

LOVE Has NO Boundaries



Don't Read in the Closet Event 2013

THE BADASS OF HIS DREAMS

Missy Welsh

Love Has No Boundaries

An M/M Romance series

THE BADASS OF HIS DREAMS

By Missy Welsh

Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love Has No Boundaries* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a free gift to you.

What Is Love Has No Boundaries?

The *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* invited members to choose a photo and pen a letter asking for a short M/M romance story inspired by the image; authors from the group were encouraged to select a letter and write an original tale. The result was an outpouring of creativity that shone a spotlight on the special bond between M/M romance writers and the people who love what they do.

A written description of the image that inspired this story is provided along with the original request letter. If you'd like to view the photo, please feel free to join the [Goodreads M/M Romance Group](#) and visit the discussion section: *Love Has No Boundaries*.

Whether you are an avid M/M romance reader or new to the genre, you are in for a delicious treat.

Words of Caution

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The *M/M Romance Group* strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

This story is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

All rights reserved worldwide.

This eBook may be distributed freely in its entirety courtesy of the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group*. This eBook may not be sold, manipulated or reproduced in any format without the express written permission of the author.

The Badass of His Dreams, Copyright © 2013 Missy Welsh

Cover Design by Goodreads M/M Romance Group

This ebook is published by the *M/M Romance Group* and is not directly endorsed by or affiliated with Goodreads Inc.

THE BADASS OF HIS DREAMS

By Missy Welsh

Photo Description

Two young men are naked on a bed in this black and white photograph. One sits up, his head thrown back to offer his tongue to the other. The other man kneels close against the first with his head tipped down and his mouth open; he appears to be a second away from kissing his lover.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

It was the middle of sophomore year when he transferred into my elite college preparatory academy. Right away it was clear that he wasn't there by choice, and he wasn't there to make friends. Not to be cliché, but if you looked up "bad boy" in the dictionary, there he would be. He had a chip on his shoulder the size of Kansas and he came from the wrong side of the tracks, and none of the rich kids there let him forget it. The guys hated him; the girls either lusted after him or sneered at his scuffed-up combat boots, messy hair, and the multitude of chains and rings and bracelets he wore in flagrant disregard of the academy's dress code.

Now it's the beginning of our freshman year of college and once again, we're at the same school. Even though I wanted him from the moment I first saw him, we've never really spoken. I might as well have been invisible for the attention he paid me, both then and now. That is, until a group outing to the city goes badly and leaves me alone on the wrong side of town. I was easy pickings for the guys who spotted me and saw a rich teenager out of his element. I'm not sure what the guys would have done to me if he hadn't shown up, but that night I discovered more than one secret. He wasn't just some regular boy with an excessive amount of bad attitude—he was a wolf, and I was his mate, and now that he had finally acknowledged me, there was no way we could live apart without sentencing him to death.

Sincerely,

Harper

Story Info

Genre: paranormal

Tags: college, barely legal, public activity, shifters, interspecies, soulmates or bonded

Word count: 12,357

THE BADASS OF HIS DREAMS

By Missy Welsh

It was the middle of their sophomore year of high school when T. Alexander Tait became the newest transfer into The Bennington Academy for Young Gentlemen in upstate New York. The name said it all about how snotty the school was, and it was instantly obvious to Pitney Gage that this Tait guy was never going to fit in properly.

Thank God.

Tait—as everyone eventually ended up calling him—came to his first day at an elite college preparatory academy wearing his uniform, yes, but not at all according to regulation. He made the blazer and slacks look like urban couture... and seriously sexy, too. Pitney couldn't stop staring at him.

With Tait's white dress shirt and navy jacket sleeves rolled up to just below his elbows, the collection of bracelets around his wrists were on display. Thin metal circlets jangled on his left wrist, while a couple leather bands hugged his right wrist. Then there were the three silver rings he wore on fingers with black nail polish. It was the one on the middle finger of his right hand that intrigued Pitney most: It looked old and was of a snarling wolf's head with ruby-red eyes.

Speaking of eyes, Tait's were a brilliant blue, and he'd ringed them in black liner so they seemed to glow like a gas flame. His lips were pink and glossy, the bottom one full and suckable. His hair was a hawk of nearly black spikes and waves that was at least six inches tall and trained forward so that the front of it flopped onto Tait's forehead. The flop made Pitney think of the mane on a surly black stallion and, for some reason, he just wanted to spend some time tugging on it.

Pitney was pretty sure the whole of Tait was supposed to look mysterious and intimidating—and he was—but more than that, Pitney saw a lost soul desperate for someone to understand him.

Kindred spirits.

Not that Pitney would ever in a million years make that observation out loud and he certainly didn't look anything like Tait on the outside—since he followed the dress code to the letter and was utterly forgettable otherwise—but Pitney recognized in Tait a fellow outsider. None of these entitled pricks would embrace Tait any more than they'd ever embraced shy and gawky Pitney Gage.

If it wasn't for the fact Pitney was pretty sure Tait would bite his head off for trying, he might've made a move to make friends that first day. Would've been easy to do since Tait was seated right behind Pitney in their English Lit class. But one look back at the way Tait glared at him, with a curled lip and everything, had made sure Pitney never said a word to him.

Ever. In two years.

Until graduation day, when Tait came over to Pitney—managing to make his navy blue cap and gown look artfully styled—and said, “What school are you going to now?”

Pitney had had a growth spurt between sophomore and junior years, so he looked down from his six-one height at the guy who'd been starring in his spank bank from day one and just blinked for a second or two. Tait's blue eyes blinked back up at him, that flop of hair just right there. Then Tait frowned and, though it was kind of adorable, the look brought Pitney back to the fact the badass of his dreams had spoken to him.

And he couldn't remember what Tait had said. “What?”

Tait sighed and rolled his eyes. “What. School. Are. You. Going—”

“Oh. NYU. In the fall. But I'm moving there next month. I'm actually really—”

“New York University?”

“Uh, yes.”

“Okay.”

And Tait had just walked away. The only thing Pitney could compare the experience to was being interviewed by one of those polltakers at the mall. Except those surveys felt a little more personal. Plus, it didn't look like Tait wanted to ask anyone else where they were going before he got in his battered old Buick and drove away.

Why had Tait cared?

Of course, months later, while Pitney and his small band of new college friends had decided to spend spring break in a crappy hotel off Broadway, Pitney discovered he was oh so very glad Tait had cared, and it didn't matter why. When sprinting down some alley in a very isolated area far from anything familiar, Pitney was thrilled to see Tait ahead of him in all his badass glory. There were two gay bashers on Pitney's tail, he didn't have a clue how to actually fight someone, but Tait looked like he knew how to do deadly things with his pinky finger and a Q-tip. Maybe together they could survive this; then Pitney would never again say he was perfectly fine leaving a gay bar alone late at night to find his way back to the hotel.

Only Tait didn't ask what was going on, didn't even wait for Pitney to holler for help. He ran toward Pitney and, as he passed him, shoved Pitney into a huge pile of black trash bags beside a pair of dumpsters. Pitney landed spread-eagle on top of the bags, and it took a moment for him to figure out what the hell just happened.

Then he heard the screaming and... Was that a *dog* fighting?

Pitney looked over his shoulder, but stopped when he realized he was on something with sharp points inside one of the bags. Gingerly, he got up off the trash bags while trying not to freak about what that puddle of liquid he'd had his hand in might actually be. When Pitney finally turned around, the only thing left to see was Tait running a hand through that thick Mohawk and panting heavily.

The bashers were gone.

“Thank you, Tait.” The breathy quality to his voice made him swallow nervously and try to control himself. “I don’t know what would’ve happened if you hadn’t... Oh my God, are you hurt?”

Because as Tait turned toward him, Pitney saw that the seam at the thigh of his jeans was split. Had one of those guys pulled a knife?

Pitney was on his knees beside Tait in an instant, pulling the seam wider to get a look at Tait’s leg. But there was no bloody gash, just a fine dusting of dark hairs on pale skin. No reason for Pitney to slip his hand inside the denim and rest his palm on Tait’s twitching muscles. He did anyway, of course because, *hello temptation*, and then he looked up.

His breath caught at the way Tait was staring at him. Tait didn’t seem to be breathing, but he did slowly lick his lips, and then take a breath, his nostrils flaring like he’d smelled something fantastic. He shifted his feet, spreading his thighs more, and angled his hips in a way Pitney had become really familiar with; that was the stance of a man who expected a blow job.

Tait wanted him?

Oh holy fuck, *Tait wanted him*.

There was suddenly a whole pack of tween girls screaming inside Pitney’s brain like they were in the front row of a Bieber concert. Thankfully, he didn’t echo them out loud, but he did wrap his hand more firmly around the back of Tait’s rock-solid thigh. When Tait leaned down, blue eyes intent and cheeks flushed from way more than a fight, Pitney wet his lips in anticipation.

But Tait froze and just stared. Pitney couldn’t let this stop now, so he reached up and grabbed the back of Tait’s head, stretched himself up, and kissed Tait hard right on those glossy pink lips.

The kiss was just getting good when Tait opened his mouth and Pitney slipped his tongue inside, but a second later, Pitney was on his back on the cold alley pavement. A moment more and Tait was on top of him, holding

Pitney's wrists down on either side of his head. The look on Tait's face now was... Why was he angry?

"You dumbass," Tait said from his perch on Pitney's stomach. "You have any idea what you just did? I mean, for fuck's sake, man, you—"

Oh, God, he'd completely misread him. Tait didn't want him at all.

"I'm sorry. Please, it... It was just a mistake. I didn't mean—" Tait raised his hand toward Pitney's face. "No," Pitney hollered and turned his head, eyes shut tight and hands coming up to deflect the strike.

He should've let those bashers get him because to have it be Tait who beat him... Oh, God, that was so much worse. Not Tait. *Not Tait.*

But Tait didn't punch him; gentle fingertips brushed at Pitney's cheek instead. When Pitney looked up at him, wariness vying against hope, he gasped at the tender look on Tait's face.

"I'm not going to hit you," Tait whispered, leaning closer. "Might wrestle you, but I'd never *hurt* you."

"But... Why're you mad?"

Tait leaned over him completely, even planting his elbows on the asphalt to either side of Pitney's head. Those blue eyes so close, that mouth right there... All Pitney wanted to do was kiss Tait again.

"I wasn't ready to tell you." Tait's breath puffed against Pitney's lips. "We barely know each other, but now... Hell, Pitney, now you're stuck with me."

Tait moved his legs back, denim rasping against pavement, until his body straightened out so he could rest himself on top of Pitney and—*Oh... That's Tait's hard cock on my stomach. Holy Christ on a cracker, he's*—Pitney's brain lost that thought when Tait ground down against him. Pitney grabbed Tait's hips just before Tait rotated to rub on him again.

"Okay," Pitney whispered.

"Pitney," Tait said with a laugh.

"Huh?"

“Only thing on your mind right now is sex and—”

“Uh... Well, yeah.” He frowned up at Tait, but used his grip on Tait’s hips to pull him closer. “Can’t imagine where I got the idea. I mean, guys lie on top of me with hard-ons all the time and don’t mean to fuck me. Must be the piss-water soaking into my skull or something to make me think about sex. Silly me.”

“Damn but you’re a snarky bitch,” Tait said with a snarl before his lips came crashing down onto Pitney’s.

Yes, those weren’t exactly the words he’d always wanted to hear a guy say before kissing the hell out of him. Pitney couldn’t really find it in himself to protest mere words while Tait was doing raunchy, porn-like things to his mouth.

Pitney had only kissed a few times and never like this, so he knew he really shouldn’t put too much stock in how fabulous it felt to kiss Tait. It was just a really good kiss, not anything meant to be and the earth didn’t move or whatever... Well, despite the whole thing feeling like maybe it was fated and sort of did tilt the planet just a little more.

For heaven’s sake, this was Tait kissing him!

But on the ground in an alley? *Yeck*. And it was only fair that he suddenly rolled over and put Tait on the bottom but, well, he maybe could’ve aimed where he was going to put Tait a little better.

Pitney heard a squishy splash and realized... Yeah, there was a swath of liquid filth pooled in the center of the alley and he’d just plopped Tait right into it. He looked down at Tait and tried not to smile at how wide open his blue eyes were. A snort slipped out of Pitney when Tait’s eyes narrowed and his upper lip curled like a snarl of disgust. Well, maybe he snarled in some anger too, because he did growl, and it was pretty menacing. In theory anyway.

When Pitney made to get off Tait, let him get out of the “water”, Tait used the fact he held Pitney’s wrists again to keep him where he was. Geez, Tait was kinda strong. Tugging hardly moved Tait’s arms from the asphalt. And

now, the rest of Pitney was catching on to the fact he was sprawled out on top of his bad boy fantasy. An alley seemed like the perfect place for an illicit affair with a badass. Maybe not lying on the alley floor, of course, but he could get into kneeling on rough pavement under a lone streetlight, his jaw starting to ache from the girth of Tait's stiff, pulsing cock in his mouth. *Oh, man...*

Pitney hollered when Tait suddenly pushed up and swung him around until he was on the bottom again. And, oh, it was wet and this puddle smelled worse, like maybe there was some fresh piss in it. Rat piss, probably. He might be hard and wanting sex, but he seriously wanted a shower way more. Tait could join him, of course. Yeah, that was a *much* better idea.

Before Pitney could offer up the idea, Tait was saying, "Pit, you—"

"Don't call me that."

"Why not?" Tait's dark brows thrust down in a deep frown. "Everybody called you that. Why can't—"

Pitney frowned right back at him. "They also called me Armpit and Pitiful and said things like 'he's not a pitbull, he's a poodle', so my name is Pitney Alastair Gage and you can call me any one of those names, but you'll use the *whole word*, thanks."

Tait grinned down at him. "Alastair, huh?"

"God, shut up."

Pitney struggled to get up again, but Tait really wasn't budging. Was he part concrete? Damn, for a little guy he was heavy.

"Tristan," Tait suddenly whispered.

Pitney stopped struggling. "What?"

Tait sighed. "T. Alexander Tait? The 'T' stands for Tristan." He bit his bottom lip for a second, then rolled his eyes and said, "And I'm a fourth."

Pitney needed a second to process that. "Tristan. Tristan Alexander Tait the Fourth." He grinned cheekily. "You win."

Tristan groaned. "Fuck you, Pitney."

“Sure, but can I call you Tristan?”

“Only if you want to be ignored.” Then his eyes widened. “Wait, did you say—”

“What if I say something like...” He dropped his voice and tilted his chin up. “Kiss me, Tristan.”

A shiver shot through Pitney at the whine out of Tait. He dropped back down and reclaimed Pitney’s mouth. This time, the kiss was less porno and more deep, wet need. *Wet...* Damn it, the nastiness of their location was totally cutting into Pitney’s fantasy fulfillment.

He turned his head to part their mouths, and Tait switched right into kissing and sucking at Pitney’s neck. Pitney forgot why he’d moved for a minute, just enjoying how it felt to have Tait nibble and lick and suck like maybe he’d leave a mark. *Marked by Tait...* He’d walk around shirtless to make sure people saw that. *Tait wanted me. See? He left his mark right there.*

Into his ear, Pitney heard Tait say, “Aw shit, Pitney. I need to claim you.”

“Claim me?”

“Fuck you.”

“Do you mean—”

“Make your ass mine.” And there was some growl to that last word.

That’s what he thought he meant. “Well, see, I-I haven’t, um...”

Tait collapsed on top of him with a groan into Pitney’s shoulder. “That’s good because you’re mine and I get to do it first, but also shit fucking hell damn because now we can’t do it right here, right now.” Then Tait started taking deep breaths like he was trying to calm himself down.

Pitney smiled, but cleared his throat so he wouldn’t laugh. Kinda nice to know Tait wanted him so badly but wouldn’t push for something fast and painful here in this nasty alley. Strange how Tait saying Pitney belonged to him didn’t turn him off at all, but whatever.

“I could suck you off,” Pitney suggested. “I’m great at that. Not that I’m, you know, bragging, just that it’d be good. For both of us. And we could do it here. Now.”

Tait sat up, his expression a little homicidal instead of interested in Pitney’s idea. His hands pressing Pitney’s shoulders into the pavement, he used that growly voice to say, “Who’ve you been sucking off?”

Pitney frowned up at him. “Just guys. Hookups and stuff.”

“You haven’t been with anyone tonight.”

“How would you know?”

Okay, the pinning him down thing was getting old, and Pitney’s twisting and attempted sit-ups couldn’t budge Tait.

“I didn’t taste anyone in your mouth.”

Pitney tried to arch up, but it didn’t work. “Well, you wouldn’t. I always use condoms.”

Tait leaned in and sniffed all around Pitney’s face.

“Dude, what the—”

“You don’t smell like you’ve been with anyone in a long time.”

“I do bathe daily, you know.”

“Sex lingers.”

Now Tait moved his legs so that his feet hooked over Pitney’s thighs, holding his legs down too.

“That’s it. Get off me.” He punched Tait in the side, but the angle was awkward so it didn’t do him much good. “I mean it,” he said anyway.

In one move, so fast Pitney could barely track it all, Tait was off of him and standing while bringing Pitney up onto his feet too. Pitney swayed and stumbled, disoriented for a second there. Tait shoved him back so he collided with the brick wall behind him. Gave him something to lean against while he frowned over at Tait, at least.

“Are you on something? Seriously, dude, what’s with tossing me around?”

“You wanted up, you’re up.”

“For shit’s sake...”

Tait was suddenly up in Pitney’s face. Or as up in his face as the pip-squeak could get.

“No one else, Pitney.”

“Huh?” That growly voice was kinda distracting.

“Nobody but me. You hear me?”

“Hold on now. You—”

Tait grabbed Pitney by one shoulder and the back of his neck to pull him down for another devouring kiss. Pitney wanted to resist, because who was Tait to get all dominant on him, act like he owned him, the squirt, but...

There was the kissing. The desperate, dueling tongues and panted-breaths kissing. Pitney kinda felt like maybe Tait sorta *needed* him. And that was pretty hot, because Tait could’ve had anyone, but he *needed* Pitney. So maybe Pitney didn’t mind being Tait’s right out of the gate. He’d wanted it for so long already anyway, he could do monogamy.

“Nobody else,” Tait said right there against Pitney’s mouth.

Pitney meant to lick his lips, but licked Tait’s instead. The noise that came from Tait’s throat made Pitney shiver and swallow, because for Tait to whimper like that...

“Yeah, okay.”

“Promise?” He sounded worried, and then... Puppy dog eyes? Tait knew how to make *puppy dog eyes*? Oh hell, he was done for.

“Yeah, I promise. Just you.”

Tait smiled, then honest to God cuddled into Pitney’s chest. Pitney could feel Tait breathing against his T-shirt like he might be sniffing him again. This time it was almost like Tait was taking hits of Pitney’s scent. Pitney dipped his

head to smell Tait's hair but... *yecck*... he smelled like garbage. Which meant Pitney smelled the same. Which meant Tait was seriously weird.

"Come on," Tait said as he pulled away. "Let's get back to the hotel."

Pitney pushed off the wall, nodding. Yeah, he was ready for the crazy to slow down some. An alley blow job would've been awesome, but the many possible things stuck to them, soaking into their hair... Yeah, he was way more interested in a hot shower and maybe slathering himself in an anti-bacterial ointment, just in case. And, possibly, doing the same for a naked, freshly-washed Tristan Tait too.

Tait reached back and took Pitney's hand. Pitney followed along, staring at their linked hands and blinking. The badass of his dreams was holding his hand and walking him "home". He grinned since maybe his tough guy was a little bit schmoopy on the inside.

"There you are, *ohmygod!*"

Pitney looked farther into the hotel's lobby at that yell and saw his friends huddled together. Well, all of them except Livy who was tiptoe running toward him after her exclamation. He stepped inside, holding the door for Tait to come in behind him, and everyone froze.

Livy gave him a once over that included a hand hovering in front of her puckered up face. "What happened to you? Why do you smell? And..." She fluttered her fingers toward Tait and raised her eyebrows.

Marc, with his eyeliner smudged from sweaty dancing, and Jesse, flexing like there might be someone to beat up, joined them before Pitney explained.

"That guy I left the bar with? Turns out he just wanted me outside so him and his friend could attack."

Livy obviously wanted to hug him, but the smell of him kept her back; she latched onto Jesse's arm instead, making Pitney wonder again if something was going on between those two. Marc didn't hesitate to come closer, make noises about whether Pitney was all right, and squeeze his shoulder. There was

a small but definite protesting sound out of Tait's throat that had everyone turning to look at him curiously, Pitney included. Pink splashed Tait's cheeks, and he looked down at his sneakers.

Pitney took a chance and held out his hand toward Tait. Would he hold his hand in front of people Pitney knew? General public was one thing, but... Pitney smiled as Tait laced their fingers together and held tight.

To the group, and with a big grin on his face, Pitney said, "Tait came along just at the right time and helped me fight the guys off."

Tait snorted, then coughed, and rubbed at his mouth. Pitney gave his hand a small yank. No way was he telling his friends he was sorting himself out of a pile of trash while Tait saved him single-handed. He didn't want to look helpless, regardless of how awesome it made Tait look.

Then Pitney realized that while his friends knew all about Pitney's ridiculously longtime crush on Tait and what seeing Tait on campus did to him, Tait didn't have a clue who his friends were. He rectified that with quick introductions, even though Livy let slip that they knew all about Tait and it was good to finally meet him.

Tait gave Pitney a meaningful look while adjusting his overnight bag that they'd stopped to get from his car before coming in. Tait hadn't gotten a room anywhere, which was good, but... Actually, come to think of it, why was Tait even in this part of the city? When Tait smiled just a little up at him—since Pitney was staring, *oops*—Pitney didn't need answers. What he needed was to get his roommate for the weekend to vacate so he could be alone with Tait.

Pitney cleared his throat and broke off from Tait's seriously intoxicating eye contact. He looked at Livy. "Right, um... Livy, would you mind maybe bunking with Jesse and Marc?"

"Oh," she said and it was so obvious she was trying not to smile ecstatically. "Sure. Sure, that's no problem. Right, guys?"

There was a moment of Jesse and Marc blinking at Tait, who just stared at them, before they erupted into movement and agreement.

“Of course!”

“Sure!”

Pitney blushed. Never had he ever been so blatant about declaring he was going to go get laid now.

Livy rolled her eyes and got both men moving toward the elevators. Pitney and Tait joined them for a somewhat awkward ride up five floors that included Livy holding her nose.

Marc looked down at Tait and asked, “What product do you use to make your hawk stand up?”

“I don’t.” Tait scratched at the stubble on the right side above his ear. “Just have really thick hair that kinda does it naturally.”

“Huh. Lucky you,” Marc said to Tait but elbowed Pitney.

Okay, maybe not so awkward. Jesse might not have an opinion on guys, but Livy and Marc were on board with their friend hooking up with Tait. Still felt weird for Pitney, since he was kind of parading Tait before them like a prize before taking him into a bedroom with obvious intentions. He might’ve hooked up, but he’d never done anything like this before. It almost felt like—*gulp*—bringing a guy home to meet his parents.

Not that Tait wasn’t worthy for him to bring home, but Pitney had never really had that talk with his parents. They’d never asked about girlfriends, he’d never mentioned boyfriends... Would it be revelational, or did they maybe know?

Tait leaned and rubbed his cheek slowly against Pitney’s arm. Pitney looked down as Tait looked up and, holy fuck, Pitney needed to get Tait alone somewhere private really fast. They could maybe stay here in the elevator and make it stop between floors or something. He just needed... If he could get Tait *naked*...

Tait smiled like maybe he knew what Pitney was thinking, then led the way out of the elevator onto their floor. Pitney followed along, his dick starting to push for its freedom. When they made it to the rooms across from

each other, Livy working on getting the door open, and sending him a wink over her shoulder helped to give him a moment to cool down.

Pitney followed her in while Tait held the door open. Yeah, it was probably best they not close the door because Pitney might tackle Tait and Livy wouldn't want to see what came next. Well, she probably *would*, but she wasn't going to. So Pitney sat on the bed watching Livy tiptoe run all around gathering up items from the bathroom and the clothes she'd tried on and discarded before they'd gone out tonight. Tait just stood holding the door all the way open and looking nervous in a really cute way.

"You are so smitten, kitten," Livy whispered during one pass by Pitney.

He rolled his eyes and made shooing motions with his hands. "Hurry up, woman," he said loudly. Then he whispered, "Before he changes his mind."

"Oh, he wouldn't. Look at him," she said while stuffing her luggage full. "If you're nervous, that means there's something important going on."

"Important?"

"Of course. The first time's important, so you're nervous. When it really means something, you're nervous." She gave him a meaningful look and cocked her head toward Tait.

Pitney whispered even more quietly, "I don't think either of us are a virgin, Liv."

Over by the door, Tait fidgeted, but he was looking down the hall.

"The second part," Livy said, "you dork." She hefted her bag and tottered toward the door.

The second part? Of what she'd said? Good God, did she think this encounter was going to mean something important... to Tait?

"Actually," Tait said loud enough for both of them to hear, though he looked up at Pitney. "Why don't you shower in their room and I'll shower here."

Well, there went that fantasy. No wet Tait, soapy rubdown tonight.

“Um, I guess. If that’s what you want.”

Tait moved in closer and whispered, “We need to talk about something, you know, *first*.”

Pitney nodded, a whirlwind of possibilities going through his mind. It was just sex; what in the world did they need to talk about first? They’d already covered condoms and the fact two dicks were involved... What else was there?

Pitney knocked before using his keycard to get back into his room. Not that he wouldn’t like to catch Tait naked and still toweling off, but Pitney still didn’t have a clue what this conversation they needed to have was all about. He was too nervous to flirt or tease. It was like the sex was definitely happening, but first he maybe had to... sign a nondisclosure agreement? Become a member of a cult?

So he knocked, heard Tait say he could come in, then he walked into the room while pretending to look like he wasn’t all messed up trying to figure out what came next.

Tait stood at the end of the farthest double bed, barefooted. Pitney took that as a good sign. Not that he didn’t have some fantasies involving Tait naked except for his clunky, black boots, but bare feet said he had no plans to leave the room. Standing by the bed, also good. But fully dressed and fidgety, not meeting Pitney’s eyes... Not so good. At all.

“There’s something...” Tait flicked a glance up at him and then away. He closed his eyes and swallowed hard. “There’s something you need to know about me. It’s why I was angry about the kiss. I should’ve told you this when I imprinted originally so you might have a choice in all this. So we both could, really.”

“I don’t understand. Didn’t we already make a choice?” He had anyway. Tait wanted sex, Pitney wanted sex, so they were going to do it. Simple.

“I really... No, see...” Tait crossed his arms and looked intently at the floor. “Imprinting is a chemical bond. When one of us imprints, it makes us really drawn to the other person, but it’s not permanent, and it’ll fade if neither acknowledges it. And acknowledging it is acting on the attraction, so when you kissed me...” He waved his hand, but still kept staring at the floor. “It sort of woke everything up.”

Where the hell was Tait going with all this? Pitney squinted at him. “And that’s a bad thing?”

“No.” Tait cleared his throat. “I mean, I don’t think it is, but... Well, you don’t have a whole lot of choice now.” He finally looked up and licked his lips. “I’m desperate to have you, Pitney. I want the bond permanent. I want to make you mine.”

Oh, hey! “So you do want to have sex with me.”

“God, yes.” He practically moaned the words.

Pitney smiled without cheering or doing cartwheels. “Excellent. Get naked.” He pulled his T-shirt over his head, but when he came out the other end, Tait was gritting his teeth and still standing there.

“Damn it. Hold on. You’re not hearing me and this—”

“For fuck’s sake, Tait. Are you *trying* to be a cock-tease?”

“I’m a werewolf!” Tait huffed out a breath like he was glad to get that off his chest.

“Huh.” Pitney looked him over. Sure Tait had always tended toward a sort of Goth-like style, but all freshly scrubbed now, he didn’t look like anything supernatural. As it was... “I would’ve guessed vampire, actually, but if you want to be—”

“This is serious, Pitney.” He sounded exasperated.

“Okay.” Pitney nodded, getting into this. “I can do role-playing. If you’re the werewolf, can I be the vampire?” Because nibbling on various parts of Tait could be seriously fun.

Tait sighed and rolled his eyes up to the ceiling.

“No, I like this,” Pitney went on. “We can, like, end the centuries-long feud by fuh—”

Pitney jerked away since something horrible was happening to Tait’s face. “Fucking fuck! What are you doing?” Tait’s face was elongating like he was growing a snout and there was hair sprouting all over him as he got a little thicker and that was why his pant leg split and were those claws? “Stop that! Tait!”

Pitney covered his mouth with both hands and stood there shaking in front of Tait the Wolf Man. If it hadn’t happened right in front of him, he would’ve said Tait had a master special effects guy hidden in the closet, but... this was real. Really *real*. Tait was a cross between a wolf and a man like some kind of experiment in gene splicing to create the perfect killer...

Well, except for how scared Tait looked. This was no mindless killing machine with glowing eyes and fangs and blood lust. This was Tait and he was fidgeting and panting, wide-open eyes tracking everything, like he was waiting for Pitney to strike.

That was still Tait, and this was fucking *epic*.

“You’re a werewolf.”

Tait nodded, blue eyes watching Pitney from a face tipped down and turned slightly away. When Pitney took a step closer, Tait jerked back.

“Can I touch you?”

Again, Tait nodded, making Pitney wonder... “Can you talk like this?”

“Yes.” But the voice was guttural and scratchy, not Tait’s at all, and his canine snout moved like it wasn’t easy to make it form words.

Pitney gently touched Tait’s cheekbone, because Tait was still some creamy skin—just with more places where hair had grown and hung all over him. That hair was in normal-ish places, though, so like he had a beard and mustache with sideburns connecting it all. The hair on his head was longer and

not a hawk anymore. Kinda looked like one of those Chinese crested dogs. Sort of. Way fiercer and not funny at all, but kind of like that.

Okay, maybe a little funny since one of his now-huge ears had a floppy tip that was seriously cute. Wolf Man cute, but still.

The rest of Tait was the same height, but lots more definition to his muscles just everywhere, from his hands to his neck and his jeans... were... tight. Seriously tight. Okay, one part of Tait was lots bigger at the moment.

Was that a wolf-like dick or a man-like one?

Pitney reached down and palmed Tait's confined erection. A startled sound erupted from Tait, a dog's yelp, and Pitney chuckled. Felt like a human cock. A really nice one, too. He gave Tait a few slow squeezes to get more noises from him and watched Tait's blue eyes flutter closed while he whimpered and whined. Pitney leaned in and discovered Tait smelled fantastic, sort of like cinnamon and almonds. Into the flopped over ear, Pitney whispered, "You gonna shift back, or are we experimenting in bestiality?"

Tait growled, his lip curling up, then he gave Pitney a shove. With a laugh, Pitney landed on the bed just as Tait finished reverting back to normal, human Tait.

"That is *so* cool."

"You're just... fine?"

Pitney sat up on his elbows. "I guess so. I mean, I wouldn't have believed you if you hadn't shown me, but there it is. I'm totally sober, and I *totally* saw you do that." He sat up and leaned on his knees. "I have questions, of course."

"Ask." Tait crossed his arms like he was waiting for an interrogation.

"Did another werewolf bite you?"

"You mean, like, is that how I got turned? No. I was born this way. It's genetic."

"Huh. Okay. Are there a lot of you? In your family? Oh! Do you have a pack?"

Tait's shoulders drooped, and he shuffled and looked away like he was embarrassed. "See, there's an anomaly with me and my sister. Our dad shifts into a full wolf; most people would think he's a really big, black dog. But there's a little something in our mom's line that's made it so Holly and me only shift partially." He shrugged and sighed. "All we can do is what you saw."

It kind of seemed like Tait felt bad about that. "But yours is so much cooler."

Tait perked up. "Yeah?"

"Definitely! I mean, no offense to your dad, but a big, black *dog*'s got nothing on the Wolf Man. And you scared the shit out of those guys chasing me, and I bet you didn't have to do anything but stand there. No dog could've done that."

Tait chuckled. "When you meet the pack, don't say any of that, okay?"

"You want me to meet your pack?"

Tait lost his grin as he took a deep breath. He fidgeted and sighed while looking at his feet. "Remember how I said you're stuck with me?" He glanced up to see Pitney's nod, then looked away again. "You're my mate, Pitney. I imprinted the second I scented you in high school. It wasn't set in stone... until you kissed me, acknowledging the mate bond, and now... You're really it for me."

Whoa. So much for that one night of awesome sex with his fantasy guy. Well... It wasn't a bad thing, right? Tait once or Tait forever was so not a difficult decision. There was a lot you could discover about your crush without ever talking to them—granted Pitney had obviously never dug up the biggest secret Tait had going on—but Pitney liked everything he knew about Tait. And so what if he could go all wolfy? It'd make Halloween all kinds of awesome.

And then there was... "You really won't want any other guy but me?"

Tait scratched at the hair of his hawk hanging limply in his face. He hadn't taken the time to dry it, but it was still really sexy all floppy like that.

"I *can't* want them," he said, peeking at Pitney. "They're, like, nothing to me."

"Girls?"

Tait shrugged. "Yeah, like girls."

"No, I mean can you want a girl?"

Tait wrinkled his nose. "Definitely not."

"So just me forever then?"

"Pitney..." He rubbed at his forehead.

"You're a moron." That got Tait to look at him, even if he did glare. "I've wanted you from the moment I first saw you, too. I don't know if humans are supposed to do the imprinting thing, but I'm pretty sure I've done it, and I'm okay with that."

Tait just stared at him with wide eyes and parted lips. He looked like he was waiting for the other shoe to drop and wreck everything. Pitney could relate, but there was no other shoe.

"Come here," Pitney said and held out his arms while laying back. "Let's make sure our bond is good and fixed in place. Permanently."

Before Tait tackled Pitney, he practically tore himself free of his clothes; then he attacked Pitney's jeans, shucking them, his underwear, and his shoes in one long pull. Fastest he'd ever gotten naked before and... *Whoa*. They were *naked*.

But Pitney only had a second to see just how cut Tait's body was, and the fact he was erect and just fucking gorgeous, before he was tackled into the bed. Pitney laughed, feeling excited and crazy, and actually managed to flip over the strongest little guy in the world. He didn't do it with any goal of

dominance in mind, but when Tait got all growly, like being on the bottom was so not happening for him here, Pitney put up a fight to keep him there.

They rolled, then rolled again, and when Pitney was almost in giggles from the frustrated expression on Tait's face, he lost the battle to keep Tait on the bottom. When Tait huffed down at him and said, "Good God, you're annoying," Pitney gave in to those maniacal giggles for a minute.

Once he sobered—which wasn't easy since Tait kept trying not to smile at all—Pitney said, "Annoying? I'm delightful."

Tait rolled his eyes and sort of collapsed against Pitney's chest. "Delightfully annoying. Maybe."

"See? We're perfect."

Tait looked at Pitney, and that something soft was back in those blue eyes. Having Tait look at him like that just *melted* Pitney. Then Tait nodded, and Pitney couldn't help wondering if Tait was agreeing that he thought Pitney was perfect. He leaned up and kissed Tait lightly, sweetly, like they hadn't kissed yet, and it was good.

For about three seconds. Then Tait grabbed Pitney's hips and managed to spin him around before shoving him face-first into the bed. Now it was Pitney's turn to snort because if Tait thought that was it? *Silly little wolfy*. He made to push up and flip over on top of Tait, but...

The way Tait was currently rubbing his cock into the crack of Pitney's ass and over his lower back was seriously hot. He didn't want that to stop just yet, so he stayed still and even bowed his back to push his ass up for more rubbing. Tait made the best sound then, a sort of grateful groan, and humped against Pitney faster and harder while holding Pitney's shoulders to the bed.

Okay, if this was how Tait wanted to fuck him later? Pitney was onboard. He did like fighting Tait for dominance, but oh yeah, "losing" at that was a good thing.

Tait leaned forward along Pitney's back, their skin sliding and catching enough to make them both moan. "We could try it," Tait said. "I'll do my best to be slow."

It? Oh. "Uh, no. Since there's this whole urgency you've got going on for the mate-claiming, bond-sticking thing, I'd rather not just 'try'."

"Do or do not, there is no try."

Before Pitney could laugh at the Yoda reference, Tait flipped him over again. As interesting as it was to have Tait now straddling Pitney's stomach, "interesting" turned into "I will make this my life's work" because Tait moved forward, grabbing Pitney's wrists to pin them against the bed, and that brought Tait's balls to rest up on Pitney's collarbone.

The warm weight of Tait's sac made Pitney lift his head to discover Tait's wet cockhead just barely brushed against Pitney's chin. *So close...* Pitney tilted his head and stuck out his tongue. He could smell Tait's precum and needed, really needed, a taste. The tip of his tongue managed a swipe along the slit, and Pitney felt Tait twitch, thigh muscles tensing, as Tait gasped. Pitney savored that one lick. When he looked up, he saw Tait staring down at him, mouth open as he breathed fast and his pupils were blown wide.

Time to give in.

"More," Pitney said and was surprised by the growl to his voice now.

Tait snapped his mouth shut and swallowed as he nodded. When he shuffled forward on his knees, Pitney stuck his tongue out again and managed to curl it around one side of Tait's cockhead. Even more fantastic than tasting Tait was watching his eyelids flutter and hearing his breath catch. Pitney pressed his tongue up just behind Tait's cockhead and rubbed the taut lines of Tait's frenulum. A whine burst from Tait's throat.

"Sensitive?" Pitney whispered and saw how the puff of his breath made Tait shiver.

Nodding, Tait moved over Pitney more, until Tait's balls were brushing Pitney's chin. Pitney grinned at Tait, then opened up and sucked one nut into

his mouth. While Tait groaned, Pitney tickled the tightening skin with the tip of his tongue, then pushed that one out to suck in the other. Tait watched, his expression getting wilder by the second. He pulled himself free to then grind his sac on Pitney's lips and tongue, saliva slicking everything. Pitney felt so dirty but in the most exciting way.

Pitney could feel Tait's thigh muscles trembling against his ribs. The heat of Tait's groin along his throat was surprisingly erotic. He wanted to push Tait back and suck the cock rubbing his face as Tait rocked his hips, but Tait still held Pitney's hands against the bed. So Pitney moved his head and managed to get his mouth on the base of Tait's cock. He sucked, hard, and Tait sort of... well, *howled*.

Tait backed up in a hurry. "Please. Just—"

"Gimme." Pitney opened his mouth and made an on-ramp of his tongue.

"Aw, yes." Tait angled his cock right on in.

For a little while, Pitney just closed his eyes and enjoyed the velvet slide against his wet lips and the tang of Tait's growing need. Oh, yeah, Pitney loved doing this.

But he loved it more since he could open his eyes and look up at *Tait*. Tait rocking into him. Tait watching. Tait moaning like Pitney was the sexiest thing he'd ever seen.

They moved liked that until Tait didn't seem to be in control of his movements anymore. His eyes were squeezed closed and he was panting hard. Pitney smiled for just a second before he leaned up and sucked as much of Tait's cock as he could reach into his mouth. Knowing he'd driven Tait to this moment was fantastic, better than getting off himself. Then Tait came and flooded Pitney's mouth with warm, salty cum. He slurped and swallowed as much as he could, but he felt some running down his cheeks and onto his neck. When he choked a little, Tait sat back and grasped himself to pump out two more bursts of cum onto Pitney's throat.

The both of them panting, Tait leaned over Pitney. The look on his face was so serious. Pitney wasn't sure, but he thought maybe he was looking at the

pure instinct inside of Tait. The wolf in there. He seemed so focused, but a little distant, while his fingers spread his own cum across Pitney's chest and from his cheek up into his hair. Pitney kept still, let Tait... let him mark him as belonging to Tait. That's what he was doing, and it made Pitney smile, really pleased to be claimed.

After a couple minutes, Tait blinked a few times and smiled. "You're mine now," he whispered and seemed shy about that.

Pitney licked his lips and caressed his hands up and down Tait's sides. "Do I get to make you mine too?"

Tait backed up, grinning at him, until he was off the bed on the floor between Pitney's legs. Pitney sat up to see him better, only to have his eyes close involuntarily when Tait opened his mouth and took Pitney's straining, red cock inside. Unwilling to miss seeing this, Pitney forced his eyes open and stared as Tait watched him and sucked his cock. Good as it felt, hot as it looked, those blue eyes were what really drove Pitney mad with lust. *Tait* was doing this to him. The one guy he'd always wanted was now his.

Pitney reached down, needing to touch, and traced the arch of Tait's brow, the hollow of his cheek, and his strong jaw. He slid his fingers up into the thick hawk of Tait's hair at the back of his head and gripped, though he didn't try to set the pace or pull Tait more onto him. Tait knew exactly what he was doing, but Pitney needed something to hold onto and some way to express how amazing everything Tait was doing to him now felt. So good he was about to come.

"Tristan," he said, pushing the word out, and got a hard suck that had him falling back and arching up as he came deep inside a warm, tight throat. "Aw, God!"

Pitney could feel Tait's mouth, throat, pulsing with him. Best feeling ever. It did not feel the same with a condom on, and he'd be greedy for this from now. He'd beg for it. Okay, maybe he'd tussle for it and then beg, but yeah... When he opened his eyes this time, it was like he had a life plan all laid out: Keep Tait so happy he'd do this all the damn time.

“You’re rebooting smile is goofy as hell,” Tait said above him.

“You really don’t have any room to talk there, cum-painting wolf-boy.”

Chuckling, Tait sat down on Pitney’s thighs, his hands caressing Pitney’s stomach. When Pitney sat up, Tait held onto his shoulders and looked down at him with a sweet expression. Pitney cupped Tait’s butt and tipped his head back. He stuck out his tongue and crooked it, making Tait smile before he came down and kissed Pitney.

The taste of himself in Tait’s mouth... Incendiary intoxication. Pitney felt a little high or just really buzzed because he had the man of his dreams. Tait’s expression when he looked down at Pitney again was so open and warm. Pitney knew, right then, he could so easily see them lasting forever. He could love Tait. Might already love him.

Then he noticed the spot of cum on Tait’s chin, like he’d lost a tiny bit. With his finger, Pitney swiped it up, then painted a “P” on Tait’s cheek with it. “I claim you too.”

Tait laughed as he sat down on Pitney’s thighs. Maybe it was cheesy, but hugging Tait right then, after everything, felt sort of better than the rest. Close, content... like home.

“You called me Tristan.”

“Mm-hmm.”

“I liked that.”

“Yeah? But everyone always calls you Tait.”

He snuggled closer, making Pitney grin for his badass being a cuddler.

“You can call me Tristan. If you want.”

Pitney smiled. “Anyone else call you that?”

“No. My family calls me... Four.”

Pitney snorted. “Tristan Alexander Tait *the Fourth*.”

“Ugh,” he groaned and sat back again, leaving his arms draped over Pitney’s shoulders. Tait’s—Tristan’s hawk flopped in his face and it was seriously cute like that.

Pitney slid his hands over Tristan’s back, petting him just because. “But you’re my Tristan,” he whispered.

He looked kinda shy as he nodded. “Yes.”

“Tristan.” He gave him a tiny kiss. “My Tristan.”

He sighed out his promise, “Always.”

Tristan hadn’t been kidding about taking Pitney to meet his pack. Apparently, it was required that new mates declare themselves. Pitney just would’ve liked more than a day to get used to being mates before Tristan drove them out of Manhattan and up near to where Bennington Academy was. Pack territory, Tristan called the nearby forest, despite the state thinking it was a park.

The seedy little motel they stopped at around the halfway mark made up for the sudden case of nerves Pitney was developing. Tristan had gotten inside Pitney enough that they’d both liked it a whole lot. Practice was definitely on the agenda for after the pack introductions.

“Um, Pitney?”

They were steps away from what looked like a VFW lodge or a little banquet hall. Pitney was really close to being calmly resigned, but now Tait looked nervous.

“What’s wrong?”

“They might not...” He took a deep breath and let it out in a sigh. “There are some who might not like that I’ve got a mate now.”

“The gay thing?”

“The anomaly thing.”

Pitney frowned. “They don’t want you to have a mate because you become the Wolf Man instead of a dog?”

“Well, I mean, it’s not for the same reason as Holly since we won’t breed and continue the anomaly, but—”

“Wait. They don’t want your sister to find a mate because they don’t want her to have kids who’ll be like you guys?” At Tristan’s nod, Pitney crossed his arms. “That’s horrible and stupid and I don’t want to meet these people.”

“We have to.”

There was some whine to Tristan’s voice that Pitney didn’t like. Tristan wasn’t supposed to be like this, all worried and intimidated. If this was what being in a pack did to him, they shouldn’t go in there.

“Why do we *have* to?”

“Because they’ll know I’m mated from the fact I’ve got your scent all over me. I can’t lie about it, so we have to own up to it, whatever the consequences.”

Well, that was some bravery, but... “Consequences like what? Because if I might need some silver bullets—”

Tristan snorted. “That’s a myth. I mean, silver bullets will kill us just as much as regular bullets.”

“Great.” Pitney turned for the car. “There was a gun shop—”

Tristan grabbed his arm, not getting that it was a joke. “We’re not buying you a gun. They won’t hurt you. They’ll just... Some of them might be mad and say things. My dad... I wanted to warn—”

“Oh, I see. *Verbal* abuse. Excellent.”

Tristan sighed again, shuffling his feet and hanging his head, and Pitney got it. Right here and now, Pitney understood why Tristan could be a thug one minute and a scared kid the next. These people, his pack, made him feel like he was something wrong. An anomaly not in the cool way of a new discovery, but like Tristan was a freak of nature that shouldn’t exist.

That from people who could turn into dogs.

Pitney reached out and pulled Tristan into a hug. “We’ll face them together because there’s nothing wrong with what you are. My Tristan’s just all kinds of awesome.”

Tristan hugged him tightly and made a little sound that tugged at Pitney’s heart. His wolfy might be the badass, but Pitney was going to go in there and protect his mate. And he had a pocketknife on his keychain if his words didn’t do the job. Nobody was going to make Tristan feel like crap anymore.

Head held high, Pitney took Tristan’s hand and marched them right on into the lodge.

It was really difficult to be serious and strong when the room was full of old dudes in silly hats. Pitney looked down at Tristan, expecting him to be smirking too, but Tristan looked hesitant and maybe like he was about to bow or something. Pitney lost his smirk and realized the whole room of people were staring at them.

“What is this?” One guy hollered before shoving his way through the crowd. He might have been more intimidating if it weren’t for the red felt pirate’s hat on his head. Well, all right, he was pretty intimidating, since he was a thick guy with a snarl who was obviously pissed.

“Dad, um...”

“What did I tell you?” he said as he got closer. As Mr. Tait moved through them, people were backing away against the walls like they wanted to make sure everyone could see.

“I tried, but—”

“*Tried? You tried?* It wasn’t for you to *try* to do, you were just supposed to follow orders and *do it!*” He got up to them and glared at his son. “Now here you are stinking of a human, obviously mated, against orders and against what’s right for this pack, you disgusting little—”

“You stop right there!” Pitney hollered at him. He couldn’t keep quiet and let Tristan’s dad call him names, especially when he felt Tristan flinch beside him.

Mr. Tait jerked back, staring at Pitney. Since he had the man’s attention, he dove right in.

“Tristan’s a wonderful person, and I completely accept what he is. I’ll even—”

“What he *is* is an abomination. Him and his sister both are a poison in this pack. They’ll bring down our purity and make us vulnerable to attack. They’re useless and—”

“They’re your children! You made them and you’re supposed to love them no matter what. That’s your whole job as a parent.”

“How dare you come in here and spout off about—”

“How dare *you* talk about your children like they’re inferior or wrong. Have you seen what he can do?”

Mr. Tait waved a hand like he was shooing Pitney away. “I will not listen to some *human*—”

“You talk about getting attacked like there’s some kind of turf war going on.” Pitney stepped into Mr. Tait’s space, their eyes level, both glaring. “Have you seen your son fight?”

There was a red glow to Mr. Tait’s eyes—just like the snarling wolf’s head rings they all wore—when Mr. Tait growled and showed his teeth. Pitney gulped, remembered now that there was a lot more animal to this guy than there was in himself. And he’d just pushed that beast a little too far. He fumbled in his pocket for his pocketknife.

Instantly, Tristan was between his livid father and Pitney. Wolf Man Tristan. That fast he was all teeth and claws and bulging muscles ready and willing to defend Pitney against attack. Pitney smiled at the back of Tristan’s furry head, that floppy ear. When Pitney looked up at the crowd, he was surprised to find them all looking shocked. What was that about?

“Enough,” a man said and, though he didn’t shout, his voice resonated through the room.

Pitney braced himself for more of a fight, hoped it wasn’t going to get physical, and watched this new guy walk up behind Mr. Tait. He was tall, really fit, seriously handsome, and definitely someone in charge of things, since the whole place seemed to be waiting for his next words. Pitney sent up a silent prayer that those words wouldn’t have anything to do with taking them down.

“You’ve improved, Four,” the big guy said, and there was something kind of fond in his expression as he looked Tristan. When he looked at Mr. Tait, the fondness turned into accusation. “You neglected to inform me of your son’s improvements.”

The anger was completely gone from Mr. Tait now and he looked a little like he might be sick. Because Tristan had “improved”—whatever that meant—or because his leader was upset? Pitney looked back at Tristan as he settled back into humanity while the leader guy urged Mr. Tait to follow him back up to a big table in the front of the room.

Pitney leaned down and whispered to Tristan, “What is going on?”

Tristan looked surprised too. “I think Dad might be in trouble for not telling Alpha I could shift better than the last time Alpha saw me do that.”

“They’ve never seen you shift?”

“Not really. Or not for a long time. When I first started, it took nearly fifteen minutes to do it all. Way longer than it takes any of them.” He moved in closer to Pitney and held his hand. “Alpha said I’d be a liability, just like a human, and shouldn’t ever be involved in a hunt or to fight to defend us from other packs. He was right about all that.”

“Okay, I get that. But that stuff about... What your Dad said—”

Tristan’s blue eyes looked up at him. “I think maybe Dad was lying when he said Alpha thought we were so awful. Or maybe Dad never told him about us getting faster at it like he’d said he did.”

Considering a lot of the people around them now were whispering and staring like maybe there was a celebrity in their midst... “So this is them being impressed?”

“Guess so.” Tristan shrugged, but he grinned up at Pitney.

“Can Holly shift as fast as you?”

“Yes. Faster, I think.”

Pitney smiled. “I’m thinking she might be about to get really popular with the single guys. I’m also really glad we’ve all permanently bonded up and everything.”

“Me too,” Tristan whispered. He was doing the melty, puppy-dog eyes thing while cuddling into Pitney’s side.

“Boys,” that alpha guy called. “Come on up here.” He waved them forward.

They went, holding hands and so close their arms rubbed. Pitney really liked their solidarity, but he seriously loved seeing Mr. Tait standing quietly behind the alpha and looking like he might’ve gotten his nose smacked with a rolled up newspaper. Shame they’d missed seeing it happen.

Alpha smiled at Tristan. “I’m elevating your status in the pack and lifting the breeding restrictions from you and your sister.” His gaze flicked to include Pitney before he said, “If you and your mate would like to have a ceremony here, we can make the arrangements.”

“Thank you, sir,” Tristan said, though he looked down at the tabletop. Was that a “no eye contact with the head dog” kind of thing? No wonder Mr. Tait had gotten pissed; Pitney’d stared him right in the eyes the whole time.

“Maybe we’ll do something this summer... or something,” Tristan went on and peeked up at Pitney.

Pitney resisted jumping up and down and squealing since, OMG, Tristan was asking him to get married. Smiling so big, Pitney said, “This summer sounds perfect. It’ll have to be human friendly, of course, so I can invite my family.”

“Of course,” Alpha said. “My pack is accepting of humans and... all other differences.”

Tristan shivered and sort of sagged against Pitney. Pitney held onto him, figuring it was a huge amount of relief making Tristan do that. He’d been in great need of that acceptance, apparently, and Pitney was thrilled for his mate to have it now.

Over the next hour or so, Tristan introduced Pitney to lots of pack members and also his mother and sister. Holly seemed shy, but really happy now, the two siblings sharing a tearful, smiling embrace that almost had Pitney choking up. Mrs. Tait was thrilled and gave Pitney kisses on both cheeks and about a million hugs, too.

Overall, they seemed like a decent group to Pitney, but he wasn’t going to let them forget they’d turned on their own just because he was different. They were all different from everyone else in the world and should band together and celebrate their rainbow of differences. Pitney just believed that was how it should be, and he’d see to it that the acceptance their alpha was extending got obeyed by all of them.

When he and Tristan got a few minutes to themselves, they huddled together in a corner. Tristan was all cuddly wolfy, so Pitney was happy to snuggle him up. Looking out at the crowd, though, something was still bugging Pitney.

“Seriously, what’s with the weird hats?”

Tristan snorted. “I know. They wanted to make sure anyone peeking in would think they’re just a normal lodge or something. I guess members in those wear hats that mean different ranks.”

“Well, they look ridiculous.”

Tristan smiled brightly as he looked up at Pitney. He had to kiss Tristan for that, so Pitney hugged him close and bent around him. Right there in front of everyone, Pitney and Tristan kissed because they were mates, because they were going to fall in love, and just because they could.

ONE YEAR LATER

“Where are...” Pitney let his question fade away because he knew where they were now. “I remember this place,” he said with a grin over at Tristan.

Only one lone streetlight ahead of them illuminated the alley in which Pitney had forced Tristan to acknowledge their mate bond last year. A year ago today.

Smiling shyly, Tristan put the the old Buick in park before cutting the ignition. “Happy anniversary.” He placed his hand on Pitney’s.

Pitney held Tristan’s hand and leaned over to steal a kiss. Tristan loved romance, but it always made him so embarrassed when he actually went through with the mushy stuff. Sure, revisiting a filthy, old alley might not scream romance to most, but for them, yeah.

“You are just too cute sometimes,” Pitney whispered against Tristan’s glossy lips.

Tristan’s cheeks turned pink, making his blue eyes seem brighter. “I just wanted to stop in before we went back home.”

Home. Pitney kissed Tristan again, just savored him, and also savored the fact their home was an apartment off campus but still in Greenwich Village. He was living with Tristan Tait. That was dream-come-true stuff right there. They’d moved in together when Pitney got written up for having an overnight guest in his dorm room stay way longer than policy permitted. He hadn’t regretted it for a second.

He pulled away only enough to look at Tristan’s kiss-dazed face. A lot about their lives had changed in the past year, but one thing hadn’t: Pitney was still head over heels in love with Tristan.

“You know what I wanted to do with you that night?” he whispered.

Tristan chuckled. “Soak me in as much garbage-scented water as possible?”

“Before that, you dork.”

A sly grin. “I think I remember you offered to blow me.”

“Yep. Underneath that streetlight to be exact,” Pitney said and pointed over at it. “I thought it would be so hot to kneel down and suck you off right there. Like you’d paid me or maybe like we’d left a club and couldn’t wait to go somewhere else.” He sighed as his imagination put them over there again.

“Well, then.” Tristan opened the car door and got out.

Pitney watched Tristan walk around the front of the car and straight over to the streetlight. *Oh, man...* Once there, he turned to face Pitney and leaned against the wall of the building. Tristan looked at Pitney, but undid his jeans and stuffed a hand down inside his baby blue briefs. A moment later it was obvious Tristan was over there jacking himself, cock and fist making his briefs bulge out from the V of his open jeans.

His breath coming faster and heartbeat starting to race, Pitney watched for a few seconds more. Tristan was over there looking so dangerous and sexy, like maybe he was the one about to get paid. It was such a deliciously wicked fantasy, perfect badass of his dreams kind of stuff. No way could he resist that.

Pitney was out the door and rushing over, not caring at all about how eager he was since Tristan was giving him his fantasy. He did give the ground a quick look for possible nastiness before he skidded to a halt and dropped to his knees when his brain gave the all clear.

Tristan’s hand paused, just fisting himself behind his underwear. Pitney looked up to find Tristan biting his lip like he was trying not to smile.

“Oh shut up and haul it out here.” Pitney glanced around at the buildings, but all the windows were dark. What traffic existed was behind the car on the crossroad, and it wasn’t likely some passerby would be able to make them out. Well, not really. Not enough to stop him, anyway.

“You know what this does to me,” Tristan said like that was some kind of warning. “You, like this.”

Pitney scoffed and reached up to move the briefs around Tristan's erection. "Bring it, Wolf Man."

Tristan gripped his cock and pointed it at Pitney while also getting a handful of Pitney's hair at the back of his head. When Tristan made the low growl he always did when he had the power and pulled Pitney in, well, Pitney just opened his mouth and obeyed. Yeah, Pitney knew him submitting turned sweet Tristan's wolf all dominant and sometimes... Sometimes Pitney really liked them that way. Sometimes he didn't even want to make Tristan wrestle him for it.

Sometimes it was all about making his wolf howl.

Pitney closed his eyes and wrapped his arms around Tristan's thighs, resting his hands on Tristan's butt, down low where he could massage and make Tristan pant from the friction. He could smell Tristan's excitement a second before the wet cockhead touched Pitney's tongue. He licked quickly before Tristan eased that velvety shaft across Pitney's lips to fill his mouth. The taste added to the feel and made Pitney moan.

His hands gripped while he sucked and bobbed, meeting Tristan's thrusts. It wasn't long before Pitney's chin was wet and he was sweating, gasping breaths whenever Tristan let him. His own body begging for attention, Pitney reached down and undid his jeans. He fisted himself and moaned around Tristan's thick dick until Tristan stabbed it into his throat and cut him off.

Suddenly, Tristan yanked Pitney's hair, pulling him off. Startled, confused, Pitney blinked up at him, only to find himself manhandled around until he was facing the building on his right, his back to the alley. A moment more, just as Pitney was formulating a question about what the hell was going on, and Tristan yanked Pitney's jeans and briefs down over his ass. No need to ask what was next, except...

"You better have some—"

"Yeah," Tristan said, not so gone on wolfy dominance that he didn't know to provide at least a lubed condom. Which, yeah, that's what it sounded like just before a wet kiss met Pitney's asshole.

They'd gotten good at this. Practice really did make perfect because right now... "Oh, God yeah," Pitney said on a moan as they both pushed and Tristan dove right on in. They'd really gotten good at this.

Pitney put his arms up against the wall, the rough stone biting into his skin. His gold ring glinted at him, making him smile, then he rested his head against his arm and jostled with every thrust from Tristan. Pitney groaned and tipped up, helping Tristan peg him just right. When he did, Pitney bit his lip to hold back the whines bursting out of him with each rub even as he pushed back to speed Tristan along.

He was close, so close it felt like he might break from the tension or catch fire from the friction. Thoughts about keeping quiet flew away when Tristan did that squeeze to Pitney's cockhead that always, every single time, made him come immediately. Pitney hollered up at the night sky, past the streetlight and right into the stars, as his body clamped down. His wolf howled behind him.

In the panting aftermath, Pitney just had to say, "That was so..."

"Anim... Animalistic?"

"Fucked like a—" *don't say dog* "—wolf in an alley. Hoo, boy."

"By a wolf."

"Whatever." Pitney chuckled against his arm. "We are kinky beasts."

"We should get T-shirts," Tristan said before he slowly eased back.

Pitney hummed through that one last jolt of sensation as Tristan pulled out, then he set about getting up and fixing his pants. They both wobbled, bumping into each other and snickering for being clumsy with simple buttons and zippers. Finally, Pitney wrapped his arms around Tristan's shoulders and kissed him with lips that felt puffy and hot from sucking on him. Tristan hummed now and leaned into him.

Eventually, they made their way back into the car. Pitney leaned back, sort of on his side, and watched Tristan watching him. He could tell his romantic wolf wanted a snuggle like he always did, so Pitney held Tristan's hand to promise that they'd cuddle as soon as they were home.

Then, he remembered that he'd basically just crossed off one hell of an item from his sexual fantasy bucket list. One item of many.

"You know," he said and kissed the back of Tristan's hand. "I also have this fantasy about you doing me over one of our high school desks. Can't tell you how many times I popped wood knowing you were sitting right there behind me."

"Sorry, sweetheart," Tristan said with a grin. "I'm not breaking into the school."

Tristan had started calling him his sweetheart a few weeks ago. It gave Pitney a warm, squishy feeling inside every single time Tristan said it. Maybe it would for the rest of his life.

Tristan winked at him. "How about I just buy you a ruler instead?"

Immediately, Pitney's mind conjured up just what he and Tristan might do with a sturdy wooden ruler and Pitney's bare butt. *Oh my God, I'm such a perv...* He felt his whole head heat up with a blush.

Tristan started laughing like he was shocked, but also like he had some ammunition. Pitney chuckled and smiled because, okay, if someone was going to get to know his kinks—and maybe give them to him—he was fine with that someone being his wolfy mate who loved him completely and forever.

THE END

Author Bio

Romance has always been the main theme of Missy's writing, even when she was twelve and concocting little tales for her friends. She grew up watching tough-guy action movies with her dad and stealing her mom's romance novels, so it seemed perfectly normal to pair up the two and see what happened. As long as there are men being brave and falling in love, Missy plans to fantastize about them—Um, she means write about them.

Contact Info

[Email](#) | [Goodreads](#) | [Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#) | [Website](#) | [Mailing List](#)