Love Bites

by StarsGarters

Summary

A scrappy young human gets entangled in the wild world of werewolf mixed martial arts/professional wrestling and learns the secret of his idol’s disappearance from the sport.
Chapter 1

Cade King swirled the remains of his cheap well whiskey, one long day bleeding into a longer night. He tapped one sharp claw against the cloudy dishwasher etched glass. On a full moon like tonight, his claws refused to submit to clipping or filing. The lunar energy pulsed in his veins like a transfusion. He grimaced at himself in the mirrored bar back, ran his tongue over his sharp, overlapping canines. The mark of an Alpha, the only werewolf capable of bestowing the Bite to a human, dooming them. His fangs couldn’t retract until the moon set making it impossible to pass for human. He shifted uncomfortably on his barstool, the other thing that made it impossible to pass also made it difficult to find jeans with a proper fit. The full moon was such a waste of time.

Cade sighed and watched the other werewolves argue over darts and the pinball machine. They were barely pups, they still reeked of humanity. He glanced up at the security cameras. It was better to be with other werewolves and friendly humans on the full moon, they provided alibis. There was less of a chance that someone would accuse you of an atrocity if you were in a crowd.

He pulled his hood up to cover his tufted ears. There was no reason to grow hair on your ears, that was just another stupid part of being a werewolf. Cade scratched at his fluffy beard, just starting to be shot through with sparks of grey. He’d shave everything in the morning. He drained the dregs of his drink and signaled to the bartender for another.

“Another long late full moon night,” Silas said as he poured Cade a double. “Some new troublemakers out and about. Sowing their oats. Just watching them is exhausting.”

Cade nodded and then sneezed, his nostrils flared. The hot wet scent of arousal wafted and flared from the direction of a back booth. “Talia is performing a small business transaction by the way.”

“Oh god damn it.” Silas slammed down a beer mug. “She’s going to get us shut down.”

Cade shrugged. It wasn’t really his business but he didn’t want to smell sex when he hadn’t gotten laid in months. There was still the memory of a ring around his finger. If he wasn’t happy, then no one was going to be happy.

Talia skulked out of the back of the bar, adjusting her askew skirt to cover her thickly haired thighs, shooting Cade a dagger of a glare. “Thanks dick.” Cade saluted her with his drink.

“You know that the Patrol is out tonight, just looking for an excuse to shut down the only werewolf bar in town.” Silas snapped, showing his entirely human teeth. Smooth white normal teeth that didn’t shred dental floss. “If you can’t follow the rules then get the hell out.”

The pack of young wolves in pastel polo shirts with popped collars, hooted as Talia sat down at a table and began to polish her claws. She rolled her eyes at them and eventually they lost interest, returning to their darts and beer.

“Who the hell bit all those frat boys?” Silas asked, “I’ve never seen any of them before tonight.”

“Don’t know. Don’t care.” Cade replied, his mouth full of bitterness. “It isn’t any of my business. Anyone can buy the Bite.”

“You’ve never bitten anyone. You could name your price. The great Killer Cade.” Silas wiped down the bar.

Cade winced and hoped no one had heard that. A room full of full moon intoxicated werewolves
with exquisite hearing, the odds were not in his favor. “Don’t call me that. That’s not who I am anymore.”

“Sure, sure.” Silas sighed as he stacked glasses. “Well you’re always welcome here.”

“That’s because I pay my tab and contribute to the decor.” Cade tapped his empty glass. “I burn this crap up faster than it could ever give me a buzz.”

“Then why do you drink it? It’s one step away from paint thinner.” Silas set the bottle beside Cade.

“Nostalgia, I suppose.” It was the only thing he could afford before he was Bitten. Before all his potential was stolen from him. “Brings back memories.”

The door opened and let in a gust of cold wind. Two rosy cheeked young men strode in with the self-confidence born of too much alcohol. They were human, probably out slumming. One shoved the other forward towards the bar and Silas raised an eyebrow. “ID please gentlemen.” He peered at the two plastic cards and handed them back. “Happy birthday, Steve.”

The smaller young man pulled off his knit cap, a puff of blonde hair stood on end with static electricity. “Thanks!” He looked around with wide-eyed wonder at the sports posters and memorabilia on the walls. “This is so cool.” The sincerity in his voice made Cade cringe. “Oh god, Denny, look look look over here—” He wobbled to a display of mixed martial arts trophy belts. “Have you ever seen anything so beautiful in all your life?”

Denny wasn’t paying any attention to his friend, he’d discovered Talia and she was treating him to a full display of her specialized talents. That didn’t stop Steve from practically mashing his face against the display case glass in adoration. “The heavyweight championship of the world… Cade King. Oh my god. Oh my god. Where did you get these?”

Silas smirked. “At a garage sale.” Cade tried to hide in his hoodie. “Twenty bucks for the whole lot.”

“Did you ever see him fight?” Steve stared up at the framed poster of a vein-popped snarling Cade, waxed within an inch of his life. He hiccuped. “I always wanted to. I always wanted to.”

“Cade King was a joke. A stupid fake pro wrestler and a stupid fake MMA fighter.” One of the frat boys dressed in a baby blue polo shirt, slid up behind Steve, looming over the short, slim young man. “He was on top of the world and he just vanished. Who would give up all that fame and fortune?” The tumbler in Cade’s hand suddenly cracked and he stared at the bead of blood on his palm.

Silas efficiently replaced the drink. “You want me to toss them out?” He spoke under his breath.

Cade shook his head. “I’ve heard worse.” Stupid and fake were kind words compared to how he thought of himself these days.

Steve shrugged, flush with liquid courage, still admiring the belt. “He was a legend. So beautiful. He was my hero.” It was just the cheap booze warming Cade’s gut, not a curl of need that he choked back and denied.

“He was a loser. He’s probably dead or something. Why don’t you come over and hang out with my friends and I. We’ll show you what real wolves are like.” Steve allowed himself to be herded over to the pack near the dart board and Cade turned his attention back to his empty glass and old empty dreams.

He never craved the attention, the spotlight. Why did the unexpected kind words of a fan cut so deeply? He gave it all up, all the toxic bullshit that mashed together to create both professional
wrestling and mixed martial arts, just to prove that he could.

*I never could walk away from a challenge. Big stupid Alpha.*

“… I want the Bite, but—“ Steve’s voice slurred over the music, “’s too expensive. I’ve been saving since high school and—” Cade glanced over his shoulder as Steve threw up his hands in exasperation and almost fell out of his chair. His friend had left with Talia a while back.

“How many drinks have you served that kid?” Cade asked Silas. Silas held up a single finger. “One beer?” *Shit.* Something wasn’t right.

“How hopeless. Just feels so hopeless.” Steve continued in a flood of sloppy confession. “I’ve worked so hard. But I’m too small to do what I want— I have to get the Bite— it’s the only way.”

Baby Blue Polo showed long fangs in his smile and the hair on the back of Cade’s neck rose in subconscious alarm. That douchebag wasn’t an Alpha. He didn’t smell right. *Fake fangs.* The predator leaned in and whispered into Steve’s ear, his green eyes widened in shock. “*You can do that?”*

Baby Blue Polo preened and dragged his fangs over the back of Steve’s hand. He lisped a bit with the fake fangs, but Steve was too plastered to notice. “I’ll do you for free, just a little trade. Ever had a wolf dick before?”

Steve shook his head but didn’t look offended or scared. He squared his shoulders and balled up his fists even as he swayed. “If that’s what I have to do—“

Cade didn’t remember standing up and walking over to their table, he was just suddenly there. He picked up Steve’s beer bottle and gave it a sniff. The rancid sweet odor confirmed his suspicions. They’d drugged the kid. *Fake fangs* and roofies. The pack looked up at him as he stood behind Steve’s chair, six foot three inches of Alpha muscle that hadn’t diminished after his retirement. Working out cleared his mind, occupied his time, kept him from going crazy with loneliness. “I think you all should leave right now.”

Baby Blue Polo sneered up at him with bravado that smelled thin and false. “Fuck off you cock-blocker.” The other werewolves weren’t so brazen, they’d already scented his anger and moved towards the door. “He’s going home with me.” He grabbed at Steve and Cade caught his wrist in an iron-clad grip. Cade squeezed, grinding the small bones together to make his point, the other wolf fell to his knees whimpering in painful submission.

Cade curled back his lips in a snarl, exposing his long Alpha fangs. “Leave now before I toss you all out.” A push to emphasize his point propelled the fake Alpha to the door. The rest of the pack scrambled out behind him.

Steve stood up and poked Cade in the chest with a scrawny finger. The beer bottle rolled off the table and shattered. “*Why!?”* Furious green eyes locked with Cade’s and Cade took a reflexive step backwards. When was the last time anyone, especially a human, had dared to stand up to him? “*Why did you do that? He was going to give me the Bite! You’ve ruined everything.*” Steve stumbled out into the snow drifts, leaving his knit cap on the table behind him.

Cade’s mouth dropped open. He picked up the cap, soft blue wool caught on his claws. “What the hell just happened?”

Silas grabbed his broom and dustpan. “Well go after him. If you’re going to play bouncer, you gotta make sure he doesn’t die in a snowbank.”
It wasn’t his responsibility. It wasn’t his—icy crusted snow crunched beneath his steel toed boots, glowing faint with moonlight and muted neon. “God I really hate the full moon.”

Cade closed his eyes and listened, his hood thrown back. They were down an alley, not too far away.

Baby Blue Polo stood over Steve and laughed. A trickle of blood leaked from Steve’s nose and Cade felt a growl build deep in the back of his throat. “You’re not good enough to be one of us. You’re small and poor and weak. Maybe I won’t break you in half fucking you—“ Steve hauled back and delivered a haymaker that staggered the fake Alpha. Cade blinked in surprise. The kid had great form, even while stumbling drunk. The would be rapist wiped blood from his mouth and snarled, “You’re going to regret that.”

It was too easy for Cade to seize the back of that polo shirt, punch him in the kidney and wrench his arm back, kicking his legs out from beneath him. Cade smashed the fake Alpha’s face into the pavement, bracing his knee against the small of his back. One of the other wolves risked a slash of claws at Cade and managed to tear the sleeve of his hoodie before scampering off down the alley in terror as Cade gnashed his fangs at the interloper. Cade threw back his head and howled with bloodlust. Just a little more pressure on the shoulder and he could rip the arm clean off. Just a little more.

“Who the fuck are you?” The fake Alpha wheezed through bubbling bloody phlegm, writhing in spasms of pain.

Cade knelt down and grabbed a handful of hair, exposing his prey’s throat. Cade pulled off the fake fangs instead of ripping out his throat. “Someone who is too damn tired to deal with your crap. Now run away or I’ll make sure your body is never found.” The werewolf staggered in a stumbling crawl down the alley in the direction of his pack, he left a trail of blood in the snow.

The crisp winter air bit at Cade’s exposed skin, there were a few bloody long scratches down his tattooed forearm. It was nothing that wouldn’t heal by morning. The full moon was good at least for that.

Cade turned to Steve, who was probably traumatized from the attempted rape, the assault and from watching Cade destroy his foe. “Are you okay kid?”

Steve was staring at the tattoos on his arm, he gazed up at Cade with wide eyes and an open mouth. His breath fogged in the cold as he said, “You’re Killer Cade.”

Cade rubbed the back of his neck, suddenly sheepish. “Um, yeah.”

“You’re Killer Cade King.” Steve repeated. “Killer Cade. Killer Cade just kicked ass for me? Oh my god. Killer Ca—“ He took Cade’s hand and Cade hauled Steve to his feet. He was so light, a feather or thistledown. Steve lunged forward, pressing his whole body against his hero, inspecting him as if refusing to believe his own eyes. “Same tats.” A two handed upwards grope of Cade’s pectorals. “Same.” Steve’s hand trailed lower towards his groin and Cade coughed, grabbing Steve’s wrist before he got a handful.

“That’s nice. Let’s get you somewhere warm and—“ Cade stammered as Steve reached up and trailed his hand along Cade’s bearded jawline.

“Same eyes. Such beautiful eyes.” It had been such a long time since anyone had touched him so gently. It hurt. The young man’s caress burned hotter than the healing scratches on his arm. “I’ve loved you since WrestleBrawl 7…” Steve paled, then retched on Cade’s boots. Cade looked up at
the pale round moon, a drunken love confession in a moonlit alley. Steve wiped his mouth on the back of his hand and wrapped his arms around Cade’s waist in a bear hug, nuzzling his abdominals and smooshing his face into Cade’s blood-spattered hoodie. “Take me home Killer.”

A little inspiration image for Cade:
Steve Dawson could drink every protein shake on planet Earth and never break out of the lowest high school wrestling weight class. He tossed his threadbare jacket upon the couch. No one else in the house was awake at this hour, other than his little sister’s hamster squeaking along on the wheel. Friday night was a time when he could forget the looming inevitability of his eventual failure.

Steve flicked on the television, turning the volume down low and adjusting the rabbit ear antennae for the best reception. He absently thumbed through a packet of history homework as he waited for the main event. He’d read the instructions at least three times, but the words still flipped over on him and he had to guess a few times what he was supposed to do. Luckily Coach would cut him some serious slack in grading, he wouldn’t want his State Champion missing out on a chance to repeat next month.

WrestleBrawl was oddly comforting with its rituals. The announcers chatted about devious rivalries and betrayals. Ecstatic fans jumped up and down with homemade signs declaring their loyalty to the wrestler that they identified with the most. Confetti danced on the television screen, announcing the arrival of The Sledgehammer, a beefy blonde man wearing a red speedo and a tattered gold tank top. He tossed back his platinum mullet and pumped his arms in the air, revving up the crowd with call outs. He was Steve buzzed his lips in disdain. The Sledgehammer was sloppy, sweaty and arrogant. Of course he was a face. People liked to cheer for the hero, the face.

A wolf’s howl blasted over the loudspeakers and the homework dropped from Steve’s fingers, forgotten. He leaned forward, his face inches from the screen. The arena darkened and spotlights formed the image of a full moon on the wrestling ring canvas. A figure in a black and silver robe strode up the entrance ramp, shiny satin clinging to broad shoulders. An effortless vault onto the top turnbuckle, crouching and looming above the audience, his back to the ring. He threw back his head, howling, the hood slipped back to reveal his green eyes and thick dark hair.

The audience howled with him, as he grinned with too many sharp teeth and shook his hair at them. He leapt into the ring, twisting in mid-air to land in front of his tacky opponent. He shrugged off his robe, revealing a hard muscled body that Steve coveted with envy-green intensity. He was exactly what Steve wanted. “KILLLLLLLER CADE!”

“Killer” Cade King was a magnetic heel in the ring, Steve’s eyes clung to every precisely choreographed move. The bad guy. The villain. Steve knew professional wrestling wasn’t real, but when Cade King executed a flawless flying suplex it was easy to believe in the illusion.

Cade was the only werewolf on the roster, and secretly, the only reason that scrawny Steve Dawson had signed up for the wrestling team. If only he could be a little bit as cool as the Killer.

Steve choked back a cry of triumph as Cade lifted The Sledgehammer off the canvas with one hand about an ankle and smirked at him, then tossed him aside into the ropes. Cade howled again, slapping his own chest. Sweat dripped down his olive skin, skin that would always be hot to the
touch. Skin that was tattooed with black spirals and tree branches, accenting the curves of muscle and sinew. He looked into the camera and winked. Steve choked on his own tongue.

The Sledgehammer’s creepy manager was sneaking into the ring behind Cade, a pantomime of stealth and he sprayed a mystery fluid into Cade’s face. “Wolfsbane!” The announcers explained for the audience members who didn’t understand the plot. “Oh no! It looks like Killer Cade is blind!”

Cade dropped to one knee, clawing and wiping at his eyes. The manager slapped The Sledgehammer back into consciousness as Cade rolled about on the canvas, his back arching and hips thrusting upwards in pantomimed agony in tattered jeans that barely preserved network television modesty standards. Steve felt his cheeks burn and his mouth go dry, but he couldn’t look away. He didn’t want to look away.

“What the hell are you watching boy?” His father stood in the entrance to the living room, scratching at his jaw.

“Wrestling.” Steve replied, trying to hide his blush in the dark. “Just some stupid wrestling.”

“You got another letter today.” His father sighed and Steve dug his fingers into his thigh. “From your safety school. You know, community college isn’t a bad thing. You can learn at your own speed, get a job.”

Cade leapt across the screen, a blind frenzy of flailing limbs. “Yeah. I guess.”

His father nodded. “Don’t stay up too late. Your mom has work in the morning.” He left Steve staring at the glow of the television screen, watching Cade get pinned against the canvas. Watching the audience cheer at his defeat. Broad shoulders slumped against the turnbuckle as Cade wept with frustrated impotent fury. Steve rubbed at his wet cheek with the back of his hand.
Chapter 3

Cade turned on his dressing room shower and winced as he stood under the pelting spray. Sure, professional wrestling was fake, but that damn folding chair was still made of metal. Patterson had missed the thick pad of trapezius muscle that was meant to cushion the blow and caught Cade right in the ribs. He scrubbed at his baby oil smeared face, the old Sledgehammer basted his muscles like a Thanksgiving turkey and it transferred everywhere.

One of these days he’d be the face, the hero instead of the Big Bad Wolf. It made sense, a heel being seduced to the lure of goodness and redemptions. He sighed. Patterson had intentionally missed with the chair. There was no mistaking the gleam of delight in the wrestler’s eyes after Cade had taken the hit. Patterson wasn’t that good of an actor.

He heard the door open, a familiar pattern of footsteps and a cane. Cade shook back his wet hair and rinsed the rest of the soap from his skin.

“Just checking up on you. I saw the chair hit. That did not look good.” Max ‘Class Act’ Burroughs, the owner of WrestleBrawl, handed Cade a towel and averted his eyes as Cade draped it around his hips. Humans were so squeamish about werewolf anatomy, well most of them were. There were always wolf-sluts. Pretty women and prettier men waiting outside his dressing room. “Sorry, if I’m not who you expected.”

Cade laughed. “I’m a little too sore for that tonight. I’ll be fine. It just cracked a couple of ribs. I’ll be healed up after next Tuesday. Full moon.” He sat down on the stained couch next to the metal rack that functioned as his closet. “What’s up, boss?”

Max pulled up a dented folding chair and sat down, leaning on his cane. He’d been a wrestling star once himself, until he shattered his leg on the steel steps of the ring. “It’s not fair how quickly you heal up.” He rubbed at his shin with a grimace, “Too bad getting Bitten wouldn’t heal my old fuck ups. Any of them.”

Cade shrugged. “Your missus would murder me if I Bit you. And she’s a little too scary for even a Big Bad Wolf to cross.”

“True. True. She’s one of the reasons I want to talk to you. Our nephew is about your age and he’s been dropping hints like anvils that he’d love to meet you backstage for autographs and maybe dinner.” Max pulled his wallet out and flipped through a plastic folder of family photos. “He’s not deformed or anything,” he handed Cade the wallet. A sunny smile topped off with white blonde hair and a tan. Exactly Cade’s type. He handed back his boss’s wallet. “Erik is a good kid. Pushy like his mom.”

“Won’t the other guys get pissed? They already think I get special treatment for being who I am.” He glanced at his threadbare dressing room, “Not sure why they think that.”

Max tapped his fingers on his leg. “Do you ever want to just haul back and hit them? You know? Really belt them?”

Cade raised his eyebrow. “If I hit a human with all my strength, I’d kill them. So no matter how annoyed I am, I always pull my punches.”

“What if you didn’t have to?” Max smiled as if he knew a juicy secret. “What if you could just let loose in the ring?”
“Are you bringing on another werewolf on the roster?” Cade bit his lip with hope. “Am I getting promoted?” No more boos, no more nasty fan letters, no more scrawled signs of hate in the stands…

“No. You’re finally gonna live up to your nickname, Killer Cade.” Max grinned with neat white teeth. “You’re gonna be the face of a whole new sport. Mixed martial arts cage fighting. All wolves, all the time. No claws or fangs, have to keep the censors happy.” He pointed at Cade, “That pretty face is gonna launch it. Wolf Fight. Of course, you’ll be paid more because there’s more at stake. A lot more money. You interested kid?”

Cade ran his tongue over his teeth, the jut of his Alpha fangs. A chance to be the star. No more folding chairs. No more pretending to be less than who he was. He ran his fingertips over the old scar on his forearm, the Bite covered up by a black spiral of tattoo ink. A familiar thrill jolted up his spine as he remembered the triumph he felt when he had made the human Olympic wrestling team. A chance to be an elite athlete again. “When do we start?”
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

TW vomiting, hangover

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Ow. Steve’s brain felt as if it were leaking out his ears. And if that made the headache stop, then
Steve was all for it. Brains were overrated. He cracked open his bleary eyes, crusty with dried sleep.
An unfamiliar ceiling swam into focus. He rolled over. There was a bottle of water and a small bottle
of pain pills on the bedside table. A bucket on the hardwood floor. Hardwood?

Steve helped himself to the water and medication, moving slow so he didn’t need the bucket. From
the stale taste in his mouth, he’d already emptied his stomach earlier. His nose hurt but nothing else.
His lips were dry, cracked. His skin felt tight. He pulled the blankets over his head, hiding from the
dim sunlight that crept in from behind the curtains.

He was in a stranger’s house, in the most comfortable bed he’d ever slept on. The threads on the soft
sheets snagged on the rough skin of his fingertips. They smelled like mothballs, as if they’d been in
storage. He was wearing a stranger’s t-shirt and his own old underwear. Steve blushed at the thought
of someone seeing his saggy elastic. It was a very large shirt, soft and labeled with the WrestleBrawl
logo.

It wasn’t like he had anywhere else to go. The grocery store had laid him off and he was sleeping on
Denny’s couch until he found a new job and made enough for a rental deposit. He tried to save
money for the Bite, he did. But when every cent he made went to survival, there was nothing left
over to save. That’s why Denny had taken pity on him for his twenty-first birthday. A full moon at a
werewolf bar.

Obviously he hadn’t been Bitten. The world wasn’t kind enough to grant his deepest desires.

A soft knock on the door made Steve wince. “Are you awake?” A low, somehow familiar voice. He
peeked out from beneath the safety of the sheets. Even the pounding of his headache couldn’t distract
Steve from the glorious sight of Cade King standing beside the bed. His plain white t-shirt sleeves
strained tight over his biceps, the fabric translucent and wet in spots. Thin grey jersey pants clung to
the muscles of his thick thighs. Cade’s face was clean shaven, pink from the razor and he raised his
eyebrow at the single blue eye that peered out at him. “How are you feeling?”

Oh my god. Cade King. He was in Cade King’s house. Cade King brought him back to his place.
“I’m sorry I threw up on your shoes!” Steve blurted out in horror the only thing he could remember
from the last night.

Cade’s lips quirked in a smile. “No harm done. I’m sorry that you got drugged by those assholes at
the bar last night. I should have tossed them out before that happened. Not all werewolves are
predators like that. Makes the rest of us look bad.”

“You’re a bouncer?” Of all the inane questions he could have asked.

Cade shook his head and pushed back his thick damp, dark hair. The sides were close cropped into a
fade. “Just helping out a friend.” Cade held out his hand. “I’m Cade.”

“I know!” Steve squeaked before thrusting out his own hand from the covers. Cade’s hand enveloped Steve’s, his palm hot and callused. Cade’s claws were clipped and filed down to nubs. “I’m Steve.” He held his idol’s hand for a few moments too long before withdrawing back under the blankets. Steve’s cheeks burned red, hidden under the sheets.

“Nice to meet you. There’s sweatpants in the dresser. Bathroom is right there. And there’s always Mr. Bucket.” Cade rubbed at the back of his head and averted his eyes to the ceiling. “You can stay as long as you want. If you need anything, just holler.” He left the room, the thin jersey of his pants making it obvious that Cade King did not wear underwear in the comfort of his own home.

“Eep!” Steve muffled a tiny squeak into the soft pillow. Adrenaline buzzed in his veins. Then he rolled over and had to grab Mr. Bucket from the floor. He fell out of the bed with a soft thud. *Please don’t let Cade King see me like this,* Steve prayed. It was so cold outside of the blankets and the room spun around him. The drugs. The floor wasn’t so bad, it stayed in one place.

He didn’t know how long he’d been on the floor before Cade burst into the room. Steve ducked his head in shame. “I’m sorry.” Cade knelt down and looked him in the eyes. The fuzzy television never showed how green Cade’s eyes were. Eyes that looked at him like he was a lost, broken thing. It was a small mercy that Steve had to immediately bury his face in the bucket again.

“Let me help you up.” Cade slid his arms beneath Steve’s knees and around his shoulders, bridal-style. Steve gasped as Cade lifted him up as if he weighed nothing at all. Steve clung to Cade’s warmth, his hand pressed against the skin exposed by the v-neck t-shirt. Cade placed him back on the bed as if he were made of eggshells but Steve held on to Cade’s shirt.


“Is it cold in here?” Cade looked at the thermostat in bewilderment as Steve continued to drag him down into the bed. “I’m sorry, I run hot. I should have turned up the heat—“ Steve wrapped his arms and legs around Cade’s body, sighing as he absorbed Cade’s heat. He closed his eyes and sighed. The room stopped spinning as Cade became his anchor. He felt Cade pat his arm in hesitant reassurance, a feather light tap before he felt asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading! I know this is a little different from my usual dirtybadwrong
For such a little guy, Steve certainly had a strong grip. His fingers clutched at the neck of Cade’s t-shirt, stretching it out. There was also a small damp circle of drool on his pectoral. A skinny leg hooked over his thick thigh as if tethering him to the bed.

How long had it been since he’d just slept with someone? *Years.* It had been years since Cade had let someone hold him like this. Eric didn’t like to cuddle, didn’t like how hot Cade was all the time. He didn’t like how Cade had folded his socks in balls, didn’t like the way he shouted the answers at quiz shows on tv, didn’t like how he’d feed stray cats… Cade shook his head as if to clear memory cobwebs. Erik wasn’t here.

He glanced down at the scrawny little man with overgrown blonde hair that tickled at his nose. He smelled better now, still acrid with sweat and a hint of vomit but Cade wasn’t as worried now. He’d still call Dr. Marcus just as soon as he could extract himself from Steve’s grasp.

It was so stupid to forget to turn on the heater. It was the beginning of winter and humans needed warmth. A long time ago he’d loved to curl up in a satin comforter at his grandmother’s house and sat in front of her wood stove, basking in the radiating heat as he listened to her putter around in the kitchen. When he was so shamefully Bitten, that all was ripped away.

*Where did I put that electric blanket?* Patterson had given it to him as a birthday present. It had Patterson’s face on it and was just as useless as it was ugly. It was probably in the gym. In boxes. In bags. In piles. He’d bought this house because it had an attached gym, but he’d never sweated a drop in it. There was too much he didn’t want to look at, too much he didn’t want to deal with. Easier to stack up his troubles and flick off the fluorescent lights.

It felt so indulgent to lay back and be held. Cade ignored the tightening in his chest and blinked back the first hint of tears. It was stupid to want something he couldn’t have. He closed his eyes and let himself be lulled into sleep by the sound of another person’s breathing. Someone who wanted him simply for warmth and comfort, not for fame or fortune. *This was nice. Too bad it couldn’t last. Nothing nice ever lasted.*

Steve’s grip loosened and he squirmed against Cade, his hand grazing the bulge in Cade’s sweatpants. Cade’s eyes flew open and he carefully repositioned Steve’s hand away from his package because it had been far too long since anyone had done *that* to him either. “Alright Sleeping Beauty, you’re getting a little handsy.” It was time to wake up. He sat up and swiveled his legs over the edge of the bed.

“Why did you leave me?” A tiny voice, almost too quiet to hear.

“What?” Cade blinked, that didn’t make any sense. He’d gone after Steve in the alley. “I didn’t-“

“Don’t leave me again.” Steve stretched out a hand across the sheets. It was so small and Cade was unable to resist covering it with his own. “I was so lonely without you.” That tightening in his chest
again. A sharp inhale and exhale.

“We don’t even know each other.” Cade furrowed his brows. “How—“ Then he saw that Steve’s face was slack with drug fogged sleep. He was talking in his sleep. *Of course he was.*

Cade’s claw-tipped fingers curled around Steve’s. He sat on the edge of the bed holding Steve’s small hand until the sun set behind the curtains.
Chapter 6

Steve heard voices in the hallway. He reached for the bottle of water on the nightstand and dropped it with a clunk on the floor. Cade burst into the room, eyes wide with alarm. “I— I dropped the bottle. Sorry.” Steve sputtered, his cheeks flaming red.

Cade seemed to echo his embarrassment, he rubbed at the back of his neck. “I’m glad you didn’t fall out of bed again.” A cough from behind him. “Oh yeah. Right. Steve, this is Dr. Marcus.” He let another man into the room. Sandy brown hair with kind eyes. And very big muscles. Another werewolf? “He’s an old friend and I— I thought you should get checked out.”

“I don’t have any health insurance!” Steve blurted out.

The doctor shrugged and held out his hand. He didn’t have clipped dark claws, so he was human and apparently very into working out. “Wasn’t planning to bill this visit. From what Cade has told me, you’ve had a rough couple of days.” Steve shook his hand and he sat down on the edge of the bed. “I’m more of a specialist in stitching up werewolves, but when Cade called me up after three years of complete radio silence, I rushed right over.” He looked at his watch while taking Steve’s pulse. “Bit of a shock being called after so long. Bit of a shock. We’re such old friends after all. Can you follow my finger with your eyes Steve?”

Steve nodded and followed the doctor’s directions. The heater had warmed up the room, but there was quite a chill in the air between the old friends. After a few more diagnostic questions, Dr. Marcus sat back and smiled at Steve. “I believe that you’re suffering from acute dehydration from the drugged alcohol and chronic malnutrition. You need to eat. You need to eat a lot more.”

Steve nodded, dropped his chin to his chest and nodded again. He clasped his knees to to his chest. “I’ll try.” After he had a roof over his head and a job.

“T’ll take care of him.” Cade said, his tattooed arms crossed over his chest. Steve startled at his vehemence. “This is on me.”

Cade King was going to take care of him? The Alpha werewolf fighter of his most indulgent dreams was going to nurse him back to health? Steve pinched his own arm, the sharp pain reassuring him that he wasn’t hallucinating.

Dr. Marcus raised an eyebrow after a moment. “Are you sure? I remember what you did to that potted plant I gave you.” A smile quirked at the edge of his lips as Cade huffed out an irritated sigh. Dr. Marcus sat back and smiled at Steve. “I believe that you’re suffering from acute dehydration from the drugged alcohol and chronic malnutrition. You need to eat. You need to eat a lot more.”

Steve nodded, dropped his chin to his chest and nodded again. He clasped his knees to to his chest. “I’ll try.” After he had a roof over his head and a job.

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Dr. Marcus raised an eyebrow after a moment. “Are you sure? I remember what you did to that potted plant I gave you.” A smile quirked at the edge of his lips as Cade huffed out an irritated sigh. Dr. Marcus held up his hand next to his mouth and mock-whispered to Steve, “It was a plastic plant and he still managed to kill it.”

“I accidentally knocked it off my desk. It was hideous, so really it was a mercy killing.” Cade leaned against the door frame, smiling with thin tight lips.

Dr. Marcus laughed. “We have a lot of catching up to do when you’re ready. I’ve got all the WF gossip.”

Steve perked up and blurted out, “WolfFight?”

“Oh you’re a fan, huh?” Dr. Marcus smiled at his enthusiasm.

Steve pushed his sweat damp hair out of his eyes. “Yeah. You could say that. I— I watched all of Cade’s fights on tape. There’s a bunch of us who circulate the tapes. I couldn’t afford the pay per
“I patch up the fighters after a bout. It’s a bloody job.” He looked at Cade until the werewolf returned his gaze. “And it’s going to get bloodier.” His voice was grim.

Cade was silent, so Steve asked out of intense curiosity, “What do you mean?”

“They never have a fight on the full moon. Fighters aren’t allowed to bite and they have to have blunted claws.” Dr. Marcus tapped his fingers on his leg. “That’s going to change.”

“That’s madness. They couldn’t possibly be that stupid.” Cade shook his head in disbelief. “There’s no way.”

“It sounds pretty cool.” Steve added and then shrank back from the intensity of Cade’s green eyes. *Uh oh.* He’d said the wrong thing.

“It would be a bloodbath. A death sport. We’d be heading back to the days of gladiators. Not to mention how human and werewolf relations might suffer. We’ve barely begun to treat each other as equals—” Dr. Marcus paused and patted Steve on his blanket covered leg. “I’m talking shop and I’m sure you don’t really want to know about the backstage crap that I have to deal with. Don’t want to destroy the illusion of your favorite entertainment.”

“I don’t want to be entertained. I want to fight.” Steve wound the blankets around his fingers and clenched his fist. “I want the Bite so I can fight. I’ve wanted to be a werewolf ever since, well ever since I saw you on television.” Cade flinched at his declaration, as if Steve had slapped him. He walked out of the room.

Steve blinked and shrank back into the bed. “Did I say something wrong?”

Dr. Marcus shrugged and forced a reassuring smile. “You know he’s an Alpha, right? He’s never Bitten anyone. Ever. Won’t talk about it either.”

“Oh.” Steve rubbed at his arm in acute embarrassment. He’d said stupid things before, but he’d never offended his personal hero, his teenage *crush*. His cheeks burned red. “I still want the Bite. It doesn’t have to be from him. One way or another, I’ll get it. It’s the only way I can do what I’ve always dreamed of.” *To be like Killer Cade King.*
Cade stared at the contents of his refrigerator as if they’d magically change if he just glared at them long enough. He really hoped that Steve liked bulk chicken breasts, electrolyte replacing sports drinks and whey protein powder. There were some sad wilted veggies in the crisper, but he didn’t trust them. He grabbed a bottle of blue flavor for Steve.

Why did Steve want the Bite so badly? Didn’t he know what a curse it was? The plastic bottle creaked under his fingers and Cade forced himself to exhale. The worst part was that Steve was inspired to become a werewolf because of Cade. Inspired by someone who hated everything about himself, who couldn’t comprehend how anyone could want to be like him. He wasn’t a hero. He was a tragedy.

“Excuse me? I kinda got lost. It’s a really big house.” Steve stood in the threshold of the kitchen, a blanket wrapped around his narrow shoulders, one hand holding up the waistband of his borrowed sweatpants. Every cell in Cade’s body cried out with the need to protect that small form. The Alpha instinct, a genetic imperative to take care of his pack.

Cade shut the refrigerator door and twisted off the bottle cap to disguise how his hands were shaking. “It used to belong to some hot shot movie producer. Too many rooms for one person. What’s up?”

Steve took a deep breath and said, “I wanted to apologize for offending you. You’ve been nothing but kind to me. You saved me from something really awful and I want to say thank you.” His chin lifted with hard won pride and his traitorous knees wobbled, “And you don’t have to take care of me. I’ve been taking care of myself since my parents kicked me out of the house right after high school.” A protective urge surged again within Cade.

“Mine waited to cut me out of their lives until I got Bitten.” Why was he confessing that? “No werewolves allowed at family reunions. It’s like I might piss on their car tires or something.”

Steve chewed on his lip. “I just had a boyfriend. And that was it.” He rucked up his sweatpants and added in a rush, “I’m single now. So don’t worry about that.” Interesting.

“So am I. I’ve been a stereotypical Lone Wolf for a really long time. Like I said, this place has too many rooms for just one person.” Cade held out the bottle of blue sports drink to Steve. “Here. You need to hydrate. Doctor’s orders.”

Steve looked at the drink and muttered, “Either I drop the blanket or my pants and I can’t decide which is less pathetic.”

Cade stooped down and scooped up Steve with one arm. Steve squeaked in surprise and Cade fought back a smile of satisfaction. “Let’s make you comfy on the couch.” Steve nodded with wide eyes.

The living room was a work in progress, Cade told himself. A single black leather couch sat in front of a huge television, surrounded by exercise equipment. A heavy bag hung from the exposed ceiling beams. Mere inches separated each apparatus from each other. He’d meant to set up the exercise equipment in the gym, but it was easier to pretend that the other side of the house didn’t exist. “Sorry about the equipment. I don’t have a lot of visitors.” Cade apologized with Steve still cradled in the crook of his arm.

Steve startled as Cade spoke, as if he’d been lost in thought. “Oh! Oh— that’s okay. This is a much
nicer couch than the one I’m sleeping on at Denny’s.”

“You don’t have your own place to go back to?” Cade asked. He was so slight, lighter than Cade’s smallest free-weights.

“Nope. I’m in between jobs and apartments. If you let me use your phone, I’ll call Denny and he can come get me and I’ll get out of your hair and you’ll never have to think about me again—“ Steve babbled as Cade held him closer, the scent of sweat and distress flooded his sensitive nose as Cade inhaled. He couldn’t abandon him, it just wasn’t right.

“I told you, I’ll take care of you. Drink this, slowly.” Cade put Steve on the couch and carefully arranged the blanket around him. He grabbed a couple of throw pillows and tucked them behind Steve. He stood with his hands on his hips, biting his lower lip in thought. “Is there anything else I can get you? How can I make you more comfortable?”

A single tear spilled down Steve’s flushed red cheek. He wiped at his face with the back of his hand.

“Why are you being so nice to me? I’m nothing.”

“I don’t know. I don’t know why I’m doing this. It’s just the right thing to do. Want to watch a movie?” Steve nodded and Cade handed him the remote. “You pick.” He sat down next to Steve on the couch and closed his eyes for a moment, inhaling the scent of new strangeness in his den. Steve smelled right. It was some stupid wolf thing, it had to be. He wouldn’t be ruled by his animal instincts, he was better than that.

Steve laughed aloud at the comedy he picked, a boisterous guffaw. He laughed with his whole body. Cade was uncomfortably aware that that was first time anyone had laughed like that in his living room. More laughter and Cade found himself joining in. He glanced over at Steve and saw that the young man was watching him, a dreamy smile on his face. That sweet innocent look hit Cade like a sucker punch to the gut.

“I—I should make dinner.” Cade mumbled as he looked down at his oversized claw-tipped hands. “I—I hope you like chicken. Or I can make a protein smoothie. I—I haven’t cooked for anyone else—“

“That sounds great. All of it. Any of it.” Steve beamed at him and Cade felt blood rush to his chiseled cheekbones. “This is going to sound stupid, but you’re so much better in person than on tv.” Oh, he could willingly drown in those earnest eyes.

Cade smiled, showing off more fang than usual. This young man genuinely liked him. He remembered Steve’s drunken confession in the snowy back alley behind the bar. He hazarded a silly joke to prevent himself from doing something silly like holding Steve’s hand again. “Are you sure? I wear less clothes on tv.”

Steve laughed and threw a pillow at him. “You make a compelling argument. But not if we’re talking about the sequined chaps. Remember the ones with the fringe?”

Cade grimaced. “Oh you remember that look? I looked like a Vegas lounge singer who only covered country songs. And those sequins really cut up the inside of my thighs. My ass was just hanging out of the back of those deranged pants.” Steve hid his face under the blanket, it shook with giggles. “What? What are you laughing at now?”

“Your ass was the best part of the costume! Even my mom said so!” Steve panted for breath. “Sorry, sorry. I’m not being very polite, am I?”
“I think we passed polite when you puked on my shoes.” Cade stood up and headed to the kitchen. “I gotta make a shopping list. Maybe we can drop by your friend’s house and pick up your stuff?”


“Behind the treadmill. Or maybe the bench press.” Cade shrugged. “It’s in here somewhere.”

Steve nodded and crossed his arms. “Cade King I would like to make you a proposition. When I’m back to speed, I’d like to help you with,” Steve gestured expansively, “All of this.”

Cade glanced at the massive free weights. “Steve, I can move the equipment by myself. It’s very heavy.”

Steve shook his head and drained the last of his blue drink. “No, no, no. I got lost in your giant house. Let’s face it, it’s a mansion. I got lost in your mansion and I saw that you have a perfectly good gymnasium. With a sauna and a hot tub! I want to help you with all that stuff in the gym. We can have yard sales or put it up for auction or just call in a garbage truck. Because there’s a sauna and a hot tub going to waste.”

“I think there might be a small bowling alley and an arcade in the basement.” Cade scratched the side of his stubbly cheek. “Honestly I didn’t really look.”

“You bought a mansion and you didn’t look in the basement?” Steve’s jaw fell open, aghast. “My mom is a realtor and one thing I learned from her was that you always look in the basement, there might be bodies. Or ghosts. Or dry rot!”

Cade shifted from foot to foot, sheepish. He hadn’t given the place he lived much thought other than it was on the other side of town from his ex. The one person who hadn’t screwed him over, other than Marcus, was his money manager. “I haven’t noticed any ghosts.”

Steve rapped his fingers on his knee. “That’s how the movies always start. And then, wham! Full poltergeist.” He wrapped the blanket around his shoulders and stood up. He held up his hand with a stern serious look and Cade shook it. “We have a deal. You saved my life, Cade King. Now I’m going to help you get your shit in order.”
Chapter 8

Steve slipped into the passenger seat of Cade’s red classic muscle car with his single duffel bag of clothes and a small battered cardboard box of prized possessions. “Denny was at work, so I just packed up.” He angled all the vents towards himself and held his hands in front of the heater. “Brr. It’s so cold out there. You sure you don’t want some of this?”

Cade shook his head and pulled out into traffic. “Nope. However I will hog every last bit of air conditioning in the summer. Sometimes I just strip down and lay in front of a fan.” Steve blinked as if contemplating that, a small secret smile that he covered up with his cold hands.

“You know you have a swimming pool, right?” Steve said. “It’s in the backyard next to the fire pit on the patio. It’s empty right now but with a little cleaning, you could be doing cannonballs in July.”

“More like doggy paddling. I’m a terrible swimmer.” Cade snorted a laugh. “How lost did you get?”

“Really, really lost. I thought I was going to end up in some magical land with talking animals, but instead it was just a walk in closet. Did you know one of those bedrooms has a mirrored ceiling? Why didn’t you take that one?”

Cade almost missed his turn into the grocery store parking lot. “I— I sleep on the couch a lot. It’s cozy. Smells right.” They parked and Cade turned off the ignition.

“So it’s like a den.” Steve stared out of the car window at the neon signage. “Billy’s Food Mart. Wolves like dens.” His voice was oddly distant.

“I suppose. I usually just fall asleep watching old movies.” Cade looked out the window. Nothing seemed odd, but Steve still seemed transfixed by the grocery store. “Is there something wrong?”

“Oh no! Nothing. What would be wrong with a random grocery store?” Steve smiled with brittle cheerfulness as he opened the car door. “Of course I’m totally fine! Do you like beef stew? I’m really good at that. I learned like three recipes in Home Economics. And there’s only so much chicken breast you can eat.” Steve grabbed a cart from outside and pushed it inside before Cade could object.

Shopping trips were usually leisurely affairs for Cade. He had no obligations or time commitments. Retirement made time bleed together and sometimes he forgot what day it was. The only constant was the moon phase cycle. His biology couldn’t let him forget the fervor of the full moon or the empty stillness of the new moon.

Steve seemed to know where everything was in the grocery store with utter precision. Cade followed behind him, pushing the overflowing cart to give himself something to occupy his hands. Steve paused in front of the flour and sugar. “Can werewolves eat chocolate? It’s not toxic to you, is it?”

Cade rolled his eyes. “Yes. We can eat chocolate. We’re not dogs. Why?”

Steve grinned up at him from his crouch. “One of the the three recipes I know how to cook is chocolate chip cookies. I’d like to repay you for saving my life with baked goods. That’s how it works, right?”

“I like peanut butter chips better.” Cade blurted out. “And you don’t have to repay anything. It was just the—“

“Just the right thing to do. I know. I know.” Steve stood up and looked at the top shelf, just out of his
reach. “Of course, the baking soda isn’t pushed forward. These shelves are just a mess.” He huffed out a sigh of resignation. Cade reached over him and plucked a box of baking soda from the shelf. “Thank you.”

Steve held the orange box in his hands and asked, “Cade, can I ask you a personal question?”

“I don’t turn into a wolf on the full moon.” It was always something people wanted to know. “Silver just gives me a skin rash and wolfsbane smells like hot garbage mixed with patchouli.”

“Of course you don’t turn into a four-legged mutt. That’s just basic Werewolf 101. They taught us that in high school sex ed. How to identify a werewolf: Hot. Hairy. Hung.” He ticked off the words on his hand. It was concise and accurate. “It boiled down to don’t have sex. So really no different than the human sex ed. Werewolves are sterile, so no babies. You have to get Bitten by an Alpha.”

*Please don’t ask me to Bite you. Please don’t.* Cade held his breath.

“Were you big before you got the Bite?” Steve looked intently at the box of baking soda as if it held the secret to the mystery of life.

“I was.” Cade answered and he elaborated as Steve’s shoulders fell. “I was about six feet tall, weighed around one ninety, depending on which division I was wrestling in.”

Steve looked Cade up and down, appraising him. “That’s good to know.” His jaw set and he nodded to himself as if he’d confirmed a difficult choice. “Maybe I can find an Alpha with an installment plan—” The idea of another Alpha sinking their fangs into Steve’s flesh made Cade’s stomach flip over. He’d only known the young man for a few days, it didn’t make sense to be possessive of him.

“What are you doing here Dawson?” A clerk in an orange safety vest and a push broom sneered, “We fired you last week.” The hair on the back of Cade’s neck prickled and his fingers tightened on the shopping cart handle.

Steve closed his eyes and took a deep breath, then turned around with a sunny smile. “As you can see from the contents of this cart, we’re shopping for food. And I wasn’t fired, Alex.”

“Fired, laid off. Doesn’t matter. Uncle Matt chose me over you. Because you can’t reach the top shelves and you can’t lift shit.” The clerk’s tone made Cade’s claws itch. “You’re such a loser.” He glanced at Cade and muttered, “Wolf trash.”

Steve’s posture changed from deferential to defiant. He held up a warning finger under Alex’s nose. “This is Killer Cade King, the greatest fighter in the history of WolfFight and he’s a legend.” He grabbed Cade’s hand and pulled him past Alex. “You’re just a stock clerk who has to put away a whole cart of groceries.”

They got in the car, Cade went to shift gears and Steve put his hand on top of Cade’s. Steve’s earnest blue eyes knocked the wind from his lungs. “I am so, so sorry about that. He usually works nights, you I thought— well it doesn’t matter what I thought. I’m sorry you had to hear that. Some people are both ignorant and stupid.” He squeezed Cade’s dark-claw tipped fingers in reassurance.

He couldn’t let Steve get Bitten. Steve was sweetness and light, the Bite would turn him bitter and dark. He couldn’t let Steve destroy his life with the curse of being a werewolf. “There’s more than one grocery store in this city. How about we get some Chinese take out and dig through some of my crap in the gym later? I know I’ve got boxes of fan mail.” If he showed Steve what the public really thought of him, maybe that would change his mind.
Cade flicked on the fluorescent lights in the gym. Black plastic bags and cardboard boxes were scattered over the inlaid floor, tightly rolled mats snugged against the walls. The air circulation system whirred to life and Steve was dumbstruck at the beautiful possibilities of the space. “Whoa. It hasn’t even been sweated in yet.” Steve peered at the gym, past the boxes and bags. It was better than any of gyms he’d worked out in. It sure smelled a hell of a lot better.

Steve darted over towards the sound system and began to fiddle with the buttons. A blaring love anthem from the past decade blasted out and Cade covered his sensitive ears.

“Sorry!” Steve laughed and he adjusted the volume. “Surround sound in a gym. This is really cool. Do you know how cool this is? I mean not the music, this is crap. But the speakers are great!”

He walked to the nearest box and opened it. “Fan mail.” He grinned up at Cade. “I wonder if any of my letters are in here.”

Cade lifted up the box. “I wouldn’t know. I never opened much of it.”

Disappointment weighed like lead in Steve’s gut. “Why wouldn’t you open your fan mail?” It didn’t make sense. Steve shut the music and lights off as he followed Cade back to the living room.

Cade dropped the box with a huff. “Don’t wear yourself out, you’re just getting your energy back.” He slipped on his boxing gloves, pulled the laces tight with his teeth. Steve swallowed back a gulp at the unintentionally erotic sight.

“Yeah, yeah.” Steve shrugged, his shoulder popping out of the stretched neck of Cade’s WrestleBrawl t-shirt. He hadn’t asked for it back, so Steve had claimed it. He needed something to prove to himself that this whole situation wasn’t a dream. He plucked a fat envelope from the box. “You know, I wasn’t much bigger than this when I wasn’t starving. I’m not going to break.”

Cade started pounding on the heavy bag. “Rather not chance it. You’re my responsibility, remember?” His brow furrowed and he hit the bag hard enough to make the rafters shudder.

Steve slid his finger under the edge of the envelope. “You’re a little ripped to be my mom, dude.” He unfolded the letter and his mouth fell open. Scrawled in red marker were the words, DIE CADE. “What the hell?” Steve blinked in shock.

Cade didn’t even glance over. He hit the bag harder. Dust fell from ceiling.

Steve wadded up the letter into a tiny ball and scowled as if the threat had been addressed to him personally. He grabbed for another, opened it and threw it into the crumpled pile. Another joined it. Another. Steve stood up and stomped to the kitchen. He grabbed a paper grocery bag and scooped all the wads of paper into it.

He continued to open letters. He couldn’t call them fan mail anymore. They dripped with vile hatred. And poor spelling. *I’m dyslexic and I still know that these are garbage.* One after the other until the paper bag was full. The box was half empty. He scrubbed at his face with the back of his hand.

Cade held out his gloved hands and Steve loosened the laces. How could people not understand how wonderful Cade was? The notion boggled Steve’s mind. Cade was kind. He was generous. He was brave. Cade pushed back his sweaty hair and wiped his face off with his tank top, exposing rippling abdominals with a trail of dark fuzz disappearing beneath the waistband of his sweatpants. He was
gorgeous. Steve swallowed hard and choked on his own spit.

“Here. Hydrate.” Cade held out a bottle of water and sat on the floor beside Steve. Steve took the water and guzzled half of it. They sat in silence for a moment, looking at the paper bag. “You don’t have to open all of them. They’re all like that.”

Steve scowled and thrust his hand into the box. “No. No they’re not.” His letters weren’t like that. “I know they’re not all like that. They can’t be.”

Cade leaned his head back against the leather couch. When he spoke it was soft as a secret. “I was one of the only werewolves on television, Steve. And I was the heel. I was the bad guy. Bad guys don’t get love. Hell, they didn’t even let me do conventions or talk shows.”

Something clenched in Steve’s gut at the yearning and resignation in Cade’s voice. Someone had hurt him, betrayed him and left Cade bitter and sad. “I—” I loved you. Steve shut his mouth. It was too raw of a confession to make to the man who had saved his life and was helping him rebuild it. It was selfish.

“These letters are part of the reason that I left pro wrestling for the slightly more honest sport of cage fighting.” He closed his green eyes, a drop of sweat beaded and trickled down his brow. “The people who sent those hate letters to me were also the same people who paid $49.95 each time to watch me smash in the face of another werewolf. I bought this place with their money. And they’re still howling for me to get back in the ring. They love to hate me.”

Steve crumpled another letter in his hands. “I’m not going to stop until I find a letter from someone who— who— from someone who is a fan and not a fucking idiot!” He tossed back the rest of the bottle and slammed it down, eyes narrowed with anger. “I know in my heart that not everyone hates you. I know that.”

Cade held up his hand as if he were about to cup Steve’s face but he ruffled Steve’s hair instead, as if he were a naive child. Steve scowled at the letters as Cade left the living room. He went into the kitchen and dug in the drawers until he found what he was looking for. The matches for the pilot light.

Steve crammed the bags of crumpled letters in the empty, snowbound fire pit. Then he carried out the rest of the boxes of letters onto the snowy patio, pulled up a patio bench and lit a match. There was something beautiful about the cleansing power of flames. All the nastiness and vile hatred in those letters turned to ash and smoke. Steve pulled his hat down over his ears and warmed his hands with the fire.

“Um, Steve? What are you doing?” Cade asked as he zipped up his light winter jacket.

Steve smiled at Cade and patted the patio bench. “Pull up a seat, I’m sorting your mail.”

“And you needed fire to do that?” Cade sat next to Steve, his thick thighs taking up most of the bench. Steve nodded and fed another letter into the flames. “You know, you can’t just set all the bullshit in my life on fire, right?”

“Yes, but I can’t get my hands on any napalm.” Steve hummed in contentment and gave Cade’s knee a squeeze. “Try it. It’s fun. We might need marshmallows.” The squeeze turned into a light stroke of Cade’s taut quad. Cade looked down at Steve’s hand and Steve took it back, sheepish. “Sorry. I get touchy-feely when I’m happy—I shouldn’t have—“ Steve stammered, his cheeks red with embarrassment. “I know you’re straight.”
“Bisexual, actually.” *Oh my god*… Steve’s heart leapt in his chest as Cade continued, “I have terrible taste in relationships. I bought this place when I broke up with my ex.”

“Oh. Lauren Gomez from the women’s league?” *I wanted to be her so badly.*

Cade leaned over, pulled a opened letter from the box and flicked it into the fire. He watched the paper curl into ashes. “Eric Burroughs. We kept it quiet. Didn’t want yet another reason for death threats.”

“No way!” Steve blinked in astonishment. “You and *Ripper* Burroughs were an item? I had no idea!” The two men appeared to be nothing more than bitter rivals in the werewolf cage-fighting world. How could they have been in love? Beautiful blonde Burroughs who became the newest face of WrestleBrawl right after Cade’s retirement from WolfFight. The timing was beyond suspicious. “You and Lauren looked good together.”

Cade shrugged with one shoulder, staring into the flames. “That was just for press. She’s a very sweet lady though. Good kisser. They made us kiss a lot during her villain arc.”

Steve ripped up a letter into tiny pieces and muttered under his breath, “I remember the kissing.”

“I was the depraved werewolf seducing Little Red Riding Hood into a life of evil and lots of black leather. I still remember when they had her kick me in the balls during the big break up match. She apologized so much for that. The ratings were pretty spectacular though.” Cade huffed out a foggy sigh. “All my relationships have pretty much been chosen for me. I don’t think I’ve ever chosen to be with someone, to spend time with them just because I wanted to.”

They fed letters into the fire in silence, the embers cracking and popping. At the very bottom of a box, Steve recognized his own scrawled handwriting. “Oh my god! I FOUND ONE. This is one of my letters.” He clasped his hand over his own mouth. “Oh no.” It was the most embarrassing one he’d ever written. “It’s that letter.”

Cade plucked the envelope from Steve’s fingers and raised an eyebrow at Steve’s squirming. “Oh I have to read this now.” Cade slit open the sealed envelope with one of his claws and inhaled. “Did you spray cologne on the paper?”

Steve nodded, he pulled his knees up to his chest and peeked out from behind his hair. It was a ridiculous gesture. Only girls in old romance novels scented their love notes with perfume. He never thought that Cade actually read his fan letters, he thought that an assistant might have glanced at them before they threw them away. He never dreamed that someday he would be sitting on a patio bench in the snow with his hero, firelight painting his skin with patterns of flickering shadows.

“Nice.” Cade carefully unfolded the letter and cleared his throat with a smile, obviously enjoying Steve’s display of embarrassment. “Dear Mr. Cade King. So formal. I just want you to know that I’m dedicating my performance at the State Wrestling Championships to you because you’ve—” Cade paused, his smile wavering. “You’ve inspired me to change my life. I want to be a werewolf just like you because you’re amazing. And next time Sledgehammer hits you with a chair, you should bend the chair in half and throw it at him because he’s the WORST. I love you, Steve Dawson.”

Steve let out the breath he was holding. There it was. He’d confessed his love to his idol. “I mean it was just a high school crush, you know. Just a kid thing. I mean who wouldn’t fall in love with someone wearing sequined chaps, right?” Steve fretted as Cade seemed more and more lost in thought. “See, not everyone hated you. There’s the proof.”

When Cade spoke, his voice was rough. “So you were a wrestler?” It was not the question Steve
expected.

“Two times State Champion, 106 lbs division. I was too small to compete at the intercollegiate level and now I’m too old. So here I am. I know I can’t be an elite werewolf wrestler or fighter, but if I get the Bite, I might be able to reach things on the top shelf at the supermarket.” Steve shrugged. “My motivations are simple.” He reached over for the letter. “Let’s just put this in the fire where it belongs, shall we?”

Cade held the letter out of Steve’s reach. Steve lunged for it and Cade simply stood up. Steve stood on the patio bench, finally tall enough to look Cade in the eyes. Such beautiful green eyes, damp with tears from the smoke. Passion overcame reason and Steve muttered, “Fuck it I can sleep on Denny’s couch again,” before he pressed his lips to Cade’s.
Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

And we earned that E rating

What the hell was happening? Cade’s mind raced as Steve kissed him. It wasn’t a simple, tentative kiss either. The young man kissed with a passionate abandon that made Cade’s animal instincts howl with delight. This was a bad idea, he wasn’t any good for Steve. But he didn’t pull away, his traitorous hands slid around Steve and pulled him closer, claw tips catching on the nylon of Steve’s coat.

Steve murmured appreciatively at the pressure and threaded his fingers into Cade’s hair. Steve smelled like smoke from the burning letters, crisp winter air and borrowed shampoo. His slight, small frame fit perfectly against Cade’s chest. Cade banged his shin against the edge of the patio bench when he unconsciously tried to move closer.

He could be selfish, just once.

He tasted so sweet against Cade’s tongue as Cade opened his mouth and indulged. Oh such a dangerous sweetness. Intoxicating like no drink ever could be again. He could lose himself in that sweetness, happily surrender to the urge to drown. He felt his Alpha fangs extend as heat rushed to his groin and he tried to pull away in apologetic horror. “I’m—I’m sorry—“

Steve held his face in his small cold hands, his eyes soft and warm. “For what?”

Cade stammered, “Fangs. They’re sharp.” Steve pulled back the side of his lip and looked at a glistening razor-edged tooth. “I don’t want to hurt you.” Was he only talking about the kiss?

Steve nodded and leaned back in. “You would never hurt me. You’re a good person. I like your fangs. They’re hot.” He tentatively touched a fang with the tip of his tongue, smiled and then resumed kissing Cade’s lips with a renewed determination.

Every part of Steve was Cade’s opposite. He was bulky muscle, Steve was lean sinew. Blonde hair contrasted against Cade’s darkness. Smooth jaw skin dusted with sparse almost transparent blonde hairs that tickled Cade’s permanent black stubble.

“What are we doing?” Cade murmured against Steve’s lips as his claw-tipped hands cupped Steve’s tiny, lean backside and squeezed.

“Fulfilling all my fantasies.” Steve groaned and wrapped his legs around Cade’s waist. “You’re so warm.” Cade easily held him up as he carried Steve back to the warmth of the house. Steve kept kissing him until Cade tripped over a dumbbell and they both landed on the black leather couch.

“Gotta put your weights away. Standard gym etiquette.” Steve laughed as Cade cursed his stubbed toe and took off his jacket.

“I’m not used to having anyone else here.” Cade confessed, “But I like it.”

Steve straddled Cade’s lap and ground down, pressing his clothed erection against Cade’s. Cade’s breath left him in a whoosh at the sensation. Steve’s busy hands seemed to be everywhere, touching every part of Cade. His touch lingered on the parts that set Cade apart from humanity and Steve
murmured bits of praise. “So hot. So powerful. God I want to be like—“

_Oh._ Cade gripped Steve’s wrist, a jolt of sadness icy upon his burning lust. “Steve. I can’t give you what you want— I can’t _Bite_ anyone.“

Steve smiled and shook his head. “I wasn’t going to ask you for that. All I want is,” A ragged groan escaped his lips as he rocked his hips downwards, holding Cade’s gaze with lust-glazed eyes. His free hand pushed underneath Cade’s t-shirt, cool fingertips caressing his heavily muscled torso, dragging down Cade’s abdominals and hooking into the waistband of his sweatpants. “This. All of this. All of you. You’re amazing.” He pulled at Cade’s t-shirt and sighed in admiration at him.

No one wanted _all_ of him. Cade swallowed back his anxiety and nuzzled at the inside of Steve’s wrist to hide his doubts. “No sequined chaps? I’m sure they’re in a box somewhere in the gym.”

“Well I wouldn’t say no.” Steve doffed his jacket and Cade touched the crook of Steve’s neck that was exposed by the oversized WrestleBrawl t-shirt. The young man looked good in his borrowed clothing. Cade shivered as Steve pulled it over his head, revealing swaths of creamy skin, dotted with pink scar and freckles. A blush rose from Steve’s neck and traveled upwards as Cade devoured him with his gaze. He ducked his head and peeked out from beneath his lashes. “I know I’m nothing special.”

Cade gulped. “Oh you’re so wrong.” His hands easily spanned Steve’s waist. Steve leaned forward and kissed him, pressing their bare skin together. Cade’s heat and Steve’s coolness. Cade panted into Steve’s mouth, overwhelmed with scent and desire. He was so hard, it was sweet torment.

Steve pulled back, his hands on the waistband of Cade’s sweatpants. A dark splotch of arousal dampened the front of the fabric. “It’s been a while for me too.” Steve smiled and Cade echoed it. “Is it that obvious?” _Years. Years since he allowed himself this indulgence._

Steve shrugged and kissed the tip of Cade’s nose. “Just let me make you feel good.” He slunk down, leaving a trail of kisses upon Cade’s chest. “You just say the word and I’ll stop.” He licked his lips, flushed pink with lustful intent.

“What are you going to do?” Cade knew full well what Steve planned, but he wanted to hear it. “Test out my gag reflex on your cock.” He brushed the back of his knuckles against the fabric covered length of Cade’s swollen cock and Cade’s eyes rolled back in his head. A full body shudder and a gasp as an unexpected white-hot orgasm seized him.

_Oh my god no._ “Wait—” Cade apologized, “Steve. I—”

“Did you just come? You came from just me touching you?” Steve stared at the wet patch on Cade’s sweatpants and Cade cringed in embarrassment. “That’s so _hot._”

“What?” Cade blinked in surprise as Steve shimmied out of his own pants and straddled Cade again. Steve took his clawed hand, licked the fingers and pressed them to his groin.

“Now touch me.” Steve demanded and Cade obeyed. His huge hand encircled Steve’s thick rosy-pink cock, slick and glossy with pre-ejaculate. Steve arched his back as Cade stroked him, as delicate as if he were spun glass. Steve seized his face in his hands and growled in a guttural moan, “I said, _touch me Cade._”

Cade had never been with a lover who took control, everyone else assumed that he was an Alpha in the sheets as well as on the streets. It felt amazing to be ordered about by Steve, Steve who knew
what he wanted. Steve who smelled so enticing. Steve who rutted up into his fist, fearless of tooth and claw. Steve. Steve. Steve. Steve. Cade raked the tips of his blunted claws down Steve’s bare chest and Steve bucked in his grasp, spilling over his fingers.

Steve rested his forehead against Cade’s as he shuddered through the aftershocks of his orgasm, threading his fingers through Cade’s dark hair. They sat in silence for a few minutes. Cade’s restless brain was oddly calm when his arms were full of sexually sated Steve.

“I know—“ Steve began, interrupting his words with stolen kisses. “I know for a fact— that you have a whirlpool bath in this house— that’s big enough for two. Come on, test it out with me.” Cade nodded, unable to trust himself with words. He watched Steve saunter down the hallway and he raised his semen sticky glazed fingers to his lips.

The wolf inside him wanted more. And so did Cade.
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

Feels and tragic backstory!

_It’s cool. It’s cool. You just made out with Killer Cade and came all over your first crush. Just walk down the hall and don’t let your knees collapse_, Steve thought as endorphins still pumped through his veins. He wiped away the involuntary wetness on his cheeks, it had been _that_ good of an orgasm.

Cade wanted him. There was no mistaking the lustful heat in his kisses, the way his fangs dragged across the meat of Steve’s lips when Cade forgot to be careful. A thrill of accomplishment buzzed up Steve’s spine as he pushed open the door to the decadent master bathroom and flicked on the lights. A massive whirlpool jetted bathtub was the centerpiece in all the glistening chrome and black marble. His real estate agent mother would have made this bathroom the centerpiece of her showing. The thought made his heart ache a little, but he pushed that longing down.

Steve sneezed. There was a fine layer of dust on the countertops and tile, as if no one had used it in years. Considering Cade’s indifference towards his dwelling, that wasn’t a surprise. He pressed the button marked BATH and then JETS. With a smile, he pressed BUBBLES for fun. He glanced over his shoulder to see if Cade had followed him and was disappointed to not see him there. There was something haunted in this house, and it wasn’t the basement.

Maybe Cade was just lonely after a bad break up, it’s not like Steve could compete with the memory of Eric ‘Ripper’ Burroughs. Steve slipped into the hot water, bubbles rising up around him. That could be it, easy. It’s not like Steve had a chance to be something more than a fling. He’d be the best damn rebound ever, a thank you for all those years of inspiration. He smiled and waited until he heard Cade step into the bathroom, his mind full of erotic possibilities for their limited time together.

Steve leaned his head back and looked at the ceiling. He laughed and pointed up. “It’s mirrored. Fog-resistant mirrors. That’s a new world of kinky fun.” He waved at himself. A pink shrimp in a bubbling hotpot. “Do you think there are hidden cameras in the rooms too?”

Cade sat on the wide edge of the tub, still wearing his semen-stained grey sweatpants and scratched his stubbled jaw. “Huh. I guess I wouldn’t be surprised, but they didn’t exactly leave me an instruction manual. The fancy toilet is in Japanese and that’s a little intimidating.” He swallowed, a gulp of nervousness. Bathroom fixtures never inspired that level of anxiety and Steve flicked a spray of water at him.

“I am more than happy to decode your mystery toilet with you. Now what’s really eating you?” Now that was a thought, those round muscular cheeks spread wide and inviting for his eager mouth and stubborn determination. Cade tearing rents in the bedding as he came undone under Steve’s tongue. He blinked back his fantasy as he realized that Cade was talking to him.

“— I like you Steve, I really do.” Cade stared down at the tiled floor and Steve sank down to his nose in the bubbles. He’d heard this speech before. Most recently from his last boyfriend right before he decided to move to the other side of the world and left Steve sleeping on Denny’s couch. He huffed out bubbles in the bathwater. _Maybe it wasn’t such a great orgasm after all._ “But if we do anything else, I have to let you know that there is so much wrong with me.”
Steve nearly choked on the bathwater as Cade continued, wringing his claw-tipped hands in angst. “God where do I start? Every time the new moon is overhead, I feel so worthless and empty that I sit on my couch in my bathrobe and I watch reruns of my old matches. And I yell at the screen and tell myself what a fuck up I was. It’s super fun to be around.” Steve knew that the moon phases were important to werewolf physiology, but no one ever went into the details other than the full moon changes. “I watch television, I work out and I cook shitty meals for myself. That’s my life and I hate it.”

“I bought this place as a way to say ‘fuck you’ to my ex and I don’t know or care what half of the rooms are.” Cade traced a line in the dust. “And he’s my ex because he demanded that I Bite him and when I refused, he went off and got Bitten by the first Alpha who would take a check from our combined bank account! And then he demanded a Wolf Fight match and threatened to out me if I didn’t fight him. So I walked away. I couldn’t physically hurt someone I once loved. I just couldn’t do that.” Cade choked up at the memory, causing Steve’s fists to clench under the bubbles. Cade wouldn’t hurt his ex but Steve was ready to fight Erik Burroughs right then and there.

“So do you refuse to Bite people?” Steve turned off the noisy jets and set a wet hand on Cade’s thigh.

“Because I didn’t ask for this!” Cade mashed his face into his hands and sighed. “I’m not who you think I am, Steve. My name isn’t even Cade King. My parents named me Marvin. Marvin! I was one of the best human wrestlers in my weight class. Not pro wrestling, none of that theatrical garbage, real wrestling. I was on the Olympic team.”

“But I never made it to competition because the night after the teams were announced, someone drugged my drink at the celebration and Bit me.” Cade tapped the ink covered tooth scars on his forearm. “One blood test later and I was off the team. Everything I’d worked for, just gone. I didn’t even get a chance and it kills me. I see you looking at me with star-struck hero worship in your eyes and I just can’t let that go on. You deserve to know that I’m a monster.” He clenched his fist tight enough to draw blood and Steve carefully pried apart his fingers, stroked soothing touches on the back of Cade’s hand.

“I’m so sorry. I didn’t know.” The sadness and self-loathing in Cade’s eyes made Steve’s gut ache.

“No one knows. I’m this huge, hairy monstrosity now. A new name, a new face and practically a new body every thirty days. And my dick is a real freak show. It’s absurdly large even for an Alpha. I can’t even have sex with a human guy without them getting immediate second thoughts after seeing it. Even the size queens are like ‘hold on there buddy’. ” Cade laughed, bitter and dry. “So, now you know most of my baggage, I’m sure I’ve got more.” He tipped his head back and looked at his reflection in the mirrored ceiling. “If you need some help getting on your feet, I’m happy to help you out with rent because I don’t want you feeling obligated—”

Steve wrapped his arms around Cade and clung to his bare skin. He felt a soft shudder course through Cade’s muscles. A simple touch, an embrace almost undid the werewolf. It was criminal that no one had appreciated him, that no one had taken the time to show Cade how truly special he was. There was a hard rind of despair and sadness covering Cade’s gentle soul and no mere words were going to crack it. So Steve braced his knee against the edge of the giant bathtub and pulled Cade over into the hot water with a splash.

Cade sputtered in shock and Steve scrambled to straddle him, clasped his hands on both sides of Cade’s face and kissed him. Green eyes wide with surprise stared back at him. “Thank you for sharing all that with me. I want to share this with you. You saved me in that alley. No fraud would have done that. You brought me home and fixed me up. No monster would have done that, either.
You just offered to pay my rent so I wouldn’t feel obligated or uncomfortable. I’ve never met anyone like you before. You’re wonderful and I’ll keep telling you that until you believe it. I want you. I want you, Marvin.” Steve wrinkled his brow. “Are you sure you want me to call you Marvin?”

Cade shook his head, peering up at Steve in grateful awe. “Please don’t. My name change is one of the few things I don't regret.” His hands slid tentatively down Steve’s sides. “I’m still wearing my sweatpants. And I wasn’t kidding about my dick. It’s made people scream before.”

Steve wriggled in sensual delight, the soap and hot water making his skin glide against Cade’s. “Well that just means you’re doing something right, in my experience.” He teased one pinked nipple with his fingertip and Cade gasped. “I prefer to be on top, myself.”

“Even if you rode me, it would be uncomfortable—“ Cade paused when he saw Steve’s wicked grin. “Oh, OH. I— I—” Cade stammered, his blush turning him redder than the hot water. “I think I would be down for that. You have a lot more experience than I do, I think.”

*Now that was a damn shame*, Steve thought. “Well, I do have enthusiasm and more curiosity than is probably wise. And I do love the expression on your face when you’re lost in pleasure. It’s intoxicating. You’re so powerful, so big and strong—“ Steve felt Cade tense beneath him as he praised his body, so Steve rose up on his knees and purred in Cade’s ear, “I want to take you apart.”

Cade gulped in response and Steve kissed his way down from the hollow behind Cade’s ear to his neck. He rested his head against firm, lightly furred pectorals and kicked out with his foot to turn the bathtub jets back on. “But there’s no hurry. I’m not going anywhere. Don’t let me drown okay?” He closed his eyes and felt Cade’s arms close around him. He’d never felt safer as he dozed off.

How could someone so small be so stubbornly determined to see the best in him? Cade pressed his lips to Steve’s wet hair. He looked up at their reflection in the mirrored ceiling and was grateful that he’d bought a house from a pervert. Maybe they’d find something other than a bowling alley in the basement?
They never made it to the basement. After they'd climbed out of the tub, fingers pink and pruny, an impromptu towel snapping war occurred which culminated in Cade running down the hallway to the safety of his bedroom.

"Ha ha!" Steve laughed, his hands on his hips like a jaunty pirate. "You've run right into my trap! Prepare yourself for my wicked, wicked ways." Cade snorted and Steve pushed him back onto the duvet, staring at him for a moment. His gaze made Cade feel funny, he was an Alpha predator reduced to helpless, horny prey. It was amazing.

Slippery. Slippery, slick and smooth. Cade ran his clawed fingertips carefully up and down Steve’s damp sides. Steve choked back a giggle, as he straddled Cade’s hips. He was flushed red from his nape of his neck to the tips of his ears.

“Ticklish.” He kneaded the muscle of Cade’s chest and then traced the ribbons of black ink tattooed into Cade’s skin. Spirals, tree branches and crows. “These are really beautiful. Did they hurt?”

So are you. Cade smiled, acknowledging the compliment, eyes fixed on the slight young man above him. “A little. You kinda zone out after a while. Since I was a heel, I could get all the ink I wanted.” He touched a straight surgical scar on Steve’s lower right abdomen. “Appendix?”

Steve nodded. “Yup. My body tried to kill me. I was in the hospital for a week.” He sighed and rolled his pelvis, Cade’s cock slowly filling up against the swell of his ass. “And I doubt that your dick will either hospitalize or kill me.” He reached behind him and stroked Cade’s cock from root to tip with one small hand. “That’s really something. I bet I could feel you right here.” Steve rubbed his belly, right above the scar. “So big, you could see it. Pushing out from inside.” His voice was dreamy.

Cade gulped. “Um. I guess. Most of my partners tried a few times and then just gave up. I even bought the thick lube and those giant werewolf condoms.” He coughed and chewed on his lower lip. “They’re in the bedside table drawer. You know, if you’re into that. I just— I just don’t want to hurt you.” Even the groupies checked him off of their lists and moved on to their next conquests. Maybe that was why he fell so quickly for Eric. Eric with the sly eyes and compliments that thrilled up Cade’s spine. Cade blinked away old memories and watched Steve contemplate his odds as he took Cade’s breath away with a twist of his deft wrist and fingers.

“Quitters. They were all quitters.” Steve laughed, tilted his head to the side and grinned. “You’re not going to hurt me Cade. And I know how to use my words. Even in bed. There’s a lot of things we can do besides you fucking me.”

His blonde hair fell in his eyes, caught on his thick brown eyelashes, as he leaned down to kiss Cade. He licked delicately into the werewolf’s mouth, teasing the tip of Cade’s fangs.
Cade’s hands easily spanned Steve’s waist and Steve rubbed his cock against Cade’s abdominals. He left a smear of arousal. Cade dipped his finger into it, then touched it to his tongue. The desire to possess Steve overwhelmed Cade. He wanted to Bite. He wanted Steve to be his Pack. The disgusting wolf in him wanted to mate with the young man straddling him. He forced his hands off of Steve, tangling his fists in the duvet. Steve watched him as he gritted his teeth and closed his eyes.

“You’re so tense. Roll over on your stomach.” Cade found himself obeying without a moment of protest. Cade closed his eyes as Steve pushed his thumbs into knotted muscles. “Tsk tsk. You need a proper massage to work out all these knots. You haven’t been taking care of yourself, have you?” Cade opened his mouth to reply but only a groan came out as Steve massaged deeper between his shoulder blades. “See, there you go. You’ll feel so much better once I’m done with you. Just let me take care of you. Let me make you feel good.”

“Sure. Just keep doing that—” Cade melted into the duvet. Steve had strong hands. “I—I— oh god that feels good.”

“Yes, let me take over. It just makes sense.” Steve murmured, wiping away a drip of arousal from the small of Cade’s back. “I can’t hurt you. Look at how big and strong you are, you could break me in half. It just makes sense to let me please you.” Steve planted a kiss behind Cade’s ear that turned into a suckle upon his earlobe. “You please me. You make me so hard. I’ve wanted you for so long.” Cade shivered and thrust his pelvis against the bed, a gasp escaping his lips. A trail of searing kisses down his spine, half-whispered praises and prayers. “So beautiful. So lovely. All mine.”

All yours.

“Spread your legs.” Steve ordered and Cade obeyed. The thick muscles of his thighs quivered as Steve’s breath ghosted over his hole. The duvet shredded beneath his claws as his fingers clenched in anticipation. “Shhh.” Steve soothed, stroking his hands up and down Cade’s ass. He paused and Cade’s stomach knotted up in anxiety.

“What’s wrong?” They’d just taken a bath together. He was too big, he was too ugly, he was a monster— virulent thoughts ran through his mind.

“Um. I just—” Steve panted, “I just had to take a moment or I’d have come all over you. You’re breathtaking like this.”

Oh. Cade felt a flush rise up from his chest and stained his ears red. Compliments held more weight when they fell from Steve’s lips.

“I dreamed about this—I jacked off thinking about this after watching you on tv. Those goddamned sequined chaps. Pure sin.” Steve confessed and then his mouth was upon Cade, laving and swiping with a passion that widened Cade’s eyes before he slammed them shut. Steve feasted upon his hole, burying his face between the cheeks. The wet slurping sounds made Cade’s face burn. “So pretty. My sweet thing. Get on your knees.” Cade scrambled up, hiding his face in the duvet. A wet spot of drool stained the fabric.

Steve spat into his hand and reached underneath Cade, grasping the root of his cock with his spit-wet fingers. “Does this— swell up— when you come?” Steve asked, in between swirling his tongue upon Cade’s tight pink furl. He jacked his fist a few times and Cade moaned, a howl of desire and need.

“Yeah. It does. Another reason people don’t like to fuck me. They don’t want to be stuck on me for an hour.” Cade panted, barely able to form words between Steve’s clever hands and devilish tongue.
“I’ve been stuck on you for years. An hour is nothing.” Steve quipped as he worked a fingertip alongside his tongue. That was all it took for Cade to shudder and cry out, his entire body rocked by orgasmic spasms.

Steve stroked his skin as he came down from his orgasm, calming Cade like a winded animal, a feral beast. Cade rolled over, his abdomen dripping with his massive splattered load. “What— what about you?” Steve’s purple-red cock was so hard it looked painful.

His lover scooped up a dollop of come. “Can I fuck your pecs?” Cade pressed his pectorals together and Steve clambered up to slot his come-lubed cock in the shallow furrow. Cade watched in awe as Steve lost himself in abandon, frotting against his chest. He was gorgeous, sex-mussed and sweating. Lips stained cherry red and swollen from eating Cade out.

“You’re beautiful.” Cade said with the reverence of a worshiper at an altar. Steve’s hips stuttered and he gasped as he came. Wet white ribbons pooled in the hollow of Cade’s throat, dripped past his ear and caught in his stubble. Cade pulled Steve down into his arms, their bodies pressed skin-tight. The scent of Steve was mixed with his own musk and the heady perfume made his wolf howl with satisfaction.

Cade moved to kiss Steve and he demurred, turning his head away. “I should brush my teeth and use some mouthwash—“

“I don’t care.” Cade growled and pressed his lips to his wide-eyed young lover’s. They kissed until Cade’s stubble rubbed Steve’s skin pink and raw, the sticky mess between them began to dry and itch.

“Seems like we need another bath.” Steve anointed Cade’s sweaty brow with a kiss and quirked a brow. “I don’t trust my legs after that. Carry me? Keep me safe?”

*I want to keep you forever, Cade thought.*
Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

As much as Steve would have enjoyed lazing about in bed with Cade, he felt guilty about not following through with his pledge to help Cade get his life in order. Perhaps unfucking his entire life was too ambitious a goal, but clearing out the gym was attainable. They unrolled a few mats to sit on while sifting through the detritus of Cade’s past life as a celebrity.

“It’s all garbage.” Cade lifted a box from the pile and put it on the floor.

Steve peered over the edge of the box. “For a fan like me? Everything in here is a treasure.” Not to mention the stories that Cade could tell. Each box was a confessional of long held secrets, vendettas and grudges. This box, however, was full of old receipts. “I take it back. This one is garbage.”

Cade laughed, the corners of his eyes crinkled in delight and Steve fell just a little harder for the werewolf. It was going to be gutting when he had to leave.

Steve slit open a box and dug through the styrofoam packing peanuts. A soft stuffed face stared up at him. “Whoa!” Steve gasped and Cade paused in his sorting of old receipts. “Is this an original Killer Cade plush doll?” Steve handled the stuffed Cade with reverence, examining the tags. “I didn’t think they went into production.”

Cade went back to his sorting. “They didn’t. Wasn’t enough demand. There’s a few prototypes here, but at that point in my career I was starting to focus on WolfFight instead of WrestleBrawl.”

“I would have bought one. It’s the most adorable thing I’ve ever seen in my life.” Cade shook his head and snorted derisively under his breath. Steve wrinkled his nose at Cade. “Look at the wee fangs! The fluffy hair! They even got your tattoos right.” He petted the fluff and cradled the doll in his arms. “They went with the red sequined chaps! Is it anatomically correct?” He peeked into the waistband and made an exaggerated sigh. “Sadly no. But I bet that couldn’t be approved for the kiddos.” He smiled at the toy and thought about how he would have treasured it back when television wrestling was his escape.

Cade put the lid back on the box of receipts and brushed paper dust off on his sweatpants. “You can have it.”

“Really? You don’t know how valuable this would be on the collector’s market, do you?” Steve pressed the doll to his chest. Like he’d ever sell it. When Cade got tired of him, he’d have something to remember the fun times.

A one shouldered shrug that made Cade’s muscles flex. “Money isn’t an issue.”

Steve fell backwards onto the mat at the sheer ridiculousness of that statement. He held the doll up above him and wriggled the toy’s arms. “God, I wish I could say that one day. Money isn’t an issue. Did you really make that much being on tv?” Looking up at the rafters of the gym, Steve thought about how much money someone would have to make to never have to worry about being hungry or homeless again. It didn’t seem real. But then again, this house had electronic toilets and heated bathroom floors.

“I do get residuals, but I also own half of WolfFight.” Cade dug in a box of kitchen tools. “Ha! I found the hand mixer and the spatulas. Operation Chocolate Chip Cookies is a go!”
“You *what*?” Steve sat up and clutched the doll to his chest.

Cade held up the kitchen utensils in triumph, then he realized that Steve wasn’t stunned by his spatulas. “Oh, yes. When WolfFight started out, they needed a celebrity werewolf to be the face of the venture. Burroughs didn’t have the capital to pay me up front at that time. So my money manager, Selene, worked out a deal where I own half the controlling interest of the company. That includes a cut of all ticket sales, pay per views and merchandise. So money isn’t an issue for me.”

“So, if you’re the co-owner of WolfFight then why aren’t you stopping them from going all fangs and claws?” Steve held the doll up, as if both of them were interrogating Cade.

“I’m more of a silent partner.” Cade chewed on his lip as Steve quirked a skeptical eyebrow. “I’m not great with business.” The other eyebrow raised up and Steve shook the toy’s head. Cade admitted in an exasperated huff. “I don’t want to run into Eric.”

“Ah. So is that also why you’re a hermit?”

Cade stuck out his lower lip in a pout. Steve wanted to suck on it. “I’m not a hermit. I go out every full moon to Silas’ place.”

“You’re a super rich hermit in a giant mansion. That’s been done before, you know. Is that why you bought this place? You needed a place to hide from everyone?” Steve teased. “If so, I respect your commitment to the hermetic lifestyle.”

A tiny mean smile curled Cade’s thin lips. “No, I bought this place because my ex really wanted to buy it. And I’m a tad bit spiteful. Just a little.” He held up two claws in a pinch. “A little bit.” Steve choked back a laugh.

“I guess you have the ‘fuck you’ cash to do that. But when was the last time you have gone out to the movies? Or gone bowling? Maybe took a walk in the park and fed the ducks?”

Cade blinked and looked down at the mats. “I honestly can’t remember. God that’s pathetic.”

“I have exactly thirty-two dollars in my wallet and I want to take you to a movie, Cade King.”

“But it’s almost the New Moon. I’m whiny and dramatic. I’m *awful* during the New Moon.”

“Define awful. Does it differ from how you are acting whiny and dramatic now?”

Cade scratched at his stubble. “Not a lot. No.”

“Well I still want to be around you, so that argument is full of holes. Looks like I’m taking you on a date Mr. King.” Steve tossed the stuffed doll at his namesake and Cade threw it back.

“Gah. Don’t call me that.”

Steve grinned as he set the toy aside. “Do you prefer Marvin?”

“I regret ever telling you that.”

“Well I had to listen to you read my teenage love confession, so I think we’re even.” Steve crawled over and patted the mat beside Cade. “There. Look at these mats. Smell the free polymers and foam. Virgin and untouched. Seems a shame.”

“We can’t fuck in the gym. That’s just not right.” Cade weakly protested as Steve hooked his ankle around his leg and pressed a slow easy grind against the thick meat of Cade’s thigh.
“You never popped a boner while wrestling?”

Cade easily flipped Steve into a submission hold. “No. I was too busy trying to win.” Steve felt Cade’s hot breath against the nape of his neck as he inhaled the scent of Steve’s hair. And hello boner!

“Looks like you and I got into athletics for very different reasons.” Steve wriggled until Cade released him. The werewolf’s hands were so large they could restrain both of Steve’s wrists with one paw. Steve rolled over and grabbed a double-fistful of Cade’s hoodie. “I wanted to be like you.”

Cade met his eyes, finally not glancing away in shame. “Yeah, I know. A werewolf.”

Steve shook his head. “No. A champion.” He pressed his lips to the pulse point in Cade’s throat and was gratified when Cade shivered beneath his gentle kiss.

“Do you even know what movies are playing?” The protest was breathy and weak.

He whispered low into Cade’s ear, his words a promise of lustful mischief. “I think that if we get a seat in the very back row, we won’t really care what is on the screen.”

“You are a menace, Steve Dawson.” Cade groaned.

“So I’ve been told.” Another stolen kiss, each sweeter than the ones before.

“Steve. It’s not a lot of fun for me out there. Aside from the stares, I’ve got to worry about the Patrol —”

“Those assholes.” Steve’s lips compressed into a thin line. Every one knew about the self proclaimed werewolf police who roamed the streets on full moons in the name of public safety. A bunch of vigilantes determined to enforce their moral code of humans first. And the authorities usually looked the other way. That’s why even the lone wolves would hang out in bars and other wolf friendly places. Safety in numbers.

“Yes. Those assholes. And the random dudes who want to challenge me to a fight. It’s not fun.” Cade sighed, “Maybe being a hermit isn’t a bad thing, Steve.” Cade flipped Steve onto his back and pinned him between his massive arms.

Steve huffed a sigh of disdain. “Try being a gay kid who looks like me. Most of the dudes out there who want to fuck me want me to be this delicate little doll. A teeny tiny twink.” Steve grabbed Cade’s chin and stared up with fierce blue eyes. “I’m not a plaything. I’m not a doll. I’m not just going to lay here and take it. I make my own choices. And right now, I want to take you to a movie.”

A sly smile spread over his lips and Cade echoed it. “Or we could defile your new gym mats.”

“Okay. Let’s go to a movie.”

A Special Note from the Author

Chapter End Notes

Heads up! I'll be posting this piece of original writing here because I started posting it here and it's not fair to those of you who started reading it to be left in the lurch. Please see the link at the end of the chapter for details. I love this place and I don't want to
violate their terms of service.

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