



***Maze and Moon***  
***By Drew Zachary***

Baz wasn't sure when exactly the corn maze went from being "a hell of a lot of fun" to "wow, this is kind of creepy", but there he was. Creeped the fuck out.

The maze was the county's centerpiece of the fall season, the big to-do during the harvest and Halloween celebrations. Hundreds of people had descended on the site, and the air was alive with all kinds of good smells from the vendors and music from the buskers. Kids hooted and hollered, and adults in costumes made the whole gig one good time after another.

When he'd entered the maze, Baz had been one of twenty people let loose by the zombie manning the gate. With loud shouts, everyone had scattered and gone running, branching off at each turn and fork until he was running alone, grinning broadly as he made his way steadily deeper into the field.

He'd run until he'd had to slow to a walk, proud of himself for keeping track of his right and left turns by counting on his fingers. By his count, he'd taken three more right turns than lefts, so the exit should be way over on the right somewhere. Baz figured he was deep enough in that he could start making his way that direction, though he knew he'd have to double back a lot.

He couldn't hear anyone else, which was a little odd. Sure, it was big, but he should at least be able to hear other people walking and talking. Frowning, Baz stopped and listened hard.

That was when he started to get creeped out. Not a single sound came back to him, not even the music and screams of the kids back by the gate. Uncomfortable, he looked around, turning a slow circle. The night air was crisp, and the stars glittered sharply overhead. A gust of wind rustled through the corn stalks and Baz shivered.

"Right," he said out loud. "Over that way." He started walking again, his hands shoved in his jeans. It was corn, for God's sake. It wasn't like he had to follow the actual path. He could just crash on through to the edge of the field whenever he felt like it.

That would be cheating, though, and he'd for sure have to say *why* he'd done it that way. So he walked and he took turns, one after another. And another. And another.

The path wasn't beaten down, not like it had been at the entrance. Apparently he'd made his way so far into the maze that he was striking new ground. "Not exactly the way to get out, then," he murmured. Baz paused for a moment, debating whether to turn back or to carry on, looking for a cross path that had more traffic.

Baz looked up at the moon, just in time to see an owl overhead, silent and sleek. "Walking," he said, hurrying along and heading back in the direction of the start rather than toward the exit.

He wasn't sure how long he walked, but he wasn't getting any closer to out that he could tell. He was getting a little cold, though, and that sucked. Baz still couldn't hear anything, couldn't see the glow of lights from the fair. Which was when, of course, his imagination dragged up the story of Ethan Rohan.

Ethan had been a local guy, a good guy. Hard worker, honest, beloved by the small town. A good guy who'd walked into a corn maze and never come out. Well, he'd come out. But not until the next day, when there was light by which to hunt for him, and he hadn't come out alive.

Some said Ethan had died of exposure. Others said that was crap, the night had been mild and he'd only been out for less than twelve hours. No, they said, Ethan Rohan had died of fright out there in the corn, his heart stopped by some unknown force.

Baz hurried the hell up, angry at himself for making the whole thing worse. Bad enough to be lost in a corn maze, but getting *scared* of it was worse. God, he'd never live it down if he panicked like a wuss.

Still. It was dark and he'd been walking a long fucking time and getting nowhere. Darting glances left and right, Baz started to run again, pushing through one row of corn into the next path.

He was running on pure adrenaline, not any less scared now than he'd been five minutes ago when suddenly he wasn't alone anymore. He rounded one corner and there, standing at the dead end the corner had put him into, was a figure.

A figure of a man glowing in the moonlight, simply standing there and staring at him.

Baz stopped so suddenly he almost fell forward. "Uh." Oh, that was intelligent. "Hey. You lost, too? Pretty awesome maze."

"You can see me?" The voice was thin, almost wavery and the... man moved forward slowly. It looked like he was floating, like he didn't have any feet.

"Sure, I can see you. You're right there." Baz backed up, though. "Are you okay? You look a little... um. Pale." Oh, this couldn't be happening. No way. Baz looked for wires, for paint that would glow, anything at all. Make-up, maybe.

"Most people can't see me, but on the Hallowed Night of the Souls, when the moon is full, should someone see me, I can be real. For a time." The guy kept moving forward as he spoke. The closer he came, the less – God, there was no other word for it -- ethereal he looked.

"Ookay." Baz backed up again. "Um. Okay. Right. Nice make-up job, man." Had to be. "I like the gliding, too." Christ. This whole thing was getting weirder and weirder and Baz was *not* happy about it. "Do you know the way out?"

The guy nodded. "Don't go yet. Please. It's so lonely."

The moon came out from behind a cloud, lighting the maze up pretty good and suddenly the creepy, ghostly looking guy was just an ordinary -- okay, so the guy was hot -- everyday guy.

"Lonely." Baz stopped walking and peered at him. "But you know the way out?" It wouldn't hurt to be friendly, he supposed. Might get out, and might stop the guy from doing something weird. "What's your name?"

The guy smiled and, yeah, hot was definitely the right word for him, but the smile made him friendly, too. "Ethan. What's yours?"

Ethan. "Are you pulling my leg?" Baz laughed. "Good one. My name's Baz. Yes, it's short for something and, no, I'm not going to tell you what. How long have you been wandering around in here, man?"

"Feels like forever." Ethan came closer. Definitely real. And he was walking, not floating. Man, the moonlight could play tricks.

"Yeah, okay." Baz nodded. He could relate to that -- it felt like he'd been there forever, too. "The maze is huge. I got totally turned around." Then the night and his imagination had gotten away from him; no way had this guy been *floating*. "So, which way do you think we should go?"

"This way." Ethan took his arm and led him to the right down a path he hadn't even seen; he'd thought this was a dead end.

"Yeah?" Okay, totally real. The hand on Baz's arm was warm and solid, the heat spreading right to Baz's skin. "Are you sure? I mean, you're stuck too, right? Even without all that junk about 'Hallowed Night of Souls' and stuff."

"There's a nice spot up here to rest awhile. Catch your breath." Ethan smiled at him as they rounded another corner.

Here, the maze opened up into a little clearing, a courtyard for want of a better term. There was a bench at one end, with a little barrel full of Halloween-sized packages of candy corn next to it. Ethan led him to the bench.

"Man, they go all out around here." Baz had never heard about this before, and he'd been going to the fair for a lot of years. But then, it looked like not many people went this far into the maze, so maybe he just hadn't heard the right stories. "Cool." He sat down on the bench and stretched out his legs.

Ethan didn't just sit down next to him; he lounged sexily. His jeans looked pretty battered and the guy had to be freezing in the T-shirt he was wearing. It had been a warm day for October, but once the sun had gone down, it had gotten chilly quickly.

Baz sat up and shrugged out of his jacket; he had layers on, and his long sleeved shirt would be enough for him. "Here," he said as he offered the jacket. "Keep warm for a bit." Just looking at Ethan was warming Baz right through to his bones. Yum. Better than candy corn.

"You don't have to." But even as he said the words, Ethan took his jacket and slipped it over his shoulders. "Oh, it smells good." Dark eyes looked into his. "I guess that means you smell good."

Baz laughed softly. "Maybe I do. You tell me. All I can smell is earth and corn, I think." He leaned closer to Ethan. "And candy."

Ethan didn't back away, but instead leaned in and buried a cold nose in his neck.

Oh. Oh, man. Okay. Baz grinned and wrapped an arm around his shoulders, keeping him there. "I knew you were cold. Maybe we can warm you up a bit."

"You do smell good, and I'm very into getting warmed up." Ethan tilted his head, looking up at Baz from his shoulder. "You seem very warm."

"Got heat to spare. I was running around the maze for a while." Baz looked down at him, wondering how to play this. "Are your hands cold?"

Ethan offered them over, and they were indeed cold.

"Aw, poor thing." Baz tucked Ethan's hands up against Baz's chest. "That won't do. How do you think we should warm you up?" When in doubt, ask for directions. Even from a guy who pretended to be a ghost.

"I think this is a good start." Ethan stroked his chest. "You smell good, you feel warm, you're good looking and I like the sound of your voice. That's four out of five senses."

Oh, this guy was smooth. Baz smiled his appreciation. "Maybe you should try out taste, see if you like the whole picture. Senses don't lie, after all."

"Excellent idea." Without missing a beat, Ethan leaned in and pressed their lips together. Even Ethan's lips were cold, though they warmed quickly against his own, and the tongue that slid out to taste him was more than hot enough.

Baz pretty much forgot about the maze, right then and there. He forgot about the dark and the silence and concentrated on his own senses, since that seemed to be working out okay for them. Ethan tasted just fine to him, and felt really good there on the bench, their legs pressed up tight together. Baz got one hand alongside Ethan's face and tilted his head, making the angle of the kisses just perfect.

Ethan made a soft noise, tongue pushing insistently at his lips and rushing into his mouth the moment he parted them.

Eagerness was always appreciated, so Baz gave it right back, tasting and licking his way through Ethan's mouth as he shifted on the bench. He twisted and tugged Ethan a little closer to him, willing to take advantage of the solitude for as long as they had it.

Ethan shifted, turning more toward him, lining up their hips and thighs, and suddenly Baz could feel the heat and hardness of Ethan's crotch.

"Oh, nice." Baz whispered against Ethan's mouth and dropped his hand to feel. "Very nice." He cupped and squeezed, his own cock firming up fast to match.

Ethan groaned and pushed against his hand, the move definitely eager, almost desperate.

"Can I...?" Baz didn't even really wait for an answer before tugging at the fly of Ethan's worn jeans, the buttons slipping through holes as easy as a ghost passed through a wall. Reaching into the parted fabric, Baz found the prize and started stroking slowly, trying to see but still trying to kiss at the same time.

"Baz!" The sound of his name was pushed into his mouth. "Too good. Been too long." Groaning, Ethan opened and closed his hands on Baz's shoulders, body moving for him, pushing the long cock through his hand.

Baz could sympathize with that. Dry spells *sucked*. Or not, as the case might be. He turned his head to nuzzle into Ethan's neck and started working up a mark as he played, his fingers stroking and rubbing all along Ethan's prick. When he felt moisture at the tip he spread it around and tightened up a little. "Good? How do you like it?"

"I like it with someone else's hand." Ethan's voice had gone all husky and the guy's hips were working overtime now, the best noises filling the quiet night.

"That's in my top two, too." Baz looked down and admired. "Nice. It should be touched a lot." He jacked again, a bit faster, and worked his other hand in there as well to play with Ethan's balls. His own cock was pressing up against his zipper, getting demanding.

"Oh, damn..." Ethan whispered the curse and then froze, mouth opening on a silent cry as heat poured over Baz's hand.

"Yeah," Baz breathed. "That's it. Yeah." He stroked Ethan through it, inhaling the scent of come and swallowing hard. "Really nice." Guy had a hell of a lot stored up, too; he hadn't been kidding about the dry spell, apparently.

Ethan collapsed against him, breathing heavily. "Oh. Baz. Thank you. Thank you."

"My pleasure." Baz kissed him again and dug around for something to wipe his hand on, trying hard not to merely get his own zipper down and his cock out. Though that was totally going to happen. Hell, yes.

Ethan's hands slid down from his shoulders, moving maddeningly slowly. Of course they also stopped at his nipples on the way down, playing and pinching at them through his shirt, so maybe there was some advantages to slow.

Baz gasped and moved himself faster. Ethan could take all the time he wanted, if he was going to do that. Baz, however, was going to help out a bit. Zippers could be tricky. Maybe. Sometimes. It didn't matter -- he'd just take care of that.

It was pretty amazing how much better his prick felt, pushing into his hand instead of against his fly.

"I can *smell* you."

"I can smell *you*." God, he could. "And taste you, and feel you." Baz groaned as he jerked himself, his whole body pushing against Ethan and trying to get closer.

Ethan grinned and pointed to his cock, one finger reaching, sliding along it. "I can smell you. I can feel you. I can hear you. I can see you..."

"Uh-huh." Baz would have had something more intelligent to say about the matter, such as, "Of course you can, I'm right here," except his attention was wholly focused on his dick and how nice Ethan felt.

"So there's just one sense left." Ethan's finger circled his crown and then slid across his slit, dragging the pre-come around.

"Oh, God, yes." Baz's eyes closed as he pushed his hips up. "Yes, yes, yes. That. Please?"

Ethan slipped down off the bench, spreading Baz's legs and kneeling between them. The dark eyes looked up at him, moonlight reflected in them as Ethan laughed. "But are you sure?"

Baz groaned, trying to laugh too, but sounding strained instead. "What do you think? Don't answer that, just... do. God, yes."

Ethan gave him a wink and then looked down and wrapped hot lips around the head of his cock.

"Oh, fuck." Baz tried to keep still, but the way his body jerked wasn't so much "still" as "oh, God. Suck me."

Ethan didn't tease him, thank God. It was more like Ethan did his best Hoover impression, sucking him vigorously, head bobbing.

"Yes," Baz said again, one hand landing on Ethan's head as his legs splayed out and his hips lifted to thrust in, faster and faster. This wasn't going to last long, not with the way Ethan sucked and the smell of sex all around him. He could barely hold on as it was -- unexpected orgasms in the middle of a maze seemed to be a turn on.

Then Ethan did something that made him think maybe the guy *was* a ghost, because Ethan certainly didn't need to breathe. At least that was the only reason his sex-addled brain could come up with when Ethan took him all the way in, throat swallowing around the head of his cock again and again.

Yelling, grabbing for the bench so he had something to hold onto while the top of his head came off, Baz took a moment to be decidedly grateful for the not-breathing, no-gag-reflex thing. Never before had he been deep-throated, never before had he so completely lost track of everything. He came in long pulses, his entire body rocking as he spilled, the world brightening up at the edges.

He couldn't even breathe, let alone talk, as he fell back on the bench, quivering. Ethan kept sucking at him, working his cock so that he got echoes of his orgasm.

When he could move, Baz reached for Ethan and stroked his hair. "Lord," he whispered, his voice rough from coming. "God. Never had better head. Ever. But someone had to hear me, man. We gotta get cleaned up." How, he wasn't sure. He wasn't up to much more than moving his arms yet.

"The maze is empty -- it got late." Ethan helped him get himself tucked back into his jeans and did up his own jeans. But instead of getting up, the guy sat back down next to him. Well, more draped half over him.

"Oh." Baz stretched his legs and wrapped his arm back around Ethan's shoulders. "Uh. How do you know that? That it's empty?"

"I know. Besides, like I said: it's late." Ethan tilted his head up, lips offered.

Baz kissed him again, thinking. It was funny how much clearer thought became *after* the orgasm. "Hey. How long have you been here, anyway? And why were you standing at that dead end, man?"

"What is this, twenty questions?" Ethan chuckled and settled closer, eyes closing. "What happened to napping after sex?"

"What happened to being indoors when napping?" Baz laughed and slouched down a bit, enjoying the cuddle. "Seriously, is your name really Ethan? You're playing up the legend to me, right? Not that I'm complaining."

"Shh... enjoying the afterglow."

"Avoiding," Baz murmured. He closed his eyes, though, and enjoyed it as well. "Tell me your name," he said drowsily.

"Ethan..." A warm hand stroked across his chest, petting him.

Baz didn't buy it for a second, but decided it didn't matter right then. He'd find out when they got walking again, heading out. After a nap. He yawned and let Ethan snuggle up a bit closer. Yeah, a nap. Then he'd head home, after getting a phone number.

Another yawn and Baz drifted off, the night dark around them, the moon high overhead.

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When Baz woke up, he was alone, his jacket over him like a blanket. There was no sign that Ethan had ever been there, even the scent of sex gone now. The moon had sunk low and the sky



was a steely gray in the east; he'd slept for a lot longer than he'd meant to, and what the hell was up with Ethan leaving without even waking him up? God.

Growling a bit, stiff and sore from sleeping on a bench, Baz got up and pulled his jacket on. Taking east as his marker, he walked to the door out of the little room and turned to follow the path.

On the ground, barely visible in the dim light, were silvery footprints.

For a long moment, Baz looked at them, trying to reconcile things in his mind. Finally, though, he gave up and started to follow them, before they faded.

Ethan wanted him to get out of the maze, after all, and maybe a trail was as good as walking together. Maybe. In any event, the steps never wavered, leading him steadily toward the way out, any doubling back being short and to the point.

His car was the only one in the lot, all the lights off, the little booths all shut down.

Halloween was over.

And the footsteps disappeared right at the entrance to the maze, never actually coming out of it.

He eyed the booth that had sold him a bowl of chili with deep suspicion. "See if you get my money next year," he muttered as he got in his car and started it up. "God, I need to get home." He pulled out and started driving down the deserted highway just as the sun started making the sky more blue than gray, sunrise still a good half hour or more off.

He didn't meet anyone as he drove, which wasn't unusual given the time of day. To keep himself company, though, he turned on the radio, glancing at the dash as he leaned for the button. Crap, he needed gas.

That sparked two new thoughts. The first was to wonder if he'd find a place open in the early morning and the second was to wonder how, exactly, he needed gas since he'd filled up on the way *to* the fair. Hard on that, he knew. Someone had clearly siphoned his tank. Bastards.

Baz took the next exit and headed to the same gas station he'd filled up at; it was close, and even if they were closed he could park and wait until six in the morning. It wasn't like he'd actually make it home on an empty tank.

The lights over the tanks came on as he drove up, and then the big "gas" sign at the edge of the lot, followed by the lights in the little store. The place wasn't self-serve, an anomaly these days, but he supposed it was less unusual outside of the city.

A lanky figure came out of the store and headed toward him as he turned off his engine.

Baz rolled down his window. "Morning," he said, reaching for his wallet. "Glad you're open. Fill it up, please." He got his credit card out and looked up at the attendant.

Who looked exactly like Ethan.

Exactly. Except for the clothes -- the man was now wearing blue overalls and in the light the dark eyes were blue instead of almost black.

A slow smile lit the attendant's face. "Sure thing. You want me to do your windows?"

"Um." Baz stared at him. "Sure. Can I ask you something?"

"Sure. We're a full-service station." There was a trace of laughter beneath the words.

"Ohhh, I don't know about that." Baz wiped those thoughts from his mind. "Um, were you out at the fair last night? In the maze?"

The attendant leaned in until there were scant inches separating their faces. "Was I that forgettable?"

Baz stared at him for a long moment. "You left me there!" he blurted, then leaned surged forward and kissed him hard, laughing. "Bastard."

"Hey, I left you a trail." Grinning, Ethan pressed their lips together again, smiling.

"How did you do that?" Baz got the door open even as they were kissing, but had to break the kiss to climb out. "Tell me your name." He smiled, pulling Ethan to him. "Man, I'm glad you're not a ghost."

"My name really is Ethan and there's no such thing as ghosts." Ethan leaned against him, pressing him up against the car.

Baz kissed him again, arching to get his hips where he needed them to be. "That means you really can give head like that. Nice to know." Damn nice. "Did you steal my gas, too?" Maybe he was nice *and* evil.

Ethan laughed. "Why would I do that? I can get all the gas I want."

"Of course." Baz shook his head and pushed the thought aside in favor of rubbing against Ethan's hips.

Still.

Maybe there was something out there shoving them together.

He decided he could live with that.



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