

LONG BLACK
CADILLAC



BA TORTUGA

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

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Chapter One

Jesus fucking Christ, he was tired. Not sleepy. Shit. After last week's little blow up at the Hot Rod, Vance didn't figure to ever sleep again.

Goddamn bloodsuckers trying to muscle in on an honest man's territory.

Well.

Okay.

Honest was a big fucking stretch, but fair was fair and these crazy bastards came armed with teeth and that weird-assed charming thing and they were hard as fuck to take down.

Besides, sucking blood was something bugs did.

Christ.

Still, he hadn't had to kill one before and it was creepy as all fuck, with the smell and the melty and all. Give him a nice easy drug bust any day. This cowboys-and-Indians thing was complicated.

He stretched out in the booth, waiting for the pretty little gal working the bar to bring him his patty melt and Bud Lite before the drunk bitches at the table beside him made him have a psychotic break with reality.

For chrissake, didn't anyone drink at home anymore?

His cell rang about ten minutes into the weirdest goddamn patty melt in fucking history.

He hated Georgia.

"Yeah, Boss?"

"Where are you, son?"

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Vance bit back the growl, but just barely. Good ole boys. Had to love 'em. "Fucking Georgia."

"I heard the beast in Greenville was less than cooperative about your request."

Well, no. The bloodsucking bastard cold-cocked his happy ass and proceeded to damn near drain his scarred ass dry. Good thing he'd been way more ready to die earlier in his life. "Something like that, yeah."

"That's a shame, son. That'll put you on their radar."

Vance guzzled his beer. "Well, man. I kinda got a rep for that shit."

Ten years with the P.D. Ten years playing Vinnie De Marco so close that it felt right hearing that name hollered out when a lover came and someone had *still* made him.

Made him and showed him things about pain he'd never forget.

He'd been working for the Colonel for going on two years now, caging the monsters some places, encouraging 'em on in others. Money wasn't bad. Colonel kept him supplied. Kept him busy. Kept him.

"What?"

"Pay attention, son. Louisiana. There's a ticket in the Atlanta airport. There's a bar about an hour south of Shreveport with a problem."

"Who the fuck cares about Shreveport?"

"I do, and now? You do, too. Get your skinny ass over there. Deal with it. Call me."

Pushy motherfucker.

"I'll go tomorrow." He was tired.

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"You'll go tonight."

Red flashed in his head and he snarled low, loud enough the stupid bitches across the way shut the fuck up. "Let me tell you something, you old fuck. I will go down there when I'm damned good and ready and not one fucking second earlier."

No more bullshit.

Not tonight.

"Did he bite you?"

What the fuck sort of question was that? "No, fuckhead. He fucked my ass until I screamed and then I stabbed him through the heart with a custom-made, cross-shaped dildo. All that *after* I spanked his ass with a paddle shaped like a crucifix and made him cry. I'll be at the motherfucking airport tonight. You better get me a decent fucking car this time."

He clicked the phone off before the Colonel could say another word.

Goddamn.

Vance tossed two twenties on the table and lit a cigarette, blowing the smoke out of his nose. One of the housewife hussy brigade stood up, stared down her nose at him. "You have a filthy mouth. You should be ashamed."

Vance took another drag, let his eyes trail down Ms. Fat, Forty and Not-So-Frequently-Fucked. "Yeah? Well, your tits are sagging to your knees. You ought to be stuffed and mounted like a six-point buck."

He'd left LA for this?

Lord, it was going to be a long, long night.

Chapter Two

The fucking Gator Hole.

Vance finished his cigarette before killing the engine. The Colonel could pay the fucking Avis folks for cleaning. No skin off his back. He'd come by when he got in from Shreveport, but it was daylight and things were dead—pun intended—so he'd gone back to the Motel Six and sucked on the business end of a whiskey bottle until he forgot that he couldn't sleep anymore.

The drunk didn't fucking last long enough, though, so here he was. Looking for signs that a fuckhead, bloodsucking bastard was squatting.

It really would be easier if the lousy bastards left neon signs. "Giant, cocksucking, bad guy here." Hell, he'd settle for a nice pile of bones making an 'x' in the dirt.

But, *no*. They had to make it all challenging and shit. Maybe some guys got off on the chase and shit. Him? He wanted to do the job and get the fuck out so he could collect a paycheck. Right. Paycheck.

Last time he checked, the motherfucking Colonel did not pay his ugly ass to sit in a Chevy and stare at toothless Cajuns and rednecks. Vance rolled out of the car and stretched, hands checking that he had his shit with him. Pistol? Yup. Can of mace? Yup. Big fucking stick in an ankle holster? Yup.

He felt like some pussy in a bad movie.

At least George Clooney had a kick-ass tattoo.

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Vance headed through the door like he was supposed to be there, heading straight for the bar. Booze first, death and decapitation later.

The place was the worst kind of dive: smoky and hot, sour with the smell of beer and despair. The bartender was a bored, skinny kid with a goatee and a cap that said, 'Fuck y'all, I'm from Texas'.

Fucking figured. "Gimme a beer and a Jack chaser."

"Gimme eight bucks." The kid popped a wad of gum, staring at him with blank eyes.

"Your fucking beer made of gold, kid?"

"What? Four for the beer, four for the shot. You don't like it, there's a titty place down the road called the Purple Pussy."

He handed over a ten. "Fucking appetizing, man."

God, he hated these hillbilly dives. You always had to worry about pet gators in the sink when you went to piss.

"Yeah, yeah." He got a beer and a shot of Jack, though, and the glasses were clean enough. He shot the Jack before he left the bar, the burn easing him off enough to let him wander back into the shadows with his beer. Hunting.

Here, kitty, kitty.

The place was ripe for it. Girls with cotton candy lipstick and boys that smelled like weed were fucking everywhere. All that fodder. He glared at a couple of little rednecks, staring without a word until they gave up their table.

He didn't have to stay long enough to make friends.

He'd been sucking on that damned piss of a beer maybe twenty minutes when the door opened, a good looking guy in

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his late twenties staggering in, almost looking drunk already, but ... not. No, this guy was pale, shaky and hollow eyed, but not drunk. Score.

Ah, that must be an appetizer. Sorta like chips and salsa, but less spicy. Bloodsucker had decent taste, though. Vance sighed and watched the guy, the door.

The walking hors d'oeuvre went to the bar, leaned across to talk to the bartender, and passed over a fifty. He got a bottle in a bag in return and headed back out the door.

Bingo.

He slammed back the beer and moved, the chaos from the bar fading away from his attention. He couldn't give a shit about the locals. He needed to take care of business.

The guy stepped right out into the street, where a long, black Cadillac sat idling, the motor purring like a big cat.

"Hey, honey." Vance's voice caught the man up, the poor little bastard stumbling on the street. "Man, you gotta watch the company you keep. Let me have that. You don't need any more."

He grabbed the bottle, spun the dude back toward the bar.

"Hey! Man, I gotta ... shit!" The guy stumbled hard, all but skip-jumping over the curb and running right into the wall. The window on the Caddy shushed down, hardly making a sound, and Vance got the impression of bright hazel eyes and a black cowboy hat before the Caddy squealed off.

Oh, for fuck's sake—a redneck bloodsucker in a Seville with a taste for ... He looked at the bottle. Okay, the jackass had good taste in whiskey.

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Vance headed for his car, getting ready to settle in to watch. He didn't mind a stakeout. Not at all.

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Chapter Three

Goddamn.

Clay pulled the Cadillac into his custom garage and parked it, sitting with his hands on the wheel a minute. The sun wouldn't be up for hours, but he wasn't sure he should go back out.

Fucking hungry. He was so fucking hungry, because the kid he'd snacked on had been no more than a, what do you call it? An amuse bouche.

That little sip had just made him want more. But there was someone out there. That guy who had taken away his toy. And Clay needed to regroup and figure out what he was gonna do with someone playing fucking bully in his schoolyard.

Tapping the steering wheel, Clay cussed. What the fuck was wrong with him? He was the top of the goddamned food chain. He started up and threw the Caddy in reverse, backing out and steering it toward town. He was hungry. So he was gonna eat.

Clay cruised down the back roads, seeing if he could find an easy mark, maybe a drunk on the way home. Sad as Hell, how no one passed out on the side of the road anymore like back in the day. No, he had to go to town. Back to the bars.

He eased into the parking lot of the Purple Pussy, rolling his eyes. The place smelled like shit.

Of course, the rental car at the front of the building, blond bastard staring right at him from behind the wheel, was even shittier.

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Clay stretched when he got out of the car, giving his ... whatever a good look. Stalker? Hunter? Shit, he could take the man. Then he sauntered for the club door.

He heard the car door shut, the sound loud behind him. "You got a stronger stomach than I do, if you can feed in there."

Turning slowly, Clay surveyed the guy. Carefully. Noting everything he could, including the man's scent. "A man's got to eat. Who in Hell are you?"

"Name's Vance. The Colonel sent me down to move you along." The man sounded about as bored as could be. Didn't jibe with the huge black circles, the weird air of aggravation, really.

"The Colonel. Well, ain't that something." What the fuck? "You tell him I appreciate the offer, but I'm in the mood to stay."

"Look, I can kill you or not. It's up to you, but I really need to get back to LA, so let me know now."

"You can kill me. Huh. Well, you can try." Clay had about had it. The bloodlust was just about to hit the fill line. Maybe the guy would try to take him down and he could tear out that pretty, tanned throat.

"Sure, man. Whatever turns you on." Fuck, the guy moved fast, pistol in one hand, long, thin stake in the other.

Clay ducked and weaved, letting the guy go whooshing by, but really, you had to admire reflexes like that in a normal man. He had what seemed both an eternity and a split second to decide what to do next, because the guy made a move, this time to shoot him.

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The bullet took him in the shoulder—not enough to damage him, but damn it stung like a motherfucker. Of course, the sound had the place stirring with people running around like they'd kicked an ant pile.

"Fuck." That guy was so going down. But not now. Now he needed to get away, because Polly at the Pussy would call the fucking cops.

"Not today, stud. I prefer the sweet bottom boys."

Well, well. Maybe he should take this one back to his little lair and play with it before he ate. Clay moved, knowing he was little more than a blur, going for disarming and maybe knocking out.

"Fuck." Someone spent a lot of time playing with his kind because, even though the pistol when flying, the little fuck's head didn't.

Growling, Clay twisted, pushing hard, sending the guy sprawling. Then he lunged again, trying to bash that head in like a baby seal's. One steel-toed boot crashed into his ribs, the fucker heading for the gun, which was kicked away by someone in the crowd. Damn it. He had to move, had to get out of there. There was no way he could deal with cops before sunrise. Even the cops he'd bribed would have to put on a show. Clay spared one more minute to send the guy sprawling with a boot to the ass before leaping toward the Caddy.

"I'll hunt you down." The man went rolling as a couple of rednecks got some kicks in on the outsider.

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"You come on when you're ready to be supper, honey."
See him. See him have the last word before he roared off in
the Caddy. Heading home. Hungry. Again.

Fuck, when things went bad, they always did it in a huge
fucking way.

Chapter Four

He was going to tear off the Colonel's head and shit down his neck. After he found that fucking Cadillac and burned it to the ground. Shit, he fucking hurt. Good thing the third goddamn day was the worst. Good thing the three-day wait period for a firearm was up too.

Vance hobbled out of the liquor store, bottle in hand, and headed for the hotel room. Another day, maybe two and he'd beat that motherfucking bloodsucker into a pulp.

Something, a flash of movement caught his eye. A cry, cut off abruptly, reached his ears. That didn't sound like your average bayou mating call.

Goddamn it.

He tucked his bottle under one arm and headed into what he fucking knew was going to be a ball of trouble. The shadows behind the liquor store lengthened to run behind the bar next door, and that was where his alarm was going off, that was where the bad was. And damned if there wasn't a long, black Cadillac idling back there.

Well, well. The pain eased up a little—even though the fucking bruises wouldn't—and he pulled his lighter out. One bottle of whiskey. One lighter. One car. Sounded like fun.

That plan would have worked great until the sound of running feet distracted him. And until a hard hand landed on his shoulder, twirling him around. Tall. Broad. Eyes like fucking holes in a blanket. That was his guy.

"You know, you're starting to really put a cramp in my style."

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"It's my job. Nothing personal." He refused to back down, to give an inch. He was like a fucking bloodsucker magnet.

"Uh-huh. Well, see, I'm not doing a job. I'm following a biological imperative." That hand clenched on his shoulder, fingers digging in, sending shooting pains down his arm.

Oh, fuck him. He was too fucking sore to play games. He grabbed the pistol, jammed it into the bloodsucker's belly. "All you have to do is move into the bayou, man. Gnaw on an alligator."

"You gonna blow a hole through me, honey? Right here?" The man had a voice like warm sand. It was easy to see how he could charm folks into becoming his fucking food.

"It wouldn't be the first time." Although he preferred something more private. "Start walking, man. I'm grumpy."

"Okay." Somehow the fact the guy went easily made the hair stand up on his arms, on the back of his neck. What was the game here?

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck. He hated this—hated it back on the force, hated it worse now. "No games."

"If I was playing a game, I wouldn't have run smack into you, would I?" Moving slow and smooth, the guy moved in the direction he'd pointed, just ambling along like he hadn't a care in the world.

"All I'm asking is that you move on. You're causing waves. My boss doesn't like it."

"What kind of waves? I swear to God, I don't get you people. Gators kill more of these folks than I do." The guy turned, hands spread at his sides. "Who the fuck is your boss to care?"

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"I haven't the foggiest. I just work for him." Political details bored the living shit out of him.

Head tilting, the guy looked at him from under that big, black hat, eyes glinting like a wolf's in the dark. "You just take orders, huh?"

"Just a beat soldier." He didn't look away, met all that will with his own. There wasn't a bloodsucker he'd met that could charm its way through his pure fucking pissed-offedness.

"So where am I supposed to go, honey? This is the best feeding ground I've had in an age. So we got a problem."

"I seem to be in that situation with your kind quite a bit." So far, he was up ten to nothing.

Sharp teeth flashed a moment, just bared like an animal's. "You don't know nothin' about my kind, honey."

"I know how you die." That was enough.

"But you don't even know why. Look, why don't you just go back to your boss and tell him to suck my ass." He could see those hands clench, see the shift in the guy's body weight.

Now, that would be entertaining. He tightened his finger on the trigger, forcing himself not to tense up, because fuck him that would hurt. "Sorry, buddy. The Colonel pays the bills."

The fucker could move. Like a blur. His gun hand flew up, knocked up by one of the guy's hands. The guy's other hand closed around his throat. Vance forced himself to relax, to go limp and not fight it. Focus on the legs, on the gun hand.

"Shit!" His dead weight dragged them down, but a sharp correction had him flying down, hitting the ground hard, his

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back screaming. He was too fucking old for this shit. He slammed his hands up as hard as he could, remembering that bastard Leo Difuoro taking that razor to his skin, making him scream. Oh, yeah. Fucking righteous motherfucking fury. That's what he needed.

Something crunched, but the heavy bastard barely made a sound, just pressed down on him, feeling heavier than a fucking neutron star, stealing his breath. Stars gathered in his eyes and he fought it, as hard as he'd fought anything. Shit. Shit.

"I should fucking kill you." That voice seemed awfully damned far away. "You're gonna be nothing but trouble. I can tell."

Chapter Five

Clay figured he had to tie the man up.

Not because he was into that, though it had its moments.

No, this little foray into bondage was so he could sleep.

Eventually the hunter would wake up, though he was sleeping like a baby right now, and he could move around in the sunlight. Clay? Not so much. It would suck to go to bed and wake up just before someone snuffed you out.

He was just finishing the last knot on the feet when the guy started to stir, murmuring something grumpy and obscene.

"...fucker. You cut me again, I'll fucking tear your balls off." Fuck knew who the bastard was dreaming about. With all the goddamn scars, somebody made lots of enemies.

"Not gonna hurt you unless you make me, honey," Clay said, just completely unable to resist stroking one rough cheek. What the Hell was he thinking? He shoulda just nosed on the guy.

Bloodshot eyes the color of moss popped open, stared at him with a complete confusion for about ten seconds. Then the man jerked, fighting the ropes.

"Stop it, honey. Just quit." Clay leaned down, hands on those strong shoulders, looking right into the man's eyes. "I need to sleep, and I can't leave you loose. Just relax and have a little nap."

"I don't sleep." The guy's head was all loose on his neck, the blinks coming slower.

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"Course not. You're a stud, awake twenty four/seven. Well, you just rest, then. Me? I need some sleep." He could get the guy on the bed, sleep next to him so he'd have a chance in Hell of waking up in case the guy got loose.

Those eyes, they looked like Hell. Hell, Clay'd almost believe the son of a bitch didn't sleep. "Yep. I'm a stud. You sure you don't want to go have a picnic?"

"I thought you didn't want me to eat." Grinning, Clay bent and hoisted the man up, making sure he wasn't gonna struggle and unbalance them. The guy's back felt weird as fuck against his hands, ridged and ropy. The muscles underneath that, though, were solid, strong. The urge to strip off clothes and look was strong, but not only would that require untying, it would be an invasion of privacy. Or something. "You got a name, honey? Feels like I ought to ask, seeing as we're sleeping together."

"Vance." Oh, man, that was a too-calm face. He checked the knots again.

Nothing moved. "I'm Clay, honey. Now, you be a good boy and get some rest. I don't want to have to strangle you again. Eventually that leads to dead brain cells."

"Well, we couldn't have that, could we?" That was all the warning he got before the son of a bitch headbutted him. Fuck! Jesus, that had him seeing stars. Clay growled, the sound low and feral, and rolled on top of the man, knowing Vance would feel like he weighed as much as an elephant.

"Uhn." Vance tugged, fighting the ropes and Clay's weight. Clay could feel the man's heart, pounding against him, could smell the blood, right there under the skin.

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Oh, Lord. His mouth watered. "You don't stop it I'm gonna eat *you*, man. You smell like supper."

"I'm old and f ... fucking stringy."

"No. You're hot. Strong. I can fucking *feel* it, man. For all you claim to know about me, you don't know shit." It wasn't just his stomach taking an interest either.

"I know enough to do my job." Every time Vance moved, they rubbed together and it heated him up that much more.

Finally Clay just pressed down against the man's belly, his cock a hard, obvious ridge. "Stay. Still." Vance growled, or tried to, there wasn't that much air the little fucker could pull in. "You just don't give up, do you?" He set his canines to the vein that ran along Vance's neck. "God, I want some of this."

"I'm poisonous." Bullshit. Bullshit, Vance was heat and need and more fucking passion than a little fuck should have.

Licking right at the pulse point, Clay hummed, the need just rising until he thought he'd explode. "I think you want it, Vance."

"Fuck you." Feel that heat. It made his eyes roll.

"I'm not a little bottom boy. Isn't that what you said you liked? I think you were lying." Hips rolling, Clay started humping, needing this more than he needed to feed.

"Bastard." Vance groaned and bucked, twisting until those dull teeth fastened onto his shoulder, hard enough to make the muscle scream. His eyes opened wide, sightless, his whole body twisting and shaking. That was foreplay to him. A prelude to the real deal. Didn't Vance fucking know that? He got another bite and one more, this time Vance held on, shaking him a little, like a dog with a toy. Clay lost it. Well,

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not completely, because he didn't bite down on the big vein and bust it open to drain Vance dry. But he bit down, breaking skin and bringing hot blood to the surface for him to lap.

Fuck. Fuck, yes. He could feel Vance, wild and fierce and so close to the edge of humanity it didn't make sense. That taste could be an addiction. It really fucking could. Clay sucked harder, knowing the shallow bite wouldn't yield much more. The hard body beneath him relaxed a little, the bite against him loosening, the harsh breaths edged with needy little moans.

Jesus. Like the man was made for him. That's what it felt like. Clay reached between them, groping at Vance's crotch, knowing what he'd find there. Thick, hard, leaking something fierce—Vance was feeling it, was right there with him, like it or not. Biting a little harder, Clay licked up more droplets, just growling and rubbing, needing to smell Vance when he came. It was a fucking compulsion.

All those muscles went tight, slapping against him, over and over, as the hot little son of a bitch lost it, humping against his hand, throat right there. Clay couldn't help it. He came hard, biting deep, the hot blood just flowing over his tongue, feeding him like he hadn't been fed in years.

When the red cleared from his eyes, he had himself a relaxed, sleeping man, the ropes keeping all that rage nicely trussed. The scent of sex and feeding was satisfying as fuck.

So Vance didn't sleep, huh?

Some folks were just wound too tight. Clay figured he'd loosened the man up good.

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And he wasn't feeling so bad himself.

Chapter Six

"Fucking Vinnie DiMarco, huh? You little fuck? Did you think you'd get away with it? Pig?"

He kept breathing, kept his eyes closed, his abs tensed. It hurt less that way. Pop, pop, pop—they'd been taking turns for a couple of hours, he guessed. Couldn't be longer than that, he still had most of his teeth.

"Answer me, fuckface. Answer me! Did you think you'd get away with it? Stupid fuzz piece of shit bastard!"

Well, yeah. Obviously he hadn't taken the assignment from the Captain thinking, wow, I'm gonna die in the basement of a steam laundry with a bunch of Spic goons hammering the living fuck out of me before I die. Oh, yeah, my thirty-two grand a year is so worth that...

Something hit the back of his head, something hard enough that he missed most of the next part, the part where they called The Butcher to come work him over.

Vance woke up, confused as Hell, blinking into the dark. Where the fuck was he and why the Hell was he tied up? His hands were caught, so were his feet and he just started rolling, heading for the edge of the...

Wait.

Wait, he knew he wasn't remembering.

Vance closed his eyes and counted to ten. There was no way he'd turned bloodbag and let a bloodsucker have him.

No way.

It was a fucking dream.

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"Whoa, Nellie. No rolling off the bed and making like a pancake on the floor." Jesus fucking Christ. That was the damned bloodsucker, all right, hands holding him in place.

He swallowed hard, trying to get his fucking head together. "If it wasn't pitch fucking black in here, I could manage better."

Fuck. Fuck him.

"You want some light, honey? We can do that." A soft light clicked on, the lamp heavily shaded. "Better?"

He blinked a little, nodded as he looked around, and tried to get his bearings. Where did bloodsuckers *sleep*?

The room seemed fucking normal enough. The walls were painted a blood red, and the fixtures looked early Old West bordello...

The bed was pure decadence, though. Pure fucking decadence. Vance started working at the ropes, nice and slow. Careful.

"Now, honey, you're working up a sweat. And I was nice. I could have used chains." Goddamn, the man had good hearing. A good sense of smell.

"Chains would be easier." They got slick, slid on the skin.

"I'll keep that in mind. Be nice or I won't let you go piss."

Oh, bastard. He hadn't even known he had to, 'til the bastard mentioned it. "You'd hate to have your bed fouled."

"Well, that's true enough, but I can always wash sheets..." That grin made him want to kill the man. Wait. He already did.

"Fucking untie me." He needed to. Shit. To get another motherfucking gun.

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"Hold still." He blinked, because the guy, Clay, stretched and yawned and came right over to untie everything but his hands.

His legs were cramping up and he rolled up, walking it out, trying to tell himself that the image of that big motherfucker coming like a load of bricks was *not* a memory.

Clay watched him like a hawk, looking like he wasn't having any kind of sleep hangover or sore muscles. The asshole could take him at this point. Easy.

Goddamn it. "Where's your bathroom, man?"

Somewhere private.

With a toilet.

A razor.

"Right in there." One big hand waved, pointing toward a little door off to the side of the room. Vance made a beeline, locking the door behind him and working his jeans open with his fingers—which were beginning to go numb, damn it. He did his business, looked around for a blade, a weapon, preferably both. There wasn't even a mirror. Or a window. The place was a cave. No shower curtain or rod, just a big whirlpool bath tucked against the wall. Goddamn it.

He was going to have to improvise.

He tugged the ceramic top off the commode, wincing as it grated on the way off.

The knock on the door didn't really startle him. Bat ears man had to have heard that. "Okay, honey. You've had plenty of time. Come on out."

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"Give a guy some privacy, would ya?" Okay, okay, put the top down. He didn't have shit for leverage, with his wrists bound.

"No. I can hear you thinking, honey. That's never a good thing in a big old redneck like you." Oh, that *fucker* was laughing at him.

He considered just hauling off and beating the bastard with the lid, but fuck his ribs were sore and if he could just get that little lever to come up out of there...

The door popped open, the little latch just coming right away from the kickplate. "No. Just no, honey."

Jesus fucking Christ on a popsicle stick. "You got a twitchy toilet."

"Uh-huh. Out." Like a big old cat, the guy just leaned against the door frame, those dark, dark eyes watching his every twitch. He sat the lid back down, leaving it crooked enough that next time it wouldn't snarl. Goddamn it.

"So what next, man?"

Those eyebrows rose, one shoulder going up and down in a casual shrug. "I have no idea. I saw, I wanted, I took..."

"Bullshit. You got lucky." He'd been tired.

"Maybe I just decided you needed a nap." Oh, Hell no. Tell him that bastard wasn't in his *head*.

Vance growled and spun. He might not be able to do much, but he could bash the fucker with the top of the commode. The thing made a very satisfying noise when it crashed into the bathtub and shattered, but it didn't look like it had done much damage to Clay's arm.

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"You know, you've shot me, bit me, and now tried to beat me with my own toilet. I would have killed most folks for that by now." The guy seemed genuinely baffled.

Vance was really getting a headache. "You know, this isn't usually so difficult."

"I do know that, honey. I do indeed."

That little smile just made his veins throb at his temples. Vance closed his eyes, counted to thirty. Twice. Okay. Okay, first things. Get the hands untied. Then kill the big monster. Collect paycheck. Retire to Fiji.

"So how does someone get into the hunting business anyway?" Grabbing his bound hands, Clay tugged him back out into the bedroom, leading him like a goat on a rope.

"It's like the army. You fuck up bad enough in real life, they recruit your ass."

"Yeah? So what did you fuck up? You want me to order you some food, honey? I'm afraid I'm fresh out." Hey, maybe he could get extra garlic or something.

"You got any whiskey?" Pizza would be good. Or steak. Oh, man. A nice juicy steak.

"That I have." The man had Jack, among others, and poured him a glass. "You never answered my question."

"Which one?" It burned so good going down, eased his head like a lover's touch.

"What did you fuck up?" Clay poured him another glass, the bottle tipping easily. A bottle. Now there was a weapon.

"I was an undercover cop. My cover got blown." In a big, big, motherfucking way. And what business was it of tall, dark and fangy?

Long Black Cadillac
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"Is that where you got the scars?" Clay took a swig of the whiskey, too, which sort of blew the Colonel's list of things bloodsuckers couldn't do to Hell.

"Yeah." He didn't want to talk about those—the web of scars across his back, his chest, on his cheek.

"Huh." That look turned damned considering. "You must have the constitution of a bull moose, honey. So you want steak, huh?"

"Yeah." Wait. Had he said that? Shit.

"I'll get someone to bring it in. You sit and be good." Clay walked out, closing the bedroom door behind him. Leaving Vance alone.

Sit and be good.

Well, now, there were two things that didn't go with him.

He was much more the "disassemble the furniture and make a stake" type.

Chapter Seven

Clay could hear Vance in there, grunting and cussing, no doubt looking for some way to bash his head in when he came back. He kept half his attention on that while he called Remy.

"Lo?"

"Hey, Remy. I need you to do me a favor. Go to Beau's and get me the sirloin, medium rare, and all of the sides." Remy would do anything for fifty bucks and a case of beer.

"You got a yen for the moo-cow, Cheri?" Remy's laugh just made him grin. Crazy fucker.

"No, I'm entertaining, you shithead. And I can't just leave right now." That sounded almost like splintering wood.

"Ah. I see. I'll get ya fixed up, Cheri. You'll see. Sweeten that there comp'ny right up."

"Thanks, Remy. I'll have the usual reward waiting for you." Hell, Remy he could usually just get away with nibbling on a little bit for pay. The man took it like a drug.

"You're good to me, Boss." The phone line went dead, leaving him with his ... company.

Ready for action, Clay wandered back into the bedroom, bracing for whatever Vance had to throw at him. Literally or figuratively. Well, the good news was that Vance hadn't managed to turn the bit of molding into a weapon and that those hands were still bound. The bad news was that Vance had torn into himself with one, the scent of blood strong and surprising, making him want to growl.

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by B. A. Tortuga

"You'd best watch that bleeding, honey," he said, trying to give Vance a chance to ... what? Run? Hide?

"Fuck." Vance grabbed the piece of board, eyes rolling. "This looks much more effective with a slab of sharpened oak or something."

"You think? Gonna whack me?" Yeah, right. "I ordered you a steak."

He heard Vance's stomach rumble. "That's cheating."

"What's cheating? All's fair, honey." Look at that man. He was so hungry, so ready. And Clay wanted. Badly.

"What is with the 'honey' thing?" The growl was cute. Sexy.

"Oh, we've been intimate, haven't we?" That would make the growl worse. Clay would bet the farm on it. He wondered what the steak would get him.

"You know, I could possibly ram this through you, if I worked hard enough." Yeah, yeah. More growl, more passion. More blood, as Vance clenched his fists.

"You might could. But I'm a lot fresher than you are. And I'm about to pounce on you." That blood ... God, some of it dripped out of one rock hard fist, sliding to the floor.

"Promises, promises." Vance bared his teeth, eyes flashing. "There's going to be no pouncing."

"No? Then you need to stop bleeding, goddamn it." His own teeth were a damned sight more impressive, so Clay bared them right back. Vance wanted to step back, Clay could see it, but to his credit, the stubborn fuck didn't do it. No, Vance took the swing, drops of blood spraying against him.

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The board crashed against his shoulder like a bat swung by Babe Ruth, sending shockwaves up his body to burst in his brain, and Clay growled, knocking the piece of molding flying and grabbing Vance's hand with almost numb fingers.

"Fuck." Vance tugged, pulling hard, fingers slick with blood.

"Maybe after the steak." Wrapping his other arm around Vance's struggling form, Clay lifted the bounds hands to his mouth, lapping at the blood.

"Don't." Vance arched against his arm, lower body rubbing against him, pushing at him.

"I can't help it," he murmured, sucking at the skin, trying to get every drop. His own hips started rolling, pushing right back, his cock hard in no time.

Vance groaned, pulse beating faster, nostrils flaring. "Let me go."

"You don't want that, honey." He didn't want that either. He wanted more of that amazing fucking taste. Jesus. Vance tasted like no one he'd ever had. He slipped the knot loose, letting those sweet bleeding hands free.

"You ... You don't know me." Right. Fuck, he knew the taste of this one, balls deep. He knew Vance was hard as a rock, could smell the need.

"I know what you need." Clay slid one thigh between Vance's, pushing up, pressing against that damned hard cock, giving the man something to ride.

"Uhn. I. I don't. Oh, fuck." Vance's eyes went wide, hips moving, humping against him. "This isn't fucking happening."

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"Nope. All a dream." A trail of bright red ran down Vance's arm and Clay lifted, licking it right up, moaning at the brightsharphot.

"Don't you fucking bite..." Those amazing muscles went tight as steel as his tongue moved, Vance shuddering.

"Mmmhmm." He wasn't going to bite. Was he? No. He'd already done that, and Vance needed some recovery time. Right. Which was why his teeth sank right in, like a hot knife through butter. Vance grunted, head slamming back into the wall with a dull thud as blood pulsed into his lips. That was ... God, it was like a drug. It coursed through his veins, making him feel almost alive. Jesus.

Vance humped him like a dog, raw, rough sounds pouring from the man. Clay felt growl after growl slip from him, felt his own hips answer Vance's, his jaw closing like a pit bull's. Fuck he needed that flavor. *Needed* it.

Vance's free hand landed on his hip, dragging him closer, slamming their bodies together. They rocked, feral noises coming from them, the smell of sex and blood all but overwhelming him. Goddamn, he was gonna explode. He smelled the proof of Vance's need, even as Vance went still and the bastard's teeth found the curve of his free arm, the sting zipping down his spine to his balls.

"Shit!" His own mouth popped free, his head falling back at the sharp, sweet pain. "More."

That hot little mouth moved up, toward his shoulder, teeth digging in, Vance tugging at him. Moaning, he let Vance have what he needed. Clay had drunk enough to feel giddy, had gotten what his body craved. Now he could just revel in the

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pleasure. Vance moaned around his flesh, the fabric of his shirt digging into his skin.

"Honey. You need to come for me now. You gotta..." If Vance didn't blow, Clay was gonna eat him right up. Slurp.

He got this heavy-lidded look, feral and lost in sensation. Those hips bucked once, twice, Vance just grinding against his leg, coming like a ton of bricks. Moaning, Clay pushed Vance back to the bed and tore the man's pants open, bending to lick the seed right off that spent cock, the lean hips. It was so much like blood. So fucking much.

Vance moved for him like a natural, spread and sprawled, hips rocking up toward his mouth, completely fucking unafraid. The man was rising again, hardly even going soft, and Clay licked and sucked, his eyes closing, his cheeks hollowing. Jesus, that was good. Hot. Musky. Salty as the ocean.

"I can't ... Uhn..." Vance's hands pushed through his hair and those bent knees cradled him. Oh, yes you can, he thought. You can do anything I want. Clay sucked even harder, his tongue working the underside of that thick prick, the taste exploding through him, making him want to bite so bad.

Vance lifted up, staring down at him with those flashing fucking eyes. "You bite me, I'll beat you bloody. You hear me? I'll..." His teeth scraped Vance's skin and Vance arched, spreading wider for him.

The man would come hard and fast. Still, he didn't want to push it too far, did he? Clay nuzzled those heavy balls

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instead, mouthing them, licking hard enough to push them side to side.

"Mmm." The soft skin drew up, wrinkling against his tongue, against his lips.

"Yeah." Turning his head, Clay bit into the soft skin covering the inside of Vance's thigh, taking one long drink before backing off to lick the tiny wounds closed.

"Fuck. Don't. No fucking biting."

"I can't help it." That was true enough. He couldn't. And Vance's cock was harder than it had been two seconds ago, wasn't it? Clay dropped back down on that hard flesh, lips sealing tight, pulling everything he could right out. Vance growled for him, entire body curling around his head and shoulders as bitter salt poured into him. Moaning, trying to nod, Clay sucked the man right down, licking him clean. Then he rose up on his knees, grabbing Vance's hand and putting it on his crotch as he straddled those fine thighs.

Rough, callused—that hand had stories to tell. Right now it was telling him that Vance knew about dicks and men and making him come. His hips snapped up, his belly went tight, and his head fell back. Fuck, yes. It wouldn't take long. Wouldn't take much. Vance's other hand wrapped around his balls, tugging enough that he felt it, then short nails scraped the line of skin right behind.

"Fuck!" Jerking, swaying, Clay came so hard he all but shorted out, the feel of a tiny, damp bit of blood on that hand enough to make him scream like a hunting cat. He thought, distantly, that this would be the perfect opportunity for Vance to kill him.

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Amazing, how Vance never made a move to do it. Those hands only offered pleasure.

"You." Vance's breath was hot on his throat. "This is deeply fucked."

"Uh-huh. Definitely." He cupped Vance's head with one hand, pulling the man close, letting that sharp chin rest on his shoulder.

"Mmm..." Vance was tense for a second, maybe two, but then it was all quiet, melted, comfort. Which, of course, was when the knock came on the damned door.

Clay mourned the loss when Vance sprang back, but he crawled off the bed and grabbed a pair of loose pants, leaving Vance to try and do up his fly. That would distract him a minute. So would the closed bedroom door.

"You got the worst timing, Remy," he said, opening the door.

"Ah, Boss. I come with food, jes' like you say." Those black eyes just screamed trouble—and not the fun, spanky trouble that he was playing with in the bedroom.

"Right. Steaks." He could smell Remy; the man was wound up tighter than a pastor's daughter on Sunday. "What's wrong, babe?"

"Cheri, I hear a bad man's come to town. A bad-ass hunter, yeah?"

"No shit? Well, I'm pretty bad-ass myself. I can handle it." He took the bag, letting his fingers graze Remy's wrist, feeling the pulse beat there. "I'll be fine."

"Yeah. Yeah, Clay. You jes ... If you need me, huh?"

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Remy was a good guy, a friend in the best way, and a Hell of a feed. Spicy and Cajun. "You know it, babe. I'll call. Thanks for bringing supper. You want money, or you want to meet up later in the week?"

"We can..." Remy blinked as Vance hit the door running, bare feet slapping on the floor.

"Shit!" Clay took off like his ass was on fire, thanking God sundown had happened. No way was that bastard getting away from him when he'd bought *steak*.

Vance was a quick little fucker, but he didn't have the foggiest idea where they were or how to get anywhere in his little strip of the bayou. Clay knew every fucking shortcut. He knew that if Vance took the trail he was on, he'd end up in gator central. And Clay knew he could cut off fifty yards if he cut around the little piece of land and went through the water. Not only that, but he'd taken Vance's shoes himself. The swamp was Hell on bare feet.

He caught the little fucker just before a toothier predator did, sweeping Vance back along the edge of the swamp, sort of rocking the football hold. "Are you crazy?"

"Is that a fucking rhetorical question?"

"No. Am I gonna have to bash your head in to get you to stay put? I ordered you food! This is just rude as Hell, man." He shook Vance for good measure, tromping back to his little house.

"Rude?" Vance looked over at him, "You had me tied up. I've broken the top of your commode and tore part of your baseboard off to stab you with. And you're hung up on me being rude?"

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"Well, all that other stuff ain't about food." Wasn't the man from the south? That was a universal.

"Oh, for..." He shook Vance a little, the little fuck groaning. "Blame it on blood loss. Fuckhead."

"Well, that's why I got you steak." He got back to the house, winking at Remy, who was still kind of standing there, blinking. But guarding the house. Good boy.

"Boss?" Remy gave Clay a look.

"I'm good. We're just gonna have a little supper. You go on, now. I'll see you later in the week, 'kay?" He winked, giving Remy a nod.

"Sure. Sure, Cheri. You call." What a good boy.

"I will. Promise."

Poor Remy. He wandered off, leaving Clay to close the door and deposit Vance on the couch. "Sit. Eat. I'll get something for your feet."

Vance groaned, reaching for the steak with shaky hands, the man's stomach snarling. Good old Remy had gotten two steaks and all the fixings. One was medium rare. One was so rare it moed. Bless his heart. Vance ate like a starving man, licking the blood from those fingers.

Clay figured he'd eaten enough, so he pushed his steak on over, too. "Go for it, honey."

"It's good. Never had one so good."

"Yup. Tastes like Heaven, huh?" He remembered that. Remembered how he'd needed the sweet, hot protein, the iron. So bad.

"Yeah. Yeah." Vance dug in, making sweet little noises, groaning, the sounds almost sexual.

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His cock took an interest, which was ridiculous, considering how hard he'd come earlier. "You want some bread? Baked potato?"

"So long as it's not pasta, I'll eat anything."

"Well, this is more like bacon and chives." He'd have to ask sometime, but Clay figured that discussion might ruin the feast.

Vance nodded, slowing down now, the man lingering over the food, enjoying it. Clay watched happily, loving the way the man savored every last bite. He could eat, but he didn't enjoy it anymore. Only the rush of hot blood made him happy.

"I. Goddamn it. The urge to say thank you is huge and that doesn't make sense."

"Well, I'll take what I can get." Winking, Clay got up and stretched, cleaning up the containers.

"What's going on here?" Vance was doing his best to glare; it just didn't work, with the whole happy-full-sated thing going on.

"Hmm? Oh, that whole symbiotic mumbo jumbo. Or, you know, we're both horny."

"I'm not horny." Uh-huh. Right.

"Well, I am. A lot." Hell, he was getting that way again right now. Because glaring not horny at all but smelling like sex Vance was cute.

"Horny and hungry, huh?" Vance shifted, adjusted himself. "What happens next?"

"I don't know." Hot fucking. Whipped cream with blood. Who knew? They might get crazy.

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"I'm going to take a shower."

"Want some company?" God knew he wanted to go, too. Take me, you crazy little sumbitch! Take me!

"You sure you won't melt? Like the Wicked Witch of the West or somethin'."

"Ha ha." Clay took the decision out of Vance's hands, hauling the man up and heading toward the bathroom. "Of course, there's the toilet lid to clean up..."

"You'd better find a broom." Shit, Vance was hot against him, even through the clothes.

"Oh, if you cut your feet, I can take care of them." Grinning, he hauled Vance even closer, letting his lips slide down that long neck.

Vance went still. "Don't you do it. I'll kick your ass."

"Promise? Because so far I've been doing most of the kicking." God, he loved how people struggled when they weren't used to being picked up.

"Fuck you." Vance's hands got hold of his hair, tugged his lips back from that tempting neck.

"Maybe later." He wasn't opposed in principle. Really. He just didn't usually catch.

"Put me *down*, asshole." Somebody was getting hard against his thigh.

"Why? You're not heavy, and this way I'm not sucking ceramics out of your feet." That would be gross. Chunky blood.

"You mean the rocks and the thorns are more appetizing?" Oh, right. Feet. He'd forgotten.

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"Shit. Here, sit on the commode, yeah?" He'd clean those feet up, then the tub. Man, this whole captive thing took a lot of energy.

"I'm fine." Yes, and he didn't sleep or get horny. Stubborn pit bull.

"Well, humor me. Blood, you know? Makes the gators come to the doorstep. Makes me bitey." So there. Now, he was sure he had rubbing alcohol.

He scooped the chunks of ceramic into the trash, found a bottle of alcohol. Vance stared at him, one eyebrow raised. "Why don't you just set me on fire?"

"What? Why would I do that?" Hell, his ass and fire didn't get along too well, anyway. He much preferred heat generated by friction.

Vance's eyes rolled. "I meant the burn, man. From the wood alcohol?"

"Oh." That had been a long damned time, too. "Well, I could blow on it if you want me to."

"Just give me the fucking bottle." The bottle was snatched from his hands, the stinky shit poured over those raw feet, blood running again. Vance, though? Never even flinched.

The man really was something else. Clay had to admire that kind of freaky toughness. Really. He mopped up with a towel, patting Vance's feet dry. "So was your momma a Rottie or a pit bull, honey?"

"Was yours a bat or a mosquito?" Oh, quick come back.

"Mine was a fine southern lady, if you would believe." No doubt his momma would disapprove of what he was up to these days.

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"Well, mine is an evil old redneck drunk. You'd probably have something in common with her." Man, someone was getting grumpy. Definitely time for more fucking.

"You know, you'd unwind a lot more if you'd nap." Scrubbing at Vance's legs, he got them good and clean.

"I don't sleep much." Vance spread, pants seams creaking.

"You said. I bet you'll sleep better with me around." That little noise had him leaning down to press his mouth to that seam.

"No biting." Fuck, the need just poured off Vance, making him want to turn Vance's world upside down.

"Nope. Not a bit." His hands found button and zipper and worked them, lifting Vance right up to slide the pants off.

Vance's ass slid a little on the commode seat, the heavy cock filling against the tanned thighs.

"God, look at you." Clay stared, his nose taking in the scent of want and man and the sweetest blood he'd ever had. "Need this."

Vance blinked, shuddered. "This is insane."

"Well, you know, a lot of folks would say you're insane to think I exist." Winking up into those amazing eyes, Clay sucked Vance right in, closing his mouth tight around the head.

"Fuck!" Vance's hands scrabbled on his shoulders, legs flailing.

That's it. That was the way to put the man off balance, keep him from thinking too much. And the taste. God, the taste was strong and dark and all he could ask for. Those blond curls tickled his lips, made him pull harder. Vance just

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shook for him, muscles rolling as that cock pushed into his lips. He could do this ... well, okay, not forever, because a man had to feed. But he could do it as long as Vance needed him to, and enjoy it, too.

"I." Vance gasped, staring down at him, wide-eyed.
"More."

Nodding as much as he could, Clay gave more, his hands rolling those balls, pushing up to pinch at Vance's nipples. The scars under Vance's shirt fascinated him, one nipple ridged and wrong, the other whole. So hot. Maybe he was a little skewed, but those scars were so much more interesting than perfection. They made Vance a mystery.

He pushed the shirt up, Vance groaning as he did. Fuck him raw, that was amazing. The scars were fascinating—hundreds of them, some thick, some thin, making Vance look like he'd been glued back together. Clay wanted to ask about them, but damn, that would kill the mood. So he just sucked harder, trying to pull all of that pain out through Vance's cock.

"Good. Fucking good. Don't stop. Don't fucking stop." Vance got one hand wrapped around his nape, tugging him closer. No. No, he wasn't gonna stop. Hell, he wasn't even inclined to slow down. Clay went faster, licking, needing, just wanting everything the man had.

Vance groaned, bucking up, almost losing his seat on the commode as salt splashed on Clay's tongue. Steadying the man with both hands, Clay drank it all down, his eyes closing at the bitter-hot flavor. Yeah. That was so good. Almost enough to keep him from biting.

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Vance's heartbeat pulsed in the big vein against his lips, just throbbing away. God. Oh, God. Closing his eyes, Clay pushed his teeth in, so gently, so slow, barely penetrating that thin, thin skin. Vance moaned, the sound scraping along his nerves, almost as lush as the blood sliding on his tongue. He didn't take much. Just a taste. A tiny one. God almighty, that was like nothing he'd ever tasted.

Vance was boneless, melted, sprawled on the commode.

Clay surged to his feet and picked Vance up, hauling that utterly relaxed body right into the bedroom. He stretched them out on the bed, his own body tingling all over. "Rest, honey."

"Uh-huh." Vance pressed closer, blinking so slow, until those eyes just closed.

Clay petted that flat belly, the scarred chest, watching over Vance while he slept. Kiss him or kill him, Clay figured Vance wasn't ever gonna be boring.

He couldn't wait to see what happened next.

Chapter Eight

He hadn't slept so long since he'd gone undercover as Vinnie, and even then, he'd slept so deep that he didn't dream. Vance woke this time, wrapped around Clay, cheek on one of the broad shoulders, more relaxed and awake than he'd been in years. It was fucking unnerving.

Not to mention deeply wrong. He had a shitload invested in being edgy, damn it.

He looked up into dark, laughing eyes, blinked.

"Hey, you. You're thinking so loud it's echoing." Clay nuzzled noses with him, the movement so natural and easy that it left him blinking some more.

Echoing? What did that mean? He caught himself chasing Clay's lips. What was he doing?

"Mmmm." He was kissing. That was what he was doing. Slow, melty kind of kisses, ones that had his toes curling right up. This was absolutely fucking insane. Hot. Sexy. Addictive as shit. He pushed closer, tongue sliding along Clay's, just tasting and touching like they were lovers. Big hands cupped his ass, turning him a little so their bodies could rub together, too. The man was just hotter than a two-dollar pistol, right off the mark.

Didn't seem to mind his scars, either, which was weird given that they were fucking nasty and shit. No, sir. In fact, Clay seemed fascinated by his scars, chasing them all over, stroking them in random patterns. Made him all shivery. He caught himself moaning, making the most embarrassing

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sounds, acting like a fucking virgin or something. Maybe Clay drugged him.

"You taste too damned good, honey. Want to eat you up." Okay. Whoa. No eating.

"No biting." He dragged one hand down Clay's spine, hauling them closer.

"You keep saying that, honey, and I keep doing it anyway." Clay pulled back to grin at him. 'Course that pushed their lower bodies together.

"Don't you grin at me." Oh. Oh, that felt good. He couldn't help but wonder what Clay's cock would taste like...

"Why not? I feel damned good. So do you." Hips rolling, Clay pushed against him, grunting when their cocks rubbed together.

"I..." Yeah. Yeah, he did. He felt fucking amazing. It was obscene.

"What's wrong with it, honey?" Clay's head tilted to one side. "Aside from the fact that you started out wanting to kill me."

"Well, that's a problem, yeah?" He was going to have a lot of explaining to do, because he ... Well, fuck. He couldn't just fucking kill Clay. He didn't want to. It wasn't right.

"Uh-huh. So, what happens if you don't?" Looking curious, Clay settled more heavily against him, one hand on the small of his back.

"I haven't the foggiest fucking idea." He supposed the Colonel could try to kill him. That would be interesting.

"Oh. Well, that's okay then."

Wait. How did that make sense?

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There had to be drugs involved.

There just had to be.

"Shower?"

"Sure." Clay rolled off the bed and stretched, showing off an impressive set of muscles, head to toe.

He stood up, feet screaming as they hit the ground. Man. Next time, he was stealing a pair of those clunky biker boots before running through the swamp.

"You hurtin'? I could carry you again." Yeah. Effortlessly. That was weirder than some of the other weird.

"No biting. No carrying." He was a stud, damn it.

A. Stud.

"Well, you're just gonna suffer, then." No. No, it was no hardship to watch Clay walk to the bathroom, ass swaying. That man had dimples that should be outlawed.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah." He was fine, damn it. Fucking fine.

"Come on, honey. I'll wash your back." Clay stopped just inside the bathroom, holding out a hand to him. "And everything else, too."

It was like a fucking compulsion, something deep in him that wanted to follow, to reach out and slide his fingers against Clay's, and wasn't that deeply fucked up? Clay grasped his hand, thumb rubbing against his skin, making goose bumps rise. His nipples hardened, his cock rose, and damned if he didn't moan a little.

"There's something deeply fucked here." The Colonel'd warned him about getting all charmed and shit, but he'd felt that before. This felt different. Deeper. Weird as fuck.

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"Yeah. I know it. But I'm not one to fight Mother Nature." That hard chest met his, and Clay kissed the fire out of him, just making him melty.

Clay lifted him up, just enough that he didn't have pressure on his feet. Oh. Damn. He.

Yeah.

Fuck.

"Mmmm. You're fucking addictive. Jesus, I want you." Yeah. Oh, yeah, he could feel that. Hard, long, ready for him.

"Water. It's been days." He needed to get wet, to get clean.

"Right. Right. Sorry." Clay really did look like he was sorry for getting out of control, too. The water came on under Clay's hand, the steam rising immediately.

"Oh..." The moan just tore out of him and he arched back, eyes closing. Fuck him raw. That was perfect.

"Good, huh? Look at you." Lifting him even higher, Clay started stroking water into his skin, just rubbing the dirt right off.

"Yup. Fucked up, scarred, wet ex-cop." Oh, man. That felt good. He'd been fucking crusty, and not in that good ... Oh, fuck that. There wasn't a good crusty.

Chuckling, Clay nuzzled his neck, loving on him, lips sliding along the pulsing vein.

"No..." He swallowed, cock just throbbing, bobbing against Clay's skin. "No biting."

"Nope. Never. I would never do that." Every time he said no biting, Clay said okay. But it always came down to the teeth.

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"I..." He started to say he didn't believe it, but the water hit him just right, easing a tense spot and he just moaned again, arching into the spray.

Okay, it had to be Spanish Fly. The bloodsucker was dosing him when he slept.

That was the only answer.

"Not." What? He blinked, and Clay smiled. Just baring his teeth.

Somehow he'd lost control of this whole thing. Really.

When the big-toothed look had stopped being oh-my-God-he's-gonna-eat-me and started being dude-I-have-a-woody, he was in trouble.

"Man, I can smell you." One hand stayed under his butt. The other one slid between their wet bellies to grab his cock.

"I *should* smell better." Less like dirt and sex and more like soap.

"You smelled fine before. But now all I can smell is this..." Hand working him, Clay ran that thumb up and down his length. His belly clenched, one leg pulling up with the pleasure of it. Goddamn.

"Kiss me, honey. Want you to kiss *me* for a change." Listen to that raspy voice. Yeah. He groaned, going up and pressing his lips to Clay's before he even thought about how that was a stupid fucking idea. Oh. Oh, Hell, he could so handle those kisses. Clay moaned for him, licking his lips, tongue pushing in and tasting. God, what an oral fixation. Shit, yes, those kisses were gonna bring him to his knees.

Vance framed Clay's face, forgetting all about monsters and blood and teeth and shit and just kissing the living Hell

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out of the finest man he'd seen in for fucking ever. His back hit the slick tile, his ass rubbing it and making him shiver. Clay wasn't exactly warm, either, but the water was, so it was all good. Clay's fingers were on his scars, which was hot and weird and distracting and ... Yeah. Yeah, very fucked. But good. And why the Hell was he thinking again?

"Thinking is overrated, honey. Feel me." His legs spread when Clay pushed between them, and they rocked, both of their cocks sliding on skin.

He got his hands on Clay's back, smoothing down along all those fine muscles, rubbing and massaging them, tugging them together. Clay's mouth slid down his neck. Again. Fixated. That was what the guy was. Just fixated on his throat. His blood.

Of course, when the kissing started, the soft, sucking touches that made his toes curl? Vance was getting that whole fixation thing.

The suction went fierce for a half second, Clay sucking up a mark right there. Vance felt the blood rising to the surface, the heat tingling through him. His chin lifted as his hips started moving faster, their cocks rubbing together fast enough to make sparks. God damn.

"Yeah. Fuck, yes. You feel like nothing else, honey. Nothing." How long had Clay been alive? How long had he been around to feel shit, and he was saying Vance felt that good?

Of course, right that second it didn't fucking matter because Vance was fucking flying, their wet skin slapping together something fierce. Moving hard, they sent water

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flying, slipping and sliding. But Clay had a good stance, had a good hold on him. He had hold of Clay's ass, knew his fingers had to be leaving bruises, but he couldn't let up, he didn't fucking want to.

Those sharp as fuck teeth slid right into his skin, cutting through like he was fragile as glass. The contrast to the way they slammed together was too damned hot. Even if it was biting. The rush was like nothing else, like Clay was tugging the pleasure out of him, out of his belly. It made him hungry, bone-deep.

"Mmmmmmm." The low growl told him that Clay felt it, too. So did that hard cock, which got even harder against him, if that was possible.

The weirdest motherfucking sounds were pouring out of him—he'd be fucking embarrassed if he weren't fixing to pop like a balloon hitting a flame. Clay pulled away from the bite, holding his lower body even closer, staring right into his eyes as that big body shook and Clay came for him. All over him.

"Oh, sweet fuck." His head rolled, the scent of sex enough to make him shake, make his balls draw up so hard they hurt.

"Now, honey. Right now. Want to feel you come." All Clay had to do was say it and he was ready to go off like a Roman candle.

"Right..." Oh, yeah. Now. The top of his head felt like it was going to pop off, spunk shooting right out of him.

"Good. That's good. Just like that." Clay licked at his neck, helping ease the tiny wounds that still stung.

"Uh. Uh-huh." Oh, fuck. Hot. Good. So fucking *good*.

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"Man, what was it we were gonna do after our shower?" Clay asked, turning him away from the cooling water.

"Uh..." He blinked, chin rasping against one shoulder. "Probably fight."

"You think? Why is that? I mean, what have I ever done to your Colonel, anyway?" Well, that seemed like a more reasonable question now than it had a few days ago.

They moved out of the tub, both grabbing towels. "Hell if I know, man. I mean, I don't know that it's personal."

Which it sort of was for him, wasn't it? Personal, that was.

"So, what do you *do*? I mean, you hunt us. Do you even know why?" Clay looked genuinely curious, not a bit of malice in his expression.

"I only got nasty when they wouldn't move on, and it was..." He shrugged, thinking about it. He'd been so blank for so fucking long it wasn't funny. "I was following orders."

"A good little soldier ... come here, honey." Clay held out that big, rough hand again, just daring him to take it. "Let me prove we're not so bad. Not all of us."

"It wasn't like that, man." His fingers slid between Clay's like they belonged there. Fuck, it was just wrong, how fucking right that felt. "I'd been fucked up. I needed a job and the force didn't want me."

And his scars were ... Yeah. He'd not been on anybody's short list.

"I don't know why. You're something else, honey. Tough as nails and twice as sharp. You'd be an asset." Pulling him close, Clay kissed his temple, nuzzling at his wet hair.

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"Mmm." Listen to him. Humming. Moaning. Jonesing on this. What the fuck was wrong with him?

"I got you, man. I got you. Come on, let's go back to bed for a bit."

Shit, those vamps really were hedonists. He didn't think he'd ever spent so much time horizontal.

"You know how much time is lost sleeping?" Dreaming? Remembering? Shit. He kept being rested and he'd get in more and more trouble.

"You think anyone knows it better than me? I have to stay in by nature, you know?" Clay kissed him, lifting him to carry him back to the bedroom. Jesus, Clay was strong. Of course, he'd have complained if his mouth hadn't been busy. Really, you'd think a bloodsucker's mouth would taste bad. Clay didn't. Not at all. Fuck.

And the man had an unerring sense of direction, because they landed on the bed like it had a homing device in it. He moaned and wrapped around Clay, hands flat on the man's back.

"Mmm." Clay settled between his legs, pushing against him, holding him down. It didn't make for panic or anything. Just heat and yeah and oh, good.

"I can't fucking want you again." But he did. He was loving this.

"Why not? I want you. It's like a fever." Shit, yeah, that was exactly what it was like.

"Are you doing it? Making me..." Want? Ache? Need? Whatthefuckever. He rose up and took a kiss, his toes curling.

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"I'm not doing anything but loving on you," Clay said against his mouth, hands holding him steady so they could rub and rub.

"I'm supposed to be..." Oh, God. Yeah. He sorta stopped thinking, just moaned a little into Clay's lips, his body moving without any input from him at all.

"I know." That came against his throat, Clay licking the marks there, but not biting. How much could he give before he got weak and shit? Hell, he didn't feel like he was losing blood. He felt better than he had in months.

Everything in him started tingling, skin going tight wherever Clay was touching. Goddamn. His throat had never been a hot spot.

Not ever.

Then again, he'd never fucked a bloodsucker. He learned something new every day.

Chapter Nine

Clay woke up late in the day, wondering what day it even was.

The sun was there, lurking outside the sealed walls. He could feel it. But it was outside, and he was in. With Vance. Jesus fuck, that man was something. Clay had never wanted anything like he wanted Vance. All the damned time. Just thinking about what all they'd gotten up to made his cock twitch.

Of course, Vance looked a little worse for wear, bruises blooming on his throat and chest, his face a little pale under the stubble. Maybe it was time to get him some food.

Clay rolled out of bed and went to find his phone. He had to plug it in to get it to work, but he finally got it, dialing Remy. Hell, by now Remy would be thinking he was dead. Unless that crazy Cajun had set up watch outside his place.

It wouldn't be the first time.

"Hey Boss! Where you been, Cheri?"

"Oh, I've been kinda ... busy." He grinned a little, peering at the bed from the front room, barely seeing Vance's toes.

"Can I get you to make another delivery?"

"Sure 'nough, Boss. That little scary Frankenstein man still breathing?"

"Yeah." Vance wasn't scary. At least not the way he looked, anyway. He was fucking glorious. "Believe it or not, he's grown on me."

"Like a mold, eh? What y'all need?" Remy chuckled, the sound low and fond, making Clay smile.

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"Something with protein. Maybe some chocolate. Munchies. That kind of shit. I bet he likes beer, too, when he unwinds." Yeah. He'd get Vance some fun shit.

"Food run, eh? I'm on it. We need to go drinkin', you and me. You been quiet too long."

"Okay, babe. Sure. We'll go." Sometime soon. When he figured out this shit with Vance. Hell, that might be awhile.

"Mmhmm." Well, that was too-knowing a sound. Good thing Remy clicked off, otherwise he might have had to growl.

Clay sighed, dropping the phone on the settee and rolling his head on his neck. Maybe he did need to get out more, but Lord, it was tough to leave Vance and worry that the man would run from him. He sure didn't want to have to hunt that ass down. Vance shifted, tight little ass going up as the man buried his head in the pillows. Goddamn, that was pretty. Especially the pale, fine ass.

Wandering over as if attached by a string, Clay slid back into bed, his hands sliding up Vance's thighs until his thumbs and forefingers caught on the lines between Vance's legs and ass.

"Uhn." Vance's muscles rippled, toes curling. Oh, yeah. Much with the pretty.

"Hey, honey. I was just passing by and I thought, look at that ass..." Bending, Clay massaged those tight muscles, thumbs digging into each cheek, his lips sliding along the small of Vance's back.

"I was dreaming." Vance's thighs spread, heavy balls swinging.

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"Yeah? What about?" He let one hand slide down to cup those sacs, rolling them gently in their skin, the scent of Vance fucking making him drool.

"Fucking. Weird, huh? I usually dream about my scars and shit." Vance was making the best noises, just slowly rocking and rolling against him.

"Well, then, it's a case of unrelenting improvement." Lord, look at that man. Gently pressing those balls up against Vance's prick, Clay bent farther and started tonguing Vance's hole.

"Oh..." Mmm. Now that was something. Vance's entire body rippled, the scent of hunger just getting stronger, headier. Moaning, Clay licked harder, pressing his tongue inside Vance's body, needing more. Needing everything. Damn. Vance went up on hands and knees, bucking and pushing back against him, riding his tongue, giving it up for him.

Jesus, look at that man. Clay got both hands up to hold Vance steady, working that fine body open for him, getting Vance ready. No way was he gonna resist having that amazing ass. No way.

Words just started pouring out—filthy and desperate and hot as all fuck. What a fucking romantic. Hell, he didn't need any pretty words. He just needed the hottest, tightest place he ever would find. Clay finally surged up on his knees behind Vance and got lined up. The head of his cock pushed right in, just like he was meant to be there. Vance's head snapped back as that tight ass slid right down along his cock.

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"Oh, fuck." Clay went still, fighting the need to move, because if he went to town like he wanted he'd fucking rip the man in half. "Vance. Christ."

"Uh-huh." Vance started moving, pushing against him, riding him. That was so not assisting his control.

"Vance. Honey. I'm. I can't..." Fuck it. Clay tore into the man, his hips spanking that tight ass for all they were worth. He'd be damned if Vance didn't crawl up the fucking headboard, bouncing and riding his cock for all it was worth. Strong-willed fucker. Fuck, yes. His whole body went tight, everything in him just straining toward Vance, pushing in over and over. So good. So hot.

"Touch me. Come on, you bastard. I need to..." Vance's head fell forward, that long scarred back right there for him.

Licking a line right up that back, Clay let go with one hand to reach around and pinch at Vance's nipples. That hard cock would have to wait. He wanted to start at the top.

"Fucking. Fucking tease." It got him going, the way those little bits of flesh went tight, felt so much, as torn up as they'd been. It was fucking hot.

"Love the way you feel. So fucking *interesting*." And for a guy like him? Boredom was a nightmare existence.

"You drive me crazy, honey. I swear to God." The little pet name made him grin, along with the drawl that just got worse and worse.

"It's mutual." He finally reached down that scarred up belly, hunting that thick cock. He could smell it. Now he wanted to feel it. Feel it jerk when he sucked up a mark on one shoulder.

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"No more biting, man." Uh-huh. Vance's cock jerked at the word biting, that shoulder pushed right into his mouth.

"Okay." He bit down hard, the taste sending him flying, hot and copper and all about life to him.

"Fuck!" Heat sprayed over his fingers, hot as the life pouring into his lips. So fucking good.

Clay pulled his teeth out reluctantly, licking at the spot as he came, his hips jerking too hard to even think about controlling them. And Vance took all his strength without a whimper. Oh, he was so owned. All of Vance's weight rested against him and he could feel the man's heart, pounding against him. It felt good.

Real good. Too damned good. "You're addictive, honey. I swear."

"Isn't everybody?"

"No." Clay kinda surprised himself by answering, but once he did, he went with it. "I mean, I've had some long time feeders, and I adored them, but it wasn't like this."

Well, there you go. Now he'd given the hunter a weakness.

"Nothing's ever fucking been like this, Clay."

"No. No, that's true enough." Sliding out was pure agony. Nothing in him wanted to let go, but Remy was on the way. "Food's coming. Don't run on me again, 'kay?"

"I'll take it under consideration." He'd seen Vance's feet, they were tore up.

"I'd just come get you." That was a promise. It came out maybe like a threat.

"You'd try." Oh, he felt that growl in the pit of his belly.

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"I'd get you. You're mine now." Growling, he nipped at Vance's neck, just making a point.

Vance groaned and spun around, moving quick as a snake and biting him back, teeth on his shoulder hard enough to burn. Clay grunted, shocked as Hell, but not at how fast Vance had moved. More about how damned good it felt.

"More, honey. More. Please."

Vance growled and bit again, just a few inches closer to his throat, the bite hungry, wanton. Clay fell back on the bed, pulling Vance with him, holding that hot as fuck mouth to his throat. His cock was on the rise again, and he forgot Remy in a heartbeat.

"Could fucking eat you alive." Listen to that growl. Shit. It buzzed through him, burning as good as those teeth as they struck again.

"Want that. Want you." God almighty. They were gonna burn out like a supernova or something. What a way to go.

Vance groaned and bit again, then the warm weight on him disappeared, the thud as Vance's ass hit the floor loud.

"You leave him alone! Boss! Boss, you good?" Remy lifted the baseball bat, Vance out like a light on the floor.

"Jesus, Rem! Did you damage him?" Clay blinked, the feeling of loss a hard shock. He crawled off the bed and checked Vance out. Breathing normal, pupils the same size. Oh, good.

"He was *biting* you, Boss. Wha' was I supposed to do?" Remy nudged Vance with his toe. "You want me to tie him up?"

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"No. No, babe, I kinda asked him to..." Poor Vance. Well, he'd had a bit of Clay's blood. He ought to heal up okay. "Thanks for riding to the rescue, though. It means you still care."

He winked, reaching out to take the bat out of Remy's hand.

"Well, sure..." Remy handed the bat over. "I got all them supplies you need. You sure you don't want me to tie him up and feed him to them there gators?"

"No, babe. No gators." He hefted Vance up on the bed, putting him in his favorite sleeping position before putting an arm around Remy and steering him to the front room.

Remy's dark head hit him right at his nipple, the little Cajun still rumbling and spitting, protecting him. It was really adorable. Clay let himself pet and soothe a little, rubbing Remy's arm and shoulder. "It's all good, babe. He's ... he's not out to get me, I don't think. He was just misinformed."

Remy leaned a little harder. "You needin' anything, Cheri? I been missing your face."

Man, any other day he might have just bent and taken a sip. Part of him still wanted to. The other part was all weird about it. "I think I'm good, babe. I been missing you, too, though."

He hadn't, but it was so nice to see Remy now that he figured it wasn't all a lie.

"Good." Remy had brought him half of an A&P, including a few Penthouse letters books and some crossword puzzle books, plus three new DVDs.

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"Are you bored, babe?" Clay surveyed the stash, eyebrows raised. "Do you need more to do?"

"You ain't been about. I thought you might need stuff. I didn't think I's gonna get to hit him with a stick."

"I didn't either." He rewarded Remy for thinking about him with a nice, slow kiss. "You're too good to me, babe."

Remy hummed, fingers sliding on his cheek. "I gotta take care of my own, yeah?"

"Yeah. Yeah. You getting any trouble in town?" Lord knew Remy could take care of himself, but Clay liked to look out for his people, too.

"Not a bit. There's another new guy lurking around, asking questions. Took blondie's car away."

"Shit. I was wondering how long it would take." Clay shook his head. Damn, who was this Colonel dude? "You be careful, babe. Call me if things get hot."

"I do. You sure you want me to go, Cheri? He'll wake up growly."

"I can handle it, Rem." Lord, why couldn't it have been Remy that he had a serious, primal jones for? It would make things so much easier. "Thanks for all your help."

"Yeah. Yeah, Boss." Remy nodded and gave him a look before heading for the door. "I'll be around."

"I know, babe. I'll look out for you. You know it." He would, too. He wouldn't leave Remy hanging. Even with ... whatever it was he and Vance had going.

Remy just waved and headed out and he heard the rumble of the big old pickup as Remy gunned it and left. Sighing, Clay scrubbed his hand over his head before heading back to

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make sure Vance wasn't brain damaged. Lord, that Remy should've gone into the major leagues.

Vance's eyes popped open as soon as he touched one shoulder, bloodshot and rolling, fury palpable. "What the fuck?"

"Sorry, honey." Ducking backward, Clay avoided the initial rage. "Remy thought you were gonna kill me. He brought food. And porn."

"You got a lot of lovers coming to protect you?"

"No. Hell, Remy is a damned good friend, and we were doing it, up 'til you." He had diarrhea of the mouth. That was his only excuse.

"I take up too much of your time?" Was that jealousy?

"No. You're the only one that gets my dick up now." He grabbed Vance and pulled the man right up against him. "I let you fucking bite me."

"You asked me to fucking bite you."

"I know!" Shaking Vance like a terrier with a rat, Clay snarled, lips curling back. "What the *fuck* is going on?"

Vance pulled away, grabbing the sheet, growling back as that fascinating skin was hidden from him. "You tell me!"

Clay mourned the loss of that sight, but maybe they needed to talk. "You should eat. Then we'll go on and on and be all touchy feely."

He got a glare. "Don't make me hurt you. Your boy just whacked me with a bat. I'm fucking *grumpy*."

"I know, okay? Look, just come eat some roast beef and sit a minute. I think Remy brought aspirin, too."

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Vance's eyes lit up at the idea of meat and he tore into the food. Yeah, if he was going to keep playing, Clay needed to feed the man more often, that was for sure. Was he gonna keep playing? He sure wanted to. Just the thought had his teeth tingling and his cock twitching.

Vance ate hearty, accepting the aspirin and tearing into the roast like a true carnivore. Clay drank a beer, which tasted pretty foul, but he figured it would put Vance at ease. Normal, buddy shit.

"Do you get anything out of that?" Vance nodded to the bottle. "I've seen you drink booze."

"Beer? Not so much. I can get a little bit of a tingle out of Jack and shit." Liquid stuff always did better than solid. Clay shrugged. "Thought it might relax things."

"This is deeply fucked up." Vance looked down at the remains of the roast, head on one hand. "Deeply."

"Uh-huh. I know it. I want to hump you like a bad dog, honey. Like right now." They might could kill themselves doing that. Clay had never heard of a bond like this, or whatever the fuck it was.

"And I am supposed to be encouraging you to move on." Vance's eyes dragged down his belly, burning him. "I don't know dick about you."

"You know my dick, though." That had him snorting, almost passing beer through his nose. Lord, he was a redneck, even if he almost pre-dated the term. "I don't know what to tell you, honey. I want you."

"It's not going to fly to tell you I don't want you, is it?"

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"Hell, no. All I have to do is make bitey faces at you and I can see your heartbeat go crazy." It throbbed right there, in Vance's throat. In his cock.

"Asshole. You can't see anything for the scars." The growl was hot.

"I can see. I can smell it, too. Goddamn." Shit, he could just ... eat the man up. Vance blushed, the blood right there, tempting him, driving him out of his fucking mind. His cock rose right up, his belly pulling in tight. Clay took two steps and went to his knees in front of Vance, pushing the sheet aside and nuzzling Vance's belly.

"We're ... we're supposed to be *talking*, man." Uh-huh. Talking. Talking was fucking overrated.

"I am. I'm speaking tongues." He licked his way up those scars, just tasting and loving.

"Clay." One hand wrapped around his nape, tugging him closer. Shit, yeah.

"Uh-huh. Fuck, you smell good." Jesus, the man had him excited as a dog with two tails.

"We just fucked a while ago, before your guy popped me..." Vance spread out, legs sprawling.

"Well, yeah, but this is different." Why it was, he didn't know. But it was. Kinda. More like exploring.

"Is it?" He could feel Vance's heart beating. Thud. Thud. Thud.

"It is. Lord, it's good with you." His cheek scraped against Vance's belly, those hard thighs.

"How ... Have you ever felt this?" Vance's hips started rolling, started moving nice and easy.

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"No. Didn't I tell you that?" Those heavy balls were right there, right below the hardest prick he'd ever tasted, and Clay touched both, fingers sliding and cupping.

"Yeah. Maybe? I don't know. How long have you been here?" Vance stretched, pushing into his touch. Fuck, that was hot.

"Here, here?" Clay had to think on that one, which interrupted his sucking and licking. "Five years?"

"That's a time. You must be careful."

"Hell, I thought I was. Then you showed up." Shit, he still couldn't figure what he'd done. Remy didn't have loose lips, and he'd been so sure he'd chosen carefully...

Vance shrugged. "I just followed orders. I didn't expect ... you."

"Yeah, I figured..." He surged up, needing that mouth, sharing Vance's taste with the man. God, he needed. Vance slid down, landed in his lap, legs wrapped around his waist. Hot. Fuck him, that was good.

His hands cupped that sweet ass, his lips traveling down Vance's throat. Scars. Jesus. Everywhere, and he wanted to find them all. It was fucking fascinating, the texture, the way they felt under his tongue, under his lips. The way touching them made Vance shiver.

"What are we gonna do, honey?" He just ... what was that fucking boss of Vance's gonna do? He'd already sent someone else.

"I. The smart thing is to go, head out. Tell the Colonel you're moving on..."

"Too late." His teeth scraped across one scar, the skin moving under his mouth, resisting for half a second. "He's sent a back-up."

"A back-up?" Vance went still, shivering against his lips. "What the fuck does that mean, I wonder..."

"I don't know. Remy's seen him..." Right above that spot, just right there, he could smell the blood running, the veins pulsing. Clay took a tiny sip, breaking the skin delicately.

"You ... What did I ... I tell you about biting?"

"No. You said no. Good thing I never listened to a soul in my life. Can't tell me nothin', honey." He bit a little harder, the heat rising up to feed him.

"Fuck me, that's sexy. How the fuck can that be a turn on?" Somebody thought too much for his own good.

Clay pulled Vance closer, harder against his skin, his mouth working and his hips humping. If Vance could talk, he was doing something wrong. Vance's thighs went tight, body starting to move in time with his, just like that. Fucking sweet. That was much better. Much. Clay left little stinging bites all over that hot body, watching muscles flex, rubbing like fucking crazy.

Each bite left a little mark behind, the tiny bruises catching his eye. Each one of those little marks made him harder, hotter. God, it had him moaning, trying to crawl into Vance's skin. Vance grabbed his hand, brought his wrist up to that hungry little mouth, teeth scraping the thin skin.

"Yeah. Yeah, lover. You can." Clay bit down on Vance's shoulder, the taste of hot blood, Vance's blood, exploding through him.

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"I. I shouldn't..." Those teeth dug in, wanting in. Wanting inside his skin.

"Please. Jesus, please." Licking, gnawing, Clay pressed his wrist harder to Vance's mouth, begging. It was a burn, a dull pain, but when Vance broke through, they both growled. The suction was sudden and hungry; Vance's mouth pulling at him. Clay felt it all the way to his toes, like Vance was drawing all of him up through his body, drinking him down. Clay all but whimpered, his hips jerking crazily.

Vance pushed him down, swarming over the top of him so that their cocks lined up, started sliding together.

"Uhn." His head fell back, clunking against the floor, and Clay went with it, his free hand cupping that hard-muscled ass to pull Vance closer. "More."

"Demanding fucker." Vance was on fire above him, jerking and rubbing and biting him, just sending him higher.

"Want you." It was that simple. He was gonna explode. Like right now. When Vance bit down on his neck, that was all she wrote. Clay came like a fucking starburst, wet and hot between their bellies.

Vance groaned, started humping him like a bad dog, fingers digging into him and keeping him close. He held on, watching that amazing face, listening to the sounds Vance made. Fuck, that man was the hottest thing going. Lips stained with blood, cheeks all flushed—Vance looked like a wet dream, jerking and shooting, heat spraying over his skin.

They fell to the floor together, both of them shaking, both of them on the verge of collapse. Clay's muscles trembled, his vision blurring out. Hell, if he had to die, let it be this way.

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Hell, it couldn't be any harder than the first time he'd done it.

Chapter Ten

He slipped out in the middle of the day, wincing at the glare of the sun, pulling his hat down over his face. He didn't fucking know what was going on with the Colonel and Clay and all this happy sending-a-replacement shit, but he was fixin' to find out, goddamn it.

It was harder than he thought, to find his way out from the fucking swamp and, after a couple hours, he was cussing his decision to be a decent person and not steal Clay's motherfucking Caddy. He'd have brought it back after all.

He hit the main highway around five pm, stomping the worst of the gator shit and mud off his boots so that he'd have some sort of a chance to hitch a ride. He'd washed, after all, covered the goose egg in his head with a ball cap and covered most of his scars. He shouldn't look too terrifying. Of course, the dude that picked him up in the Peterbilt made him look like Little Bo Peep. Jesus Christ on a crutch.

By the time he landed in town—after baring his teeth and snarling at the poor fucking trucker who wanted a blow job for gas money—he was starving and furious and hunting.

Wait.

No.

Looking.

He was looking for his replacement.

To talk to the little fuck.

Goddamn it.

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The sound of a gun cocking had him freezing, his hands shooting up. Fucking Christ, he didn't have a thing worth robbing.

"I don't have a fucking thing you want. You'd better move on." What was with this fucking town and guns?

"Oh, I think you do, man. Walk. We're going to the roach motel down the way." That was a Yankee voice, and vaguely familiar.

"Did I do something special to warrant an armed escort to the local bed-by-the-hour?" Man, talk about working quick. He didn't have to search for his replacement.

"Yep. Consorting with the enemy. Move." The shadow of that gun disappeared, but he knew it would come out quick.

"Consorting? Fuck you, man." Shit. Shit. He put on his undercover face, rolled his eyes.

"No thanks. I can smell the fucker on you. I'd love to give you the benefit of the doubt, man, but I'm thinking not." The motel loomed, all neon and dirty brick, and the guy pushed him toward room one thirteen. Yeah. That was a great sign.

"Am I the classiest guy the Colonel hired or what? I mean, really, man. This place is nasty." Okay, he just needed to get his hands on that weapon.

"You have a better budget. Sit." Okay, now he remembered this guy. Brown hair, scarred cheek. Clean up crew.

"Man, I haven't ratted anyone out. Hell, I took a blow to the head, see?" He whipped the cap off, knowing the lump was fucking impressive.

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The guy studied him a minute. "One way or the other, you need debriefing. Maybe even deprogramming. Those fuckers are dangerous." Lord, look at that ... zeal.

Had he ever been that...

No.

No, he'd been all about the cash. He'd lost the whole zeal thing about the eighth month undercover with the force.

"Debrief away, man. I'm all ears."

"Why didn't you do your job?"

Uh. Yeah, that was a good start, huh? "Has he been feeding since I showed up?"

Wasn't that his job? To encourage them to find new feeding grounds?

"No. But he's still here. Colonel wants him gone." The unspoken echo of the 'for good' was there. He could almost hear the Colonel say it.

"What's the Colonel's hard on for this one?" Hell, what was his hard on for Clay? Maybe Clay was just hard-on inducing, for fuck's sake.

"I don't know and I don't ask. I just follow orders." That look was reptilian, emotionless, just fucking scary.

"I know all about that, man." The fact was, he'd just fucking woke up. He wasn't in order-following mode anymore.

"You sure about that? What's his weakness? How do I get to him?"

"You don't honestly think I'm going to let you have the job, do you? He's mine." A pure, white-hot rage surprised him, bubbling up through him.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"You're too close to the situation. You're out." The kid flicked a dismissive hand, reaching for the little black cell phone on the dresser. He moved, quick as a snake, grabbing the kid's wrist and wrenching it back, dragging the little fuck away from the phone.

"Shit!" Moving fast, the asshole ducked around, breaking his hold, going right for that fucking pistol.

He was not fucking getting shot in a crappy, motherfucking hotel.

No.

Fucking.

Way.

He dropped down, going for the body slam, shoulder connecting with the little fuck's breadbasket. A sharp grunt sounded, that solid body going backward, but damn the kid was strong. They grappled for the gun, but the battle eventually tipped in Vance's favor.

He grabbed the pistol and caught the kid in the chin with the butt. "Goddamn it. Will you sit down?"

"No. You're fucking out of control." The kid rolled to his feet, cupping his lower jaw, blood dripping from his lips. Vance could see the crouch, see the kid making ready to come in again.

"Don't make me hurt you, kid." He didn't like random violence. He caused it, but he didn't get off on it.

"You're gonna have to, to stop me." Okay. Shit, that little fuck was gonna make another charge.

He cocked the gun, put on his best police officer face. "I will shoot you, kid. Freeze."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

The moment the kid stopped dead, leaving him thinking it was all good; the fucking door burst open behind him. And all Hell broke loose. He spun around, his hand with the pistol flying up with a casual knock from a baseball bat. Something flew past him, somebody screamed and he reached out with a numb hand to get that bat and beat someone to death.

The bat didn't hit him, but it didn't come when he pulled, either. It was that little Cajun of Clay's clinging like a pit bull, but he didn't have to worry about it. Clay had a hold on his replacement, lifting the man up against the wall by the throat.

"If you kill him, I can't ask questions." He jerked the bat again. "And call off your dog!"

"Rem! Back off, babe." Clay nodded, his eyes kinda glowing, teeth bared. But backing off. Just like the little guy with the bat.

Babe, huh. Interesting. Asshole.

He shook it off, stood right up, nose-to-nose with the cleaning staff. "You feel like chatting yet, fuckhead?"

"Fuck you, man." That would sound better if that voice didn't sound like it had been through a meat grinder. Clay hadn't been gentle.

"Uh. No." He reached down, grabbed the guy's nuts and squeezed. "I've been hit with a bat, come onto by a trucker, and chased by an alligator today. I'm *grumpy*, man. When are you supposed to report to the Colonel?"

Those lizard eyes went wide, the kid trying to crawl up the wall to get away from him. "Eight. I'm supposed to call him at eight."

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by B. A. Tortuga

"Good dog. Now, tell me, what does the boss man want to hear from you at eight? Am I supposed to be toast or what?"

"No. Just him. I'm supposed to bring you in."

A low growl came from Clay, the man just moving in like that gator that had stalked his ass. Boom. "Gonna eat him, honey. I swear."

"He'd give you the shits." In, huh? Shit, that sounded ominous and remarkably un-fun.

"No one's taking you anywhere." Man, Clay did growl really well.

"This is why you're in shit, man," the kid croaked. "You're compromised."

"Compromised? Christ, kid, you've got a hard-on for the job, don't you?" Was he? He didn't feel compromised. He felt rested and fucking awake for the first time in five years.

The kid grunted again, sounding for all the world like a pig. "I just follow orders."

Clay gave Vance a hard look. "Let me squash him like a bug?"

"No, I want him headed back to base with a message." He stepped up, got right in the little fuck's face. "One, you tell that motherfucker that no one—no one—drags my ass in and two, I quit. If he sends you back, I'll fucking tear you into pieces so small the birds'll eat 'em."

Those dead eyes went wide, and Vance could smell cinnamon gum as the kid breathed out. "He'll kill you, man."

"Promises, promises. It's harder than it seems." And he wasn't anywhere near scared of dying anymore. Hell, bring it on.

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by B. A. Tortuga

"No. I mean *he* will." That head jerked toward Clay, and a horrible gurgle came after, when Clay squeezed until the kid turned purple.

"Oh, I wouldn't worry about him and me, man. We'll find an agreement." That was a fucking amazing color.

It wasn't until he put his hand on Clay's arm that the grip loosened and the kid could get great gasps of air. "Remy. Take Vance and get out of range. I'll make sure wonder chicken here can't follow."

"I don't need protection against little piece of shit clean up crews like him, man." Right. Go with Remy, like he took orders worth a damn.

Clay turned on him, baring his teeth. "Honey, please. Go with Remy. I'll be right out."

He shuddered, and it wasn't from fucking fear either. Shit. Shit, he wanted. Goddamn it, what was wrong with him? "Yeah. Come on, Batboy. You got any smokes on you?"

"Fuck off, man. You ain't nuttin' to me." Remy handed over a crumpled pack, leading him out away from things, hand on his elbow. Ah, Cajun hospitality. They heard a high-pitched wail, and he could just imagine the kind of leverage Clay was using to keep the kid from following. The strains of the Nutcracker were just loud and clear.

He looked over at Remy, who just looked right back. Man, he was on a deeply fucked road, wasn't he?

Clay finally came barreling out, grabbing both him and Remy and hauling them along, cursing kinda viciously. "Come on. Come *on*."

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One eyebrow went up, but he started moving, hauling ass toward the fucking Caddy like his ass was on fire. He wasn't sure he wanted to know.

"You know," Clay said, not even panting as they pelted away full speed. "They don't make them all as tough as you."

"No shit?" He snorted, shaking his head a little. "You trying to tell me my message isn't going to get to the Colonel?"

"Oh, I didn't kill him. Much. He'll get the message there."

Remy started laughing like a loon, whapping Clay on the arm with his free hand. Clay just chuckled sourly, stuffing them both in the backseat of that long black Cadillac.

"Anything you need from your place, Remy? I think it's time to move on, and I ain't leavin' you here for them to find."

"Oui. Need gran'pappy's bow and the stash of jug liquor. I got clothes too, for me and this other one."

"Grandpappy's bow? Are you real or a caricature looking for a place to land?"

"Don't be a bitch, Vance. He saddled up to save your bacon when he coulda let you die and had me to himself." The words were snarly, but Clay reached back for him as he pulled the car out, touching him like the man had to know he was okay.

"Yeah, yeah." He pushed into the touch, toes curling. Fuck, that was. Yeah. "He still hit me with a bat."

"I thought you was hurting the boss, man. It wasn't personal or nothin'. I take care of him." That was almost cute.

"I do like that." Clay smiled at him in the rearview. "Okay, we'll stop at Remy's, stop at mine, then hit the road and find someplace smaller ... If that's possible."

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"Wouldn't bigger make more sense? More people, less chance of unfortunate incidents?"

"Yeah, well, I can eat animals." There was something there, in Clay's voice. Some reluctance he'd have to explore later.

"If you get alligator breath, I'm not fucking kissing you." They squealed into a trailer park filled with the scariest little travel trailers known to man. Jesus Christ.

Clay turned, glaring. "I'll eat rats just for you. Go on, Rem. Get your shit."

"Gotcha, Boss. Be quick as a bunny." The little fuck scrambled, heading for a little blue wreck.

"He's your fetch and carry, huh?" Jealous? Him? Fuck, no.

"He's a friend." Clay grinned, relaxing a little, making him realize just how much tension had been thrumming through that big body. "Honest to God."

"Yeah? What am I?" Vance knew he wasn't a friend. Hell, they didn't know shit about each other.

"You're mine, honey." Swarming over the seat, Clay landed on him, stealing his breath. And then kissing the Hell out of him.

He groaned like he was fucking dying; he couldn't help it. Every fucking nerve in his body woke up, starting tingling and sparking.

"Mmmm. Jesus, honey." Clay all but ate him up, lips smashing down on him again and again.

"Lord, lord. Can't you two keep it together for a minute?" The car door opened and closed, the big engine roaring to life.

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"Hmm?" Blinking, Clay glanced up front, then turned back to him. It was Remy. That made it safe to make out, right? Unless he bit, and then he'd get the bat.

"Nothing, Boss. You just eat the Frankenstein guy and we'll recoup. It's all good."

Oh, he was gonna kick Remy's ass.

"Mmmhmm." Okay, Clay didn't seem to be paying attention to anything but him. That gave him a happy, made everything else just fade right away. Of course, Clay's hand on his cock, rubbing through his jeans, had him arching, had his chin lifting to push their mouths harder together.

"More," Clay said against his mouth, pushing up on top of him until he slid down the back of the seat, almost horizontal.

"Mmhmm." He was fucking agreeing without knowing what Clay wanted more of. His jeans opened right up under that strong hand. He didn't think the zipper moved. Clay just tore the cloth, pulling his cock out and pumping it.

Oh. Oh, fuck him raw. Vance's eyes rolled like dice and he just started humping, hips pumping furiously.

"Come on, lover. I need..." Clay cupped his head with one hand, pulling his mouth to that long neck. Yeah. Oh, fuck yeah. He growled, bit hard, the action easier than before, his teeth slipping in, dark blood on his tongue, burning him deep down.

"Uhn." Bucking against him, Clay moaned, the sound deep, animalistic. The car swerved a bit, but Vance ignored it, licking and sucking as Clay rocked and rocked.

His lips left the long throat with a pop as he shook. "Close. Close, fuck."

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"Then get it over with. Lord. You two are enough to make a Cajun cry." He was so getting Remy a gag.

Clay just pulled his face back around, staring right into his eyes before bending to take a deep bite right into his throat, teeth sliding in like tiny razors. It sent him fucking flying, his whole body shaking with it. He came so hard his bones rattled, hands opening and closing as heat poured out of him, just like Clay'd demanded it.

Lord, but Clay followed right along, grunting, pushing hard against him and even with Clay's jeans still closed up tight as a preacher's wife, he could smell it. Smell Clay when he came.

They floated a second, then the car came to a stop. "Done? Good. We're here, Cheri. Up. Out. And clean yourselves up. You smell like a cathouse."

Oh, yeah.

A gag.

A big, red, ball gag.

He'd even write Remy's name on it.

Chapter Eleven

They found a roach motel somewhere out in the swamp.

The only thing around was an all-night Amoco and a liquor store, so Clay figured they didn't need to worry about posting a lookout. They sent Remy for snacks because he blended, and that crazy Cajun came back with Slim Jims and Twinkies and all manner of weird local food. Pickled pig's feet, for God's sake.

Now they were all sitting around the little room with its two double beds, kinda staring. Clay could feel the sun coming up out there, but Remy had duct taped the curtains closed and put out the do not disturb sign.

Vance stood, stripping off his shirt, the scars white and fascinating on the darker skin. "I'm going to take a shower."

"Damn, what you do to yourself, Boo?" Remy's eyes looked just about big as saucers.

Clay wondered that himself, even as he slid a hand around that trim waist. "You gonna tell us, or just want me to come get wet with you?"

"Isn't much to tell. I was an undercover cop. I got blown. The guys I was watching expressed their displeasure over a couple of long, long days."

"That don't sound like the good blowin', Boo. No, sir."

Bless his heart, Remy just had the care gene. He couldn't be nasty to anyone. Clay grinned over. "You coming too, babe?"

"Your boy don't mind, yeah, I am." Remy's smile answered his, the man coming right to him, just like always.

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Tugging them both into the bathroom, Clay chuckled. "We won't get much hot water, but the tub is big enough." Might as well get them used to each other.

"I can wait, man." Vance didn't pull away, though. Hell, the man headed to the tub and got the water going.

"No need to." Clay stripped down, reaching for Vance after he was naked, just needing to see the rest of that skin.

Remy stared at Vance, Remy's little dark body half-exposed. "Lord, lord. You gotta be the strongest motherfucker ever."

"You're talking too much, Rem." Clay winked at Vance. "It's one of his failings. Come on, you two. Before it gets cold."

"Bitch, bitch, bitch." Remy chuckled, stripping off the tattered jeans as Vance stepped into the tub, pulled the curtain half closed.

Man, Vance was gonna have to work on that shy thing. Not that Clay could blame him. He'd all but been killed, he was totally out of his element, and this thing between them ... well, it was just too damned weird. Clay stepped into the bath, pushing right up behind Vance. "Hey, honey."

"Hey." Yeah, Vance looked good wet, hair plastered down, skin shining. That tight ass felt even better than it looked, snuggling right up to his cock.

"You gonna make it?" That body was tense as Hell, and Clay just set to touching, relaxing the hard muscles, knowing Rem knew the drill well enough to join them on his own.

"Think so. Maybe."

Remy slid in behind him, hands sliding up his spine, working his muscles.

"Oh, good. Wouldn't want you to fall apart." Humming, Clay pushed back, then forward, figuring he'd found vamp heaven.

"I'm not the fall apart type." Yeah, and Vance didn't sleep and didn't need like no one else either.

"No? Well, I should check, just to make sure you're all good, huh?" His lips slid down Vance's nape, his tongue coming out to taste a little.

"No more biting." He grinned, the words were sounding more and more like a fucking endearment. He approved. Of course, he also approved of the way Remy was licking along his spine, hands rubbing his ass.

"Uh-huh. No biting. I swear." He was a big fat liar, was what he was. Clay let his teeth scrape right where he wanted them to, hoping for at least a shiver.

He got it, Vance groaning and resting against the tile, Remy's laugh just barely audible.

"Mmmm. Yeah." Man, he could just stay right there forever. Especially since the bathroom didn't have a window. Score.

Remy was licking and nibbling, Vance rubbing against him, that muscled body moving in slow undulations. Damn, this was. Yeah. A man could get used to it. He reached back to stroke Remy's hip, his other hand sliding around Vance's belly. His cock was hard, just rubbing on Vance like nothing going.

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Remy cuddled in, thick, short cock on his thigh, hotter than the water and leaving little wet kisses. Vance spread, his cock sliding in that tight little crack. Jesus Lord. Clay moaned, pushing harder against Vance, his hand sliding down to cup Vance's prick, thumb running up and down. He squeezed Remy's hip, pulling the kid in closer, harder.

"Fuck." Vance's head fell forward, giving him all that long, scarred neck.

"We ain't got that much hot water, Boo." Remy groaned, humping against him like a bad puppy.

Laughing, Clay bit down on that amazing skin, the feel of it making him jerk and hump. He thumped Remy a little, just giving that crazy Cajun a little sting. They moved together, all three of them grunting and rocking, him caught smack dab in the middle, right where he wanted to be. Clay stroked and pulled, kissed and pinched. Somehow he managed to get them all turned so Vance and Remy were both rubbing up on him, their cocks sliding on his skin, him taking one kiss after the other. Remy was spicy; Vance tasted dark and sharp. They were both fucking addictive.

Fucking hot.

He was gonna blow in no time, all the danger and running and almost losing Vance just fucking overwhelming. Clay reached for whatever skin he could hold on to, his hips rocking like crazy. Two hands dropped, wrapped around his prick. Both of his men stilled, then Remy twined their fingers together, both of them working his cock. His head fell back on his neck, his muscles going so tight Clay thought he might just explode. "Jesus. Yeah. There."

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Vance growled, teeth scraping on his skin even as Remy's thumb pressed into his slit. That did it. His brain shorted out and he just came like a ton of bricks, unable to stifle his loud cry. Maybe it was even a roar.

"Oh. Oh, Cheri. So pretty." Remy kept rocking, lips brushing over his jaw as Vance bit his arm, just hard enough to sting.

Clay's knees sagged, but he managed to loop an arm around both of his men and stay standing, turning to sink his teeth into Vance's shoulder. He'd just take a little. A tiny bit. Vance jerked, spunk splashing on his hip, followed in a few seconds by Remy, hot and sweet against his thigh.

That was just the ticket. All of them got to come before they ran out of hot water, and they got to wash to boot.

The night might have been a disaster, but the morning was shaping up to be much better.

Chapter Twelve

Man. His life hadn't been white fences and roses and shit, but it hadn't been this deeply fucked and weird in at least a couple years.

Vance lit his cigarette, staring out into the setting sun through his sunglasses. Man, he was getting old somehow, when the early evening sun made him feel like his skin was too tight and his eyes were itching.

"Boo, you getting all burny out here, yeah? The boss is still sleeping." The little bat-wielding Cajun slipped out, cigarette in his teeth. "I'm fixin' to go to the Wal-Mart. Get some supplies and shit."

"My name's Vance."

"Yeah. Yeah, I know that." Remy nodded, offered him a half-grin. "I know." Asshole.

Vance took a deep drag. "How long you known Mr. Bitey-face in there?"

"Ten years, maybe? He's been real good to me. Keeps me out of trouble."

"You're not worried I'll take your job?"

He got an incredulous look. "No, Boo. I ain't worried 'bout that at all. I'm gonna go. I'll bring back food."

Then Remy just went, hopping in the Caddy and heading off like this whole thing was normal. Ten years. Lord, Remy didn't look that old, did he? Clay must have been robbing the cradle, huh? Vance wasn't the cradle type at all, so he wondered if he was a departure.

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by B. A. Tortuga

"Honey, get your ass in here, will you? I can't come get you." Oh, someone had woken up growly.

"Bitch, bitch, bitch." He tossed his butt, heading into the hotel room, the darkness feeling good on his eyes.

Clay's hands landed on him as soon as the door clicked shut. "Need you. So yeah, I'm bitchy."

"Your Cajun went to the store." What that had to do with anything, he didn't know. Fuck, Clay's hands felt good.

"Mmmhmm. He likes to go. Do. Me, I'll stay here with you..." That hot mouth traveled right across his cheek to his lips, tongue pushing into his mouth. He arched into Clay's strength, rubbing against all that naked skin. Oh. Better. Much better. He fucking approved. "You got too many clothes on, honey. We're gonna have to do something about that." Clever fingers. That man had damned clever fingers. They got rid of his clothes in short order.

"I was outside. I don't do naked outside, man." He was a big fucking fan of naked bloodsucker in the dark, though. Damn.

"Why in the Hell were you outside? I swear to God, I can feel the sun on your skin." Pulling at him, Clay got him over to one of the beds, pushing him down to climb on top of him, straddling his hips.

"I was..." He didn't know why. Wasn't it the thing to do? His fingers wrapped around Clay's cock, tugging good and hard.

"Uhn." That whole long body arched for him, muscles sliding under skin. God, the man was just built like a brick shit house. And that flesh was hotter than you'd think. He

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couldn't fucking get enough. Shit, there were going to be assholes hunting him and he was lying here with Clay, hard and wanting, fucking hungry.

"Stop thinking so loud." Grinning, Clay bent and bit his shoulder, not hard enough to break the skin, but damn.

"I'm..." Oh. Oh, fuck. If Clay didn't stay out of his head ... That felt fucking amazing.

"Love the way you feel. Love the way you taste." This time those teeth broke through, pulling his blood right up to the skin, making him shake.

He bucked, hips pumping as his balls drew up tight. "Fuck. Fuck, that. I."

Shit, he couldn't think.

"No biting. Right?" That laugh went right to his cock, making it twitch. Clay bit him again, this time pulling strongly, right in time with his heartbeat. He had time to settle into it, body rocking in time with the pulls at his throat. Then Clay was pulling at his cock, trying to pull everything out of him. Daring him not to come. This sound came out of him—half-broken, half-so right it hurt—and his muscles went tight and hard, the whole fucking world stopping.

Clay snarled, biting one last time, tearing him right up, but it felt so damned good he couldn't even think to stop it. He shot so hard the top of his head felt like it was going to come right off, the dark room going almost black.

"Uhn." He barely heard Clay's grunt, but he felt Clay shoot against his belly, felt the wetness spread between them under Clay's stroking hand. It was all he could do, to just reach up, wrap his hand around Clay's ass, holding on.

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Clay slumped against him, leaning on him, hand stroking his side.

"Hey." He held on, nuzzling Clay's throat, breathing deep.

"You feeling better, honey? You were thinking too much." He got a kiss that tasted like copper and salt, like hot sex and need.

Thinking? Him? "You're like a fucking drug."

"Hell, I hear that. You make me crazy, honey." He could see that in Clay's eyes when the man pulled back to look at him, the hint of confusion mixed with the heat.

He had a thousand questions—how long had Clay been this way, how fucking old was the man, how often did he need to feed—but they didn't manage to slip out, because he leaned up, just a little, and licked Clay's lips.

"Mmmm. More." Looked like someone else was just as distracted with him, just as needy.

"Uh-huh." He fucked Clay's lips with his tongue, pushing in and tasting. That mouth opened wide to him, letting him in, Clay pulling him even closer. If that was possible. He wrapped his hands around Clay's head, tilting them both so that he could take more, take what he needed.

They rolled, Clay humping on him again. Already. They were like dry kindling in a lightning storm. He couldn't fucking be hard again. No fucking way. He growled, biting Clay's bottom lip hard enough to burn.

"Gonna just eat you up." Yeah, he'd heard that one before. Damn, but that big bastard could move.

"Promises, promises." He bit again, tugging hard enough that it had to ache.

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"Fuck! Jesus fuck, Vance." Leaning down, Clay got a hold of his skin, too, biting hard. Making him buck.

"No. Biting." He growled, bit, drawing blood this time, the flavor surprisingly sharp.

"None. Not a bit." Oh, someone liked that. Clay jerked against him, hips moving again like they still weren't wearing come from the last time.

"Fucker." He dragged his fingers down along Clay's spine, nails digging in.

"Any time you want it, honey. I promise. You get me hard like nobody else. Swear to God." Clay left love marks all over. From his neck, to his chest, to his upper arm.

"I want it." He'd never fucking asked for it before.

"Then you got me." Sliding right down his body, Clay flipped him all the way on his back, lifting his hips. His cock got a sweet touch of lips and tongue, then his balls, before Clay was tonguing his hole. His eyes flew open, toes curling so tight his calf muscles threatened to charley-horse. He just. Oh. Fucking A.

"Mmmm." That deep moan vibrated against him, sending him into orbit. Then Clay pushed in, opening him right up, and he thought his head might come off. He might have babbled; he wasn't sure. He was terribly busy being driven into complete and total incoherence. That fool man kept at him until he was going to melt and run like molten lava. Then Clay surged up over him, cock prodding at his entrance. "You ready, honey? Say you're ready."

"Ready. Please. Goddamn it. Fuck me." Now. Deep and hard so that he could feel it for days.

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"Now. Fuck yes, now." That hard cock just pressed right into him, all the way, no stopping to give him time to adjust. The burn was sweet, settling right in the base of his spine and making him growl. He reached up, braced himself on the wall, hips rocking.

"So fucking hot, Vance." Well, at least he knew that Clay knew whom he was fucking. He saw it in those dark eyes, too, when they met his. Like they were fucking looking right into him.

"Never been like this." He gritted out the words, pushing back, taking Clay in deeper.

"Never..." It was more than an echo. It was like a fucking promise, and Clay moved in him, just surging into him.

Clay pegged his gland and he almost fucking screamed, head tossing, prick slapping his belly. "There."

"Right there? Yeah, I like what that does." It was a barely audible growl, but Vance heard it loud and clear. Clay hit that spot over and over, slamming into him.

Shit. Shit. He. Oh, sweet fuck, yes.

Things slipped right into pure sensation, Vance's focus on nothing more than Clay and him and the way they were moving. Clay pulled him up and sat back so he was almost riding upright, that prick pushing so deep he thought it might kill him. But what a fucking amazing way to go. He might have groaned, might have growled, he wasn't sure. All he knew was that fucking pleasure.

He knew Clay was growling, though. No one could miss those animalistic sounds. They poured over him as Clay bucked and writhed. His head rolled, eyes trying to focus on

something, anything. He was so hot; his skin felt like it was going to crackle.

"God. Vance. I can't..." Clay's face drew up in a grimace, his eyes all but fucking glowing. Then Clay was coming inside him, pounding deep, wet heat filling him. That was what he needed, Clay's heat pushing his own orgasm out of him in a rush.

"Goddamn, I cain't leave you two alone for a minute." Remy's voice pushed through the afterglow.

Clay laughed, the sound barely there, like there wasn't enough air to make it. "We just had to set a few things straight, babe. Anyone take notice of you?"

"Nah. I just bought some stuff, paid and came back. Smells like a whorehouse in here. I shoulda bought that apple spray stuff." Little fuckhead.

Rolling them, Clay stared over Vance at Remy, giving the man a look. "Be nice, babe. You want me to cook?"

"Oooee!" Was that a real noise or did the goddamn Cajun turn into a pig?

"What about you, honey?" Dropping a quick kiss on Vance's mouth, Clay slid out of him, lifting him. "Want a nice, juicy, rare steak?"

"Oh." The sound that escaped him was damn animalistic growl, as bad as Remy's squeal.

Remy just hooted. "You'd best feed him, Cheri, 'fore he eats you and me both."

"You don't shut up, I'll let him eat you..." Look at that ass. Clay prowled over, grabbing Remy's neck and taking what

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looked to be a bruising kiss before going to poke through the plastic bags.

Remy hummed, swayed for a second, blinking over at Clay with a vaguely dazed expression.

He needed a fucking shower.

And another cigarette.

Chapter Thirteen

Clay watched Remy and Vance circle each other for as long as he could stand it. They were just snarly, being closed in, and Hell, so was he. He couldn't blame them. What they needed was to arm themselves with information. That meant finding out all he could about his enemy. Clay finally grabbed one of the little hotel chairs and turned it around, straddling it. He stared from Remy to Vance and back, finally growling.

"Sit."

Remy sat.

Vance growled back, baring his teeth a little. "Fuck off, man."

"I need to talk to you, Vance. We need to figure this shit out." He waved a hand. "Sit, please."

"It's less fun to fight with you if you're being polite." Good to know.

Vance grabbed a chair, turning it around to straddle it before sitting. They stared at each other until he started to grin. "So tell me about the guy you work for."

"He's Southern. He pays good money. He's not real big on the sense of humor thing." Vance sighed, chewing on his lip a second. "He's got an overdeveloped sense of vengeance and a bead on me, it looks like."

"Well, I can see that. I mean, if he thinks you betrayed him." Clay tilted his head. "But let's go back a bit. What does he want with me?"

"I don't know." He glowered and Vance shrugged. "He'd call with a town and have me encourage the bloodsuckers to

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move on. The ones that wouldn't move, I got rough with. He never said anything about why. I always figured people were dying."

"Well, it's entirely possible. But not with me. When was the last time I killed anything, Rem?"

"Does the little fuck that come to kill Boo count, Boss?"

"Did I kill him?" Well, shit. He thought he'd just ... mangled him a bit. "No."

"Okay, then. Six years, give or take." At his look, Remy grinned conspiratorially. "Member that guy who'd been beating up old ladies? The crazy one? Him."

"Well, there you go. See, honey? I'm a good guy." He winked, just loving the head-tilty look Vance gave him.

"I know. I mean, I don't know, but I'm not a fucking monster. I was a cop. A good guy. Once."

The urge to get up and go over there and kiss the fire out of Vance all but overwhelmed him. Clay let his eyes do the talking instead of his fingers, though, staring right into Vance's eyes. "I know that, honey."

"So, I think I'm heading to North Carolina to deal with him." Vance scratched idly at the old scars, fingertips rasping. "You two staying together?"

His hands clenched so tight on the back of the chair that wood and vinyl creaked. "You ain't going without me, Vance. No way."

"You can't walk into a giant blood-and-fang trap, man. I can. You have that whole burning-death relationship with the sun." Right, like Vance wasn't avoiding the sun like the plague.

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"Oh, fuck that. You go, I go. That's that. You can put me in the trunk and let Remy drive." He winked at his little Cajun, who was watching them like a tennis match.

Remy arched an eyebrow. "Why we got to go at all? We jus' find us a place and land."

"Because he's the Boy Scout type, babe. Now that he thinks the Colonel is wrong, he's gonna go confront him. Right, Vance?" Clay turned to meet those dead serious eyes, knowing it was true.

"Fuck off." Oh, those cheeks went red.

"No. Rather fuck you." He gave up on sitting so far away, springing up to stalk over and put his hands on Vance's knees, squatting down so they were more face to face. "I ain't saying you don't got the right, babe."

He felt Vance shudder. "You're under my skin, man, like a drug. He'll keep hunting you unless I take him down."

"Then we take him down." That was simple enough, right? "We'll figure it."

"Y'all got yourselves some weird mojo 'tween you." Remy stood, stared into Vance's eyes. "You crazy, man. You know that."

"I will kill you, Remy. Just out of boredom." Vance sounded so incredibly reasonable.

"No killing Remy. He's a good boy. Got a great ass. And unlike us, he can go out in the sun." Clay whapped Vance's leg lightly, just to make his point.

"Us? I don't have a problem with the sun."

Remy blinked at Vance's words, stared back at him with curious eyes.

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"Honey, you were having a Hell of a time this morning." Lord, Vance was gonna fry one of these days, just out of sheer cussedness.

Vance snorted. "I just was tired."

"And a little stupid." Remy wasn't helping.

"For fuck's sake. You," he pointed a finger at Remy. "Stop it. And you," he looked back at Vance. "You need to think about what's going on instead of denying it."

"What's going on? I'm not flipping over. Last time I checked, that required death. I have no memory of dying."

Clay sighed. So much for getting his own information. "Yeah, well. Being with me might have some, uh ... side effects."

"Rash? Sensitivity to light? Blue balls?"

"A wanting for ... hey, you want that steak? I did promise to cook, huh? What all did you get, Rem." Well, shit. Vance wasn't the only one good at denial.

"Red meat. Jerky. Beer. Donuts. Salsa. Good stuff."

"Good man." He stood, stretching, pondering pants. Steak required pants.

"Oh, I don't think so." Vance's hand wrapped around his cock, fingers on his balls. "What side effects?"

"Sunlight bad. Raw meat good." He went up on tiptoes, not even smart enough to be worried, no sir. Nope, his cock just went right hard.

"I don't eat raw meat." That hand started moving, stroking him in slow strokes.

"Uh. Okay." What? Was there a question? Shit. That felt amazing.

"Lord, lord, lord. I'll start the steaks." Remy sounded almost snarly.

"Don't be a bitch, Rem. You could come help." It wasn't his fault Vance was like crack. It really wasn't. The man just did things to him no one else had. That didn't mean he was willing to let Remy go.

"Your new boy'll tear me up. Boo don' look on me fond, Boss." Oh, for chrissake.

"Jesus Christ, you two." Clay's eyes crossed when Vance's thumb pressed against his slit. Fuck, how was he supposed to function?

"You just want to have your cake and eat it too." Vance kept stroking, jacking him good and hard. Yeah? So? There was a problem with that?

"Uh. Cake. Yeah." His brain was just gonna melt. That was all there was to it.

Remy's hands landed on his shoulders, rubbing, thumbs pushing in. Oh. Good man.

"God. Y'all are good to me." Vance's hands ... Well, those were better than good. He looked down at that scarred man, licking his lips, needing.

Vance's eyes were shining, almost glowing, so close to bright it wasn't funny. "No biting."

Oh, Hell yeah. He cupped Vance's cheek in one hand, the other going back to Remy's hip, just like before. In the shower. Remy was a good man. Vance, though. Vance made him insane. Vance leaned into his hand, Remy moaning low, breath brushing his ear. Goddamn, he was the luckiest

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bastard on Earth. Clay sank right back to the floor, dragging Remy with him, bending to bite at Vance's thigh.

"Oh, fuck!" Vance's cry made Remy jerk, rubbing against his hip, fingers digging in.

Clay pressed against Remy, giving him more to slide on, and he licked at Vance, loving on the man. Jesus.

Remy's mouth was on his shoulder, tongue soft and gentle on him. Vance reached out, growling. "Uh-uh. Biting's mine, now." Remy opened his mouth and Vance dragged Remy up along his side, Vance kissing Remy until the little Cajun relaxed. "I mean it."

Jesus fucking Christ. That was ... God. "Biting yours," Clay agreed. For now. He kissed Vance as a reward, tongue pushing in deep, his hand on Remy's hip, that sweet, round little ass.

Vance kissed him hard, tongue fucking his mouth while Remy went to town moaning, humping him like a bad puppy. Groans tearing out of him, he shifted a little, bringing Remy around even more, letting the kid have at. His other hand pulled Vance deeper, and he let his teeth sting that sweet lower lip.

Remy slid between them, mouth dropping to cover Vance's cock as that little ass rubbed his prick. Little slut. Clay did enjoy him.

His eyes met Vance's, silently asking if this was okay. Like it was. Who in Hell knew? But it felt good, and Clay wasn't much on denial. Vance groaned, the kiss growing toothy, sharp, his lip splitting. Okay. Yeah. Okay. Clay licked and sucked, his hips pushing right up behind Remy as if they had

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a mind of their own. Because his own mind wasn't working. Just his body.

It was just a big-assed ball of blood and pleasure and he was feeling it, balls to bones. Clay rocked forward, pushing against Remy's ass, cock finding that little hole. His mouth met Vance's again, just going to town. God, yeah. Remy spread and pushed back, little slut groaning and taking him, just like that. Whatever Remy was doing made Vance cry out, the sound pushing into Clay's mouth.

They got to rocking, all of them moving together. His hands landed on Vance's thighs, giving him balance, and he could feel each thrust the man made into Remy's mouth. That hot little ass took him in, and Clay didn't hold back, just fucking Remy like crazy.

Vance had one hand on Remy's head, one wrapped around his nape, nails dragging on his skin. Remy's ass was squeezing, Vance was biting, both of them were making amazing fucking noises. Rocking between them, Clay let himself growl, let his teeth scrape where they wanted to, right along Vance's throat. Jesus, he was going to explode.

"No biting." Vance moaned the words, the offer.

Clay bit right down, hoping to Hell Remy wasn't doing the same thing. Then he couldn't think, because Vance filled him, filled him right up, just made him feel like he was going to die. Again.

Things happened in a flash—coming and sucking and drinking and screaming—it was like being caught in the sun for a second, the burn so hot you didn't feel it. Then they all

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sorta collapsed, poor Remy getting squashed between him and Vance, just panting and groaning.

He stroked Vance's shoulder, right on up to the sluggish trail of blood on Vance's throat. "I'm coming with you."

"Yeah, yeah. We all go, yeah, Boss? Hunt down the crazy cracker. Cain't you get to feeding him?"

"We could buy Remy a ball gag. It would be cute."

Clay laughed out loud, patting Remy's butt with his free hand. "We could. It would. He might kill us in our sleep. I'll cook."

Vance rolled his eyes, grinned. "I'm not ready to die quite yet. Sorry."

"Yeah. Yeah, I hear you, honey." They all sorta stuck together when he moved, but Clay made it to his feet, intent on feeding his men so they could get on with what they had to do next.

That whole talking thing just hadn't worked out worth a shit.

Chapter Fourteen

Road trips with a blood sucker?

Fucking challenging.

Between trying to find a hotel that let them check in late or early and keeping Clay from nibbling on folks or Remy from growling and pulling the bat out of the trunk, Vance was considering daring the Colonel to come get his happy ass.

Not only that, but nothing he ate was helping the gnawing hunger in his belly and Remy was looking fucking tasty.

He obviously needed a drink.

Of whiskey.

Or beer.

Damn it.

Remy looked at him, one black eyebrow arched. He glared over. "What're you looking at?"

"You, Boo. You got a wild eye. I seen it with the boss."

Asshole.

He headed out of the motel room, needing a smoke. The morning sun made him wince, made him keep to the shadows. Jesus.

A heavy hand smacked the window as he passed. "Get your ass back in here, Vance."

"I don't take fucking orders." Still, he leaned against the window, pulled his hat down farther.

"Honey, you're gonna burn yourself." He could hear the growl, the deep animal sound of Clay's voice. "Please..."

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"Yeah..." He stumbled back, helped the last few steps by Remy, the stocky little Cajun easing him in before sealing doors and windows.

"I got 'im, Cheri."

"Thanks, babe." Clay was there right away, pulling at his clothes, looking him over. They staggered to the bed, Clay pulling him down, pressing his face to that long neck. Vance just growled, body convulsing as he bit down, so hungry. Needing so fucking bad it hurt.

Clay held him there, rumbling, words coming out that made no sense. Oh. Oh, the ache started to ease as soon as the blood began to flow. Something in him was screaming, jumping up and down and pointing out that he was drinking a bloodsucker's blood, for chrissake, and that had to be, at best, unhygenic.

The hungry part of him squashed that screaming bit with Remy's bat.

Wrapping around him, Clay gave him more, head tilting back so he could get a better angle. Okay, who needed beer? The ache inside him eased and he found himself nuzzling and licking, the ferocity easing right on up.

"That's it. That's it, babe." Petting, Clay hummed for him, relaxed against him, too. He hadn't realized how tense Clay had been to begin with.

"Mmmhmm." He caught himself rubbing, hands shaping Clay's body. Muscled bastard.

"Hey. Better?" Clay kissed the corner of his mouth, holding him right against that fine body.

"Uh-huh." He nodded, almost drunk with it, fucking giddy.

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Stupid, but true.

"Good. Gonna drive me crazy, honey. I swear. Restless bastard."

"Short putt, Boss." Remy's hand slid up his spine, a cool cloth cleaning the sweat from him. "This okay, Boo?"

"Yeah. Yeah, man. Thanks."

"You're a good 'un, Rem." Clay patted his ass, licking the moisture off his cheek. "I owe you a big bag of beignets."

"Oo-eee! I could go for that, Cheri."

Vance chuckled, stealing a kiss from Clay. Remy was something. Something special.

Short bus special.

"Right now you could snuggle with us..." The air conditioner was on full blast, so snuggling would be okay. He almost approved. Clay went on. "I ain't heading out again until nightfall. No more trunk."

Remy nodded, pressing close like he belonged there, cuddled with them. "We need a day or two, Boss. Just to rest. Boo's all sunburned."

"Then we stay and rest. Snack a little. Play tiddly winks." He could feel Clay laughing, chest rising and falling.

"Tiddly winks. Christ." He snorted, blinking slow and then slower. Better than naked mayonnaise Twister, he guessed.

Chapter Fifteen

The whole road trip experience was a nightmare.

Clay wanted his little house back in the swamp. He wanted his occasional foray into town to feed. He wanted poker night with Remy and his pals. Of course most of all he wanted Vance free of this damned Colonel so they could just go off and fuck and bite and sweat and have each other for a good long while. Which was why he was somewhere around the North Carolina-Virginia line, looking for a cheap motel that would let them check in near sunrise. "Wake up, y'all. I'm fixing to have to get in the trunk."

Vance blinked, frowned. "We need a hotel, huh? Where are we?"

"Almost there, babe. You need to tell me where to go." Oh, like Vance didn't do that a million times a day.

"Mmm ... There's a little place right around here. Cabins. It's off-season enough we can get one. I've stayed there before. Lots."

Vance pushed up into the front seat, staring in the dark. "Four or five miles up on the left, unless it's gone."

"Okay." Vance's vision had improved. Clay wondered if the man had even noticed. Probably not, as deep as he was sunk in denial.

Warm fingers slid on his thigh, tracing the seam of his jeans. Teasing. "Man, it feels like winter's coming."

"Hmmm? You cold?" He was not so good at reading the weather anymore. Hell, he lived in the swamp.

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"Not yet, but I can smell it. On the air. There. That road." Sure enough, there was a sign with a little cabin on it.

"Got it." They wheeled into the lane, heading right up to the rental cabins. "We'll let Remy check us in, as your colonel likely don't know about him."

"Yeah. There's a trick to the doors. Come on." Vance nudged Remy on the way out of the door, moving like a predator in the fading night. Clay followed, prowling after Vance, all of his hunting instincts suddenly up. Jesus, would you look at that man. Vance looked back, eyes flashing, daring him, challenging him. Hell, yes. He could so get him some of that.

Like a startled fucking deer, Clay took off after Vance, ready to run the man down and eat him up. He hadn't had a chase in too long. Vance took off like a bat out of Hell, heading for the cabins, racing him and the sunlight.

Yes. God, yes. Clay sped up, his footfalls silent, his hands clenching and unclenching. He needed. He could smell Vance—blood and sex and excitement—as the man worked the door, fighting his way inside.

He made the door just as Vance slid through, leaping, missing Vance by mere inches. Damn it. Clay whirled, reaching. Vance's heat just escaped his fingers as Vance jumped for the bed and he followed, landing hard on Vance, the bedsprings creaking. Snarling, he bent to take his due, his teeth reaching for that fine throat. Yeah, he could *hear* Vance's heartbeat.

"No. Fucking. Biting." Vance twisted, bringing that throat just that much closer, the struggle sweet.

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"No. No biting." He said it just before his teeth sank in, the taste of Vance exploding through him.

"Clay!" Vance's hands held his mouth close, the life pouring into him, sweet and wild and tinged with an addictive darkness. All he had to do was turn just so, offering his own throat to Vance, letting the man have him right back. It went both ways. When Vance's teeth sank in, something snapped into place and things went red, the pulsing in his ears so loud his brains seemed to slosh around in his skull a little. Fuck him.

Of course, the sloshing thing could be Remy, whacking at them both with a shoe. "Boss! Boo! Y'all is gonna ... I don't know. Stop. Stop that shit right now!"

"Jesus Christ, Rem!" He rolled, his arm sweeping across Remy's midsection to push the kid away. He was a Hell of a lot gentler than Remy was.

A fucking shoe.

"None of that shit! Eating each other and groaning with the sun coming up and shit!" Remy looked a little like a crazed gnome, jumping up and down and hollering, fingers making the thick dark hair stick up all over.

Clay glanced at Vance. "I think he's broken."

"Hey, man. He's your lackey. I come lackeyless. Lackey free? Whatever." Vance looked amused as fuck.

"Asshole." His hands landed on Remy's hips, and Clay pulled the kid in, wrapping an arm around Remy's waist. "Breathe, babe."

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"It just went on and on ... I thought. I just. No one could live through that..." Remy pushed close, hands mapping him, reaching to pull Vance closer.

"Hey, man. I'm not dead. Not even close." Vance smoothed down Remy's hair a little.

"See? He's in one piece, even. Unless you whacked something off with the shoe." Look at that Remy. He'd taken to Vance right off. And Vance liked the kid, too. But man, they needed to get Remy his own room once they got the Colonel taken care of.

"Yeah. Yeah. I know. I just." Remy shrugged. "Y'all are gettin' weird, Cheri."

"We been weird from the get go, babe." He smiled, trying for reassuring, then gave Remy a kiss and a pat on the ass. "We need to fix up the windows."

"Yeah. Yeah, I got it." Remy looked at Vance, eyebrow arching. "C'mon you. Help me fix it up for the boss man."

"Don't get too close to the windows." He gave Vance a look, just making sure the man understood. The more they shared blood...

"Yeah, yeah, yeah..." Vance stopped all of the sudden, growling low, eyes fucking glowing. "Remy. Take Clay into the bathroom and lock the doors. There's a way into the crawlspace in the linen cabinet." Vance slid out of the bed, snarling and keeping low as he headed for the door. "Do it, Cajun. Now."

Remy grabbed his hand. "C'mon. C'mon, Boss. Hurry. Hurry."

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Oh, Hell no. "Go, Rem. I'm not letting him do this alone. No way." He could feel the sun, trying to find its way in. And he could hear ... something. Something Vance knew, but he didn't.

"No. No, Boss. He's got a chance still, with the sun. You ain't. Come on. Come *on*, now."

Vance turned toward him, muddy eyes blazing. "They'll kill him, Clay. Make him scream first. I've got a chance. Go." Vance pulled out a pair of pistols, scarred skin straining over the tense muscles. "Now, man. It's time to be the good guy, huh?"

His gut churned, but goddamn, Vance was right. Remy didn't stand a chance. He was only fucking human. Vance could stay alive until Clay could get back to him. He hoped. He gave one short nod and whirled away, hauling Remy under his arm like a football.

Goddamned asshole had better stay alive.

Clay had plans for him.

Remy got the doors locked and he climbed up, pushing up at the little door to the crawl space. He pulled himself up and reached for Remy when the whole place shuddered, the sounds of bullets making his ears ring.

He wanted to move, wanted to go back down there and make the bastards pay. But he couldn't. The sun would be pouring in the door, and he had to protect Remy. Had to.

"He's strong, Boss. He is. You don' worry. He'll be down there screaming for me to get the car, you watch and see."

Not looking at Remy, because he didn't want the kid to see his glowing eyes and bared teeth, Clay nodded. Then he

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pulled that warm little body into the cradle of his, hiding Remy from any danger. "We'll get him back, babe. We will. Now we just have to stay still and quiet. All right?"

"Like little mice."

"Yeah. Mice in the attic." All he could do was close his ears and try not to think about what Vance might be going through.

Night would fall. And then Clay would go on the hunt. He had every intention of getting Vance back. And of tearing those men with guns into tiny little pieces.

He did love a good plan.

* * * *

Pain.

Fuck.

Pain.

He growled and snapped at the air, the lights burning the living fuck out of him. Out. Out. Out.

Out.

Chains rattled above him, his shoulders screaming as he pulled.

Fuck.

Somewhere above him he heard voices, heard the slow, heavy drawl he'd heard on a hundred jobs, but he couldn't really make out the words. A booted foot nudged his legs, prodding him, poking hard.

He snarled, biting at the air, his blood burning in his veins. Out. Let me out.

A full on slap rocked his head back. "None of that, boy."

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He focused, blinking at a jowly fat fuck with little eyes and a mean-assed smile. "Hey. Hey, Boss."

Fuck him raw.

"Seems you forgot who was boss, didn't you, boy? Seems like you just couldn't get the job done. Not even when I sent you reinforcements."

"He. He fucking stopped eating, you fuck." Shit, he hurt and he needed fucking off this wall. "You don't pay me enough for this shit."

"I'm not paying you for anything anymore. Now, tell me where the fucker is." Another blow rocked his head back, slamming it into the wall.

"Go to Hell, man. He's gone." It wasn't true. He could feel Clay, growling in the base of his neck, rumbling low.

"No, son. He's not gonna give you up. Not even close." Another slap, this one from one of the Colonel's fucking dogs.

Vance snapped, reaching out to bite, jaws clamping on the fuckhead's arm. Blood rushed into his mouth and he damned near screamed with the rush of heat and strength. Shouting, running feet, exploding pain in his head. He had it all in seconds, something blunt and heavy smashing into the side of his face.

He heard the bones cracking, felt shit give way in a rush. Oh. Man. That. Yeah.

His legs gave way, the chains holding him up.

"I wasted a lot of money on you, son. You were one of my first boys. My first success."

The words were there, but they didn't make sense.

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A line of fire crackled across his chest, the glint of a knife right there in front of his eyes. "Where. The fuck. Is he?"

"F ... fuck. Fuck off, you smarmy asshole." He'd been cut by better.

"Oh, son. You have no idea what I can do to you. None at all. Not now." Looked like the man was gonna try to show him, though. Or at least the lackey was. How did a guy get a lackey, anyway? Why was he the only guy without one?

"B ... b ... bring it on." His eyes rolled like dice, pain just flooding him. "You best pray you kill my ass before I get loose, Boss. I ... I'm gonna rip your throat out."

"You'll try, boy." The Colonel hauled back and kicked him before backing away. "Find out where that damned vamp is. Kill them both."

"You got a hard on for him, man? You ain't his..." He coughed, a gout of blood spraying on the Colonel's face and shirt.

He could barely see that face, turning to stone as the man looked down at him. "No. But you're mine, Vance. You always have been. And I'll see you dead. Get my car, James."

Home, James, huh?

Fuck him raw.

* * * *

Clay was about to go crazy.

He itched. He burned. And he would swear he could feel every bit of torment Vance was going through. It pulled at him. Urged him to act.

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Once night had fallen, he and Remy had crawled out of their hidey hole, and he'd had to get Remy water and a bathroom, as well as some food. Bless his heart, the crazy little Cajun had held up well.

"We got to find Boo," Remy had said, tugging him out into the night. And the search was on.

The car had been trashed and the little cabin riddled with bullet holes, but there hadn't been cop one, so someone paid well to keep things quiet. It hadn't taken but a minute for Remy to find the owner's pickup and jerry-rig it to start, both of them zooming down the highway, running on his instinct and the few directions they'd pulled from the wrecked Caddy.

Goddamn it, he liked that car.

They spent the morning in a little quiet cheap-assed motel and when Clay woke, the sun was setting and Remy was sneaking in the door.

"I got us some defense, Boss, and I saw the place they got Boo. There's guards and shit; it's a big old house, but it's just like Boo told us—three stories and a green roof and them ugly bushes cut to look like hearts and spades and clubs and shit."

Two sawed-off rifles landed on the bed, along with a pair of .38s. He knew better than to ask. They needed to get Vance and get the Hell out of Dodge.

"Good job, babe. C'mere." He held out his hand to Remy, knowing he needed a moment, just to get his shit together, Remy's solid little body just the ticket against his.

"We'll get him, Cheri, yeah? You don' worry on it none." Remy pressed close, petting him like Remy was the big badass.

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"I know, babe. I just don't know what he'll be like when we get him. You might have to stay away the first little bit." Hunger could make some of them crazy, and it had been a few days...

Remy nodded, eyes serious. "I ain't looking to be lunch, yeah? We gotta, we'll get him some bagged stuff."

"There you go." Sighing, he took a kiss from Remy, needing something, and damn it, he wasn't allowed to bite. "Come on, babe. Night's awastin'."

"We'll hex their asses and get Boo." Remy grabbed a gas can and a backpack filled with God knew what. He did keep the little Cajun for a reason. They headed down the road, parking the truck out of sight about a quarter mile from the gate.

"Things get bad, you get the Hell out, Rem. I won't have you hurt. You got it?" Clay knew he could tear it up if he needed to, all on his own. That was Vance in there. His.

"We ain't thinkin' that way. We're gonna go in there and get him and go. You and me." Stubborn ass.

"You're a stud, babe. I knew I kept you around for a reason. You let me take out that guard, then you come on." Clay waited for the short nod before stalking into the darkness, intent on doing a little killing.

The first guard went down easy, the next one fought a little, enough to make him snarl and to give Remy the chance to whack the asshole in the knee with a bat. If this was how bad the help was, it was no wonder the mythical Colonel was pissed off that Vance had gone to the other team. Clay motioned Remy to go around the back side of the house,

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figuring they'd split up and catch any other guards that might be patrolling. Remy nodded, moving quick and quiet. There was a big wrap around front porch, a double set of front doors flanked by long, thin windows. He could see guys, moving around back there, pacing.

The back would be best. Hell, maybe they could get in through the low windows under the kitchen. Clay took one more guard in a rush, the wet gurgle as Clay tore out his throat the only sound in the night.

He heard sounds from the inside now, the distance sounds of screams, of his own in pain. He met Remy at the back, one low window already broken out, a guard covered in glass slumped to one side, Remy holding one arm. "I was waiting, Boss. They got me with sumpin'. A shot."

"A shot? Fucking bastards. You gonna be okay? You feel sick?" At the nod, he gave Remy a quick squeeze, knowing they both did better with a little contact. He sniffed, trying to scent if something was wrong. It was his Remy, but more. "Be ready for anything."

Clay went in low and fast, hoping to Hell he didn't land on anything loud.

There was a guy coming in the door, and he took the fucker down and bashed him.

Yeah, okay. Now he just had to follow the screams. Goddamn. Rage burned in his belly, making him move faster. Not reckless. Just quick as Hell.

Remy ran behind him, staying close, pistol in hand as they headed deeper into the house. "They know we're here, Boss.

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I'll watch your back. You get him afore he screams himself hoarse. That's a nasty sound."

"I'm on it." That was all the time he spared for talking. Clay followed the sound of Vance's screams, hot fury riding him, pushing him faster and faster.

He ran through the house, boots clacking on the wood floors, heading toward the sound. He screeched to a halt in what looked like a drawing room, the shadow of a hutch hiding him. Two guards stood at the door at the end of the hall, pistols drawn, eyes huge. One looked at the other as Vance screamed. "How come he ain't dead, man?"

"Because the Colonel don't want him dead yet. He sold out. Got bit. That used to be one of the best. One of the Colonel's special pets, you know. One of *them*."

"Oh ... Yeah. Yeah, where's Andy and them?"

Andy and them probably wouldn't be coming back. Clay hoped to Hell they were dead. It took him perhaps two seconds to decide which guard to take out first. The one of the right would move faster, so Clay took him down.

"Fuck!" He heard the hammer cock, heard the shot so loud his teeth rattled, and waited for the pain, the shock. What he got was Remy, nudging him. "Come on, now. He's still making that fucking noise."

Shit. His whole body went into fight mode, and Clay tore into the room, trusting Remy to stay out of the line of fire. Bullets would hurt like shit, but he'd survive them.

The smell hit him first—burnt flesh and blood thick on the air—but when the sound of sizzling and laughter pushed over the screams, he went wild. They had him hanging from the

wall, slashing at Vance with sun lamps, laughing as they connected.

Clay waded in, teeth bared and hands clenched into claws. He swung at the closest asshole, sending the man flying in a screaming arc, right into the wall. A dull cracking sound followed, the scream cutting off. Two more went, bam bam, and one guy managed to hit him on the shoulder with one of those fucking lamps, making him scream before ripping out a soft, vulnerable throat.

"Boss, Boss. He's getting loose!" He'd heard Remy sound a thousand ways, but never heard pure terror.

Blood sprayed across him, but Clay didn't stop to drink the fucker down. No, he went for the last one, needing him to help Vance heal enough to get out. "Don't kill him, Rem! I need him."

"He ain't right. He ain't Boo no more." Remy was backpedaling, eyes fastened on Vance. He stopped to look—Jesus.

Vance was raw and striped with burns, lips drawn back to show long, sharp fangs.

Sending the last sun lamp crashing to the floor, Clay grabbed the last guard, propelling the begging man forward. Right onto those fangs. The last chain holding Vance snapped and the guard fell, Vance snarling and feeding, the guard's screams cut off with a snap.

Clay checked the danger areas, making sure no more guards were pouring in. Then he went and pulled Vance away from the empty shell he was mauling. "Where's the fucking Colonel, honey?"

Glowing eyes blazed up at him, Vance pure animal, pure hunger and pain as he was attacked.

Damn it.

"Boss!" Shit, Remy'd kill Vance. Vance heard the sound and snarled, lunging for Remy, eyes empty and wild.

"Go, Remy. Get us a better car. Don't get yourself killed." Remy had to get out. He could handle Vance. He remembered what that first desperate hunger felt like.

"Meet you in the back. No getting eaten." Remy took off like a bat out of Hell, Vance snapping and trying to follow the little Cajun, teeth snapping at the air like a rabid dog's.

Clay yanked Vance around, shaking him like a pit bull with a chihuahua. He had to get Vance to settle some before he let the man feed, or it would get ugly. Vance screamed again, blisters breaking under Clay's hands. The blood had helped, though, he could see the skin trying to heal itself.

Rushing Vance, Clay pushed the man back against a wall, holding him there with one arm, raising his other arm to press it against Vance's mouth. Fuck. Fuck, those teeth were sharp, biting deep, the suction fierce as Vance fed. It fucking hurt like nothing had since he'd changed over, but Clay let it go on as long as he could, knowing it would heal Vance like nothing else. Finally, though, he had to fight free, slapping Vance hard across the face when the man went for him again.

Vance's head rocked, knees buckling a little. Goddamn he hoped Remy'd found them a car.

Now it was time for Vance to sleep, to get his shit back on straight. If he could. Clay picked the suddenly very heavy body up, running for the back door.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

They could figure out where the Hell that damned Colonel was later.

When Vance could talk and shit.

Chapter Sixteen

Hungry.

Hungry.

Hungry.

He could smell it.

Food.

Close.

Alive.

He could.

Right here.

He pulled against the ropes holding his arms, screaming out his rage, the hunger crawling on his torn skin.

"You sho' he ain't getting free, Boss? He's like a rabid dog."

"I'm sure. Did you get me what I asked for?" He knew that voice. Somewhere deep down.

"Yeah. Yeah, Boss. I got some ointment and soft sheets, too. Z'at still Boo in there?"

"It is. He's just real confused and hungry, and you're like to drive him crazy, all alive and shit. You go on to your room. You did good, babe." Vance could hear ... something. Something familiar, a wet touch of skin. It gave him rage. More rage.

He screamed, pulling, fighting to open eyes that didn't want to work. Out.

Out.

Hungry.

Out.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

OUT.

"Go on, babe. I need to take him the blood you brought."

The click of a door closing sounded like the beating of a bass drum, so loud in his ears. He stilled, listening, the constant thrum of food fading, the hunger easing some. Something was here with him.

Something he knew.

A man. A man came through the door. And yet ... this was not food.

"Hey, honey. Look what I brought you. Something to eat."

He groaned, trying to reach. He knew that voice. Knew.

Hurt.

He hurt.

"Shhh. I know, baby. I know. It's itching and hurting and you hate it, yeah?" The man came right up, not even afraid of his bared teeth, holding up a bag of red fluid. Oh...

The lack of fear eased him, his nostrils flaring as he arched, begging for it. Food. Please.

"Neeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeed."

"Lord, you're a zombie." Laughing, the man pushed up against him, holding him back against the wall, pressing the bag against his mouth.

Oh.

He drank deep, the pain inside him easing as he sucked. The strangest sounds poured from him—pleasure and need and hunger together.

"There you go, honey. That's it, Vance. Just drink. I have more." Soothing. The voice was so soothing.

He looked into dark eyes, relaxing, caught. His. His.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Mmm. That's it. You be a good boy, I'll give you dessert. One more bag. Come on." Another bag pushed against his mouth.

His eyes rolled as his stomach filled, hunger easing. His skin began to knit, itching as it did.

"Look at that. So much better. So good, baby." The man kissed his throat, his cheek, getting right in close and tempting him.

"Mmm." He groaned, sniffing, tongue sliding out to taste. Not food.

So good, though. So good.

One big hand cupped the back of his head, pulling his mouth against the thin skin, encouraging him to sink his teeth in deep. He whimpered and bit, the splash of blood sharp, familiar, tingling and burning, filling him with energy. A low moan sounded, the man just rubbing on him like a cat in heat, making his body remember even more. Yes. Yes, he knew this.

He rubbed back, groaning and sucking, the burn and life and...

Wait.

Life.

Life.

He lifted his head, stared a little. "Clay. Clay, they shot me."

"I know, baby." Dark eyes stared into his. Clay, his Clay, just touched his cheek, cupping it, stroking his lips. "I know, honey. You'll be fine."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"You've got me tied up again." Which, obviously Clay knew, but still, he thought he'd point it out.

"Uh-huh. You tried to eat Remy. Uh, a couple three times." That grin. Made him want to head-butt the man. Maybe kiss him.

"I don't eat people. Especially not little freaky Cajuns." He leaned a little harder. "They shot me, man. I know they did."

"They did, honey. You gonna be okay if I let you loose, now?" Clay looked ... worried. About him. Damn.

"Fuck if I know. My shit isn't exactly together, man."

"Well, we're gonna try." That body pressed up against his, holding him still while Clay untied him, helping him when he slumped toward the floor. "I got you, honey."

Nothing was working right. His legs didn't want to hold him, that hunger was back again—smaller now, gnawing in the base of his spine.

"Come on and sit with me. I got something for you." Yeah. Yeah, Clay would take care of him. The man always did.

"Okay. I can sit." He thought. Maybe.

Hell, maybe not. He was having a seriously stupid day.

"I got you." Clay half dragged, half carried him to the bed, helping him slump down on it. "Better?"

"Yeah. Yeah. I am." He reached out, fingers trailing over Clay's bicep. "What do you have for me?"

"A little more sustenance." Clay looked worried again, that face all screwed up in a frown. "You sit. I'll make you a protein drink, okay?"

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"A ... Clay? What's up? What happened?" Something was fucked. Something was deeply cracked. Like deeper than a hunch cracked.

"I'll explain it all." Cupping his cheek in one hand, Clay stared right into his eyes. "I promise. But you need some food, first. It will help your legs work."

"Yeah. Yeah, I have this hunger like I haven't eaten in a hundred years. Almost hurts." Those eyes just looked like home.

"Uh. Yeah. We'll talk about that, too..." The man had legs to his fucking neck. They were pretty legs. They worked, too. Clay got a big cup, and a bag of something that looked like Bloody Mary mix but smelled better.

His stomach clenched, trying to fight its way out of his body and he started moving across the bed, dragging himself a little.

"Hold on, honey. I'm coming." It looked like Clay put a little hot sauce in, maybe some pepper. Then he could smell it, smell the amazing ... whatever it was, and Clay was right there, holding the cup to his mouth.

He groaned, drinking deep. Better. Oh, better. His eyes closed, that deep ache fading again. Yes. Yes, good.

"See? Much better, yeah?" Sitting close, Clay wrapped an arm around him, leaning close, letting him just use that strength.

"Yeah. Yeah, 's good." His eyes started blinking, nice and slow. "Man, I..."

Tired. He was tired.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"That's it, honey. Sleep some. Real sleep this time, not that whole unconscious thing. I'll fill you in when you wake up."

A light kiss fell on his forehead; Clay easing him down on the pillows.

"I ... I don't really sleep..." But he did.

Deep.

Chapter Seventeen

Lord, lord, lord.

He'd been in some deep goddamn shit with the boss. He surely had. But going and burning down a big old house after getting shot up, hit, shot at, and rescuing a Frankensteiny, kinda crazy, fucked up, former cop baby vampire?

Pretty goddamn weird.

Not as weird as the last cochon de lait him and Granny had back home because, Lord, lord, you get them Thibbideaux boys to drinkin' and the world got a little starry, but still.

Yeah.

Weird ju-ju.

He opened the door a crack, peeking. Just to make sure the boss' ass wasn't toasted.

He about shit himself when the door opened all the way and Clay came out, closing up behind him. "Your room, babe."

"Boo okay?" As okay as could be, anyway. Remy hadn't never seen nothing like that—wild eyes, fangs like a snake, Boo tearing into his own skin. Weren't nothing that could be okay after that.

"Yeah. I mean, he will be." Oh, the boss didn't sound so sure, did he? But the big guy put a hand on his back, steering him away, so he must have figured it was okay to leave Boo alone.

"Yeah? I know you like him something fierce, Cheri. I do." He looked Clay over; the boss looked plumb wore. "You need some of me?"

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

They got into his room, the door closing behind them, and Clay wrapped around him, just holding on. "I promised not to bite anyone else, babe."

"You're gonna get fucking hungry." There was something cracked 'tween them two boys. Still, friends was friends and he got to loving on Clay, trying to work that tension out.

"Mmmm. Oh, you're too good to me, Rem. You really are." Nuzzling in, Clay licked at his throat, a low moan sounding.

"You're my family, Cheri. My friend." He tilted his head some, figuring that instinct would take right on over. It wasn't nothing but loving and living right now. Having a little snack.

Sure enough, Clay just turned and sank his teeth through the thin skin of Remy's throat. Oh. Oh, God, he hadn't felt that in too long. A little ache, a little heat and then just a wash of pure pleasure—like nothing on Earth. He stroked Clay's thick, soft hair, fingers shaking as the suction started, Clay pulling at him, balls deep.

It didn't last long, even as hungry as the boss was he never took more than a few sips ... but it was long enough to make him hard as a rock. Make him shake.

"Better?" He couldn't help but whimper like a girl-child at a horror matinee.

"Much better, babe." He got a smile, those dark eyes looking much more ... well, not human. The boss wasn't that anymore, was he?

Eh, whatever. Clay was still family and that was enough. "Good. Wha's next, Boss? What do we do?"

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"I have to make sure Vance is healed. He was ... he was very weak, babe." Yeah. Weak in the mind, that was for sure. "Then we go after that bastard Colonel."

"Why?" That was a bad fucking idea. Whoever this colonel man was, he had more money, more guns, more men and could go outside in the sun. "We could jus' take Boo and head south."

"We could, but I get the feeling this bastard takes things very personally. He'll keep coming." They rocked a little, Clay's skin warming right up under his hands like it always did when he drank.

"Well, he cain't have Boo no more. Boo's one of ours now, yeah?" Except for that whole crazy bitey gonna-eat-his-ass-for-lunch thing which, really, hadn't stopped Mama from marrying Daddy, had it...

"He is, babe. That he is. You gotta be more careful though, 'til I give you the all clear. He might not be right enough not to, uh..." Clay chuckled, kissed his mouth hard. "You know."

"Yeah. No sucking the chauffeur dry." He grinned, kissed Clay's cheek. "You want I should look around, Cheri? See what I can see?"

"Would you, babe? I mean, if you're tired, get some sleep. But if you have the inclination, we could use a little extra knowledge of the lay of the land."

"No problem, Boss. I can go look. You know me. I'm a go-baby." 'Sides, he got shit done, he did.

He took care of shit.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"You're a stud." He got another kiss, Clay pushing him right down on the bed and fucking his mouth with that amazing tongue. The man had talent.

He wrapped close, rubbing against all that muscle hard enough to feel good. Real good.

"Want some help with that, Rem? I know what feeding does to you." Oh. Good Boss. Clay reached down, cupping him through his jeans, giving him something good and hard to press against.

"Good to me." The man was too fucking pretty for color TV. Remy humped away, a little high from the feeding, a lot hard and maybe just a touch strung out.

"Come on, babe. Let me..." Clay got into his pants, the button and zipper undone so fast it made him gasp. Then that hand was around him, just stroking like crazy.

"Thank ... thanks, Boss. I ... Yeah." Remy's head tossed, blinked as he thought he saw someone in the window, then Clay hit that spot with a thumb nail and pop! went the weasel. Thank God and Greyhound.

"That's it, babe. That's it. God, you smell good." He got a kiss, sweet and good, a real thank you. The boss knew all about family. That was why he stayed.

He cuddled in a second, nuzzling and taking a minute, just them. Just to rest. Pretty soon, Boo would be calling and the boss would go, but right now they'd rest a second.

Chapter Eighteen

Remy left to go do his go see, and Clay watched him for a long moment, the back of his neck prickling. Damn it, he hated that Remy had to do all the dirty work, but morning always came faster than he wanted it to, and he didn't need to get caught out.

He keyed the lock to his own room and slipped back in, checking the curtains to make sure they were good and shut. Then he went to check on Vance. Pale as milk, except where the burns were healing, and restless, Vance was muttering, muscles jerking as the newly-born feeder dreamed. He'd never met one that had been so close to turning before death. Not that it fucking mattered now.

Rubbing a little at his own burns, Clay stripped off and headed over to crawl under the covers to hold Vance tight. That would settle him right down. Vance hummed and cuddled in, hands slipping over his back, petting him like he'd been the restless one.

It was fucking weird. He'd never felt like this with the guy who'd turned him ... of course, that had been kind of a fight so I don't get fucked sort of situation. Vance though, Vance was worried about him, was dreaming about him now instead of being hurt. Clay could see it, see himself through Vance's eyes.

He really needed to stop getting Remy to cut his hair.

"I'm right here, honey. Right here." He just murmured it over and over, petting Vance right back, loving on him gently.

"Mmm. You got me. I thought..." They'd shot Vance in the front door, after Vance refused to give him and Rem up. Stubborn man.

Clay rewarded that with a kiss, turning Vance's lips to his and licking at them. Sweet, hot, and just following his mouth everywhere, Vance was a wet dream.

"Oh." Vance's eyes popped open, glowing for him. "Oh, I can. I can *feel* you."

"Hmmm?" He was kissing here. No talking, damn it. Kissing. Kissing. Vance groaned and pushed closer, dragging them closer together, one leg wrapping around him and holding on tight. Hot damn. Yeah. Clay much preferred the kissing to the serious talking they needed to do. He just humped a little, teeth stinging Vance's bottom lip.

Vance stilled, shivering, caught in that whole bite-or-be-bitten thing.

"Shhh. We can do both, baby. I promise." Yeah, he could give a little now, thanks to his snack.

"I. Damn. That was." Vance held his hands out, looking confused as fuck, then pushed back into the kiss.

Poor baby. He'd have to explain a lot, but Vance just needed to heal, needed to settle into his bones first. Clay could help with that, and he stroked down Vance's belly, right down to that amazing cock.

It curled right on up, hard and warm, slapping right into his palm.

"Pretty, honey." He broke the kiss long enough to look down, just to make sure everything was okay down there, not burnt. That bit was whole, solid, thank God. Last thing Vance

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

needed was a striped, blistered pecker. He didn't need Vance to have that, either. He needed that to be good and strong, because he had plans for it. In fact ... Clay hummed, sliding down the rough hotel sheets to take Vance's prick right into his mouth.

Vance grunted out something that sounded a whole lot like 'yours' and, yeah, yeah, Vance was, but it didn't matter right then because Vance was pushing into his lips, fingers in his hair.

Clay closed his eyes, sucking hard, his lips working up and down the shaft. He steadied Vance with his hands, holding him tight, wanting to feel every tremor, every move. Vance throbbed and swelled on his tongue, that flesh hard as nails, thick and heavy with their need. Humming, Clay worked harder. Hell, if a vampire couldn't suck, he needed a new line of fucking work.

Vance blinked, a surprised laugh ringing out, balls drawing up tight, nudging his chin. Hoo yeah. Mind meld in action. Or something. Clay laughed too, then licked right up the underside of Vance's cock before pushing down to the root. Just demanding Vance's come.

Vance's roar just echoed, the man giving it up for him, bucking and rolling, spunk on his tongue tasting of blood. Clay licked up every bit, the tiny bit of copper make him hunt more. God. Just ... Vance. His.

Yeah. Yeah, yours. He heard it, clear as a bell, Vance still too caught up in the pleasure to get what was going on. Clay went verbal with it, hoping to keep Vance from getting het up. "I got you. Told you so, huh? It's all good, baby."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Yeah. Thank you. Thank you for coming for me." Vance was fading again, the morning encroaching, insisting that they hide, sleep.

Poor Vance. He'd probably slept less in the last five years than he had the last day. That young, it was impossible not to sleep when the sun came up ... "You're welcome, honey. Rest now. I'll keep an eye out."

"Yeah? 'Cause I can..." The words faded away, Vance going still and quiet, body working on healing itself, making the change.

Clay shook his head. He'd have to feed Vance more of his own blood if the man was going to heal enough to go after the fucking Colonel. He could wait, though, see what Remy came up with.

Waiting wasn't his strong suit, but for Vance? The sky was the limit.

As long as it was dark.

Chapter Nineteen

Fuck him raw, his feet was sore as boils.

He'd walked and looked and listened and shit and found out exactly dick about who ran shit 'round here. Every town had a boss and, if Boo's soldier-man was the boss, well then, the cat was away and them mousies would play, yeah?

'Cept nobody was playing.

Or talking.

Or doing nothing like he'd thought.

Maybe the soldier-man worked another town.

Maybe he'd driven too far south. Lord knew he'd been hyped and scared and Boo'd been making that *grinding* noise in the truck.

Nasty.

Still, maybe he could tell Clay that things were quiet and they could just go home where there was good music and decent folks and enough 'gators to keep all them stray dogs from following an honest fella.

He put his hand in his pocket where his little knife was, speaking of strays and being followed. "I ain't got nothin'. Jus' lemme 'lone, now. You don't wan' trouble."

"I don't? Are you sure?" That voice was like the boss' kinda. Well, not, because it was smooth as honey, not gravelly, but still. It had that same reverb.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'm real sure." He didn't turn around; Lord no. He just walked, eyes ahead, fingers on his knife.

Boss, you'd best be up and willing to help your kin out.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"How do you know what I want, sweet? It might be something more than trouble." Oh, now, that wasn't fair. The man moved a Hell of a lot faster than he could, one hand falling on his shoulder.

Remy ducked and spun, wishing people didn't take such notice of a guy with a Jose Canseco. 'Nother reason to miss home. "Now, now. You be nice."

"I intend to." He got a general impression of tall, lanky, and lots of teeth. Fuck a duck.

"Lookie here. I ain't scairt of y'all." Nope. Not scared. Not. Not, notty, not, not, not.

Fuck him.

"I don't want you to be scared, sweet." The guy had an uncanny speed, no doubt, suddenly right in his space. Right. There.

Sweet. No way. "What you want then?"

He did his best to puff up, look bigger. It worked on gators; Hell, he'd seen it sorta work on the boss.

Once.

For about a minute before the laughing started.

"I can smell you, sweet. Spicy. Hot. Needing more than the one you serve can give you..." Was that supposed to be charming? Shee-it. Them blue eyes was just staring at him from behind a shock of long, long black hair.

"I don't serve no one. I work for a living."

"Work doing what? Acting like a guppy to a shark?" Hands! Hands in bad places. Okay, good places, but not with this guy.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

He pulled the knife out, hands shaking a little—not out of scared, goddamn it, but healthy rage. "I had me a couple three bad, bad days, man. Don' to push no more. I'm real tired."

"Now, sweet. Stabbing me with that little toothpick will only make me angry." Oh. Asshole.

"Clay's gonna eat your ass, man. Back off." Why the *Hell* did the tall ones always pick on him?

"Clay." That artfully shaggy head tilted. "Is that his name? Why are you with him? He has picked his companion and it is not you."

"Where're you from?" Just 'cause Boo and the boss was ... close, didn't mean he didn't have a place, damn it.

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you, sweet. You should be more concerned with where I want to be."

"Huh?" Man. Man, he needed to get somewhere with a load of folks 'til he could call the boss.

The guy just ... followed him, every move he made, side to side, back and forth. It was fucking uncanny. Finally he just faked a stab and turned and started running for all he was worth, heading for a grocery store parking lot with all them lights and folks and shit.

He expected to get his ass caught, as fast the dude could move. But when he reached the shopping center and looked back, there was no one behind him. It was like the big guy was a figment of his imagination.

Lord, lord. He grabbed his phone and headed into the store. Time to call the boss and find out what the living fuck—

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

wait, was it a living fuck with them or not? Whatever. Didn't matter. He still needed to know what was what.

Sweet.

Him.

Right.

Chapter Twenty

Clay paced. He was starting to worry about Remy. The little Cajun hadn't come back, not to his own room, not to theirs. Jesus fuck, he hoped Remy hadn't gotten caught by the damned Colonel or something.

Vance was sleeping, tossing and turning a little, but calming every time Clay touched him. God, it had been a long time since he'd been turned. He never dreamed anymore. Still, the burns had healed, and Vance shouldn't be as ravenous now.

He hoped.

His cell phone rang, startling him enough that Vance sat straight up, snarling. "Remy."

"Shhh. Yeah. Remy." He stopped pacing and went to sit, stroking Vance's thigh. "Hey, baby. Thought you mighta run away."

"No, Boss. There's one of y'all hunting my ass, for real. You think I got me a sign that says, 'Come munch on some Cajun?'"

"Someone hunting you?" A low growl rose in his chest. "Where are you?"

"A Bi-Lo in the milk and butter section."

"Shit, babe." He didn't remember seeing a Bi-Lo. "How far did you go afield?"

"A ways. I'm coming there, though, 'less you don' want me to. I just ... I can't stay here all night; that security guard's following me."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Do you want me to come get you?" He would. "I want you to, babe. Vance is better."

"No. No, I got the truck. I'm coming. You..." He could hear Remy trying to relax, taking a deep breath. "You need anything?"

"No. You get whatever you need to eat on my dime, get your ass back here. You hear me?" Goddamn, he didn't want to lose Remy.

"Yeah. Yeah, Boss. I'm coming."

The line went dead and Vance leaned against him, frowning. "Who's hunting Remy?"

"He says a vamp, honey. That's just weird." Usually the local vamps would avoid the ones passing through, and their kin, like the plague.

"Why would a vamp be here, so close to the Colonel?" Vance stopped, growled low, eyes flashing. No. No, now was not the time to go all Vengeful God. He had too much to worry about.

"I don't know, honey." Clay leaned in, took a kiss. "Colonel later. Right now, you need to get your strength back."

"He ... My memory's all horked. Where's Remy?"

"He's at the grocery." That sounded so ... normal. "He's coming in now."

"Good. He's been gone." Vance frowned again, obviously trying to think.

"Yeah. Out getting the lay of the land for us. You feeling better, baby?" Thinking was really overrated. But he had to stop being a damned coward and talk to the man.

"Hungry, but yeah. Yeah, I don't hurt."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

No, he imagined Vance was beginning to feel good. Real good, for the first time in a lot of years. Fuck, he was getting a little hard, just imagining what kind of sex they could have now.

"Good. I was worried, man."

"Yeah. Me too. I got a little lost." Vance stretched, that scarred skin having a little more stretch now.

"Uh-huh." The scars would never go away, but they'd take on an interesting sheen, one that would make them alluring.

"You okay?" Vance curled against him, rubbing a little, moaning.

"Uh-huh. Better every second." This man got to him so good, made him want everything. It was almost scary, how he just wanted to get inside Vance, all the way, deep.

"Uh-huh." Vance nibbled his hip, the sting sweet as Hell.

"Oh, do that again." Shit, yeah. That made his skin feel tight, made his cock push right up.

"Yeah." Vance moaned, licked his skin and then nipped again, teeth razor sharp against his skin. Fuck! Clay arched, low noises starting to come right out of his throat. They didn't make any sense, he knew, but they didn't have to. Vance heard him now. Hungry baby.

One bite followed another, Vance just scoring his skin, drawing up a bead or two of blood as lapping it away. Growling, Clay rolled, thumping Vance onto his back, taking that mouth. He could taste his blood there. Taste himself. Vance arched, cock hard where it dragged against his skin and left little burning kisses.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Sweet, baby." There. That made sense, right? He reached down and wrapped his hand around Vance's prick, stroking, thumb pressing hard against the slit. He dragged his nail over lightly, just giving Vance some sting back.

Vance growled for him, spreading and jerking, just snarling out his name.

"So fucking pretty." Damn, just look at that man. Somehow the fangs were making him pant, pushing him to move closer, offer Vance his throat even as he pulled harder at that hot cock.

Vance groaned, the pure need in that sound better than sex, teeth just brushing his skin. "Need. Need, love."

"Take, baby. Take it now. Come on." His head fell back more, his neck just right there for anything Vance wanted. Those teeth sank in, Vance just running on pure instinct for him, just like from the start. He could feel it, Vance groaning and pulling, drawing hard. Then Vance pressed a wrist to his lips, returning the favor.

Biting down hard, Clay sucked Vance into his mouth, the blood spicy, full of fucking fire. Jesus, Vance was going to be strong. The circle drew closer and tighter, both of them humping and moaning, the bedsprings creaking.

"Jesus fucking Christ. I have *not* had a good enough day to walk in on this. You two let *up!*" The door slammed, Remy opening the top of a longneck.

Vance growled, nostrils flaring.

"Oh, I don' think so." Remy broke the bottle on the edge of the dresser, one little foot stamping on the floor. "I came to rescue your crazy lily-white ass! Don't you *growl* at me!"

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

Oh, shit. Aggression would just make Vance worse. Clay was up and off the bed, standing right in front of Remy, before anyone could blink. "Now, babe. Put that away. You cut yourself, Vance will go ape."

"I want to fucking go home! Get in the truck, Boss, please. Bring Boo, we'll go."

Shit, somebody'd rattled Rem's cage.

He put his hands on Remy's shoulders, feeling how cold the kid was, how shudders rocked that skinny body. "Oh, babe. Come sit. Please?"

"Uh-huh." Remy tossed the bottle, eyes looking over at the bed. "How you feeling, Boo?"

"Better. Better, man. You look cold."

Oh. Good Vance. Now, if he could just make sure Vance didn't bite...

"He is. Bless him." Drawing Remy to the bed, Clay sat and pulled that slight form right down on his lap. "Tell me what happened."

"There was one of your type, Boss. Tall. He called me sweet. He been watching, Boss. Watching me and you and Boo. He wasn't scared at all."

Damn. Damn, damn, damn. "Tell me everything he said." There might be some clue, someone he knew ... Something.

"He said that I was like a slave kinda. He called me sweet. He was real tall." Someone had charmed the living fuck out of Remy. Clay turned the sharp little chin this way and that, just to make sure nobody'd munched and run.

No punctures. Well, no new ones.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"It's okay, babe. It's gonna be fine. We'll move. Okay? We'll go farther out." He didn't want anyone using Remy as a cat toy, goddamn it.

"Okay. Okay. He ... he just. I dunno, Boss."

Vance started pacing, nostrils flaring, eyes just glowing. Shit. "You ... You don't worry, Remy. We'll ... Christ, you smell good."

Jesus Christ on a pogo stick. It was still early enough in the night that he didn't want to send Remy to his own room alone, but if Vance kept looking at the kid like that...

"Boo, keep your fangs in. I ain't lunch."

"What?" A rush of pure confusion hit him, then Vance reached up and touched those new, sharp incisors. "Shit."

Remy arched an eyebrow. "I swear to God, Boo. If you're fixin' to have some weird-assed epiphany thing, I'm gonna bash you with a bat."

Where had his life gone so completely fucked? Clay put Remy behind him, getting up to go to Vance, wrapping around him. "I told you we needed to talk, honey. They killed you."

"No. I mean. Shit." Vance stared at him. "Did they do this to me?"

"The killing part? Yeah. The toothy part is my fault." He wasn't never one to shy away from the truth. And with Vance it was more important.

"I'd been bitten before." There was a cold curiosity there, Vance's lizard brain looking for ways to take advantage, to adapt.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Yeah?" A hard, possessive rage rose in his gut. "Well, you're mine now. Mine."

"You think so?" Vance's eyes went bright, the little fuck getting right in his space, nostrils flaring.

"I do. You're not getting bitten by any other bastard out there, you got it?" He pushed at Vance's shoulders, just classic fucking aggression.

"Fuck this."

He heard a door open and close, but Vance was right there, chest slapping against his, teeth bared. "You want to get into this with me?"

Cocky fucker.

"I do. Age and experience are on my side, baby." Quick as a cat he slammed Vance up against the wall, the crack of that sturdy body hitting the wall shaking the room.

Vance didn't back down, teeth flashing, Vance's cock full and hard against him. "More."

Yeah. More. He spared a thought for Remy, but it was best that boy wasn't around. He'd know to call if things got weird, though. So Clay put all his energy back on Vance, pushing that sweet asshole back against the wall again and sinking his teeth into one muscled shoulder.

"Fuck!" Vance nearly crawled up the wall, body jerking against him. "No ... Oh. Oh, Hell, yes."

One hand slid under that tight ass, the other lifted one of Vance's thighs and Clay encouraged the man to wrap around him so they could get closer. Much closer. Vance knew, followed right along, hips tilted as he leaned against the wall to brace them.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

Rubbing up on Vance was becoming a habit he never wanted to break. He bit down again, this time tilting his head to let Vance have at him. He'd proven his point. He could hear Vance laughing at him, the sharp bite punctuating that they still had things to talk about.

It didn't matter, though. Not at the moment. All that mattered was the sharp, bright taste of Vance's blood and the feel of that body against his.

Like a fucking drug.

Fuck him raw.

Of course, the way Vance bucked and rubbed, teeth sinking deeper, Vance agreed, wholeheartedly.

Chapter Twenty One

Gryphon watched the little Cajun slam out of one hotel room and into another, huffing and puffing, face red with anger. He practically glowed under the little lamps above each door, making Gryph's mouth water.

It wasn't just the fact that Gryph could smell another vampire on the man. No, it was his spice, like hot red pepper and file powder, all jambalaya and gumbo. It was irresistible.

As soon as Gryph was certain no one was going to follow, he slipped around the back of the hotel, looking for a bathroom window he could charm open. He could hear the water running, hear random humming under the splashing and bubbling.

Perfect. The window opened nearly soundlessly, and his body just fit through the space, sliding right into the room.

The humming stopped, dark head tilting under the water, one hand reaching for a bottle of shampoo. "Boss?"

Gryph's nostrils flared, the scent of soap not hiding the heat of his little sweet one bit. "I hate to disappoint, but no."

"Shit." It came out as "shee-it," making him smile. Then the curtain flew open, a bottle flying at him. The little wet man scrambled for the door, feet slipping and sliding on the cracked tile.

Oh, no. No running back to the head vamp. Leaping, Gryph grabbed that hot body, arm sliding around the lean waist to stop its forward momentum.

"Lemme go, now. I ain't lunch, goddamn it." Slick and strong, the little beast could fight. Luscious.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Oh, sweet. You're far too wondrous for something as trivial as lunch." His other arm wrapped around the Cajun's chest, holding him as close as one could hold a slippery little eel.

That tight little ass rubbed against him, skin soaking him through. "I got the boss right here, now. I ain't gonna let you hurt him none. He's a good 'un."

"I am not interested in him." Though he had to wonder about someone who could make this man so loyal. "What is your name, sweet?"

"Remy Arceneaux." Ah. An Acadian. That explained the spice.

"Well, Remy, I am Gryphon St. Jean, and I have no intention of harming your boss." Only you, he thought.

"You got you a weird name, honey." He could feel the lean muscles, tensing to fight.

"It's an antique, I'm afraid." Tightening his hold, he pushed one hand down to wrap around one lean hip, getting a better grip.

"Everything is with y'all. Lemme go, now. I ain't tasty. Not at all."

"No? You smell like a feast." He had to taste. Simply had to. Gryph bent and licked a line along the slope of one shoulder.

"Oh, I don't think so." That strong little draft-horse man grabbed the door frame, catapulting himself out of his arms as Remy somersaulted into the main room. Damnation. Gryph gave chase, reaching for that slippery little form, not willing

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

to let him get away. Remy slid across the floor, bare ass scooting toward a baseball bat propped by the door.

Oh, he did like it when his sweet tried to play rough. First a knife, now a bat. Gryph put on a burst of speed, catching the bat as it swung his way.

"Fuck. Boss, where you *at*?" Remy stumbled back, tugging at the bat, groaning as he held fast.

Reeling Remy in, Gryph smiled wide. "I can hear him, sweet. He's a tad busy."

"Yeah, well." A flash of hurt mixed with pure frustration in those dark eyes, then it turned to pure fury. "Yeah, yeah. Y'all is hearing each other and all caught up, but me? I'm still just Remy and I ain't gonna be your snack!"

Look at those eyes. Dark and sparkling and full of life. Lovely. Hauling Remy up against his chest, Gryph bent and took that cussing mouth. He'd been told he was good at that.

Remy gasped, went still for a moment, staring at him in pure shock. Then he was being kissed back, so hard that, if he'd had a beating heart, it might have stopped. Then, of course, those hard little fists started slamming against his shoulders, feet kicking away.

Laughing with the pure joy of the fight, Gryph squeezed Remy tight, one arm wrapping around to grab both of Remy's. "Now, now. Hitting ought to wait until we know one another better."

"I. I ain't gonna. What you *want*, man?"

"You. Did I not tell you that at the market?" He tilted his head. "I thought I had."

"No. No, you just went on about me and the boss and shit. I ain't got what you want, now."

"Yes, you do. You have this." His free hand trailed down to Remy's tight, muscled ass. "And these."

Stretching his fingers, he grazed Remy's balls.

"I ain't giving them up." Those soft sacs drew up, skin wrinkling against his touch.

"I like them attached, sweet. I have no desire to take them with me, unless you come along." They clearly had a misunderstanding.

"Well, that's good? Wait. Come where? I gotta take Clay and Boo home 'fore Boo snaps and eats me or the boss or that soldier man."

"We don't have to go anywhere now, sweet. We can stay right here." While Remy seemed to be stunned, he turned toward the bed. Standing was so unnecessary.

"I. This ain't good hoodoo..." They sat together on the bed, Remy straddling his thighs. He could eat this one up.

"No? I think it's the best kind." Talking also seemed overrated, so he began with the kissing again, his lips pushing Remy's mouth open so his tongue could dip inside.

"What. What you..." Remy blinked slowly, staring at him, tongue sliding over his lips. "What you doing?"

"Now, sweet, I know you've done this before. It's called sex."

"Well, yeah. I ain't a virgin, but ... I tend to sorta know the guys I'm doing..."

"We've been introduced." That mouth called to him, and Gryph tasted it again, needing to learn all of Remy's secrets.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

Remy groaned nice and low, tongue sliding against his, sweet as honey. That was it, what he wanted. To get Remy under his tongue.

He cupped the back of Remy's head in one hand, the other pushing down to slide them closer together. Smooth skin, heated, still damp, all of it his. Yes. Good. One kiss slid into another and another, Remy's thoughts slow and sensual, caught up in him as it should be.

He started moving, pushing Remy up and down until the sweet man was riding up and down on him, bare cock meeting his still covered one.

"Lord, have mercy." Remy groaned into his lips, ass tight, hips jerking.

"Who the Hell is this? Christ, is it bloodsucker central?" The door slammed open, the bastards from next door pushing in.

In less than a blink he'd put Remy behind him, standing and making himself as big as he could, teeth bared.

The one Remy answered to growled low. "You'd best not have bit him. You might live if you didn't."

The younger one needed the same warning, bright eyes glowing, searching for Remy. The hunger just poured off him.

"I fail to see how you need two pets," was all Gryph said, staring the pretty one down. Tall, dark, hot...

"I ain't a *pet*." Remy slapped his ass, that hand stinging. "And Boo, if you don't quit looking on me like that..."

"Everyone sit down and shut up." That was the tall one, the one Remy called "Boss." "I don't want to fight with you. But you're out of line, coming after Remy."

Gryph snorted. "I think you are the one who is treating him poorly."

Remy headed over toward the door, toward the bat. "Y'all is bastards. All of you. I'm gonna beat you both. All three. Whatever."

Three sets of hands reached for Remy, but it was the big one who got him, pulling him in and shielding him from both the Boo and himself. Holding him close, like a lover. It made Gryph want to tear his eyes out.

"Hush, babe," the boss said. "I'm just trying to protect you."

"Can't we go home, me and you, Boss? My chickens are all scattered." Those dark eyes kept sliding back over to Gryph, again and again.

"I don't think that is possible, sweet," Gryph said, feeling for his little Cajun. Poor lad. He was the only one who didn't know what was going on.

"You ain't got nothing to do with this, yeah?" Remy's eyes were fastened to his, swallowed.

The young one went over to his Cajun, shook Remy a bit. "Rem? Man? You okay?"

Remy all but crawled up the big man to get away from those eyes and teeth, and the boss growled. "Vance. Back off, babe. You keep looking at him like he's lunch."

"I can't help it. He smells so good. I won't hurt you, Remy. I swear."

"Uh-huh. No biting and I mean it." Gryph could smell the panic on Remy's skin and it made him snarl.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

His muscles tensed and he flew at them all, tearing Remy out of the big man's grip, sending the new baby flying. "No one bites him but me!"

Remy curled around him, body holding on, clinging even though he knew his sweet Cajun didn't understand.

"I've got you, sweet." Gryph turned, avoiding a lunge from the big one, flashing his fangs. "Stop. We'll talk. But only if you control your progeny."

"Hey! I'm not a bad guy!"

Remy groaned. "Shit, y'all are making my head hurt."

The big one rolled his eyes. "I'm Clay. This is Vance. I gotta say, if you've charmed him, I'll kick your ass."

"Man, how many bloodsuckers can charm one man?" The newborn blinked over, slowly standing up. "You'll scramble his brains."

"Like yours have been, you newborn?"

Clay snarled at him again, moving toward him, but he stared over Remy's head and the man stopped halfway.

"Let him go," Clay said. "We'll talk."

It would probably be an inappropriate time to point out that Remy was holding onto him. He was going to do so anyway. "When he asks, I will. Now, shall we pretend we're more civilized than we are? What are you doing on my territory?"

Remy relaxed, eased against him as the tension ratcheted down a bit. Gryph sat, wrapping his arms around the sweet one, kissing his cheek. The other two watched him, bright eyed and tense, but willing to talk, it looked like.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"We're here because someone was hunting us," Clay finally said.

"You have to know the Colonel. You're too close not to know of him." The newborn was strong, scarred, hungry.

"We ain't here to cause you trouble, now..." Remy blinked, sat up suddenly. "I need pants. And to turn the water off."

"Here, have a sheet." Clay came over and yanked a sheet off the other bed, then waved at Vance to go turn off the water. Vance snapped, growled, but went. Remy curled up, that dark skin hidden in the sheet. Hidden from him.

Gryph slid a hand down Remy's back, smoothing the sheet away for a moment before tucking it back around the man. "I do not know the Colonel personally, you know."

"Well, I do." Interesting, the sudden, cold, raw fury that the newborn had. "I know him and I'm going to rip his motherfucking throat out and watch him drain."

"Oh. Well, good luck to you, love." Really. That would save him the trouble of much of the sneaking around he had to do.

"Thanks. So, you know we're not here to fuck with you. You tell Clay there you aren't here to fuck with us, leave the Cajun the fuck *alone* and we're all good."

"I cannot do that. Remy is mine." It was undeniable, odd as it was. The man's scent was addictive.

"Bullshit," Clay said, crossing his arms and staring. "He goes with us."

"Do you know him?" Did the baby know *anything*? Did the elder not teach him anything?

"I do now. Deep inside." He could almost hear Remy's thoughts. It would not take much to be able to read them all the time. That was rare.

"He didn't bite me, Boss, I swear." Remy stood up, tanned skin gone pale. "I didn't let nobody bite me."

Clay took Remy's hand again, drawing him away, and it was all Gryph could do to contain his white hot rage. He closed his eyes and counted to ten. "If you want the Colonel, he's moved to his summer home. He has a place in the North Carolina mountains. It's not far, but it is well protected. Give me the Cajun."

"I ain't property." No. No, but those dark eyes were fastened on him, clinging. Begging.

"Then you choose, sweet. Come with me." There. He had asked. He had not asked any man to stay with him since Alain, back in ... well, corsets were still cone shaped.

"Oh." Remy rippled, staring at him, a wet spot growing on the sheet.

"Fuck, Rem..." The newborn pounced, moaning like a slavering beast.

Several things happened all at once. Remy rolled away, wrapping up in the sheet like an outre mummy. Clay lunged and grabbed at Vance, swinging those bared fangs about and nearly impaling himself upon them. And Gryphon grabbed Remy under his arm like one of those American footballs and ran for the door...

Sadly, the sun was starting to creep above the horizon, and he was forced to slam the door shut again.

Damnation.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Lemme go. I swear, I'm gonna leave you three in here and take the truck to Baton Rouge. Jus' me. And there won't be nobody to fetch you bags of blood for a noontime snack!"

Gryphon let go. "You're wearing a sheet, sweet. You might think of changing."

Remy stared at him, mouth opening and closing, and opening and closing, over and over. "My momma told me to go to church and go into business with good folks. I shoulda listened."

Remy kicked Vance's hand as the little man stomped by, tugging on a pair of jeans and a shirt two sizes too big. "I'm going for a walk. Stay outta dat bathroom. Fuckin' window's open."

Well, that had been the best choice, he hoped. A walk was not leaving, and his sweet cared enough to tell him about the window. "Come back soon, sweet. Don't leave me alone with them too long."

"Bah." Remy stormed out, muttering about crazy fucking bloodsuckers and goddamn South Carolina and something that sounded vaguely like beignets.

Gryphon watched him go, knowing he'd be back. He glanced over at the other two, who were locked in a kiss that would have made him sweat if he could.

He could only hope Remy would be back soon.

Chapter Twenty Two

Okay, in the grand scale of deep fuckupedness, Vance figured they'd just fallen off the deep end.

He sat on the side of the bed, half-listening to Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dumber snarl and snap at each other about Rem and territories and whose dick was bigger and all that shit.

Okay, so. He was dead, but not. And a bloodsucker, which would explain the whole hungry thing. And the Colonel was close and a little porker and, if Vance found him, that would fix the murderous enemy thing and the whole I'm going to chew off someone's arm thing in one fell swoop.

Although he'd bet the Colonel was bad for the cholesterol. Did bloodsuckers worry about cholesterol?

Man, he needed a fucking beer.

Okay, back to facts. Remy had lost his mind.

Clay was all committed to this whole pissing contest with the new guy, who seemed to really be an old guy and he was glad he wasn't hunting away, because between Clay and Old Man Hunter, he'd be fucked and sucked.

And not in the fun, spanky way.

Clay whirled on him, eyes flashing, breaking him out of his thoughts. "Goddamn it, baby, would you quit thinking so *loud*?"

"Uh. Maybe?" How exactly did someone think quiet?

The new guy laughed right out loud, and Clay turned on a dime, whapping the man right in the nose. Damn.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

He headed over to grab a beer out of Remy's cooler as they fought. Clay looked good. Hot. The other dude hit like a girl, sort of. Of course, the other guy could dance out of the way of Clay's blows like Valentino doing a tango. So maybe that girly thing was useful.

He popped the top of the Bud, gagging as soon as the beer hit his throat. "Jesus fucking Christ! What's wrong with this shit?"

"I fear you'll find it distasteful, youngster." That came from the old dude, who dodged and weaved, even as Clay turned away and left him hanging for a fight, coming over to him.

"It's not what you need, honey, that's all."

"Nobody ever needs a beer, man." He smelled the bottle, nose wrinkling. That was fucking unnatural.

"Well, yes. But you're hungry. If you're satiated, you can tolerate regular food and alcohol..."

He sat the bottle aside, sighing. Hungry.

Fuck.

Well, he'd get to eat the Colonel soon.

Clay touched the side of his face, thumb stroking over his cheekbone. "We'll hunt soon. Maybe we could eat the old guy here."

He snorted a little, but fucking leaned into the touch. He was a sap. "Remy smells better."

"That would be because he's alive, baby."

"How touching." The old guy stretched out on the bed. "God save me from being trapped in here with you two."

"I could shove you in the bathroom for a few hours."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

Christ. Dead. He was dead. That was deeply fucked up. The urge to just open the hotel door and look at the sun was huge.

"Mine." He wasn't sure if that was out loud or in his head, but he heard it clear as day. "No sun."

He met Clay's eyes, almost hearing the click of connection between them. His nerves just hummed with it, everything burning. Okay. Okay, freaky, but damned good. Clay moaned, kissing him hard, teeth stinging his lower lip. God, that man could make him forget everything.

He reached out, fingers sliding up into Clay's hair to hold them together. This was ultimately easier than thinking. Everything else just went away, from the old vamp watching them to the smell Remy left behind to the whole dead thing. All there was left was Clay.

The kiss kept on and on, and goddamn, not having to break to breathe? Fucking amazing. He approved. Clay moved them, putting them someplace horizontal. He wasn't sure where, because the bed had that other guy on it...

It didn't matter once he got down, Clay hard and heavy above him, teeth teasing and sliding and trying to make him crazed. Somehow or another they got naked. Had they been naked before? He couldn't remember. He sure could feel the sting of Clay's teeth, though. He moaned and stretched for the bite, for that mouth. It was a fucking addiction, worse than any drug.

"God, honey. Need you more every fucking day." Clay bit him again, mouth open on his skin, tongue tasting him over and over.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Got me. More, man." He heard the soft laughter of the dude on the bed, the sound almost—almost—distracting.

So Clay gave him more, humping like a naughty puppy, cock hard and wet against him. Those hands dug against his hips, yanking him up harder and harder. His balls ached—whether from need or overuse, he wasn't sure—but he felt them throb, aching as his cock throbbed.

Clay reached right down and cupped them in one hand, grinning wildly at him. Oh, Jesus fuck, that felt good. That pressure increased, Clay knowing just how hard to push, when to ease up to make him insane. Those teeth never let up, even when the hand did. He was gonna look like a fucking pincushion, the way Clay was gnawing on him.

"Jesus. Clay. Come on, quit teasing." He needed to come, needed to eat. Needed Clay. Right now.

"Yeah, honey. Yeah." Clay quit teasing, pushing back behind his balls to press the tiny strip of skin there. And that mouth. Clay really bit down, started drinking, offering himself up, too.

He bit down, bore down, taking Clay in. Fuck, that was. He. Addiction. Pure need.

Arching, Clay humped against him, hips rocking and rolling. He knew this now, knew this rhythm, knew this need. He gave himself over to it, lost and found all at once. Right where he needed to be. They fell over the edge together, both of them all but howling with it, Clay's voice ringing off the fucking rafters for him.

"You know. I wouldn'ta come back with food, if I thought you two would be going after it again." Remy's voice barely

cut through the buzz, two sacks hitting the floor with a thud.
"Enjoy."

Clay raised his head. "We were done." He got a slow kiss before Clay pulled away a little, smiling at Remy. "Feel better, babe?"

"I'm fucking sleepy. I need a nap."

Vance looked over. Yeah. Remy looked bitchy. Sort of tasty, but he figured it was a bad time to mention that.

"Okay. We'd clear out if we could. You know we can't..."
Clay shook his head. "Want me to remove the oldie but goodie so you can have the bed?"

Remy looked over at the old guy. "Where's he gonna go?"

Then Remy crawled up on the bed and plopped down, asleep before his head hit the pillow. Shit, the guy still had his boots on.

It was kinda of like watching a sleepy puppy.

Especially when the lanky vamp started petting that stubby little back. Lord, lord, that was gonna make Clay growly.

He went for distracting, as his balls were still aching and he needed his sleep too.

Clay blinked at him, eyes a little wild. "What, baby? You hungry? I think Rem brought us some ... Well, he brought enough for three."

"I." Oh, man. Blood. In a bag. He. He wasn't ready for that. Not that hungry. "You go ahead. I'm going to rest. I have to go find the Colonel."

"No, you need to eat. Come on, I'll share."

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

"Haven't you taught him a thing?" That came from the great snide one, who was getting on his last nerve.

"What? Is there some grand high bloodsucker manual? It's not like we've been living the slow life." Wait, was that irony?

"There's a manual?" Clay's eyebrows went almost to his hairline, and that redneck Southern boy accent went deep and hard. "Well, paint my ass red and take me to the circus. Who knew?"

Now, he might not know irony, but sarcasm?

That Vance understood.

"We'll have to ask around, see what printing it's on. Maybe Remy can read it to us, like a bedtime story."

"There you go. We could snuggle up, have some blood, just really make it homey."

The old guy sneered. "Hand me a bag, will you? I might as well eat."

"Yeah, I don't see Clay letting you have Rem. He's handy with a bat and one Hell of a getaway driver." He grabbed a bag, tossed it over, trying to decide if that sound his stomach made was from revulsion or starvation.

"Come on, honey. Eat. It will make you feel better I swear." Clay had never lied to him.

"I." He met Clay's eyes, staring into all that dark. He wasn't ready for this shit. He'd do it and he'd fucking cope, but he so wasn't ready.

"I know, honey. I do." Clay reached up and stroked his cheek, a world of promise in that stare. "I know."

It didn't make it right, but that touch made it easier and that was enough. He'd take it.

Chapter Twenty Three

Remy hadn't never dreamed so much his whole life. He dreamed about fighting and fucking and drinking 'til his lips were numb and the world went topsy turvy. He dreamed about swinging his bat and sharp teeth and running like Hell. Running so fucking long that he forgot if he was running away from or running toward.

Lord.

'Course, every time he floated up from dreaming, something eased him back down, let him rest good and hard like he needed to. When he finally did manage to convince his stupid eyes to open up, they stared right into Gryphon's. Goddamn.

"Well, there you are. Did you have a good sleep, sweet?" Those eyes were damned pretty. Really. Deep.

"Mmhmm." He nodded, stretched, caught up sure as anything. "Stop that, now. I ain't looking to be all charmy and shit."

"Not charming you, sweet. I've eaten and slept myself, and am ready to begin wooing." That mouth pressed right down on his, light and kinda sweet. A little minty.

Wooing?

Him?

Hell, he was usually pretty happy with a handjob and a case of beer...

Of course, that kiss sort of caught him up and he found himself breathing with it, following those lips. One hand cradled the back of his head, Gryphon turning his head from

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

one side to the other so their lips could slide back and forth. Somewhere he'd lost his boots and his jeans and they sort of got their legs tangled together. He moaned, especially when Gryphon's fingers found a sore spot on his neck. Damn.

"So tense. You need to think more carefully about your companions." He was about to get all bristly, but that grin told him that the guy actually had a sense of humor.

"You keep that up, I'll have to come to beat you 'gain." Lord, he was tired of having a fight.

"Shhh. No beating. Just resting. Your friends are finally dead to the world, hmmm? That gives you some time to just lie down and be with me." That hand ... God, that felt good, sweeping down his back.

"Mmm. I. You got a sweet touch. Douce, yeah?" The endearment came to him, way back in the back of his brain where his Nannan's voice still echoed a little, all smoky and low.

"I enjoy touching you, sweet. I truly do. You have fascinating skin." Oh. Oh, Lord. That touch lingered on his hip, fingers stroking.

"I figure this is a bad idea." Bad.

Real bad.

Bone deep bad.

Felt so good, though.

"Shhh. There are no bad ideas here." Okay, the guy was licking his neck. That should be gross. Wasn't though. Wasn't at all. He stretched, swallowing hard and letting his morning wood rub up on that hot skin.

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"Mmm. Yes, that's it, sweet. Just that way." Hand flattening out on his ass, Gryphon pushed him a little, letting the rubbing get more serious.

"Mmmhmm." Wait. Wait, this was not in the ... Oh... Oh, that was it. There.

"So hot. So sweet." The man shifted, got him between those long thighs instead of against just one, really giving him the goods.

"Douce..." He nodded, jerking as Gryphon's lips traced his collarbone. Oh, Lord, yes.

Long fingers slid down his cleft, teasing him, sliding back to find his balls and stroke. So light and soft. That sent shudders all through him, 'cause it was damn near tickling, but not quite and that made it hot and what the Hell was he doing, loving on this man like he was the boss.

"You like me," Gryphon said, smiling against his throat. "Yes. Come along, sweet. Faster."

"Mmhmm." Remy set to moaning, hips rolling, damn near begging that touch to give him more.

Someone was listening in, because he got more, fingers stroking his balls, a heavy thumb pushing at his hole. And Gryph started to hump up against him, rumbling low. His eyes rolled and he just moved, caught up in the whole thing like a beach ball in the waves. A low chuckle met that thought, Gryph holding him tighter, moving him faster. Those damned fangs grazed his skin, almost punching through.

"I." Oh. Oh, he was fixin' to ... He just needed a little bit...

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"This, sweet?" Those fingers did something amazing, that thumb pressed against him hard, and Gryphon ... bit him. Deep.

He cried out, spunk pouring out of him as the room sort went all tilt-a-whirl and sparkly like the best carny rides after too much hootch.

He barely heard the growl, had no warning besides that before he really was flying, Clay springing up off the floor and tearing him right off those teeth. "You goddamned fucker!" Clay shouted, the sound freakishly loud.

Oh, shit.

Oh, shit.

Oh, fucking shit.

He went still, quiet. Okay. Okay. He needed his pants and his boots. His wallet was in his pants.

Vance was staring at him, at the blood leaking down his chest.

Oh, man. He shoulda never left home on this weird-assed trip.

"You," Clay stabbed finger at Vance. "Stop staring and sit down. You stop biting my boy!"

Then Clay turned to him, putting both hands on his shoulders and staring into his eyes. "You okay, babe?"

"Yeah. Yeah. I. Hey, Boss. You mad at me?" That was the big one, right now. Boo might could eat him and he didn't know what was up with Griffy, there, but Clay? Clay was *family*.

Those crazy-dark eyes softened, and Clay pressed a sweet kiss to his mouth. "No, Rem. I'm not mad at you. Worried

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about you, yeah. Pissed as Hell that we're stuck in this mess. Not mad at you."

"Kay." He nodded, patted Clay on the cheek. "I guess I better clean me off, huh? 'fore Boo's eyes bug out?"

"Yeah, Rem. Yeah, you better. Please." That was from poor Boo, hands clasped over the scarred belly.

Clay patted his butt, kissing him again, almost seeming normal. "Go wash up, babe. We'll be right here. We'll sort this out."

"Kay, Boss." Remy grabbed his jeans and his boots (and his wallet, just in case "working it out" meant "running like Hell") and went to get clean.

Lord.

Lord, lord, lord.

This shit was too deep for him.

Chapter Twenty Four

Clay figured it was time to get their shit together. He grabbed Vance, sat down on the bed, and stared at the new guy, shaking his head. "I don't like this, man. You got to go."

"My name is Gryphon, not 'man,' and I assure you, I have no intention of going anywhere without Remy. I can help you, you know."

He ran his hand over his head, ruffling up what hair he had. "What the Hell do you want? I can't just give up Remy. He's ... he's my family, and he deserves my protection."

"Clay, old dude—Remy's a guy. You can't really just have him." Vance really was very new at this...

They both looked at Vance like he'd lost his mind, finally agreeing on something. Clay almost laughed, because Vance looked so confused. And Clay figured he'd never understand, because Vance was never going to have anyone but him. Period.

"I think we can let Remy decide," Gryphon pointed out mildly, idly scratching his chest. It wasn't a bad chest, as chests went. Clay liked them a bit more scarred...

"You two deal with that. I'm going to find the Colonel and have a discussion with him." Vance started hunting for clothes. "I've been cooped up forever."

"Baby." He grabbed Vance by the hips. "You can't. Come on, now. We need to eat first, need to get your strength up. You go in there with this kind of bloodlust, you'll end up dead for real."

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Remy came back in, grinned at Vance. "You want me to find him some big old biker? He could suck away."

"There you go, babe." Oh, better. Remy looked more like his usual self. Clay grabbed him when Gryphon would have reached for him, hugging that warm little body close.

"Better?"

"Yeah. Yeah. I needed a bath. We got a plan, y'all?"

"No. We're milling about like cattle. Possibly sheep."

Man, he was really getting to dislike that Gryphon.

"We need to find a bigger hidey hole, Boss. Y'all need space."

"Yeah. Yeah, we need someplace ... someplace like a house or somethin'." They needed to think, too. And that was damned hard right now.

"I'll go find something." Vance was buzzing, fighting to get out and explore. He remembered that, vaguely.

"What you'll find is a mess of trouble." Clay stared at Gryphon, meeting those clever eyes with all of his will. "Can I trust you to keep Rem safe and not run off with him while I find this one something to eat?"

"Boss, I'm good. For real. I got it." Remy leaned against him, warm and alive. Of course, that made Vance growl, eyes flaring.

"I'm not taking any chances." He hugged Remy close, then patted his ass and led him to the bed, handing him off to Gryphon, who nodded.

"I'll keep him safe. Even from me. The sun is going down. Take your young one out to eat."

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"Bring me back something, Boss? I'm hungry as all get out." Remy was drawn into the curve of Gryphon's body and damn, that looked cozy.

He fought down his instinctive protest. "You bet, babe. We'll bring you a big old bag of Popeye's. I know you like that."

Then Clay turned his attention to Vance, who watched the whole byplay with glowing eyes. "Come on, honey. Let's you and me go hunt."

"Uh-huh. Yeah. Yeah, let's." The energy pouring off Vance was just enough to make them all hard.

Lord, almighty. They didn't go now ... Well, orgies could be fun, but Remy would get eaten for sure. The sun had just slipped completely behind the horizon when they left, Vance pulling him out by the arm.

"What happens now? Where do we go?"

"Wherever your nose leads you, honey. We try to stay away from anything obvious, anything that will get us shut in a sunny room..." How did he explain hunting? All that blood of the evildoer some vampire novelist had come up with was bullshit.

"You'll make sure I don't go overboard? I'm not the bad guy."

"I'll make sure, baby. I promise." No way would he let Vance damage himself or anything, though. Because he was a good guy, for all that Clay wasn't.

"Cool." Vance lifted his head, started moving through the dark like a fucking dream. It was hot—the hunt and the way Vance trusted him, just like that. Look at that man. Clay

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caught up soon enough, but he watched a little first. Then he hustled, knowing he needed to be right there.

They hit a bar, Vance sliding in among the shitkickers like he belonged, heading right for the dance floor. Jesus. He hadn't imagined Vance could dance. Hell, with those scars, Vance might not have for a while.

Clay hung back, letting Vance find his own way, letting the man pick out his own feed. He didn't want to influence him, at least not this time. Vance picked a stocky bastard, meeting the guy's eyes over a little blonde girl over and over.

His head was gonna explode. He knew the guy wasn't really holding Vance's interest for anything more than food, but it still pissed him right the Hell off. His fangs fucking itched. Just like that, Vance looked out the door, got a nod, and then Vance headed out, moving like sex on the hoof.

His hands clenched and unclenched, but Clay made himself a hole in the dark, moving casually, right out after Mr. I Think I'm Gonna Fuck Vance but No Way.

Vance was in the alley, humming, rubbing a little, the level of charming going on there complete fucking overkill. Hell, that poor guy was gonna have happy humpy dreams for weeks. If he could get the Hearts and Roses song out of his ears ... Clay gritted his teeth, feeling his fangs prick his lips.

The bite, when it came, had the big guy shooting, just like that. Vance was moaning in his head, soaring with it, almost lost. Almost. But he wasn't completely gone, and Clay was just fucking amazed. He'd been a monster when he first changed over.

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"Come on, honey. That's enough." He didn't say it aloud, but he knew Vance heard him. Vance moaned, the release like an ache, but those teeth slipped free. Vance stared at him, needing to know he did well, needing to know what next.

Nodding, Clay moved over to help, grabbing the stocky man when he would have slid down the wall. "You did good, babe. He's gonna think he had the best night ever. We just need to get him someplace safe. This isn't get him a cab country, so I'd say the back hall of the club, where we came out."

"Okay. He's good, right? Just going to need a steak tomorrow?" Those muscles bunched, lifting big and loose-limbed. "God, I feel good."

"Yeah. He'll be fine. You stopped at just the right place, baby."

Proudhornyyeahgoodproud. He just sent all that right to Vance on the direct line.

Vance growled, eyes flashing. "Want you."

Now. Nownownownow.

"Uh-huh. Just put him right there." He waited. Patiently. For like two seconds after Vance laid the guy out next to the john. Then he grabbed Vance, dragging him away.

"You. Do you need to eat?" Vance was firecracker hot, rubbing against his ass.

"Soon. Not yet. Need you more." He wanted ... God, he wanted more. Everything. He couldn't feed off Vance. That would ruin the whole hunt. But he could fuck him into the ground.

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"Yours. Fuck, lover. I feel ... alive." Vance gave him a grin, a wild-eyed look that started an ache, deep down.

"I bet you do." The first feed could never be duplicated. Grinning, he pulled Vance along, finally finding them a dark corner where they could hide from the world. And where he could push his hand right down the front of Vance's pants. Hard. Hot. Swollen. Vance bucked right into his touch, humping like a bad puppy.

"Sweet. Love how you feel." That probably wasn't out loud either, but he was getting used to the whole mind-bending thing. Jesus, he was gonna come in seconds.

"Want you to fuck me. Want to fuck you. Want." Vance just rang out in his head.

He tore at Vance's jeans. He was gonna fuck this man right into the ground. He couldn't let Vance fuck him. Not like this. But soon he would. Vance, fortunately, was all about the plan, not fighting him at all and letting him at that fine ass.

Oh, thank God. He just twirled Vance around and shoved, bending the man over and shoving those jeans all the way down. Oh, fuck that made him drool. Vance was so fucking ready. So warm.

The scars stood out in stark relief, snow-white against the unmarked skin.

Now.

Now, Clay.

In.

"Yes. In." His own button and zipper let go easily, and he lined up, shoving in hard. No spit, no lube. Just in. There were advantages to not being human.

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Vance rode him hard, desire let loose in waves that just crashed around them. Fuck, yes.

If people in a five mile radius weren't getting hard, he'd be amazed. He knew he sure as Hell was. Clay slapped his hips hard against that tight ass, gritting his teeth against coming. Vance had to shoot first.

"Pushy old man." The words were ground out between Vance's teeth, Vance so close it hurt.

"You know it, baby boy. Now come for me." He reached for Vance's cock, knowing how it ached, how Vance needed. One touch ought to do it.

Yup.

One squeeze and one deep thrust and bingo. Happy shoot-your-brains-out-of-your-dick time.

Clay all but screamed, his cock just jerking and shooting, his head falling back on his neck.

They rested, just for a second, and then Vance looked back at him. "Someone's gonna notice us..."

"Yeah. And I need to eat." He'd hunt a little himself. Then they'd go back and settle out what they were doing. Remy. Gryphon. The Colonel.

Jesus, he was tired.

Chapter Twenty Five

Remy was so tired.

So tired, and sleeping so hard. Gryphon almost hated to wake him. But he had to. The sweet thing had been asleep long enough, and the other two would be back soon.

"Sweet. Sweet, I need you to wake up."

"Hmm?" Remy smiled for him, pressed closer, completely unafraid.

Really, that Clay fellow's worry was really out of line. How could he hurt someone as sweet and giving as this young one? "Did you have a good nap?"

"I did. I dreamed. What's up?" He did love how Remy woke up, all warm and lazy. Trusting.

"You, now." Daring to take a kiss, Gryphon moved his lips slowly over Remy's. Sweet.

Remy's hand slipped around his nape, sweet little mouth opening to him, tongue sliding in to taste, flicking against his teeth. So bold. Gryphon hardened, his prick rising. Oh ... Good.

The little noises filled his mouth, Remy's tongue tapping the tip of his teeth, the hint of blood hitting him. The wave of need that rolled over him astonished him. Really. It had been so long. So long. Gryphon let Remy tease him, let himself sink into the deep, aching want.

Remy's hands moved over him, exploring him, feeling him. Taking care of him. That had to be Remy's special talent. Taking care. That was what he needed to tap into. He kissed

the man some more, pulling those lean hips right up against him.

"Mmhmm." Remy was getting hard, the motions of those hips slow and sinuous, almost dancing with him. How he loved to dance. Gryphon laughed, low and slow, rubbing up against Remy in return, his whole body shivering.

Remy gasped and grinned. "You got yourself a great laugh, Douce."

"You think so, do you? I rather like your smile." It lit up Remy's face, made him take another kiss.

It was fascinating to have a lover who was so unafraid, so at ease with his needs, his hunger, his teeth. Remy deepened the kiss, finding his rhythm and following it, easy as pie.

Gryph rolled to his back, spreading his legs to let Remy slide between, one hand on that tight ass and pressing down.

"This gonna end in another fight, now?" As if Remy cared, that heavy prick was leaking and hard as nails, rubbing against his own.

"I doubt it, Sweet. I have a feeling that even if they come back now, they won't have much focus..." Oh. Focus. Remy had that in spades, the way he was making them both moan.

"Kay. You feel good." Remy's mouth landed on his collarbone, teeth just barely scraping his skin.

"Mmmm. Do that again." His whole body arched at the touch of those teeth, his hands rubbing up and down Remy's lean back.

"This?" That bare touch came again. Then one more time.

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"That. Yes, please." The urge to bite back came strong and deep in him, but Gryphon resisted, letting the loving last as long as he could.

"Mmhmm." Another bite almost stung him and he jerked, hips rocking.

"Sweet." Laughing, he wrapped his legs around that slight form, bringing them even closer together. There was joy in this like he had not felt in a long, long time.

"Uhn." Remy groaned, nuzzling against his throat, lips open, tongue on his skin.

Yes. Yes, now. Gryphon pulled Remy up, his mouth moving down so they were both in a position to bite and suck before sinking his fangs into that tanned throat. Remy stilled for a moment, then shuddered, sucking up a mark as sweet blood pulsed into his mouth.

Bliss. Absolute bliss. Shaking, he moved against Remy, licking the tiny wound to stop the blood, the taste spicy and salty and metallic.

"You. I mean. Douce..." Remy chuckled and moaned. "I ain't never had another. I mean. That was. Oo-eee!"

"Indeed, sweet. That was indeed." Pulling Remy even closer, trying to sink into that skin. He'd never felt better.

"You ... You wanna fuck, Douce? Boss ain't here and he's real distracted these days." Wicked, wanton man.

"Is that what you want, sweet? Show me, if it is. Get yourself ready?" Did he want to ... for Heaven's sake. Of *course* he did.

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"Sure, Douce. You like to watch, do you?" Remy sucked two fingers into those kiss-swollen lips, started sucking and licking, giving him a show.

His mouth all but watered, and he nodded. "I like to watch you, yes. You have my full attention, sweet."

Remy blushed, pressed closer and started rubbing against his belly as those fingers slipped free with a 'pop' and headed down to disappear inside Remy's body. His eyes widened, his mouth opening on a silent sigh. Perfect. Completely at home with him. Sweet Remy. Gryphon watched as long as he could, and when he could bear no more he reached around, pressing Remy's fingers with his own.

"Yeah..." Remy groaned, lips open, eyelashes dark where they were closed. "That's fine."

"More than fine. So hot." So alive. So very alive. Gryph let one finger slide inside, testing Remy's readiness. Remy was like a little furnace, blazing around him, promising pure Heaven. His eyes tried to roll in his head, but he kept them on Remy, refusing to miss any of this. He pushed Remy to open himself, making ready.

"I think now, yeah? I got a need." Remy shifted and straddled, pressing the top of his cock right where he wanted it to be.

"Now, then." His hands landed naturally on Remy's hips, and Gryphon tugged, moaning deeply when Remy slipped right down on his cock.

"Uhn." That was a fabulous noise, almost as good as the way Remy snapped around him, ass dragging around his prick.

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"Remy." Nothing in his long experience had moved him so. Perhaps he had felt this good, but never this ... deeply.

"Uh-huh. Like. Like a guy that 'members my name. More." Sweet lad. Gryphon rolled up to take a kiss, his hand behind Remy's head to pull him down. The angle changed, pushing him deep inside, giving Remy more. Remy jerked, echoes of pleasure just flooding him. "Gryphon!"

Oh. Again.

Someone remembered his name, as well. It charmed and delighted him. Holding Remy right where he was, Gryphon pushed up, muscles straining.

Remy's eyes rolled like dice, throat working as they moved. The scent of need and blood just washed over him. He hadn't taken much the first time. Surely he could take a tiny bit more ... Gryphon moved, lips trailing down Remy's neck, sinking right in at the base.

Remy squeezed him tight, a sweet noise filling the air as that ass rippled and jerked around him. Gryphon cried out, unable to withstand any more. He spent himself, filling Remy deep inside, his prick jerking madly. All the while he licked at the punctures he'd made, letting Remy feed him.

This time, they weren't interrupted. It made an enormous difference.

It made all the difference in the world. "Better, sweet Remy?"

"Mmhmm." Remy curled around him, moaning low, muttering in broken French.

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"Good. Sleep some more. Your friends will be back soon."
Then they would begin all of the posturing and sniping again,
no doubt. For now they would simply rest.
Together.

Chapter Twenty Six

"A hearse?" He couldn't fucking believe it, but there it was. Vance stared at Remy. "You got us a hearse?"

The little fucking Cajun had a sick fucking sense of humor.

Remy looked over, shrugged. "It fits all y'all, doesn't it? It's got the scary good tint on the windows and curtains and shit, don't it? It's fucking cool, man."

Vance looked at Clay. "Where did you find him again?"

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

"The swamp." Clay grinned, winked, making him chuckle a little.

"Him, the gators, and mosquitoes the size of sparrows. Amazing." He shook his head, grinned. "Do we have to ride in coffins?"

"Nah. I couldn't fit three in there. I tacked extra padding up in the back." The little fucker looked tickled as a pig in shit.

"Lord, lord." Clay clapped Remy on the back while the skinny one rolled his eyes and smiled fondly. Man, this was gonna be a bitch of a trip.

"Okay, y'all. In the hearse. Get cozy." Little fucker.

"Don't make me bite you, Rem." Although, Vance bet Remy would be spicy as Hell.

"Fuck off, Boo, or I'll go munch on the boss and make you all twisty."

"All right, children, let us play nice and get this done, shall we?" That came from the Gryphon guy, who put a possessive hand on Remy's waist.

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Oh, look at that. Man, Clay was gonna be pissed.

"Yeah, I have some business to take care of with the Colonel. Move it."

Clay only growled a little. Not much at all, just curling his lip. Then he grabbed Vance instead, pushing him into the fucking hearse. They landed together in the back, which Remy'd actually made cozy with a shit load of blankets and pillows, the tinted windows well-covered.

Clay curled around him, face buried in his neck. "This is humiliating, baby boy. But kinda cute."

"Hey, he's your lackey, man. You get the blame."

"Yeah, yeah." He got a vicious pinch, right on his ass. Of course, it might not have been Clay. Gryph muscled right in with them, moving them over.

"Watch it, man. That doesn't belong to you." He scooted closer to Clay.

"No? Ah, well." That chuckle was damned wicked. "It's quite nice."

He snorted, rolled his eyes. "Where are you from, man? You're not a local."

Of course, he wasn't a local, either; or was he? He'd have to ask Clay whether him becoming whatever it was he was here made him from here.

Fuck, that made his head hurt.

Clay bit him. "Don't be a doofus, honey. You're from ... wherever you're from."

Gryphon laughed again. "Indeed. You would not believe me if I told you where I was from, at any rate."

Fuck, that mind-reading thing? Weird as Hell.

"How do you know? I'm pretty good at that whole imagination thing."

"Are you?"

Clay rumbled about as loud as the engine when Remy started them up. "Yeah, he is, but he's not imagining anything about you."

Like he'd do that. He was all filled to the top with Clay.

"Mmmm." Clay nuzzled against him, smiling. "Yes. All the way up."

"You two don't start nothin' back there, now. Horndogs."

He caught himself before he growled, focusing on Clay. Horndog. That was him.

"Yeah, what does he know?" Clay whispered. "What else do we have to do?"

"Nothing. Just rest and touch before we go hunt that motherfucker down." He carefully avoided thinking about the jobs he'd done for the Colonel. He'd been ... misinformed.

"You can't help that. You were just doing a job." Clay nuzzled his throat, nibbling a little, giving him the shivers.

"I know." Still, it bugged him. He was supposed to be one of the good guys. Damn it.

"Well, that's quite relative, isn't it?" Gryphon said. "Now you're a good guy to vampires and a bad one to your colonel."

Oh, fuck. That was going to make his head hurt.

"Oh, Douce, honey. You don't want to go about spouting that shit. You'll make things worse on our poor Boo."

Vance was going to eat Remy.

Chomp.

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"Drive, Remy. You shut up," Clay finished, growling at Gryphon. "We really should rest, baby. Gather our strength. Pray that Remy doesn't stop at Popeye's. It gives him the farts."

"Oh, great. It'll be like being trapped with a falafel-eating pit bull. Remy, no fried chicken for you."

"Fuck off, Boo. Y'all be sleeping."

"Or dead."

Remy laughed hard. "Y'all's already there, Boo. Me? I can't take you there."

"But you can drive us in a hearse," Clay said, snorting with laughter.

When had they descended into a slapstick comedy troupe?

Man, if this was eternal life, he was seriously, seriously fucked.

Chapter Twenty Seven

Gryphon listened to the two in the back as long as he could stand it. They were ... well. If they could tolerate sunlight he would liken it to basking. He tried to find another word, but could not. Then he decided to focus on Remy instead. He listened to the little Cajun's heartbeat, letting it lull him as the daytime could not. He wanted to go up there and sit, lean on Remy, but he could not do that either.

It was dreadfully boring.

"Do you sing, Remy?"

"I was born on the bayou, honey. 'Course I sing." It came out as 'sang' and Gryphon could hear Remy's pleasure in the thought.

"I can't imagine it will bother those two if you do..." He would love to hear Remy's voice. The very thought made him smile.

"Lord, lord." Remy chuckled and starting singing to him—first a few hymns that he had the vaguest memory of, then some bawdy songs, warbling in and out of pidgin French. Oh. That was the most adorable thing he had ever heard. Gryph hummed along as soon as he caught the tune, having no idea what the words were.

Remy's joy hit him in waves, sweet and pure as the memory of sunlight through colored glass. So much better than listening to the cooing and grunting next to him. Perhaps that was not strictly fair, but it did seem so.

"You doin' okay back there, honey? Y'all ain't too cramped?"

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"I'm rather mashed against the wheel well, I think. Your friends are not inconsiderable in size."

"Yeah, they's big ole boys, huh? Boss, especially. Not wee like me."

"They are, indeed. I would much rather be here with you..."

"Yeah? Well, I vote, we finish with this soldier man; we get the Hell out of town."

"I think that's a fine idea." He wondered idly what it would take to separate Remy from Clay.

"Yep. I could use me a nap and a couple of quiet days."

"Oh, I can think of things to do that are not quiet." His hands actually twitched, wanting to touch that lean, little body.

"Oh." There was a rush of hunger, of pure need. "You like it a little loud, huh?"

"I do. I like to know that someone is enjoying me." That had him smiling, licking his lips. His fangs pricked at his lower lip, all but aching.

Remy inhaled, he could hear it. "Damn. You. You got some to be enjoyed, huh?"

"I think I have something you would enjoy, yes." Had he not proven that to some extent? He sent a wave of his own longing to Remy, letting him feel it.

Remy's groan echoed in the hearse, the big car weaving a little. "D ... damn."

"Now, sweet, no running us off the road. Of course, if you find a place to pull off and ... nap." Yes. That would be most pleasant.

"Yeah? Even with the boss back there?"

That would be less than ideal, but yes. He needed that badly. "Really. Even as crowded as it is."

"There's a rest stop a mile up the road. Maybe I oughta get me a Coke."

"There you are. I think we could all use some refreshment." Now his mouth was watering. Truly, Remy had an extraordinary effect on him. Remy's chuckle settled in his balls, knowing and unconsciously sexual.

His whole body tightened, and the two beside him shifted, the smell of arousal suddenly quite strong. Ah, well. What a way to while away the day.

The car slowed, settled to a stop. "I'm gonna get a Coke. You want anything, Douce?"

"No, no. I am fine. Come back and have a rest then, hmm?" He missed the scent and heat of Remy when he got out of the car. Gryphon shifted, trying to find a comfortable spot.

"And he called me a horndog..." The newborn's voice was rough, husky.

"You are. That's natural enough, however. With me, there is no excuse." Knowing it was unwise, but unable to stop himself, Gryph shifted closer to the other two.

He got a chuckle, the two giving him room before a low groan filled the air. "Damn, Clay. Good..."

"Oh, for the love of..." Gryph sighed, shifting again, this time because of his aching cock.

"Mmm." Someone's hand slid down his spine, petting him, nails just scraping.

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"Yes." Gracious, that felt good. Sliding just a bit closer, Gryph reached out, needing the contact.

Now two hands were on him, two nude bodies there, eager and flushed. How they had managed the nakedness ... Gryphon snorted, his own hands moving, a low moan coming from deep in his chest. He almost hurt, he was so hard.

The newborn worked his buttons open, fingers dragging down his chest. Someone was so hungry. So needy. He heard the slightest growl, but then the older one, Clay, began to help, moving them together, pressing in against them. Vance turned his face to Clay, offering that hungry mouth at the sound of that growl, hands still working at his clothes.

Soon enough he was naked, his own hands helping to slide his pants off, his mouth pushing in to join that kiss. He simply couldn't resist. Not after he could smell the blood. They let him in, groaning and rubbing, the heat flaring. The door opened and closed, the scent of Remy adding to his pleasure.

"Remy..." He wanted Remy, too. He would keep him safe from Vance. So would Clay.

"Yeah? You ... you sure, y'all? I could drive..."

"I'll protect you, sweet. Please." He rolled up on one elbow and held out a hand.

"Rem. Come on, babe." Clay was asking too, a smile in his voice and on his face.

Remy slipped back, feet already bare, eyes huge in the dark cave they'd made. "Y'all."

Gryphon laughed, reaching out to tow Remy to him. "It is our nature, sweet. Want you so. Come." Now all three sets of hands were working on Remy's clothes. They shared Remy's

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mouth, one after the other, slow, drugging, spicy kisses that had Remy melting and moaning.

"Sweet." His turn came to kiss, and Gryphon pulled Remy against him, tongue dipping in to taste. Good. So good.

Remy's arms wrapped around him, fingers in his hair. He could almost feel the two pair of lips on Remy's shoulders, the pair of mouths wanting to bite. Growling, he turned Remy into his shoulder, reaching past to pull Clay to him, both of them fighting for dominance. They kissed hard and deep, the message passing clearly between them.

It was the newborn and his Cajun that pushed between them. Remy rubbed, muttering against his lips while the newborn went the direct route, biting into Clay's shoulder. Glorious. Gryph licked at Remy's lips, then took a hard kiss, hands sliding down to cup that tight little ass.

Remy sucked on his tongue, one leg draping over him to spread that pretty ass for his touch. He wasn't the only one moaning. Clay made a low, rough sound, but Gryph forced himself to keep his eyes on Remy. He wanted to see that hard little face when he pushed a finger against Remy's tight little hole.

"Douce..." Remy groaned, pushed back, eager for him.

"Yes. Hot. Your skin is on fire, sweet." How long had it been since he'd been that warm? He couldn't remember.

"Uh-huh." Remy's prick slid against his stomach, wet-tipped, and hot enough to brand. Someone's finger slid over his, pushing alongside into Remy's body. The way that made Remy arch, made that hot breath fan his cheek ... It had him

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jerking, teeth snapping within inches of Remy's throat. But he would protect his Cajun from even himself.

"D ... douce..." Remy pushed closer, that throat so close, veins just throbbing for him.

"Remy. Sweet. Want." So strong. The need was so strong, cutting so deep into him. But he couldn't. Not with the youngster right there. "Soon."

"Soon..." He could hear the need, Remy pushing against him, almost begging. The other two growled, the heat in the car flaring.

"Mine." He didn't mean to get into it now, but he couldn't help himself. God in Heaven he needed. Remy pushed against him, rolling on top of him, cock hot as a brand. His hands curled around Remy's ass, pulling and pushing, and he felt other hands on Remy's skin, on his skin. They were maddening, the conflicting urges. He wanted to tear Clay and Vance away. And yet he wanted to share. Remy nuzzled into his shoulder, tongue dragging on his skin, a soft moan tickling him.

"Sweet. Move. Just there." He guided Remy so that their pricks lined up, got them moving together in a good rhythm. That was what he needed. Warm fingers brushed against his balls, then disappeared, Remy bucking against him with a low cry.

"More," he demanded again, not knowing who he was talking to. It was Remy he was kissing, his tongue sliding into that hot mouth. Remy jerked and rubbed, humping madly, cock leaking against his belly. The bodies beside then pressed closer, moving them together, hands pushing against his

belly, sliding down to press his cock and Remy's together even harder.

Bliss.

"Oh. Oh, Lord. I ain't gonna last, y'all. I ain't. So good." Those pretty, dazed eyes looked like holes in the darkness. "Douce. So good, you."

"Then come for me, sweet. Let me feel you. Smell you."

Clay growled next to his ear. "Come for us, babe."

"Oh..." Remy shuddered above him, groaning low. Then he heard a soft slap and Remy shot, the newborn's chuckle echoing in the car.

"God." That was ... he could almost feel the vibrations of that little blow, right though the hand that held him to Remy, and Gryphon could not hold back any longer.

Remy slumped against him, eyelashes tickling his skin, breath panting against his throat.

"Sweet Remy." The others were still moving, still rocking, and his own prick ached inside someone's fist. It didn't take long. Not long at all before he cried out and shot against Remy's belly.

"Mmm. I can smell you, Douce." Remy kissed his throat, made him shudder.

"I can smell you, too. All heat and good." He bared his teeth, grabbing the hand that tried to pull away, licking Remy's seed right off.

"Can smell both of you. It's almost as good as blood." The newborn sounded hungry.

Newborns were always hungry.

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Too bad for the baby he wasn't willing to let them eat his Remy.

Chapter Twenty Eight

Between Gryphon's little bit of information, his own experience with the company, and Clay's ability to stare down perfect strangers and get them to spill their guts?

They were finally out of the motherfucking hearse and moving across a kudzu-choked field, the four of them spread out and running toward what looked like a camp ground—lights and fires, maybe some boats. Shit, he wished he could've checked the place out in the sunlight.

Sunlight.

Fuck.

Rage bubbled up in Vance again, those assholes stole that from him—the sunshine, his life, his home. Fucking everything.

He growled, started moving faster. He was going to kill that son of a bitch.

He was going to rip the fucker's throat out and make the bastard bleed.

He could hear Clay, not out loud. In his head. Telling him to slow down, to stay calm so they didn't get caught. So he didn't get caught again.

He stumbled a little, and then slowed. Clay. Fuck.

Who on Earth would have thought that he'd be willing to give up the sun for a man?

Clay hummed for him, the sound settling somewhere deep in his belly. It didn't ease the rage, but it helped him focus it.

They bent low, heading toward the light. He couldn't hear Clay or Gryphon move, but Remy, he heard. He'd never

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thought humans were so loud, so noisy, so alive. Hell, that heartbeat sounded like a drum in the darkness. Fuck, Vance was hungry. Clay veered off, one hand signaling that he was going to circle. That had been a bad thing last time. They should go in twos.

He followed, leaving Gryphon and Remy to go the other way. He needed Clay. Clay needed...

Wait.

What was that?

He dropped to the ground as a huge searchlight swung around sliding over the tops of the kudzu. Clay fell near him, crawling over to lay close, hand on his back. Damn it. Just God fucking damn it. Shit. He reached down for the piece that Remy'd found him, the weight familiar and comforting in his hand. Never again.

He'd never let them have him again.

They started moving as soon as the light was off them, low and fast. Remy was out of range now, so all he had was Clay and the fierce desire for revenge. They took two guards out in a flash of heat and blood and raw hunger. Then they took two more.

The guns started popping, rounds pinging the ground behind him, kicking up clods of grass. Clay cursed, grabbing him and yanking him sideways, pulling him right out of the way. He rolled, started shooting back, the flare of the shot stunning him a little.

"Look slightly to the side, honey. You got night vision, now." Moving in a blur, Clay slid away, shooting fast. Bitch.

He was still getting used to all this shit. A bullet came whizzing by, just grazing his shoulder. Fucker.

He took another down.

Fucked up as it was, it felt good to take them out, to just blaze a trail right up to the fucking compound, ready to pull the whole fucking place down.

They made it up as far as the edge of the clearing, the men in the place scattering like ants, when the explosion happened, the light stunning him, leaving him staring in the kudzu.

Clay crawled to him, light blind as he was, clumsy as Hell. "What the fuck was that?"

"Looked like a fucking flashbang grenade. Did they get Remy?" Could Clay tell?

"No. No he's..." Clay tilted his head. "He's okay. We need to move."

"Then let's move." He had less than no intention of getting his happy ass blown to Kingdom Come by Colonel Howdy Doody and his band of mercs. They still raced toward the house, but now Clay was in full on avoidance mode, zig-zagging across the grounds, making it hard for even Vance to see him.

He finally stopped thinking and just ran, following on Clay's heels by instinct alone. Another bright flash had him screaming, the light and sound so close that it all but knocked him off his feet. He heard Clay shout, heard a crash, but all he could do was spin in circles. He dropped and started crawling, his eyes squeezed so tight that his cheeks hurt.

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"Vance!" Clay reached out, hand falling on his leg, making him jump near a mile. "Jesus, baby. We're ... we need to get the fuck out of here."

"How? Which way? What about Rem?" Fuck. Fuck. He couldn't see. He couldn't fucking see.

"We'll find him. Hell, we'll even bring the tall one..." Clay finished speaking just about the time a hole blew out of the back of the man's shirt, those eyes going wide and red-gold in the dark before Clay toppled over.

Fuck him raw.

He grabbed Clay and ran, teeth snapping at anything in his way. The car was out there. Waiting. It had to be.

It had to be there and okay.

Just like fucking Clay.

Goddamn it.

Chapter Twenty Nine

Fuck him raw with a 1972 rebuilt Evinrude.

There'd been a boom and a crash and a thud and shit and he'd felt Douce's arm around his chest like a steel band as they did them some running.

Now they was in some sort of blown-up warehouse thing or something, all hid up in the top of the fallen in roof where couldn't nobody see them. Shit.

Shit, he'd lost his shotgun somewheres and his ankle was all ooky and swole and Gryph was making these weird-assed noises. These folks was about as cracked as hatching eggs 'round here.

"Remy?" Okay. Okay, there was noise he understood. Gryph was like, talking and shit.

"Uh-huh?" See him, see him be reasonable and responsive and all.

"Are you ... Umph." Douce rolled over to him, hands moving on his skin. Couldn't the guy just sniff him to know if he was hurt?

"You okay?" He didn't have the super-amazing vampy sniffer; he had to use shit like words and looking.

"No." Gryphon laughed a little, the sound kinda odd. "But I shall heal. I was more concerned for you. And a bit toothy."

"Did the light get you?" He rolled closer, wincing as his ankle screamed.

"It did. I imagine I look somewhat leprous. What hurts, sweet? I can feel you, all tense."

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"I'm good." Okay, first, get the strong one healed up, and then deal with the rest. He'd been here. He knew this. Remy got close, let Gryph sniff his neck.

"Stop, Remy. You're hurt. I have no wish to make you weaker." He could hear the longing, though. Feel the need vibrate through Douce for sure.

"You don't want me, Douce? I don't taste so good to you?" If he was going to fucking get caught here, he was going to get all he needed.

"Oh, sweet. You taste like Heaven and I am a damned man. But I would not hurt you for the world."

"It don't hurt. I know." There was a sting and then a heat that felt like the best drunk ever.

"No, I can make you love it. But it will leave you woozy." Lord, Douce liked to hear himself talk. What was he gonna have to do? Run and jump on those fangs?

Now that was a funny fucking thought. Him with a cape and a beer, flying through the air, landing on teeth.

Christ.

"Now you're laughing at me." But Douce was laughing, too, giving his mental cape a little Elvis sparkle, making the beer a bottle of Dixie Voodoo. Remy applauded, tickled bone-deep. There was something about Douce that just suited him down to the ground somehow. Either that or he was just real tired and horny.

"Or both. Tilt up just a bit more, sweet." Gryph nuzzled at his throat, teeth scraping his skin like to make him holler.

"Mmmhmm." Douce. Please. He lifted his chin, offering himself right up like he'd known Gryphon as long as the boss.

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Delicate, needle-like fangs slid right into his throat, breaking the skin with the fiercest goddamn pleasure he'd ever had. Ever. He wrapped around Gryph with a happy cry, hands tangling in the long hair, holding his Douce close. Every pull just made him throb, every little moan against his skin made him groan. Gryph didn't take much, but he could almost feel the energy spring back into the man.

Vamp.

Whatever.

He'd just go with his.

Oh. Man.

His.

Lord, lord.

"Remy..." Those fangs slid out of his skin, Douce's rough tongue licking the wounds. "Yours. Mine."

"Yeah." The chuckles bubbled out of him, less amused than just fucking happy, which was weird as fuck, but true—he so needed to get home.

"Now, we just have to decide how to get out of here, hmm? Let me look at your leg, sweet." Yeah, Douce could look at shit in the dark.

"Don' touch it now. Just look."

"I won't make promises I won't keep." Gryph bent and sniffed at his leg. Weird. "It's torn but not broken. Let me wrap it."

"You're not going to kiss it better?"

Sniffing.

Bizarre.

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"Once you let me fix it, I'll let you drink from me, sweet. That is far better than a kiss." He'd seen it with the boss, how a vamp could drink, heal, and then give away blood like a Red Cross.

"I ain't ever done that, Douce. You sure?"

"I am. I need you strong and ready to run, sweet. Ready?" Those long-fingered hands fell on his ankle, ready to twist it back to right.

"Uh-uh." No. No, he wasn't. No way. He. "OW!"

"There. Let me wrap it." Cloth tore and those hands wrapped his throbbing ankle, making the pain ease a little.

"You're a cruel, cruel man. Vamp. Whatever."

"No. No, sweet Remy. I am kind. You will see." Gryphon pulled him close, holding him against that long, lean body. "Come drink, sweet."

"I..." He didn't know about this part. "You sure, Douce? I don't wanna be hurting you..."

"I am sure." He could feel Gryph vibrate, the scent of him suddenly strong and heavy. Okay, with that prick poking at him ... Yeah, Douce was ready.

"Smell you." He groaned, eyes rolling with a sharp, sudden need.

"Yes. I need this." The scent of blood came strong, too, just right there, and he knew Gryph had opened a vein for him. Guiding him right to that throat, Gryph moaned, settling against him.

The first taste on his tongue surprised him bone-deep. He'd been all ready to be disgusted, but this...

Goddamn.

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This was like a fucking orgasm in the first sip. The power of it ran through him like good moonshine, like the stuff that made you cough and hallucinate. Remy reached down, rubbed the heel of his hand against Douce's crotch. Nothing so good should be one-way. Nothing.

"Oh..." Long, low, that moan made him feel tall as mountains and ready to leap right over them. Damn. Just damn.

His own dear Douce. Yes. His own. Remy moaned and sucked a bit harder, the electric shock spreading through him. The blood poured over his tongue, seeming like there was a lot more than there probably was. It made his heart race, made him feel like he was gonna explode.

He pulled back, staring at Gryph, seeing his Douce in the dark. "Please."

He wasn't sure what he was begging for.

"Yes. Whatever you want, sweet. I want you." The trickle of blood had all but dried up, but Remy figured he'd be jazzed for days on just what he had. No wonder Boo had attacked the boss for it.

Remy nodded, grabbed Gryph's hand and tugged it down to his cock. He'd never been so fucking hard. Growling, Gryph opened his jeans, pulling him out and stroking, really giving him what for. It was electric, like biting down on a live wire.

His head snapped back, whapping against the ground good and hard. Need. Need. Shit fire, he could just turn over and beg for it like a French whore.

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"Is that what you want, Remy? You want me to take you? I will. Oh, I will." The rough desire was right there. Right there in Gryph's rough growl.

"Need." He nodded, nails sliding on Gryph's shoulder. He'd beg for it, if he had to.

"Then you shall have." The man was fast, moving them in the blink of an eye so he was on his back and naked and all spread. Then that mouth was on him, tongue pushing into him.

Remy could hear his heart pounding like a voodoo ceremony in the bayou, complete with drums and sacrificial chickens and ... Oh.

Oh, right there.

Gryphon opened him right up, pressing in, letting him feel every bit of the stretch. Then the man was on him, cock against his hole, not giving him any time to think at all. Oh, sweet fuck. He rolled up, shoulders leaving the ground as he pushed back, took his Douce in. Lean hips settled in between his thighs, Douce hovering over him, eyes just fucking glowing. Beautiful bastard. Every inch slid right in, and it felt like a lot of inches from his seat.

"Full." He almost hooted. "Fixing to get blown to bits by the soldier man and I ain't never been fuller."

A soft chuckle ghosted over his throat. "I do love you, sweet. I am keeping you."

"Promise?" He was all about that, somehow. Hell, he could fucking feel Gryph all through him.

"It's a promise." Bending, Douce bit right into his neck, hips pounding that prick into him. Lights sparked even in the

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dark and Remy just let it go, let his body rock between cock and teeth. Fuck him. Yes. Douce was just gonna take him to Heaven. Or drag him into Hell. Either way he'd go happily.
Good thing he was easy.

Chapter Thirty

Clay was tired of getting his ass kicked.

They'd lost Remy and the big guy somewhere, and he and Vance were both burned, both shot through. They'd crawled somewhere to recover, spending the day curled together in a fugue. The sun was going down, though, and Clay was itching to find Remy, and ready to take this fucking Colonel down once and for all.

"What's his weakness, honey? What is it that drives him?" He'd never thought to sit and think it through.

"He hates y'all. Us. Whatever. He's fucking scared." Vance sat, eyes closed. "He was always business—he paid big money..."

"Scared of what? Did he ever give away anything that might say why? Think, honey." He needed every scrap. Just to plan.

"He's southern. He hired me to move y'all on. Every time he asked if I'd got bit. I said no, even if I had..."

"So he's trying to rid the South of vampires? Man, he's a weird one." Clay grinned a little, feeling Vance pinch his ass.

"I. I think." Vance tilted his head, looked over. "Why would he care if we got bit?"

"I don't know, babe. It's not like you can catch it that way..." Unless the Colonel thought so ... Maybe he thought there would be an epidemic.

"I don't know. He ... He took my blood when he had me trapped, but that doesn't have anything to do with us. He just

said he wanted to move you on, to make sure no one got settled."

So maybe it wasn't about him at all. Or about vamps. Maybe it was about the soldiers ... He stopped, looked at Vance for a second, comparing his lover to the others he'd seen. Stocky, shorter, scarred—every single one of them—shit. Shit. What was that weird son of a bitch doing with those boys?

"So. So, you're his weakness, then..." Shit. Shit. What the Hell was this all about?

"Me?" Vance looked confused as all get out.

"You. The others like you." There had to be something about ... Jesus. What if the Colonel was doing something vamps would be able to sense? To smell. It sure made sense when he thought of his instant attraction to Vance.

"Like me? I don't..." Vance stopped, frowned. "He got me in the hospital. He found me there."

"After you got torn up, right?" That was it. Oh, holy fuck. It was like some kind of freaky movie with Dolph whatshisname.

"After they cut me. They thought I was going to die, I'd lost almost all my blood, the infections were eating me up, but I survived."

"So he filled you up with all sorts of shit. Fuck, Vance. He's been using you all this while. Like bait or something." Clay marveled at the sick logic of it.

"Is that ... Oh, fuck." All sorts of shit was racing through Vance's mind, Clay could see it—shame and fury and being taken for a fool again and then the what-if's started.

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"No. None of that. We would never be together." He'd never be sorry for that.

"Is it real?" Like it wasn't now, no matter how they started.

"Mine, honey. All mine. Real as anything you can imagine." He took a hard, deep kiss, his teeth sinking into Vance's lower lip. Vance wrapped around him, needing this, needing something to fucking believe in and God knew, Clay was right there and willing to be believed in.

Clay hauled Vance up against him even closer, his hands learning that strong body all over again. They needed this, needed to get settled and ready and pumped up all at the same time. He traced scar after scar, petting each one, letting Vance know how they fascinated him.

His fingers pushed down, into the loose pants, cupping Vance's balls, the heavy cock. "Love how you feel."

"Perv." Vance laughed at him, licked his lips and nipped them just enough to draw blood. "Don't let them take me again, yeah?"

"No. Not gonna do that. Not ever." He'd kill them both first, 'cause he'd seen what they did to Vance, knew that old bastard Colonel was a mean one. "We're gonna take him down this time, honey. We got to get Remy."

"Yeah. I wouldn't leave him here like this." No, Vance was a good guy, no matter what they said about him down at the jail.

"Then we need a plan. Flying in with no rhyme or reason ain't working."

"You go get Rem. I'll go get the Colonel. We meet back at the car and drive."

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His hackles rose. "That whole splitting up thing has done us so much good..." Damn it, he wasn't going to leave Vance for love or money.

"You know that your eyes get all glowy when you're pissed?"

That had him snorting. "So do yours now. What did he used to do in the way of boltholes? How likely is it there's a way in underground?"

"Here? Fucking unlikely. This place looks like an old campground. There'll be storage buildings, maybe some with storm cellars, but they haven't been here long enough to build shit." Vance chewed his lips, thinking. "If it was me, I'd've spent the day tearing anything and everything down that the bloodsuckers could use for shelter come the dawn. Then set a shitload of fires for the dark and wait it out. They know they hurt us. They just don't know that Rem's human and that we got us a new friend."

"Well, then, we have to figure out how to use that." Damned if his brain was giving him anything. His connection with Rem was all but closed on one end. He knew Remy was still alive, but that was it.

"How long do I have in the sun?"

"You're stronger than most your age, but I'd say maybe a minute or so tops before you start to burn third degree. If you had eaten..." No, he was the one who would be better off braving the sun. Or that Gryphon. He was old, wasn't he?

"A whole minute, huh?" The wheels were churning in Vance's head; he could see them—something about sneaking down there and playing soldier, getting close. Right, like

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Vance had even healed from the fucking gunshot wound, much less learned to control his eyes or his fangs in a dangerous situation.

"They'll be ready for us no matter what. Man, I wish we had the Caddy." That sumbitch was like a tank.

Vance's eyes lit up, shining at him from across the darkness. "Yeah, well, we went through Fort Jackson about an hour before we landed here, man. Did I ever tell you that I worked Vice?"

"No..." Oh, Lord. Good Lord and butter. But it might just work. It might just. "Okay, baby. I'm with you all the way."

Vance leaned forward, kissed him hard enough that his lip split. "Cool. Let's go play."

"You got it, honey. Let's do it." It was crazy. Insane. And he couldn't wait for Remy to see them coming.

The crazy little Cajun would love it.

Chapter Thirty One

Gryphon might have gone completely mad if it were not for Remy. The sun beat at the roof of the warehouse building they hid in, and all day long they heard men shouting, working, building up stacks of scrap for nighttime fires.

Remy slept off and on, waking every so often to mumble about being thirsty or hungry. Gryphon would give him small sips of blood in his sleep, and soon enough Remy had stopped complaining and started vibrating with energy.

It was rather cute.

"You're going to bounce us off our perch, sweet."

"You the one that be feeding me the good stuff." The more hyped up his sweet became, the heavier that accent sounded.

"Well, I cannot go draw you a nice cold cup of water, can I?" He grinned against Remy's throat, tongue just coming out to taste.

"Nah and I ain't seein' a bit of corn liquor for us, wicked Douce. Not that I need me none. No, sir." Remy's chin lifted, throat working.

"Yes, well eventually you will need real food and water." Moaning a bit, Gryph licked at the salt of Remy's sweat, luxuriating in the scent of him.

"You. I ain't never knowed nothing like you, Douce."

"Not even your Clay?" That warmed him deep down, made him happy. Somehow this strange little man had worked close to him, inside him.

"Not even the boss. He's family. This ... This ain't family."

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"No. No, this is something else entirely, sweet. Not at all familial." He had to take a kiss. Just one. Remy's fingers tangled in his hair, the one kiss turning into two, three. Four. Remy stole his breath, had him gasping. So sweet. So incredibly giving. What a love. Gryphon wanted more and more, wanted to take Remy away and just fuck and suck until they were both exhausted.

Remy groaned, nodded, eyes wide. "Please."

Had Remy heard him?

Impossible. But perhaps. *Yes, love. Yes.*

Remy's eyes widened, stared at him. "Lord, lord. Tell me again."

"Tell you what, sweet? How I adore you? How I want to take you with me?" He did. Too badly.

"Yeah. Yeah, shit, if we're gonna die here, it's good to know you feel for me, Douce."

"We will not die here." No. They would get out somehow. Gryphon admitted he had been lazy of late, but he was a vampire. Surely he could take a few humans.

"No? Well that's good. I ain't fond of here. And you and me, we ain't never danced or nothing."

"We need to have dinner out, hmm? Perhaps take a walk late at night in the bayou." There were a thousand things he could do with Remy. Once the sun set.

Remy beamed at him. "Yeah. Yeah, I could do that."

The rush of sheer joy just made Gryph moan.

"Good. Good." His prick rose under the power of Remy's thoughts, despite the heat and the sounds of activity outside. Remy reached down, fingers wrapped around his prick, sliding

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nice and easy. Oh. God, yes. His spine threatened to snap, he arched so hard. "Remy. More, sweet. More. I need..."

"Uh-huh." Remy slid down, baring his cock, lips open and closed.

Gryph took the moment to be selfish, pushing up to that hot little mouth, begging with his body. He wanted. Now. Remy gave, lips wrapping around his prick, the heat sinking down, spreading right over him.

"Remy!" He tried not to shout, not to give away their position, but it became difficult indeed. Glancing down, watching Remy take him in ... It was more erotic than anything he'd ever seen. Those dark eyes stared at him, Remy wanting him, hungry for him. Admiring him. He stroked that bushy hair, thumb sliding down Remy's cheek. The pads of his fingers landed next to Remy's mouth, sliding along with his prick. Remy's hunger flared, his fingers licked and sucked, the pretty mouth working him.

"More, sweet. Please." He had become one giant ball of need. His whole body ached with it, the danger inherent in the situation making it all the more urgent.

"Mmhmm." Remy sucked harder, eyes rolling with it, throat working around the tip of his prick.

Grunting, Gryph let his hips roll, let his prick slide in and out of those amazing lips. God in Heaven.

Fingers wrapped around his balls, tugging and pulling, rolling them gently. His brain tried to leave his body, his balls drawing up tight, his belly like a board. One more thrust, one more tight seal of Remy's lips and he was shooting, seed pouring from him.

Long Black Cadillac
by B. A. Tortuga

His Remy drank him down, pulling out on aftershock after another.

Petting Remy's hair, Gryph sank back, shaking a bit. How he'd needed that. "Remy? What do you need, sweet?"

"You." The tip of his prick was given a soft, gentle kiss, then a heated little lick.

"Mmmm." Stretching under the sweet attention, Gryph smiled down. "How do you want me?"

"However I can get you is a wrong answer, Douce?"

"There is no wrong answer," he replied. "I just want to make you feel good."

"Then come on and do it, Douce. I want bad."

"Oh, God, yes." He could give Remy some preparation, couldn't he? He pressed two fingers to Remy's mouth again. "Get me wet."

Remy grinned around his fingers, nipping the tips and making him groan.

"Teasing boy. I shall make you feel so good. Love..." His hips were rolling again, his prick hard as diamonds. Ah, the recovery time of a teenager. One of the advantages to eternal boredom.

Of course, Remy seemed the very cure to his boredom, with the sweet dark eyes and rumpled curls and thirst for life. Thirst. Oh, God, he would have to watch that. He let Remy suck his fingers only a short while longer, unable to wait. Then he pulled them free and pulled Remy up, pressing against that hot crease, right down to the tiny hole.

"Mmm. That's it, Douce. Fill me up, now." Remy's lips were hot as little flames on his throat.

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"I will. So deep." There. Hot. Sweet. He gave Remy all the time and patience he could. It was not much.

Fortunately, his sweet Cajun needed him more than preparation, the little hole stretching for him. Gryph settled himself between Remy's thighs, moaning happily at the heat. His cock pushed where his fingers had just been, rubbing hard.

"You look like the kitty that licked the cream, Douce, you sure do."

"No, I just have my sweet Remy." His eyes tried to fall closed, his head bobbing, his lips finding Remy's for a deep kiss,

Remy's ass squeezed him tight, that tongue sliding against his, caressing him. Grunting, Gryph began to move, sliding in until he could not tell where he ended and Remy began. Good. Hot. Perfect.

Fingers traced his face, his eyes, the corner of his mouth. Drowning. This was like drowning. They rocked, both of them grunting and panting, his hands finding a bruising grip on Remy's hips. More. Harder. Deeper. Remy bit his bottom lip hard enough to sting, making him jerk and bear down, slamming into that tight hole.

His fangs descended, the sharp tips poking at Remy's lip, tearing his own, mingling their blood. Remy's eyes went wide, the muscles surrounding his cock squeezing tight. Gryph bit down a little harder, really letting Remy taste him, taste them. He needed everything. Couldn't take much more. It made his head spin.

The cry rang out in his lips, in that kiss, and heat spread over his belly. Gryphon shot so hard he saw stars, so deep

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by B. A. Tortuga

that he could feel Remy's heartbeat. God in Heaven, he'd needed that.

Remy's laughter tickled his lips, body jerking around his cock.

He pinched. "Are you laughing at me?"

"Yep. Laughing at us, Douce. We's funny men, us two."

"We are, hmm? I'll just call it happy." Stuck in some odd building on a compound where the owner wanted people like him dead, but happy nonetheless.

"Yeah. Now we just need happy and not dead, huh?"

"That's it, sweet. We just need to figure out how to do just that." Surely they could. They were resourceful types. They just had to wait for dark. And make a plan.

Chapter Thirty Two

"Hold on, man." Vance cocked the hammer on the shotgun and set it on the dashboard. Man, they didn't make vehicles like these old military issue Hummers anymore. He hadn't hotwired a car in altogether too long. Fuck, he was having fun. It was going to be worth dying to fuck this carefully-organized crapshoot up.

"Holding, honey. For dear life. You're insane, you know that, right?" Clay sounded fucking jazzed, though. So there.

"Would you believe you're not the first man to tell me that?" He stood on the gas pedal and killed the lights, the two of them crashing through the underbrush like a couple of fools from that *Deliverance* movie.

"I would. Believe me, honey. I would." Clay laughed when they went airborne for a moment, whomping back down to the ground.

"Remember what I told you, now. We're going to cause as much trouble as we can, then we're going to find Remy and finish the job, huh?" It was either going to work spectacularly or they were all gonna die. Either way worked.

"I remember, Boss." Lord, Clay could do a fine impression of Remy. He really could.

"Don't make me pull this car over and spank your ass, now." He chuckled, ducked a low-hanging branch.

"Oh, baby boy. Promise." The damned fool man was just laughing like a loon. Vance couldn't blame him. This was a Hell of a rush.

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They hit the top of the hill and he reached out, squeezed Clay's knee. "It was worth it, man. No matter what."

"Every fucking minute, honey. You know it." Clay leaned forward, watching, anticipation in every line of his body.

"Yeah. Let's go rescue the Cajun." They hit the little chicken wire fence going about eighty, wire and hay and men just going flying as they barreled into the center of the camp.

They bounced, rocked, and the look on the one guy's face as the front bumper took him out gave Vance a savage sort of satisfaction. Clay let out a whoop and opened fire, taking out more guards.

They didn't have long, not fucking long at all because the fuckers were swarming like ants, the bullets beginning to whiz by. "Okay, lover. That's your cue. You find them. I'll park this bitch and be on your heels."

"You don't get yourself done in, you got it?" Clay took off like a shot, an unholy Rebel yell coming out of his mouth. That boy could move.

Vance steered right for the second biggest tent, knowing that the biggest was a fake, that the Colonel was there, waiting for him to fuck up. He crashed through, standing on the brake as a shitload of itchy damned canvas came down on his ass. Hello, boys.

The scene degenerated into mass chaos. Men were shouting, running everywhere. Bullets rained toward him, but as he moved into the mess that was left of the tent, they tapered off. No one wanted to hit the Colonel. Him, on the other hand, he wanted it, bad. He waded through chaos,

tearing and growling, the scent of fury and fear sudden and strong, almost delicious.

"Goddamn it, are you all worthless? Get him!" The good colonel was scrambling back, face bloodied, the scent of copper coming off him just maddening.

"You wanted me something awful before, Boss? Why not now?" A bullet hit him in the chest, the fire and tear fucking familiar now, making him stumble a bit. "Have to. Have to try harder, man."

Fuck, he hoped Clay had Remy.

Another bullet hit him, making him grunt, making him remember what Clay had said. "When in doubt, baby, grab someone and feed like a motherfucker."

Yeah. Yeah, Clay. He lurched forward, teeth bared, intending to rip that motherfucker's throat out. He barely saw the flash of metal, but he felt the gush of liquid heat on his stomach. The Colonel grinned at him. "I might not be able to kill you, monster, but I can leave you to the sun."

"Shit, man. Whatever you did to me, whatever you filled me with. I ain't ... I ain't the fucking monster."

"No, son. You're exactly what you've always been." The rheumy eyes stared out at him, cold and all lizard-brain. "Bait."

Vance went down to his knees, eyes rolling a little. "Yeah. Yeah. You didn't think. Didn't think I'd bring the monster home, though..."

His hand wrapped around a tent pole, fingers gripping it hard. Just a little bit closer.

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"There are always mistakes in the beginning of a war, son."

"Yeah." Fuck, shit was getting gray around the edges, his jeans soaked through. They were running out of fucking time here. *Get to the hearse, Clay. Y'all get there. I'll follow.*

If he could.

The Colonel threw his head back to holler for reinforcements and Vance staggered to his feet, blinking over at the gray blob. "Time to finish this up, Boss. Time to write my big check."

The tent pole slid, nice and easy, catching the Colonel in the shoulder and pinning his fat ass to the ground. Vance stood a second, staring down, swaying. "You were right, Boss. I'm nothing but bait. Here kitty, kitty."

He turned to run, meeting a line of wide-eyed jackasses in fatigues, rifles in hand. He grinned, hand sliding down into his wet jeans to where the detonator was.

"I tell you, guys. Things are fixing to get incredibly fun."

He hit the button, hoping to Hell he could run far enough that the explosion didn't tear him in two.

He wasn't sure there was enough blood to fix that.

Chapter Thirty Three

Clay ran, getting his bearings, zig-zagging to avoid getting shot down. The damned bonfires made him feel like a sitting duck, made him feel like he had a giant finger sign pointing right at him.

He listened for Remy, tried hard to get a bearing on his little Cajun, but the man just wasn't there. Oh, he was alive, but there wasn't a hint of a mental connection. Damn it. Switching tactics, he went on vamp instinct, trying to figure out where Gryphon might have holed up for a day or so.

That gave him more love. Not only did he see a big warehouse type building that hadn't been torn to pieces like the others, but was more ... slumped in. He caught a whisper of something. Someone. Another vampire. Like a spidey sense or something.

It wasn't Vance. He couldn't think about Vance. Not now.

He moved in, legs churning, and as soon as he came through the big double door, it was like an eerie quiet descended. No one was shooting at him now.

"Remy! Remy, goddamn it. Are you in here?"

"Boss! Boss, you gotta get the door open! We're stuck!"
Oh, fuck, yes.

He knew now, he could hear Remy's heartbeat. Gryph must be keeping Remy strong if he couldn't get the man out. Racing up the little loft, he started digging into the damned fallout, trying to get them out fast. They were working with him, scrabbling, tugging sounds coming through. Come on. Come on, boys.

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There. An opening. Hot damn. Clay dug at it, blood running off his fingers. They needed to go. Needed to. He could feel Vance screaming.

Remy's face appeared, looking buzzed as fuck. "Boss. Hey. You found me."

"Hey, babe." Oh, fuck, it was good to see Remy. He yanked down the rest of the debris, pulling that little rangy body into his arms.

Remy hugged him tight, just vibrating, filled with energy. "Gotta get Douce, now. He's been good to me."

"Don't worry, babe. I won't leave him behind." He took a kiss, tasting Gryphon on Remy's lips. Surprisingly, there was no rage. Just acceptance. "Let me get your man."

Gryphon reached for him just as a wave of worry hit him, the edges of regret making him panic. He could hear Vance. Get to the hearse. Run. Run. Run.

"Shit. Time to go. Come on, man, come on. You can have a snack on the way out."

Gryph nodded and shot out of that damned hole, staggering like a drunk, but upright. The explosion knocked them all to their knees, the trees catching flame, the ground shaking with it.

"Fuck. Fuck. Boss. What the fuck'd you do?"

"Come on. We got to get to the car." Jesus, that crazy fucking man. He was alive. Clay knew he was. Well. Vance was a vamp. But still.

"Boo? Boo's in there?" Remy just stared at him, swaying on hands and knees.

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"He'll be with us when we go, Rem. Come on." Gryph couldn't lift Remy, so Clay did it, slinging that small form over his shoulders and clambering down.

Gryphon took the lead, attacking a man and drinking him dry, moving stronger, heading for the hearse. That was it. That was what Vance needed to do. Feed, baby, he thought. Come back to me. Remy clung to him, and he knew he had to keep going out, not in. It was the hardest fucking thing he'd ever done.

The flames licked at them as they ran, so fucking hot his skin felt like it was crackling. Bacon. He was gonna burn up like bacon. Then they shot out of the fire, the cool night air shocking, making him shiver. "Rem! You burnt?"

Remy was silent, just still as shit on his shoulder.

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck. He stopped just short of the hearse, easing Remy to the ground, desperately checking for a pulse.

It was there, thready and weak, but there. Shit. Shit.

Before he even thought about it, he'd opened a vein, fixing to press it to Remy's lips. Just about the time he did, though, he heard a growl, a heavy body knocking him aside.

"No. Go find yours. I will take care of mine." Gryph's eyes glowed in the dark a moment before he turned to Remy, lifting the limp body up.

He could feel Vance, like a fading heartbeat, coming for him. Stubborn fuck. Beautiful stubborn fuck. Clay went to meet him halfway, knowing Remy was in good hands, that Gryphon would get the man out if they didn't come back. Feed. He and Vance both needed to fucking feed.

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Those bright fucking eyes met his, dead serious. "It went kaboom in ... in a glorious way, man."

"Did you get him, baby?" Grabbing Vance as he staggered, Clay held them both up, feeling slick blood on his hands, on his chest. Fuck. Come on, come on.

"You fucking know it. They'll be counting teeth for weeks."

"Fucking A. Come on, honey. Let's find us someone to snack on and hit the road." Yeah. They just needed a little ... There. Someone was still fucking standing.

Vance stumbled, head hitting his shoulder good and hard. Love. He heard it, clear as a bell. He dragged Vance the last few feet, pushing him at the man who was just struggling to get away; the poor fuck was going fast, though. "Drink, baby. Please. Need to get moving. You just need to drink."

Holding himself together with one hand on that poor belly, Vance growled, looked into the eyes of the bastard struggling in his arms. "I ain't gonna hurt you. You'll feel fine. I'm ... I'm a fucking good guy." The charm took Vance to his knees, but the fucker gave that throat willingly, Vance drinking deep.

God save him from the good guys. Of course, that was why he fucking loved the bastard, wasn't it? The drink helped Vance bounce back, and Clay dragged the fool up and off, heading for the hearse.

It was running, Gryph behind the wheel, Remy slumped on the seat beside him.

They piled in, Clay shouting all the while, "Go, go, go."

Gryph took off like a bat out of Hell, proving that even old vamps had a sense of adventure.

Now, if they could just find a place to hole up.

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Perferably somewhere without any kabooms.

Chapter Thirty Four

Lordy mercy his head hurt. Remy turned, falling hard off a bed, crawling along the floor. Man. Just. Man. He needed to. Something.

Christ.

Where the living fuck was he?

"Remy. Sweet." The voice came from where he'd been, the bed. A pair of blue eyes peered down at him. "Don't open the curtains, hmm?"

"No." No, he didn't think he would.

He crawled to the bathroom and up into the tub, turning the water on. Wrapped soap. Crappy shampoo. Hotel.

Motel.

Whatthefuckever.

The shower curtain opened a few moments later, long legs appearing in his line of sight before Gryph plopped down in front of him. "Soap, sweet."

"Huh?" Soap was bubbly, sorta, more bitter than sweet.

"Hand me the soap. I shall get you clean."

"Oh. Sorry. Y'all ... Did everyone ... I 'member a fire." He got the soap open, handed it to his Douce.

Lathering up, Gryphon began scrubbing him gently, loving on him. "Everyone is fine. Your friend and his boy, they're over next door. Beat up, but well."

"Oh, good." He relaxed into the water. Clay was his family, through and through. "And you, Douce? You're good?"

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"Better than I was." He got a glinting grin. "Your Clay got us all something to eat earlier. You'll have to eat up when you get clean."

"Yeah?" His belly felt more sick than hungry, but the water eased it some. "You want a bite, Douce? Will that make you better?"

He'd do that for Gryph.

He would.

"I would rather you had one, love. I imagine you feel a little queasy, hmm? A little headachey." So gentle. Gryph was treating him like spun glass.

"Mmhmm. My head's fixin' to split like a melon. When I'm better I'll run and get supplies. Right now, I'll stay here."

Right here.

In the water.

"Swamp baby." Gryphon kissed him, lips light and cool against his.

"Mmhmm." Sweet. Gryph's mouth was sweet like candy. The kiss went deep, wet with the shower, rough with need. Gryph pushed him back against the wall, long body stretching out on top of him. He wiggled, rubbing a little, surprised as all Hell that he felt good enough play, even this much.

"That's it, sweet. That's it." That now familiar chuckle ghosted across his mouth, then Gryph bit down, bright blood welling out of that fine lower lip. "Have a taste."

Remy opened his mouth to say no, don't get all weak and shit on his account when the first drop hit his lip and his fucking world tilted.

Sweet.

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So sweet.

He pushed into the kiss, tongue sliding on Douce's lips. His whole body tingled with every thrust of his tongue, every press and rub of their lips. Lord, that felt good, tasted good. Yeah.

Goddamn, he felt fine. Must be having that gee-I'm-not-dead thing where you gotta get you some to celebrate. Gryphon was laughing at him. He could hear it in his head. Like an echo. Hello-o-o-o. Did that mean his head was empty? Man, it would suck, iff'n his momma'd been right all these years.

"You're thinking far too hard, love. I might feel left out." Gryph reached down, grabbing his cock and his attention.

"I wouldn't want that..." He arched, groaning as the pleasure hit him in a rush, leaving him lightheaded. "Don't you stop, now. Don't you dare."

"Not about to." That big hand cupped him, stroked, pulling up and down. The other hand found his balls, just rolling them like crazy.

Remy nuzzled right in the curve of Gryphon's neck, lips open as he licked and tasted. Oh. Tasted. He. Oh, man. No. No, that wasn't...

Yes. He heard that loud and clear, too. Yes, please. Gryphon wanted him to. Groaning low, he bit, blood splashing into his mouth, surprising him. Feeding him. Oh, he was hungry.

"That's it. That's it, sweet." Gryph bucked against him, pulling him off and rubbing and just moaning for him.

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Remy jerked, his orgasm surprising the living shit out of him, but the taste of his Douce was so good.

So fine.

"Remy." His head smacked back against the tile as Gryph all but crawled up him, humping against his belly. The man went for like, three seconds before coming all over him in wet bursts, the smell enough to make his mouth water again.

"Oh. Better." He nuzzled again, licking and sucking, nerves just all lit up like the fourth of July.

"I thought that might help." Sitting back, Gryph pulled him up across those long thighs, sort of rocking him, comforting.

"We gonna go home now, Douce?" He didn't really care where home was—so long as it wasn't surrounded in Yankees—but he needed to have one.

"We are. There is no more Colonel to ask our kind to move on. And I would rather like to see your swamp."

"Mmm. Yeah. Go home, back where the gumbo is spicy and there's zydeco on the street corners."

"Mmmhmm. Of course, gumbo might have to be a rather occasional thing..." Now those eyes were staring right into his, trying to tell him something.

Remy stopped, trying his damndest to listen to the sounds in his head that were echoing over and over. "I. I can hear you, Douce."

"Yes. You could a bit, before. Now, though. Now it's easy." He got another kiss, this one telling him stuff, too, that he was loved and wanted and safe.

Remy floated, wandering along, fascinated by this ... thing that he and Douce shared. The kisses kept distracting him,

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kept bringing him right on back to those full lips. The water started to go cold, so Gryph rinsed him off, easing him out of the shower and drying him with a fluffy towel. Wow. His legs worked. Go him. His ankle felt. Wow.

Wow.

He felt fucking amazing. Good enough to go run errands for them all, even.

"No running out until sundown, sweet," Gryph said, carrying him to the bed and plopping him down.

"Then we can both go together, yeah?" He bounced a little, reaching up to draw Gryph down. "You smell good."

"We can. We can go all manner of places together at night." That smile was fond, but kind of worried.

"Come on, now. Tell me. You got weirdness in your eyes." Which, given his Douce was a vamp, was standard, but they just needed to get it all out.

"So are you, sweet. Now." Okay, what? So was he...

"So am I ... weird?" No. No, he was ... "Oh, shit."

Stroking his cheek, Gryphon nodded. "I ... You were dying, sweet. I couldn't. If I had not, Clay would have. Neither of us was willing to let you go."

"I thought it would hurt." He tilted his head, thinking hard. "Why ain't I crazy like Boo?"

"Because you didn't sit in a basement and starve for days, I suppose. And you..." Here Gryph laughed, right out loud.

"You have a certain moral flexibility, my love."

"Shit, Douce. I ain't bad. I was jus' born this way." Oh, he did love that laugh. "I don' know what y'all are gonna do without me to drive and go shoppin'."

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by B. A. Tortuga

"We'll just have to move slower. Shop late." That deep voice growled right through him. "Amuse ourselves."

"Yeah? You ... you ain't gonna. I mean. I." Shit, Remy. Think. Just tell the man you gotta stay with him.

"You're not leaving me, sweet. I made sure of that. I have never..." Gryph kissed him hard. Hard-hard. "I have had a long life. I have never made anyone else as I am."

"Yeah?" He wrapped around his Douce, holding on. "That's good, 'cause I ain't never been a vamp before. I jus' took care of a lot of them."

"Well, at least you know what we do." Laughing, Douce rolled him over, pinning him down and nuzzling him. Sniffing him.

"Uh ... Uh-huh." How could that be sexy? Getting sniffed? It was, though, it made him all tingly.

"Sweet. Love the way you taste. The way you smell." Sharp teeth stung his throat, just a bit.

"More." He'd seen Boo and the boss. He'd seen that fire. Remy wanted his taste.

Shifting, Gryph gave him that long, thin throat, teeth sinking deep into his own. Fangs. Whatever. Oh, God. His world went red and hot, like being dipped in flame but ... oh, fuck him, better.

A low moan vibrated along his skin, Gryph starting to move on him, rubbing, prick hard as an iron bar. One big hand cupped his head, pulling his mouth in tight to that fine skin.

Gryph. Douce. Love. He would have screamed with it, if his mouth hadn't been busy, if the flavor of his own Douce hadn't

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filled him up. It went on and on, but it probably only lasted seconds. Because Gryph was coming for him, like a fucking freight train through a bayou night. Boom. Oh, Lord. No wonder Boo'd been looking at the boss like the man was pure magic. Remy reckoned he knew all about that now, bone deep.

"Remy. So good." Douce lifted his chin, looked him in the eye. "Better?"

He was all baby-headed, sleepy as fuck and blinky. "Uh-huh."

"Oh, good. We can rest now, love. Now that you know." They snuggled up together, Douce just aholding on, and he started to drift.

It was surprisingly easy to become a vamp.
Who knew?

Chapter Thirty Five

The battle was over.

They'd driven a Hell of a way before they'd stopped, getting Gryphon and Remy in one room, them in another. Clay had tried to get angry about Remy. He really had. But he would have done the same thing, wouldn't he?

He'd gotten them some blood, too. Nothing special, just a blood bank drop, but it fed him and Vance both enough that they could rest. Heal. Now they were just ... lying together. Vance was sleeping. And Clay was thinking about how weird it was that they didn't have some fucking Colonel to go kill.

Vance was dreaming about him; if he closed his eyes it was like watching the weirdest movie ever, because in this fucking dream, he was the hero. He wasn't the good guy, though. He really wasn't. He was just crazy in love with a guy who used to be a cop. Or something.

Vance moaned, shifted over and drew him close. It was gonna take them a few weeks to get up to strength, but they'd done it. They'd come through to the other side. Of what, Clay wasn't sure.

He stroked the thick hair back off Vance's face, his fingers tracing down one cheek. It didn't matter much. Vance was his.

Those bright eyes popped open, stared at him. "I'm sticking with you, man. Like glue."

"Uh-huh. Mine." Grinning, he took a kiss, just long and lingering and lazy. "You know how to make a bang, baby."

"Misspent youth. I did well in the academy." Vance stretched, scarred skin moving and rolling, becoming more and more flexible.

He traced every scar he could reach, knowing they'd never disappear, but they would fade some. Smooth out. He would mourn that if it didn't mean Vance would be with him a long time.

"Forever. We'll have to find a place. A good place."

"We will. Someplace with lots of room to run. Lots to hunt." He nuzzled, licking at that fine skin.

"You ... what're you gonna do about Rem?"

"I don't know. He's with Gryph now..." He wasn't going to let Remy go that easy. The man was family.

"What does that mean? He's ... Rem."

"That means Remy was mostly dead, honey. Gryph brought him over." That just blew his mind. But he would have done it just the same.

"Lord." Vance winced. "Is he okay? I mean, I know it sucked."

"He's fine. He wasn't like you ... If you get me." That just sounded wrong.

"Thanks." Vance snorted, smacked his ass a good one. "Are you saying he went blood-sucky better than me?"

"I'm saying he wasn't starved, beaten and tortured." That still made him fucking growly. Like killing mad.

"Oh, in that case..." Vance winked, fangs flashing a little. "We need a place. You and me."

"Yeah. Yeah, honey. Us. Together. Remy can visit." He took a kiss, just unable to stop himself. Vance's chuckle

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echoed in him, the pleasure in his lover undeniable. "Mmmm. I need me a car, honey."

"Well, the Hummer's totaled and I think we should give the hearse to Rem."

"Yeah." Patting Vance's ass, he shifted to get even closer. "I'm partial to Cadillacs."

end

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