underneath.

MJ's teeth found his collarbone, scraped sharp enough to make him grunt. One hand fished out his prick, started rubbing and pulling at him, good and hard. His eyes tried to roll back in his head. Fuck, so much better than his own hand. Sonny got a handful of ass, squeezing, just murmuring at how hot MJ's skin was.

That man just hummed away, sweet and low and deep and vibrating against his skin. His prick was worked hard, thumb on the tip making his toes curl. Which was actually kinda dangerous, considering that he only had one foot on the floor.

Sonny chuckled, rocked, his breath on MJ's mouth, a second away from giving in and taking a big, sloppy kiss. Which was when MJ saved him from himself by scraping one fingernail over his slit, making him jerk and shout, making him shoot so hard that he probably covered MJ's whole belly with his come.

MJ groaned a little, eyes closed, hand sliding away, forcing the zipper of his own shorts down to start working that cock, ass rocking against the wall. One hand firmly on that fine ass, Sonny used the other to reach for MJ's cock, giving the man something to fuck, something to really push against.

"Mmmhmm..." The son of a bitch was hot as a firecracker, entire body into humping his hand. Liquid sex dripped on down, easing the way, slicking his palm up. Hooboy.

He wanted that. Made his fucking mouth water harder than the chocolate had. Sonny just shook his head, sweat dripping into his eyes as he pulled and pulled.

"Come on, man," he said. "Come on."

"Oh, sweet fuck." MJ's head slammed back, throat working as heat sprayed over his hand. Fuck, yeah. Just like that.

God, that was pretty. Sonny licked a bead of sweat from MJ's cheek, right beside that chocolate-sweet mouth.

"Goddamn."

"Uh-huh." MJ nodded, tongue slipping out to wet those lips.

Sonny stared, his own mouth suddenly dry. Lord, the things that mouth made him think. He sighed, easing away. "Better than the chocolate," he said, meeting those eyes for just a minute.

He got a half-grin, a nod. "And the chocolate was worth fighting over."

"God, yes." Sonny swayed a little, blinking. "Man, can you get me and my Twinkies to the couch? I'll share." He figured he could share both. Twinkies and couch.

"I imagine I can do that, yeah." MJ chuckled a little, nodded.

"Cool." He grinned, just feeling oozy and loose. "Thanks, by the way. For the groceries."

"Guy's gotta eat." MJ plopped him down, then settled beside him, head bobbing a little.

He put an arm around MJ, pulling him close, letting the Twinkies drop to his lap. He nuzzled into the hollow between

MJ's neck and shoulder. "I'm sleepy as fuck. I'm blaming your pills, 'kay?"

"Uh-huh." MJ yawned, long and wide. "Mine's the shots."

"Yeah." Sonny leaned a little harder, just enough that his lips pressed to MJ's skin, his tongue slipping out to taste.

"We're a mess."

"Mmmhmm. Nap. Then food. Chocolate's mine though."

"Uh-huh. I bet it would go good with the bananas." His words slurred, MJ's skin tasting so good. Sonny let his eyes close, let his head get heavy, relaxing.

"Mmm. Bananas." MJ started snoring a little, not bad, just enough.

That would do.

He'd settle for a nap now.

Later he'd wheedle more chocolate out of MJ.

Or fuck it out of him. Whatever came first.

## Chapter Seven

His ass was asleep.

Not just tingly and hot, but asleep-asleep.

There was also someone on his shoulder, heavy and hot and drooling—which surprisingly was less gross than he'd thought it would be, but that could be the chocolate talking.

Man, he wished his ass would wake up.

MJ stretched, the tingling in the base of his spine making him shift and squirm. Oh, wow. Sonny's head made a great noise when it slapped against his bare thigh.

Impressive.

Possibly ow, too.

"Jesus fuck!" Sonny exploded into action, leaping up off the couch, then hollering his damned fool head off as he teetered and fell backwards, shaking the entire foundation of the little guest cottage, making the windows rattle.

That? Was pretty fucking cool.

"You okay man?"

Sonny lay flat on his back, arms spread, looking at the ceiling. "Nope. I think I might be permanently damaged. But I can tell you where to ship my remains, Precious."

"Cool." He stretched out on the couch, trying to convince his ass to return to the land of the living.

"What the fuck did you do that for, anyway?" Sonny sounded only vaguely curious, like it was only polite to ask.

"I didn't. I mean, my ass is asleep, so I stretched. The falling was all you."

Man, he bet that bread would be good with that nut-butter-shit.

A positively evil chuckle broke his thoughts as Sonny rolled over, propping up on his elbows. "You want me to wake it up for you? I can, in about a million ways."

"My ass is off-limits, thank you." He stretched one leg up, flexing a little. "I don't play catcher."

"Why not? You've got an ass made for fucking, Precious." Those dark, dark eyes moved up his legs, right to where they joined. And Sonny stared.

"You should talk. You look like you'd be a sweet fuck, honest." Tight and hot and right—yeah, MJ could see it.

"Hell, no. I've never let anyone do that. Why would I start now?" Grinning, Sonny hoisted up on his hands and knees, crawling over until he could use MJ's thighs as leverage to stand. "I'm good with my mouth, though."

"Never, huh? How do you know you wouldn't like it?" Not like he knew, but Sunshine didn't know that.

"Nope. No way. I'm made to be the fucker, not the fuckee." He got a cheerful grin and a fine view of Sonny's chest, belly, and privates, still exposed by askew shorts, before the man grabbed his box of Twinkies and started limping toward the kitchenette.

Now that might be a fun thing ... Find a permanent magic marker and write 'fuckee' across Sonny's chest. Yeah. Yeah, he could go there. "You leave my chocolate alone, dude."

"Yeah, yeah. I want some coffee. Did you get coffee?" Man, he'd never seen anyone so damned happy to scratch his

ass, or his balls. Of course as sticky as they both were, maybe it was a necessity. He hoped Sonny washed his hands.

"I did." Dude. Now he needed a shower. A hot one. Because, man, he had hairs sticking together that were *never* meant for that shit.

"Cool. I'll put some on and then go take a little swim. Have you tried the water out there?"

"Not yet. I was, but the whole food-shopping-driving thing happened." And the whole hand-job thing. That led to the napping thing.

"You should come with me." The smell of coffee came, strong and good, as Sonny opened it and started dishing it out. Blue Mountain, or whatever. It was supposed to be good shit.

"Sure." He wandered over to his bag, found a pair of trunks and changed into them before heading to dig through sacks, looking for the last bite of chocolate and a piece of bread.

Sonny got a Twinkie out of the box and sat on one of the little wicker stools to prop up his ankle and look at it. "Hey, I think it looks better."

He peered over, nodded. It did look better, still a little swollen, but not horrible. "Not getting your ass kicked seems to be good for it."

"No shit. And you never kicked my ass, you just made an attempt." Sonny winked. "Should I plastic it? Hey, do you have any duct tape?"

"In the trunk of my car." He frowned suddenly, looking up at Sonny. "Nobody's driving my car, right? It's parked?"

There was some stuff that law enforcement would find ... interesting in there.

"Woody would have had to drive it to storage, but yeah, he got us a place in Wilmington, a place where your baby and my Rosie will be safe. Along with all of your other crap."

Sonny shrugged. "Do you think that rope would keep a bag on my foot? Or should I just take the wrap off for a bit?"

"I'd just take it off. What do you drive?" Cool. Storage worked. Man, he needed to get online and shit, deal with the damned job. Oh, look. Pastry.

"A '62 Starfire. She's a sweet beast." Another Twinkie wrapper crinkled, Sonny just ... fellating it as he swallowed the damn thing nearly whole.

He wasn't sure whether to gag or be impressed.

"Pretty, pretty. I'm fond of my 'stang, have a Firebird on the west coast that I dropped a sleeper engine into. She's fine."

"Yeah? Nice." Licking a bit of cream off his lower lip, Sonny got up, tested the unwrapped ankle. "It'll do as long as you don't knock me around anymore."

"Don't come at me with a needle or a rifle and you should be mostly safe." Pretty much. For now. He had a soft spot for wounded animals.

"Cool." Tucking his cock back into his shorts (and yeah, washing his hands again) Sonny headed on out, leaving the coffee brewing, smelling really good.

MJ got himself a cup of coffee and followed along, face lifted toward the sun. Oh, nice. Warm. Bright. He approved.

He got out there just in time to see Sonny strip off the shorts and wade into the water. Nice. He had to approve of that too.

He followed suit, stripping right down to nothing and wading in, moaning a little as the water splashed up onto him. Oh, yes. That was just what the doctor ordered.

"Good, huh?" Wading out a little more, Sonny flipped over on his back and floated, grinning over at him.

"Not bad at all." He smiled and sank into it, riding the waves. God, he did love the beach.

"Mmm." Sonny sounded like a big fucking cat, all purr. Those long arms moved gently, keeping Sonny afloat.

This was the fucking life. This was why he did what he did—protecting the water and the mountains and the sky, so people who loved it could take care of it.

Well, that and the money wasn't bad.

Warm fingers grazed his hip, Sonny grinning as he swam closer.

"Hey. Don't float off. You'd have a bad time limping back." He didn't shiver. He didn't.

"Oh, should I use you as my anchor?" Those fingers curled around his thigh, pulling them closer.

That parted his legs, balls dangling, lapped by the water. "Then we'd both have to find our way back."

"You'll keep me close to shore. You're that kind of guy."

Oh. Oh, damn, Sonny was exploring, slipping down to cup him in one hand.

"You sure you won't get us killed?" He couldn't remember if this was a let-it-all-hang-out place or a protect-your-nuts-at-all-costs place.

"We're pretty private." He got a wet grin. "I made sure of it. Helps when your traveling companion is unconscious."

Bastard. His hand shot out, goosing Sonny's ass good and hard.

"Ooph." Sonny flailed, going under for a moment before popping back up like a bobbing cork. "Man, you're awfully brave, I could've grabbed something sensitive."

"I am fearless, man. It's in the job description." Fearless, dexterous and possibly able to talk his way out of almost anything.

Except being kidnapped by a meth lab loony.

Sonny chuckled, moving back in, clinging like a barnacle. Talk about dexterous. "So how do you get a job like that?"

"It's sort of a volunteer thing. I have clients who find me, let me know what they need, and I let them know if they need me." He had principles.

"Yeah, but..." Sonny turned to float on his belly. "How do you gain those particular skills, Precious?"

"How'd you learn to do what you do?" Asking questions was always easier than answering them.

"Shit, I grew up doing it." Making lazy circles around him, Sonny went on, "My granddaddy was a ridgerunner. My uncles all ran illegal beer and cigarettes. It's in my blood."

"Yeah? Illegal cigarettes like weed?" Illegal cigarettes ... Bizarre.

"You really have a skewed idea of what's legal, man. Anything that Uncle Sam doesn't get his taxes on is illegal, and highly sought after..." Splashing him, Sonny laughed and struck out, swimming strongly out into the bay.

MJ chuckled. Legal, illegal—he sort of avoided that whole issue, if possible. It was sort of ... fluid for him.

He didn't follow Sonny, really. He just started moving, letting his muscles stretch and work, making him feel good.

It wouldn't pay to get sloppy. Though really, he could rest a little bit after being beaten and drugged and ... yeah. Hell, Sonny still looked like he'd been through the mill, dark bruises standing out on his skin, easily visible in the clear water.

He was still studiously avoiding looking at his own face and throat in the mirror. He'd caught a couple of glimpses before and, damn, he was not winning any beauty contests. It wasn't all vanity either, damn it. People remembered bruises and bloody noses.

"You're gonna drift away with the tide if you keep thinking that hard, Precious. What's up?" God, that man swam like a fucking eel.

"Hmm? I was just looking at your bruises and wondering how mine were doing. I'll have to be healed before I start thinking about taking another job."

"You bruise so well." One dark eyebrow waggled. Asshole.

He slapped some water across, eyes rolling. "Don't make me beat you. Again."

"Oh, like you could." They'd had this discussion about a zillion times, hadn't they? Sonny just kept poking it, though, like a kid with a washed-up jellyfish. "You're something else, MJ, I tell you what."

"So I've been told a few times." Man, what accident of karma threw him into Sonny's path?

"I bet. You probably have this effect on most folks." Sonny flipped to his back again, skin shining. "Though I have to admit, I've never kidnapped anyone before."

"No? You were so good at it; it felt very natural." His hand reached out, slid along Sonny's back almost of its own accord.

"Thanks. I try. My daddy always said you should excel at whatever you do." Humming, Sonny pushed into his touch, all male animal. All happy male animal.

He chuckled, thinking of his own father with his little wire-rim glasses and his closet full of BDUs. Yeah. The man was a fan of excelling.

"I'm sure he's proud. You're rather focused." Psychotically focused.

"You have no idea." He got the hottest damned look before Sonny swam back in toward shore, finally standing and wading out. That same look came again as Sonny glanced back over his shoulder. "You coming?"

Man, the comeback for that question was so easy.

Too easy.

Vaguely cheesy.

Too bad he couldn't resist.

"That depends; you going to spread pretty for me?"

"Spread what? Mayonnaise? A blanket for a picnic?" That damned satisfied chuckle made him want to crack Sonny's skull.

He snorted, hauling himself out of the water, feet dragging on the sand. "Your legs, Sunshine. That pretty ass."

"Sorry, I'm not on the market. Glad you think it looks good, though." Stopping just inside the door, out of the sun,

Sonny waited for him, hooking an arm around him as he got close enough. "Take me back to bed, Precious. I'm pooped."

"Pooped and demanding." Sounded good though. Bed. Pillows. Nappage.

"Hey, don't you know that's why I brought you with me? To fulfill my every whim?" Wet, hot, and damned fine against him, Sonny limped with him into the bedroom, hauling him down on the bed.

"Is that what it was? I thought it was extreme psychosis on your part. It's good to know." He curled right in, worn completely out.

"I got you to get me Twinkies, didn't I?" Sharp as anything, Sonny's chin dug into his collarbone as they snuggled together, one of Sonny's hands landing on his ass. Which was awake now, at least.

Which was better. Numb asses just sucked rocks. Really.

## Chapter Eight

Sonny swung in the hammock, one foot rocking himself lazily. Sun. Sand. A weird assed eco-terrorist to snuggle with. The only way his vacation could be better was if MJ would offer up that amazing ass for him to fuck.

It didn't look like that was going to happen, but, hey, he'd never thought he'd kidnap anyone and haul them to Jamaica either.

Lord, that had been fun. Maybe he should buy some more morphine and take MJ somewhere else. Aruba. Barbados. Hell, maybe they should go to Australia. He peered down at the floor of the porch, where MJ was spread like a two-dollar whore, naked as a jaybird and sunning himself. He didn't *seem* to be showing any signs of withdrawal.

The man had some amazing ink. Black and spiky, flowing over that belly, over one pec, down the opposite thigh.

There was even a faint etching of the same pattern on the base of the man's cock, just brushing the ball sac.

Damn.

He'd noticed that before, but he'd been entirely too hurty to do anything about it. Three days of swimming and sunning? Yeah, his ankle felt better. Sonny pondered. MJ's blanket thingee was bigger than his hammock, and way sturdier. He'd go down there.

Swinging out of the hammock, he sat on the blanket, cross-legged, and started tracing patterns. "So what does this mean?"

"That one on my thigh means warrior and peace, sort of swirled together."

"Yeah?" He touched it, feeling the roughness of hair, the smoothness of scar tissue formed by the tat. "It's pretty."

"Thanks." MJ smiled, skin hot as hell under his fingers.

His fingers wandered, tracing up to caress the line between torso and thigh. "Did you go to college?"

Okay that was out of the blue, but somehow he wanted to know. What did a guy study that made him go, hmm, I wanna blow shit up for peace?

"Yeah. Berkeley first, then Cal Tech."

California. Yeah. That belly was flat and fine, calling his fingers. Damn. The man frustrated him, made him want to holler a lot, but damn.

"Mmm. Feels good. What about you? You go to school?" MJ arched, rocking up just a little. Sensual little shit.

Sonny bent, licked at the little hairs trailing from MJ's belly button down. "No. Was going to, but it just didn't work out..."

Yeah. He'd got that beaten right out of him, that urge to study.

"What did you want to ... Mmm ... what did you want to study?" Oh, look at that cock fill.

"Russian literature. Hotel management. Underwater basket weaving. Shit, I just wanted to go drink beer and ogle pretty boys."

Damn. The ink around that cock was much easier to see now.

MJ chuckled, shook his head. "I never liked literature class. I was an engineer."

Well, duh.

"Makes sense." Sonny figured he was something of an engineer himself. One hundred and fifty proof. God, MJ smelled good. All he had to do was turn his head and his lips were at the base of that hot prick. So he did.

"Uh-huh..." Fuck, those blond curls were soft as hell, slick, sweet.

His fingers and his lips met, his hand curling around MJ's cock to pull it to his mouth, his tongue coming out to taste.

"Oh." That was a sweet sound, damn near as good as the flavor of that hot fucking skin.

Almost. Sonny figured he might be a little oral. He licked again, really savoring it, the heat and salt, the sea and man taste.

MJ stretched out, thighs tight, shaking just a little before settling down, spreading a bit.

"What kind of engineering? Electrical? Chemical?" He grinned a little, breathing hard on the skin he'd just licked, looking to see where the ink went from there.

"I. Electrical. I like to ... Oh, fuck. I like to make things work." Oh, look at that. It had to fucking hurt, a needle pushing into that sensitive skin.

"Did it hurt?" he asked, just not able to resist, licking down along the design, his cock starting to ache at the thought of MJ just getting off on it, getting inked and moaning and writhing.

"Yeah, but it was ... It's hard to explain." Oh, there was a story there.

He'd need to know that, he figured. Later. He'd make a note to ask later. Right now? He'd settle on licking those balls one way, then the other, cupping underneath with the flat of his tongue.

"Oh. Hot." MJ sounded a little stunned, a lot horny, just moving and rocking on his tongue.

They'd done at least a dozen hurried hand jobs, but this was their first slow taste. His first *real* taste. Sonny was finding MJ fucking addictive. He licked and sucked, the soft, wrinkled skin just amazingly hot and firm.

MJ made some great fucking noises—some high and breathy, some deep and rough, depending on where his mouth was.

Sonny stopped short of rimming MJ's ass, even though he wanted to. He figured it might ruin the mood, and God knew he didn't want to do that. So he moved back up, sucking the head of MJ's cock into his mouth.

MJ's feet slammed against the floorboards, a sharp cry ringing out. Oh, hell, yes. That was fine.

The man just made him hungry, yes, indeed. He had a kick like good 'shine, enough to intoxicate. Sonny went all the way down, sealing his lips to the line of tattoo around the base.

"Oh. Oh. Oh..." MJ twisted, pushing and moving, trying to get deeper into him.

He could have been a bitch and held the man down, but Sonny was needing so bad ... He cupped that muscular ass in his hands and let MJ fuck his mouth.

Fingers slid down, brushed over his head, his ears, filthy fucking words pouring down as MJ gave it up, hips rocking furiously into his mouth.

That cock was thick, salty-bitter, and just long enough to nudge the back of his throat. Sonny breathed through his nose, lips and tongue working, his hand coming up to pull at MJ's balls just a little too hard.

That was all it took, MJ grunting and jerking, just giving it right up for him.

Fuck, yeah. Oh, fuck, yeah. A man could live on that taste for *months*. Sonny sucked MJ right down, licking him, sparing only a half-second's hope that the man was clean.

MJ's ass landed on the blanket, groaning. "Oh, God. Your mouth."

"Mmm." Humming, Sonny licked the tip one last time, pressing his tongue into the slit just to catch it all. "You like?"

"Fuck, yes." His head was caressed, stroked, petted. "Yes."

"Good." Grinning, he crawled up to straddle MJ's thighs, stroking his own cock, which poked right up out of his soft shorts. He needed to come in the worst way.

MJ's hands joined his, pumping away, being a helpful little shit.

"Oh, hell, yes." Sonny let his head fall back, one hand moving on his cock, the other going back to brace on MJ's leg to give him better leverage, more thrust.

"Look at you, man. Fucking sexy." MJ was watching, lips open, hand working the tip of his prick, rubbing in circles.

"Damn. Hell. MJ. God." His whole body shuddered, his cock throbbing, so close. So close.

"Uh-huh. Let me see it." MJ's free hand tweaked his nipple good and hard, electricity zinging through him.

That did it. Whoa. Sonny arched, his cock jerking madly as he shot all over MJ's hand and arm, a harsh cry coming from him. "Damn. Yeah."

MJ groaned, nodded, hand working him through the aftershocks. He took MJ's hands in his, eased them away. Man, that made him sensitive as hell, made his belly rock hard. "You got good hands, Precious."

"They keep me in pennies." MJ stretched up, wiggling a little in the sun. "Sunshine."

Chuckling, Sonny slapped MJ's belly, watching fingerprints rise on the tanned skin. "You? Are purely something."

His nipple got pinched, hard as all fuck. "No slapping."

"Why? You like it too much?" The sting made him remember what he'd meant to ask. "So what about the tat?"

"Huh? What about it?"

"You said it was a long story." His fingers found the base of MJ's cock. "I got time."

"I go to a couple of guys between jobs. One on the west coast, one in Singapore, one in Samoa. They..." MJ shifted a little, grinned. "Take care of me."

"That's not a story." He petted a little, knowing if he was sensitive, MJ had to be positively twitchy. Sonny pinched the tip of MJ's cock, so lightly. "Tell."

MJ arched, belly going tight. "Easy, man. What do you want to know? I started small, little sections, found out I liked it, you know? I got a whole thing with it."

"No, I want the story of *this* one." Did it hurt? Did you like it?

"Oh." MJ's cheeks went pink, eyes rolling a little. "I got into some trouble, got fucked up, thought my ass was grass. I needed something after it, something to make me. Uh. You know. Something to make it all work again."

Sonny stared. "It works just fine, Precious. And no, I don't know. Do tell." Why this was so fucking important he didn't know.

"It's not that big of a deal, yeah? There's this guy, he and I used to fuck after he inked me. He noticed that things weren't up and bouncy and he told me he could help." MJ's eyes were fucking hot, cock filling again, sure and slow.

"And it helped?" God, he could just see that, someone putting a needle to MJ's skin, then bending over and taking MJ's pretty cock up the ass.

"It did. It burned like fucking fire and I got hard. Swore I was going to come in black like the ink."

"It's hot, Precious. Real hot." Stroking, easy and soft, Sonny stared at it, imagined it. Fuck, what a visual.

"When he wrapped me up, started riding, I just ... Man. He had me spread-eagled on this chair, just there to ink and ride."

"Goddamn." He wanted to fuck MJ so damned bad. He wanted inside, just to feel. He traced that cock again, fingers slipping down to follow the tat. "I ... MJ."

"Yeah." MJ arched, eyes rolling back into his head. Fuck, look at that. Fucking pretty.

Sonny shifted, rubbed, his own cock almost hurting as it grew, lengthened. "Want you."

"Yeah. I hear you. I know about wanting." MJ's eyes just dragged down his body, tongue slipping out to wet those lips.

"Let me, MJ. Please?" Goddamn, he'd never begged for it in his life, but he wanted so bad. Needed it.

"I never have." MJ's hand found his cock, just barely touching. "You going to let me?"

He arched, his head falling back. One good turn deserved another, right? He wasn't no fucking chicken. "I ... yeah. It'd be fair."

"You can't hit me during, either."

"I'm not going to." Lord, you hit a man a few times and he started expecting it. Sonny chuckled. "And you can't try to rip body parts off."

MJ nodded. "I won't even blow any bits off."

"Works for me." He slid off MJ's body, spread those muscled thighs. "We need ... damn. Did you get condoms when you went shopping?"

"Huh? No. No, I didn't figure we'd need them. Aren't there any in the shaving kits?"

"I. Oh. Yeah. There's actually one in my ditty bag." Lord knew how old it was, but he didn't care. "Be right back."

He was so not giving up this chance.

He heard footsteps following him, MJ right at his back.

Sonny dug for the condom, crowing as he came up with it. He turned, practically mowing the man down. "Bedroom?" he asked.

"Lube?" MJ was looking a little wild-eyed, a little jumpy. Oh, no. No thinking. None.

That would never do. He pressed MJ against the wall, biting the man's neck, teeth sinking in hard. "We've got oil." Baby oil. Lotion.

MJ arched, starting to rub against him, all that skin just right there.

Yeah. That was more like it. Perfect. Baby oil. Sonny grabbed the ditty bag and took it along, dancing MJ back into the bedroom. He touched with his free hand, stroking, tracing ink.

MJ chuckled, mouth on his shoulder, sliding over his skin with those teeth, just threatening.

"Mmm. Yeah. Yeah." They tumbled right onto the bed, the ceiling fan overhead cooling their heated skin, and he pushed MJ down on his back, licking his lips at the fucking picture the man made.

"You sure you want to do this, man?" MJ was working that full prick, hand sliding in a steady rhythm.

"Why the fuck wouldn't I?" He fumbled for the damned oil, getting it open, spilling a bunch on the bed. "I haven't wanted anything so much in a long time."

"Because I'll be after your pretty ass later." MJ spread a little, showing off. "This worth it?"

That ass was enough to give a man palpitations. Sonny'd thought so from the first time he saw it. "Yeah," he said, putting two fingers against MJ's hole, rubbing oil against the sensitive skin. "Yeah, it is."

MJ tensed a little, hips shifting away from the touch before settling back.

"S'okay, man. I swear to God, no hurting." He'd done this a million times. Maybe more. Never had one complaint. He took his time, used lots of oil, got MJ good and slick before pushing one finger in.

Oh, sweet fuck. MJ was hot and tight enough to make him think he might beg for mercy before MJ did. Sonny took a deep breath, willing himself to wait, to take his time. In and out, gentling, opening, he moved his finger, watching MJ's face. MJ watched him, eyes fucking sharp and close, body just starting to shift, to ride it, feel him. Good man. Nice and easy.

"Fucking tight, MJ. Hot. Pretty as all hell." Sonny murmured meaningless words, fucking words. The one finger became two as he eased out and back in, adding a little more oil.

"Mmm..." MJ stretched, thighs spreading a little farther and giving him a long look.

Damn. Oh, yeah. Sonny watched his fingers slide in and out, his mouth dry, his skin hot. He couldn't wait to get in there.

"You look fucking hungry, like you want to eat me up."

"That's because I do." Sonny spread his fingers, just a little, watching MJ's belly quiver. "You're ... Jesus, MJ. Tight."

"Full. It's so full." That hard cock bobbed, leaving a wet kiss on MJ's belly.

"S'okay, Precious. I swear, you're gonna like it. Gonna give you one more finger." He wanted to just say screw the prep, but MJ needed it. That damned tight body was just squeezing

him. More lube, a few more pushes, and slow but sure, he pushed three in.

MJ arched up, muscles going tight and hard as fuck. "Oh. Oh, damn, that's more."

"Yeah. Yeah, breathe. Let it burn. It'll be good." They'd always told him it was good. He hoped to fuck at least Woody would never lie to him like that. One deep breath, then another, and MJ's body relaxed a little, landing back down on the mattress. Yeah. That's it, just relax. Good man.

He stroked MJ's belly with his free hand, stroked the cock that hadn't flagged one bit. At least that told him there was no pain. "Good now?"

"Uh-huh. Different, but good." MJ's head tossed a little, lips parted and wet, tongue flicking out to taste.

Sonny almost bent to take a kiss. Almost. That felt ... weird. Which was even weirder when his hand was half buried in MJ's ass. Instead he got the condom with his free hand, tried to wrestle it open.

MJ chuckled, the sound a little breathy. "Want some help, man?"

"Yes. Damn it." Shit, he prided himself on his dexterity, too.

That set MJ to laughing, body rippling around his fingers, eyes just dancing. Asshole. Pretty fucking asshole.

"Well, help me, you jerk." He grinned, letting his fingers crook just so...

"I am help ... Oh, sweet fuck!" The condom fell from MJ's fingers, half-opened. "Again. Fucking do that again."

"This?" That look. Jesus, that look. Sonny did it again just to see that look, feel the strain of MJ's muscles.

"Uhn." MJ was his, hello. Look at that throat work.

Sonny bent, licked at the skin covering one pec. "Condom, Precious. Where's the condom?" He needed it now. Really. Now.

"Uh ... I. Damn." MJ scrambled around, fingers just searching for it. "Damn. Oh. There. There we go. Here."

He took it, got it out, smoothing it over his cock. Then he started oiling up. Slowly, easily, he moved his fingers out, sliding his cock into place against MJ's hole. "You ready?"

"I." Those eyes met his, a little wide, a little wild. "Yeah. Yeah, okay."

Breathing deep, he lifted MJ's hips in his hands and guided his prick inside, bit by bit. Oh. Oh, fuck. His eyes tried to close, but Sonny blinked them back open, needing to watch, just to be sure he wasn't fucking this up. Needing MJ's reactions.

MJ panted, hands sliding over his own body, petting and stroking in long sweeps. "Fuck."

"About to, Precious." There. Sonny slid in all the way, MJ's body finally taking him in, letting him slip right up, hip to ass.

That earned him a groan, MJ's fingers on his arms now, trembling a little.

"Hush. S'all right, MJ. S'good." His body wanted to move, but Sonny held himself there, letting MJ get used to him, letting that heat loosen around him a little.

"Yeah. Yeah." MJ wriggled, then that muscled chest hitched as the man took a deep breath, that insane grip

finally easing, becoming something more heated and less panicked.

"Oh..." Sonny moaned, cupping MJ's ass with one hand, using the other to pet, to stroke, just rubbing over MJ's belly and chest, pinching his nipples. He could feel each one of his touches in the way MJ's muscles shifted and fluttered, moving around him. That was enough to get him moving, his hips rolling, pushing him in and pulling him out. Even with the condom, it was a fucking wild ride.

Man, the deep, raw sounds were just pouring out of MJ, the man's eyes rolling like thrown dice. Once he got a rhythm going, got his breathing in and out, he reached for MJ's cock, hand circling it. Fuck, the man was hard, hot, leaking like crazy.

"Yeah. Yeah, I want. Come on." MJ was panting, shoulders off the mattress, pushing back against him.

He knew it. MJ was a natural. Sonny let go, really moving now, fucking MJ hard and fast. Sweat ran on his skin, his lungs heaved, and damned if he didn't just stroke MJ until his arm was tired, thumb working the tip.

He felt MJ's orgasm building, could see that tanned skin going dark right before MJ shot, hips bucking. Crying out, Sonny bucked right back, his hips snapping, just sawing back and forth as he shot inside MJ's body, filling that damned condom.

MJ moaned, eyes closed, lips open. So fucking pretty. Just too fine for color TV.

Without even thinking, he bent, putting his lips to MJ's, kissing gently, tongue coming out to taste. A deep hum

Racing the Moon  
*by BA Tortuga*

pushed into his lips, MJ tasting him right back, tongue touching his, nice and easy.

Sonny remembered to grab his cock at the base and pull out, tying off the condom clumsily before collapsing down beside MJ to exchange long, lazy kisses. MJ's hand landed on his nape, thumb drawing slow circles as they tasted each other, watched each other.

Sonny rested heavily against MJ, lips and tongue moving, his eyelids drooping. He might just be ruined for life.

## Chapter Nine

Uhn. Beer.

MJ leaned back in the booth, watched Sonny chat to the bartender, probably talking about some damned hallucinatory illegal booze. Or cigarettes. Or something.

Man had a pretty ass.

He was on his third beer, taking advantage of the local hotel's wifi hot spot to make a few money transfers, contact a couple clients. Ogle Sonny's ass. Plan another job on the East Coast.

Normal shit.

Sonny's front was nice, too, the open shirt he managed to pull off even in a hotel bar showing off his abs and belly. "Man, you should taste this home-brew stuff they have. Not quite rum, not quite moonshine..."

"Does it make you hallucinate, too?" He could lick all the way up and just enjoy himself thoroughly.

"I have no idea. You'll find out in a bit, I bet." Sonny grinned at him, leg brushing his, hand on his shoulder a moment as Sonny slipped past him. "So, have you gotten over being sore at me for hauling you off?"

"I'm just not thinking about it." He was sorer at himself for falling for it, for waking up on the beach.

"Okay." Those long, clever fingers slipped under his shirt at the small of his back. "So, you about done?"

"Yeah, I juggled pennies." Mmm ... that felt good. Damn good. "You find out any wicked booze recipes?"

"I have an appointment for tomorrow night. They'll either let me in on how they make it or use me as some voodoo sacrifice." Sonny leaned on him, skin warm, and muscles firm. "So I have aaaaall this time."

"If you see a goat, run." His fingers found Sonny's belly, petting in random circles.

"Oh I will. Trust me. No goats. They smell bad." Their hands moved in time, Sonny's on his back, his on Sonny's front. Finally, Sonny cleared his throat. "So. If you're all set we could uh ... go back to the bungalow. Swim."

"Swimming's good." Or fucking. Fucking worked.

"Yeah." Oh, the flush traveling up Sonny's chest and throat told him Sonny would be up for fucking, too. Hell, Sonny had shown a real talent for it.

"Let's go. It's a short walk." Which was good, as hard as his cock was.

"Uh-huh," Sonny muttered, rising. "If we make it that far."

"You're a strong one. You'll make it." He shut his laptop with a click, cock pushing against his fly as he stood.

Sonny pushed in front of him to get back out from behind the table, ass rubbing his cock as they brushed. Damn. His moan almost got out. Almost. His hand wrapped around Sonny's hip for a second, fingers gripping.

Sonny looked back at him for a moment, eyes almost black, pupils dilated. Then Sonny walked off, ass just swinging like it belonged to the big slut Sonny was.

He might have drooled.

Okay, might have wasn't exactly accurate because, damn.

MJ wiped his mouth and followed along, focused on that ass.

They made it halfway back to the bungalow before Sonny stopped and pulled him into an alley, brightly painted, hung with little plants and streamers. MJ got a kiss that curled his toes, Sonny really giving it up.

"Sunshine." It was sheer luck that he didn't drop the laptop when he reached up, fucking Sonny's lips with his tongue.

"Umph." Sonny grunted as the case clunked against his back, but didn't let go. The man had been a slow starter on the kissing, but man, once he got going...

Yummy. He started rubbing and groping, knowing what Sonny got off on now, what Sonny needed from him. It worked both ways. Sonny knew just where to nip, where to pinch. They rocked together, Sonny's cock sliding down against his through their clothes. He managed to work one hand down, cupped Sonny's hip, fingers squeezing that tight ass.

"Uhn. MJ. Yeah." Arching, Sonny rocked into his touch, making happy noises.

He nodded, bit down on Sonny's bottom lip a little. Mmm. Maybe more than a little, tugging so that he could get some of those good noises.

"Mmmhmm." Sonny hummed for him, low and rough, hands cupping his ass, the back of his neck, nails scraping his skin. "Oh, yeah."

"Want you naked. Want." Need, maybe. Fuck. Fuck, he wanted it.

"Not ... oh. There. Not here. God, MJ." The only thing that made him feel better was that Sonny seemed just as wild, just as ready to fuck right there in the street.

"Fuck, yes. Come on, Sunshine. Please." He started tugging, pulling Sonny down the street.

They went, Sonny grabbing his laptop as it slipped, hobbling along behind him. That ankle was healing, but still couldn't take too much fast moving. Still, Sonny did all right, almost passing him as they got to the bungalow, pushing him inside.

MJ pushed and tugged 'til they got to the bed, pulling at Sonny's shirt so he could get to that skin.

Sonny helped, arms up, muscles shivering as he licked and touched. Sonny touched him as soon as the pesky cloth was gone, stroking his hair back off his face. "Yeah, Precious."

"Yeah." He worked Sonny's jeans open, thick cock pushing toward his hand, sweet as anything, wet-tipped and hot.

Grunting, Sonny just pushed at him, cock slapping against his palm. "Good. Want you, MJ. Want you bad."

He nodded, sitting down on the bed, lips sliding over the tip of Sonny's prick and sucking good and hard.

A startled gasp came from Sonny, those hard abs quivering for him. One hand clenched in his hair. Sonny's other hand stroked down his cheek, cupping his chin, his throat, stroking lightly in time with the movement of his mouth. His hands stayed busy, pushing jeans down and stroking the fine skin. Hot, salty and male, Sonny tasted like the sun and sea just outside their door. The skin around the head was thin and smooth, lower down it was veined and

rougher. Sonny just cussed him, gave him filthy words, love words, too, telling him what a pretty mouth he had.

He rolled Sonny's balls, fingers sliding behind, stroking the hidden wrinkled skin. Come on, Sunshine, give me more now.

"Fuck! Fuck, MJ. I ... Oh. Damn." Yeah, Sonny's thighs shook for him, those long legs moving, Sonny's heels drumming on the mattress.

"Uh-huh." He couldn't resist; he let Sonny's cock go, spreading Sonny wide so he could slide his tongue behind the heavy balls, over that tight little hole. He thought Sonny was gonna buck him off, or clobber him with a flailing hand, but finally the man settled into a rhythm, pushing against him.

MJ let himself relax, fucking the tight little hole with his tongue, in and out, in and out. Man, his prick just ached, sliding on the nasty old comforter. Next time he'd have to remember to put a T-shirt down there or something.

Sonny took it a lot longer than he thought anyone could, finally grabbing his shoulders and pulling him up, eyes wild as they stared at each other. "Man. I need. God."

"Gonna let me in?" He was aching for it, throbbing.

"I..." Sonny just stared at him, those eyes so dark. "Said I would," Sonny said.

"You did." He stretched for the lube, snagged it and almost broke the tube tip off. He was going to make it good, so good. His lips found one of Sonny's nipples as he got his fingers slick and sliding over Sonny's hole.

"Good." That big body slid restlessly, Sonny's cock red and wet, slapping that flat belly. "Feels good."

He tugged at the tight little nipple, let his teeth threaten some as he slid a finger in, nice and slow. Oh. Oh, yeah. He needed in there, in deep.

"God." The flesh under his lips went tight, hard, just begging for it. And damned if Sunny didn't open for him like a cheerleader slumming with the surfer boys, body taking his finger in, snug, hot, so good it almost burned.

"Fuck yeah, Sunshine." He teased the tip of Sonny's nipple, finger slipping and sliding and pushing. Searching, maybe, for that little flat gland.

Those eyes went wide, sightless, and Sonny's whole body shuddered, telling him he'd found it. Oh. Pretty. And damn, the way that body clamped down on his finger. When he got his cock in there he might explode. Explode or die. He kept stroking that little hot spot, watching as Sonny rode the sensations. He'd never fucking seen anything like it.

Ever.

Sonny reached for something, hands slipping across the sheets, body bucking like crazy. Finally Sonny seemed to settle for stroking his own cock, licking his lips, panting.

"Wait for me, man. Want to be in you, feel it when you shoot."

"I. Oh, fuck, you'd best hurry then." Yeah. Yeah, Sonny looked like he was shivering on the very edge.

"You ready?" He got the rubber on and slipped another finger in, just to be sure, to be careful. He wouldn't hurt Sonny. He liked his teeth in his mouth, in their sockets, where they belonged.

"Yeah. Yeah." He expected at least a little doubt. An admonition to do well. He just got a drugged, heavy-eyed look, Sonny urging him on.

MJ settled himself in between those long, long legs, petting and scratching for a second as he lined up. "Breathe, Sunshine."

"I can't." Grinning, Sonny did just what he said to, though, taking a deep breath, relaxing as the air rushed out.

It was surprisingly easy to lean in for a kiss, push into that perfect fucking heat in slow, rocking motions. Sonny groaned into the kiss, hands coming up to clutch at him, hips rolling up to take him. One of those strong legs wrapped up around him, pulling. Yeah. Oh, sweet fucking hell, yeah. His heart was pounding furiously, caught as much in the kiss as he was by the feel of Sonny all around him. The man could fucking kiss. He really, really could, lips and tongue just killing MJ with their heat, their smooth, damp fucking heat. And inside ... Sonny squeezed down on his cock slowly, every heartbeat obvious.

Their bellies rubbed together, hairs tugging a little as they moved, and MJ got his hand around Sonny's cock, started working it. Lips and tongue and hand and hips, all pushing to drive Sonny over the edge.

"MJ!" Sonny cried out, shaking, skin flushed and hot, cock jerking. Head thrashing from side to side, Sonny moaned, so close that MJ could feel it move through him.

"Yeah. Yeah, Sunshine. Right here." His hips jerked, slamming into Sonny now, driving.

It took no time, really. No fucking time at all, and Sonny was coming, liquid heat spilling right into his hand, those aftershocks squeezing him hard.

He lifted his hand up, licked it clean as he moaned. The bitter salt flavor pushed him over, head slamming back as he shot.

"Fuck. Oh, Jesus fuck." Sonny yanked him back down for another kiss, tongue fucking his mouth.

MJ got one hand under Sonny's nape, tilting the man's head so the kiss could deepen. When they finally came up for air he couldn't see straight, could hardly breathe. Sonny just blinked at him, petting him clumsily.

"H ... hey." Oh, hell, he was meltier than cheap ice cream. God, he was never moving again. Ever.

"Uh-huh." That got him a smile, as goofy as could be, Sonny pulling him down and nuzzling his neck. "Damn."

"Uh-huh." Damn was right. Possibly guh. He'd also take uhn.

"Not hallucinating, by the way. Just you." Well, he supposed that was a compliment.

"Good. Wanted you to remember." He took another kiss, and another, cock slipping free from Sonny's body.

"That'll stick with me a bit, Precious. No urge to knock your teeth out."

"Good. Hard to eat bacon without teeth."

"Mmm. Bacon." God love a redneck. They settled a little, Sonny holding him tight. "After."

He nodded, cheek on Sonny's shoulder. "Yeah. Later. This works for now."

"Mmmhmm."

Man, he could get used to this so easily. He really could.

All the more reason he needed to schedule a new job. And soon.

\* \* \* \*

Sonny watched MJ pace, the little high-tech cell phone in his hand, headset on. That thing had to have international capacity. Man, that boy's toys just fascinated him. The conversation, not so much.

"No, I need to be on the next ... uh-huh. Right. That long? Okay..." MJ said, sighing as he hung up.

Staring at him from the easy chair, Sonny shook his head. "How do you feel about Aruba? Or maybe Barbados?"

"I love Barbados. Love it. Fucking love it. There's a quarter-million dollar job with my fucking name on it first, though." MJ shook his head, hand running through his hair.

"Well, now. That's quite a paycheck." Shit, he couldn't make that in a year. And it was kinda hard to compete with. Sonny needed to buy more drugs.

"No shit. I'm thinking I deserve a long vacation after it." He got a bit of a look, MJ admiring him. "A good, long vacation."

"Yeah?" Well, that was promising, at least. "So kidnapping you and putting you on a boat now would be counterproductive?"

"Yeah, given that the men I work for don't, uh, accept no for an answer. You'd end up with some scary fuckers

breathing down your neck." He got a half smile, a nod. "I wouldn't want you killed, Sunshine."

"I like my neck where it is." Well, shit. Sonny sighed. Ah well, Woody was giving him hell, wanting him to come look at the new operation. "When do we leave?"

"Eight days. I'll take a nice leisurely fourteen-day cruise, do my job. I could be back in your neck of the woods in six weeks, should you want to take a ride in the 'stang."

"Yeah. Yeah, okay. I can do that." Eight days. Hoo yeah. "So we have a bit of time."

"We do. You got a plan, Sunshine?" That eyebrow cocked, eyes twinkling.

Well, he always had something in his head. Or, you know, his cock. "I'm thinking, yeah. Now, we could play tiddlywinks."

"We could. Or pick-up sticks."

"Mmmhmm." Sonny grinned, spreading his legs a little as his cock started to fill, his loose swim trunks hiding nothing.

MJ's eyes fastened onto his crotch, tongue wetting those lips. "Or. Uh. Follow the Leader."

"Oh, I like that. Like truth or dare. Like hide-and-seek, if it means your mouth on me..." Sonny groaned.

"Truth or dare works. Take off the shorts." MJ's hand started rubbing that hidden prick, working it. Nodding, licking his own lips, Sonny raised up and shucked his shorts, his cock springing free. Yeah. Fresh air. MJ took a deep breath, nodding. "Just like that. You're a good looking man."

"You think?" Sprawling, he put on a show for MJ, touching himself from chest to thighs.

"Indeed I do." MJ leaned against the wall, thumb sliding up and down along the ridge, pushing against the tight jeans.

"So. You get to start." God that felt good, watching MJ, his own hand doing exactly what MJ's did. Definitely more follow the leader than truth or dare.

"I thought I did." MJ just kept staring, kept watching.  
"Truth or dare?"

"Hmm. Dare." He always liked dare more. Always.

"Come here and take my pants off." He got a wild-eyed grin. "With your mouth."

Oh, the bastard was good. Sonny got up and stalked over, sinking to his knees easily. His ankle wasn't even tingling anymore. That was good. MJ's bruises had all faded, too. That wasn't so good. Still, the dare had been to get the pants off. Hands behind his back, Sonny worked the button and zipper with his teeth, cheek pressing MJ's crotch.

MJ whimpered, lips parted, hips starting to rock, rub against his mouth. This game might not last long. The good ones didn't. Sonny brought one hand around, touching himself as he pulled cloth aside with his teeth, nuzzling into the cloth to get to flesh.

"Mmm..." MJ's fingers felt good, sliding on his scalp, petting him. "Don't get all distracted, Sunshine..."

"Me?" He almost let MJ feel his teeth, just the tiniest scrape, before using his cheek to smooth the cloth down, nudging it with his lips.

"Uhn. I. Uh. Uh-huh." Mmm. Incoherent MJ. Nice.

Yeah. That was damned good. The pants finally slid all the way to the floor, and Sonny rubbed his face against that fine

prick like a cat. The man smelled good—horny and male, musky and just fucking right. Salty, clear drops slipped from the tip of MJ's cock, taunting him.

Still, he sat back on his heels. His dare was done. "Truth or dare, Precious?"

MJ stretched, cock just bobbing. "Dares are way less dangerous, dude."

"This is very true." Sonny sprawled back on the floor. "Suck me."

"Oh, very inventive." MJ knelt down, tongue dragging along his inner thigh, cheek nudging his balls.

"Hey, I never claimed to be good at new shit ... I know what I like." That mouth made him insane. Ever since MJ had rimmed him. God.

"You smell good." That tongue moved over him, teasing and tasting as MJ spread him wide.

"Not sucking." Laughing, Sonny arched up, trying to get more, closer. Good.

Lips wrapped around one of his balls, the suction gentle, but enough to feel, to drive him bugnuts crazy. Oh, fuck. He should have said suck his cock. His balls were so sensitive. So touchy. He would come in no time. Sonny reached down, stroked MJ's hair. MJ's tongue slipped and slid over his sac, tickling him, the suction steady, sure. Oh, fuck. Those fingers slid against his hole, teasing the living hell out of him.

"MJ. Not playin'. Gonna ... oh, fuck. Jesus." He was thrashing, begging, hard words falling from his lips. MJ bucked up, lips dropping down over his cock like a lead balloon, just crashing down.

"Uhn." It came out in an explosive sound, his hips rising and falling, cock fucking MJ's mouth like there was no tomorrow. They moved together, MJ's head, his hips, rocking and driving, and sweet fuck, it was good. Hot.

Oh. Oh, he could maybe make it long enough ... Sonny pulled at MJ, trying to get his body to turn. MJ groaned, taking a second to figure out what he needed, what he wanted. Then MJ shifted, moved across the floor. That heavy cock got close enough to his mouth for him to get hold of it, start sucking.

Yeah. Yeah. He could do that. Fuck, he loved the feel of MJ in his mouth, that sweet mouth around him. Sonny grabbed MJ's ass and started sucking, his head rising and falling. They moved together, both of them moaning and grunting, sucking like they were starving men.

So much for their truth or dare. There was truth in this, though. The pressure and the salt and the hard muscles and heavy breathing; all of it made sense. Sonny groaned, sucked harder, pushing, so close to the edge he ached. MJ had all of him, had taken him deep, swallowing, tugging around the tip of his prick.

That did it. Sonny just came like a ton of bricks, swallowing hard around MJ's cock, his hips pumping up and up. MJ groaned, pulling at him, swallowing hard. Drinking him down even as the prick in his mouth jerked and throbbed.

Sonny moaned, still working that sweet prick with the flat of his tongue, his own pleasure almost secondary.

Weird.

Soft pants tickled the inside of his thigh, MJ open-lipped, gasping. "Oh, Sunshine. Wow."

"Yeah." Goddamn. Wow wasn't even close. They were like a fucking flash fire. Or an explosion. Boom.

"Still smell fucking good." MJ nuzzled his balls, lips soft and gentle.

"You're addictive, Precious." He licked his lips, and MJ's cock. Damn. Gently, he wiggled right around to take a kiss, just wanting it, which was still so odd.

Those eyes stared right at him, the kiss deep and sweet and stealing his breath.

They just weren't much for playing games, were they? Either kissing or killing. Sonny'd go with MJ as far as Florida, then they'd go their own ways long enough to get some work done.

But if MJ didn't drive right down and get him with that sexy assed 'stang when he was done?

Sonny was gonna get more morphine.

## Chapter Ten

MJ could smell as they got close to shore. Florida was out there. Waiting. Fuck.

He and Sonny hadn't said much, had fucked like bunnies and watched the skies. He needed to get off soon. In fact, he'd be picked up off the boat right before dawn; the little boat was due at five. He'd head straight up the coast for a few billion hours, then across to Detroit for equipment, then to Seattle to deliver a couple of packages.

Boom. Boom. Boom.

Sonny rolled over, big body stretching, muscles sliding under skin and fuzz. "You're already on the job, huh?"

It wasn't a complaint, from what he could tell. Just an observation.

"Planning it, yeah." It used to be easier.

"Yeah?" One leg drawn up, Sonny sat up against the headboard, sorta watching him curiously, head tilted. "Why?"

"It's a big one. Bigger than any others I've done. Used to feel less serious. Less like ... working."

"Well, maybe it just didn't seem so much like they'd break your legs if you *didn't* do it." He got a grin now, those pitch colored eyes twinkling for him. "You know, that makes it a little more pressing."

Break his legs? Dude. They'd remove his spleen with their teeth. "You think?"

"Oh, yeah. I mean, me? I just run the risk of going to jail. Or you know. Getting cracked up in an accident."

"No accidents. No cracking. Jail I can spring you from." He winked over. "You owe me a road trip."

"I do." Sonny shifted again, teasing him. He knew it. MJ'd learned the signals by now. "In your car, you said, though mine would be good too."

"I haven't gotten a chance to see yours yet." And that was a shame. "You staying at the Wilmington house?"

"I can use it as a base, sure. That way you can find me." Grinning, Sonny shrugged. Those shoulders ... he could fucking rhapsodize about those. "I'll have to get away from the coast to find a new base, but that'll be day trips, maybe overnight."

"Cool. I contacted the real estate lady. You're officially a tenant. Called you ... Uh. Mr. Sol. She'll be nice."

Sonny hooted. "Well, why didn't you tell me you'd just planned my time? Do I have tea with your momma, too?"

"I haven't planned any fucking thing. I just figured you'd rather spend your felonious time on your work than on looking for a place to stay." Like his mother would have *anything* to do with Sonny. She'd read his aura, threaten to give him a high colonic, and start burning sage.

"Uh-huh. You're pacing, Precious." Bastard. Laughing at him.

"I am not. I'm thinking." He didn't pace. Fucker.

"I knew I smelled smoke." Okay, Sonny hadn't pushed like this in days. Maybe weeks. How long had they been in Jamaica, for Christ's sake?

"Suck my ass, man." What kind of decent comeback could you have to that one? He'd heard it for years—years—and there wasn't anything cool to say back.

"I have. Come on over and I will." Sonny had, too. First day on the ship. The man's mouth blew his mind. "Unless you need to pace some more."

"I have to keep my thighs strong and tight, you know?" He went though, didn't he? Of course he did.

"You do. Lord knows, MJ, you have fucking amazing legs. C'mere and show 'em off." As soon as he got close those hands were on him, pulling him into their bunk. It smelled like sex. Strongly.

His thighs went tight and hard, sort of like his cock, but less 'bounce, bounce, notice me' and more 'hello, I'm a big, bad stud'.

"Uhn." Sonny bent, bit one, teeth sinking into his muscle. Those big hands cupped his ass, pulling him close.

He growled, head falling back at the burn. He wasn't going to pull away though. Hell, no. Not a chan ... Oh. Oh, fuck yes. "Hungry bastard."

"Always. I tell you, Precious. If I coulda got my hands on more drugs..." Long, heavy licks traced the join of his thigh and torso.

"Not gonna get to drug me again." Fuck, that felt good.

"Oh. You think?" Ow. Well, more like ooh. But also ... damn. The man was gonna eat him alive. Sonny laughed against the side of his cock, those teeth grazing his most sensitive skin.

"I know." Fuck, his prick was just begging for it, bobbing up and down like one of those scary puppet things. The whole puppet idea went away as Sonny pulled him up to straddle that wide chest, sucking him like there was no tomorrow, mouth hot and wet and taking him all in.

He might have started babbling, started groaning and making promises and shit. He didn't know. It didn't matter. All that mattered was that mouth on him. Sonny gave it to him, too, putting extra oomph into it, sucking him until he thought his brains might leak out his ears. His balls drew up tight-tight, hips pushing furiously, fucking Sonny's mouth in deep, quick bursts.

"Mmmhmm." The sound vibrated around him, went right up his spine as Sonny gripped his ass, Sonny's thumbs spreading his cheeks, pushing his hole.

He pushed back against that touch, jerking as he was stretched, come just pouring out of him in a rush.

The mouth. God, that mouth. Sonny just took it all, licked him clean, this long, happy growl making his skin tingle.

"Mmm..." He rippled, happy little sounds pulled right out of him.

He finally slipped out of Sonny's mouth, settling back against Sonny's waist. "Oh, that was way better than watching you pace, MJ," Sonny said, grinning up at him.

He rubbed his fingers against those lips, shaking his head. "Yeah. Yeah, your mouth is something."

"I'm a little oral, you know?" Nipping the pads of his fingers, Sonny grinned. "So, you jumping ship?"

He was surprised into telling the truth. "In a couple hours, yeah."

"Yeah. You looked like you were gonna go over the side." Giving him a casual shove, Sonny got up and went to get a beer out of the mini-fridge. "Asshole."

"Just a working man." He settled, just watching for a minute. Man, he'd spent six weeks fucking this man and Sonny didn't even know his real name. Fucking bizarre, how life worked.

Guzzling the beer, Sonny wandered back over, handing him one, too. "Yeah, yeah. I know. Same here. Shit, I just been enjoying the time off, is all."

"Yeah. Me, too. I'm thinking this next paycheck could buy a lot of time off."

"It could." Shit. Cold. Asshole pressed that beer bottle right to his belly, making him yelp. "I was thinking of selling out my interest to Woody."

"Yeah? You and Woody a thing?" Not that he was jealous.

"We used to be." The shrug didn't have that elaborate casualness that Sonny gave MJ when he was lying. "He said I was too combative."

"You? Combative?" He snorted, trying to figure out if they had time for him to make Sonny scream before the boat came. "You're a pussycat."

"Oh, sure I am. Real sweet. Kind to my aging grandma, good to my parakeet. Problem is, I tend to order Woody around, and he can handle that as a partner, not as a lover." He got a wink and a grin, Sonny giving him a hops-y kiss.

"You have a parakeet? For real?" He smiled into the kiss, sucking Sonny's bottom lip. That was somehow extremely cool.

"I do. I've got finches, too. I have this little Vietnamese lady who feeds them." Sonny rolled them, his beer bottle bouncing away, spewing foam.

"You'll have to show me. I want to see your life." The kiss got a little desperate, a little sharp around the edges.

Sonny's cock prodded his hip, one heavy thigh spreading both of his so Sonny could rub on him. "You will, Precious. If you're not back to me when I think you should be? I'm coming for you. Remember that."

"I'll count on it." His hand found Sonny's hip, started rocking them together.

"Uh-huh. Yeah." One hand cupped the back of his neck, the other his ass. "Harder."

"Uh-huh." He squeezed, moaning into Sonny's mouth. Yeah. More.

"Yes. Please." That cock left a wet trail on his skin, Sonny starting to sweat, skin beading up.

"You want me?" Willing? One more time?

"I do. Yeah. Fuck, yes." Sonny kissed him, leaving his lips burning, tingling.

He nodded, spread himself until his thighs burned. "Nobody else."

"Good. Where the hell did we leave the..." Sonny reached beside the bunk, scrabbled through a little drawer that had a latch.

"Don't tell me you lost it." He leaned up, started licking and nipping whatever skin he could find.

"No, I know it's ... ha. There it is." Sonny came back with a condom and lube just about the time his lips wrapped around one nipple. "Fuck!"

"Mmmhmm." Good and hard, so he could feel it tomorrow.

The condom landed on his chest, Sonny using both hands to get the lube open, moving back to push two fingers right into him, no waiting, no easing into it. He managed to get the condom open, hips moving, riding that touch.

"Gonna make you feel it, MJ. Feel me."

He was already feeling it, his nerve endings firing as Sonny found the little gland inside him and touched it.

He nodded, moaning. "Yeah. Yeah, Sunshine. Want you."

"Soon. Get you open. Ready." Sonny's cock bobbed for him, red, wet, so good. They smelled good.

He got the rubber slid down over Sonny's prick, fingers working the shaft.

"God. Can't wait. Can't." Pulling free, Sonny slicked his cock up, slapping MJ's hand away, pushing right up against his hole.

It ached, burned so fucking good all the way down to his balls. "Sonny. Fuck."

"That's the plan, Precious." That thick cock stretched him, Sonny's chest heaving above him, those eyes never leaving his.

He stared back, just watching, hips moving in desperate little circles. Going to fucking remember this.

Lip sucked in between his teeth, Sonny rode MJ hard, pushing in and out, hips smacking against him. He could see every flex and draw of muscle, could see the pulse beating in Sonny's throat.

Beautiful. He rolled into each thrust, toes curling tight, one hand reaching for Sonny.

Hot, hot skin, damp with sweat, met his touch, Sonny arching into it, panting and cussing. "Fuck. More, MJ. More. Goddamn."

"Yes. So fine." He got hold of Sonny's nipples, twisted, tugged.

"Shit! MJ..." The moan came long, loud, more of a growl, and Sonny just went crazy. Those hips lost all rhythm, all finesse, Sonny driving into him, jerking, finally shaking. And yeah. Kinda screaming as he came.

Sexy bastard.

He leaned forward, head on Sonny's shoulder.

Sonny stroked him, ran his fingers through MJ's hair. "You okay, man?"

"Yeah. You?"

"Fuck, yes. I think I might die happy." That soft chuckle stirred his hair, but there was nothing in it but ... damn.

"I'll be back in six weeks. Looking for you."

"I'll be there, Precious," Sonny said, rubbing his back, pulling him up for a kiss. "Waiting."

"Yeah." He nodded. "You'd better be."

He sighed, tried to ignore the ticking of his watch. Yeah, the man'd better be.

## Chapter Eleven

"Hi, honey! I'm home!" Sonny called out, knowing Woody was at the little house in Wilmington, waiting for him. He'd seen the man's car out there, a dark blue Chevy Impala jacked to Jesus with improvements.

"Sonny! Jesus, man, I was thinking you were gone for good."

Woody came bounding up as Sonny dropped his duffel on the floor, grinning, his light blue eyes shining. Woody enveloped Sonny in a tight-tight hug before pulling back to look at him. And planting a wet kiss on his mouth.

Pulling back, hands on Woody's chest, Sonny stared at the man. "What the fuck was that for?"

"What? I missed you, man."

"Well, we haven't been that kind of friendly in years." Vaguely uncomfortable, Sonny backed off even more. "You find a new spot for the operation?"

"I have a few in mind. Want you to come look at them."

"I trust you, man." He really didn't want to break it to Woody his first day back, but the idea of selling out his interest in the business had more and more appeal. Hell, he might just become a man of leisure, let MJ support him. The thought made him grin, feeling all evil and shit.

"What's that about?" Woody asked.

"What? Oh, I was just thinking about someone. So how are my birds?" He really did have birds.

"Hell if I know. Mrs. Tho is still cashing her checks."

He'd have to go see Mrs. Tho in Raleigh, visit his place. Maybe close it up. He'd hate to have to get rid of his birds, but lord knew he never saw them anymore. Mrs. Tho would probably take them without pay, or at least take them if he gave her a nice lump sum. She liked them a lot.

"Earth to Sonny."

"Huh?" He looked up to find Woody watching him with the weirdest expression. Sonny stretched. "Sorry, man, still in vacation mode."

"No kidding. Look at you, all brown and shit. Where were you again?" Woody grabbed his duffel up off the floor and took it to the little bedroom for him, kinda ... pacing. Flitting from place to place. It was weird as hell.

"Jamaica. Woody, are you okay?"

"No. You've been gone too long, and I sold the shipment, and you know, I just..." Woody trailed off, grinning a little, looking more like him. "Sorry, man, I'm not used to going it alone. Need you here to order me around."

Okay, that made him all restless. Maybe now wasn't the time to tell Woody his plans. "Yeah, well, you're better than you think. So tell me how much we got."

They got down to business, Sonny pushing the desire to just go out and stare at the beach aside. No wondering where MJ was right now. Six weeks. He just had to wait six weeks.

He could do that.

He surely could.

\* \* \* \*

The store door still sounded the same, a jingle and a tinkle that his mom called fairy bells before the wave of patchouli and sandalwood smacked him, made his eyes water. Christ, Mom must be toking. Good thing any asshole who wanted herbs, crystals, and candles to stick in your ears was probably mary jane friendly, or she'd be fucked.

"You here?"

"Baby boy? Is it you? It *is*! Lord and lady above, I thought you couldn't stop." MJ grinned at his mom—stick-thin and grey, stoned eyes just staring out at him like he was a vision.

"I wasn't sure I could, but I had an hour or two. How's Dad?"

She shrugged, smile a little sad. "The same. You still working hard?"

They had the nicest little agreement going. She pretended that his money was conjured up in Druidic rituals; he pretended that Dad's mind hadn't disappeared from the Alzheimer's eight years ago and that the man was sitting at home instead of in a home.

"I'm considering retirement, Ma. That's one reason I stopped. There's a chance I'll be out of pocket for a while." A long while, possibly. The more he thought about it, the better the visual of Sonny and a boat and the open sea sounded. Just sex and sea and open sky.

"Yeah? You don't think you'd come back here?"

"No, Ma. I'm thinking overseas for a while. Don't worry. You know me. I'll always be in touch and your account ... Well, I'll take care of it." He reached out, cupped her cheek in

his hand. "You look tired, Ma. You need to lay off the weed for a while. Let your body recover."

She gave him a smile, quick and lively and familiar to his bones. "And you need to find a good man to give you a reason to make a home."

Right. Well. Somehow he didn't think his mom would quite understand his meth-dealing, whiskey-soaked, hunting-and-fishing redneck hang-up. "Yeah, Ma. I do."

As soon as he filled up the 'stang, bought some C-4 and some hollow-tips and went to make sure that oil rig never left dock.

He was all about reasons.

\* \* \* \*

In ten years of doing what he did, whenever that tingle happened in the back of his neck, he knew he was fucked.

Not in trouble. Not in a bind. Not about to fight with a crazy, gun-toting asshole in North Carolina.

Fucked.

Like bent over a rusty pickup tailgate with a bunch of drooling frat boys punching your ass without lube fucked.

He'd felt it about ten minutes after the charges blew, his 'stang buzzing down the highway like a junior varsity cheerleader on her first red. He'd seen that truck before.

Seen it three times, in fact.

Seen the gap-toothed Neanderthal driving, too, in the parking lot of a Subway two days ago, eating a spicy Italian and pretending to read a three-day old USA Today.

Goddamn it.

He pulled off the highway, headed away from the blast, knowing that the cops would already be buzzing and whirring, trying to look important for the cameras, so he could push the speed some. The damned blue truck exited, too, coming closer, close enough that he could hear the rumble of the diesel over the sound of the radio.

Shit. Okay, come on. What do you know about Seattle? What do you know about it? Come on, MJ. Think.

He peeled around a corner, heading toward the darkness, toward fewer people and fewer...

Goddamn.

The asshole in the truck gunned the engine, clipping his rear left bumper and sending him fishtailing. He squeezed the steering wheel, trying to go with it, let himself work with the skid and keep the 'stang barreling forward.

Another slam and he heard something in the back end crunch and grind. Fuck him. He slammed around a corner, worry turning to ice-cold fury tinged with fear. The road opened up and he took a deep breath. He could do this. He could make it.

MJ gunned it, hurtling along the street. He'd have been fine, too, if not for the car that squealed into the intersection, stopping right there, the driver bailing and running as his tires left skid-marks. Right there where all he could do was brace himself.

Brace himself and pray.

\* \* \* \*

So. Six weeks had come and gone. Then eight. Too damned many. No word from MJ.

Fucking bastard. Fucking goddamned son of a bitch asshole. Sonny had been good. He hadn't tried to call. He'd handled his birds. He'd dealt with setting up a new shop for Woody, one the guy could carry on without him. He'd gotten cars fixed up and looked into boats and now MJ was ... what? Standing him up? Deciding he was better off without his own personal redneck?

No way. No way. Sonny did the dumping if there was dumping to do, and he wasn't ready to be shed of MJ yet. Far from it.

"I'll just have to track the bastard down and kidnap him again," he muttered, stuffing a pair of jeans in his rucksack.

"Huh?" Woody asked, wandering in, blue eyes a little cloudy with sleep. Sonny grinned fondly. Man still looked best when he woke up in the morning, sandy hair all floppy and eyes like a summer sky.

"I need to go, man. I have some calls to make, but I'm out."

"What? Why?" Poor guy looked so confused. Maybe a little scared.

Sonny tilted his head. "Woody, man. You've been doing this without me a long time."

"No, I haven't." Woody came over and put both hands on Sonny's shoulders. "You mean you're out of Asheville, right? To go find that ... guy." That upper lip curled a little. Sonny ignored it.

"I mean that, too." Now was as good as ever. "But I'm turning the rest over to you, man. All of it. Well, not the car. And I still want the cabin up here. But you can have my place in Raleigh. And the one bolt hole out in Tennessee."

Those hands tightened on his shoulders enough that he heard joints grind. Ow. Woody's mouth fell open. Man, morning breath.

"No way. No fucking way. We've been doing this too long."

Yeah. They'd been friends for twelve years, lovers for five, and in business for eight. It kinda surprised Sonny how easy it was to give it up. But it was.

"I'm sorry, Wood. I am. But man, I gotta go." He shrugged Woody's hands off, going back to packing. "I mean it's not like I won't call. I'll keep in touch and shit. And you can use me as a bouncing board or whatever you call it. A sounding thing. Whatever."

"Where are you going, at least?" Woody moved to sit on the bed that his duffel was on, leaning back on his elbows like a casual man. Sonny saw the tension, though, and sighed, sitting, too.

"I'm not sure. West coast somewhere. His job was supposed to be near Seattle. Look, Wood, you know it's not you..."

"No. It's him." Woody shrugged. "But that's neither here nor there, I guess."

"Don't, man." He punched Woody's shoulder. "Just don't, okay? Now, are you gonna help me find him or not?"

He got this look, long and steady and kinda ... closed up. Then Woody nodded. "Sure, Sonny. Sure. Don't I always do what's best for you?"

Bouncing up, Sonny nodded, grinning to beat the band. He'd hunt MJ's ass down, and he'd find him, and he'd fuck him into the middle of next week. Asshole. Trying to get away. Sonny packed a box of Twinkies for the flight, clapping Woody on the back as he went back and forth.

"Yeah, Wood," he said. "You always take care of me."

\* \* \* \*

"No, I'm almost to Portland," Sonny said, peering around the corner of the truck stop, just to make sure no one was watching. "That guy you hooked me up with knew his shit, Woody. Would you believe someone besides me kidnapped the man?"

He listened to Woody rant and rave about how dangerous and stupid it was to be planning a charge into the woods where armed men were holding MJ and thought about the last couple of days. Long flight to Seattle. Even longer day in a hotel making calls to people. There was this one guy, Donnie? Dorkus? Somebody. Anyway, the guy had told him about this eco-terrorist he'd heard about who'd gotten caught by the investors of some fucking whaling ship MJ had sunk or something.

Jesus, the man had more enemies than Batman. And more lives than Catwoman, because damned if Doofus hadn't said MJ was still alive.

Racing the Moon  
*by BA Tortuga*

"Woody, hush. I'm gonna do it. Yeah. Can't wait for you to meet him. I think you'll like him. Right. See you in Asheville in about a week. Later."

It'd be a lot less if MJ would just fly.

Maybe he should get some more morphine.

## Chapter Twelve

Fuck.

Okay.

MJ rolled his eyes, trying to focus, trying to get his shit together.

It would be a hell of a lot easier if there wasn't a fucking wall right there. In front of his fucking nose. Like a coffin.

Okay.

No thinking about coffins.

None.

At all.

If he was fucking dead he wouldn't be hurting so goddamn much and he'd be happier and fucking haunting whoever ratted him out and got him double-crossed.

Double-crossed and pistol-whipped.

Double-crossed, pistol-whipped and tasered.

That sounded a lot like a song title.

Well, it would work better if tasered had three syllables. Taser-touched. Taser-nudged. Taser-zapped.

Oh, taser-zapped.

That would work.

Double-crossed, pistol-whipped and taser-zapped.

Christ, he had to get out of here. Now.

Just about the time he started to wiggle like a fish on a hook, he heard the poppoppop of gunfire, one of the slugs punching a hole in the door a foot above his head. He knew because he saw light.

Oh, fuck him raw.

He started slamming his shoulder against the door, the cuffs pulling like all hell with every jerk. Better to die out there than in here.

The sounds out there were just fucking fascinating. Maybe those bastards were killing each other. Of course, then he would starve to death, and that would suck hard.

The door flew open on one of his rushes at it, spilling him out on the floor, the bright light stinging his eyes.

Oh, fuck, yes.

Better.

Much better.

He started moving without even looking up, just wiggling and heading toward a door.

Rough hands caught at him, yanked him up, his numb feet refusing to hold him. His back hit the wall, and something hard and heavy pushed into his belly, his weight rising up off the floor, his legs and arms dangling. None of the guys who'd kidnapped him were that strong...

"Time to go, Precious."

"Sonny."

He just relaxed, something a lot like disbelief—or maybe it was relief—crashing over him.

He was either the luckiest asshole on Earth or hallucinating.

Either one worked.

"We'll talk later, yeah?"

He bounced as Sonny beat feet. They made it almost all the way to the big car Sonny dumped him into before someone started shooting. He landed half against the

passenger door, one leg over the console. Sonny shoved at him, getting him across before taking off like a fucking bat out of hell.

He wriggled until he was sort of upright, blinking as the road just zipped by. "Where are we? I had a place about hundred miles east of Seattle, but they kept moving me."

"We're near Olympia. We'll head to Portland. I figure Idaho, Utah, catch seventy and head across. We can angle south later. If I give you a pocket knife can you cut yourself loose?"

Sonny sounded so ... normal. Kinda jazzed.

"They're police cuffs, man. You found me." He blinked over, staring.

Sonny.

His Sonny.

Fuck.

"Like metal, or plastic riot?" They hit the interstate; he could tell by the way they sped, by the smooth whump of road under the wheels.

"Metal." Uncomfortable as fuck, too. He sank down a little in the seat, bending his elbows. "What day is it?"

"September second." Sonny kept checking the rearview, watching their tail. "I got your kit. Is there anything in there that works on cuffs?"

"Uh-huh. There's a ring of keys. One'll fit." Oh, fucking cool. "September second? Damn."

"Yeah, Precious. You don't write, you don't call." They slowed, Sonny pulling off at the next exit, taking the off ramp

too fast, but making it. They pulled into a huge truck stop, the smell of diesel strong enough to make him gag.

"Okay. Okay, let me get you loose."

"Fuck, yes. Please." He turned, twisting to offer Sonny his wrists. They fucking hurt.

Sonny grunted, dug around in the backseat before he heard the click, and damned if the cuffs didn't come loose. "There. You'll have to get your own feet."

"Kay. You okay? I heard the shots." His fucking shoulders screamed as he moved, his eyes just tearing up against the pain.

"I ... I hope you can drive for a while, Precious..." Sonny didn't sound jazzed now. In fact he sounded fucking weird. When MJ looked over, Sonny was kinda slumped in the driver's seat, eyes crossing a little.

"Fuck." He reached out, trying to get his fingers to move, to fucking *work*. "Where the hell were you hit, man?"

Don't you fucking pass out on me, you motherfucker.

"My ribs. Back right side. Fuck, MJ." Sonny's chest heaved, but the short, sharp breaths didn't sound wet, at least.

"Okay. Hospital. Right. Feet. I'll get you to somewhere and drop you off." He couldn't fucking go in a hospital looking like he did. They'd call the fucking cops. Cops. Shit. No. No, with the gunshot wound they'd ask questions.

Fuck him.

"No! Jesus. They report this shit to the police, Precious. We can. God. We can clean up here. They have showers. You can wrap me up." Yeah, like either of them could walk.

"Yeah, yeah. Fuck. We need a goddamn hotel room." He finally got his fucking feet loose, yanking the metal off his torn up skin. Okay. Okay. Come on. Think. "All right. Here's the plan. I'll wrap you up. Take you to a hotel and make you comfortable." Then he was going to get in the shower and stay there.

For a month.

"Okay. Yeah. Okay. Your fan club will try to find us. We'll have to park the car out of sight." See? Sonny could think. He was shot, and he could think.

"Yeah." He got the car door open and explained, very carefully, to his legs that he was going to walk around the car and drive. They could be all shaky and psycho later. Right now, the options were working or getting put back in a dark closet. Right. No closets. Up. Moving. Go legs.

Damn. Sonny was listing to port. Badly. The man was panting like a hot dog, eyes closing on a grimace. "Sorry, MJ ... thought I could go a few more miles..."

"It's okay, Sunshine. It's okay. Tell me you filled up the morphine supply. Get in the backseat. I'll get the bleeding stopped." He stood, not fucking swaying, damn it. "And pop the trunk so I can get my bag."

"Okay." Sonny did everything he asked, moving like a fucking zombie. "I got all sorts of shit. We get stopped by the cops, we're fucked."

"We won't get stopped." He took four Vicodin dry, then drew up a syringe of morphine and grabbed some wadding. "Gonna dope you up and tie your chest up. Any sewing can wait until I find a room."

He gave the shot right through Sonny's jeans, not waiting for the man to argue.

"Not gonna be much good to you, Precious. Not ... oh. Man. That feels better already."

"You got me loose. I'm surprisingly self-sufficient." He ripped Sonny's shirt open, looking at the wound. A through-and-through; excellent. He started packing the wound, working as fast as he could.

"Fuck. Jesus, gimme a drink, will you?" But Sonny took it well, gripping the backseat and just sweating bullets, but not screaming or anything. That tanned skin looked pale as hell, but otherwise Sonny looked pretty good.

"You drink on top of that shot and you'll puke all over the car. I'm almost done. Looks real clean. Didn't nick anything major. You just stop bleeding, 'kay?" He started wrapping, praying that nothing inside was torn up.

"You got it, Precious. I'll just nip that in the bud." The exaggerated drawl Sonny said it with had him cracking a grin.

"Good boy." He dug out two Valium and popped them in Sonny's mouth. "I'm gonna drive a while, man. Sleep."

"Okay. Get us someplace good. Big bed ... tub." The words started to slur, Sonny gone already.

"Uh-huh. I'll find something." He got the door shut, got himself settled in the driver's seat, wrinkling his nose as Sonny's blood seeped through his torn T-shirt from the seat. What a fucking mess.

MJ pulled out just as the highway patrol pulled in. A fucking mess, but they were moving and he'd be damned if they got caught.

He was never getting caught again.

\* \* \* \*

Sonny woke up feeling like he'd been beaten with a baseball bat. By Jose Canseco in all of his steroid glory, maybe. His body ached in places he didn't know he had places. He tried to roll over on his back, stiffening as screaming pain stopped him. As long as he stayed still he was okay, if stiff. "Precious?"

"Yeah?" MJ was slumped in a chair by the window, the fading sunlight shadowing the man's face. "You need another shot, man?"

"Where are you?" He could barely see the man, damn it, and he wanted ... well, he wanted to make sure it was really MJ, and that he was really in one piece. "Get your ass over here."

"Bossy asshole." MJ stood up, moving slow and careful, holding himself like he was blown from glass, but moving. The shadows made the man look all fucking mottled and bruised.

"Damn it, and I didn't even get to do it to you." Sonny tried to laugh, groaned instead. "Only bruises you should wear are mine."

"No shit. I had a lot more fun fighting with you, Sunshine." MJ got a pill bottle, shook out a few. "Here, take a couple of these. They'll take the edge off."

Then MJ settled right there beside him, close enough to touch.

"You okay, though?" he asked, chewing the pills down. "Not pissing blood or anything?"

Sonny reached out, carefully settling his hand on MJ's thigh.

"More sore than anything. Got a broken rib, maybe a cracked shoulder blade. Nothing major." MJ reached out, touched his arm. "I shot you up with some penicillin and stitched you up some. Looks real clean."

"Cool. If I stay still, I'm good." Yeah, he was actually pretty good right here, touching Precious, knowing they'd made it. He started laughing.

MJ was just staring at him, sort of wide-eyed and dazed. "You'll hurt yourself."

"I know. I know. But if you could have seen me riding to the rescue ... I was a little out of my mind, Precious. I'm amazed we're alive." God, that hurt, but it meant he was there, alive.

"How'd you find me, man? Hell, I thought..." MJ shook his head, eyes moving back to the window.

Man, after being locked up like that? MJ deserved a camp out. Somewhere with no walls at all. Sonny stroked him. "I know some people. I put out the word. Goddamn, it wasn't easy."

"Glad you did, though. Somebody set me up." MJ stretched out beside him, nose almost touching his. "Hey."

"Hey." Sonny rolled on his good side, just a little, enough to be able to see MJ better. His breath huffed out, but he just grabbed a pillow to prop himself up.

MJ frowned, hands sliding over him, settling him right down. "You good, Sunshine? I don't want you pulling those stitches."

"No, I'm fine. I just need ... well, I don't want to crowd you, MJ. But damn." He was hungry for the touches.

"Crowd me?" MJ scooted closer, eyes searching his. Those hands kept moving, kept petting him and searching him and learning him.

"Uh-huh. Make you feel closed in." He touched, too, his free arm moving so he could slide his hand up MJ's back and his ribs, careful to avoid the heavily wrapped area.

"I'll mention if I do." MJ leaned in, brushed their lips together, and then slid that hot tongue over his lips.

"Mmm." Oh, God, yeah. He'd been furious when MJ hadn't shown, then scared, then determined to find him. Now he had MJ, and Sonny took a kiss that made him hurt ... but hurt so good.

A deep, sweet sound pushed into his lips, MJ's fingers sliding right around the back of his head. When he tried to push closer they both grunted, all sorts of shit pulling and aching, but Sonny wasn't giving this up. No way.

No fucking way.

"Easy. Easy. Don't want to fucking lose you." The words were just growled against his lips before that tongue pushed deep.

Nope. No one was losing anyone now. Not now. Tasting MJ deep gave him a hint of orange juice and a slight taste of toothpaste, but no weird banana things. MJ's lips wrapped around his tongue, sucking just a little, eyes closing as MJ hummed. Mmm. Good. God, it was good. His hand settled at the base of MJ's neck, holding them together so he could bite a little, beg a little with lips and tongue.

Those hands were enough to make him purr, fingers on his nipples, on his back, just teasing his balls. It wasn't enough to make him ache, but fuck, it felt good.

It felt right.

Sonny had given up letting that make him feel weird.

They pulled apart just to breathe, maybe to look at each other. MJ's lashes had blond ends. His cheeks were all flushed, his face a study in bruises.

"You did it up right, Precious."

"They were waiting for me, man. They knew just where to find me." MJ sighed, frowned, then shook his head. "Doesn't matter right now. You found me."

"Mmmhmm. Kiss me some more so I know how happy you are." He grinned, his nails scraping the back of MJ's neck.

"I can do that."

That was no lie. One kiss slid into another into another, just sweet as shit. It made him, well, not hard. He wasn't sure if he could do that right now. But he could sure enough do kissing. He could do more touching, too, finding welts and scrapes and loving on them.

Seemed to work just fine for MJ, too. The man relaxed, just sort of oozed against him. They kissed lazily, like it was a mimosa Sunday and they had all the time in the world. Lord knew they probably didn't. They'd have to get moving. Not now, but soon. Sonny ignored the thought, taking another kiss, then another.

MJ started shaking some, the adrenaline rush finally dissipating and letting his Precious go.

"Mmm. Yeah, yeah, it's all right," he murmured against MJ's mouth. "It's all good."

"Yeah. I know. You came." MJ nodded, breathing against his chin, his jaw.

"I did. Soon as I sleep a little I'm gonna come, too." He laughed again, thinking of how beat to hell they were.

MJ started chuckling, tongue licking at his lips. "In the morning, we'll have to drive."

"I know. We should have pancakes first. I have clothes for us. Shit." Stuff he couldn't remember. God, his head was logy. "Money. Cards and all."

"Cool. We have to have a shower, too." MJ hummed, one hand curled around his waist. "You smell fucking good, though."

"Yeah? Not like a skanky whore's bed?" He grinned, nuzzling even closer, ignoring the twinges. "You make a pretty wounded hero."

"I didn't think I was playing the hero." MJ's belly was hot, smooth against him.

"No, like in a bad movie ... the wounded. Oh, never mind." It wasn't worth it. They could fight later, when he had energy. He looked forward to it, in fact.

MJ chuckled. "Man, one day we'll have to watch a movie together."

"Or go out for Chinese. This whole meeting with blood and guts all over us? So getting to me." He grinned wildly. Fuck, who was he kidding? Adrenaline was his friend.

"Mmm. A little blood's okay. No more guts."

Racing the Moon  
*by BA Tortuga*

"No shit." He licked MJ's lips again, feeling how firm they were, how hot. Savoring.

MJ's eyelids started drooping, breath slowing. "Sunshine."

"Sleep, Precious. We'll work the rest out tomorrow." His own breathing started to even out, taking on the rhythm of sleep.

"Mmmhmm." MJ settled, legs tangled with his, hand keeping him close.

They would sleep. Get their strength back. Then they'd hit the road and fight and fuck all the way to Florida.

All they had to do was make it to the boat.

Then it was anywhere they wanted to go.

### Chapter Thirteen

He'd managed to coax Sonny into the back seat and get the man doped and comfortable. Then he'd hit the road, heading east.

He wasn't sure where he was going, but it didn't fucking matter, so long as he kept going until he could figure out what the hell to do about finding the fucker who'd betrayed him and paying said fucker a little visit.

With a sledgehammer.

A sledgehammer and a pickaxe and possibly a boiling oil enema.

Oh, man. That would be gross.

Asshole would deserve it, but still.

Damn.

"Are we there yet, Precious?" Sonny's voice came, thick and groggy, but awake. Maybe it was time to stop and take a leak.

"Yeah. Let's stop and stretch." Dude, it was after two already. "You hungry?"

"Possibly. Or I could just need to pass my stomach out through my esophagus. Either way, I could use grease." Warm fingers ghosted over his neck.

"Oh, man. That's fairly gross." He leaned back toward the touch, wanting more of it.

"Uh-huh. I feel gross." He got more than just a hand as Sonny leaned up and kissed his nape. "Stop somewhere quiet, Precious."

His moan surprised him. He couldn't quite believe the way things had gone. Of course, believing was way cooler than not, so he was sticking with that.

"Yeah." The chuckle caused a little breeze. "Come on, let's eat and make out a bit."

"Looks like there's some little drive-in coming up. We'll order and find a place to park, yeah?" Like Sonny was up to making out in the car.

"That sounds like a plan. I can see if you're pissing blood, you can see if I need to puke ... ah, ain't life grand." Well, at least Sonny seemed cheerful enough.

"You're heading to that gross place again, man." Besides, the blood was getting better.

"Yeah, yeah, feed me then. It has to be a product of the drug-induced euphoria." He could hear Sonny rustling, but couldn't quite figure out what he was up to.

"Hamburger and fries?" Or maybe those chicken finger things that either tasted like fish or onions, but came with mustard sauce. Mustard sauce actually sounded good. Mustard and pretzels and ... Oh. Corny dog.

"What have they ... oh. Chocolate shake. And do they have corny dogs?" Lord, a man after his own heart. MJ could even forgive the Twinkies now.

"Yeah. Two chocolate shakes. Two corn dogs. Two tater tots." He dug out some cash, wiggling and stretching.

He heard a hum, Sonny crowding his headrest, hands on his shoulders. "Did you get extra mustard?"

"I'll ask when they bring the food. How's your side, Sunshine?"

"Not as bad as it was. Pulling like crazy. How's your ribs?" Oh, that felt good. MJ's head dropped forward as Sonny rubbed his sore muscles.

"Sore. Don't stop." He let his head rest on the steering wheel half a second.

"Not gonna until the food comes. You're like rock, Precious. You're a good egg." A good egg. He almost started laughing hysterically.

"It's chilly up this far north, huh? Even in September. I bet there's snow up here." Snow. Ice. Serious white shit. Like eggs. Jesus fucking Christ.

"It is. Too cold for this chicken." Chickens. They had a theme.

"Gobble, gobble." Wait. That was turkeys, right?

"Oh, my very own white meat," Sonny said, laughing.

The carhop came up just then, giving them one hell of a look.

"We need extra mustard." He was just rolling, laughing hard enough that it hurt. "And breath mints."

"And some of those bendy straws for the kids' cups." Oh, the kid just rolled those eyes at that, but he thought Sonny might start to hyperventilate.

"Yes. And napkins. You can *never* have enough napkins."

They waited just long enough to get all their shit, and tip the kid to be fair, before pulling around to the back. Sonny waved a hand up by his face. "Get your ass back here and eat with me."

"Have I mentioned that you're getting pushier the older you get?" He grabbed his shake and slid out to get in the back.

"Oh, yeah. An hour ago I was willing to let you be a few feet away." Of course an hour ago Sonny had been snoring like the Latvian Chainsaw Drill Team.

"Eat your corny dog." He tore open a mustard packet, getting his fingers all yellow.

Sonny grabbed his hand and wiped it on his corny dog, stealing half the mustard. "Yeah. Okay. Mmm. Chocolate and ice cream. God love us."

He shook his head, chuckling as he licked his fingers clean. Ooh. Tart. Man. "Who said one of those was for you?"

"You wouldn't deny an injured man. You're the nice one."

He had to laugh. They'd argued that one in Jamaica, about how MJ hadn't left Sonny behind. Now he could tease Sonny right back for rescuing him.

"Man, you're a real hard ass. Driving across country. Getting shot. Finding me..." Man, that was deeply fucked-up, wasn't it? Sonny came.

Found him.

On purpose.

"Hey, I flew. Note, we're not in my car. And man, I have no idea where yours is." Leaning on him, Sonny shared space and food, both of them nibbling.

"I totaled it. That's how they got me." He stole a tater tot, free hand on Sonny's thigh. "You flew? You know that's unnatural, right?"

"Hey, eighteen hours versus five. I got here sooner. Good thing, too." Sonny leaned into his touch, making happy noises. "Oh, fuck, wait. They totaled your car? That's just wrong."

"Yeah." He wasn't sure which thing he was agreeing to, but it didn't matter right now. The whole thing sucked, except the whole Sonny part.

"Mmm." Sonny finished up his corny dog and licked his fingers, taking a mustardy kiss before sucking down part of his shake. "That's just the ticket."

That must mean that Sonny wasn't going to hurl. Cool. Wait. That was his shake.

MJ snorted, grabbed the one closer to Sonny. "Don't think I didn't see that."

He got a chuckle. "What? So, how long was I out?" Sonny had a free hand now. It was dangerous, skating over his body.

"It's mid-afternoon. You slept a bit." His cock threatened to fill, thighs parting as Sonny touched him.

Stroking up his thigh, Sonny pressed the heel of that hand against him, laughing soft and low. "You think you can, Precious?"

"My cock thinks it can. The rest of me is waiting to see." He rubbed a little, hips rolling carefully. Okay. Not too ow. Not too ow at all. "You gotta be careful, though."

"Okay. We can do careful." Easy, slow, Sonny opened his button and pulled his zipper down, warm hand sliding into his pants to pull his cock out. "Oh, Precious, I was dearly afraid

I'd never see this again. And lemme tell you, it's your best side."

"Hey!" He popped Sonny's ass. His face was a little gross right now, but it would heal and he'd be ... Oh. Oh, fuck, Sonny had the best hands...

"Like I don't have a thing for all of you." Uhn. He'd have to come back to that thought later, after Sonny stopped sliding a finger around the head of his prick, into the slit.

His head rolled, lips parted on a moan as his thighs went tight. "Oh."

"Uh-huh. You smell good, MJ. Feel good. God, if I could I'd fuck you so good..." Sonny made up for it by stroking him, loving on him, soft touches interspersed with firm.

"Soon. Soon we can." He leaned until he could get his mouth on Sonny's jaw. "Don't stop, Sunshine. I thought ... I mean. Just don't stop."

"Not gonna. Promise." No, Sonny wouldn't. That sweet mouth was cold on his neck, tongue freezing as it pushed against MJ's skin. Strong pulls came on his cock, Sonny's thumb running up the underside.

"Uhn." His toes curled up, nerves firing like mad. Oh. Oh, yes. Damn.

"Uh-huh. Pretty. God, MJ." He could hear the wet sound as Sonny licked his lips, could almost feel that whole big body strain toward his cock. Sonny was just a bit oral. Too bad his back wouldn't let him bend that way.

"Kiss me." Please. Now.

"Mmm." Leaning a little more, Sonny gave him what he'd asked for, tongue pushing in, driving him higher, making him

fly. Between the pressure of lips and tongue and the feel of Sonny pulling his prick, he might be overdoing it just a bit ... but who gave a damn?

Not him. Not even a bit.

His orgasm barreled through him like a freight train, making him arch and cry out.

"Shhh. I got you. Yeah. Fuck, MJ." Sonny petted him until he relaxed, breathing hard.

"Yeah." He nodded, face buried in Sonny's neck. "Yeah. Sunshine. Damn."

"Mmm. We might need a banana split after that." God, Sonny never quit. Not ever. MJ thought he might be able to live with that.

In fact, he thought he might just be learning to need it.

\* \* \* \*

Sonny looked over at the passenger seat where MJ slept away, mouth open and head back, pondering what time it was. They really ought to stop. He was aching, not anything sharp, but hurting anyway, and he wanted a bed. He'd pull off, find them a hotel, and if MJ could be gentle with him, maybe he'd get to come this time.

Checking the rearview automatically, Sonny pulled off at the next off ramp, seeing a sign for a Ho Jo and a Holiday Inn.

MJ's eyes popped open as soon as the car slowed, head snapping up like the man'd been shocked. "Time to stop?"

"Yeah. We've both put in enough drive hours." Nearly eighteen between them with just the nap at the drive-thru. "I want food, a shower, and you in bed."

"Hell, yes. I owe you an orgasm and I am starving." MJ's hand landed on his thigh. "How's the side?"

"Not bad. Just tight, you know?" It really wasn't bad. Itching like a son of a bitch, which was a good sign. "You?"

"I probably can't run a marathon, but I'm better. Ready to get my shit together, start thinking again."

"Yeah. Yeah, okay." There. The Holiday Inn sat a little more off the road than the Ho Jo, had a diner, and had parking around back. Sonny's brain cataloged all that while his body went sproing from MJ's unconscious touch, traveling up his thigh.

"You smell good." That hand moved higher. "This a rental car, or is it yours?"

"It's mine. I bought it off the lot at a used place, cash in hand. Checked out the engine first." Sonny spread his legs, cleared his throat. "You like it?"

"Yeah. It doesn't suck at all. Want to see your car, though." His balls were cupped, rolled a little.

He nodded, his breath coming in hard as he pulled into the lot at the Holiday Inn and found them a nice, out-of-the-way spot. "I want it back, too. This one is a little spongy in the steering. Fuck, Precious, that feels good. I must be better."

"Good. It's been too fucking long since I had you in my mouth." Oh, fuck, Precious was *awake* and wanting.

"Uh-huh." It came out weak, breathless, and Sonny shifted in his seat, his hips rising and falling. "We need a room, Precious, and I might offend someone like this."

'Like this' was about as hard as he'd ever been, just like that.

"Yeah. I want you naked." MJ squeezed his cock, moaning. "I'll get us set up."

"Kay. I'll..." Sit here in the car and jack off? Hump the steering wheel until you get back? Sonny laughed. "I'll get the bag."

"Cool." MJ got up, got moving. There was still a hitch in the man's get-along, a little limp, but MJ was in one fucking piece. Which suited his ass down to the ground. Sonny really did sit there for a few minutes, idly rubbing his cock through his jeans, frankly amazed that it was still there and working. Not amazed that MJ had the effect on him that he did. That man would raise the fucking dead.

It didn't take long at all before MJ was back, key card in hand, leaning against the hotel wall.

Shit. Sonny crawled out, hissing as the pain in his back made his cock go down a bit, grabbing their rucksack as he went. "Where to, MJ?"

"Give me that before you screw up my stitch job. 104."

"Not fucking helpless." But he handed over the bag and took the keycard, heading for their room. He'd lie back and let MJ suck him, then maybe fuck his mouth. Yeah.

"Touchy touchy." MJ goosed the hell out of his ass.

"Hey! I'm just focused, buddy. See me. See me think of nothing but your mouth on me." Grinning, he hurried a little

more, making himself out of breath by the time he got into the room.

"I see you, Sunshine. I'm watching." The door was shut, locked, MJ dropping the bag on a cheesy hotel chair.

Sonny made a beeline for the bed, pulling off the nasty, polyester comforter and baring the sheets and blankets before starting to strip. "'Bout to see a lot more of me."

"Oh, hell, yes. Show me more." MJ stepped out of his shoes, eyes fastened onto Sonny's.

"Okay." The shoes were a little harder than he'd like, the shirt a little twingey, but the pants went right off without tearing or pulling or hurting. Hoo-boy. Damn. Yeah. Once he got naked, Sonny slid up on the bed, spreading out, making with the comfy. "Your turn."

MJ's T-shirt came up nice and slow, showing that flat, tight belly. Mmm. Pretty.

Sonny's hands actually clenched and unclenched with eagerness. That stomach deserved an ode. Too bad his poetry skills had never moved beyond roses are red and things that rhymed with snot.

MJ started working those thin jeans open, cock pushing at the fly. Those eyes were fastened on him, MJ focused, wanting, watching. Sonny moaned a little, his body doing just what it should, surging at the sight, and he could have cheered. Not broken. Yay. Sonny grabbed his own cock and started stroking, licking his lips. "Come on, Precious."

"That's mine." Oh, fuck. That little growl was hot as a two-dollar pistol.

"Then come and get me, MJ. Want your mouth on me. Dream of that." He had, while they were apart. That and MJ's tight as a virgin ass. His toes curled, his hips rising and falling, and Sonny had to pull his balls down with his free hand, keeping him idling instead of revving.

MJ nodded, crawling right up along his legs, cheek rough on his inner thigh. "Kept wanting."

Reaching automatically, he stroked MJ's messy hair. The man needed a trim. He grinned. "Did you think of me in your little closet, Precious?"

If he didn't get bit for that...

Oh. Oh, that fucking hurt.

MJ looked up, the bite mark on his inner thigh already bruising. "You say something?"

"No." Shit. Little fuck. "Just mumbling about how I was gonna tear your ass up. Suck me."

That tongue slid up his cock, hot and wet and slick. "And, yeah, you bastard. I did."

Then MJ's mouth dropped over his cock like a ton of bricks. Sonny grunted, his back trying to arch, a little shock of pain making him relax back down on the bed. Goddamn, somehow that just added to the pleasure. Was he fucked or what?

MJ's head bobbed, just eating him up, lips riding his prick and demanding that he feel. He felt it. Sonny felt every little bit of it. MJ's lips were soft, hot, a little swollen after the first few passes. Wet, rough, MJ's tongue tested him, pushed him, and the barest edge of those teeth made him cry out. Then those fingers slid under his ass, thumb spreading him, teasing his hole.

"Fuck." He held back from bucking forcibly, knowing what the hell that would do to him. God, the very minute he healed up enough, MJ was gonna get the ride of his life. For now, Sonny'd settle for watching that mouth take him on, watching that blond head bob up and down.

Those eyes met his, hot and needy, bright and wanting him.

"Oh. MJ. Precious. I need ... gonna." His balls drew right up, his belly like a board.

His cock slid deep, buried in MJ's throat, MJ's nose in his pubes. Oh, fuck him. Yes.

Sonny hollered, hoping they didn't have neighbors yet, because damned if he didn't sound like he was being slaughtered. He was, with pleasure. When he came, it just burst out of him, filling MJ's mouth, emptying him for at least a week.

MJ sucked him right down, humming low and deep against him as that tongue cleaned him off.

"God, MJ. Jeez." Okay, he sounded blown, just gone. Of course, he was. Sonny petted MJ's hair, fingers sliding down to touch the spot where MJ's lips met his skin.

"Mmmhmm." That tongue flicked his fingers, teased them.

"Want to taste you, too, MJ. Want you." He wanted to fuck, but he just didn't think he could.

"Right here." MJ crawled up his body, tongue dragging on his belly.

"Uhn. Yeah." He used his hands to help MJ up, pulling, trying to get them together for a kiss. He'd gotten addicted to

that. Yeah. MJ's lips landed on his, that sweet fucking mouth just taking him, sharing the bitter-salt of his own come.

God. Clutching the back of MJ's head, Sonny took the kiss, his tongue pushing back into MJ's mouth, tasting it all. It had him moaning, had him rubbing his thigh up against MJ's cock.

That hard prick dragged against him, leaving wet, slick kisses.

He reached for it with one hand, pushing against MJ when he couldn't get to it.

"Come on, Precious. Gimme."

"Precious. Keep meaning to ask. Where the fuck did you get Precious?" The words were muttered into his lips, MJ shifting, moving toward his touch.

"It was a joke. A stupid ... oh." He grabbed MJ's cock, squeezed. Hot, long, hard as anything, it was just what he needed. "Precious was ... it's not a joke. Now."

"Good. Fuck, your hands." MJ nuzzled into his throat, licking and groaning, leaving a mark. Like he didn't have enough bruises. These were different though. And he wanted to see his on MJ, so he latched onto one shoulder and sucked up a lurid hickey.

He loved those deep, raw sounds, the way MJ rolled those lean hips and fucked his palm. He'd love it more when MJ was holding the headboard and fucking his mouth. Sonny tugged, encouraging MJ up, curse words and love words coming out of him at equal speed.

MJ crawled up, finally paying attention and moving up to where Sonny fucking needed him. God, yeah. Tongue slipping out, Sonny tasted, bringing the hot drops at the end of MJ's

prick in, tasting them. Sonny moaned again, his hands on MJ's hips, pulling him right in with no more ceremony.

"Sunshine." MJ sank right in, hips pressing deep, cock sliding on his tongue.

"Mmm." He knew that had to vibrate like crazy, so Sonny did it again, letting MJ set up a rhythm. Fucking perfect, the angle, the way MJ straddled his chest without pressing down on his lower back and side. So good.

The thrusts into his mouth were slow and steady, MJ starting to shake a little, shudder above him. Reaching down, Sonny got behind MJ's balls, pushing at the little patch of skin there, his fingers slipping and sliding as he sucked. And sucked, his lips sealing around the base of MJ's shaft.

"Oh. Gonna. Fuck." MJ arched, moving faster, starting to just lose it and fuck his mouth.

Yeah. That was what he wanted, needed. Sonny sucked harder, begging with his lips and tongue. Begging with his hands.

He felt MJ's cock jerk right before the heat filled his throat, MJ's grunt echoing. Oh, hell yeah. Just like that.

All he had to do was lick MJ clean, pull MJ back down to cuddle him against his good side. "Good, Precious. Damned good."

"Uh-huh. What I needed." MJ purred, nuzzling him.

"Yeah. Yeah, so good." He'd needed it too. It would be nauseating, the way he snuggled and licked and all, if it wasn't so fucking necessary.

MJ groaned, nodded, slowly melting against him. "You hungry?"

"I could eat." He so could. Hash browns. Stuffed French toast. Maybe some sausage.

"Yeah. Denny's?"

"Fuck, yeah. We should probably bathe. Or at least brush our teeth." He chuckled, thinking of breathing on the waitress.

"That would mean moving, man." MJ's breath was warm as hell on his throat.

"So does eating. We could call over to the diner. I bet they have a thing. Where we could call ahead and charge it to the room. Go pick it up. Then we could eat in bed."

That sounded fucking A.

In fact, he'd bet sausage tasted even better from MJ's fingers.

## Chapter Fourteen

He bought a laptop, a wireless headset, and a new cell phone in Boise and headed for the closest bar with wifi. It was about time he got paid. Got his money moved. Got his life back.

MJ could feel Sonny right behind him, rumbling a little, tense. They weren't exactly in agreement about this whole getting back in contact thing, but damn. Half a mil was half a mil and he wasn't throwing it away.

Not after getting beaten and slammed and losing his 'stang.

He got the laptop booted up and logged in, moving his money first, just in case.

Sonny prowled. He could see the man out of the corner of his eye, watching the street out the window, sipping a cup of vile black coffee. Or at least it smelled vile.

"Come on, Precious," Sonny said on one close pass. "Hurry."

"Yeah. Yeah. I needed to move cash." He logged onto the private server, fingers flying as he tried to get hold of Harry. "Come on. Come on."

He'd just about given up when the first message came through.

*'MJ? That you?'*

"Yeah, it's me, you son of a bitch. Surprise," MJ muttered as he started to type.

*'Yeah. It's me. I want my payment.'*

*'Of course. Where are you and I'll get it to you.'*

'Fuck that. Wire the damned money.'

Sonny breathed down his neck for a minute, grumbling, then moved on again. It was certainly a novel experience, doing his job with a two hundred pound watchdog behind him.

*'I need proof you completed the job.'*

Oh, fuck that. *'I need proof you didn't set me up, you motherfucker.'*

*'Set you up? MJ? Was there a problem?'*

The little timer on the computer was ticking down, moving faster. Any minute and they'd have his IP address.

*'I want my money, in my account, in 24 hours.'*

He hit the power button on the machine and stood up, the sound of police sirens in the distance. "Come on, Sunshine. We need to go."

"Yeah. Yeah, we do. Shit." Sonny grabbed the rest of his shit and made for the door, tugging him along, cussing up a storm. "I knew we shouldn't have stopped so soon."

"Yeah, yeah. Move." He started jogging. "They don't know what we're driving. They don't know you."

"So you'll have to scrunch. You could give me a blow job." Oh, the asshole was grinning at him with that crazed adrenaline junkie look in his eyes

"Like you can drive with my mouth on your prick." MJ winked, heading for the car. "Come on. I do poorly in jail."

"So do I. And I don't have your thing ... all the guys just want to get to know me." Sonny laughed, hopping into the car and gunning the engine. "You're late, Precious. Come *on*."

He growled a little about the thought of someone else *knowing* Sonny, sliding into the car and slamming the door. "Go. Go."

Sonny peeled out, just fishtailing a little before the car's traction took over and they purred on down the road. Damn, Sonny knew how to pick them. "So you think you'll get your money? We could buy a boat."

"I'll get my money." He didn't mean to snarl. Didn't mean to get all tense. "It'll add a little to the retirement fund."

"Hey, Precious, chill." Sonny took a corner on two wheels, sprinting for the Interstate. MJ saw the signs flash by. "I'm not the one set you up."

"I know. I know. It just pisses me off that someone did. I said, when I saved up enough, I'd quit. That payment hits it. How do you feel about the Bahamas?"

Two million would get them a boat, enough to survive for a while.

"I love the Bahamas. Barbados. Aruba. I can sell out to Woody. Won't be anywhere near what you make, but it'll keep me a bit." Sonny grinned over. "If we make it that far..."

"If we don't, we'll tell them I kidnapped you. Then you keep going."

"Oh, fuck that." Stomping it, Sonny dodged onto the Interstate. Out here in Idaho, there was no gridlock, just open road, especially once they got out of the forty-five mph zone around the city.

He got the cell plugged into the laptop, got online, and pulled up a map. "There's a series of backloads, trees, off exit 320."

"Okay. Point me toward it." Sonny kept an eye on the rearview, fingers drumming on the steering wheel. "I think we can actually do this, Precious."

"Of course we can. I'm not going to jail." He nodded toward the exit sign. "There, exit and take a hard right."

The tires squealed as Sonny took the off ramp at maybe twice the suggested speed, the big car hugging the curve. They shot onto the ranch road that went off it, Sonny heading the way he pointed.

"Let me know when I need to merge on that state highway."

"Three miles." He looked back, shook his head. "They've backed off."

"Probably didn't really want us, just wanted us out of their town." Sonny laughed, the sound almost joyous. The man got off on speed, and MJ could see why he was good at what he did. Running illegal contraband. Like him.

"Fuck, yes. You drive like a bat out of hell." He chuckled, pointed up the road. "You see the exit, speedy?"

"I do. I like the back roads, you know?" They barreled down the road, turning off on a four lane state highway, one that showed signs of being covered with snow all winter long. Man, they needed to get to a beach.

"I know. Dude, we are too far north. We need a coast. A boat. Some lube."

Oh, hell, yes.

Lots of lube.

"Yeah, but we can't go down to California, as you won't fly. And I need to stop off in the Carolinas to settle up with the ex." Sonny glanced over. "Lube is good."

"You don't want me in a plane, man." Settling up sounded good, lube sounded better. "And yeah, we've been out of commission long enough."

"So. We've got a long drive ahead of us. How do you feel about camp songs and cow poker?" Bastard. Laughing at him. Sexy bastard too.

"Don't make me beat you. We're just starting to heal."

"You could try. I wouldn't mind. Though knowing you, you'd go for where I'm shot." That laughing gaze found him over and over, Sonny driving almost on autopilot. That, more than anything, told him how much Sonny had healed. It was nothing like that day Sonny had come to get him, nothing like the strained, focused determination, hands clenched on the wheel.

"How did you find me?" They hadn't talked about it, not at all.

"I know lots of folks, Precious. It took a hell of a lot of calling around, and some serious bribes. I finally hooked up with a guy I know in Portland; he runs guns, not my thing, but he'd heard about you." Shaking his head, Sonny swerved around some kind of road kill. "Wasn't easy."

"Heard about me?" He shook his head, sighed. "Man, I'm not worth shit if people know who I am. Not a dime."

"Not about you specifically, babe." One hand reached down, patted his thigh. "Just about a job that'd gone bad,

about someone who was teetering on the edge of being not so useful."

The last word was a deep growl.

"Yeah. Yeah, I was. You came at a good time." The perfect time. He'd been in serious shit.

"Well, you were in a closet, Precious. That's just not cool." Again those fingers traced his thigh, soothing as his muscles jumped.

"Nope." Not cool at all, but that touch? Fucking rocked.

"You okay, Precious? You need to stop somewhere, we can." He figured that was Sonny's way of being super nice, because he knew they really shouldn't stop until they were sure their tail was long gone. Or heck, maybe Sonny really did want that blow job.

"I'm good. You drive; I'll try to drive you crazy. Time'll fly." He slid across the seat, close enough to touch.

"Oh, you think you can, huh? I'm told I'm focused when I drive, MJ." Sonny gave him a sideways kind of look, a little pat.

"I bet I can." He'd try anyway, fingers dragging down over Sonny's side.

"Mmm. If anyone in the world can, it's you, MJ." Sonny kept the car steady, muscles only tensing up a little. "Woody used to try, but he never even made me swerve. It was why I knew we weren't a thing, you know?"

Yeah. Yeah, that made sense. He slid his hand up, fingers teasing through the denim, petting.

"Uhn." He could feel Sonny's cock jump, but the car never wavered. Sonny was good. It was gonna be a nice challenge,

something to keep his mind off the long miles they had to go. And the hundred damned close hotel rooms he was gonna have to stay in.

"We need a houseboat. Something tricked out with a kick-ass deck to sun on." He kept petting, kept stroking away.

"Uh-huh. Something we can have one of those pull out diving boards on." Sonny would look hot diving off the boat naked, muscles shifting, skin slick with sweat. Those heavy thighs opened, the car stuttering a little as the pressure on the gas pedal changed.

"Oh, yeah. A place to grill out. Lots of windows." He hummed, nuzzling Sonny's shoulder a little.

"Yeah. I ... mmm." He thought maybe, just maybe, he might be distracting Sonny a little.

"Yeah. I want to see you all stretched under the sun. All hard." Oh, that was a pretty thought.

"Yeah? Make me hard, MJ. Make me crazy. I swear, I've never done shit for anyone else like I've done for you." He could feel Sonny's cock now, pretty much battering at the zipper of those low-slung jeans from the inside.

"Yeah. Yeah." God, he could *smell* Sonny; it made his mouth water.

"Never wanted to just play caveman like I do with you, man, bash you over the head and drag you to my cave." Sonny's hand left his thigh, going down under the steering wheel to pop the button on that straining denim.

"You've bashed me enough. Fuck, I want you." His fingers slid right down, slipping over that heavy prick.

Sonny's hips rose and fell, the wheel listing a little to the right before Sonny corrected. "Say the word and I can pull over. I like to live dangerously, Precious."

"I really think jail would be a terrible idea." He slid his fingers over the tip of Sonny's prick and got them wet so he could lick them clean.

"I ... yeah. I know." He could feel Sonny's heat, hear Sonny start to pant.

"Yeah." He licked his lips, dropped his hand back into Sonny's lap.

"Fuck. MJ. I ... damn." Sonny put his hand over MJ's, pushing him to touch harder. The car barely wavered. But it did. A little.

"Uh-huh. You smell good. Fucking hot." He leaned, biting at Sonny's shoulder.

"You feel good. I love your hands. I truly do." Sonny was on the edge of babbling. He could tell by the way the words ran together, by the way that big body squirmed against him.

"Find a fucking deserted road. Now." He needed. Now.

"Okay, yeah." They swerved, a ranch road coming up on them fast, the cattle guard rough as a cob under their wheels. Sonny drove until they rounded a corner, hiding them from the main road, then slammed on the brakes, leaving them staring a couple of open range cattle in the face.

"Get over here," Sonny growled, almost killing him as they both clunked the steering wheel.

He pushed right into Sonny's arms, lips slamming against Sonny's. Fuck him. Yes.

"Mmmph." They kissed hard, Sonny's cock pushing into his hand, wet-tipped and hard and hot. Eager. Sonny was always so fucking eager for him.

MJ didn't hold back a bit, just pushed and rubbed, fingers wrapping around that hard fucking prick.

"Want to feel you too, Precious." Gasping, squirming, Sonny struggled with MJ's clothes, yanking at his buttons.

"Uh-huh." He groaned, shrugged his shirt off. "Fucking need you."

Those hands went right to his chest, Sonny's fingers pinching his nipples, skating past the bruises that still dotted his skin. "God, yes. What you do to me."

"Yeah. Yeah. More." He panted for it, chest heaving, muscles just tight as a board.

"MJ..." Sonny bit down on his lower lip, sliding down his belly to shove a hand at his fly, trying to get beneath. "Need you to come. Need to come. Fuck."

"Uh-huh. Need to find us somewhere safe. With a bed."

"As soon as we ... oh." There. Sonny got his jeans open, got his cock out, stroking him in perfect rhythm with the movement of his own hand. They were just like wildfire together, hotter than any explosion he'd ever created.

"Yes..." He bit at Sonny's lips, eyes rolling as he pulled and bucked, hips pumping.

"I. Uhn..." The sound came out long, drawn out, Sonny's hips pumping that hard cock into his hand over and over, hot come spilling over his thumb. Sonny squeezed him hard, hand yanking at him, crazy with it.

That was all he needed, biting down on his bottom lip hard enough to split it as he shot.

"Oh, you bastard. If anyone's gonna make you bleed it will be me." Sonny laughed, the sound wild, and licked his lip, kissing him with the taste of his own blood strong in it.

Oh, yes. Just. Yes. He felt much less like murder now, lost money or not. "I needed that."

"Uh-huh. Nothing like a good orgasm after a chase." Chuckling, Sonny kissed him again, this time slow, lazy. Sloppy. "We're gonna take a year to go cross-country at this rate."

"No way. We have a boat to buy."

"And a couple of scores to settle." Getting that serious look, Sonny straightened up, doing up his jeans. "MJ, there're cows staring at us."

"Huh? Cows?" He blinked over, tilted his head. "Damn."

"That's fucked up." Sonny laughed, squeezed his cock before helping him tuck it away, too. "Only for you, babe. Cow voyeurs of all things. So where does the map tell us to go next?"

"We'll keep going east, then south." He grinned, shook his head. "Unless I end up heading to commit mayhem in L.A., of course."

"If you're gonna do that, let me know now." Sonny patted him in a very inappropriate place if they were going to get moving again and then turned the key in the ignition. "No sense circling back..."

"Yeah..." He just didn't know. "Maybe south first, then east?"

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"Okay. We can do that. I tell you what. We'll head out on this same highway, get to where it meets something, get a hotel. Then we'll plot a course." Easy as pie. He was the compulsive planner. Sonny just played it by ear.

"Just like that, huh?" He grinned, took a deep breath.  
"Let's go, Sunshine."

"Just like that, Precious. Got you with me. It's all good."

And if it was good enough for Sonny, maybe it could be good enough for him.

Just like that.

## Chapter Fifteen

They stopped at some place called Green River, Wyoming. Not to be confused with Green River, Utah, the guy at the motel said as he handed over the keys. That was the end of the earth. Sonny thought maybe all Green Rivers must be portals to hell, but he didn't say it, just smiled and nodded and asked where they might get food.

They got patty melts and tater tots and headed for yet another hotel room. This one had one giant bed, not heart shaped, but the frilly pink decorations made it pretty clear it was the honeymoon suite. Sonny laughed his ass off.

MJ looked around, shook his head. "Dude, pink is your color."

Sonny whapped a little, feeling fine that he could. He'd driven a fair bit, and still had some oomph. That was a good sign. "You want pink, you'd best watch it. It might be your ass."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. You'd never catch my ass."

God, he hoped that wasn't true. Sonny calculated the distance from him to MJ to the bed, hiding a smile as he casually set down his coconut cream pie.

Then he pounced.

MJ blinked, hands reaching out to steady them both as they landed hard on the bed.

"Gotcha, Precious." What the hell else was there to do in Green River, Wyoming? They needed to play. Bad. Two bad boys like them, cooped up in a car. And he needed to distract MJ from that whole locked in a hotel room...

The way that cock nudged his hip, MJ was more than willing to be distracted.

"Mmm. You promised me a ride, MJ. You ready?" Sonny was. Fuck, he was more than ready. He was about to burst with it. He took a short, hard kiss, feeling growly and feral.

"You know it." MJ started tearing at his clothes, tugging good and hard. Felt fucking good, knowing how bad MJ needed.

"Yeah. Yeah." Kneeling up, Sonny helped, getting them both naked, getting MJ's shirt open, his pants open, feeling that little spurt of excitement he always did. It never got old.

"You smell so fucking hot." MJ's eyes were burning, focused on him.

"You sweet-talker, you." He knew exactly what MJ meant, though. Hot, male, MJ's scent made him throb. They were both almost mended; he could tell by the way the sex became a battle, both of them fighting to be on top.

"Bitch." MJ grinned, leaning up to bite at one of his nipples, making it sting.

"Uhn. Harder, Precious. Make me feel it. Need to feel it." Sonny almost wanted it to hurt. Because they'd made it. They were still alive, damn it.

"Pushy." Fuck, MJ had sharp fucking teeth, giving him all the sensation he needed.

"You know it. Should by now." His hands moved, sliding over MJ's body, finding the sensitive spots like the one just above MJ's ribs, the one where his neck met his shoulder.

MJ moaned against his chest, the sound vibrating and heated. "More."

Always more. Sonny grinned wildly, bending to bite at MJ's shoulder, teeth scraping over the collarbone.

"Oh. Oh, sweet." MJ's hands pushed into his hips, squeezing good and tight.

"Want you, Precious. So bad." Sonny was just panting, his breath heaving in his lungs. He needed to be in, or have MJ in him, or something. Like now.

"We got lube?" MJ shifted him backward, cock wet-tipped, sliding on his crease.

"Yeah. We had. Didn't we get...?" He knew they did. Damn it. Sonny shifted, trying to search, but that put MJ up against him so good that all he could do was rub like a cat in heat.

"Oh, fuck. Fuck, Sunshine." MJ groaned, sobbed, hips bumping against him as they rolled.

"I want ... goddamn it, MJ, find the fucking lube. I want you in me." He'd wanted ever since they'd stopped the fucking car in the middle of a fucking cow pasture.

"Fuck. Fuck." MJ rolled over, tearing into a shaving kit with a rumble. "Oh. Oh, here."

"Now. Now." All Sonny could do was pull down on his balls, pressing the base of his cock so he could wait. Otherwise he was just gonna blow too soon. "Can't wait."

MJ slicked that pretty cock, then two fingers. "I won't hurt you, but fuck. Fuck, I want."

Those fingers pressed deep, stretching him straight away.

"S'okay, Precious." Gasping, he arched up, body begging, opening for MJ like a practiced whore. "S'okay. Come on."

"So fucking fine." MJ lined up, sliding into him like it was meant to be. "My Sunshine. Oh, fuck."

"Yours." No way he could deny it. Especially not with MJ in him with no rubber on, something he hadn't even thought of until he felt MJ's flesh inside him, hot as fire.

MJ's lips landed on his, the kiss stealing his breath, holding his eyes. God, this was bigger than fucking. Bigger than either one of them, really, which sent his head just rabbiting along with his heart, his hips snapping, taking MJ all the way in. Over and over.

"Yeah. Yeah, Sonny. Mine. Yours. So good." MJ murmured and whispered, lips moving against his.

"Come on, Precious. Come on." Sonny's hands clutched at MJ's back, scrabbling at him, pulling at him. MJ's fingers wrapped around his prick, started tugging in time, pulling just right.

"Fuck!" His whole body arched, his toes curling in the sheets as he shot, body clamping down hard on MJ's cock. MJ's eyes went wide, almost comically shocked as heat pumped into him, MJ's hips jerking gracelessly.

Sonny watched, stroking MJ's belly, panting as he started to come down, started to feel MJ's heat and wet inside him. Oh, that was gonna leave a hell of a spot on the honeymoon suite bed.

"Mmm..." MJ sighed, leaning down against him. "Hey."

"Hey." Grinning, Sonny stroked MJ's back, feeling worlds better, just from that. "Feeling okay? Not sore?"

"Feeling boneless." MJ took a kiss, then another and another.

"Good. Me too. A little wet..." Sonny chuckled, bit a little.

"A little?" That hum vibrated his lips.

"Uh-huh. Kinda swampy. We should bathe." And eat some more and fuck some more...

"Bathing is good. I'm a fan."

"I know. Come on, Precious." Sonny got up, pulling MJ with him, feeling less than fresh. He grinned. "We made a mess."

"Yeah. We're good at that." MJ pushed and shoved a little, getting him in the bathroom. "Need to soap you up."

"Mmm. Soap. Your hands. No bad there." God, he was feeling good. Loose and lazy and just not at all concerned that he was in a hotel in Green Whatever, Wyoming. Bizarre.

"Not even a little." MJ started the water, the steam filling the air, just like that.

Grinning, Sonny grabbed the soap, getting a leg up on MJ with the lather. They still had a long drive ahead of them. But the way they'd gone after each other, they were in better shape to make it now.

They might even make it to that boat in the Bahamas yet.

\* \* \* \*

If it hadn't been for the full moon, he'd never have seen the man, the gun.

The light caught on the barrel and he clamped his hand over Sonny's mouth as he shoved them both over the side of the bed, blessing the motel gods that put the heaters by the curtains.

"Shooter at the window, man. Easy."

Sonny had gone full-on battle ready, and he didn't relax, but he did nod against MJ's hand, signaling that he

understood. They stayed low, both of them moving to try to see, but not brushing against each other. Not making noise.

There were two. One at the door, one at the window. They wouldn't dare kill him here. It'd be too fucking noisy. They'd want to take him.

Fuckers.

Sonny tapped his shoulder and motioned, tipping him off that the man was gonna be on the move, and then heading for their bag, which was over by the bathroom.

And was where all the hardware was.

The only advantage they had, hopefully, was that their eyes didn't have to adjust from the bright parking lot to the dark room.

He moved toward the door, keeping the knob in sight. He could hear them jiggling it, working the lock open. His fingers found Sonny's jeans, found the two lighters in the front pocket. MJ broke one open, blowing the lighter fluid under the edge of the cheap-assed door.

Sonny moved into position behind him, the bag strapped to his back, heavy pistol in his hand.

He held up the lighter, scooted back a bit as the lock clicked. One.

The doorknob turned.

Two.

As the door swung open he tossed the lighter, protecting his eyes against the little flash-bang.

The guy at the door screamed, the flare catching him right at the legs. The window shattered as the guy there went

down under Sonny's fire, Sonny's free hand on the back of his neck to keep him down.

The fire went out quick and so did the screaming as he stood and took the man's windpipe out with an elbow, the crunch satisfying as fuck.

It was over almost before it began. The guy went down, the other one making wet gurgling noises as Sonny went and shifted through the guy's pockets, snatching up wallet and gun and ammunition. Then Sonny popped up in front of him, snagging his sleeve.

"Time to go, Precious."

"No shit." He nodded, grabbed his shoes and a set of keys, moving and running before the cops showed.

Before the adrenaline rush faded.

Sonny took all of two minutes to get dressed, and then he was in the car, revving it up, bouncing as he waited. As soon as MJ's ass touched the seat Sonny roared out, tossing a pistol in his lap along with a bunch of crap from the shooter's pockets.

He checked the clip, chambered a round. "Not police issue. Fucking silencers."

Which was sort of cool. They needed some.

"South or east, Precious?" They'd been choosing daily, just sort of like tossing a dart at a map.

"East." These weren't cops. They'd had fake IDs, big cash money, cell phones. "How the *fuck* did they find us?"

"I don't know, MJ. When was the last time you logged on? Not Idaho, was it?" Sonny spun out on a curve, slipping right past the interstate, opting for the state highway. Kansas.

Right. They were somewhere in Kansas, slipping down through Wyoming and Colorado yesterday.

"The day after. When I got my money." How did they do it? Fuck him.

"Fuck. Fuckity fuck. Okay, from here on out we do radio silence, yeah?" They didn't have any pursuit. Yet. But the cops would be out. He breathed a sigh of relief when Sonny slowed to the speed limit and cruised just under.

"Yeah." He started sifting through the stuff, loading another pistol for Sonny, putting the cash in the little hidden pouch they'd made. "There's two cell phones here. I'll see if anyone calls them."

"Okay. The IDs were fake, you said? So that's not gonna help us figure out where they were from." Always thinking, his Sonny.

"There's no credit cards, no pictures." He looked at the car keys. "Pickup truck. Not a rental, so they were local."

"No shit? They have local talent in Kansas. Who fucking knew?" Sonny grinned over, white teeth flashing in the semi-dark of the car. "Lord, lord, you're popular, Precious."

"Yeah, it appears so." Man, he needed to get his shit together, get off the road. "We might talk about splitting up."

"No!" Loud, forceful, Sonny growled it out. "You've got your money. We just need to get my shit settled and we can take a nice, long vacation."

"They aren't looking for you, Sunshine. Man, you know what kind of a boat we can get?"

"No. You'll have to tell me. If it's not a bass boat, it's beyond me." Sonny laughed. "And I don't care who they're

looking for, I am not letting you out of my fucking sight again."

"You swear?" He didn't like this. Didn't like it at all, being hunted.

"Cross my heart, Precious. Mine. You hear?" Oh, that was a pretty redneck sound, that little drawl, but MJ kinda liked it.

"I do." He nodded, reached over and touched Sonny's shoulder. "I hear you. Let's find somewhere to burn this ID. I don't want to be caught with it."

"Okay. And I need to look at the fucking map. And eat. Wake me up out of a sound sleep to try and shoot at me ... Jesus."

"Rude assholes. I want bacon." He looked up at the moon, said a little prayer of thanks. Shit, if it hadn't been for that...

Damn.

"Me, too. And maybe waffles. Mmm. We could get little syrup packets to go. I could get you very messy." Sonny reached up to grab his hand, clinging a little too tight.

"Yeah? We haven't been able to play." He held right back. Shit, his heart was pounding.

"I know. I say we push through. If we drive straight it will take us ... maybe twenty-eight hours to hit North Carolina. That way we have no stops and we'll be harder to find. We can sleep in shifts in the car. Then we can be out of the country in forty-eight." Sonny glanced over. "What do you say?"

He nodded. "Works for me. Let's get your shit taken care of and disappear."

Together.

## Chapter Sixteen

They were in Tennessee. So close that Sonny could feel it, and damn it felt good to have this almost done.

MJ looked hollow-eyed and pooped, just like Sonny felt. Goddamn, he was ready to be done. Seveirville, Canton, and then Asheville, where they'd meet up with Woody, who would have *his* money, and the supplies they'd need to get to Florida.

Good old Woody.

"Hey, you okay, Precious?" The road was pretty dark, the trees like a tunnel and the curves tight. He didn't want MJ freaking out on him.

"No, but I'm coping." MJ kept looking behind them, nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room of rockers.

"We're almost there, man. We're almost there." They'd change out cars, pick up Sonny's Starfire. They could sleep for a bit, eat, and then head out. The bolt-hole he and Woody kept would be safe enough.

"Yeah. Then we head to the coast. Buy a boat."

"Yeah. Just laze around a bit." He patted MJ's leg, casting around for something to keep him awake. Fuck, his bullet wound was itching. "What does MJ stand for?"

"Manning Jameson. It's a family name." MJ's nose wrinkled, eyes just rolling. "My dad's James."

"Well, there you go." Lord, he'd bet MJ's folks had money. "I'm a Junior. That's why I'm a Sonny."

"What's your full name?" MJ looked over, scooted closer.

"Robert Adam." He'd much rather be a Sonny than a Bobby Junior. "I like Sonny just fine, thanks."

Mmm. MJ was warm.

"You don't look like a Robert anymore than I look like a Manning." MJ hummed, hand moving along his back, petting.

"Exactly." Oh, good. "'M'all stiff. We got any Twinkies left?"

"Nope. Ding Dong or cherry pie?"

"Ding Dong." The pie would just be messy as hell. Besides, those were better when they had time to lick and suck a little. The chocolate would be instant energy.

MJ stretched over, dug in the bags of odds and ends they'd collected, and came up with a Ding Dong, just grinning from ear to ear.

"Don't you eat both of them, you. I know your addiction, now." God, he was so close. So close to relaxing.

"Me?" MJ opened one, tore a piece of cupcake off and offered it to him, held in those square fingers.

Sonny grinned before nipping it right out, chewing a little before licking MJ's fingers clean. "You. I tell you, Precious, I've never seen anyone hoard chocolate cakes like you."

It was one of the many things he fucking loved about the man.

Sonny swerved a little, just keeping it on his side of the road. Loved. Whoa.

MJ chuckled, took a bite of his own, eyes on him.

"Chocolate is a gift from the gods."

"It is." Sonny licked his lips, his mouth dry as a bone.

"Water?"

"Okay." A bottle was dug out, handed over to him, damp and cool and slick in his hand. "You're okay?"

"Yeah. Yeah, I'm good, Precious. Just ... I just. Well. Thinking bad, water good." He grinned, trying to make light. Lord love a duck.

"No thinking. We got your stuff and then we go and make ourselves something." MJ stilled, tilted his head. "Something just ours."

"I was just thinking that. See why I kinda freaked out?" Laughing, he snatched the rest of the Ding Dong. "We're a pair, aren't we?"

"Greedy." MJ's laugh sounded fucking good; the way the man tugged his hand over to suck it clean was even better.

"Pure D selfish." Hoo yeah. Canton was close. He could smell the Bowater. Damned paper mills smelled like nothing else. "We're in North Carolina, Precious. Give me another forty minutes and we can get a room and fuck like bunnies."

"Works for me." MJ's hand slipped down, teased his ass. "Peter Cottontail."

"Don't make me start calling you Bugs." Sonny wiggled. "So, how do you feel about grits?"

"I don't like them as much as polenta, but they're better than oatmeal."

"Polenta. How very California of you." They'd have to explore cheese grits with bacon drippings. He'd bet he could bring MJ around. "And fried chicken? I know how you feel about the weird bananas."

"I grew up in Santa Barbara, man. You know—tofu dogs? Fish tacos? Peanut chicken pizza?"

"Peanut chicken ... that's just wrong." A deer jumped out in front of them, but not close enough to hit, flashing off into the woods after giving them a glowing stare. "Pizza should have meat. Maybe veggies."

"Chicken is meat." He got another bite of chocolate and creamy middle.

"No, I mean sausage meat," he said with his mouth full. "And don't tell me peanuts are vegetables. I mean mushrooms and maybe onions."

"Oooh. Sausage and mushrooms. Yum." See? He knew the man had some sense.

They kept up the food and the chatter all the way into Asheville, where Sonny turned off on a back road, heading up toward his little bolt-hole cabin, which was a hell of a lot nicer than the one he and MJ had met in.

MJ straightened up, started with that weird, almost-vibrating thing again. "We almost there?"

"Uh-huh. You okay?" They had maybe a ten-minute drive.

"Yeah. Nervy. I'm cool. I am."

"It's cool. I'd trust Woody with my life." Hell, he was, wasn't he? Man, it would be good to get this done. Sonny had been nervy himself, looking over his shoulder, worrying about being a liability. He'd be glad to have some cash, some means. His car.

MJ nodded, sliding one of the pistols into an ankle holster. He had to admit MJ was fucking careful.

He bumped over a cattle guard, knowing it was more of an early warning system than for actual cows. There was his

baby, his Starfire, pulled into a little space under the pine trees by the cabin.

"Here we are, Precious. Hot damn."

"Cool. Let's get this done. Quick and easy." MJ went all-business just like somebody flipped a switch. Goddamn.

Sonny stared for a minute, but then got his ass in gear. Woody might shoot MJ first, and then ask questions, so Sonny sort of muscled up in front of him, knocking on the door, grinning as the little sliver of light came from the opening door.

"Hey, honey, I'm home," Sonny began, just about the time all hell broke loose. The loud pop pop pop of a gun going off right fucking next to his ear sorta stunned his ass and he swore time moved in slow motion as he staggered back, reaching for the gun in his waistband.

Woody grabbed his arm, twisting it up behind his back and holding him still. "No, sir. I don't think so."

What the fuck?

He turned his head, blinking at the lack of MJ standing there. It took a second of looking down, staring at the blood starting to pool around blond hair, before he could even start to think.

Sonny went a little crazy then, fighting like a madman, trying to get to MJ. He dimly heard someone screaming, the sounds echoing out through the woods, acknowledged that it was him, but damned if he could do anything about it, especially when something cracked with sickening force against his head, making the world go dark as his legs gave out.

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The last thing he saw was MJ's still, pale face.

## Chapter Seventeen

It was raining.

Raining.

Okay. He was all about the rain.

Man, his head was throbbing like he'd been bashed, the rest of him not feeling much better. Fuck him raw. Okay. Okay, focus. Where the hell was he, and what was he...?

Oh.

Right.

Woody.

Motherfucker.

He got himself moving, crawling carefully, holding his head as still as he could.

"Eight *years*, man," Woody was saying, even though it was indistinct, like he was swimming in molasses. "Eight fucking years I did everything you asked, worked my ass off for you. Did you ever take me to Jamaica? Fuck, no. Why him?" Woody's voice rose, shaking a little. "Why him and not me?"

Oh, no. No.

He did *not* go through all this bullshit because of a fucking lovers' quarrel.

MJ reached down, almost hooting as his fingers met cold steel still in the holster. Fucking A.

He lifted up, just enough to see through the window, see if he had a clean shot.

Sonny was across the room from him, slumped back against a cot with his hands behind him, no doubt tied. The man had blood all down the side of his face, and a huge

goose egg on his forehead, but his eyes were open, watching Woody pace.

And wave his arms as he shouted.

Sonny said something MJ couldn't hear, and Woody stopped, staring. "Well, of course I did. I figured if they killed him we'd go back to normal. But noooo. They thought he'd be worth more alive. Fuckers."

"I'll show you worth more." He muttered under his breath, lined up, cursing as the man walked back over toward Sonny. Move, bastard.

"I trusted you, man." Oh, now, that he heard; Sonny sounding plaintive, confused as hell. "You were the one person I always trusted."

"Yeah, and you shoulda thought of that before selling out on me for some asshole with a boat." Woody didn't move away, damn it. In fact he moved toward Sonny, waving that fucking big handgun, standing straddle-legged right in front of Sonny's fucking face.

No.

No fucking way.

Sonny was *his*.

He tapped the window hard, making enough noise that Woody spun around, gun training on him. Come on, fucker. I'm already having a bad fucking day.

Sonny toppled over, rolling off the cot and squirming under it. Good man. Woody, on the other hand, started shooting at him.

He ducked down, first shot taking Woody through the shoulder, second shot going wide. "Drop the gun, motherfucker. Drop it now."

The gun clattered to the floorboards; he heard it more than saw it, heard Woody curse viciously. When he chanced putting his head up, he got to see Sonny roll out from under the cot and take Woody's legs right out from under him, sending the man crashing to the floor, too. Away from the gun, he hoped.

He kept the gun trained on Woody. "You got him, Sunshine?"

He'd be damned if he was going to move toward the door and lose his line of sight otherwise.

"Well, I'm a little tied up," Sonny said, sounding for all the world like he was laughing. "But he's out for now, yeah."

"Kay." He did his best not to move his head, just hurried to the door and got the son of a bitch's gun.

Sonny was lying there, looking at him. Staring, really. "You come back from the dead right nice, Precious."

"Huh?" He got Woody's gun, settled the back of his pistol against the base of the man's skull. "You okay?"

"No. My head feels like it's been run over by a combine. How's your noggin?" Sonny wiggled to a sitting position before promptly turning to one side and retching.

Fuck. Okay. Shit.

MJ refused to follow suit. No fucking way. He was cool. He was going to pistol-whip this redneck bastard who had the brass balls to think interfering with him and Sonny was a good idea and then they were leaving.

"Okay. Okay, sorry." Sonny sat back up, looking like warmed-over shit. "I need ... I need my hands, man. I've got to get my shit together; we've got to get out of here."

Woody moaned then, starting to stir.

MJ looked over at Sonny, nodded, and slammed the butt of his pistol on the back of the man's head. He wasn't sure about how Sonny felt about his ex-lover's brains spattering everywhere, but the man was already puking anyway.

"Turn around, Sunshine. Let's get you free." Fuck, there was blood everywhere. Goddamn.

Sonny moved carefully, avoiding the nasty spots on the floor, presenting his hands.

MJ untied the torn sheet, stepping back as soon as Sonny was free. Some people responded badly to being tied up.

Sonny just rubbed his wrists before turning back and reaching for MJ's cheek, the thumb sliding up to stop short of MJ's temple. "Fuck, that looks ugly, Precious. We need ... Fuck. I don't know what we need."

Those dark eyes flicked from Sonny, to Woody's still form, and back again, looking lost.

"We need to go. Get your shit and get in your car." Then he'd finish shit in here.

"Okay. Okay, yeah. I need to. I'll check the car good, make sure he didn't fuck with it." Slowly, carefully, Sonny got to his feet, moving to gather things up, muttering about something that sounded like 'fucker' and 'money'. Sonny left though, without a backward glance, carrying a couple of bags and a large metal case.

He looked around. Sweet little cabin. Nice dry walls. It would burn beautifully. Too bad he had the forest to think about. He shook Woody's shoulder, banging the man's head against the floor a little. "He's mine, you hear me, you backstabbing little fucker? I don't share."

"I ... huh? Wha'?" Woody looked up at him. The guy had blue eyes. Hell, MJ could even see why Sonny had slept with him. Really. Kinda. Okay, not so much.

"Sonny? Where's Sonny?" Woody asked, eyes rolling wildly.

"Going with me. Where he belongs." A single bullet and he'd never have to worry about this idiot again.

"You fucker. Fucking hate you..." Woody started struggling, started fighting him, just about the time he heard the roar of a smooth, heavy engine outside.

He cocked the pistol, smiled down, and pressed it against Woody's forehead. "Ask me if I care."

"No. MJ. Precious ... Don't." It was Sonny, clinging to the doorjamb, blinking at him. "I got the money. My car is clean. He's not smart enough to find us without me calling him every fucking day and *telling* him every fucking thing..." Sonny trailed off. "Please."

He looked into Woody's eyes, staring until there was real fear there. "You're alive because of him. I ever, *ever* see you again, and you'll beg me to kill you."

"Come on, MJ. Come on. We need to get going." Sonny came around, put a hand on his shoulder. "We truss him up tight, leave him here."

"Okay. Tie him up. It's time to hit the road." He nodded. He fucking hated this state.

Sonny made quick work of tying Woody up, making it nice and tight, wrists and ankles. It made MJ feel a little better, knowing Sonny wasn't gonna go easy on the guy. Okay, it was immature, but there it was. Sonny finally nodded, stood up. "Come on. Come on, MJ. Time to go."

Sonny didn't spare a word for his ex-partner. Not one.

"Right here." He followed on Sonny's heel, taking a minute to unload his gun into the radiator and tires of the car they'd come in. No reason to make anything easy.

"He must have come in the Starfire," Sonny said, sliding into the driver's seat. "There's no sign of his Jeep. You got everything you need out of the other car?"

"I will in five." He bent over in the car to grab his stuff, closing his eyes a second as the world spun wildly.

"Babe, come on. Come on." He could hear Sonny, kinda like he was underwater, could feel Sonny's hands on him after a few seconds, turning him toward the car, helping him settle. "It's okay. It's okay now. I'll get us out of here."

"Yeah. It's cool. I'm cool. Can you drive?" Please let Sonny be able to drive or they'd be walking to the fucking coast.

"I can. I'll get us ... we'll get to a place I know. Clean up. A place even ... Well. No one else knows."

Sonny must have more bolt-holes than the President. Or the Pope.

"Kay." He didn't nod, because that would be worse than fucking-eyeless-boys bad; he just got his ass in the car. "Your car?"

"Uh-huh. Mine." The engine had been idling, now it roared, the world spinning sickly as Sonny spun out, heading back down that twisty little road they'd come up.

MJ closed his eyes, leaned his head back. Man.

Man.

They so needed a vacation.

\* \* \* \*

Sonny pulled into the little parking area under the tiny house on stilts, killing the engine and sitting. Staring a minute.

MJ had fallen asleep somewhere in north Georgia. Bone tired but determined, Sonny just kept on driving until he reached Alabama. Until he got them home. Not even Woody knew about this place. It was where Sonny's daddy used to keep his mistress. Maybe now they could sleep.

He reached over and stroked MJ's arm gently. "Precious. Wake up. Come on."

MJ's eyes popped open, the eye on the side where the bullet grazed just bloodshot as hell. "Oh. Shit. I was asleep. Sorry, man."

"S'okay, man. I. I just drove." His other hand sorta refused to let go of the steering wheel. "We're here."

"Okay." MJ watched him, stared at him, then reached out and touched his lips. "We're okay."

"Yep. We are. It's all good." Yessir. He was just fine.

MJ nodded, leaned back against the car seat, still and quiet, just breathing.

"There's a bed up there." Somehow or another Sonny felt like it would be some kind of victory if they could just make it up the stairs.

"Okay. Yeah. Is there water?"

"Should be. I keep everything paid up here. You know?" They could clean up. Get clean clothes. MJ would have to roll the cuffs up. "Even a little stackable washer and dryer."

"Okay." MJ opened the car door, stood. The man looked like an extra from a fucking horror movie in the light. It was deeply screwed up. "What do you need from the car?"

"Just. Just the metal case. That's the money." He didn't want to leave that in the car. Sonny took his seat belt off, swayed to his feet outside the car. His knees held. Barely. "You?"

"Just the pistols and ammo." There was a hard line in MJ's jaw, that economy of motion that showed tension, worry. He could so, so relate. Moving stiffly, like an old man, he got the .45, got MJ's bag. He stopped at the back post of the carport to get the key out from a loose piece of shingle.

MJ watched, stood behind him, and waited until he got the door open. The place was dusty and still, but it worked. It worked.

As soon as they both got in he bolted the door and dropped everything but the gun, going from the tiny front room to check the kitchenette, the bathroom, and the single bedroom. Empty. Thank God.

Sonny sighed, leaning against the wall in the bedroom.

"You need to sleep." MJ looked at him, eyes narrowed. "You want a Valium? It'll help."

"No. No." A laugh burst out, sorta hysterical sounding. "No more drugs, okay? I need to get clean. So do you. If I remember right, the hot water heater is good."

"Okay." MJ held his hands up, backed off. "You go first and I'll keep watch. That way you can sleep while I fix my head."

Sonny gave MJ a good once over, trying to figure out what he should do. Was he gonna get his ass kicked if he ... if he went and touched? God knew that was what he wanted. Something solid. Just to know MJ was still there, because he sure seemed mostly gone.

Sighing, he moved, peeling his shirt off, wincing as dried blood pulled at hair. "Sure. Okay. I'll go first."

"Okay." MJ stood at the window, eyes never leaving him. "If you need me, holler."

Staggering a little, Sonny grabbed the doorframe to the bathroom. "Aaaa?"

He saw it in those eyes before MJ's lips twitched—the need, the laughter, just bringing that green to life in a second. Then MJ was moving, storming across the floor like a squad of fucking Marines, pushing right against him.

Oh. Oh, fuck, yes. Sonny grabbed MJ so hard he heard things creak, leaning to take a kiss, their mouths meeting with a smack. Fuck. Oh, goddamn.

MJ didn't give him a second to think, the kiss sharp-toothed and fierce. MJ started tearing at his clothes, hands burrowing in to touch him, feel his skin. They slid right to the floor, Sonny ripping at MJ's shirt and jeans, trying to climb right into him. He needed this. Needed the feel of those smooth muscles, the feel of MJ's skin, the floppy, too-long

hair on his cheek. Sonny soaked it all in, opening up to let MJ in.

"Mine. Mine, you hear me? I won't let him fucking hurt you." The words were growled against his lips, those eyes serious as a heart attack.

That made him nod frantically, his hands clutching at MJ's back, pulling him even closer. "Yours. I promise. I never ... he and I. You know that, right? It was over."

MJ blinked, ferocity easing, fingers cupping his cheek. "I know who you chose."

"Good." Okay. They'd be okay. Laughing, Sonny rolled MJ to his back, straddling him, rubbing on him. "Lord, I'm fucking a zombie. You look half dead, Precious."

"It's gonna start bleeding again when I wash it. I'm gonna have a scar." Those eyes danced, the bloodshot one on the close side of creepy. "You still gonna love me?"

"Hell, yes, Precious. I'd love you blind and bald." And it didn't even scare him to say it. "You know that. That I love you. Right?"

"I guessed, yeah." MJ touched his lips. "We're going to get rested and clean and then we're going to go get us a fucking boat and supplies and get the fuck off dry land and God *damn* it, we're going to stop bleeding and make love for a couple years."

"Sounds like a plan." The best plan he'd heard in a long time. Sonny laughed, kissing MJ's fingers, and then leaning to kiss his mouth. "Looks like I'm out of the ridgerunning business, Precious. You'd best love me enough to keep me busy."

Racing the Moon  
*by BA Tortuga*

He held his breath a little, feeling like the worst kind of girl.

MJ stared into him, all business, all serious. "I'll keep you, loved and busy. The rest of the world can go fuck themselves. We're retired."

Sonny just nodded, pressing down against MJ's body, rocking against him, loving on him.

They'd get that boat. Fucking sail around the world if they wanted to. And stay retired. At least until one of them got a wild hair up their ass.

He could live with that, no problem.

## Chapter Eighteen

The wind felt good, a hint of a squall on it, salty and fresh where it mingled with the beef Sonny was cooking. MJ chuckled, turned over to catch the last few rays on his naked ass.

Not bad. Not bad at all.

"You want it medium or medium rare, Precious?" That drawl hadn't faded one bit. Hell, it probably never would. His Sonny was a redneck through and through.

"Medium rare." He lifted his head, stretched. "Smells like there'll be weather tonight."

They could fuck while the boat swayed.

"Uh-huh. A little ozone." Sonny grinned over, the dying sun looking fine where it painted stripes on those broad shoulders and flat belly. The smoke rising off their little grill made Sonny look like he was standing in a waterfall or something.

Cool.

Sonny's eyes were on him, so he arched a bit, giving him a little show, a little bump and grind. "Gonna make me burn the meat, MJ."

God, he liked the sound of Sonny's laughter, the way the man squirted him with the water bottle he always kept by the grill.

"I wouldn't want that. We'd have to feed it to the sharks." He scooted away from the next squirt of water, dug in the cooler for a couple of beers.

"Well, you know, a good grilled steak does have to rest. For at least five to ten minutes." Sonny took the steaks off the grill and covered them with foil, closing the lid on the potatoes and weird bananas still inside before coming to plop down beside him and grab one beer. "What could we do in that time, do you think?"

"Five to ten minutes..." He made sure his balls were out of reach and then went for it. "Depends if it's you or me, Sunshine..."

That got him a beer spray, Sonny shaking the bottle and letting him have it with the foam, laughing like a loon. "You little fuck, I'll show you what I can do."

"Promises, promises. Quit talking and start proving." He leaned over, got his lips around one nipple, sucking good and hard.

Sonny moaned, hands sliding over his shoulders, shockingly hot where the beer had been cold. They rolled a little, Sonny pulling him on top, cupping his ass, that cock already hard against his belly.

He let his hips roll, prick rubbing against Sonny's thigh, heat against heat.

"I tell you what, MJ. I think we have time to do a little more than rub. Where's the lube?"

Hell, yes. Where had they stashed it?

He hoped it wasn't at the bottom of the cooler again. That had been ... uncomfortable.

Sonny flailed, hand reaching out to open the little compartment on the side of the bench, coming up with a bottle and a happy grunt. "You gonna ride me or do me?"

"Cockhound." He winked, nipped Sonny's bottom lip. "I'll ride."

Those eyes went wide, Sonny's answering grin going feral. "Oh, hot damn. I love that." The lube smacked into his hand. "You need to get yourself ready then, Precious."

"Pushy, pushy." He leaned down, started nibbling and nipping, slicking his fingers. He slid his hand down between him, slicking his hole, teasing Sonny by not letting his Sunshine see.

"No fair!" One of Sonny's hands slid behind him, touching his fingers, pushing at them. God, the feel of it as one of Sonny's slid in alongside one of his...

He arched, lips parting. Oh. Oh, yeah. "More."

"Like this?" That finger pushed deep, moving his with it, Sonny pushing him and pushing him, that long body starting to roll under his, to vibrate.

"Yes..." He nodded, lips on Sonny's throat, cock leaking and balls just aching.

"Good. Hot. Can't fucking wait to be in you." One more finger slid in, making the total come to three, stretching him almost unbearably.

"Oh. Oh, fuck. Want." He lifted himself up, his own fingers sliding away as he started moving, riding that touch.

"Gonna have me, MJ. Soon. Need you to ... fuck. Slick me up, babe." Sonny stared up at him, eyes glazed.

"Uh-huh." He managed to get more lube, then get his fingers wrapped around that heavy cock, stroking Sonny in time with the fingers inside him.

It jumped for him, throbbing hard, Sonny moaning and arching under him. The fingers inside him crooked, twisting, finding and pegging his gland.

"Sonny!" He twisted, eyes going wide as his hips rolled, needing more. Now.

"God, MJ." Sonny watched him carefully, touching that place inside him over and over. "Pretty. God, look at you."

That would require mirrors. Or eyes on stalks. Or ... Oh ... "Fuck me. Now."

"Gonna." Pulling free, Sonny lifted him, put that slick cock right at his hole and started pushing. Heavy, hard and thick, Sonny opened him right up. Gravity did the rest.

Oh. Oh, that was what he needed. He just leaned into it, Sonny's cock pushing a deep, happy moan out of him. The boat moved under them, helping to pick up their rhythm.

The wind kicked up, too. Damn. He could smell the rain on the air, feel the crackle on his arms. Sonny surged up into him, grunting, chest heaving with his breath.

"It's good. Fuck, Sonny. It's so good." His fingers were splayed against Sonny's chest, the fingers of his left hand covering a bite mark he'd left the night before.

"Hell, yes. Good. God." Sonny's hands clamped on his hips hard enough to bruise, hard enough to leave marks. Those hands just slammed him down on Sonny's cock, up and down.

If his fucking brain could remember how to make his hand move, he'd stroke himself off. Too bad he couldn't, or maybe not, because Sonny shifted and slid and that cock pushed deep and...

His head snapped back, balls drawing up hard as stones.

"Fuck!" He must have tightened up, because Sonny shot so hard inside him he figured he'd feel it for weeks, curling up to bite his chest, stinging like fire.

That pushed him right over the edge, the purple and pink sky going dim.

"Oooh, that was a fine appetizer," Sonny was saying when his hearing came back. "Really fine."

"Uh-huh." He nodded, kissing Sonny's jaw, the hollow under Sonny's ear.

"We could have steaks now. Protein. Energy."

"We could. We'll need energy for the storm."

"We will." Laughing, Sonny lifted him right up, got them sitting. "And we don't want to waste the weird bananas."

He started chuckling, ass squeezing Sonny's cock. "You and your fucking bananas."

"You like my banana." Okay, that was so obvious. So bad it made him laugh. Which made everything jiggle and move and wow.

"Mmm." Maybe the steaks could wait a little bit longer...

Sonny must have agreed with him. "I hear cold steak salad is nice," Sonny suggested.

"It's delicious." He squeezed again, leaned in for a kiss.

"Oh, good. Then that's what we'll do." Sonny hadn't really even gone soft, moving in him.

"Mmmhmm. You're a fucking addiction." His own personal high.

"Yeah, well, you're pretty damned hot, yourself." He knew that smile, knew it meant Sonny was on an adrenaline high, ready to go and go like that silly pink bunny.

"I'm just stunned that we've managed six months and no one's been kidnapped." He was about to say cuffed, but there was that time or two they'd played some...

"No shit. Or shot at." He noticed Sonny didn't say beaten, either. Because, you know, they'd tied it up once or twice, and there'd been some play in that, some not.

He started moved, riding nice and easy. "Hell, we haven't had to pull out the morphine since you stitched my face up."

Scar actually looked sexy. Rugged. Rakish.

"Mmmhmm." Sonny moved beneath him, reaching up to touch his scar, eyes on his, dark and focused. "I did good."

Oh, it was easy to lean in, rest his cheek on that hand. "You took good care of me."

Just like he'd taken care of Sonny.

It worked well. He was a fan.

"We're mutual. And getting mushy." Sonny laughed out loud, reaching up to hold him steady as Sonny whirled them, on top of him now. Holding his hands next to his head.

MJ squeezed again, bearing down on that pretty prick. "Doesn't *feel* mushy."

"Feels ... feels amazing, Precious." Panting, Sonny started giving it to him, hips rolling, punching. That thick cock slid in and out, in and out.

"Oh." He grabbed his knees, pulled them up and back, spreading himself right out.

"MJ..." It came out as a moan, rough and hard, Sonny's voice just shattered. They moved with the motion of the water under the boat, increasingly violent as the wind blew up a gust, both of them grunting, humping.

"Fuck, yes." His skin pimpled up, muscles rippling. Oh, he loved that, the cool wind on hot skin.

"Yes." God, yeah. All they could do was move, rock, fuck hard. Sonny bit him, teeth scraping over his collarbone, sending shocks right up his spine.

"Do it again." He groaned, nails scraping long lines up Sonny's back.

All he had to do was ask, because Sonny did it right away, teeth sinking in, stinging hard. Fucking A. It hurt in the best way.

He grunted, abs clenched tight, just drawing his balls into a tight sac.

"Gonna." Sonny would, too, just come again, just like that. This time he got to look up into Sonny's face, watch the muscles strain in Sonny's neck and chest as that big body rocked and rolled, convulsing on top of him.

It only took that and the squeeze and tug of Sonny's hand to bring him along, just pulling the spunk out of him.

Sonny flopped on him, pushing the rest of the air out of his lungs, making him wheeze.

"Oh, goddamn," Sonny said, kissing the side of his neck. "Yeah."

"Mmmhmm." The rain started, feeling like ocean spray at first. "Gonna be a wild night, Sunshine."

"It is, Precious." Laughing, Sonny slid away gently, hauling him up and rubbing his sore ass. "Need to get the grill turned off, get everything lashed down. Then we can have that steak salad and some wild night loving. You can do me..."

He hummed, fingers trailing over Sonny's hip. "Until you're screaming for more."

"Wouldn't be the first time you've made me scream, would it?"

God, no. There was that one night, right off the coast of Aruba ... damn.

"Won't be the last. I have years worth of plans." He grinned, laughing as the rain came harder. "I'm going to get things tied down downstairs and grab a head of lettuce."

No sense losing stuff to the storm.

"Sounds good." He got a smile, free and easy, Sonny just tanned and relaxed and looking so good.

He headed down, then looked back. "You ever miss it, Sunshine? Running a meth lab?"

He figured he had just enough of a head start to get the cabin door shut before Sonny tackled him and took him down. He was almost right.

Almost.

end

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