

LOVE IS AN OPEN ROAD



Don't Read in the Closet 2015

WOLF'S HONOR

Laylah Hunter

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Love is an Open Road

An M/M Romance series

WOLF'S HONOR

By Laylah Hunter

Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love is an Open Road* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a gift to you.

What Is Love is an Open Road?

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 these authors 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 is an Open Road*.

No matter if you are a long-time devotee to M/M Romance, just new to the genre or fall somewhere in between, 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.

Each year, a dedicated group of Volunteers from the M/M Romance Group work hard behind the scenes to bring these stories to you. Our Editors, Formatters, Proofreaders, and those working on Quality Assurance, spend many long hours over a course of several months so that each Event is a success. As

each and every author also gives freely of their time and talent, it was decided that all edits suggested may be accepted or rejected by the author at any given time. For this reason, some stories will appear to be more tightly edited than others, depending on the choice of the author.

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.

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Photo Description

A young, dark-haired man is pressed up against a concrete wall, face first. He's held there by a taller man standing behind him, who leans into him possessively and has a hand on his forehead. The young man has his head tipped back and his eyes closed; the man behind him has an ambiguous expression that might be anger.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

I almost made it. I wasn't a mile away from the edge of pack territory, but he managed to catch me. Now I'm pressed against the cold cement walls of this last hiding place. I can feel his heat behind me, his heavy breath on my neck. I absorb the pain as he wrenches my arms high up my back, immobilizing me. I wait for punishment. I'm so tired; I let my body relax into the inevitable. Running had been my last attempt at freedom. It's been so long since I was free. Most of my life has been spent under the power-mad control of one Alpha or another, the curse of being an Omega. Everyone wants to own you, control you... use you. The image of the man behind me standing over my last Alpha, covered in his blood, eye's glowing with battle rage; flashes through my head. That was only two days ago. In the chaos that followed, I managed to slip away. I hadn't been out of the Alpha's house in two years. I had hoped that no one in the pack would even remember my existence. The hard press of muscle, the scent of blood and power coming from the man behind me smothers my hope. I breathed in the scent of my new reality...

Author: I hope this Omega can finally find some peace. I like my Alphas strong and possessive ;-). No insta-love or "baby talk" please, yuck!

Prompts: Werewolves/Shifters, Alpha/Omega, Dom/submissive

Sincerely,

GreenEliza

Story Info

Genre: paranormal, postapocalyptic

Tags: shifters, hurt/comfort, rescue, in heat/rut, mates, exiled, trope subversion, knotting

Content Warnings: violence, past abuse and rape, attempted rape

Word Count: 6,628

WOLF'S HONOR

By Laylah Hunter

There's a stitch in Cory's side that's been there since the last time he dared to sprint. It doesn't want to go away no matter how much he tries to breathe deeply and slowly. Fuck. It's still full dark overhead, but it's probably past the point where "late" turns into "early" by now. Maybe nobody's even looking for him. Maybe in all the fighting people assumed he was dead, or the new alpha has too much to handle dealing with the rest of Gregor's pack and won't have the time to track him down.

He keeps moving, the steady long-distance lope that humans and wolves have in common. It would be easier if he could shift, but as an omega he can only shift without aid when the moon is full. Just one more way his stupid body leaves him fucked, literally and otherwise.

The ground he's covering right now is wasteland, one of the barren stretches that separate the weres' wild territories from pure human towns. It makes his hackles prickle, being out in the open like this, without the forest to hide him. He's so exposed.

When he reaches the edge of the ruins, the crumbled pavement leading into shells of buildings, he hugs the shadows the old construction throws. It smells unsettling, an acrid sharpness like smoke but less natural, a reminder that he doesn't belong here. Cory hasn't lived among pure humans since puberty, when his shifter blood became obvious and he got thrown out of the town where he grew up. Even then, ruins were places that people scavenged, not places they lived. The wreckage of old human culture doesn't feel like home at all. But it has to be better than getting claimed as war spoils by another arrogant, power-mad alpha creep.

The wind changes, and Cory shivers. Something feels wrong. He forces himself to move a little faster, despite the exhausted weakness of his limbs. The past ten years have taught him to always pay attention to that instinct—even if it's not always right, better safe than sorry. He spends *more* than enough time being sorry.

He cuts off the broad main road and starts looking for someplace he could go to ground. After as long as he's been awake and traveling, he knows there's

no way he could actually outrun pursuit. But maybe, if he's really lucky, the ugly scents of the ruins will hide him and he'll be able to take shelter.

He finds a pried-open door on the side of a sprawling, low building made of pale concrete. It's dark inside anywhere the roof hasn't caved in, moonlight spilling in uneven patches across a huge expanse of empty space and rows of steel scaffolding. There's nowhere near as much cover as Cory would like, but he didn't see much that was any better. He ducks through the maze of steel, looking for anything that could help him hide, or—hah—defend himself if he had to. An angry alpha could probably just pull free one of the scaffold's beams and use that as a weapon. There's nothing Cory could do that would stand up to that. It's not *fair*.

Something that isn't Cory makes a noise, back near the door where he came in. Panic jolts through him, a little fresh energy and a lot of fresh nausea. He's just so tired. He stumbles further into the dark, trying to figure out how he could circle around back to the door and get out again. He's trapped himself, hasn't he? He's gone to ground and all it did was make him easy prey.

When he hears the soft growl from behind him he still bolts. Instinct takes over and he can't help it. Anywhere's better than here. He's just heading for *away*.

He catches the alpha's scent just before the man collides with him. He stumbles into the wall, pinned between cold concrete and a hot, muscular body, and that's it. Game over. All the panic energy just evaporates, and he's done. His body is already betraying him, heat rising to his skin in response to the alpha's pheromones. His chance at a life is over.

The boy's shoulders slump in defeat, his head bowed to the concrete wall. For a second, victory thrills along Troy's nerves, wild and potent as when the alpha's windpipe caved under his hands two nights ago, giving him and his fledgling pack territory of their own. But on his next breath, the full extent of the boy's response is like cold water on that flame: the rich, tempting musk of unclaimed omega is shot through with a bitter note of misery.

He stops himself inches from sinking his teeth into the boy's nape. He breathes hard, shaking with the effort of staying in control after the chase roused all his instincts to prove his mastery. The boy doesn't flinch, doesn't plead... and doesn't want. Troy is suddenly sure of it.

No, that's not quite right. The boy wants to be taken the same way Troy wants to take him: at the level of mindless, hungry instinct. But that's all. During the hunt Troy hoped—unreasonably, but still—that it was foreplay, a teasing challenge for him to prove himself. That hope seems more contemptible with every breath he takes, with the bitter scent of miserable resignation sticking in his throat.

He scruffs the boy with one hand instead of biting. "This has gone on long enough. We're going home." The boy mutters something. "What was that?"

"It's not. Home, I mean." The boy's tone is completely hopeless. Flat. "But you won't let me go, will you."

"Where would you even go if I did?" Troy doesn't let go. "You're heading for human territory. They figure out what you are, they'll shoot you."

"Maybe that would be better," the boy whispers.

"Fenris wept," Troy swears. Shot to death like a rabid dog would be *better* than going back to the compound? "No, come here. It's going to be okay." He pulls the boy into an actual embrace, and he knows that's cheating, using his own scent to overwhelm resistance instead of actually addressing the problems, but—how do you fix something like this? "Sounds like somebody should have challenged that asshole a long time ago."

"It doesn't matter," the boy mumbles into Troy's shirt. "It never changes anything."

You can't tear out the throats of people who are already dead, Troy reminds himself. "Will you give me a chance to be different?"

The shoulders that shrug under his arms are far too thin. "I can't say no."

That stings. But it's true, isn't it? He's not going to let a member of his pack just go get killed, even a new member of the pack, even when his protection doesn't seem to be wanted. He sighs. "I'm sorry. What's your name? I'm Troy."

"Cory."

"Cory," Troy repeats. He buries his face in Cory's hair, breathing in, letting the human name and the wolf impressions intertwine in his mind. "I'm not going to watch you go off to your death. But I'm not going to be a monster, either. Now let's go home."

“Yes, sir,” Cory says.

It’s a start.

Troy’s version of the pack takes some getting used to. He arrived with four other alphas, two of them female, and they tease each other and spar sometimes but it never smells like a real fight. They don’t call dibs on the omegas, but it doesn’t look like Troy is just taking everyone, either. The sixth person who came with them, Jared, acts enough like a beta that all the survivors of Gregor’s pack are confused when he goes into heat a few days after the full moon.

Cory keeps waiting for the catch. It can’t be this easy for things to change. He won’t be in heat for another few months, which was the only thing that gave him enough of a chance to run in the first place, but that’s never meant he was off-limits before.

In the meantime, they’re all settling in and getting used to each other: Troy’s people figuring out what the pack compound needs and getting to work on it, the old pack slowly starting to volunteer skills and information. Two of the oldest houses on the edge of the compound have been falling apart for ages, and they wind up using the one that’s in worse shape to scavenge materials to fix the other one.

At the new moon Troy leads a hunt with the whole pack, pulling the omegas with him when he shifts so they can join in. They track elk through the forest, running one down after hours of determined, steady chase. There’s enough meat for everyone to eat their fill, and afterward they loll in a clearing together, nuzzling and rolling around, licking each other’s chops and tugging on ears. Everyone smells happy. It can’t last. But Cory wishes it could.

Troy collapses into an exhausted heap on the sofa, exhaling a long, loud breath. The house is starting to feel more like it belongs to him at last; the smell of the thugs who used to live here is fading, being replaced with the more comforting presence of his own people. Still, it’s not easy. “What if I ran off to the mountains to live in a cave, by myself, and went wolf full-time?”

“You’d miss out on beer, for a start.” Sara comes out of the kitchen with two big mugs in her hands, grinning at his look of surprise.

“Where did we get beer?” he asks as he takes the one she offers. “Thanks.”

“Turns out one of the guys here knows how to brew.” She sits down in the chair across from him and flips her braid back over her shoulder before she takes a long pull from her own. “There’s also the fact that we’d track you down and kick your ass.”

Troy laughs wryly. “I knew there was something I was forgetting.” The beer isn’t half bad, more flavorful than some of the garbage they’ve had in the settlements they’ve passed through.

Sara gives him a minute to just enjoy getting intoxicated and start letting his guard down. She’s a helpful friend that way. “What’s bothering you, anyway? You know if it turns out we have any more alph-holes lurking around, we’ll help you knock them down.”

“I know you would. If that was our only problem, I’d be pretty much set.” He stares into his mug. “They’re so *fucked up*,” he says to his beer. “They’re all just a mess, and they think it’s *normal* for the leader of a pack to terrorize everyone under his care.”

“Tell me about it. You know one of them told me the other day that the last guy murdered female alphas on a regular basis?” Troy’s head snaps up, his teeth bared in reflexive revulsion. “Pretty much. We’re all going to have our work cut out for us.”

“Right.” Troy takes another long drink. “Keep an eye on me, too, okay? Kick me if I get out of line.”

Sara raises an eyebrow. “You’re one of the most reasonable guys I know.”

“I don’t feel that way lately.” He looks down; it’s not usually hard to meet Sara’s eyes but he’s not usually this disappointed in himself, either. “It’s Cory.”

“The runaway?”

“Yeah. I can’t stop thinking about him. I catch his scent somewhere and I want to follow it. It’s...” He trails off, shaking his head.

“The aftereffects of having to spend two nights tracking him down to prove yourself?” Sara suggests.

“Maybe. It’s not going away, though. And it’s so clear he just wants to be left alone. I feel like such a creep.”

“Feel like one, maybe, but you’re not acting like one,” Sara says. “And yeah, I’ll let you know if that changes.”

“I guess that’ll have to do.” It won’t help him stop thinking about the scent of Cory’s skin, or the way he shivered when he was pinned to the wall in those ruins—but at least it’s some reassurance that thinking about it won’t bleed over into doing something terrible.

Now that the omegas are doing some of the hard labor of the pack—today everyone was working on the fences around the compound—they get to use the bathhouse, too. It’s a rough log building, steamy inside when the fires are lit to heat the water, big stone tubs sunk into the ground so they’ll hold the heat better. The air is heavy in Cory’s lungs, damp and warm, as he strips out of his grimy work clothes and sponges off the dirt on his skin. He and Mel, one of the other omegas, are the only people in the bathhouse so far, and that suits him fine. It’s still easier to relax if there aren’t any alphas around.

Which of course means that as soon as Cory’s mostly comfortable in the water, Rick comes swaggering in. Cory’s hackles rise and he’s instantly on alert. Rick was one of the guys who never dared to challenge Gregor for control but was always ready to take advantage of the system he set up.

“Well shit,” he says with a grin, “two sweet little bitches just for me, huh?”

Cory and Mel trade nervous glances as Rick strips his shirt off. Mel’s younger than Cory by a few years, and she grew up in a shifter pack. One more like Gregor’s than like Troy’s, from everything Cory’s heard. She looks like she’s going to cry.

It’s not like he wants to be a hero or anything. It’s just easier to suffer through things himself than to watch somebody else hurting. “Yeah?” Cory says. He makes himself stare at Rick, even though all his instincts scream at him not to challenge. “You think you have what it takes to wear us both out?”

Rick snarls, then wrestles it down into a sneer. “The new boy’s been spoiling you if you think you can talk to me that way.” He climbs into the water, all rippling muscles and scars. His cock is getting hard already, like being challenged—or more likely, the idea of punishing Cory for challenging him—gets him going. This is going to hurt.

“It’s just the truth,” Cory says. He’s going to be sick, but he couldn’t live with himself if he didn’t try to help Mel out. “You’re not that impressive.”

The water makes everything happen in slow motion. Cory has enough time to tense as Rick lunges for him, and he manages to twist enough that Rick’s

hand closes on his shoulder instead of his throat. He hits the back wall of the tub too slowly to break anything, but it stings like hell where the rock scrapes him raw and he yelps in pain. Mel scrambles out of the way, out of the tub.

“Run!” Cory barks at her, clawing at Rick’s arm, struggling to break free. She bolts.

“Trying to play hero, huh?” Rick’s eyes are glowing gold and his grip is hard enough to bruise. He’s *definitely* hard now, his cock pressed up against Cory’s hip. “Think you can impress her by throwing yourself on the cock she needs?”

“Nobody needs *you*,” Cory pants. He should stop fighting now. The more he struggles, the worse it will be, and he did what he was trying to do already. But he’s so *angry*. For a few short weeks he’d been able to pretend that things were different now, that he wouldn’t have to bend over for any creep who happened to be born with alpha genes.

Rick gets a hand free enough to haul back and really hit him, hard enough that his head snaps back and for a second everything goes dark. He can taste blood, and he’s clumsy, fumbling, unable to fight back as Rick flips him over. The edge of the tub digs into his hipbones. Rick’s fingers dig into the nape of his neck and his body goes limp instinctively. He squeezes his eyes shut and tries to will himself not to cry.

The door slams open, hitting the wall with a bang, and a growl that’s almost a roar splits the air. Rick tenses behind Cory and then he’s just *gone*—Cory looks up in time to see Troy throw him against the wall, teeth bared, eyes shining with fury.

Alpha rage has never been so beautiful.

Troy pins the piece of shit traitor to the bathhouse wall, hands around his throat, squeezing hard. “Give me *one good reason* not to kill you right now.”

“Fuck you, I didn’t see you claiming him!” That’s almost impressive, given how little breath the shithhead must be getting.

“Is that the best you can do?” It would feel so good to just keep squeezing. It would feel so good to punch a hole straight through this guy’s ribcage and *tear his heart out*. “I’m not hearing any good reasons here.”

“It’s the wolf,” the shithhead tries next. “I can’t help it.”

“The fuck you can’t,” Troy growls. He lets go and steps back. The smell of rage and the drive to fight are thick in his throat. “You don’t know a goddamn thing about being a wolf.”

The asshole takes a swing at him instead of fleeing. More dumb human shit, but the kind Troy really wants to indulge right now. He blocks, throws a punch himself, revels in the dull thud of impact. The next swing catches him in the jaw, but not hard enough to stop him. He closes in to grapple, sweeps the shithead’s leg, and takes him down to the floor.

He wants to just keep hitting until there’s nothing left under his fists but pulp. When his next punch breaks the guy’s nose with an audible crack he makes himself stop, breathing hard, a growl rumbling in his throat. “An alpha wolf *protects* his pack,” he says, eyes locked with his opponent’s. “And you’ve proven you’re a threat to mine. I’m going to give you twenty-four hours to get out of our territory, and after that, if we *ever* catch your scent again, we will run you down and tear you into so many pieces the crows won’t even be able to find them all.”

Now he can smell fear overtaking the macho rage at last. Good. “Fuck you,” the shithead says again—as clever as he is honorable—but he sounds defeated. Frightened.

Troy pulls back. The guy scrambles to his feet and finally has the sense to turn tail and run.

“Wow,” Cory says, sounding very small.

His voice shakes Troy out of the battle focus, brings him back to his surroundings. He looks over. “Are you okay?”

Cory’s bottom lip is split and swollen, and there are fresh bruises around his shoulders and neck, but he nods. “Fine. Thank you.”

“Thank Mel. She let me know you were in trouble.” Troy doesn’t let himself look down, into the water. He would have fought for any member of his pack, yeah, but with Cory there’s an extra layer of urgency to it, a part of him that wants to leave his scent and his marks all over Cory and... And what, act like his ownership is the reason Cory shouldn’t be forced? Buy into this shit idea that omegas are fucktoys with no preferences of their own? He looks away.

“I will. Next time I see her.” The water ripples; Troy still doesn’t let himself look. “But thank you, too. None of the other alphas I’ve had would have done that.”

Troy shrugs. "I did say I wanted to be different."

"You did," Cory agrees. "I think I'm starting to believe you."

Three days later Cory wakes up feeling like something is wrong. He's not sure what it is, but *something* is making his hackles prickle and his adrenaline levels rise. He half expects the compound to be under siege, but everything seems calm when he looks out the window. He can't shake the nagging feeling that it shouldn't be.

He gets dressed and goes looking for Troy.

Wait, no. Answers. He's looking for answers.

The other bedrooms are empty, but he keeps catching the faint hints of a scent that nags at him, something he ought to be able to place if he could just smell it more clearly. He pads down the stairs. Nobody in the kitchen, no sound from the living room. At the back of the house, though, there's a little room with bars on the window and a lock on the outside of the door. Gregor used it to starve the fight out of people who were stubborn. Sara and Jared are standing guard outside of it now.

"What's going on?" Cory asks, even though he can finally catch enough of that haunting scent to recognize it.

Sara shifts her weight, grimacing like she doesn't want to have this conversation. "Troy's in rut."

"And you just... lock him up when that happens?"

"Slow your roll, kiddo," Jared says. "He insisted. Said he didn't want to do anything he'd regret."

Cory swallows. "Like me."

"Like you." Sara meets his eyes and he can see her wolf measuring him, taking stock of what he's made of. "I quote, 'I'm not going to dope him with pheromones and rape him. That's not who I want to be.'"

"And it's not who he is." Cory takes a deep breath to steady his nerves. "It's okay. I'll do it..."

Sara and Jared exchange glances. "You sure?" Jared asks. "You don't have to do this. Kind of the entire point."

Cory's seen how much it fucks alphas up to be denied any relief in rut. Michel, the first alpha to claim him, once had a rutting rival locked in a cage and then fucked every omega in the pack in front of him. The guy totally lost it, throwing himself at the bars over and over again until he actually broke bones.

Troy's putting himself through that on purpose. For him. Cory squares his shoulders. "He's been trying so hard to take care of me. I want to take care of him, too."

"Cory..." Sara says.

It's funny. He's never needed to argue *for* an alpha to have him before, but having to insist makes him a lot more certain he means it. "I want to be there for him. Please open the door."

They let him in.

The raw scent of Troy's musk is so much stronger on this side of the door. All of Cory's nerves light up, his skin tingling and sensitive in anticipation of touch, even before Troy looks up from where he's sitting against the far wall.

His eyes are vivid wolf-gold, and there's a growling undertone to his voice when he says, "What the *hell* are you doing?"

Cory's hands are shaking. He pulls his shirt off anyway. "Kind of a stupid question, isn't it?" He breathes as deeply as he can, inhaling Troy's scent, not fighting the feelings it provokes. Letting it overwhelm him will make this easier.

"Don't—if you're trying to pay me back for something—please don't. Get out while there's still time."

That... That hurts, a terrible ache behind his ribs that has nothing to do with pheromones at all. "Let me say yes," Cory says. "Unless you—unless you don't want me..."

Troy winces, his hands balled into fists at his sides. "I've wanted you since I first tracked you down," he admits. "It's taking every ounce of self-control I have not to tackle you right now."

There's no furniture in here, but there is at least a nest of blankets that they must have brought down from Troy's room. Cory sinks to his knees in that softness, flushing warmer. "Then you don't have to hold back," he says. "I'm yours."

Troy snarls, his scent spiking sharply, and a second later Cory's flat on his back, pinned under Troy's muscular heat. For once that's not terrifying, and

that's when Cory really knows this is going to be okay. He wraps his arms around Troy's middle and tips his head back, baring his throat. He expects to be bitten, but Troy's gentle, nuzzling his throat and breathing him in. Even the first scrape of teeth doesn't actually hurt; it just makes a thrill run down his spine and pulse in his cock.

He rocks his hips, moaning as Troy grinds down against him in return. His hands clench in the back of Troy's shirt, and every breath makes him dizzy with the raw hot scent of Troy's need. He's getting caught up in the instinctive demands of rut now, his body responding to every touch with a craving for more, but this time that feels like flying instead of drowning. "Yes," he says as Troy tugs his pants undone, "please, yes, let me feel you too."

Troy sits back on his heels and pulls his shirt off. Cory has just enough time to take in defined muscle and the tight lines of old scars before he's pinned again, Troy's hands closing around his wrists. He arches up into the touch instead of trying to get away, thrilling at his alpha's power.

But Troy eases off instead of overpowering him, kissing him with an intensity that feels somehow careful despite the passion in it. Cory's hands flex helplessly, trapped where they are, and he hooks one leg around Troy's so he can hold on that way.

It's all happening so *slowly*—if it weren't for the intoxicating, heavy musk on the air Cory wouldn't believe this was a rut situation. Troy licks the line of his throat, kisses along his collarbone, barely touches the fading bruises Rick's hands left. He pauses there, his breath hissing and hot against Cory's skin. "I hate that he left his marks on you."

Cory nuzzles at Troy's hair, just breathing him in. "I'm sorry," he says. "You can replace them with yours, if you want."

"Don't be *sorry*," Troy growls. "It's his fucking fault."

Cory arches his back, trying to press toward Troy's mouth. "So fix it," he says. "I'd rather wear your marks than his any day."

Troy groans, rocking hard against Cory's hip, and the desperation in that sound makes him feel powerful, for all that he's the omega here. When Troy bites his bruises, that isn't vicious, either; instead it's a sensual, almost *cherishing* hunger that makes him sob with pleasure. Troy lets go of his wrists, sliding one hand down his side and into his unbuttoned pants. For a second Cory tenses, reflexively nervous about alpha strength, but Troy's grip is comfortably firm, not too much.

It's embarrassingly good just to have Troy's fingers on him there. Cory's never had an alpha do this like they actually knew what it felt like on the other end of a reach-around, though a couple of them have grabbed his dick. They always do it too hard, like they're trying to prove something—though what they needed to prove when they already had Cory helpless, he doesn't fucking know.

This, though. This is as different as Troy's teeth on his bruises. Troy's fingers stay comfortably tight, and he moves like it's all in the wrist. Cory barely stifles a nervous giggle and freezes for a moment, reflexively terrified Troy noticed and is going to rip his dick off for laughing.

Troy just smiles at him, eyes a burning wolf-gold but not angry. There's so much hunger in them, maybe there isn't room for anything else. His mouth looks almost kind, and Cory melts. This encounter is wrecking him, but not in the ways he's used to.

"S-so," Cory breathes, eyes fluttering shut for a second as Troy's wrist action gets really nice. He licks his lips, getting up the nerve to ask for it. "You want more?"

The animal sound in Troy's throat does things to Cory's sex drive he's never felt even in heat before. "Yes," Troy growls softly. "But I want to treat you right, too."

That simple statement hits Cory in all the right places, and he whines again, his entire body pleading against Troy's even though he can't move much. "You are, you are. Please, I need it."

Troy's eyes flare like lamps in the darkening room, unearthly gorgeous, and Cory understands for the first time why some humans think shifters are sexy. He has the barest fraction of a moment to admire that before Troy's mouth devours his, hot and demanding, and he yields gladly to that invasion in anticipation of the next.

As soon as Troy lets him go, Cory rolls over onto elbows and knees, legs braced wide apart, back arched to present his ass for Troy to take. He's trembling all over, his body singing with need, and the first time Troy touches him he whines embarrassingly.

When he pushes back against it, it's not even Troy's cock, it's fingers and there's lube. He should have known Troy wouldn't be the kind of alpha that starts dry, even though shifter dicks get everything wet in a hurry. His own is leaking enough slickness to fuck him with; he knows that from experience. More slick is always good, though.

Troy's fingers feel even better inside him than they did outside. Cory's high on it already, desperate to be fucked in a way that's easier to bear than usual, like he's getting some of what he needs to satisfy his pheromone-fueled lust even though he doesn't have Troy's cock yet—and even stranger, Troy's acting like he's getting something out of this, too. Once again, it's not something Cory's exactly had a chance to explore before.

He sort of wants the chance to do it again with Troy and find out, though.

They don't start like a jackhammer, as much as Troy must want to; Troy pushes in slowly enough that Cory whines again, wishing he would hurry up and get deep enough to rub all the delicious aches the unexpected foreplay has given him.

Instead, Troy goes totally still. "Does it hurt?"

"No! Oh my gods no, don't stop right now or I'll—"

Troy vents a huge sigh of relief and gives it to him harder, relieving him of the need to come up with some plausible threat. Cory shuts up because his words go away for a while, and when he gets them back Troy's built up to a really, really nice rhythm that leaves him with no desire to talk at all. So *this* is what it's like to have an alpha who knows what he's doing.

Cory blisses out into omega heaven for a while, content with the world in new and wonderful ways as most of his world narrows down to Troy's marvelous cock working his ass. It starts to thicken at the base, like they always do, and Cory feels it when Troy lets go with a strangled snarl, slams in hard, and his cock starts to pulse with hot waves of release. Cory's already had a few slow, languorous waves of climax, but he shudders and finds a little more left to shoot onto the blankets at the electric feel of Troy's teeth closing on his nape.

For a few seconds they just stay like that, panting for breath. Cory's trembling from trying to hold himself up with Troy above him, even though he's not taking anywhere near Troy's full weight. "Fuck," Troy says when he notices. "Here, let's get you down so you can relax."

They ease down onto the blankets, rolling onto their sides, and Troy grunts once in discomfort but he still relaxes against Cory's back almost immediately. He presses his lips to the back of Cory's neck, gentle, comforting. It's nice. It feels strange to be still joined together, the hot thickness of Troy's knot buried in Cory's ass, but... he doesn't mind too much.

Troy kisses his nape again. "What are you thinking about?"

“Um.” He’d squirm if it were easier to move right now. “You won’t get mad?”

“Wolf’s honor.”

Cory ducks his head, grinning. Before Troy, he would have thought that was a contradiction in terms. “That I don’t really mind having to lie here with you.”

Troy snorts, a soft huff of laughter against Cory’s skin. “High praise.”

“You asked,” Cory points out.

“I did.” Troy strokes Cory’s skin where it’s easy to reach, gentle, aimless. “And I’m not actually being sarcastic. Given where we started? Not minding is a big step.”

Cory laces his fingers with Troy’s. “You’ve been really good. To the whole pack, I mean, not even just nice to me. I’m... I like you.”

Troy hugs him, a quick squeeze. “I like you too,” he says, and it feels really nice to hear that.

They settle into a comfortable silence together, sticky and warm and sated. Cory must drift off at some point, because the next thing he’s aware of is Troy pulling away slowly. He rolls over, blinking up at Troy muzzily. Troy smiles at him, and Cory smiles back.

“So, I don’t know about you,” Troy says, “but I’m starved. You want to go see what we can find for food?”

“That sounds great,” Cory says, taking the hand Troy offers. “Then maybe a shower?”

“Definitely a shower,” Troy agrees. The way the heat flares in his eyes, he’s probably thinking about pinning Cory to the wall in the shower and fucking him again. This first round will have taken the edge off, but Troy’s going to be in rut for at least another two or three days. A shiver runs down Cory’s spine as he imagines Troy taking him again, and it isn’t a bad shiver at all. That... sounds good.

He’s spent so long trying to get away from what his life has become, it’s almost strange to stop. But he leaves that room hand-in-hand with Troy, and he’s not trying to get away anymore. He’s moving forward.

The End

Author Bio

Laylah Hunter is a third-gendered butch queer who writes true stories about imaginary people in worlds that never were. Most of hir work deals with queer characters, erotic themes, and the search for happy endings in unfavorable circumstances.

Hir mild-mannered alter ego lives in Seattle, at the mercy of the requisite cats and cultivating the requisite caffeine habit, and dreams of a day when telling stories will pay all the bills.

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