Down the Rabbit Hole (aka Curiouser and Curiouser)

by MisMiz (Jaaaaack51)

Summary

JD learns the value of the direct approach.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.

JD Dunne entered the room in a state of quivering anticipation. Inside, it was so dark he could barely see. He carefully made his way over to the bed and crawled under the covers. The sheets felt deliciously smooth and cool beneath his hot skin. He noted this fact absently. Most of his attention was focused on the person lying next to him in the bed. He'd dreamed of this moment for months. He wanted everything to be perfect. Leaning over, he began feathering light kisses all over his companion's face and gently slid his hands under the broad shoulders.

Wait a minute. he thought, puzzled. Something feels different. Casey doesn't have a mustache. MUSTACHE!!!!! OH MY GOD!!! He stared in horror as Buck Wilmington sat up in the bed and grinned at him.

THUMP! JD groaned in pain as he woke up flailing and rolled out of bed and onto the hard floor. He sat up and shook his head, trying to clear away the last vestiges of sleep. God! What a crazy dream. It had been just a dream? He glanced quickly around the room and gave a sigh of relief when he saw no sign of his friend. He was the room's sole occupant.

Reaching up, he grabbed his pocket watch off the little nightstand next to the bed. Squinting his eyes, he saw that he still had well over an hour before he was due at the jail. Plenty of time to have breakfast and visit the bathhouse first. He didn't particularly want to go back to sleep so he might as well get a head start on the day. What the hell kind of dream was that, anyway? If Buck or one of the other fellas ever found out...; He shuddered.
Mercifully, he was the only one at breakfast. JD could feel himself relax as the lingering effects of the dream began to dissipate. It was just a dream. It didn't mean anything. JD turned his attention to his toast, determined to think about anything except Buck and his stupid broad shoulders.

He walked into the bathhouse a short while later and came to an abrupt halt. Two of the tubs were already occupied. By Buck Wilmington and Ezra Standish. JD may have been able to rationalize things to himself over breakfast, but that didn't mean he was ready to face Buck and his naked shoulders just yet with the dream still fresh in his mind. He stood there for a minute, paralyzed with indecision.

Ezra was leaning quietly back, eyes closed. Buck, as usual, was talking.

"Hey Ez. Did I ever tell you about those twins I grew up with back home? Long blonde hair. Big blue eyes." Buck sighed.

"No, Mr. Wilmington. But I feel quite certain that is about to change." It was Ezra's turn to sigh. Awww...You'll love this story"...Buck broke off what he was saying when he caught sight of JD lurking in the doorway.

"Hey, kid!" he called cheerfully. "You're just in time. Pull up a tub!"

JD felt an irrational surge of anger at the sight of his friend, lounging casually in the tub, completely unaware of the havoc he had wreaked in JD's dream. It wasn't bad enough he had managed to ruin things there for JD, but now here he was, rubbing it in. Telling another one of his apparently endless tales of his conquests.

"Are you feeling quite the thing, Mr. Dunne? You seem a bit perturbed." Ezra had opened his eyes and was regarding JD curiously.

"Perturbed? I aint quite sure what that means, Ezra. But if it means I'm sick and tired of Buck here, interfering in my life and taking over my dr..." JD's voice had risen to a near screech before he stopped short, appalled at what he had almost said.

Both his friends were staring at him, mouths gaping in shock.

"I'm sorry." JD muttered. "I had a bad night."

He glanced at Buck and, unbidden, the feel of his hands sliding over that strong hard body washed over him. He clenched his hands into fists and spun on his heel, hoping they hadn't noticed the telltale flush of color that had accompanied this thought.

"I uuhhh...I'll see you fellas later." He stammered as he fled the bathhouse with all possible speed.

Over the course of the next few weeks, once the initial shock of the dream had worn off, he found himself replaying it in his head, taking it a little further each time. His initial embarrassment had transformed itself into a burning curiosity and each replay left him wanting to experience the reality of it just that much more. How on earth was he supposed to ask Buck to do those things though? Each scenario he envisioned led either to Buck laughing in his face or punching him in the face. Neither option appealed to him, although he'd take the punching over the laughing any day.

How the heck did a person do this? How did you let someone know you wanted them to kiss you without actually saying so? Maybe if JD just hinted around about his interest, the older man would take it from there? He would give Buck an opening and let him take the lead. Yeah. He liked that idea. Buck was always so keen on trying to teach him stuff he already knew. Well, this time Buck
could actually teach JD something he didn’t know and was keen on learning. JD was enormously pleased with this train of thought.

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Two weeks later, JD was ready to tear out his hair in frustration. Curiosity may or may not have killed the proverbial cat but it was killing JD. Seemed like the only thing he could think of anymore was Buck and everything he wanted Buck to teach him. He couldn't believe a man of Buck’s experience and prowess could be so... so thickheaded! You’d think he'd recognize a seduction attempt by now. Especially since half JD’s ideas came from Buck’s stories!

First there had been the standard “helpless” routine. JD had swallowed his pride and pretended to have trouble saddling his horse. Buck had rolled his eyes, told JD to quit fooling around, and left the livery without a backward glance.

Then there had been the fake injury attempt. He had pretended to sprain his ankle while they were out on patrol. But instead of sweeping JD into his arms, Buck had rigged up a travois and dragged him ignominiously back to town behind his horse.

Then JD had planned a romantic candlelight dinner and arranged for an unsuspecting Buck to meet him in his room. Chris had sent Buck out of town that same afternoon on some overnight business for the judge and JD was out half a week’s pay with nothing but a bellyache to show for it after eating all that food by himself.

Finally, in desperation, JD had told Buck how attractive he found broad shoulders and firm muscles. Buck had shown up at his door that same evening with the biggest, scariest woman JD had ever laid eyes on. She had broad shoulders all right. And lots of muscles. She looked like she could break JD in half without even trying. That had been the last straw. JD was ready to throttle his clueless companion. He was fresh out of other ideas.

He was sitting disconsolately outside the jail the evening after the fiasco with the amazing amazon, as Buck had referred to her, when Vin Tanner walked up and sat down in the chair next to him.

"It appears you're gonna have to be a little more direct, JD. Buck aint the kind to take advantage of a friend. And he aint always too good at picking up a hint either." The tracker's voice was matter of fact.

JD was mortified. He felt his face flood with color.

"I don't know what you're talking about, Vin!" he blustered.

"Don't ya, kid?" His friend's voice was soft.

Looking up, JD saw gentle amusement in the tracker's blue eyes. And a faint echo of underlying pain. Following his friend's gaze, JD saw Chris Larabee walking up the street, escorting Mary Travis to the newspaper office. The two blonde heads were close together, as Chris bent down slightly, listening intently to the woman at his side. JD fought down a stab of pity, knowing that was the last thing Vin would welcome.

"Yeah. I guess I do know what you mean." JD got to his feet with a renewed sense of purpose. If Buck needed direct then that’s what he’d get.

He looked down at Vin, still sitting in the chair. "Could you tell Buck I'm looking for him if you see him?"

"Sure, JD." Vin replied, settling more comfortably in his chair now that Mary and Chris were out
of sight.

"And Vin?" JD added, as he turned to go.

"Yeah?"

"Thanks."

Vin smiled briefly. "Good luck, kid." he said softly as he watched JD walk briskly towards the boarding house.

There was a knock on JD's door a short while later.

"JD? You in there? Vin said you were looking for me?" There was the sound of the door opening.

"You ok? Why is it so dark in here? Is that you, JD? What are you doing in…?"

JD reached out and yanked Buck to him. “I learn better by doing so just shut up already and kiss me.”

There was a moment of silence. Then warm lips covered his and he was pressed flush against that strong hard body from his dream.

"Buck..." JD pulled back, a bit breathless and not entirely sure what he wanted to say.

“You might just turn out to be my star pupil, JD. Now shut up already and kiss me.” Buck muttered, pulling JD closer.

Subtlety might be an art form but the direct approach sure saved a lot of time.

The End

End Notes

You made it to the end! Thanks for reading.

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