

Stains and Tracks

By: Rufus Quintin

The German Shepherd flicked the smoldering end of his cigarette across the asphalt, feeling strangely undersatiated by the nicotine rush it provided. He felt for his pack, found it, but rejected lighting a second, at least not yet. He was beginning to feel nauseous anyway. He remembered the lighter and knew it had to go in the box as well. He couldn't forget anything, especially not the lighter, because that meant he might get tempted to make another trip. He only wanted to do this once, if it at all. He felt that he should, but that persistent feeling of obligation always got him into trouble.

The shepherd stirred through the clutter of receipts, fast-food napkins, and flattened, lamentably empty soft-packs avalanching out of his GTO's glove compartment. He drew forth a tiny piece of metal, cradling it in his paw. A smooth, featureless rectangle with reflective properties caught a glint of hazy sunlight, burning a blue steak across his retina. It was a mundane device, save for its history. He was told it saw the shores of Inchon. The device bore enormous sentimental value of course, but not to him. It had somehow navigated itself to and from Korea, evading the occasional shrapnel, survived the passage of a generation before circuitously migrating into the disarray of his Pontiac's glove compartment to endure the companionship of a ketchup packet.

He could have bought another one, having seen several dozen examples at surplus stores and flea markets throughout the central U.S. The Doberman would have never known the difference. He wondered how many millions had been produced as he polished it with the fur on his wrist. Its owner had an attachment to it or as perhaps more likely the case, the other way around. Objects have a strange power over their masters. The thought, which was more like a disquieting epiphany aroused an anxious expression of amusement in the form of a short nasal exhalation. He placed the metal rectangle into the unmarked moving box strapped into the passenger seat with more care than he intended, laying it among a number of other lost objects. There was now only one thing left to do.

The shepherd reached for his cell phone and scrolled down a list of numbers associated with names, associated with memories. C.J.'s number had fallen into neglect, but there it stood in defiance of the temptation to erase it. His thumb wavered over the tiny LED screen, resisting the urge he feared would initiate another six months of passive-aggressive, inconclusive bullshit. He willed his paw-pad to tap out, "I got ur stuff. U home?" He immediately regretted hitting send. The canine turned on the car radio. A layer of atmospheric static, no doubt resulting from the humidity, forced its way over The Eagles. He hated the waiting game. He hated mind games.

Two consecutive cigarettes and his best efforts at spacing out couldn't still that writhing entanglement of anxious energy taking residence in his torso. He knew the nicotine probably wasn't helping the issue, but it gave his paws something to do, and that seemed favorable to clawing another hole in the steering

wheel. He did his best to avoid making eye contact with his cell phone, preferring instead that ten-mile stare beyond the broad hood of his car. The parking lot offered up little in the way of entertainment.

A song or two later an electro-mechanic buzz complicated the lighting of a third cigarette. A whisker singed into acrid smoke. For some reason he had difficulty calling up the incoming SMS let alone holding onto the phone. A terse "Ya," greeted him in his inbox. He could still back out and go to his original plan of casting the box into the dumpster behind the HyVee and be done with it. It didn't really matter where it landed. C.J. hadn't even asked for it, nor did that ass deserve it. His paw turned the ignition before he had realized it.

The earth-shaking roar of the tempest V8 startled him as much as it did a nearby flock of house sparrows. Why do people do anything, he thought, resigning himself to a course of action he really had little interest in pursuing. The asphalt led him down a familiar path he probably hadn't traveled in circa six months or so. He didn't keep track of that either, or so he tried to convince himself. It didn't seem like that long ago. In fact it wasn't. Time seems to accelerate the older you get, he told himself, letting the Pontiac carry him down a residential tree lined street somewhere in southwest Topeka.

C.J. was the kind of guy who could tell you the make, model, and any defect a car could have by sound and sound alone. His engine and aftermarket exhaust had to be unique to Topeka, broadcasting the low frequency rumble through asphalt and meticulously tended turf. The Doberman must have heard the GTO coming from a mile away. He could probably triangulate his position, could calculate his speed and angle of approach like some uncanny canine Doppler. Trent exhaled a bolt of air through his nostrils, an appropriately dull reaction of humor that seemed to expel some of his anxiety along with it as he pulled down a familiar street. A break in the cirrocumulus overcast permitted a few rays of sunlight through the haze, bringing out an eerie texture to the elongated afternoon shadows.

Trent wanted to keep driving like he had once or twice before, to scope the neighborhood to see if any new cars stood in the Dobermans driveway. He expected to see the Mustang or the 'Cuda, or something else like a Chevelle or even hyper-customized modern fiberglass. He never spotted anything, but that didn't mean much. He knew he could just keep going, play the stalker and be done with it. This time he felt like he had no choice; like some tectonic shift on the other side of the world set into motion a causal chain of events, mistakes which could only be resolved with additional mistakes, or at best well intended errors of consequence. Trying to untangle his reasoning just ended up confusing him.

Trent watched his paws pull the steering wheel to the right, felt his boot ease onto the break, bringing the GTO in front of a single story ranch style. A yellow Buick GSX set up on jacks among the usual clutter filled the garage. Not much changed, things were just a little bit greener. Birdsong and the whine of a cicada or two succeeded the cessation of the engine. C.J. inherited himself a nice place and took care of it too.

The shepherd found himself carrying the box up the driveway, stepping over half dozen or so soggy newspapers accompanying the oil stains on the concrete. He scanned for the Doberman, following at last a clank of metal that led him to spot a pair of boots and pant-legs protruding from beneath the Buick. He waited for a moment, standing in the daylight just outside the garage, compelled to leave,

compelled to stay. He ground sand into dust beneath his boot sole, feeling no need communicate anything else.

The Doberman surfaced a couple of moments later, riding a creeper from under the transmission. Reflective glass lenses masked inexpressive features turned towards the waiting shepherd. The Doberman righted himself, straddling the dolly and nudged his goggles onto his forehead with a gloved knuckle. His shirt and jeans displayed a pattern of black-brown dots and streaks effusing the scent of oil and solvents. A dusty red bandana covered his scalp. C.J peeled the gloves from his paws, idly tossing them between his legs.

The Doberman got to his feet, offering only an audible expression of pain as greeting. A grimace shaped his features. He stood tall, an ear or so taller than the shepherd. He kept his build; the shepherd could identify the muscle groups packed under his clothes. It felt strange to see him again, and a little uncanny that so little about him had changed. That fact didn't bode well, but he knew he was locked in. The shepherd stood under the garage door, trying to brandish his own physique and doing his best to look ambivalent.

"Trent," spoke the Doberman, finally acknowledging the shepherd's presence.

"Sup," he replied, passing the box on. The Doberman wordlessly received it and placed it on the hood of his car, taking a brief moment to rummage through its contents. He flipped through a stack of CCR and Turbonegro records, shuffled through a few articles of underclothing, and immediately pocketed a jangling set of keys and the metal lighter Trent found earlier. He also pulled forth a black leather collar, inspected both sides and handed it back to the shepherd.

"This belongs to you."

"I'm giving it back."

"Keep it," he said with an air of authority.

The shepherd nodded, agreeing only to avoid conflict. He folded the collar and slipped it into the hip pocket of his jeans.

"So why are you here?" continued the Doberman, a skeptic expression passing over his features.

"I'm moving," he lied, "I found these and wanted to give them back."

C.J. nodded, doubts maintained. "It's been a while."

"Six months give or take."

"You been counting?"

"Not really."

The Doberman walked past Trent out into the amber sunlight. He pretended to watch a group of children play across the street, producing a pack of cigarettes and trying the reobtained lighter, utilizing one of his own when the prior failed to generate a flame. He offered the shepherd one as well, who partook.

"You look good," said C.J. after a while, ashing without averting his gaze, "you've put on some more mass."

"Thanks."

"You could have put on more, if you did what I told you."

"Fuck you."

"It's your body. Do with it what you want." The Doberman inhaled deeply on his cigarette, hesitating a moment or so before pointing the ember at the Pontiac parked curbside. "I see you painted her."

"Yea, this April."

"Carousel red is a good choice. Wish I had my camera."

"Thanks."

"Transmission still causing you problems?"

"Rebuilt it. It's doing a bit better now."

"That's probably more work than she needed, but as long as you're satisfied with the results, then it was worth the effort."

Trent nodded, "Still grinds a bit, but it's an improvement."

C.J. shrugged and flicked the cigarette in the general direction of a coffee can overflowing with butts. A child squealed somewhere down the block. The Doberman threw a furtive glance in the direction of the noise, "Damn kids." He wandered down to the end of his driveway, collecting the wet rolls of newsprint and brought them back into the garage, disposing of them in a metal drum. Trent stood still, contemplating how to make the least awkward departure. The Doberman returned and stepped up beside him, staring fastidiously at something uncertain across the street said, "You came here to talk, so let's talk."

"What?"

"I know you; you always want to get the last word and always have to say what's on your mind."

"I came to give your shit back. You're welcome."

"Bullshit."

Trent started off down the driveway, giving the Doberman the finger as he moved toward his vehicle, swinging the door open with violent irreverence. He stared back over the glossy red hardtop at the cross-armed canine under the looming garage door. He didn't seem to move, he didn't seem to care. The door swung shut, the shepherd remained outside. Once again acting against his instincts, he strode back up the driveway, skidding to halt on his boot-heels inches away from the Doberman's muzzle.

"Yea, I do have something to say! You're a fucking idiot, a whore, and you're an asshole! All I've ever done was treat you with respect! I've done shit for you no one else ever has, yet you're too stupid to realize it! Fuck you! You don't know shit about respect. You've never done anything in your life out of respect."

The shepherd felt his fist clench, his claws bit into his paw-pads. He felt his arm raise but then let go. His violence sublimated into an anxious tremble. He stepped back, cursed, and spun backward toward his car again. He stopped in front of a roving gang of children on bicycles who had slowed down for the spectacle. A girl circa age eight came to a complete halt, stared mouth agape, and then bolted the way she came.

"You're lucky," the Doberman said without losing composure. "If I were younger I would have broken your nose the moment I saw your fist ball. But like I said, I know you. I know you're not going to hit me and I know you came here to give me a piece of your mind. I know you're not done either, because that would have been the smallest piece of your mind I ever got. So shoot."

The shepherd backtracked, retreating from the herd of children watching from the corner of the block. He stood tall, trying to regain his pride. "Yea," he said, "I said what I needed to say. I came here to see if you learned a thing or two about respect. I guess not. I guess hearing I'm sorry from you would be too much to expect. But you can start by admitting to a mistake."

The Doberman nodded, "I've made mistakes. Talking about them won't change them. You can't tell me I haven't learned from them. The fact that you got to keep your teeth just now should be proof of that. You want me to say 'I'm sorry.' You want me to apologize because I didn't meet your expectations. You find it disrespectful that you didn't get your way. Hearing sorry is just your way of getting a happy ending."

"No," the shepherd said, "I just hope you've realized by now that it's not all about you."

"That goes for you too."

Trent turned away, and paced off a few steps, returning visibly burdened. He scratched at his muzzle, a nervous tick he couldn't remember acquiring and conceded, "This was a mistake."

The Doberman nodded.

"I'm sorry," Trent said, with his ears swept back.

"I know."

"I'll go." Trent took a step backward, inclined to go on his way in earnest.

"Thanks, by the way."

"For what?"

The Doberman pulled his father's lighter out of his pocket, holding it up between thumb and index finger, staring at the shepherd through the space in his paw.

"No problem," said Trent, redirecting his step forward.

"Where was it?"

"In the GTO. Found it under a seat a few weeks ago. Kept it safe."

Trent took another step forward and looked up at C.J. The Doberman looked back, a smile on the edges of his lips. C.J. extended a paw. Trent took it in an impressively firm grip that pulled into a masculine, shoulder-to-shoulder embrace. Paws beat the dust of each other's backs. Familiar scents of oil, sweat, and dust circulated in Trent's nostrils. Trent placed a kiss to the Doberman's cheek. A stained brown paw repelled him with almost enough force to knock him off his feet, sending him stumbling down the incline.

"What the fuck?" Trent said in defensive, self-righteous tone of voice, his soles catch him on the concrete.

The Doberman about-faced into the garage. A paw beckoned him in.

"What was that about?" continued Trent, chasing after C.J.

"What were you thinking?" asked the Doberman in reply, penetrating authority surfacing in his voice.

"You really haven't changed."

"I told you never to do that in public. What's your problem?"

"It's just a kiss. Nobody saw it."

"You don't get it."

"Apparently not."

The Doberman sighed, shaking his head. He crossed his muscular arms and stared down the length of his muzzle at the pacing shepherd. "You're brainwashed."

"What?"

"You watch too much fucking TV. The faggots in Hollywood and the bay have put it in your head that you have to live like some middle-class posers in some house in the country arguing about fucking doilies!"

Marriage, monogamy, suburbia, assimilation into the hetero-lifestyle by any means necessary! They've convinced you that it takes those things to be happy. You never bothered to ask if that's what it takes, if that would even make you happy. It's a fantasy, bro!"

"I'm just saying, how long are you going to keep living like you do? You're almost 40!"

"I'm happy with what I got. I'm too realistic for that grass is greener bullshit."

"I feel sorry for you."

"You have no idea how many people out there won't let you be happy, even if your into the beaver cleaver shit."

"We could have tried."

The Doberman sighed, pulling the bandana from his scalp and dusting it off on his thigh. "Were you ever happy?" he asked, inspecting the rag before pocketing it.

"At times," said Trent, taking a seat on a weightlifting bench, beside a rack of dumbbells.

"And you remember where it got us?"

"Yea," said the shepherd, averting his gaze to the Jackson Pollack of oil stains on the concrete floor.

"I can't do it, Trent. I never lied to you."

The shepherd nodded, pretending to untangle a knot of fur on the back of his paw. "Who are you with now?"

"The usuals."

"You happy?"

The Doberman shrugged, gesturing with his paws. He paced the length of the Buick before asking, "You?"

Trent threw his head to the side, starring past a rack of free-weights at nothing in particular. His shoulders twitched, hinting at a shrug.

"Then we're better off," said C.J. as he casually reclined against his Buick with his arms spread open.

Trent didn't nod, but didn't feel like refuting either.

"Have you gotten off your chest what you need to say?"

"I think so," the shepherd said in a less than resolute tone.

"Good," replied C.J. as he walked past the fellow canine, flipping a switch on the wall. The garage door descended, producing an uncomfortably loud mechanical whirr. It shut cutting off all but a sliver of

daylight, leaving the interior of the garage bathed in milky pallor emanating from behind a plastic fixture doubling as a moth cemetery. An incandescent work-light cast shadows from beneath the car. C.J. strode in front of the shepherd. Trent looked up at the Doberman's perpetually unmoved features without lifting his chin. He understood the ritual, he had seen it before. C.J. gripped Trent by the collar, pulling the shepherd to his feet with a thread snapping tug. Trent instinctively fell into the kiss that waited for him. He felt his broad arms clasped in such a way he knew he could not easily escape had resistance been necessary.

Why do people do anything, Trent asked himself for the second time as he permitted the foreign tongue past his lips. He didn't feel like questioning the wisdom of things, he did that too often with too little result. He might as well enter another mistake in a list too long to count. What did it matter, he made his decision. He let his paws slide to the Doberman's midsection. He let his head tilt and his muzzle fall into place. He let himself be held in a way that assigned roles without negotiation. He let his tongue communicate wordless consent, trapped beneath its writhing peer.

Trent didn't have to confess that he missed the Doberman's taste, an uncanny element that seemed to make him strangely acquiescent. Few had that power, he realized, surrendering to the pink, slick tongue writhing within his muzzle. No one else out there had that will-bending authority, few had his body, and no one else out there was interesting even if C.J. just kept things interesting in his own knuckleheaded ways. The Doberman's strong paws clutched his biceps, kneading the muscle in a way that seemed to annul his strength while Trent let his paws slide under the sweat-dampened fabric of the Doberman's once-white shirt. He found those perfect lats, traps, and delts flexing beneath a thin layer of skin. His fingertips curled into the unyielding firmness of taught muscle and raked the contrastingly soft fur. The Doberman growled a little into the kiss. Trent knew C.J.'s buttons, apparently they hadn't changed.

He let his claws sink into the short fur and pass crosswise over the Doberman's spine. He clutched lean fur and flesh along C.J.'s comparatively vulnerable flanks, scraping tense obliques. Trent knew the order perfectly well, he knew where it would get him and above all he knew how stupid it was. He found himself in that situation before, many times in fact, and always reacted as such. He couldn't think of any other way now.

The Doberman's paws crept across his body, sinking claws into flesh to the point where Trent felt unsure if he had drawn blood or stopped just short. Trent tried to flex and show off every muscle, every recently honed sinew granting him an appearance formidable in every respect. C.J. clutched and probed the shepherd's physique as if sizing up the recent developments. The Doberman was particular with what qualified as a body, Trent passed muster before if only by a thin margin. Six months won him the confidence not to doubt his passage of the Doberman's unspoken evaluation.

C.J. broke the kiss after another moment or two of heated "assessment." Trent knew by his expression not to immediately chase after another kiss. The Doberman groped around Trent's waist, finding the outline of the black leather collar stashed in the shepherd's jeans. He reached into the shepherd's pocket, pulling the leather band past a decidedly firm sheath, bringing it up around Trent's neck, buckling it into place and testing its soundness with a gruff tug. The Doberman then grabbed Trent's

muzzle, twisting it left then right, certifying his work with a close visual inspection. "There," he said, "You look better already. Now you're ready."

Trent knew what he implied. In no particular hurry he sat back down on the weightlifting bench, keeping his eyes focused on the Doberman in a beatific upward stare. The collar constricted around his neck as he swallowed. It felt heavier than he remembered. The Doberman had ordered him to wear it at all times when not at work or when bathing. Trent obeyed, aside from one or two unnoticed transgressions. He wore it with resignation, unsure of exactly what it meant to wear it again. Trent lifted up, unlatching C.J.'s belt buckle. His fingers slipped the prong from the leather strap and lowered the zipper over an intimidating male bulge. Jeans and gray boxer briefs followed each other down to the Doberman's hips.

Trent usually didn't get much time to enjoy the sights. Most of the time he found his muzzle mashed into the heat of sheath-fur upon exposure. This time the Doberman struggled peeling his oily shirt over his shoulders, giving Trent a moment or so to enjoy the auburn canine sheath at his own pace. The short uniform fur felt hot to the touch, damp with sweat and musk. The pinkish-red tip of impressive girth peaked from the sheath-slit. Twin orbs hung heavy in their pouch. Trent cupped them at once, enveloping them in a gentle yet decisive grasp, pulling the Doberman toward his awaiting, angled muzzle.

The Doberman issued a vulgar sigh, freed of his shirt he let fall by his side. Trent turned an eye upward, perceiving that half mocking half appreciative curl of a smile on his slender muzzle. The Doberman's pointed ears directed at him in anticipation of each audible slurp and moan. Trent's tongue began by coating the short-furred sheath with a sequence of laps, soaking the already damp male anatomy. The shepherd's senses had been attuned to C.J.'s musk since his arrival, now its totality, salinity and more than a faint essence of motor oil flowed into every corner of his muzzle.

It took Trent months to oust the Doberman's scents and musk from his apartment. He still found them or remembered finding them in his bedroom, in his sheets, and in his clothes. Olfactory ghosts, persistent in their haunting, escorted him and would continue to so long as they remained tethered to his memory. He partook of those scents now, the heavy primordial compounds trumping the oil and dust, direct and unmitigated. They filled his senses, his muzzle and his nasal passages where they worked their purpose, clouding everything but the imminent.

C.J.'s paw came to rest upon the back of Trent's scalp, its authoritative presence felt familiar, perhaps indispensable. Its force pressed muzzle into sheath to the point where it became difficult to lick, to shift focus, and even to breathe. Trent continued at his best, watching the pointed tip of the Doberman's cock followed by smooth slick shaft. A tug on his ear instructed him to permit that length into his muzzle, finding it quickly slide past his lips. A thrust assisted Trent, bringing his nose into contact with musty pubic fur and sending the thick aroused length as deep as possible. His tongue swirled around the venous red shape, he felt it pulse and expand, swelling between palate and tongue until it reached its apex.

Experience had taught the shepherd how to handle the likes of C.J. This however was a challenge even when it was a common occurrence. Fortunately, it was more of a skill of accommodation than any other talent.

“Good boy,” said C.J. in his most patronizing voice, his paw relinquished its hold to pet Trent along his muzzle and between his ears. The hold reaffirmed as C.J. sent a thrust that forced Trent’s nose deep into the Doberman’s coarse pubic fur and tight belly. The action repeated until it reached its usual brisk pace. Trent looked upward, past the defined abs and prominent pecs. His sleek fur shone with a blue hue in the fallow light. The brown patches of fur upon his chest, belly and limbs were marred by streaks of oil. The Doberman gazed down, distracted and unyielding, not an unfamiliar sight.

Trent had to brace himself, he held onto the edge of the weightlifting bench between his legs. His other paw reached around to the Doberman’s behind, clenching the fur of his buttock. His claws sank into where the fur turned from black to brown, just beneath the short docked tail at the crest of his curvature, right where C.J. liked it. He knew where he could and couldn’t go. An inch too high or an inch too low and he would regret it. The Doberman vocalized some indistinct guttural tone, one Trent came to recognize as favorable. The Doberman’s butt flexed with each buck, Trent enjoyed feeling the pulse of muscle beneath his paw. It felt empowering, even in submission.

Trent began finding it difficult to maintain the slick dashing of his tongue and the creative twists of his muzzle. The growing knot caused his jaw to ache; the deep penetration compromised his breathing. Force of will urged his tiring tongue along the slick underside, lapping inward, coaxing out the pre he began to sense seeping through his mouth and down his throat. The venous shaft pulsed often, issuing forth the distinct fluid that seemed to coat every corner crevice in his muzzle with natural musky lubricant, thickening his saliva, marking him from within. The collar around his neck constricted each time he swallowed the ever flowing pre, a psychological reminder of what he permitted in his body and from whom it originated.

A nudge against Trent’s forehead directed him off C.J.’s cock. He let the Doberman slip from his muzzle. The firm maleness with its knot hung close, a thread of pre linking his muzzle to it snapped. Trent couldn’t forget what it looked like, he knew its features, its ridges, its sensitive spots, but seeing it up close never failed to incite a sense of appreciation if not libido. C.J took a step or so back, letting his jeans fall to his ankles where he slipped out and kicked them against a drawer cabinet. Trent remained on the bench with his mouth ajar, his tongue hung limp past his lips. He never observed this behavior before.

“You did good, bro,” the Doberman said standing in the nude, his arousal fully revealed, “Didn’t miss a beat.”

“What’s a matter?” asked Trent, clearing his throat, his voice affected by the soreness in his jaw.

“Nothing,” C.J. said starting off on his way somewhere.

Trent followed the naked canine with his gaze until he disappeared past an adjacent door that led to the kitchen of his home, unsure as to follow or stay put. He adjusted himself in the meanwhile, pinching and rolling the fabric covering an uncomfortable, firm sheath. He licked musk off his lips. The taste of Doberman pre wasn't going anywhere.

It took a moment before C.J. returned carrying a bottle that explained his behavior. His hard-on diminished, if only slightly.

"I'm getting old," C.J. said, "I can't give it to you in both ends anymore. I gotta take my pick. Now tail up!"

Trent sighed and began by slipping off his boots. He stood, stretched, and started stripping the shirt off his back, casting it on the nearby rack of weights. He couldn't really say this is what he was afraid would happen or what he expected would happen, but rather it was somewhere between expectation and fear, he really couldn't prepare and just had to accept it. Besides, the "tail up" imperative had a profound and unexplainable effectiveness he didn't feel like questioning. He looked down his chest and abs as he worked on his belt and buttons, wondered how many hours went into sculpting those muscle masses back when he was trying to impress this guy. It wasn't like they didn't matter now; it meant he could always walk out with his pride, no matter what happened.

Trent let his pants slip to his ankles. He picked them up, folded them and put them beside his shirt with a little more care than required. C.J. watched, leaning against the car, with a great deal of enjoyment, flicking off the snap-cap of the bottle at a premeditated moment. The German Shepherd stood tall, naked, his blacks and tans showing upon his longer coat. His fur had a way of blurring the distinctness of his physique, obscuring the fine lines of muscle, but he learned to trim it in such a way that would show off, if not exaggerate his tone. His arousal stood equally tall, several inches emerged from his tawny sheath, revealing more excitement than Trent would have preferred to let on.

"My my," said C.J. approaching the shepherd, "you have been working on yourself." He reached out and swept a paw through the fur of the shepherd's chest, Trent flexed on instinct. "Good boy," he continued, applying a few rewarding tugs to the shepherd's exposed maleness with his oil-stained paw. "Now tail up!" he commanded again.

Trent assumed his position over the vinyl padded bench, he lost track of when exactly, but remembered doing it there once or twice ages ago. Trent refamiliarized himself with the improvised foot and handholds and lifted his tail as instructed, positioning himself lengthwise on the seat with a knee on the cushion and a foot on the floor. C.J. lifted the canine's tail further, taking a hold of the appendage in a way that would have offended Trent had it been anyone else. The shepherd coped, allowing the curious side of his companion to surface in an inspection that took just a moment longer than it should have. "I see you've kept tight for me," he said, stepping in behind the shepherd's rear. Trent took that as a compliment.

C.J. applied a generous portion of lubricant to the bare patch that surrounded Trent's tailhole, painting the soft folds around the supple pink slit with his familiar and thankfully effective favorite brand. It was

really going to happen, Trent thought; putting together what had seemed a sequence of disconnected moments and memories into a narrative that did little to explain the here and now. The slick brush of paw-pad against the too easily yielded flesh signaled a degree of finality before it even began. That psychosomatic abdominal ache was back, right on time. Trent's entire manhood throbbed with dull soreness. He glanced down the underside of his body. His cock stood fully erect, knot and all with the first of many droplets of pre beading at the tip. Yea, it had been a while.

The Doberman brought his paw around Trent, taking a wet hold of his cock. Stained paw-pads coated the shepherd's cock and knot with a slick layer of lube and Trent imagined a little bit of motor oil. The gesture was but a formality, a little trick Trent had insisted on long ago and thankfully stuck. A few seconds of repositioning brought C.J. beneath the shepherd's raised tail. It didn't take much longer before he felt the curved point of the Doberman's cock pressing against Trent's wrinkled pucker, seeking out the taught bands of muscle at the very center of his tailring. C.J. rarely took his time which had its advantages most of the time, not always, but often.

The tip hit its mark, sinking into the shepherd's slick folds, immediately forcing the tight flesh to stretch around the canine girth. Trent felt his passage grow taught as the Doberman's cock slid into him a tad too fast to with too little resistance. The shepherd barked an expression of pain that could be mistaken as one of surprise or the kind of subby vulgarity the Doberman got off on. The pain echoed up tail and spine, supplanted only by the exaggerated feeling of immense girth spreading apart his insides. That quasi-natural feeling of being topped set in, the not exactly comfortable, but not exactly undesirable fullness that seemed to radiate through his torso and wavering limbs. As much as he would deny it, Trent knew he was too conditioned not to fully enjoy it.

Trent's tailring bore down on the slick cock it had no hope of stopping. The occasional jolts of pain caused involuntary spasms no doubt to C.J.'s delight. The Doberman took advantage of Trent's tightness, wasting no time in riding the quivering muscles of deprived canine tailhole. His knot pushed Trent forward, causing him to reevaluate his bracing strategy. His paws reaffirmed their hold on the metal bench frame, his claws dug into the vinyl and his muscles flexed to the added benefit of showing off a little. C.J.'s knot still forced him forward, slapping between his cheeks and against the highly personal bare patch.

C.J. gripped Trent's muscular buttocks giving them a decisive, dominant squeeze. Further taps, nudges and squeezes along his backside communicated the Doberman's will. A claw to the thigh told him back into the Doberman's bucks, a paw on the belly meant he needed to sound a little sluttier, and a squeeze on his flanks instructed him to work those tail-muscles. Trent remembered exactly how to react.

The shepherd tried not to look back. He only occasionally threw glances over his shoulder at the heated Doberman. His eyes seemed glazed over, bloodshot on the count of irritant solvents. His jaw hung open baring white fangs, expiring hot damp breath against Trent's back. Nostrils and ears perked down at Trent, perceptive of all the sounds and scents of sex. Pleased growls reverberated through him along with a few disappointed ones. C.J. was enjoying himself, or else he would have finished by now.

Trent vocalized a number of guttural tones, wincing as the musky red cock parted his insides through long deep thrusts. Its curved tip reached deep into his intimate passage, tugging against the tender walls from tailring, over prostate, to those seldom reached places not everybody could touch. Trent's writhing body received the thrusts, his insides molded to the Doberman's shape, made slick by copious pre. C.J.'s pace remained inconsistent, quickly changing its pace from fast to slow, constantly seeking out different angles and regions within him, prohibiting Trent from getting too accustomed. He did his best, willing his tailhole to remain tight as possible.

The Doberman eventually slowed down his thrusts, easing his shaft in and out of Trent's slick tailhole, which had begun to take on a slight reddish hue. Trent knew what would come next, having resigned himself to the possibility before, well, since before he was willing to admit. He kept his gaze averted, looking at the black padding of the bench. He stared at the stress marks his claws depressed into the vinyl, so that the Doberman wouldn't be able to see his face and read his expression. He watched his pre create a puddle beneath him from which ran tiny rivulets that led off bench in viscous droplets that fell onto the floor's foam matting.

C.J. hilted the shepherd once more, bucking the swollen knot against his opening. In between panted breaths he spoke, "I do think you're going to get bred today."

Trent exhaled a shuddering breath, keeping his face averted. At least he gave warning this time, or felt like a little bit of dirty talk. C.J. rarely tied. He had to like you, and even then you couldn't count on it, which was actually kind of a blessing. Trent obviously wasn't in a position to argue, you couldn't dispute something like this, especially not on all fours with a cock inside you.

"How does that sound to you?" C.J. continued.

"Yea, please breed me," Trent whispered, venting the words in a single exhalation.

"You sure? Look at me if you want it."

Trent swallowed, gulping some remnants of C.J.'s musky essence past the collar around his neck. He hated dirty talk, but knew it came with the role given to him, and that it belonged to the many indisputable acts when you presented to C.J. He turned his head back, threw C.J. a submissive expression and asked the Doberman to breed him again. C.J. smiled, his muscular chest rising and falling with the quick breaths he took.

"Thought so," he said, letting his paws do the rest of the talking. A few nudges and squeezes repositioned the shepherd. C.J.'s thrusting continued, faster this time, building momentum. The knot hammered against his entrance with more and more force. Trent winced, hissing air through his clenched teeth with every strike. It pushed against the tired muscle, stretching it just enough to send searing bolts of discomfort through him. The Doberman gripped the shepherd's waist, instructing him to back into the swift thrusts, to take the knot himself. Compromising some of his pride Trent rocked back, met the most virile thrust yet and slipped the slick bulge into his body.

The Doberman pulled him close; grinding hips into buttocks in an instinctual reaction. C.J.'s cocktip slid even deeper, the knot wedged itself against bladder and prostate filling all imaginable space inside his passage. Trent exhaled a vocal grunt, bracing against the sharp waves of pain throbbing from his tailring. The muscles flexed into place, locking him with the Doberman. Trent felt his insides displaced in the not too unfamiliar totality of union. The throb of maleness and the no doubt copious quantities of Doberman pre seeping into his insides, marking him with his former mate's scent and unique male essence.

C.J mumbled a few things to himself, some more dirty talk and barbed compliments the shepherd could have done without. It sank in during the recommencement of the Doberman's thrusts, the deep rutting that came with a good breeding, he surrendered yet again. He surrendered his body, sure, but also something else. Pride, integrity, dignity, all the things he valued or rather claimed to value but did little to protect beyond threatening with a petty little bit of violence. Exactly where those things went missing bothered him the most. Certain was they went missing well before he took the knot.

The Doberman eventually shut up, concentrating on attaining the inevitable. He stood hunched over the shepherd, breathing heavy into Trent's black fur, grinding his hips against his elevated rear, and edging himself on the shepherd's pre-cum drenched interior. The pain subsided into the dull ache of tied sex, the overfull sensations that had their way of conducting through his body, through his balls, and through his cock and own fully-formed knot. The push and pull of total union, the ever more frequent spasms of the Doberman's cock, and whatever craving had inspired him to lift his tail in the first place had their effect. He willed the Doberman's climax as much as the other canine sought it, flexing and angling his body to accommodate the irregular jabs penetrating his insides. C.J. entered into the final stretch, the frantic search for that right sport, that point of friction or frictionlessness, the correct amount of pressure that would be just enough to get him off.

The Doberman found that spot. In a few last hammering thrusts powerful enough to force the muscular shepherd and the bench beneath him forward, he came. C.J.'s weight fell upon the shepherd. He exhaled a number of vulgar gasps corresponding to the first and most forceful of his ejaculations. He thrust too deep to feel the hot jets of fertile seed splash into him, only the perceivable throbbing of C.J.'s manhood gave any sort of indication as to the quantities of thick Doberman cum deposited inside of his body. Trent shuddered, his powerful limbs weakening as the Doberman bred him with all he had to offer.

A few pelvic thrusts concluded the ordeal. Both canines panted. The musks and pheromones of heat mingled with the chemical aromas of motor oil. Trent took in both, undeniably aroused. He felt, or imagined he felt the slow seep of white canine cum flow into the crevices of his body, pouring through his most intimate regions. The knot kept everything in place and secure as it pressed against his prostate and seemed to stimulate all that made him male. The ache of pent-up cum of his own coursed through him like some undeniable urge more primal than he cared to admit. It got hard to breathe with the collar around his neck.

"I assume my boy wants to get off?" said the Doberman, panting heavily and still leaning on the shepherd's back.

Trent nodded. He knew the game.

"Does the doggy need to cum?" C.J. reiterated.

"Please make me cum," said Trent not entirely amused.

"Well, okay then, that's all I needed to hear," said C.J. reaching around to stroke the shepherd's member.

Trent shuddered, his limbs nearly buckling as the relieving stroke took some of the ache out of his solid arousal. His pre easily lubricated him, slickening his smooth hard cock and swollen knot in a matter of moments. The Doberman's oil-stained paw-pads ran the length of his arousal, stroking the venous flesh that was definitely still familiar to him. Trent felt glad that C.J. remembered his buttons too. A twist around the tip, a squeeze at the base, some love for the knot and he was already at the edge. A playful buck or two sent C.J.'s cock rocking against Trent's prostate, pushing him to the edge. The shepherd's body nearly failed him as he almost collapsed against the bench as he came. Jets of his cum slashed on the smooth padding beneath him, white contrasting starkly upon the black padding. The viscous substance poured with every throb until every drop had been milked from his cock, leaving an enviable amount beneath him.

Trent caught himself in time and straightened his limbs, concentrating the last of his strength to propping up not only himself but the Doberman still lodged inside him. Both males panted, taking in the scents of their union. C.J. let the shepherd's spent cock hang and leaned back, presumably inspecting his bunched sheath disappear into Trent's body. The Doberman seldom stayed tied for long, usually a minute or two for courtesy, after that he became bored with it. Trent didn't keep track of time but it felt a little longer than usual when the Doberman put his paw on the small of his back and pushed. A tug brought his knot to the tight entrance to his body and pulled the opposite direction. A few more tugs, each more forceful than the last freed the captive knot from Trent's body. The shepherd shuddered as it passed, his tailring once again forced to stretch to its size.

C.J.'s semi-limp maleness slid from Trent's body, hanging out coated in a glistening mixture of pre and cum. A trickle of that mixture seeped from the shepherd's body, oozing out of the abused, burning canine tailhole and trickling into his fur. Trent flexed, trying to restore some sort of function to the nearly broken tailring of his. He didn't feel back to normal, his passage felt vacant and sore, his limbs ached like after a long workout, and everything around him seemed hazy or unclear. He stood, realizing just how much of a workout bracing against the thrusts of a two hundred and fifty pound male actually is.

C.J. cleaned himself off with a shop rag, tossing it to Trent once he righted himself. "Clean up after yourself," he said pointing his muzzle in the direction of the cum-puddle he left on the bench. Trent

wiped his product away, feeling a combination of shame and remorse as he took a second look at his own cum trapped in the fibers of an oily gray rag he ended up tossing into a bin.

The Doberman leaned back against his car, arms crossed over the patches on his chest. His blacks and tans glistened albeit dappled in post-coital dishevelment accentuated under the spotlight of the garage lamp. His reddish-pink cock hung limp before him, its knot preventing its egress back into its sheath. Trent decided against sitting down, for fear of leaving cum imprints on the Doberman's possessions, preferring instead to lean against the heavy rack of weights next to his clothes.

"Your spending the night." C.J. said, sounding more like a demand than a question.

"Am I?" said Trent, trying to regain some of the defiance he arrived with yet finding that difficult knowing that he was full of his disputants cum.

"You always like to spend the night after we fuck."

"That's was true, but we're not an item."

"I thought we were never an item, it didn't stop you from asking."

"That's different."

"How?"

Trent shrugged. "I thought we were an item, but we weren't."

"You know," C.J. began, starting the search for his clothing, "It broke my heart when you left. Guys come and go, but you, you're a friend. I missed you."

"All I ever wanted was to be more than just a friend. Is that too much to ask?"

"And what will that look like? You and me growing old, watching the Golden Girls with our TV dinners?"

"All I ever said was lets wait and see."

"That's not me Trent."

"What is?"

"I gotta find my own path."

"It'll get lonely down the road."

C.J. shrugged. The belt buckle on his jeans jingled faintly as he threw them over his shoulder. He blew air past his lips and rolled his eyes upward toward the backlit moth cemetery. "Speaking of roads we've been down."

Trent slipped his shirt over his shoulders and pulled it down tight over his torso. He thought twice about slipping on his boxers, preferring to cover himself by holding the fabric in front of him. Trent didn't expect the Doberman to say anything unexpected, yet he stood in such a way that it appeared that he did, seemingly anticipating the other canine's next words. C.J. disappointed. "I'm gonna go piss," he said, turning through the side door, leaving the Doberman behind.

C.J. abandoned waiting for his knot to recede, slipping his boxer-briefs over the outline of his cock. Jeans and shirt followed. As he straightened out his pockets he found the plain metal lighter in his front-pocket. He held it in his paw under the pale light. It had no features, just brushed aluminum and a hinge two thirds of the way up. His finger touched the non-descript surface.

His thumb flicked the lid open, the cam fell into place with a click. The eyelet blackened by permanent soot, encrusted in decades of use and flint particles. He tried to ignite it once more; it failed again, he closed it with a metallic click, never letting his eyes off it. C.J.'s fingers clenched around it, his fist seemed to tremble. He walked over to Trent's jeans still slung over the free weights. He slid the lighter deep into the back pocket, brushing it flat.

Trent reentered that moment, elbowing the door open. He paused, on the shallow step leading to the house. He didn't say anything, though he could have. There was more to his argument but he didn't feel like any of it would help. C.J. tossed him his jeans. Trent wordlessly slipped them on and strode to the bench they fucked on to slip his boots back on.

"Maybe you're right," said C.J. locating his smokes, "but that won't change anything."

"I think you're right," said Trent, stamping his left foot into his boot. "Maybe you deserve to be alone."

"There's no maybe. Why you keep coming here is beyond me."

"It's beyond me too, C.J. Trust me."

The Doberman walked back over to the wall and flicked the switch to the garage door. Clean air poured in and swept the humid and sex ridden air out, replacing it with a breeze several degrees cooler. The sun had set, leaving the pale blues and violets of rapidly diminishing daylight. The children had all gone home leaving lightning bugs to conduct their courtship rituals. Streetlights flickered into existence and the smell of a charcoal fire blew in from somewhere not too far off. Both canines stepped out under the lip of the garage door, into the twilight and the sound of many crickets. Cigarettes lit up in the lips of both muzzles.

"Seriously though, what brought you here?" said the Doberman, exhaling smoke.

Trent shrugged and tried to think of an elusive answer until the delay attained awkward levels. "You'll hate me if I say it," he replied, wishing he hadn't.

"You're hopeless."

"I know."

"Then you'll be back then?"

"No." Trent said, in a louder tone of voice.

"You'll be back."

Trent didn't dignify with a response.

"I hope you come back. You're a good lay."

Trent shook his head and tossed his cigarette on the pavement, putting it out with his heel.

"You sure you don't want to spend the night?"

The shepherd shook his head again.

"Damn," said C.J. The Doberman repeated the gesture from before, tossing the butt at the coffee can. "Keep the collar," he continued, "You don't have to wear it anymore, if you don't want too, but hold onto it. It looks good on you. And if you do come back, bring it with you."

Trent nodded to evade yet another argument, his eyes darkened and his ears lay low, expressive of a little bit of resignation.

He turned toward C.J. Miscommunications lead them to cycle through several possible fare-well gestures, be it hand-shake or style and degree of hug. They opted for the least effusive, a multipurpose shoulder-first hug usually reserved for post-last-call parting-of-ways. Trent retraced the steps back to his GTO, lifting his paw shoulder height in a wave. The well-maintained V8 roared its distinctive tone and soon pulled the vehicle down the street through the cones of streetlight. C.J.'s collar landed on the passenger side before the shepherd even turned a corner. Trent rubbed his neck, casting a quick glance down at the black leather band lying unlatched and discarded on the bucket seat beside him, feeling little in the way of empathy for it. The Doberman remained behind, fuming through the rest of his pack until blue faded to black leaving him with the cicada and crickets. He eventually returned indoors. The garage door shut behind him, cutting him off from sight.

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