



# PRIMAL CHASE

FROM THE ASHES

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Jay Williams loved living in the mountains. He loved waking up to the scent of pine. He relished how his cabin floorboards creaked under his footsteps. Even the early-morning chill only soothed by building a fire was refreshing. Nothing compared to chopping wood by the glow of the sunrise.

Most of all, he treasured the isolation. He hadn't always lived alone. There was a time when he woke cradled in another man's arms. But that chapter of his life was over now. That man was gone, and he was never coming back.

Jay tried not to think about it. He tried to enjoy his independence.

There were no nosy neighbors, late-night partiers, or salesmen to knock on his door. Unfortunately, there was also no cell phone reception. Or an internet connection. When he spoke to people, it was after a lengthy drive into town.

So when his jeep broke down as he was driving home, he was pissed.

"No, no, no," he muttered. "Come on, baby. Don't do this to me."

His jeep wasn't known for its reliability, but he liked to think it harbored sentimentality for him after everything they'd been through together. Unfortunately, it was only enough for him to steer onto the shoulder before the stuttering engine died completely.

He sighed, turning the key in the ignition. Nothing. No lights, no attempt to start. With a sigh, he met his own eyes in the rearview mirror. They blinked back at him, more grey than blue in the moonlight.

"At least it's a warm night."

He popped the hood and climbed from the jeep, scratching the dark stubble on his jaw. His boots thudded against the pavement. He didn't have a working flashlight. The one in the front passenger seat was dead. That was how Murphy's Law worked, after all. It kicked you when you were down.

A breeze lifted the hair from his forehead. It crept beneath his cargo jacket and the hem of his shirt. He shivered. Goose bumps broke out over his skin, making his hair stand on end. Warm or not, the air seemed charged tonight with static electricity.

Suddenly, there was an explosion and a brilliant flash of light beyond the treeline.

Jay jumped in surprise, instinctively crouching behind the jeep. It was like someone had set off a firecracker. The only difference was how this light didn't fade after the initial flash.

It pulsed, glistening like the Northern Lights. Violet. Magenta. Emerald.

His eyebrows drew together in confusion. What the hell?

He remained crouched for some time before deciding to investigate. Rational explanations ranged from partying campers to disco hunters, to hikers having a rave. Whatever it was, perhaps it came with a satellite phone and the number for a tow truck.

He rose to his full height, decision made. His first order of business was to slam the hood and lock up the jeep. He could only hope no car barreled around the corner in his absence. The chances of being rear-ended were slim, but there was an uneasy feeling in his gut nevertheless.

Twigs snapped under his boots as he hiked into the forest. The light grew brighter with every step, as if calling to him. Deep down, he knew it wasn't an earthly light. It flowed too easily. Weaving between trees like voltaic waves, it was beauty unto itself. As he drew closer, it began to retreat.

"Hello?" he called. "Is anyone there? I don't mean to scare you. I just need a phone, or a CB radio."

There was no answer. The only sounds were those of rustling branches overhead.

Frowning, he ventured closer. There was an enormous pile of burning coals ahead. They dimmed before his eyes, disintegrating to ash. He stepped behind a tree to shield himself from the heat. Even midday in the summertime was cooler.

Curiosity eventually overwhelmed his reason. He peered around the tree. His heart skipped a beat, and sweat broke out on his brow. The ashes were moving.

Phoenix.

Alien.

Demon.

Whatever emerged from the ashes had the physique of a Greek God. He wouldn't have been surprised to learn that it was sculpted by the finest artists of the Renaissance period. But by the simplest definition, overlooking the contours of muscle, what emerged from the ashes was a man. A naked, dirty man.

Jay exhaled, pulling back to hide in the shadows. Adrenaline thrummed through his veins. Of everything he'd expected to see, a man bathing in coals didn't even rank.

He'd seen enough. He was going to back away slowly and return to his jeep, lock the doors, and hope another car came along before—

He gasped when a hand landed on his shoulder, spinning him around. The naked man stood before him, heat radiating from his skin. Before Jay could react, the man grabbed his head and yanked him forward into a kiss.

He opened his mouth to protest, but the man took advantage by plunging his tongue inside. It explored, swirling and flicking in ways that made Jay's eyes flutter. The man refused to let him go when he tried to pull away. Breathing harshly through his nose was the only alternative to passing out.

Jay gripped his biceps, fiery to the touch, torn between pushing him away and pulling him closer. An electric jolt shot straight to his dick. He began to harden as the nerves were gently stimulated. Christ, it felt fantastic. Almost like phantom fingertips tickling his shaft and thumbing the head. Strange and unexpected, yes, but his knees threatened to buckle from the pleasure it gave him.

He flushed, heat spreading over his face and chest. While he wasn't the instigator here, he didn't want to give this man the wrong impression. That wouldn't end well for either of them. He was experiencing a natural response to unnatural stimuli. That was all.

He tried to pull away again, putting real effort into it this time. Instead of releasing him, the man thrust his tongue even farther into Jay's mouth, licking the back of his throat. He jerked in surprise, ninety percent certain that human tongues couldn't do that. His hips brushed against the man's naked thigh in the process. The friction made him groan.

Sweat trickled between his shoulder blades, over his back and below his waistline. His cock twitched when it trailed down the crease of his ass. He grunted into the kiss as his legs began to tremble. There were infinite ways he could imagine putting a long tongue to good use.

He pressed his hips forward, grinding, caught up in the ecstasy flooding through him. It wasn't merely affecting him physically, but mentally as well. His brain tingled. His chest swelled, heaving with something more than earth-scented air. It was like contact with this man somehow made him complete. The more contact they shared, the better he felt.

Logical whispers deep within his mind spoke of how wrong this was. He was kissing a naked stranger, if something akin to mouth sex could truly be called kissing. With every lick and prod, his balls tightened, drawing up. He just needed one more forward grind, one more stroke—

The man broke away from his lips as abruptly as he'd crushed them.

Jay would have fallen, if not for the arm that snaked around his waist. He stared at the man's lips, bitten pink and shiny. His own tongue darted out to taste lingering traces of musk. God, that was good. He needed more. He leaned forward to close the distance between them again.

But the man released him and stepped back.

Slightly put out, Jay shivered, his heart pounding rapidly. Whatever daze he'd fallen into faded away. He remained rock hard and aching, but he was distracted by the questions running through his mind. After untangling one from the others, he opened his mouth to speak.

"What the hell was that?"

"My apologies," the man said. "I needed to feel you. Taste you. I needed to know."

"Know what? If I can survive without air? You could have asked. The answer is no."

The man smiled, but it didn't reach his eyes. He looked a little sad. "Introductions are in order. My name is Skyler. I'm here to breed with you."

Jay blanched. "Excuse me?"

"Breed. Copulate. Mate."

"No, yeah, I got that." Jay ran a hand through his hair, taking a deep breath. He must have crashed his car. Slammed his head against the steering wheel. It was the only explanation. Either that, or this guy was clinically insane. In either case, it might be best to play along.

"I'm sorry to tell you this, Skyler, but I'm a man. Men don't breed with men. So, if mating for the sake of reproduction is what you're looking for, I'm not the one."

Skyler seemed to find him amusing. "I don't seek to conceive a child. I seek to conceive an entity of a non-corporeal nature. Many entities, in fact. Those that only stem from euphoria. The euphoria experienced during orgasm."

"Right." Hard though he was, his upstairs brain was rapidly catching up. This man was a psycho. A sex maniac who happened to bathe in ashes and lure strangers into the forest.

Jay began to back away.

Skyler matched his every step.

Though he found it unnerving, he tried to keep his expression passive. "Well, that sounds like quite a mission, and I wish you the best of luck with it. I'm just going to go. I have friends expecting me. It was nice meeting you, but—"

"There is no one expecting you."

His stomach dropped. "What?"

"You are Jay Williams. You live alone and prefer to keep it that way. You have no close friends or sexual relationships, though you do enjoy pleasuring yourself on occasion. Under different circumstances, you would ravish me in a heartbeat. And the only reason you are here is because your jeep inexplicably stopped."

Shit.

Jay grasped half of that. Then he was done listening. He turned and began to run.

Did Skyler have a fantastic body? Perhaps. Was Skyler out of his damn mind? Hell, yes.

Jay wasn't about to bend over for him. He wasn't that kind of guy. He'd slept with three men. Ever. And two of those had been as a teenager.

There was a reason he lived alone. While he wasn't ready to confront that reason, it originated from letting someone penetrate the wall he'd built around himself.

And sex gave a whole new meaning to the word *penetrate*.

Even a glimpse of Skyler's dick had revealed him too well-endowed for someone with so little experience. It didn't matter how much Jay was fingered first – he shuddered with desire at the thought – he'd never be ready for something that big to fill him.

He cursed as a low branch whipped at his face. His steps were unsteady, made difficult by his arousal. It was stubbornly persistent. Trapped in the confines of his jeans, it throbbed, insisting he turn around. But his pride refused. If he had to ignore his primal desires to survive an encounter with some nut job, he would.

Without warning, the forest floor dropped out from under him. There was no time to slow before he was tumbling down a steep embankment, slamming against logs and crashing through brush. Pain radiated through his bones. His legs flailed for a foothold, but he was falling too quickly.

He grunted whenever his ribs absorbed the impact. The breath was stolen from him as he rolled to a stop at the bottom of the hill. Face down in decaying leaves, he was too stunned to move. He could only listen to rocks sliding down the embankment after him. Loosened earth showered ferns like rain.

Everything hurt. The throbbing between his thighs shifted to include his head and ribs. Scratches on his hands and face burned, but he was too busy trying to breathe to care.

He heard Skyler reach the crest of the embankment and pause. The mood had changed considerably. There was a difference between a game of cat and mouse, and an honest-to-God injury. While Jay had been too panicked to accurately gauge the danger he was in before, there was no longer any doubt. He was hurt. And he'd been caught.

Bushes rustled nearby. Skyler had reached the bottom of the embankment. He knelt beside Jay, resting a hand on his shoulder. Even the light touch made him jerk. He tried to get up and run, but a sharp pain in his side made him face-plant instead. He couldn't run if he wanted to.

"Shhh," Skyler soothed him, caressing his cheekbone. "I know you're in pain. Tell me where it hurts."

Jay might have obeyed, if he could unclench his jaw. Labored breaths escaped through his teeth.

Skyler gripped his shoulder and hip, gently turning him onto his back. Jay went rigid when a fresh wave of pain washed over him. His erection was softening. There was something about being unable to breathe that reordered his body's priorities.

Skyler's hard-on was also wilting fast. At least he didn't get off on other people's pain.

Jay lifted his gaze to Skyler's face. He saw confusion there. Even a little hurt.

"Why did you run?" Skyler asked. "I offered you euphoria. Rhapsody. Elation beyond your wildest imaginings. And you ran. Injured yourself." He parted the flaps of Jay's jacket, leaning so moonlight encircled his head like a halo.

Jay was mesmerized, blinking heavily. He felt fingertips graze his lower abdomen as they slipped beneath the hem of his shirt. When his shirt was pushed up, cold air made his nipples harden. He shuddered as Skyler studied his chest. From the frown on his face, he didn't like what he saw. One of his hands reached out. Heat radiated from his skin.

"Don't—" Jay choked out, shifting a bit. "Don't touch me."

Skyler looked surprised. "I must touch you to heal you, Jay. How are you to create entities if you're in pain?"

"You're too hot. You'll burn me."

Skyler's eyes darkened. "Only in the best way, I assure you. You'll soon come to understand."

He rested his hand on Jay's ribs, his touch light. A soft glow emanated around it. It seemed to melt into Jay's skin, expanding over his chest and abdomen. The feeling was like pins and needles at first. It became a healing massage, regenerating his nerves without causing him pain.

He shivered when it sank beneath his skin, penetrating his body, warming him through and through.

Any pain he'd felt vanished, leaving him almost numb. The only remaining feeling was that of a deep stretch. It made him very tired. The only place Skyler's touch didn't heal was his head. The ache there hadn't disappeared.

As if reading his thoughts, Skyler explained, "I apologize if your head hurts. The human brain is much too complex to renew without the risk of complications. The electrical impulses are fragile. I won't risk damaging them. They're too important in the creation of entities."

Jay blinked, hearing Skyler's words, but unable to process them. His vision blurred to shades divided by light. It was his first clue that something wasn't right. The pounding in his head was relentless, dragging him under. It was similar to being dragged under water while staring up at the clouds in the sky. They blurred more and more . . .

Pressure across his shoulders roused him enough to realize that Skyler was lifting him to an upright position. His jacket was stripped away, and his shirt pulled over his head. There wasn't a stitch of clothing above his waist to separate his skin from the night air.

"What—" he slurred, head lolling back. "What are you doing?"

Skyler cradled his head and shoulders. "Close your eyes. Rest, Jay. I only want to look you over for injuries I might have missed. It's important."

But there was something in Skyler's tone to suggest otherwise. A dark thread, laced with anticipation, and something more frightening: determination.

He began to shake as he was cradled closer. An arm reached under his legs to carry him. Hopefully to the road, where a car would stop and then drive them to the hospital. He could use a doctor right now. He should probably stay awake for the journey, in case they weren't headed for the road . . .

But as he was carried, the rocking motion began to lull him to sleep. Or ease him into unconsciousness. He was too dazed to pinpoint such a nuance.

His head fell against Skyler's chest, soaking up the warmth. A muscle flexed against his cheek and he felt the weight of a stare peering down at him. The rumbling chuckle that followed was almost enough to wake him. Almost.

Jay returned to awareness slowly. There was an insistent pressure on his dick. A warm, kneading pressure that was somehow muffled and suppressed. He groaned, shifting his hips slightly.

It was then he felt the bed of earth beneath him. Something cushioned his head, for which he was grateful, but it didn't make the throbbing any more bearable. His head and shaft throbbed at the same time. One with pain, the other with pleasure. They grew more intense in a battle to drown one another out, breaking through his peaceful oblivion.

He cracked open his eyes. The overhang of a shallow cavern curved overhead. It didn't provide enough shade against the moon-rays, which suddenly seemed too bright. He clenched his eyes shut and turned his head.

"Jay?" Skyler asked, voice low. "Are you awake?"

There was a tugging at his waist. He heard leather being stripped from a buckle. Clinking brass.

Skyler was undoing his belt.

At the moment, that was fine with him. They had a war to wage against the pounding in his head. Nausea welled up in his gut when the pain became too much. If a questionable hooker had offered to blow him to chase away the pain, he would have accepted. But he didn't have a hooker. He had Skyler.

His teeth chattered. A whimper left his lips before he could silence it.

"I know, Jaybird. I know. I'm going to make you feel better."

Warmth blossomed in his chest. Jaybird. He'd forgotten the nickname until now. How had he forgotten? His former lover had called him Jaybird whenever they were in bed. Right up until the morning of the accident, and—

The throbbing in his head increased with a vengeance. His legs jostled as Skyler stripped him of his boots, jeans, and boxers. He felt a vague sense of embarrassment from being nude in front of a stranger. Doctors and nurses were one thing, but Skyler was no more a medical professional than he was a human. Humans didn't emit healing light from their hands.

"Oh, my God," Skyler breathed. "Look at you. You're amazing."

Jay opened his eyes again. He was a little confused as to why they weren't heading for the hospital. Too disoriented to be afraid. Just . . . curious. Despite the feelings coursing through him, he felt disassociated from reality. As if he were observing his life, instead of living it. None of this could be happening.

Skyler crawled to his side with all the grace of a predator. Heat from his skin warmed the air. He eyed the expanse of Jay's chest, gaze lingering on his nipples and abs. Slowly, almost as if unaware, his hands reached out to touch. Instead of healing, they caressed Jay's skin, mapping the plains and valleys of his chest.

The touch was so warm and soothing that it lulled him into a hypnotic state. He was neither asleep, nor fully awake. Only staring up at Skyler with hooded eyes, lost in the soporific effect of another man's touch. It was something he hadn't felt – hadn't allowed himself to feel – in a long time.

Hushed words fell from Skyler's lips. They were little more than a string of syllables, like the chant of an ancient healer. The whispers overlapped as his touch grew firmer, massaging, kneading Jay's chest and arms. He paid special attention to Jay's nipples, stroking the buds with his thumbs and stimulating the area around them.

Jay felt his cock twitch in response. The touch sparked a path of fire down his spine. There was something jarring about being stroked in an area normally so private, now so vulnerable. He hardened until it hurt. The breeze teased him, blowing only enough to keep him on edge.

Skyler moved his hands over Jay's lower abdomen. Over the muscles that tensed whenever he came. It was too much, and not enough. His breaths quickened, eyes fluttering closed. He clenched in anticipation, straining toward Skyler's fingertips. But they avoided touching his shaft, skating around it to stroke down his inner thighs.

His eyes flew open. If this was punishment for running away, he'd admit his regret in an instant. Apologize. Whatever it took. He understood the concept of quid pro quo well enough.

But in the shadows, Skyler didn't appear to want an apology. There was no taunting smirk on his lips. His pupils were blown, eyes wide with awe. He looked reverent. Afraid to explore any further, as if he wasn't worthy.

There was a dark hunger too, simmering just beneath the surface. Jay wanted to exploit it. He wanted to crack the façade of control and dominance, to watch it crumble beneath animalistic lust.

A deep groan vibrated through his chest as he lifted his arms over his head. He stretched, lazily arching his back and allowing his muscles to flex. Shadows caressed his skin in turn. They rippled over his dick and abdomen, ending at the hollow of his throat. He challenged Skyler with his eyes, plainly stating that if Skyler wouldn't touch him, the elements of the night would.

Skyler swallowed, the muscles around his throat tightening. His caress became rougher, nails leaving crescent marks on Jay's outer thighs. Jay pressed into the touch, spreading his legs in invitation. Never before had he been so wanton, so bold, but being watched made him feel powerful. Unashamed.

And quite frankly, he wanted Skyler to get on with it.

When Skyler finally, *finally* grazed his balls, outlining them with the pad of his thumb, Jay gasped. Skyler gave a low, throaty murmur as he cupped them, gently rolling them between his fingers, weighing them, inspecting them. Their heaviness seemed to please him.

"So fertile," he whispered. "So full and ready. You're perfect."

"Please," Jay gasped, trying to breathe through his need. With one touch, he'd been reduced from provoking to begging. It was what he'd asked for. Now he'd take it.

The throbbing between his thighs increased with every probe. He trembled with every heartbeat. Little jolts from Skyler's fingertips traveled through his balls, further filling them, stimulating them. He grit his teeth to keep from screaming. Sweat layered his skin.

His hips rolled against Skyler's fingers, seeking friction that wasn't there. When he reached down to end his suffering, Skyler snatched his hand and pinned it to the dirt.

"Almost," he promised. "Wait for it."

The words didn't register. Jay was done waiting. Building pressure made him stiffen, on the very edge of orgasm, breath hissing between his teeth. His skin felt too tight to contain the torrent of ecstasy mounting inside him. It would destroy him if he couldn't release it, feel it, treasure it. His mouth watered, and tears filled his eyes.

"Now."

Skyler gripped his cock and stroked him from base to tip.

He yelled, feeling his balls draw up. Then he was coming, exploding through the stratosphere. Head thrown back, his hips jerked into Skyler's fist, spasming uncontrollably. The pleasure went on and on, compounded by the heat of Skyler's hand and the release of something more than pearly strings of come.

“Oh, fuck,” he cried out, writhing against the ground. “Harder. Yeah, *God*—”

Skyler tightened his fist, stripping Jay’s shaft with frantic strokes. They were almost too fast, burning and raw, but the twinge of pain only heightened his pleasure. His legs thrashed with every upstroke. Skyler milked the come right out of him, smearing it, thumb grinding against the sensitive bundle of nerves just under the head.

He keened and cursed. He didn’t know if he was begging for mercy or pleading for more, but it scarcely seemed to matter, because Skyler’s fist twisted on the next stroke. It triggered a burst of white behind his eyelids and tore a ragged howl from his throat.

He was dying. Had to be. It was too much.

“Can you see them?” he distantly heard. “Look.”

The pleasure finally began to ebb, allowing him a break before it broke him. Gasping for air, shuddering through the aftershocks, he pried open his eyes to see electric crackles of light fade into the atmosphere. He wasn’t sure if he believed them to be real.

Skyler was smiling. “They’re only the beginning. Together, we can retrieve more.”

He lowered his head and nuzzled Jay’s cock, which was still hard. Jay groaned, even as he wondered how that was possible. Thoughts slow, reflexes non-existent, he didn’t have time to speak or pull away before Skyler engulfed him in his wet, hot mouth.

“Agh, wait—” he choked out, bucking up and then falling back. His hands shook as Skyler’s tongue swirled around his length. It produced a low-voltage current to heighten his pleasure, making every nerve tingle.

His mouth went slack, eyes rolling up in his head. The muscles in his abdomen stuttered. To anyone else, it might have appeared like he was having a seizure. Maybe he was. But the bliss it gave him was too extreme for him to care.

“Oh, my God. Oh, my—”

He salivated as it climbed higher and higher. The tipping point was when Skyler’s tongue thinned enough to *slither* into his slit. It stimulated him from the inside, tickling and electrifying nerves he never knew he had.

“What the— oh, shit, yes. *Fuck*.”

The tongue retreated, lapping at the head, and he came so hard that he couldn’t utter a sound. His mouth widened in a silent scream. Skyler’s grip was firm on his hips, keeping him still as his entire body warmed. Fiery euphoria seemed to expand the pleasure centers of his brain beyond their usual capacity.

Every muscle convulsed, over and over, until tears leaked from his eyes. Through the blurriness, he saw what appeared to be tiny bolts of lightning charging the air until it buzzed with sound. They glowed, a nebula of color erupting toward the clouds.

Then Skyler *sucked*, like he was trying to suck Jay’s brain cells out his cock. The suction bordered on painful, but it elicited another wave of convulsions.

He squeezed his eyes shut, breathing through the pulses, upper body curling in on itself. His muscles burned with rigidity, but it was worth it. He gripped Skyler’s head to anchor himself, to keep him from flying apart.

Grey lined the edges of his vision when the pleasure began to dissipate. Tension leached from his muscles. They unknotted bit by bit, until he was loose enough to freely thrust into Skyler’s mouth, to feel Skyler’s throat close around him. It might have been greedy, but hell, it was a long way down. The aftershocks could scarcely be called *after* anything for how they made him shake and moan.

Skyler grunted in approval, the vibrations traveling to his balls as if coaxing them to fill for another round. The rhythmic contractions seemed endless, mere ripples after crashing waves. Skyler's palms kneaded the globes of his ass. The pleasure melted over a wider area, sinking into his bones.

"So goddamned good," he husked.

Finally, he collapsed against the ground with a dull thud, limbs boneless and limp. His chest heaved with every breath. Holy shit.

Skyler lifted his mouth with an obscene slurping sound. Not a drop of come had been spilt. He ran his tongue over his lips like he couldn't get enough of the taste.

"That was the best sex of my life," Jay slurred. "And we didn't even have actual sex."

Skyler's eyes shifted to the forest floor. Remorse was evident in his expression.

"I must apologize for getting carried away. You're so . . . delicious, and yet, so sensitive. I could bring you to heights unknown, but it is ill-advised until your brain recovers. The same could be said of duration." He ran a hand over Jay's sweaty forehead. "But you handled that very well. Sleep now. We will continue in the morning."

Jay ran.

He ran through the forest, toward his cabin in the distance. It sat on a cliff overlooking the town below. Moonbeams shone onto a roof of patchy shingles.

Relief flooded through him. It would be all right. Rest was what he needed.

The ground softened as he neared. Leaves and thorns were like velvet beneath his feet. Nothing would slow him down. He was almost home. The cabin loomed over him, more sinister than he remembered, but it had been a terrifying night. If he saw the Boogeyman in the veil of harmless shadows, no one could blame him.

He ascended rickety front steps and pushed open the door, glancing over his shoulder before crossing the threshold. The cabin had aged during his absence, adorned now with cobwebs and broken glass. Its musty scent greeted him as the air stirred with his arrival.

Scraps of yellowing newspaper crinkled under his feet.

*Storm Claims One*, the headline read.

Jay ignored it, turning his attention to a pair of jeans crumpled in the corner. Although caked with dust, they would keep him warm. He put them on and padded to the bedroom, intending to grab a sweatshirt before locking up. What he found instead stopped him in his tracks.

“No,” he whispered.

A body lay in the bed. Even without venturing closer, Jay knew who it was. The sight made him feel sick. His stomach lurched as he stumbled backward. Glass cut his feet. Bloody footprints followed him to the porch, appearing almost black in the light. They pointed at him, angry, accusing.

“It wasn’t my fault,” he breathed. “I didn’t do anything wrong. I tried to save you—”

He gasped when a hand landed on his shoulder, spinning him around. The dead man stood before him, grey skin hanging from his bones. Rainwater dripped from his hair. Before Jay could react, the man grabbed his head and yanked him forward into a kiss.

He opened his mouth to scream, and the man plunged his tongue inside. It dove down his throat, choking him, drowning him. He couldn’t breathe. It pulled back and dove into his throat again, thrusting, only allowing him to breathe in intervals.

His hands flailed before grabbing the man’s shoulders to push him away. Skin caved under his grip, clammy and swollen. Something trickled down his arms. Whether it was blood or water remained a mystery.

Jay was horrified to feel his body respond to the dead man’s kiss. If any moment could be deemed inappropriate to get hard, it was when he was struggling for air. Nevertheless, his dick filled with blood, bulging against his zipper to strain forward for attention.

He let out a muffled cry when the dead man suddenly gripped him through his jeans. Wetness seeped through the fabric. It drenched his skin, making thrusting against the man’s hand easier. But limited contact only sated them for so long. By the hard line against Jay’s thigh – he distantly wondered how a dead man got it up – they both wanted more.

Icy fingers wormed inside his waistband. A wrench of inhuman strength jarred his hips and tore the denim. The ripping sound made his heart skip a beat. He was left bare to the man’s hand, exposed to the air.

Meaty fingers wrapped around his shaft to fondle and stroke him. The cold touch made him shiver into the kiss, but God, it felt good. It felt familiar in all the right ways, dead flesh aside.

A whisper of bone poked through one of the man’s fingers. Jay jerked when it prodded at his slit.

Fuck, *yes*.

He wrapped his arms around the man's neck and threw himself into the kiss, shoving his hips forward. Pre-come streaked his abdomen on each downstroke. Groaning with need, he wrapped one leg around the man's waist. A bloated hand gripped his ass to yank him closer, while the other groped him harder.

He broke away from the kiss to look into the man's eyes. A milky coating layered the irises, but he would know those eyes anywhere. They retained the same heat they'd had when alive.

"Fuck," Jay rasped, pressing their foreheads together. Heat was pooling at his core. He wouldn't last much longer. The dead man seemed to know as much, but he wouldn't stop jacking, wouldn't slow his pace. His fingers danced along the underside, playing, teasing the vein there.

The hand on Jay's ass began to explore. Jagged fingernails dragged over his skin. They traced his crease before dipping between his cheeks. A finger rubbed over his hole, soggy and twice the size it should be. He gasped when the fingernail caught on his rim. But then the finger plunged into him, stroking him from the inside.

He whined at the cold intrusion, squirming and writhing in the dead man's embrace, clenching around the finger. His clothes were soaked. Water continued to seep through them, seemingly without a source. But he knew better. The source was standing before him. It was rubbing his cock and fingering his hole. Keeping him on edge.

"Deeper," he whispered. "Deep as you can go, please. *Yes*."

The finger inside him thrust to the knuckle and just *kept going*, like there were no limits for the dead. It found his prostate without a hitch, grazing it, lightly scraping, and then grinding hard. He howled into the man's shoulder. Violent shudders wracked his frame. Pained pleasure made him claw for something to anchor himself with.

The man walked them to the nearest wall. Jay slammed into it, driving the man's finger even deeper into his body, jarring him forward.

Glistening lips brushed his throat before latching on. They invoked a full body jerk from him, made more severe by the dripping hair pressed against his chest. He wasn't surprised to feel a lack of teeth. Decaying gums wouldn't hold them, after all. The dead man nestled and sucked on the flesh of his neck like a leach. Wet, slimy, and cold. His eyes drifted shut and he thrust against the hand wrapped around him.

It tightened and sped up, demanding everything he could give. He moaned when the thumb brushed the head, smearing pre-come down his length. The rhythm became erratic, unpredictable, until he was all but fucking into the hand and pushing back against the finger inside him. Duel sensations that coiled in a tangle of ecstasy, fighting for dominance.

The dead man straddled his leg and started to ride his thigh. It was so taboo, so dirty and *hot* that Jay felt his pleasure spike and explode.

"*Oh—*" The low, broken groan was wrenched from his core as he came.

White heat pulsed from his balls. His hips stuttered and seized. A steady *hunh, hunh, hunh* stemmed from his lips as his cock quivered, slit flaring. Come painted the floor in uneven streaks. His ass clenched, rim clamping down around the finger, globes trembling from the force of his orgasm. All the while, he rode it out, sucking air through his teeth like a dying man.

An unexpected grind into his prostate made him cry out. His cock jetted a stream of come from the pressure. Slimy wetness against his leg made him vaguely realize the dead man was coming, too. An inky black come dribbled down his thigh, smearing over his skin with every

drive of his hips. He would have been repulsed, but he was *still* coming, shaft acting like an endless geyser, gushing until it was spent.

His knees refused to hold him up as the spasms receded. The arm around his shoulders tensed, dragging him closer, constricting his breathing. Loving him to death.

Jay shivered and shook as he was lowered to the cabin floor. Too drained to do much of anything else, his hips weakly bucked, seeking more touch, more pressure. He panted for breath, teeth chattering, body limp in the dead man's arms. There was nowhere else he'd rather be . . .

Jay jerked awake.

An arm around his waist dragged him back. Dirt ground against his side. Skyler cradled him, body hot enough to make him sweat. His hairline was drenched, along with his chest.

He glanced down, unsurprised to find evidence of his recent orgasm already crusting on his skin. His dick was red and half-hard against his stomach. Tremors that had nothing to do with pleasure ran through his limbs.

It had been years since he'd allowed himself to think about what happened. How he'd taken the jeep into town for supplies, leaving his lover alone. How the storm had moved in faster than anyone had anticipated. How he'd worried all night as water flooded the roads, trapping him in town. By the time the roads had cleared, it had been too late.

"Jay, are you all right?" Skyler murmured into his ear, voice thick with sleep.

No. He was pretty fucking far from all right. But he nodded and closed his eyes, unwilling to revisit the past anymore tonight. He'd avoided thinking about it for years. He even harbored repressed memories, according to local psychiatrists. A type of selective amnesia.

He remembered the basics. Understood the gist of his former relationship and the tragedy that had forced it to end. But he didn't remember the details, and he didn't care to. If they were revealing themselves through his dreams, he would do his best to ignore them.

"Bad dream?" Skyler asked.

"No," he snapped. His own voice was hoarse. "Even if it was, it's none of your damn business. I don't know you. You don't know me."

"I'd like that to change."

"It can't."

"Why not?"

Jay exhaled. "Another relationship is the last thing I need. Let's not pretend this is more than what it is. We're using each other. You need entities, because you're some glorified alien. I need sex, because I'm a hot-blooded male. But when this is over, we'll go our separate ways, and we'll never see each other again."

"Is that what you think?"

"I said it, didn't I?"

Skyler's forehead pressed against his skin. "This runs much deeper than you think. I'm not here by chance. You're not some random man. We're meant to be together."

Christ. Those were exactly the words he didn't want to hear. Well, there was nothing left to be done about it. The safest avenue would be silence. Jay refused to listen to any more.

"Just go to sleep," he ordered.

Skyler sighed, breath hot against his shoulder blade. But he complied. As he settled down, his eyelashes brushed Jay's skin. The graze felt like a gesture of affection.

*Goddamn it.*

Hours later, when it was still dark, Jay woke with one intention: leaving. He tip-toed around Skyler, half-fearful he would wake up and half-surprised he was still sleeping at all. This had been the strangest, most powerful experience of his life, but he was ready to end it, thank you very much.

Screw his dreams of a dead lover.

Screw Skyler and his non-corporeal entities.

Jay had a life mere minutes away from here. A lonely, somewhat empty life, he'd admit that much. But at least he wasn't forced to relive the past through his dreams. At least he wasn't coerced into an intimate relationship before he was ready.

Skyler lay on his clothes. His boots were nowhere to be seen. He had no choice but to head for the road as naked as the day he was born. It wouldn't be pleasant. It might cut up his feet. But there were worse things in life than literal and figurative freedom.

He winced when a twig snapped under his foot. Barely daring to move, he snuck a glance over his shoulder. Skyler was still out like a light. Thank God.

The farther he crept, the bolder he became. Finally, it reached the point where he could run without fear of detection. He took his steps more carefully than last time, ever mindful of how one misstep could send him tumbling down another embankment.

Skyler wouldn't be there to heal him this time. Or to give him orgasms so damn fantastic that they neutralized his headache.

That was something worth researching when he returned to civilization. Voltages, charges, neurons, and electrical impulses within the brain.

*Electrocution*, his brain piped up. *Terrible way to die.*

Rustling in the foliage made Jay pause. He leapt behind the nearest tree, pressing his back to the bark. It was rough against his skin. He tried to silence his breathing, but found it impossible.

Then static electricity wafted through the air, and his breath hitched.

"Jay? I know you're here," Skyler's voice drifted through the trees, getting closer. "What do you gain by running? Don't you want to know why I chose you?"

He couldn't stay here. He'd be caught.

Forgoing hiding to flee, he bolted from his spot, leaping over a fallen log. The road was close. He was sure of it. Unfortunately, he couldn't find the same path he'd taken into the woods. The brush was thick and near impenetrable. Moonlight dimmed until he couldn't see a damn thing.

All the while, the footsteps behind him grew louder. His legs weakened as he remembered the euphoria gifted to him before. Caught up in his memories, he stumbled over a tree root and fell. Dry leaves scratched at his hands and arms. He crawled forward, seconds away from rising to his feet when he heard Skyler's growl. The weight of the man landed heavily his back.

He gasped when his knees and elbows gave out. The pain of being flattened so suddenly was eclipsed by Skyler's *heat*, and the erection pressing against the back of his thigh. Hot, panting breaths in his ear made him shudder and buck. His shaft swelled as the movement made him grind against the ground.

"Caught you," Skyler breathed. His teeth scraped the shell of Jay's ear before descending down his neck. "Don't tell me that you don't want this."

Jay had forgotten how to speak. He groaned when Skyler shifted to slot himself between the cheeks of his ass. Not pressing, not spreading, but gently thrusting against him. He was too big. But it was a slicked finger and not his dick that slid between Jay's cheeks to circle his hole.

He grunted in alarm nevertheless, the threat of penetration abruptly real. This wasn't a dream. This was really happening.

"Shhh, it's okay," Skyler whispered against his back. He began massaging Jay's ass, hand sliding down to cup his balls. "Going to feel good. I promise. I can make it so good for you, Jay. Better than before. Better than you've ever had."

His heart slammed against his ribs. He wanted it. God, he wanted it. But this was wrong. He didn't even know what Skyler was, much less where he came from or what the hell was happening after each orgasm. Each long, sinuous, mind-blowing orgasm.

He didn't *want* to want Skyler, or anyone else. Allowing himself to want them was like inviting pain with a neon sign. But his thoughts were stuttering, all reason fleeing in favor of desire.

His hips bucked against the ground, desperately seeking friction. Something about Skyler was affecting him. He knew it, and yet, he didn't care. Lust was riding him hard. It was an all-consuming need, begging to be satisfied. Desire would kill him, if the pleasure didn't first.

Skyler stopped massaging his ass to lay bodily against his back, fingernails trailing a path up his side.

"What's it going to be, Jaybird?" he whispered. "Do you want to fly?"

"Please." The plea left his lips before he could stop it.

Dead silence followed his admission, and for a moment, he worried that he'd said something wrong. But then Skyler's lips skimmed his spine, kissing a path to the small of his back. He gasped softly, eyes flickering shut. Those lips were like molten lava, warming him at his center. He clawed at the leaves, hands clenching into fists. Breaths ghosted over his skin, soothing him even as his heart sped up.

A gentle pressure between his shoulder blades coaxed him to lay flat. Dirt ground against his face. The scent of earth filled his nose, invoking something primal within him.

He was meant to do this. He was always meant to do this. What the feeling meant or how it came to be, he was at a loss to explain. None of that mattered now. It was something to explore another time. For now, he lost himself in the feeling of Skyler's lips on his skin. Gentle, loving, tender. They were somehow familiar and yet strange.

When Skyler's lips reached the cleft of his ass, he swallowed hard, waiting. Exhaled breath, hotter than it had any right to be, had him quivering with need.

"Exquisite." The word was spoken into his skin, as if branding him with it. A gentle nip made him jerk, inevitably thrusting against the ground. When he pulled back to do it again, fingertips gripped his hips, holding him in place. His cock jumped in protest. He felt it leaking pre-come, beading at the tip and painting his abdomen.

Heated thumbs slid between his cheeks. They squeezed before separating the globes of his ass to expose his hole to the air. A breeze made him tense, but the grip was firm, holding him open and vulnerable. Thumbs caressed the skin of his inner cheeks until he was rhythmically clenching for something to fill him.

"It's beautiful," Skyler murmured, his voice rough. One of his thumbs pressed against the spasming ring, not quite dipping in, but tracing, sensitizing the nerves. The alien sensation made Jay squirm with both pleasure and uncertainty. He needed more. His forehead rolled over the ground, arms flexing just enough to push his hips back. The silent plea made Skyler groan.

"I have to—" Skyler broke off. "Have to taste you."

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