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A Knight at the Speedway
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*A Knight at the
Speedway*

A homoerotic Phaze Urban short by

JAXX STEELE

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Chapter One

Artis Kent was bent over his desk flipping through the folders in his drawer. The slap of an envelope hitting his desk made him jump and look for the source of the sound.

“Who’s the man, Artis? Who’s the man?”

Artis looked up and rolled his eyes. “I don’t know, Josh. Who’s the man?” he asked his friend in monotone.

“Dude, I’m the man.” Josh tapped his chest as he sat on the corner of the desk.

Artis went back to his drawer and continued flipping. “All right, Josh, I’ll bite. Why are you the man—this time?”

Josh pushed the envelope toward him. “Today, I achieved BFF status, and because of that you’re going to forget everything I allegedly did at your birthday party.”

Artis raised an eyebrow at him. “Doesn’t BFF mean ‘best female friend’?”

Josh’s brows furrowed. “Really? I thought it meant ‘best friend for life’.”

“Wouldn’t that be BFFL?”

Josh’s head tilted to the side and his eyes looked up in thought. After a few seconds he shrugged. “Well, I don’t know, something like that, the point is you’re going to love me and you’re going to buy me lunch.”

Artis chuckled and finally pulled the folder he needed from the drawer. “And why am I going to do that?” he asked closing the draw with his knee.

To answer his friend, Josh pushed the envelope even closer to him, smiling brightly. Artis looked up at Josh again and huffed as he snatched the envelope from the desk. Pulling out its contents, his jaw dropped and he jumped to his feet in glee.

“Oh my God! Josh, where did—how did you—” His excitement clipped his sentences as he moved back and forth happily.

“I told you, Artis, I am the man,” his friend mentioned, flicking invisible dust from his own shoulders.

Artis hugged his friend and sat back in the chair laughing. “Aww, man, I was just sick knowing I couldn’t go to this thing.”

“Yeah, I know, but because you’re my bud I pulled a few strings, asked around, and bada-bing,” he snapped his fingers, “I came up with these,” Josh finished flicking the top of the tickets.

Artis stared at the tickets unable to stop smiling. “Man, Josh, you have no idea what this means to me. How can I ever...”

Josh sputtered cutting him off. “Forget it, man. You’ve been walking around all week looking like someone kicked your puppy. I just couldn’t stand it any longer. Now, these tickets are only good for qualifying, so—”

“Hey, no, qualifying is fine. I couldn’t get tickets at all, for the race or qualifying. I’m good.”

Artis handed his friend a ticket then stuffed the other into his inside jacket pocket. He shook his head and laughed again, still unable to contain his excitement.

“You are absolutely right, my friend. Not only are you the man, consider your *alleged* drunkenness and acting a fool at my party forgotten *and* I’m going to take you to lunch.”

“Great! I knew you would.” Josh hopped off the desk. “You can also pick me up tomorrow for breakfast. We can eat at Denny’s and still get to the track when it opens at eight o’clock,” he said laughing as they walked out of the small office of Kent Travel.

* * * *

Artis lay in bed later that night, too excited to sleep. His day started off in the dumps because he was still moping over not being able to go the race on Sunday. It drove him crazy to know that he could attend motorcycle races all around the country, but he couldn’t get tickets to go to one in his own backyard.

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

His day did a whole three hundred and sixty degree turn after Josh showed up. That little slip of paper burning a hole in his pocket left him elated. After lunch he was so psyched that he knew he booked more people on vacations or some kind of weekend getaway than he had all week, even though it was likely not the case.

Josh had no idea what a great thing he had done for him. Of course he knew of his love for bikes and motorcycle racing. They had been friends for the last six years and Josh knew he was gay, but he had no clue about the crush he had on Kris.

Kristopher Knight was one of the top motorcycle racers in the country. He was a native of Indianapolis and one of the finest men Artis had ever seen. They had known each other only briefly during college. Kris had believed even then that he was going to be famous motorcycle rider one day, but no one took him seriously. Artis had taken his first ride on a motorcycle with Kris and was hooked after that. He never knew if it was Kris, the bike ride or the combination of the two that sent the thrill through his blood, setting it on fire when he rode, but it never went away.

Two more hours went by with Artis staring at the ceiling. Finally, he took his photo album off the nightstand and pulled it to the bed beside him. He flipped through the high gloss pictures of races gone by, smiling. It all but documented Kris' career over the last ten years and showed how beautifully he was aging.

When he met Kris, they were in an auto mechanics class, back at college. He was a nineteen-year-old kid with a contagious wild streak. Handsome, with his dark and mysterious good looks, he could have had any girl he wanted on campus. Plenty threw themselves at him, outwardly wanting him, but he never showed signs of giving in.

On a few occasions Artis had questioned him about why he didn't date one of the many girls that offered themselves to him. He simply shrugged and said that they weren't his type, that he had other plans for his life. Kris never confessed what type he was. His dark eyes were so intense after conversations like that Artis decided not to bring it up again.

Kris' reputation for riding started to take off after that. Although he still found time to hangout with Artis, their time

together was limited until he left school, never starting his senior year. They rode together one last time at Raceway Park and said goodbye that night. The next time he saw Kris was in a magazine two years later, when he won his first race as a rookie at the Club Moto Speedway in Livermore, California.

Artis turned the page. In college, Kris was a tall and slender kid with wild dark brown hair. His eyes were even darker, a brilliant ebony that sparkled with the gleam of stars in the night sky when he flashed that killer smile. He was lean, but his muscular structure was defined. It showed much potential of him becoming the sexy solidly build man he grew to be.

He let his fingers glide over the cellophane covering the picture. His mind recalled when he saw Kris last year in Texas and realized how much of a change there was. Not much taller than he was in college, Kris was definitely heavier. His body had filled out incredibly compared to the image before him. Although the picture before him showed his body nicely, the one in his mind had showed great improvement. Bulging muscles and rippling abs were all visible as Kris ran his hand through his long wet hair. The bright blue leather jacket he wore was open and the women that were around him pawed at his tanned bare chest. He smiled at the memory. He had watched from a distance, of course, not wanting to interrupt the photo shoot he rode piggyback on.

Turning the page, Artis' smile grew when he saw the next picture. He remembered that day well. Photographers were snapping pictures of Kris like crazy after his win at the Orange County Raceway.

Artis stood behind them, snapping his own pictures—as he did often do to get his own shots, when a woman snatched off Kris' jacket and ran her fingers down his gleaming chest. Everyone went wild. Artis had to hold his camera over his fellow photographer's heads, in hopes of getting at least one good shot, it was the closest he had been to Kris since they said goodbye ten years ago. Kris had been so handsome that day. His hair was damp and tussled, face flushed with excitement of his win.

The photo that was in Artis' book now was the best he had taken. The beads of sweat on Kris' face and chest were visible

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

and alluring as was the sultry, dazed look in his eyes, as he looked their way with the woman draping off his arm. Artis had done his best to crop her out of the picture, but her hand remained. It was such a fantastic shot that the hand on Kris' chest with the long red nails pressing into his right pec only made it look better, so he kept it.

Artis had read in *Moto-Cross Magazine* Kris had won enough races to make qualifications for the race he now had tickets for, so he had no doubt Kris would be there.

This had to be the coolest thing in the world for Kris, to come home and race his bike on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, he thought happily, wishing he could share in it with him.

Many years ago, Kris tried to talk him into breaking into the track one night so he could ride his piece of junk Harley around the track. Luckily, Artis had convinced him Speedway Police would hear that thing a mile away and he was far too pretty to go to jail. Their compromise had them settling for a ride along the dirt roads out near Raceway Park. Artis chuckled out loud at the memory.

This was the first time in a hundred years motorcycles were being raced on the IMS track. It was history in the making. He would be attending this milestone and catch a glimpse of Kris. It didn't get any better than that. Maybe he'd get the chance to open a dialog with Kris, perhaps even resume their friendship...that is if he remembered him at all. Ten years was a long time and they both had changed over the years.

With a sigh, he flipped through the pages for a while longer and then returned the album to his nightstand. It was going to be a great weekend. He wasn't ready to go to sleep, but the sooner he did the sooner he could wake up and get it started.

Chapter Two

Artis and Josh arrived early at the track to find it full of people. The tickets allowed them premium parking on the inside of the track, a penthouse suite with a buffet style lunch and access to the drivers to have their picture taken with them when qualifications were done. The inner area that was usually flattened dirt with a few grassy patches was now covered with exhibits, displays and giveaway booths from all of the known motorcycles companies.

Artis was like a kid at Christmas running between exhibits. There were no clouds in the sky to block the morning sun and sweat had already started to run down his face and neck. Soon his light blue tank top was soaked, sticking to the firm muscles of his chest and back. The heat didn't dampen his spirits at all, but they did seem to take its toll on his friend. Josh trailed behind at a slower pace, draining his bottle of water as he dutifully snapped pictures of Artis dashing happily from one place to another.

Artis had not finished checking out all the exhibits by the time qualifying runs began, but he was as anxious as Josh to get to the suite and watch the race from above the track. The cool air washed over them as they walked into the beautifully decorated suite. A buffet of meatballs, macaroni and cheese, grilled chicken breasts, salad and chopped fruit stood ready for guests. Josh picked up a plate and filled it to capacity while Artis snatched a can of Coke from the basin of ice at the end of the table on his way to the seats.

Outside, the sun seemed to blaze down hotter on the elevated stand. Adjusting his baseball hat, Artis popped open his soda and squinted at the information board on the other side of the track. He recognized many of the names on the list, but he was truly rooting for only one driver. The man he was looking

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

for stood in the number eleven slot. At the sight of Kris' name, a surge of exhilaration went through his body and shiver went down his back despite the heat. The position number told him Kris would be riding in the second rotation since they were only racing ten bikes at a time.

The suite seats they had pleased him. They were at turn two and gave him a good view of all the racers. By the time Artis and Josh reached the suite the racers had already gone by, but they would soon make it back that way. The part of the track he couldn't see he watched on the big screen attached to the display board. Artis leaned on the railing waiting for them to come back around, watching the race from that position. When the first run was over, Artis took his seat again as the names on the board shifted from one to another telling the current status.

Kris' name shifted to the top of the list and he could hear the roar of the bikes at the starting line. He jumped to his feet again, full of excitement. The bikes took off and he monitored their progress on the screen. When the bikers came into his line of sight, a joyful smile burst across his face. They zoomed his way and as the riders lay almost completely on their sides to take the turn in front of him, he could clearly see Kris' signature bright blue leather jacket pass him. His heartbeat picked up sharing the adrenaline rush of his favorite rider.

With a loud "Woo!" he saw Kris go down the straightaway and then take the next turn on the big screen. Round and round the bikes went as Artis leaned against the rail, his eyes unmoving from the screen. He startled when something cold and wet pressed on his shoulder.

"I thought you might need this since you don't have enough sense to come in out of the heat," he heard a familiar voice say.

Artis looked over on his shoulder, took the bottle of water his friend offered and returned to his chair. "Thanks man." He took two long gulps. "I just didn't want to miss anything."

"Yeah, I can see that. You know, there is a large flat screen T.V. inside the suite?"

"Yeah, but it's not the same." Artis took another gulp from the bottle. "The noise, the smells, being outside on the track...mmm, ahh, love it," he said with a laugh.

“Something is wrong with this picture. I’m inside relaxing in the cool air conditioning, eating food and drinking beer. While my best friend is outside in the blazing heat, cooking his brain and making his natural tan even darker.” Josh shook his head. “You trying to make me look bad in front of Vicki’s people?” he asked in a teasing tone.

Artis laughed again. “Nah, man, I’m good for real. Tell them I’m fine and thank them for me.”

Josh waved away his thanks. “It was no big deal. Vicki had to work so I got her ticket. Once I told Mr. Smith you were a huge Kristopher Knight fan, but couldn’t go to the race, he asked around for another ticket,” he explained with a shrug.

Artis jumped to his feet suddenly surprising Josh as he juggled his bottle of beer.

“What the hell—” Josh exclaimed.

“Look! Kris is in first place! If he can hold on to it for two more laps he’ll run in tomorrow’s race!” He moved to the rail again. “Go, Kris! Go!”

“Dude, you know he can’t hear you, right?”

Artis ignored his friend and kept yelling. When the next two laps were completed, Kristopher Knight’s name was still at the top of the ranking. He let out a loud hoot and turned to his friend.

“Yeah! This is amazing! When can we go down and get our pictures taken?”

Josh threw his fists in the air sharing his friend’s excitement. “Right now, dude, let’s go,” he indulged his friend.

An older man approached him when they entered the suite. “So, Artis. I hear you’re a Kristopher Knight fan.”

“Yes, Mr. Smith, I am.”

“He’s a good racer. He’s got a good future in the league. I’m glad he will be in the race tomorrow. Are you going down there to meet him and get your picture taken?”

“Yes, sir, I am.”

“Well, then come along, you’ll need this.” He offered him a bright yellow lanyard.

Artis walked over to the man and bent his head, accepting the lanyard offered to him. Attached to it was a large laminated pass.

“Thank you, Mr. Smith.”

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“Now, you can’t keep that, son,” Mr. Smith mentioned with a soft chuckle. “We need it back for tomorrow’s qualifying races, but it will get you pass the guards and access to the area where the riders are.”

“Okay, I’ll bring it back.”

Artis followed Josh from the suite and down the elevator. Once outside, they saw a crowd of people that wore the same lanyards around their necks heading one direction and trailed after them. The crowd started to take shape and form into a line that disappeared inside a large tent. Artis smiled at the sight of the name above the tent. Kris always drew a crowd.

“Damn, is it always like this?” Josh asked his friend, stunned.

“Yup. He’s popular.” Artis shrugged it off as nothing.

Josh shook his head. “Look, dude, I’ll wait for you in the suite. I only came to this thing for the food and drink. This part is all you.” He nodded his head toward the tent.

Artis chuckled, slapping his friend five and then took his place at the end of the line. After almost two hours of waiting, there was only one person separating him from Kris. Artis could feel his heart pumping faster at the thought. The woman in front of him entered the tent and he moved up. From his new position, he could see inside the tent. His hair was long, resting along his broad shoulders with thick damp strands hanging on his forehead. The white tank top that clung to his chest was only half tucked into his dark jeans and his jacket was thrown across the chair in front of him.

Artis stared attentively as Kris leaned on his bike and took the woman into his arms. After instructing the photographer they were ready, he flashed one of his amazing smiles and Artis felt his cock jump in his shorts. With the picture taken, the woman rushed over to the photographer and waited for the copy to come from the printer. She returned to the table with the glossy photo of them and a pen. Kris signed the picture and handed back to her. She kissed him on the cheek and left, giggling happily. Artis took a few deep breaths to calm down before he walked into the tent and stopped at the table.

“Artie? Is that you?”

Artis let out a shocked breath, his heart swelling within his chest. His chest rose and fell so fast he could hardly get any air into his lungs. He nodded, jerking his head wildly, unable to speak.

Kris left the bike and walked around the table to him. “Oh my God, it is you,” he said happily. He wrapped one arm around Artis’ neck and the other around his waist and pulled him into a hug. “I was hoping I got the chance to see you while I was here.”

Artis melted in his embrace. Although he was stunned at the turn of events he recovered quickly and returned the hug, loving the feel of Kris’ body pressed against his.

“I didn’t think you would remember me,” Artis finally whispered.

Kris released him. “Remember you? Are you kidding? I could never forget you!” he exclaimed, holding his shoulders, laughing. He turned to the photographer. “Ralph, this is my best friend, Artis! He lives here in town. We went to school together.”

“Hey,” was all Ralph murmured from behind the camera.

“Come on, Artie, let’s take a picture.”

Artis was elated. Kris remembered him and he was about to take a picture with his bike. And what a bike it was! The royal blue Kawasaki Ninja was amazing. It was still dusty from the ride, but that just made it more appealing as far as Artis was concerned. He slowly ran his hand over the crotch rocket as the memory from his first ride on a motorcycle came to mind.

“Go ahead and get up there, Artie. I know you want to,” Kris offered with a sly grin nudging him.

Artis didn’t hesitate. He threw his leg over the powerful machine and a rush of adrenaline surged through him as he gripped the handles. He closed his eyes and bit his bottom lip enjoying it.

“Quick, Ralph, take this picture,” he heard Kris say through his heady daze.

He kept his eyes shut, but he still saw the flash although it was dimmed. Before he could open his eyes, the bike dropped down from extra weight added to it. To his amazement, he felt Kris’ arms slip around his waist. He looked to his left as far as

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

his gaze could go without turning his head. His cock surged to life at Kris' closeness.

"Take this shot, too, Ralph. We would have had one like this years ago when I took him on his first ride, but no one was around to take the picture."

His stunned face was surely captured on film. Kris' arm around him for a second time was more than he could imagine would happen when he woke today. At best, he was hoping to just talk to him. Now he sat on this incredible bike with Kris behind him, resting his chin on his shoulder holding him in his arms. This day had moved up to the best of his life in a matter of minutes!

For years he wondered what it would feel like to be held by Kris' strong arms. At long last, he knew they felt wonderful. Strong and muscular, holding him firm without crushing him. Kris' torso pressed into his back and his cock against his butt...mmm. An erotic shiver went through his body at the revelation. It left a tingling sensation in its wake. He closed his eyes again. If this was a fluke, it was something he never wanted to forget. Taking a deep breath, he reveled in the feeling and then it was gone. Kris released his hold on Artis and slid off the back of the bike.

"Did you get that it, Ralph? I want two copies of that one."

"Yeah, I got it," Ralph replied as he removed the first picture from the printer.

He handed the photos to Kris who lingered over them before returning to Artis. "Here you go, Artie."

Reluctantly he threw his leg over the bike and stepped away from it. "Thanks."

"Did you watch me qualify?"

"Of course I did," he answered smiling. "You were amazing."

"We have so much to talk about, Artie. There's so much I want to tell you. So much has happened since we last saw each other."

"Kris, they're looking for us," Ralph announced with his cell phone to his ear.

"All right, Ralph. What are you doing tonight, Artie?"

Artis' eyes widened. "I—I, umm, nothing, well, nothing important."

"Great! They're giving a party for the racers tonight at our hotel. They let us invite a date, but since I don't have one you can come with me and we can catch up. You'll be my date!"

Artis blinked. "Uh, okay."

"Kris, let's go," Ralph urged zipping his camera bags hoisting them to his shoulder.

Kris rushed around the table and pushed his bike upright releasing the kickstand. "We're downtown at the Conrad," he continued telling Artis. "The party starts at nine o'clock. I'll leave your name so you can get in."

"Uh..."

"So I'll see you tonight, right? Don't be late. I can't wait to see you—Oh, and dress up. Magazine people will be there," he added following Ralph from the tent, leaving Artis with one of his killer grins and a wink.

Artis stood in the empty tent trying to absorb how much his life had changed in a matter of minutes. A slow smile touched his lips as he looked at the picture Kris had given him. Kris was holding him and smiling brightly. He looked genuinely happy and Artis didn't look like some stunned fool taking a picture with the great Kristopher Knight. He pressed the picture to his chest and laughed before pulling it into his pocket.

"This day turned out way better than I expected," he muttered as he left the tent.

* * * *

Artis changed his clothes four times before he decided on a beige linen jacket and pants suit with a silky black t-shirt. As he looked himself over in the mirror, he hoped when Kris said dress up he didn't mean black tie. Standing in front of his car and motorcycle, he glided his hand along the seat and handlebars of his bike with a sigh and proceeded to his car to head downtown. It didn't take long for him to get to the hotel, his house was just south of the downtown Indianapolis in Fountain Square.

"Can I park your car for you, sir?" the valet asked when he pulled up to the Conrad Hotel.

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

Artis exited the car and handed him the keys. “Thanks. I’m here for the party for the motorcycle racers. Do you know—“

“Of course, sir,” the valet cut him off. “That party is being held in the Blue Lounge. It has just started,” he added closing the door.

Before Artis could thank him, he pulled off. This was his first time at the Conrad and he was astonished by its magnificence. The lobby was glitzy and glamorous with red and bright gold colored carpets, chandeliers of crystal shined like diamonds and bright-mirrored elevators. Artis walked through the lobby looking like a tourist as he followed the signs to the Blue Lounge. Outside the room was a large table with three people sitting at it taking names.

“May I help you?”

“Umm, yes, Kristopher Knight said he would leave my name here. I am Artis Kent.”

“Yes, Mr. Kent, I have you listed.” The man checked his name off a list. “Here you go, you may go in.” He handed him a sticker with his name printed on it and thumbed the doorway behind him.

“Thanks.” Artis applied the tag to his chest pocket on his jacket as he stood in the doorway looking around.

The room was flooded with people. Some he recognized from the media having seen them on various channels before. Others he knew were drivers, but there were plenty of people in the room he didn’t know at all. The dress code was as different as the people. Some casual, others in black tie. The drivers wore their team hats even though they were in suits and ties. Slowly he walked into the room brushing off invisible lint from his jacket, smoothing out his shirt and running his hand over his hair.

“Artie!”

He stopped instantly and turned slowly to the sound of his name. This time he couldn’t stop his mouth from dropping open. Kris stepped into view looking incredible. The black suit he wore complemented his dark features excellently. Unlike his fellow drivers, he wore no hat. His hair was neatly combed with that sexy signature curl resting on his forehead. The jacket to his suit was open showing a crisp black and white strip shirt tucked

neatly into black pants. The pants fit his body smoothly showing off the bulge that instantly caught Artis' eye.

"Oh my God, you look fantastic, Artie," he complimented and gave a classic wolf whistle.

Artis shook his head and smiled. "No, Kris, it's you who look fantastic. I had no idea that you cleaned up so well."

"Maybe you will after tonight," Kris whispered close to his ear as he gave him a quick hug. "Come on, let's get a drink." Grabbing his hand, Kris pulled Artis through the crowd to the bar.

"Yes, Mr. Knight, what can I get you?"

"Do you still drink Corona?" Kris asked Artis.

Artis laughed. "No, no, I only drank that stuff because that's what the guys drank and I was too young to buy beer for myself."

Kris laughed, too. "Yeah, we did drink whatever they gave us back then, huh? Okay, so, what are you drinking now?"

"I like vodka. Give me a vodka and cranberry, Belvedere, if they have it."

"You heard the man," he told the bartender. "Make it two. I like vodka, too, but I prefer Grey Goose. Unfortunately, they don't have it."

The bartender made the drinks and slid them across the bar to them. With a nod of thanks to the bartender, Kris raised his glass in the air.

"To us, Artie, a friendship renewed."

Artis was overwhelmed. The only word he could muster was a soft spoken yes as he clinked his glass to Kris' and took a sip.

Kris put his drink back on the bar still smiling at him. "I cannot get over how good you look, Artie. The years have been kind to you. What have you been doing with yourself?"

"Well, since we last saw each other I finished school with a degree in travel and leisure. I worked as a travel agent for a long time. Until just recently, I opened up my own travel agency."

"Really? That must be cool. So you do a lot of traveling?"

"Yeah, I do. I've done lots of cruises, gone to places abroad and I've been to all fifty states. I get to tell the clients firsthand about hotels, food, atmosphere, you know, stuff like that." He

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

sipped his drink and added subtly, "I've even been to see your races."

Kris' eyes widened. "What? You've traveled just to see me race? Which one did you see?"

"Umm, well, all of them, I think," he admitted shyly. "Well, at least all of the ones you've had in the last six or seven years. It's good to be your own boss." He smiled and shrugged. "I've been to the ones in Oregon, California, Florida, Japan, Australia—"

Kris touched his finger to Artis' lips. For a long time Kris stared at him. He looked around with a conspirator's eye and picked up his drink. "Get your drink we need to talk."

Confused Artis did what he asked and followed him into the lobby. Silently Kris walked along the hallway opening and closing doors to other conference rooms. Finally, he looked to his left and right, opened the door to an empty room and pulled Artis inside. Kris closed the door behind him, then grabbed his arms and kissed him hard. Stunned, Artis stood rigid and wide-eyed.

"I'm sorry, Artie. I don't know what came over me," he said releasing him. "I wanted to talk to you first, tell you how I feel, but... If you want to punch me in the gut, I completely understand."

"No, no, I umm—"

Artis was cut off as Kris interrupted and started pacing the floor. "I just, well, it's been so long since I've seen you and you look so good." He paused to sip his drink. "I don't know, I wondered, well, I hoped that you would be, well, respondent to—" He sighed heavily, stopped pacing and turned to Artis. "The truth of the matter is, I'm—I'm interested in you. I always have been, even back in school. I didn't realize it back then, but I know that's what it was now."

Artis gasped, but before he could form any words, Kris was talking again.

"So many times I've wanted to come home and find you Artie. You have no idea how many times I wanted to pick up the phone and just call just to see how you were." He sipped his drink again. "With so many races, training, tours...it was just so hard..."

“You—you like me? I mean, like for more than just friendship?” Artis asked, coming to his senses.

Kris turned to face him with a soft smile and then walked back to him. “Yes, Artie, that’s what I’m trying to tell you. In the years that we’ve been apart, I found myself. I have been with men and I’ve been with a few women, too, but I know who I am now. I can’t keep living alone trying to be someone I’m not. I realized sometime ago that I have not been truly happy since I left Indiana...since I left you,” he added caressing his face. Kris dropped his hand and swallowed the rest of his drink in one gulp, stepping out of his personal space. “But I do realize that this must be a shock for you. I had to tell you for my own peace of mind, but I completely understand if—”

“I love you, Kris,” he blurted out abruptly stopping Kris’ speech.

“Huh?”

“I—I love you, Kris. I have always loved you. I think since that first ride you took me on...maybe before.”

Kris closed the distance between them again. “You—you love me? How can that be?”

Artis raised his glass wanting to wet his suddenly dry mouth, but it hovered in his hand by his waist.

“I didn’t know if you, well, if you liked—”

Kris chuckled. “Yeah, I know. Back then, *I* didn’t even know I liked men. But even in my confusion, I knew you were special to me. I know what I want now and I have grown up since we were last together, Artie.”

He and Kris were of the same size, standing eye to eye, chest to chest, pelvis to pelvis. Kris’ lips grazed against his, and he found it hard to think, let alone speak. Artis’ forced his glass to move toward his mouth. Kris smiled and put his hand on top of it, then guided the glass to his own mouth instead. He drained the rest of the liquor. Kris gripped the back of his head abruptly, and pushed the cool drink from his mouth into Artis’ own. At the connection of their lips, Artis felt the heat of desire blaze up within him.

Artis shared the drink with his crush, sealing their mouths together as they swished the drink back and forth between their mouths before finally swallowing. The combined sensation sent

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

tingles down his spine, making him dizzy. The taste of Kris on his tongue made him moan and long for more of him. His cock throbbed and pushed shamelessly against his pants, trying to break through his zipper. Breaking the lock and breathing hard, he gazed into Kris' eyes before his lips found Kris' again, this time meeting in a kiss.

The touch was soft and experimental at first. Artis parted his lips and made his body pliable to Kris' advancements, giving him lead, letting him take control. Kris pressed him to the wall, grinding his pelvis against him moaning loudly. The kiss deepened becoming needy. The glass made a soft thud on the carpet when Artis dropped it. He slipped his hands around Kris' neck grasping a handful of his long brown hair. Kris continued kissing him for a long time, sucking and tasting his mouth before he spoke again.

"Oh my God, you don't know how long I've dreamed of this Artie. How much I have wanted this with you," he whispered along his neck.

"Yes, I know; me too."

"God, I want to taste you so bad." Kris dropped to his knees.

"No, no, we can't. They will be looking for you."

"I don't care," he growled, his voice full of lust. "I've had to put off what I wanted for too long. I won't do it any longer," he retorted defiantly tugging at his pants.

"Please, Kris, we're both not thinking straight. This is not the time," Artis murmured breathing hard. He put his hands on both sides of Kris' face and pulled him to his feet.

"You don't want me to?"

Artis brought his face closer kissing his lips, both cheeks and his nose. "No, no, please don't think that. Oh God, I want more than anything to feel your mouth on my dick. Man, you have no idea, Kris." He chuckled then added delicately, "You have other priorities right now. We have to take care of those first."

Kris sighed and pulled him closer, resting his head in the crook of Artis' neck. "Artie, I'm so tired of belonging to them, doing what they want me to do." His voice sounded exhausted

and sad. "I want to finally belong to myself...and if you'll have me, belong to you."

Artis held him tight as the words he spoke warmed his soul. He kissed his forehead tenderly before gently pushing him back.

"We have to go back to the party."

"I don't want to go back," he exclaimed stubbornly.

Artis caressed his face. "Kris, we have to do what we must do, so that we can do what we want to do."

Kris cut him a look and sucked his teeth. "You're still saying that?"

Artis shrugged. "It's still working for me."

Kris sighed and his shoulders slumped. "All right, Artie."

The sadness Artis saw in Kris' eyes broke his heart. Kris grasped his hands and brought them to his mouth.

"But promise to stay with me tonight, Artie. I don't want to be alone."

Artis nodded. "I promise."

Kris kissed his knuckles, and the sensation made him instantly regret being the voice of reason. He took a deep breath as Kris backed away from him. Kris fixed Artis' clothes then straightened his as well. Artis watched as he picked up their discarded glasses from the floor and put his killer grin in place.

"Let's get this party over with."

Chapter Three

Artis and Kris returned to the party and he was stunned to see Kris transform into the epitome of a social butterfly. He moved smoothly between the reporters from TV and magazines, fellow riders and the promoters with smiles, wit and impressive knowledge of his profession. Everyone wanted to know what he would do when his contract was up with Atlas Racing League. His answer was the same to everyone that asked. Giving them one of his patented killer smiles, he replied that he would discuss it with the people closest to him when that time came and then he would get back to them. He did several interviews throughout night, always keeping Artis close by and in every picture. When the question finally rose about Artis' identity, Kris, to Artis' surprise, didn't falter a bit. He calmly introduced him as his best friend and someone that was very dear to him.

Artis found that even though he had an amazing time at the party he was glad it was over so he could spend some time with Kris. Silently they took the long ride to the tenth floor and walked down the hall to his room. Artis' eyes widened as Kris swung open the double doors. He had been in many nice hotel rooms over the years, but none like the one he walked into. Kris' suite was exquisite.

The off-white plush carpet was so soft that he could feel his feet sinking into the fabric even with his shoes on. He saw a lot of time was placed in the detailing of the room. The molding along the ceiling was made of tiny pink cherubs alongside yellow flowers. Soft pastel colors covered the walls giving the room a serene, inviting look.

The kitchen area and dining table were to the right when he entered the room. A tall bureau and desk made of cherry wood were to the left and a small sitting area consisting of a coffee table and a couch was in the center of the room. The wall that the

bureau rested on ended quickly as Artis moved into the room. A large bedroom was around the corner and it took up most of the suite.

“This is a beautiful room, Kris. I will be sure to mention to my clients how nice the rooms at—”

Artis’ words died in his throat when he turned and looked into Kris’ eyes. The dark pools burned with the fires of unmistakable desire. Kris walked to him like a predator stalking his prey. His hand gripped Artis’ face and pulled his lips to him with a needy groan. The hungry kisses were placed all over his face. Artis could hardly return them. Kris pushed him backwards into the bedroom and onto the bed. When they landed, they both reached frantically at each other, snatching and tearing until they were free of all of their garments.

The soft coverlet on the bed was a bright blue satin and felt cool on Artis’ skin. They pushed the large fluffy pillows to the top of the bed as they lay naked side by side staring at one another. Kris opened his mouth to say something, but Artis touched his lips and shook his head. Kris smiled behind his finger, nodded and kissed it.

Slowly Kris ran his hand across his shoulder and along the lines of Artis’ body. Artis closed his eyes to enjoy his touch without the distraction of unnecessary senses. The large, strong hand that glided over his hip gently pushed against him, urging him to his back. He turned over willingly exposing his body to Kris fully.

“Oh God, Artie, when I think of all the time we wasted not—” Kris began, but Artis touched his lips to quiet him again.

“We’re together now, that’s all that matters.”

Kris chuckled softly. “You’re right. You were always the voice of reason,” he agreed, lazily gliding his hand over the muscles on his chest.

Artis stretched his arms above his head and his chest rose high off the bed. Kris’ hands sent thrilling shivers over his skin. He could feel Kris’ lips press against one side of his chest and his fingers flicking his hardened nipple on the other side at the same time. Artis squirmed under the sensation. His cock bobbed begging for attention and the first low moans of pleasure escaped his throat.

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

Suddenly Artis turned them over. Kris lay on his back as he pinned him down and kissed him. Wide-eyed Kris returned his kiss. Although his voice showed his surprise, he was not unhappy at the turn of events.

“Artie, wha—”

“I think our first time should be a mutual thing. I want us to make each other come. Okay?”

Kris nodded instantly. “Whatever you want.”

Artis smiled. Putting one last kiss on his lips, he turned around on the bed so that his feet rested on the pillows near Kris’ head. He positioned himself so that Kris’ cock was directly in front of his face. At the same moment he sucked Kris’ cock into his mouth, he felt the liquid heat of Kris’ lips closing around his own.

Moaning loudly around Kris’ hardening member from the joy that Kris was giving him, he sucked joyfully returning the favor. Giving and getting head at the same time was always good. It made him hard as steel, but this time it was mind blowing. This wasn’t just any cock in his mouth, this was Kris’ cock he held in his mouth—his Kris. The Kris he had long wanted and was finally having. This was joy beyond joy and even if it never happened again, he would enjoy every second of the time he had with him.

He had masturbated many times to the fantasy of this scenario, but this was the real thing. The realization of his fantasy was enough to make him blow, not to mention the incredible skill of Kris’ tongue. He could feel his cock hitting the back of Kris’ throat with each pull into his mouth. Kris’ strong fingers played with his balls at the same time adding to his pleasure immensely.

Artis let out another muffled moan. If he didn’t get Kris to stop, he would come embarrassingly fast.

“Wait, baby, wait.”

“No, I want to suck it,” Kris muttered breathlessly and continued.

Artis moaned again. “Ahh, oh God, Kris please. That feels so good, but I won’t last that long with you doing that.”

“Uhh, Artie you’re killing me.”

With a groan of his own, Kris reluctantly released his cock and Artis quickly scooted back up to the top of the bed. He lay beside Kris on the pillow kissing him softly. Artis reached out for the jutting shaft that rested against Kris' tight abs. Grasping firmly, he started stroking it. Kris reached down and mimicked Artis' movements on his swollen shaft.

Artis broke their kiss and looked down between them, taking in the differences in their organs. Their differences were obvious with one being white and the other brown, but the similarities were also plain to see. Both were long, thick and hard when filled with the blood of excitement. But Artis had not expected the contrast between the two to be such a turn-on. He was filled with a sudden surge of pleasure from the sight of the two hard cocks, side by side with the tips almost touching. The hungry groaning kisses Kris placed along his neck and ear added to that.

Artis continued to watch as their two hands moved simultaneously toward the same goal and his body shook with desire. He wanted Kris to feel the same way.

"Baby, look, you have to see this," Artis panted.

Kris paused his kisses, but not his hand movements. "Damn Artie, I didn't—"

Stuck on witnessing the striking beauty before him, Artis stroked harder and faster moaning louder and louder. Kris copied his movements and both their heads fell back in ecstasy, but it was Artis' cock that blew first, erupting all over Kris' hand. The sensation rocked his body to its core as Kris continued to milk him dry.

Once Artis recovered, he rolled Kris onto his back and continued to pump at his shaft. He saw Kris slip his fingers into his mouth. The soft slurping sounds of Kris sucking his fingers clean of his leftover essence made Artis' cock twinge.

Taking the swollen ruby head back into his mouth, Artis sucked hungrily. Kris' blissful moans rose again. Just as Kris' hands gripped his head, urging him to go faster, Artis pressed his finger between his cheeks and into the tiny hole within. He heard Kris' breathing grow heavier, warning that he was nearing his end. Kris' cock exploded with volcanic force, his joyful screams fill the room and Artis' ears a short time later. As he swallowed

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

the last of Kris' seed, he locked the sound of Kris' moans in his mind. He knew it was a sound he would never forget.

* * * *

Artis woke in Kris' arms resting on his chest, the gentle touch of his hand gliding up and down his arm. Kris' body felt tense beneath him, his breathing more like a group of sighs.

"Kris is everything okay?" he asked in the dark.

"No," he admitted.

"What's wrong?"

He was quiet for a moment before he answered in a worn out voice that had nothing to do with the sex they had.

"Artie, in the last ten years I have made a lot of money racing. I drive for a great racing team, I have endorsements out the yag and I even have money put up in the bank. At thirty-one, I am young enough to keep doing this for a lot more years...but I find myself wondering if I should bother, if it's even worth it."

Artis lifted his head. "Of course it's worth it. You are a remarkable driver. You're living your dream. This was what you've always wanted to do. Not everyone can say that they are actually doing what they dreamed of doing. That's an amazing achievement. You're known all around the world and you're the top of your career."

Kris stared at the ceiling. "All of that may be true, but at what cost, Artie? I'm a gay man hiding in a straight life. I can't have the type of life I really want. All of those things you mentioned are great, and believe me I am grateful, but I want a man by my side to share all those things with. I want someone to love me."

"I'm sorry. I had no idea."

Kris shrugged. "How could you? The life of a driver at the top of their game, I've come to find, is rough when you're gay. They've taken a page from the military and have adopted a 'don't ask don't tell' policy."

"What do you mean?"

"My sponsors don't give a rat's ass who I take to my bed as long as I keep it under wraps. As long as I play the pretty boy

racer who is all huggy-kissy-faced with the women that watch racing to see hot looking guys drive fast, they're good. Even the married drivers have to play the game with the women, too, hugging, kissing smiling—" He sighed heavily before continuing. "It's all about how you can be marketed commercially. They don't give a damn that it's lonely as hell when you're single."

"Couldn't you have just taken a lover and kept him under the radar? That way you could—"

Kris' head snapped around. The look he landed on Artis was so hard it stopped his words.

"Who the hell wants to live like that? Why do I have to continue to live the life I want in the dark? The straight guys get to take their women to parties and out to dinner, vacations, wherever they want. They don't have to keep their relationships *under wraps*," he snapped. As soon as the words were out, he gasped. Kris sat up and pulled Artis to him.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to yell at you. You're the last one I want to take out my frustrations on." He kissed his lips gently. "You're the only one who's ever wanted to be with me just for me."

"It's okay."

"No, it's not okay, Artie. I really am sorry and I won't do it again."

Artis nodded and Kris leaned back onto the pillow with a huff.

"It's just so frustrating. You can't even imagine."

Artis laid next to him and took his hand, intertwining their fingers. "What are going to do? I mean is there anything you *can* do?"

"Yeah, I can leave."

"What?" Artis asked astonished.

Kris turned to his side to face him. "I can leave, Artie. Leave it all behind. I can stay here with you and have a life, a real life." He paused to lift his chin. "With you I can be just plain ole Kris. If you'll have me...will you have me?"

"I can't let you do that, Kris."

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“You’re not letting me do it. I want to do it. I want to be with you, I want to be free, to have the life that I really want. Just tell me you want me and I’ll do it tomorrow.”

Artis was stunned into silence. This was much more than he had ever expected when he held the ticket to qualifications in his hands yesterday. That seemed like a lifetime ago in the face of what’s happened in the last twenty-four hours. He wanted more than anything to be with Kris. Having him in his bed every night, sharing their lives and growing old together would be a more than he had dreamed of.

The down side to that dream was he could not picture Kris voluntarily quenching his thirst for speed. It was in his blood, part of who he was. Even if he did manage to douse the fire that burned in his soul just to be with him, he would regret it one day and their relationship would suffer for it. It was a sacrifice he wasn’t willing to let Kris make, especially after he worked so hard to get where he was—even if it broke his heart to give him up again.

“Let’s not talk about it right now. Let’s just enjoy each other tonight.”

“We have to talk about it, Artie. I have to leave tomorrow after the race. We’re off to Tokyo for another race next week, but I won’t go if you want me to stay.”

“We’ll talk, okay, but for now, please, just make love to me.” The pressure in his chest grew making his voice crack with emotion.

He watched Kris nod and then he left him to retrieve a tube of lube from the bathroom. Artis immediately turned over to his stomach. It was easier to hide his face from Kris than let him see any tears that may escape. He didn’t want Kris to realize the decision was already out of his hands.

Artis felt Kris climb onto the bed and move up behind him. Kris’ tongue ran a hot wet trail up his back sending erotic shivers along his spine. He kissed along the knotted muscles of his shoulders and then back across to his ear.

“When I saw you sitting on my bike today, Artie, I wanted to push you forward and take you right there,” he growled in his ear grinding his cock against the split of his firm ass. “Your ass looked so good waving in the air, just waiting to be fucked. I

couldn't help but jump up behind you. I wanted to feel what it would be like to be behind you, holding you like that. I never expected us to be like this tonight, but I'm so glad we are." He pressed further and his cock slipped roughly between his cheeks. "I want to fuck you so bad." His voice shook in his lust-filled state.

A soft gasp escaped him at Kris' words. "Do it, Kris." Artis sensed his hesitation as he moaned and adjusted his shaft to rest on one cheek. "Do it, Kris," he repeated more urgently and then added an insistent, "Please."

Instead of the pressure of the impending penetration, Artis felt pressure on the small of his back. Confused, he took the gentle guidance, lowering himself to the bed. Kris' strong, firm hands slid over the smooth, muscles of his dark skin.

The tiny circles Kris' fingers made on his back awakened every nerve in his body and made his cock throb with need. Moving his hands lower, Kris massaged and kneaded his left butt cheek, then the right.

Kris' touch relaxed and excited him at the same time, making goose bumps rise over his skin. He felt his digits leave his body for a short while then return feeling cool and slick.

"Raise your ass to me, Artie."

Obedying at once, Artis rose to his knees offering his ass, keeping his head down on the pillow.

Kris groaned and kissed his left cheek. "Damn, Artie, you look so damn hot like this."

Artis reached back and palmed both cheeks to spread himself wide. He heard a soft hissing "yes," come from his soon to be lover just before his body suddenly caught fire. The hot wet firmness of a tongue dived between his cheeks and attacked the tiny hole within, lapping wildly. Each tantalizing pass was better than the last. Artis buried his face in the pillow and screamed his delight over and over. His body vibrated all over from the delicious tongue-lashing that Kris was giving him, but as he was about to reach for his throbbing shaft to increase his pleasure, it was over.

"Damn, Artie, I feel like I should apologize in advance for what might happen. I want to fuck you so bad I may forget it's our first time together."

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“I’m fine, Kris. Do what you want, just do it now,” Artis urged.

He could feel Kris’ oiled-slick hands sliding up and down his crack making the saliva soaked area even more slippery. When his hand stopped sliding between his cheeks, the pressure of Kris’ cock replaced his tongue. The force of the head pushing against the opening of his ass was exquisite.

Almost a year had passed since he’d taken a lover to his bed, even without the benefit of a relationship. To relieve his lust, he would jerk off to the pictures he had of Kris, often dreaming of feeling Kris’ length and girth deep inside him afterwards. Now he wasn’t dreaming, it was the reality he waited for...luckily Kris didn’t make him wait long.

After two test prods Kris sheathed his cock fully and they both moaned their pleasure of it. Allowing a short adjustment time, Artis rocked back hard against his lover letting him know he was ready to feel him fully. Kris’ hands gripped his hips and guided him back into every motion. They found their rhythm quickly, naturally, as if they had been lovers for years. Kris moved slowly at first with long deep strokes as he gripped his shoulders. Artis opened his body to him and Kris ground into him. Kris moved to the left, then to the right and made large powerful circles with his hips as he gripped Artis’ shoulders for balance. He was magnificent! It was everything he had hoped it would be like being with Kris. At the rate Kris was working him, he would not last much longer, but he didn’t think Kris would last long either.

Kris cried out a sound of pure pleasure, and as it filled the room, it struck Artis’ heart like one of Cupid’s perfectly aimed arrow. He reached beneath him and pulled at his cock. When Kris exploded inside him he wanted to be ready and make their connection complete.

“Come for me,” Artis panted, pumping up and down on his cock.

Kris let out another sound of joy, and muttered something. Artis couldn’t understand his words, but he understood his actions clearly. His fingers were pressing into his hips almost painfully as he slammed into his ass. He had to pump his cock even faster to keep pace with Kris’ movements. Suddenly Artis’

blood ignited. He stroked his throbbing shaft a few more times and it erupted, flooding his body with the force of a euphoric firestorm.

Exhausted from his own orgasm, he could still feel Kris' building as he continued to dig inside of him. He reached underneath them and gripped his swinging balls. Fondling them and gripping them firmly for a short while, Kris' body locked in place as he let out a sound of pure unadulterated ecstasy. Kris mumbled incoherent words against Artis' back as he shoved his cock as far as he could into his ass. He finally collapsed on top of him moments later, gasping for air.

Artis eased them to the bed and grasped Kris' hands, bringing them beneath his shoulders so he could hug him. He could feel their connection in his soul and if they were to part after this night, that's exactly where he wanted to keep this moment.

Chapter Four

When Artis woke the next morning he was alone. On the pillow beside him was a ticket to the race and a note.

*I love you, Artie. Last night was fantastic.
See you in the winner's circle.
Forever yours, Kris*

Artis held the note to his chest and stared at the ceiling letting his tears slid down into his ears. His life had soared to the heavens, made a total three-sixty and then crashed and burned into the depths of hell in a span of twenty-four hours. *How was that fair?* It had to be a record somewhere. He lay in bed a long time astonished at the turn of events, before he gathered his things, located his cell phone and mustered up the energy to move to the bathroom.

In a daze, he showered away the traces of his night with Kris. The dried combination of their sweat covered his skin and the soreness in his hips and ass reminded him of Kris' passion, slowly went down the drain as he washed. He dressed himself on autopilot and left the hotel for home. He couldn't bring himself to go to the race only to say goodbye.

His cell phone started ringing so much that he finally turned it off.

Drifting in and out of sleep all day, he lost track of time. When he finally got up to move about his house, it was dark outside. He couldn't ignore the violent growling of his stomach any longer and poured himself a bowl of cereal. Turning on the T.V., he learned that Kristopher Knight had won the first running of the Red Bull Grand Prix. Artis stared numbly at the screen when they showed the highlights of the race. Even as Kris lifted his trophy into the air smiling brightly, he could see him

searching the growing crowd of people around him. Artis knew Kris was looking for him to share his big moment with, but Kris had no idea that he wasn't there.

Artis pushed the uneaten food away from him and left the table. Dragging himself back to his room, he fell into his bed and curled up into a ball. He had no appetite, no energy, no life...nothing.

* * * *

“Hey Artis, how's it going?”

Artis looked up from the folder he had been staring at blankly. “Oh, hey, Josh. You need something?”

Josh sat on the edge of his desk. “Not really, I just came by to check up on you. I haven't seen that much of you in the last month. You haven't been coming out to ride with us.”

“Oh, well, I've just been handling some things and I haven't been able to find time to ride with the fellas. That's all.”

“Okay, but we haven't kicked it for a while by ourselves either. I mean we used to play pool or just go out for a beer at least once a week. Is everything all right? You just don't seem,” he paused to find the right word. “I don't know, you just don't seem right, like you're out of it.”

“I'm sorry, Josh. I guess I have been a little out of it. I've been doing a lot of thinking, taking a little time to reevaluate some things in my life,” he answered in a low voice.

“You were high as a kite when you were at the race last month. When your boy won, I thought you would be on cloud nine for a minute off of that.” He chuckled and gave his friend a light punch on the arm. “But, since then you have been so, damn, the only word that comes to mind is sad.”

Artis forced a smile and shook his head. “I'm okay, man, for real. I just got a few things on my mind, that's all,” he assured his friend.

Josh looked him over, but before he could question him again, someone else interrupted them.

“Hi, I'm looking for Mr. Kent.”

Artist and Josh turned to see a man in a brown uniform coming into the room.

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“I’m Mr. Kent.”

“I have an envelope for you, sir. Sign here please.”

Artis took the clipboard from him and signed his name and the man handed him the envelope. Tossing it across his desk, he leaned back in the chair.

“Aren’t you going to open it?”

Artis shrugged. “I don’t know who sent it. It doesn’t have a return address. It’s probably some kind of advertisement from the competition or something.”

Josh laughed. “Advertisements don’t come by UPS, Artis. They come with the rest of the mail.”

Artis shrugged again.

“Well I want to know what it is, do you mind?” he asked picking up the envelope.

“Whatever.”

Josh tore open the envelope, dropped the contents into his hand and looked it over. “Well, it’s not an advertisement,” he announced handing him the paper inside. “It looks like an invitation.”

Confused, Artis took the paper and looked it over. “I have no clue what this is about.”

“The address doesn’t look familiar to you?”

He shook his head. “No, it says it’s somewhere in Claremont, Indiana. The last time I was out there was years ago, when I was last at Raceway Park. I don’t know anyone who lives out there.”

Josh shrugged. “Maybe someone rented a place out there just to have a party. You should go. You need to get out.”

Artis dropped the invitation on his desk and shook his head. “I don’t know, man. I just don’t feel like partying.”

“As your best friend I order you to go to this party. My wife has been riding my ass about getting you out of whatever bad spell you are going through. It’s breaking her heart to see you like this and she’s busting *my* balls behind it.”

Artis looked at him and twisted his lips.

“You’re going to this damn party if I have to come get you and take you myself,” Josh insisted pointing his finger at him.

Artis stared at him for a minute and then chuckled softly. “If Vickie knew you were talking to me like that she would have your nuts in a vise.”

Josh smiled. “Yeah, I know, so you’d better not tell her.”

Artis laughed. “All right man, maybe you’re right. Maybe it is time I got over it.”

Josh’s head fell to the left questioningly. “Get over what?”

Artis sighed. “Never mind.”

“All right man, whenever you’re ready, I’m here.”

“Thanks, Josh.”

Josh picked up the invitation again. “This says the party is tonight, man.” He looked at his watch. “You should leave now so you don’t have to rush to get ready especially since you don’t know where you’re going.”

“I can’t leave now, it’s only three o’clock.”

Josh sputtered and hopped off the desk. “Dude, you’re the damn boss. You can leave when you want. Come on, drop whatever you’re working on the desk and go tell Debbie you’re leaving. That’s one of the perks of being the boss.”

Artis let himself be pulled from the chair.

“You really need to get with the program.”

* * * *

Artis went home as his friend suggested, but he made no attempt to get ready for the party. He was still wrestling with the idea of going to some stranger’s house out in the middle of no man’s land for a party. Claremont was a tiny suburb just outside of Indianapolis with more trees than people. The little town consisted of houses and the racetrack, everything else was open land. The more he thought about it, the more it bugged him, and he decided not to go. Later that evening he sat at his table with his head in his hand, flipping pieces of corn from one side of his plate to the other, when his phone rang.

Snatching it off the table, he answered, “Yeah.”

“Dude, why didn’t you go to the party?”

“How do you know I’m not at the party right now, Josh?”

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“Because if you were at the party you wouldn’t be able to hear your phone, and if you did, you wouldn’t have answered it on the first ring.”

Artis rolled his eyes.

“Don’t make me come over there,” his friend continued in a warning tone.

Artis chuckled and shook his head. Vicki must be standing right there beside him. He could almost see her with her hands on her hips as she tapped her foot. Josh was like a big brother to him. He and his wife was the closest thing he had to a family and he hadn’t given them any type of explanation about what had gone on with Kris. But they knew something was wrong and loved him enough not to give him space. He knew they just wanted to help him out of what they perceived to be some kind of funk. They had no idea his heart was broken and no party was going to fix it, but he knew they meant well.

“Josh, as a matter of fact, I was just about to get in the shower and head on out there.”

“Oh. Well, good. He’s about to get in the shower now,” he added in a much lower tone.

Artis shook his head. “So, maybe I should get off of the phone so I can do that, huh?” he added dramatically.

“Yeah, yeah, that’s a good idea. You go do that. I’ll call you tomorrow for a full report.”

Artis stood and saluted the cell phone. “Yes, sir!”

Josh laughed. “Good man! Bye.”

Artis closed the phone and headed for the shower. Just over an hour later, he drove down the dark tree-lined streets of Claremont. There were no streetlights to help him see the numbers on the few houses he passed and his car lights were little help. He turned on the overhead light in his car to look at the invitation. Luckily, whoever sent it had enough sense to add directions and make a picture map.

He had passed the landmarks indicated on the map and had a feeling that he was going in the right direction at least. After following the rest of the directions to the letter, he found himself in front of a large ranch style house that sat in the middle of at least an acre of land. Creeping closer to the house, he could see a

bright light on the large country porch that almost lit up the whole front yard.

“That’s got to be it. There’s no other house on the block,” he murmured looking up and down the street. “Maybe the other cars are parked out back.”

He parked outside the gate, walked up to the door and knocked. He didn’t have long to wait before the door swung open. Artis’ eyes widened and his jaw went slack. Frozen where he stood, the blood surged through his body and his heart rate tripled making him dizzy from the sudden change. It took a while before the connection between his brain and his mouth was restored.

“Kris! Oh my God! What are you doing here?”

Kris smiled and pulled him inside. Closing the door behind them, he grabbed Artis by the waist and into his embrace. His kiss was insistent and full of passion. Artis recovered quickly kissing him back, but suddenly he pushed him away.

“No, Kris, wait. What’s happening? Tell me what’s going on. What are you doing here?”

“I live here.”

“You live here? No you don’t. You—you don’t live anywhere. You travel all over the place racing with your team.”

“Not anymore.”

Artis stood in the foyer with his hand on his forehead.

Kris is here! Kris is here with him! What was Kris doing here? Surely he had another race to go to or something, but he said he lived here. He can’t live here. Whoever lived here had invited him to a party, but there was no party going on here.

The frown on his face deepened and he turned his confused look on Kris. He was about to question him when Kris burst into laughter and held out his hand.

“Okay, okay, before you have an aneurysm trying to figure out what’s going on, let me explain.”

Artis took his hand and he let Kris pull him to a small couch in the living room. The room didn’t have that much more furniture in it, just a coffee table, a matching chair and a large screen flat television.

“What the hell is going on, Kris?”

“I left the league.”

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“You did what?” Artis asked alarmed. “How could you do that?”

Kris patted his leg to calm him. “Relax, I’m good. My contract with Atlas Racing was coming up for renewal. When they came to me earlier this month to renew it, I turned them down.”

“Why would you do that, Kris? Racing is in your blood, it’s your life.”

Kris sighed and took Artis’ hand. “Artie, when I didn’t see you at the race I was heartbroken. I never felt that bad in my life. The time we spent together was the best I ever felt. I was happy for the first time in my life...and then you left me. It felt like my heart was ripped out. I called and called, but you never answered. Winning the trophy at the speedway meant nothing to me after you cut me off. I went to Japan a train wreck.”

The sadness in his voice was like a steel barb in Artis’ heart. “I’m so sorry, Kris. I wasn’t trying—“

“I know that, baby,” he cut him off squeezing his hand. “I’m not telling this for you to apologize. I just wanted you to know how important you are to me, and what having you and then losing you was like. While I was in Japan I had two weeks before I even had to show up for qualifications. It gave me time to think.” He paused, taking deep breath before continuing. “We spent such a wonderful night together. After everything that we said to each other and did for one another, I just couldn’t believe in my heart that you didn’t want me.”

“I didn’t want you to give up racing for me. I couldn’t live with myself if you had done that,” Artis explained sincerely.

“Yeah, I figured it was something like that. You were kicking me to the curb for the greater good,” he declared dramatically with a chuckle, doing quotations in the air. “Let me just say I am not doing this just for you, Artie. I’m doing it for me. I had to do this in order for me to have peace of mind and a life of my own.”

“But how can you just give up racing?”

“Well, I didn’t, not really.”

What do you mean?”

“I bought Raceway Park. It wasn’t for sale but, it wasn’t really doing well either. The plans I have for it will bring money back to the town.”

Artis blinked a few times letting the words sink into his brain. “You bought Raceway Park?”

“Yeah, I pulled a few strings and now it’s mine. I’m going to turn it into an indoor track where the drivers can race not only dirt bikes, but trucks and ATV’s, too. It’s going to be a blast,” Kris explained excitedly. “And, of course, I’ll be able to race on it anytime I want. I’ll have to get a new bike, which will be cool.”

“So it’s an investment with perks for you.”

Kris chuckled. “Yup, and then I brought this house so I could be close to the track.”

“That’s great, Kris. I know you will be happy owning the track.”

“I won’t really be happy until you are with me. I wanted you out here with me, but I didn’t know where you lived. You told me you had your own travel agency so I looked you up and sent the invitation to your job.”

“Why not just come by my job since you looked up the address?”

“I thought I’d have a better chance to seduce you here in my house in case you really were serious about not wanting to be with me.” The sly grin and sliding hand between his thighs let him know he was in trouble—of the good variety.

This morning he was missing Kris like crazy, still hurting over not having him in his life and now he sat on his couch in his arms. Kris had given up racing professionally, but he was happy. Best of all, he still wanted to be with him. His chest swelled with joy and he turned to Kris kissing him soundly.

“Mmm, can I take that as you want to be with me?”

“Oh, yeah,” he said hugging him.

“I’m so glad. I got you something. A gift.” He pulled him from the couch, through the dining room and out the back door. Outside in the yard sat a bright red Kawasaki Ninja that matched the one Kris rode in the race at the speedway. Artis gasped and Kris’ arms slid around his waist as he pulled his body against him.

A KNIGHT AT THE SPEEDWAY

“I never could get that picture of you on my bike out of my mind, all leaned over with your ass hanging out.” Artis shivered as he placed kiss on his neck. “I had to get you your own bike so I could fuck you on mine and then on yours.”

He put his arms on top of Kris’ and pulled him even closer.

“Feel like breaking them in, baby?”

Artis stared at the bikes for a long time and then turned a bright smile to him. “Let’s do my bike first!” Kris yanked him away from the door and across the yard, laughing.

About the Author

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Jaxx Steele now lives in Indiana with his partner and their cat. When not writing Jaxx loves to travel and find new and wonderful places to incorporate into his stories.