



Changeling Press

# Holiday Howlz

*Haulin' Hawg*

LENA AUSTIN

# **Holiday Howlz: Haulin' Hawg**

## **Lena Austin**

All rights reserved.  
Copyright ©2009 Lena Austin

**WARNING:** The unauthorized reproduction or distribution of this or any copyrighted work is illegal. File sharing is an International crime, prosecuted by the United States Department of Justice and the United States Border Patrol, Division of Cyber Crimes, in partnership with Interpol. Criminal copyright infringement, including infringement without monetary gain, is punishable by seizure of computers, up to 5 years in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000 per reported instance.

ISBN: 978-1-60521-302-6  
Formats Available:  
HTML, Adobe PDF,  
MobiPocket, Microsoft Reader

Publisher:  
Changeling Press LLC  
PO Box 1046  
Martinsburg, WV 25402-1046  
[www.ChangelingPress.com](http://www.ChangelingPress.com)

Editor: Katriena Knights  
Cover Artist: Reneé George

This e-book file contains sexually explicit scenes and adult language which some may find offensive and which is not appropriate for a young audience. Changeling Press E-Books are for sale to adults, only, as defined by the laws of the country in which you made your purchase. Please store your files wisely, where they cannot be accessed by under-aged readers.

## **Holiday Howlz: Haulin' Hawg**

### **Lena Austin**

**In the six months since Loren left his biker lover back in Barkus, Kansas, they've never said those three important words. Now Loren's coming back, and silent BD has plans that involve bungee cords and a motorcycle to prove his love.**

## Haulin' Hawg

Loren drummed his fingers nervously on the steering wheel of his eighteen-wheeler. Saying "his" even in his mind made him smile. After six months on the road without a break, save for a week's layover in El Paso while the company repaired his antenna, he was ready for a holiday at home.

Home. What a funny word for a guy who'd run away from his last foster home at sixteen and vowed never to be shackled to the system again. Now he was driving for Barkus, Kansas, making his semi scream down I-70 in the winter. Running back to the man of his dreams, Bad Dawg the biker.

The long-legged, slow-talking redhead with a voice like Sam Elliott at his finest was enough to distract Loren from the road and make him smile a shit-eating grin nothing could wipe off his face. Man, he had it bad for BD, and he didn't care about traps and being tied down to a place anymore.

Unfortunately, Loren hadn't given BD a definite arrival time. Naturally, as a low man on the hierarchy of truckers working for the company, he'd gotten all the shitty little jobs none of the others wanted. Loren had done his time and paid his dues, and now the truck he sat in was assigned to him, and him alone. He could customize the berth, up to a point, and had managed to acquire a refrigerator, coffee pot, and a specialized GPS system for truckers. Loren patted the GPS device, sitting atop the Qualcomm computer. The luxury of never being lost had been worth every cent.

He hoped BD would stoop from his artistry with customizing motorcycles to help Loren outfit the berth for comfort and function. Eventually, if their relationship worked out for the long haul, Loren would send BD money for the down payment on a Harley to customize.

Loren dreamed of owning a Harley Hawg, customized in blue metallic paint. Not that Loren minded, but riding the bitch seat behind BD was murderous on the ego and the kidneys. Loren wanted his own bike to ride next to BD.

The exit to Barkus was nothing more than a tiny county road sign, but Loren's GPS beeped a warning in plenty of time for him to turn north and head toward the man he loved. The big blue semi made the turn with lumbering grace, considering Loren had dropped off the trailer in KC and was bob-tailing it home before the Qual-com lit up with another load and another delay on his requested holiday time. Four days of bliss with BD.

He hoped. Talking on the phone was fine, considering how the conversations went. BD had never been talkative, and Loren understood his private nature. Hell, a prairie dog shifter had to be cautious to survive, and BD made secrecy into a fine art.

Loren crawled his semi through the town of Barkus. Not only was the day getting on toward dusk, but the small town had strict speed limits. The last thing Loren wanted was a speeding ticket. Not a good way to meet your future father-in-law, especially since the sheriff might not approve of his son's human mate.

Loren winced to himself, still incredulous at the circumstances. A whole town of shifters, mixed with tolerant or ignorant human residents -- a gator shifter, among others! The still-pink scar on his hand reminded him of when BD had bitten him to prove the point.

He turned into the gravel and dirt driveway, which led to BD's home. The house was dark, meaning BD wasn't inside. Sure enough, the lights blazed out the window of the huge barn BD had converted into a workshop. Loren parked his rig in the parking lot mostly used by BD's biker buddies.

Loren sniffed himself cautiously when he got out of the cab. He'd bathed yesterday at a truck stop in Indiana, but he didn't want to offend BD's nose just in case. A guy got pretty darn rank when he could only stop to bathe and do laundry about once a week. Of course, BD had stated clearly when they spoke three days ago that

Loren could have another religious experience in the cathedral to cleanliness BD termed a bathroom. Loren intended to take him up on the offer.

Loren walked around to the small side door of the barn and didn't bother to try to muscle open the big double doors. They were for when a bike needed to be driven in for custom work or minor repairs. A wailing scream of metal being ground -- or a tone-deaf banshee chorus warming up -- assailed Loren's ears before he even turned the doorknob.

Loren winced at the painful sound and seriously considered waiting in the truck. The sound was eardrum-shattering through the barn walls and made his skin crawl. Now he knew for certain you could kill with sound. His ears begged him not to open the door, but he had to see BD. He turned the knob, and when the door swung free, he clapped his hands over his ears and stepped into the cavernous barn.

BD was there, in a corner area where a welding setup and other metal-smithing tools stood. In front of him on a bench, clamped to a fare-thee-well, was part of a motorcycle's motor jugs, and BD made a grinder scream as he made minute adjustments to angles on the vanes of the jugs. He had a massive set of sound-deadening earphones on and, from the focused concentration on his face, was deaf and blind to anything but his work.

What Loren knew about customizing bikes would fit in a teacup in comparison to BD, but the way the already cut pieces reflected the lights was beautiful. Someone had undoubtedly paid BD a small fortune, because the Harley sitting nearby was a work of art in baby blue and silver chrome. Loren drooled on his steel toes to go admire, but he dared not.

Loren also recognized that disturbing BD in any manner while he used the grinder could destroy the bike's motor. Those finicky cuts were probably made on precise angles. If he startled BD, he could ruin a month's work. Since leaving BD there suited Loren, he backed out of the barn and shut the door softly. He hiked up to the house, found the spare key right where BD had told him the hiding rock would be, and

let himself into the house. He had a little holiday surprise to prepare for one redheaded prairie dog.

\* \* \*

BD smiled and gave the jugs one last polish, then turned them to inspect the insides. To his surprise, they were clean, shiny, and showed no signs of scratches or wear. The previous owner had known what he was doing.

He rubbed his reddened, tired eyes and slipped off the bandana, which had kept sweat from dripping into them. Naturally, since he'd forgotten to remove the "Mickey Mouse ears" headset, the bandana tangled in the headset and darn near ripped his ears off. His ears still rang and buzzed, but the diamond cuts on the jugs for the new panhead were done. The angled cuts on the vanes shone like their namesake, reflecting light in a glittering pattern. Best of all, diamond-cut jugs were a practical thing -- all those different planes kept the engine cooler.

His shoulders slumped from weariness and his whole body ached from forehead down, but the ache was nothing compared to what was in his heart. In all the months since Loren had left, not once had either of them uttered the three most important words. BD just couldn't seem to spit 'em out, despite his heart shining like a beacon on the prairie for the hot human trucker. He had no idea how to say the words, and even the advice telling him to just open his dang mouth and say them just didn't move 'em past his throat. They just got stuck there in a big old lump.

Now, with two days until Christmas, and he'd not heard a peep from Loren for three days. In their last phone call, Loren had given BD some story about how he had to go do a split load to Vegas, whatever the hell a split load was. By BD's calculations, Loren could have been on his way through Kansas this morning, but the coffee had grown cold in his hand while he waited, scanning the horizon for a big-ass blue semi with yellow lettering. Finally, he'd given up in disgust at himself and stomped off to the shop to work like a lovesick pup on his present to Loren.

Okay, so maybe he'd gone a tad overboard working on a custom panhead he'd managed to finagle off the crusty old codger in Nebraska. Still, the bike shone like a



new dime, with chrome everywhere, and as a real tribute to their love, the latest in microfiber seats. Not leather. Not for two vegans who didn't believe in skinning animals for fur or skin. Finding seats to fit a man's bike that weren't leather had been a stone bitch.

He checked his supplies for the special chromed nuts he'd ordered, along with his gaskets and Locktite. He pulled the rolling toolbox over to the bike stand. Another three or four hours, and the gift would be ready. He just hoped he had someone to give the custom bike to.

\* \* \*

Loren stepped back and admired his work. The decorations and tree with presents piled underneath in the living room were perfect. Other than a short shower and an errand in town, he'd worked steadily to give BD a holiday he hoped neither of them would forget.

As soon as he'd cleaned up, he'd made the trip back into town just before the only UPS store in town closed up for the night and had picked up all his parcels from his Internet shopping. The lady at the counter had giggled like a fiend and helped him load the passenger side of his truck, saying she was BD's cousin. He guessed by now the whole damn town was in on what BD was getting for Christmas, if the small-town reputation was even half right. He figured it had been about 7 p.m. by the time he'd gotten his packages and it was 9 p.m. now, so the phone lines had probably run hot for the past two hours while he put up the artificial tree and decorated the house.

In fact, when he stepped on the back porch, he could see quite a few eye-shines reflecting the light, so he gave a wave. Yeah, he'd guessed he'd have an audience, and he'd better get used to the idea.

Three prairie dogs came closer, into the area where the kitchen light shone through the window. They reminded him of his sisters in the way they gave him the serious once-over, in the suspicious way females had of wordlessly implying a man -- even a gay man -- couldn't dress himself if his life depended on the results.

Loren grinned and winked. He turned in a circle, showing off his clean jeans, red flannel shirt, and boots. "Now that I've had a shower, how do I look?"

The three prairie dogs inspected him then gave him a grave nod.

"Okay, then. I'm going to go get him." He put on his coat and wagged his finger at the three. "No peeking. You'll hear about our reunion in the morning, I'm sure." He waited until the disappointed prairie dogs scampered off into the night.

Loren tucked his cheek between his teeth to keep from laughing aloud. He'd passed inspection from the family, he guessed. So now he could go get his man.

The walk from the house to the barn never seemed so long. He knew prairie dogs followed his every move, and he felt like John Wayne in *The Quiet Man*, where the whole damn town accompanied the hero to see what he'd do. Amusement won over any resentment he might have felt, but he did face the night and his silent audience. "I'll handle this seduction, thank you. No peeking, and I mean it. Or we'll elope."

The threat worked. All the eye-shine disappeared, and he heard rustling and scampering.

Loren put his hand on the door, swallowed a hefty load of fear, and stepped inside the quiet shop. He closed the door carefully, shutting out not only the chill night air, but curious critters.

BD concentrated on some weird socket wrench with a dial, pulling the wrench with infinite care. He mumbled to himself. "Steady... easy... don't ruin the chrome... There. Perfect. Finally." He carefully lifted the wrench off the nut, gave the shining surface a wipe, and grunted in satisfaction. He stood, took a step back, and his eyes inspected every inch. A slow smile crept over his face.

Loren had to envy the owner of the bike, considering the amount of attention BD seemed to give every detail. He suppressed a sigh, since BD wasn't wearing ear protection, and he didn't want the biker's sharp senses to pick him up yet.

The lanky man wore ragged jeans and a T-shirt so faded the once dark blue material was now the nondescript gray of storm clouds. His chestnut hair fell into a ragged braid over his left shoulder, and the black boots on his feet hadn't seen polish in

months. He still looked like a copper-colored god to Loren. One with big brown eyes... and fur.

He looked even better naked, and Loren decided he'd worship his private -- and... furry -- god with a religious experience in the shower. If one of them wasn't yelling, "Oh, God! Oh, God!" by the time the hot water ran out, it wouldn't be for lack of trying.

He knew his mind skipped over the part about BD also being a cute little prairie dog shifter. He couldn't help the avoidance his brain attempted. He couldn't mesh the man he loved with the little furball. The concept would not compute, and he didn't know the answer when he couldn't formulate a question to ask. However, there was one question he knew he'd be asking before the four days were up, if he could summon the courage.

The chill air Loren had brought with him swept through the barn, despite some pretty massive heaters chugging away in the old hayloft. BD shivered, then looked up. His big brown peepers homed in on Loren's face like a smart bomb locked on target. Then his lips curved into a broad grin. "You made it. I wondered."

An invisible force reeled Loren in toward BD, and he didn't fight the lure one bit. He did manage to maintain dignity. This wasn't some idiot romance where they ran toward each other in the middle of a meadow and fell together into the tall grass. However, the notion did have some appeal for next summer. If there would be a summer. Loren cleared his suddenly dry throat. "Yeah. The other driver was six hours late. New guy. Didn't watch his drive time carefully enough."

"You got cocky now you got your own truck." BD's eyes were alight with humor. "Want some coffee while I clean up?" He jerked his head toward a restaurant-size coffee urn on the counter of a small kitchenette setup. "It's less than a day old."

Loren swore he heard his heart shatter and tinkle into a thousand shards on the barn floor. What he wanted was a kiss, and more. Looked like he wasn't going to get a smooch, or the "more." Damn. He should have been used to the disappointment by now, but rejection hurt. "Coffee that isn't burned to ash sounds great." He moved with

what he hoped was casual ease to the pot. He'd be damned if he'd show disappointment, or his broken heart.

In three strides, BD was behind him, grabbed his arm, and yanked him around. "Forgot something I wanted first." He jerked Loren into his arms and kissed him until Loren's toes curled.

Much better! Loren put his arms around BD's waist and pulled BD tightly to him, nipple to nipple, belt buckle to buckle, and cock to cock. They ground into each other like they were trying to fit into the same skin, which was just the way Loren wanted to be. BD tasted like coffee, so Loren imagined he'd slugged down quite a few mugs of brew himself during the day. In his opinion, the bittersweet zing was the best way a man could taste.

Abruptly, BD released him, so quickly Loren almost staggered. BD looked at his body from the top of his head to the toes of his boots, with his gaze lingering hungrily on the bulge in Loren's jeans. BD gave a growling purr of pure appreciation. "You wait right here."

"There's no place I'd rather be." God, the man could make him ache with need just by looking at him.

BD slipped through a door marked with the archetypical quarter moon of the outhouse. In fact, the whole door had been painted to resemble a ramshackle, weather-beaten wood door of an outhouse, complete with black iron hinges and door handle. The man was a genius with paint. Loren heard water running, so he had to assume BD had another shower in the barn. The man was a fiend for cleanliness.

Loren got his coffee and wandered over to the bike BD'd been working on. Naturally, the tanks and seat weren't on the frame, so BD could work on the engine, but the gorgeous metallic sky blue fender stood nearby. Loren couldn't wait to see the whole thing put together. If BD didn't finish reassembling the Harley before he left, maybe Loren could persuade him to send him a picture.

Loren heard the bathroom door open. "You were quick. This is beautiful, BD." Loren crouched down to examine the motor and the beautiful planes BD'd cut into the vanes earlier.

"You want to help me christen it?"

Loren looked up at him, startled. BD was naked, and while he'd made some attempt at drying off, his red hair was a dark streak of wet ponytail, dripping a bit. One drop slid slowly from the tip, down his belly, and disappeared into the thatch of his chestnut pubic hair. Loren choked on his lust, unable to speak. All he could do was nod.

BD picked up a handful of bungee cords from a nearby wall hook. Damn things were everywhere. Then he advanced on Loren with a positively evil smirk. "I believe I owe you something to do with a bike and some bungee cords."

Loren froze right there, crouched next to the insanely beautiful bike. If Loren thought his dick had been hard before, it was nothing compared to the way the flesh strained to bursting to get out of his jeans at BD's bondage suggestion. So, did Loren say something poetic or encouraging? Noooo! "No seat."

"I know where the seat is." BD continued to stalk him, like he'd turned into a hunting cat instead of... of... BD reached down and pulled him to his feet. "It's in the gray cabinet behind you. Bring it to me, then strip."

Loren's brain clicked offline. Fortunately, his subconscious obeyed a whole lot better that way, and he moved toward the cabinet. Had he wanted to melt this much before? He was a big pile of melted butter now.

Inside the cabinet was the blue seat made out of some Williamsburg blue suede-like fabric he'd never seen before. He used to live outside of Manassas, so he knew the unique color well. Whatever the fabric was, it looked like suede but felt like velvet. His skin twitched, knowing he'd be lying on the glorious fabric, getting the hell fucked out of him. His impatience rose to a fever pitch.

BD waited until Loren stumbled back before taking the seat from him. BD had a socket wrench in his hand, but handled the wide seat with the ease of long practice. BD pointed to a little area rug near the fender of the bike. "Be done in a minute."

Loren got the idea pretty quick. *Translation: Go kneel on the rug and wait. Think about what I'm going to do to you. Watch and anticipate.* Okay, so all his blood wasn't in his dick. He could think, if he tried. Wasn't worth trying. Loren hauled ass to the rug, stripped, knelt, and watched a naked, hard BD bolt on the seat he'd get laid on. Loren had never felt this exposed or hard.

With every clicking turn of the ratchet his emotions and lust wound up tighter, as if Loren were the nut and bolt. Come to think of it, a bolt penetrated a nut. From there, the imagery took him, and BD fucked Loren with every turn of the ratchet. By the time the second nut and bolt had been firmly seated, Loren was nearly wild with lust and need for whatever he could get.

Ignoring his wild eyes and barely swallowed groans of need, BD rummaged in another cabinet and came up with some furniture movers' padding. This BD laid on the bike's handlebars, all the way to where the seat was. Then BD used bungee cords to tie the whole thing securely down. Finally, he turned to Loren and crooked a finger.

Dammit, he had some dignity. Loren got up and sauntered over instead of running like a little girl. He even caressed BD's ass. "Obviously, you have a plan. How are we going to do this?"

One side of BD's mouth lifted into a half smile. "Sit on the seat facing back. Lay down so you're supported."

This was going to be a trick, but Loren had to trust the chrome kickstand and the blocks holding the front tire steady. Gingerly, Loren got one leg over, grateful the padding was there. Cold metal frame on hot balls would have ruined their fun. Loren slid on the velvety seat until his cock and balls dangled off the back edge.

BD disappeared from view by stepping away, and Loren didn't dare take a second to look for him. Loren heard a rattle, like BD had pulled open a drawer to the massive red rolling tool case. Did BD keep lube in his toolbox? Oh, wait. Not *that* kind of lube. Man, did Loren have some trust issues.

Lying back was the trick. Loren didn't know if he could trust the blocks holding the bike upright and secure. Loren bit his lower lip and leaned backwards. First his

spine touched the padding. Then his head and shoulders found the handlebars. The tire moved a little beneath him, and Loren sucked in a tiny gasp of air. The last thing Loren wanted was to knock this gorgeous machine down and scrape up the paint and chrome.

Like a miracle, BD's hand was on his shoulder, keeping him from freaking out and falling to the floor like a rag doll. His big brown eyes shone with a combination of lust and pride. "Trust the bike, man."

The world stopped moving, and Loren felt the steadiness beneath him. There was balance there, and the solidity of about five hundred pounds of American steel. Loren was okay, and about to be laid by the man he loved with all his heart. Even if BD did have a furry side.

His silent love nodded, as if BD'd been able to read his thoughts. Perhaps BD could smell his fear before? There was so much to learn about him. BD put his right hand on Loren's thigh and caressed him, moving slowly up so Loren felt every inch of the slide. His thumb tweaked his right nipple on his way past and kept going up his shoulder and down his arm until BD clasped his wrist. Then BD pulled Loren's hand up above his head to the handlebar.

Belatedly, Loren remembered BD had promised to use bungee cords to hold him there, and BD was a man of his word. The firm, hard rubber of the handle was chilly, but not nearly as much as the steel would have been.

BD showed him the orange cord before tying Loren's wrist loosely to the rubber. "Tweak the hooks, and they'll come apart anytime. Got it?"

"How'd you learn about bondage? You're from a small town." Loren had to ask. Just had to.

BD's face closed up, and he looked away. "Tell you sometime. It ain't pretty."

"Okay, fair enough." There was a lot Loren didn't know about him. Loren didn't even know his real name. Loren knew BD was Sheriff Mitchell's son, so Loren assumed his last name was Mitchell, but that was all Loren knew. "Maybe later you could tell me your real name?"

Now BD snorted, and the humor came back in his eyes. "Maybe." The half promise was all Loren could get out of him while BD secured Loren's other wrist to the other side of the handlebars.

Loren had never felt so vulnerable before. There he was, strapped to the most gorgeous Harley he'd ever seen, with his legs dangling down over the back wheel and his balls swinging in the breeze, figuratively speaking. With hundreds of prairie dogs outside. And one inside. Ready to fuck him. Loren's brain fried somewhere between lust and laughter. God, his life had gotten strange.

BD moved to straddle the rear tire, where Loren could see him easily. BD gently grasped Loren's knees and gave a little push upwards, signifying Loren should lift his legs. Without his help, Loren would have had difficulty, despite his flat abs.

BD gave him a funny grin. "Never done this before."

"Me, either, so don't feel bad. How about if I rest my ankles on your shoulders?" Loren began to see fantasy and reality were two different things. Getting fucked on a bike took more effort than the novelty was worth, but Loren was still hot to try.

"That'll work." BD stepped nearer and steadied Loren's legs until they rested on BD's shoulder blades. Then BD put the lube on Loren's stomach. "Hold this a minute." BD tore open the foil packet and made sure they were protected, both of them. Loren vowed if they ever became exclusive, Loren would be more diligent about the blood tests. Loren hated needles and doctors.

Since Loren was ready to turn inside out with need, the short space of time BD took to roll down the bit of latex seemed like forever. Loren couldn't see the simple process happening, of course. "Geez, BD, hurry the hell up. I've been waiting for six months, and I'm just about out of patience."

"Six months, three days, and seventeen hours." BD picked up the lube and applied the warm gel to both of them. "Not that I was counting."

"I missed you too, Red." Loren gasped as BD slid in, with Loren's ass accepting his cock like Loren's body was home. Every burning inch of warmth was heaven. "Oh, God, you feel good."



"Slice of heaven." BD's slow voice picked up the pace, a short breath between each word. BD slid past the second sphincter.

"Then let's christen this bike, dammit." Loren's hands twisted in the cords and made them creak.

If an overstretched bungee cord let loose, Loren imagined the recoil would be something like the explosive way BD let loose. Straddling the big tire, he pounded Loren's ass mercilessly in short, hard strokes.

Loren's ass rode the velvety seat while he hung on for dear life to those cords and the handlebars, sure the violence of BD's fucking would break the kickstand and send him and five hundred pounds of metal crashing down in an inglorious heap.

Some say having sex on or in a new thing gives that inanimate object life, power, or soul. Loren could believe the legend. If love and lust combined into a force people could see, then maybe this act was the finest example.

Loren ached to come with BD, but he couldn't even give himself a hand job because his wrists were still bound to the bike. Sure, he could have fiddled with the hooks and gotten out if he had to, but the ability to free himself wasn't the point. The point was for him to prove to BD that he trusted him, just like BD had trusted him with his secret. Loren had to trust that, even if BD came inside him, BD would ensure Loren had the best damn orgasm later. Oh, man, was waiting and anticipating difficult.

BD would be quick. They'd both been doing without anything but their own hands for over six months. There'd be time enough for leisurely love for the rest of the holiday, until Loren logged on the Qual-com the morning of the twenty-sixth and headed out. Loren's mind skittered away from the future, determined not to think about leaving again. He didn't want to leave BD ever again. Ever.

BD bent over and kissed Loren's lips, and Loren parted his legs so BD could reach. They could barely touch lips unless Loren lifted his head, but the kiss lingered long enough to let him know he was appreciated. Then BD attacked Loren's pecs and nipples.

At the first nibble, Loren was over the edge so fast he didn't even realize his balls had ascended. Loren soared with an orgasm, and he'd never even seen the cliff coming. Loren gave an inarticulate howl, and he didn't give a damn if the hundreds of prairie dogs outside lit cigarettes afterwards.

BD lifted his face from Loren's left nipple and pounded him so hard, Loren felt the steel monster beneath him move forward an inch. BD's face contorted into the weird face all men get when they come. Some of them look like Elvis with a curled lip, some of them look like Lon Chaney with the sunken cheeks, and some look like Goofy. Others, like BD, look like wolves howling. Loren was glad BD was a wolf in rodent fur. Did the analogy make sense? Hell, Loren didn't care.

Either Loren was seriously in love, or... fuck it. Loren was in love. Saying "I love you" never hurt because you never knew when you'd get another chance. Apparently, BD felt the same. They both blurted out in stereo, "God, I love you!"

Then they both collapsed, their bodies spent, at least for the moment. BD rested on the support of Loren's legs while both of them panted like greyhounds after a race. They rested so long BD softened and slipped out, leaving Loren with the sensation he could feel the wind off the prairie up his ass for a few seconds.

An eternity later, BD lifted his head and gave him a slow, sleepy smile. His huge brown eyes melted Loren's heart, they were so full of love. "You know what 'I love you' means to a prairie dog, don't you?"

"Um... do prairie dogs mate for life?" Loren half-hoped they did. A tiny, lingering demon from his past yowled in fear.

"Sorta." BD lifted himself off him, removed the condom, and tossed the latex into the trash. Then BD freed Loren's wrists with a flick of his fingers and helped him sit up. "Most times, in a coterie -- that's a family unit -- there's one male with a bunch of females. Pa had three wives, all of them with their own house. Folks -- the humans, I mean -- ignored the polyamory." BD grinned at him. "Each one raised her pups and had a job. Pa liked 'em independent and feisty."

Loren clambered carefully off the bike. "So, how's the 'sorta' part of your statement fit in?"

"You're going to make me talk 'til I'm dry, aren't you? Want some coffee?"

"Long as I don't have to drink the sludge they call coffee at the truck stops, yeah." Feeling a little vulnerable and chilled, Loren reached for his clothes.

BD poured them both a mug from his coffee pot and waited until Loren dressed before gesturing to a group of battered armchairs around a pot-bellied stove. Turned out the stove was a gas replica. Soon as BD pushed the button, the stove started chugging out some serious heat. "We don't hibernate, but when we get cold we sleep a lot. You don't get much work done snoozing." BD got his clothes and dressed right by the heater.

Loren fell into the arms of a brown Naugahyde recliner and put his feet up. Anything not moving was a fine chair where Loren was concerned. "You still haven't answered my questions, BD. I already figured out half the town's your relatives and the other half tolerant humans."

Loren's lover -- and now he could say "love," since they'd both said those important three words -- snorted into his mug. "Okay. Guess I'd better 'fess up. Barkus is kinda special. If you don't fit in back home, you fit here." BD knocked back another slug of coffee.

There was still one unanswered question left. "You hate your real name, don't you?" Loren kept his voice soft. He'd had a foster brother like BD once. Gino had demanded they all call him just Gino, and wouldn't tell them his real name. Until one day his father won custody, came and got him. Gino was beaten to death a few weeks later. Then they found out why Gino hated his name. Gino's real name was Eugene, Jr. Guess BD had a real reason to hate a name like that. A bunch of the foster kids visited his grave and carved 'Gino' into the headstone as best they could, just so Gino wouldn't have to share names with his murderer. Loren told BD this.

BD's big, brown eyes welled up with sorrow, but BD shook his head. "Naw. Nothing like that. Look, it's just a..." BD squirmed and looked uncomfortable. "I was

born puny. They thought I'd die. So, they gave me a pretty name for the gravestone. Then I surprised them and lived. Name's Ophir. Means faithful. I don't like having a grave name." BD pulled over a wooden chair and sat backwards on the seat.

"Okay, I can see how you'd hate the name. How'd you end up with Bad Dawg?"

Now BD chuckled and grinned. "Being the sheriff's son is kinda hard on a redheaded freckled kid who wants freedom more than respectability. Pa tanned my hide regularly and called me a bad dawg. Kinda stuck."

Now it was Loren's turn to be uncomfortable. He mumbled into his coffee. "I guess we have a love of freedom in common."

Now BD lifted his head and looked at him with love spilling out. "Is that why you're a nomad trucker who has just a PO box?" BD looked at the floor and shifted his weight in the chair. "Pa pulled your record."

At first, Loren was angry. Then his face turned red with embarrassment. "My record should have been sealed when I turned eighteen." Then Loren remembered a sheriff might be able to see everything, especially one who loved his son. Loren put the feet down on the recliner and wondered if he could make KC before the hotels were full. "Guess you won't want anything to do with a former thief and..."

"Aw, hell, no!" Faster than Loren thought possible, BD was there beside Loren's recliner. BD blocked him from moving. "Loren, all Pa told me was you had a rough life as a kid. Said you'd been in the system since you were eight." BD reached out and caressed Loren's cheek. "I kinda figured you ain't had a real family, ever."

Loren shut his eyes and hoped he could learn to trust someday. "I don't remember much before I was fostered. The stench, mostly. Some of my foster families tried. They tried hard. I still keep in contact with two of them. They're in Virginia."

BD kissed him gently. "I also know your birthday is Christmas Eve. I know it's a day early, but you want your birthday present now?"

One corner of Loren's mouth twisted up in a semblance of a smile. "In all my thirty-one years, I've never had a birthday present not wrapped in Christmas paper. It's

okay, BD." Loren gestured toward the bike, still wrapped in the mover's quilt. "I got my present."

BD's eyes opened to the size of the pecan clusters Loren tried to shoplift often as a kid. "How'd you know? I mean, it's only wrapped in a dodgy ol' quilt, but I couldn't find enough birthday paper this time of year."

Loren blinked. Maybe they weren't communicating. "Huh? I was talking about getting laid, dude. Best present in the world. I mean it."

Arms folded, BD just shook his head. "You damn sure ain't used to presents, are you? C'mere."

Loren followed him to a huge, locked area on the other side of the barn. The heaters didn't reach all that far, and Loren could see his breath in the air. BD unlocked the door with a set of keys from his pocket, flipped on the lights, and shooed him inside.

There, hanging from a hook in the middle of a paint shop was the matching tank to the bike. Loren saw lettering and a dark blue image. Awed, Loren moved forward. The words were "Haulin' Hawg," and the image, in royal blue just like Loren's truck outside, was a short-nosed semi and trailer. In gold letters, right where his gonads would rest on the tank, were the words, "With love, BD." A tiny stuffed prairie dog rode atop the tank, held there by wire. Tied around his neck was a gold ring and a note. Loren took down the little critter.

BD lounged casually in the door with his arms folded across his chest.

The note read, "I'm not good with words, but I love you, and if you're reading this, you've said you love me. I can't marry you legally, but since when do prairie dogs give a damn about laws, anyway?"

Loren put the ring on his finger and turned to BD. "Since when do you think I ever paid attention to the law?"

"Never, according to what Pa said." BD sauntered over and put his arms around him. "I say we go to bed in OUR house."

Now Loren smirked. "No, husband of mine." Maybe someday he'd stop stumbling over the words. "There are presents waiting for you inside first. Like I said, I never was good at obeying the rules, like waiting for one special day." His face heated a bit, so he knew he blushed. "I decorated your house with a tree and stuff I bought off the net. I wanted a real Christmas with you."

His long nose nuzzled Loren's hair. "I got my present right here." Then humor entered his voice. "Of course, I wouldn't mind if one of those presents was a traveling carrier for a large, fat prairie dog."

Loren put his face on his shoulder, and felt at home for the first time in his life. "Yeah. It's blue and the name plate says, 'Bad Dawg.' I thought you might get a kick out of traveling in style, if I could persuade you."

"I do."

## **Lena Austin**

Someone cursed Lena Austin with “may you have a life so full you’ll have many tales to tell your grandchildren.” Lena’s a “fallen” society wench with a checkered past. She’s been a licensed minister, hairdresser, Realtor, radio DJ, exotic dancer, telephone service tech, live-steel medievalist swordswoman, BDSM Mistress, and investment property manager. Not necessarily in that order. She never finished that degree in marine archaeology, but did learn to scuba -- she’s got a lifetime of “Research material!”

Hey, why waste these stories on kids who won’t listen anyway? Writing them down is a nice way to spend her retirement. What? You expected an ex-BDSM Mistress to take up crocheting or something? See all her books at <http://www.LenaAustin.com>. You can reach her by e-mail at [voiceomt2002@yahoo.com](mailto:voiceomt2002@yahoo.com).