



Trick Or Treat

Author: *Ariel Dawn, AJ Mullican*

Category: LGBT+

Description: Jax

Spinning tales of Jack-O-Lanterns is what I do, not who I am. At least, that's what I thought before one argument with my grouchy grandpa ended up with me turning into a literal gourd.

If my family's legends are true, I'll be stuck as a pumpkin forever unless I find my fated mate before my thirty-first birthday...this Halloween.

But how am I supposed to find a guy as a pumpkin when I can't even find one as a single man?

Mason

The last thing I want to do after a long shift at the coffee shop is go to family owned pumpkin farm with my friend. That is, until I find the perfect pumpkin to bring home. When a hot, muscled, and very naked beefcake appears in my locked house, I'm sure I'm losing my mind.

Especially when I realize I'm falling in love with a man...who turns into a pumpkin every night.

Can I push aside my sanity and embrace my feelings for Jax and save him from turning into a pumpkin forever? Or will Jax's curse break more than just my heart?

Trick Or Treat is perfect for fans of quirky shifters, pumpkin spicy rom-coms, and laugh out loud humor.

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Jax

Most people love the fall season, but I hate it.

Not because I have anything against the changing of the leaves, or the chill in the air, or even Halloween itself, but because every year as soon as the weather shifts, so does everything in my life.

I've grown up on the Gallagher Family Pumpkin Farm, and it's pretty much the same bullshit every year.

It's always a rush to make sure our pumpkins are top notch, the farm is perfect, and the hayride is good to go.

Oh, and of course make sure everything is stocked in the store.

For the last five years, I've been basically demoted to eye candy and hayride driver, to try and help draw in the crowds.

I guess most people wouldn't complain about being the spokesperson or model for a farm that's been around since practically the dawn of time, and for the most part, I don't hate my job.

I just hate how every year around this time, my family goes balls to the fucking wall about how I need to settle down and find a nice girl so I can pop out the next generation of pumpkin pickers to keep the family legacy going.

As if I couldn't keep it going on my own. Pfft.

And of course, it doesn't help matters that the Appleseeds across the river, who own and operate the local apple orchard—the Hatfields to our McCoys—seem to be marrying off their sons, and the daughters are popping out kids left and right.

I don't think I'd have the heart to marry a girl out of convenience, even if would get Grandpa Robert off my fucking ass.

“Don't be so fecking stingy with the hay there,” Grandpa says as he spreads some throughout the display.

The cool air kisses my skin as a wind blows through, kicking up some stray strands of hay across the field.

“I mean, that is our birthright, right?” I drawl sarcastically. My grandfather grunts out a dissatisfied sound.

He hates when I mouth off to him like a teenager, as he says. I don't consider my sarcasm mouthing off by any means. If I really wanted to tell the man off, I would, but I know it won't get me anywhere.

“It's not our birthright, Jax. It's a feckin' curse,” he says.

I've heard the story every year, around this time.

Most families would shy away from their bad history, but not my family. No, we embrace our historic roots and profit off it.

According to my grandfather, our family is descended from the famous “Stingy Jack.” You know, the very guy who's supposedly the father of the Jack-O-Lantern,

and who is single-handedly responsible for outsmarting the devil himself so the guy ended up pissing him off and getting cursed?

Yeah, that's my family, and the legend of Stingy Jack is our bread and butter, much like the Appleseed's use their lineage to the famous Johnny Appleseed to sell their apples and products.

Still, it's annoying to constantly hear the same story over and over again, just as I'm told over and over that I need to get serious and find someone to settle down with.

Why can't I just live my life the way I want to?

Date who the fuck I want?

Why do I have to live up to my family's expectations, when my own is what's most important, right?

I cast Grandpa a glare as I put the finishing touches on the display. The sun is deceptive today, and though it's golden and beautiful across the field, it's cold as a witch's tit.

Grandpa crosses his arms, looking at me with that scathing look he always does.

"You know there is more to our curse than the legend," he says.

I roll my eyes. He does this every year, and every year I endure the "talk" like it's part of my epic hero journey or some shit, when in reality, it just pisses me off.

But today, I'm too on edge. I slept like shit because I kept having weird fucking dreams about turning into a damn pumpkin and no one was able to hear me, which sounds funnier than it actually is.

Who wants to be turned into a fucking cursed fruit? Not me, that's for sure.

I sigh, knowing it's probably best to just let him get the speech over with.

"I know, I know. So you say," I bite.

"I'm serious, Jax. You're going to be thirty-one this Halloween. You're running out of time."

I grind my jaw. Thirty is not old. Plenty of people settle down in their thirties and forties.

My grandfather acts like there's a timer on my life, and it's annoying as fuck.

Just because he settled down with my grandmother when they were like fifteen doesn't mean I'm any less of a person because I'm thirty and single.

It's not like I haven't tried to meet people, but being a gay man in this small town isn't all it's cracked up to be. Not to mention the fact my father refuses to accept the fact that I am, indeed, gay as fuck. He's always been a dick, though, my dad, which is why we don't talk much.

Guess it runs in the family.

Thankfully, my grandmother has always been supportive, but my grandfather seems to think if I meet the right girl, I'll magically fall in love with the pussy.

I gave up trying to tell him that's not at all how this works, because I just don't have the energy to keep giving a shit what he thinks.

I'd rather spend my time browsing dating apps hoping to find a nice, hot guy who can

be the Cinderella to my pumpkin carriage, but because I'm cursed by my ancestors, I've come up short every fucking time.

Honestly, I've accepted I'm probably going to die a lonely old bachelor, which means I'm more than equipped to take over the family farm. Singular focus and all that jazz.

"What are you talking about, I have all the time in the Goddamn world," I say as I cross my arms.

My grandfather shakes his head.

"No, you don't, Jax."

"You act like if I don't get married by the damn full moon, I'm going to turn into a pumpkin, Grandpa. Seriously."

His face is cold, impassive, and he tightens his lips.

"That's exactly what will happen," he says, as if he's not absolutely fucking crazy.

I wave him off as I head towards the back of my truck. "I'm not dealing with this today. I can't."

My grandfather follows me, clearly incensed by my adult attempt at boundaries.

"You must deal with it, Jax. The time is upon us!"

I shake my head. "I'm not listening to your stupid folk tales, Grandpa. It's a damn legend, not reality." I heft out a crate of pumpkins, moving past him towards the sign on the other side of the road.

“It is reality, Jax. You need to find a mate.”

I hate how he always uses that word. Mate.

He should just say “pretty woman who wants to have a bunch of fucking kids.” We all know that’s what he means, anyway.

“I’ve tried to find a boyfriend, not that you would understand.”

“I told you, you can’t—”

I drop my crate, his words grating on me. I’ve had enough of this shit.

I turn on my heel, glaring at him.

“I can’t what? Huh? Wishing I’d be straight isn’t going to make me fucking straight, you know. I know you think I just need to find the right girl to fuck, but that’s not how shit works!”

Grandpa’s eyes darken, and he sneers at me.

“Your duty to this family is—”

“My duty to this family? What about my fucking duty to myself?”

He advances into my space. “You don’t get to be selfish in this family, boy. Selfish is what ended us up in this place!”

I throw my arms up in frustration. “It’s a fairytale, Grandpa! Stingy Jack isn’t fucking real! None of this...” I motion to the farm sign entrance, the pumpkins, and the decorations. “... is real! But I am! I am real, and so are my fucking dreams and

aspirations!”

My blood is practically vibrating, heated by several years of anger and pent-up frustration. Maybe this isn't the right time to have this conversation, but hell if I'm not having it. It needs to be said, he needs to understand.

“Jax, calm down,” he says gruffly.

Oh hell, no.

“Calm down! No! I won't fucking calm down! You need to understand that I'm a damn adult and I make my own choices and ...

My stomach twists, and I feel flush with heat. A sharp pain shoots up my spine, and I clutch my stomach. One look at my grandfather's face, and he is as pale as a ghost.

The birds chirp, and the sun shines, and he looks like he's two sheets away from death.

I don't know if it's that extra chili cheeseburger I ate at two in the morning when I couldn't sleep or what, but this shit hurts.

“Jax, listen to me, you need to calm down or you'll—”

“Or I'll what? Regret what I say? Piss you off? I got news for you, it's neither,” I say through gritted teeth.

My grandmother's voice pulls my attention.

“Oh no. It's starting...” she says as she runs to me, placing her hands on my shoulders.

What's starting? Ow!

Pain shoots through my back and stomach, radiating outwards to my legs and arms. Something's wrong, something's definitely wrong.

"I told him to calm down, but he doesn't listen," my grandfather yells.

"He never fucking listens!"

"Robert!" Grandma pulls me close, her lips warm against my forehead. "You have to fight it, baby, fight," she says, her voice shrill and full of pain.

I want to speak, but it's difficult with the pain overtaking all my senses.

"Maybe it's better this way, Annie. Maybe this is what needs to happen."

What are they talking about?

Another pain makes me double over and yell.

"No. I refuse to believe that!"

"Let him go. Let nature take its course."

"No!"

I throw my grandmother off me, because the pain is too much. I fall to the ground, trying to fight it but it's no use.

This is it.

This is how I die.

Arguing with my grandparents.

How fucking sad is that?

My bones snap, and it hurts, but I don't have the will to fight whatever is happening to me. I hate to listen to him, but I have to. I have to let go.

It'll all be over soon.

Except, when I hear the shrill cry of my grandmother, and the sigh of my grandfather, I think maybe I'm okay.

I certainly feel better.

I reach out for them, but I can't move my arm. I'm stuck. Frozen.

But I feel strangely heavy.

I can't see anything. Not clearly, anyway. Everything is blurry. What the fuck?

I feel myself being lifted, and my grandfather looks straight at me, but it's off. Something is way off.

He looks bigger than usual.

Like a giant or something.

"I told you this would happen, but you didn't fucking believe me. And now you have no choice," he says.

I try to speak. I yell at him to let me go, to put me down . Because I'm aware I'm in the air, somehow, though how my grandfather could pick up all two hundred pounds of me is beyond me, I know he's holding me. Somehow.

He can't hear me.

He doesn't respond, just carries me.

The world is sideways as if he's holding me to his side. As if I'm ...

Oh fuck no. This can't be happening. It's just a legend.

My brain panics as I recall the legend my grandparents told me every fall, the same one I repeat on all our hayrides.

The legend of the Jack-O-Lantern.

And my grandfather's insistence that I settle down.

He must hear my thoughts, for he speaks gruffly.

"I told you you'd need to find a mate before your thirty-first birthday, so you wouldn't change. But you had to go and get all on your fecking high horse and now...."

He sighs, setting me down amidst a sea of pumpkins.

No, this can't be happening.

I must be having another one of those weird dreams...

“You better hope your mate finds you, boy. Or you’ll be stuck like this forever because you couldn’t listen to me.”

No, he can’t be serious.

I can’t be stuck like this forever, can I? Stuck like a cursed fucking pumpkin!

As he walks away, I can see him open the gate.

And for the first time in my life, I’m scared that I’ll never see him, or my grandmother, or this farm again.

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Mason

“Oh, my God , is that Mason Vance?”

I cringe as the young woman squeals and runs over to me.

I try to hide my face behind the magazine I’m reading, but it’s no use.

She spotted me, and she’s not going to let it go.

She grabs my arm—rude!—and starts shaking it in her excitement, nearly causing me to spill my coffee.

If I wasn’t accustomed to fans accosting me, I might have spilled it.

“Excuse me, miss ...” I start, but she cuts me off.

“Oh, wow, it’s really you!” She holds my arm hostage, hugging it to her chest. “I can’t believe I’m in the same coffee shop as Mason fucking Vance !”

I clear my throat and tug on my arm. “Please, miss, if I could have my arm back?”

“Sally! Terri! Get over here! I found Mason Vance!”

Oh, great. She’s calling her friends. As if one woman hanging all over me wasn’t torture enough.

I cough and pull harder, finally freeing myself from her grip.

The girl pouts and puts her hands on her hips.

“I was just playing,” she whines, batting her false lashes at me.

I hope she doesn’t bat too hard and lose them in my coffee.

I took the lid off to let it cool a bit, not to have my drink seasoned with lash glue.

I slap my hand over the top of the cup, hoping to save myself from losing what was supposed to be my breakfast.

Sally and Terri show up just as Fangirl’s face starts turning red. She seems to have realized that I’m not in the mood for hysterics, and her fawning turns to fuming.

“False alarm, girls. No way the real Mason Vance would be such a jerk.”

I sigh and rub my bicep, which still has the imprint of her nails in the skin. “You’re saying I’m the jerk? You grabbed me out of nowhere! I was just trying to enjoy my coffee.”

The girl strikes a haughty pose, nose in the air and arms crossed over her chest. “Hmph. Whatever. You’re a has-been anyway.” She grabs Sally and Terri each by an arm and leads them away. “I don’t even know why I was excited to see a former supermodel.”

Well, at least she’s gone. Her words sting a bit, but I consider the source and brush them off. I’ve never cared what random women on the street think of me, and that’s not about to change now.

Now, if a cute guy called me a has-been, that might hurt.

Getting outed at a Hollywood party five years ago shouldn't have damaged my reputation as much as it did.

The world is more tolerant than it was when I was a kid, even more than it was when I was a young up-and-coming model.

But the moment I was photographed making out with another guy in the modeling circuit, both our careers bombed.

He found a nice sugar daddy to hook up with, and I ended up as a washed-up barista.

As if summoned by my depressed thoughts, my manager shouted at me from across the cafe.

“Mason! Are you gonna clock in today, or are you just gonna drink the merchandise?”

The trio of girls that had just left me turned around and snickered, then started loudly whispering to each other. The words “loser” and “faggot” drifted back to my ears, and I hated that the slur got to me as much as it did.

One of these days I'll find my prince. Someone who doesn't have the “Mean Girl” act down to a science. Someone authentic and real ...

... And a nice ass wouldn't hurt.

While I lament my fate, the customers come and go. Venti latte. Grande mocha half-caff with an extra shot. Treinta coronary-in-a-cup with three espresso shots and enough sugar to put a bull elephant into a diabetic coma.

Then, just as my shift is ending, up comes my favorite customer. Grande blonde roast, black. Maggie.

“Hey, Mags!” I chirp as the sight of my BFF renews my energy. “How’s your day so far?”

“Better now,” she replies, inhaling the aroma of her coffee. “And it’ll be even better once you clock out. I have a surprise for you.”

I give her a dubious glance. “Uh oh.”

She bats her eyes innocently. “What?”

“Last time you had a surprise for me, you hooked me up with that weird cousin of yours.” I roll my eyes and start untying my apron. “The one who collected bugs?”

Maggie giggles. “He was an amateur entomologist.”

“He was weird.” I type my code into the register to clock out and step out from behind the counter. “Now, what’s today’s surprise? Have another cousin who collects discarded teeth?”

“No! Even better: I found a cool pumpkin farm outside of town that’s having a huge sale. We can find you some decor for your front porch, so the kids don’t think you’re a crazy old miser. Remember the egg incident from last year?”

I groan. “Don’t remind me. That took forever to clean up.”

Maggie takes my hand and practically drags me from the coffee shop. “Come on. It’ll be fun!”

Twenty minutes later, we pull up to the farm.

Maggie parks, and we head on to the big display of pumpkins in front.

A small throng of locals picks through the pumpkins, looking for the best one to cut open, gut, and carve for their front porch.

It's a little barbaric, but whatever. I'm here more for Maggie's sake than for tradition.

None of the pumpkins on the display really catch my eye. I look all through them until I see one in the back, behind the counter. I point at the perfect round gourd with the neat stem growing vines and nudge Maggie's shoulder. "How about that one?"

"Hey!" An elderly man helping a young family pick out a pumpkin stops what he's doing to come yell at us. "That one's not for sale."

I back up at his vehemence, holding my hands up in mock surrender. "Sorry, man. I just thought it was a nice pumpkin."

"Robert! You be nice to the young man." A woman about Robert's age comes around the corner and picks up the pumpkin I was looking at. "If he wants this pumpkin, he can have it." She hands it to me with a smile.

"Not that pumpkin, Annie!" Robert fumes, his face turning red. "Any fecking pumpkin but that one."

Maggie and I exchange shocked glances. Who gets that worked up over a pumpkin? "Uh, I mean ... I can pick a different one if he's that upset about it."

"Nonsense," Annie says. "If this one speaks to you, then take it." She eyes Robert and adds, "Free of charge."

That's almost stranger than Robert's vehemence.

The pumpkins at Gallagher Family Pumpkin Farm go for twenty to thirty bucks a pop.

Why give it to me for free? Something seems off, but at the same time, I kinda dig this little pumpkin.

It's, like, a perfect specimen. Round and smooth, with no sign of knots or brown spots.

It's almost sexy, if a pumpkin can be sexy.

Robert huffs and grunts. "Fine. Take 'im, if he's the one you want so bad."

Him? I don't quite get it, but I also don't argue. Maggie and I take my prize and book it to the parking lot, hoping to get away from Crazy Old Robert.

"That was freaky," Maggie says when we get out of earshot.

"Yeah," I say, "but hey, free pumpkin!"

Maggie laughs. "Yeah, dude, best one in the whole lot! You really scored."

As I sit in the passenger seat with the pumpkin on my lap, I catch myself absently rubbing the pumpkin's smooth skin. I jerk my hand back before Maggie can spot me feeling up the gourd. She's pretty cool, but I don't want her thinking I'm a freak.

"So," she says, starting the engine, "what're you gonna carve into it? Something scary, something cool, or just a generic toothy grin?"

I pause to consider it. The pumpkin's almost too perfect to carve into. I can't bear the thought of ruining it by cutting it up and gutting the poor thing. "I don't know if I will," I say. "Maybe I'll just use it like it is. It's so gorgeous, y'know? I'd hate to ruin it."

"Sure. Don't want Old Man Robert chasing you down because you sliced up his precious prize pumpkin."

We burst into fits of laughter and crack jokes about the elderly man running after me with a pitchfork, shouting that I "violated" his pumpkin. The mental image is just too much, and I push it aside with a chuckle.

It's just a pumpkin. A gorgeous ripe pumpkin, but nothing more.

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Jax

What the fuck am I supposed to do?

I try my hardest to move—well, anything—but it's damn near impossible. The closest movement I seem to be able to get is to wiggle this damn stump sticking out of my head, but that isn't going to do shit.

On top of the fact I can't move, I can't freaking see anything! Well, not clearly anyway. Everything looks kind of blurry, and the most I can see is blobs and shapes.

But I can hear and feel everything, tenfold.

I tried my hardest to shout, to yell, but to no avail. I can't fucking believe I turned into a goddamn pumpkin! Seriously!

I didn't know the stories about Stingy Jack actually had merit. How was I supposed to know they were true? I thought they were just stories that were embellished to help us sell pumpkins.

I groan as the sun heats my skin—hell? I don't even fucking know right now. All I can hear is Grandpa grumbling, but his voice is like a TV on static. I can barely make out what he's saying beyond the curse words I'd recognize from the inflection alone.

I don't know how long I stay like that. Roasting in the sun like a Goddamn vine-ripe tomato, but before I know it, someone touches me, and it's like a lightning bolt to my system.

My vision flashes white, and I get the strangest ... vision?

Can someone have a fucking vision if they can barely see an inch in front of them?

Do pumpkins have eyes I don't know about?

That would be terrifying if they did.

The vision that accosts me makes no sense, but then again, what does make sense in a world where you can turn into fucking gourd?

God, I could use a damn drink right about now.

In my hazy vision, there's only one thing that stands out clear: Amber eyes framed by thick, black lashes. Irises that shimmer with flecks of gold and copper, staring at me in a way that makes my entire being want to vibrate.

The eyes get smaller, and eventually, I can make out a face.

Holy fuck, is this guy hot.

Dark, espresso-brown hair, a perfect, angled jawline with neatly trimmed facial hair. Those amber eyes rove over me, making my insides feel flush.

It's weird, and I know he's not really looking at me— because he has no idea I'm a fucking person—but somehow it feels like he is. Like somehow, he can see past my orange outer form, past the pumpkin guts and down to my very soul.

But the moment he looks away, I'm reminded of the harsh truth that he really doesn't know I'm not what I appear to be.

My proverbial heart drops, because I want him to keep looking at me.

I want him to stare at me with those fiery eyes and thick lashes like I'm fucking perfect.

Even if I'm going to be a vegetable for the rest of my life, however long that is.

Panic strikes again, as I wonder what will happen to me.

The shelf life of a pumpkin is kind of limited, especially if you gut one and carve it, and ...

Oh, God! What if someone fucking tries to carve me? Will I feel it? Will it hurt? Will I fucking die?

Panic makes my stem vibrate, and the heat turns to full blown anxiety.

And then warm hands lift me. The hot guy holds me out in front of him, and Grandpa argues with him, but I can barely make out the words. Soon Grandma's voice is there, too. Warmth surrounds me as I'm clutched close to soft fabric. A shirt.

The thick scent of laundry detergent mixes with a seductive vetiver and cedar, and my metaphorical mouth waters. It makes me hungry, thirsty, and energy bounds within me.

I feel a content sort of comfort as warm, solid fingers run over my skin, drawing lines and petting me along the indents of my outer shell.

The touch, his touch, makes my stem vibrate, makes the tiny little curls of vines at my stem want to stretch and vibrate as well.

It's like a shiver and a purr, somehow combining to make you both aroused and relaxed.

The next thing I know, I hear the slamming of a door, and the drop in temperature makes my stump shiver and my vines retract. Though my pumpkin vision seems to clear a bit as big, amber eyes stare at me as warm hands set me down on a

Actually, I'm not quite sure what I'm being set on. A dresser? An end table? A shrine?

All I know is that, once Pretty Brown Eyes takes a step back, I can at least make out the semblance of a room. Well, if color blocks and shape can be a room, since everything just kind of blends together around the edges. Everything but him .

He is the sharpest thing in my vision, by far.

He steps backward, crossing his arms, one eyebrow raised as he contemplates my placement in his bedroom.

A strange sense of longing and vulnerability overcomes me, and I have the wildest desire to be the prettiest fucking pumpkin I can be, just for the sheer fact that I want him to keep looking at me like he is.

It makes my gourd warm and mushy, and desire ricochet within my shell.

He shrugs, shaking his head.

"Whatever; it's fine," he says as he pulls off his shirt, tossing it aside, and my vines start to twitch again as warmth builds in me like a festering fire.

Pretty Brown Eyes doesn't just have a pretty face.

His chest is fucking sculpted . The kind of sculpted that says he probably spends countless hours in the gym, which is something I can't say I relate to.

Most of my days are spent helping my grandparents on the farm, doing the majority of the labor because I'm the "strapping young guy," so the last thing I want to do when I'm done working is exercise.

Normally, I just like to kick back, crack open a fucking beer, and catch up on Netflix.

God, how lame am I?

A sharp pang hits me as panic sets in. What if...

What if I never get to do that again?

What if I am stuck like this ... forever?

I shove the terrifying thoughts away, though, because as soon as I see Sir Hot Stuff drop his fucking drawers, I can't really focus on anything other than ...

Fuck, that's a nice dick.

Energy ricochets within me once more, bounding back and forth like a stray bullet, and my stump starts to twitch again. Even my vines threaten to grow at the sight of the naked specimen before me as he gets comfortable on his bed.

Oh shit!

Like a train wreck, I can't look away, but I know I should.

I watch as the breathtaking man wraps his hand around his dick, as he spreads his

legs and arches his back, and my entire gourd heats like I've been baking in the sun.

A deep moan escapes him as I watch him build his rhythm with one hand, using his free fingers on his other hand to stroke and play at his entrance.

There's something inherently intimate about how a man masturbates when he thinks no one's watching, and I'm not talking about the consented "Oh, sorry I stumbled on you with your cock out" role play.

I'm talking about the kind of jacking off that comes when you know you are alone, where you can just lean into what you want and not have to worry about whether or not someone else will find it sexy.

Because all that matters is how good it fucking feels when you just let go.

I watch as the sunlight highlights the gleam of precum on his cock, watch as he sinks his fingers inside, writhing on the bed as he moans while he fucks himself.

Fuck, that's hot.

I swear, if I had a dick right now, I'd be hard as hell. Instead, my entire being vibrates and warms as my stump pulses and my vines shake, and then I feel the strangest sensation.

I can't speak or scream without a mouth, but inside my consciousness I rattle like an earthquake as my center becomes so hot, it's like molten lava at the same time he lets out the deepest, sexiest moan I've ever heard.

I don't even have to look to know he's found his release, but I look all the same as I melt internally into a puddle of pumpkin goo, catching the sight of one hand holding his cock as he spurts his release onto his chest, while not one, not two, but three

fucking fingers are buried in his hole.

His chest rises and falls, and the only sound in the room is his heavy breath until he speaks.

“What the fuck?” he says, the bed creaking as he sits up. “Why the hell does it smell like pumpkin spice in here all of a sudden?”

I watch as he breaks the spell, removing his fingers, reaching for his nightstand drawer. When he pulls out a towel, sighing as he cleans himself, a part of me can't help but feel conflicted.

That sigh is one I know all too well. It's the sigh of a desperate single man who wishes they weren't alone.

And something about that makes the reality even more tragic. He shakes his head, dispelling whatever thoughts have distracted him as he rises from his bed and heads for what I assume to be a bathroom, only because I can hear the water.

As much as I want to sprint over to the bed and wrap my arms around the beautiful man whose name I don't even know, I know I can't .

Because I'm a fucking vegetable.

Fuck my life.

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Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:48 am

Mason

I've been working at a coffee shop for too damn long.

That's the only explanation for the fucking smell of pumpkin spice that just won't go away. After I, er, took care of some private business when I got home, I showered, I changed the sheets, I even put on fresh cologne— Why do I still smell that cinnamon-and-nutmeg combo?

God, I need something better in life than this barista job.

At this point, I'd take just about anything else.

What could a washed-up model do for a living?

I regret not building up a useful skill set while I was jet-setting and getting paid for looking pretty.

Now I spend my days pouring java and my evenings filling out job applications, and the only things I get for my efforts are endless rejection emails.

And silence. Those sting the worst because it means they didn't even think I was worth the minimal effort of a form letter.

Since I can't locate the source of the spice, I give up and head to the kitchen for an early afternoon dinner.

After inhaling the sweet pumpkin spice flavor at work all day and now at home, I need something meaty and savory to combat that.

I'd like a nice, medium rare steak, but I'll have to settle for cooking some frozen burger patties to slap on cheap store-brand buns.

Can't afford steak on my salary, and the tips lately have been shit.

Even when I stoop to flirting with the female customers, who I have zero interest in, the jar stays frustratingly empty. As empty as my fridge now that I've cooked the last of the burgers. Guess I'll have to go shopping at some point.

It's a good thing I kept most of my sleek, modern furniture from "the before times." Looking around at the upscale black decor, I shudder as I think about what my house would look like if I had to get my furniture from one of those big chain stores.

Although ... Maybe I should get rid of it. Give up on the past.

Too much contemplation for one afternoon. I pour a glass of wine while the burger patty simmers on my countertop grill.

When dinner's ready, I take my plate back to my room and turn on the TV to stream a movie. I'd eat in the living room, but as fancy as the setup is, I hate how empty it is in there with just me. At least the bedroom's a bit smaller, cozier ... less depressing.

I scroll through my one streaming service for a few minutes until I find a nice rom-com to watch while I eat. It's one I've seen before, but sometimes those old familiar shows give me that little bit of comfort I need.

The pumpkin spice scent gets stronger again when I start eating. I take a few bites, wipe the mayo off my chin, lick my fingers ... and boom! Spice.

What the hell?

A quick look confirms that I'm alone, and no, I haven't made myself any coffee with dinner. Just me, my burger, and a glass of wine, none of which should smell so pumpkin-y.

I'm fucking losing it, I swear.

Once I finish the burger, I pause the movie to go rinse off my plate.

I come back with another glass of wine and a couple sleeping pills.

This is probably not the best combination, but I've got an early shift tomorrow—before dawn—so I have to knock out early, too.

I start the movie back up and wash my pills down with the whole glass in one fell swoop.

"You know, Jack," I say to the pumpkin, which I've decided to name out of boredom, "I don't even know why I'm watching this movie.

It's about two people who fall sickeningly in love and live happily ever after.

I can't even get a single date, let alone find a guy who's willing to stick around with a deadbeat barista. "

Jack, unsurprisingly, doesn't answer.

"You're right. I should've put on something less depressing. Like Schindler's List or something."

Jack doesn't laugh. I guess he doesn't appreciate my humor.

I continue my one-sided conversation with Jack throughout the movie, providing top-notch commentary on the film while Jack watches from the dresser. He may just be a pumpkin, but he's a great listener. Doesn't interrupt.

Then the climax hits, where the two lovebirds finally connect, and with me in the middle of my fourth glass of wine and half asleep thanks to the pills kicking in, I end up bawling uncontrollably.

Poor Jack probably thinks his new daddy's a loser.

The movie ends, and I shut off the TV. I set my empty glass next to Jack and pat his smooth, firm skin.

"Well, Jack, I guess it's bedtime for me. Gotta be up ass-early in the morning to go sling coffee." I don't know what gets into me—maybe the wine—but I also bend over to kiss Jack's stem goodnight.

Does Jack taste like pumpkin spice?

I shake my head to clear it of the insanity and turn off the lights. Since it's just me and Jack in here, I don't bother with pajamas or boxers. I crawl under the covers and knock out.

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Jax

I'm sure that I've said once or twice in my life, that I wish I could just be idle, and not be a part of society, or do anything.

Like most folks, I feel just as overworked and exhausted as anyone else, but not being able to comfort the man in front of me when he's obviously upset is a form of torture. Punishment, even.

Especially because I get it.

The loneliness, I mean.

You think you know loneliness, but you don't, not until you're an openly gay man in a small town with a dating pool the size of a petri dish, until conversations with everyone seem still or stunted because no one wants to really get to know you .

Not in the I-want-to-come-home-and-Netflix-and-chill-with-you way that involves actually watching sappy rom-coms on Netflix and cuddling instead of getting railed over the couch arm while watching *Scream* .

Which, to be fair, wouldn't be bad either.

But there was nothing I wanted more than to be able to cry out, "me, too!" and give Hot Pants McGee a big fucking hug, one perpetually single guy to another. I can't help but wonder if, under different circumstances, we would have met.

If I hadn't turned into a fucking gourd, if he would have walked up to my register and batted those pretty eyelashes at me, maybe I would've asked him for his number. Maybe he would have just been sly and written it on the receipt.

I don't know why, but to me he seems like the type that would bait me. The kind of guy who wants to be chased and wooed, playing hard to get but then melting like hot caramel the minute you actually get your fucking hands on them.

The moon shines through his bedroom window right over the spot where he lies in bed, casting an almost silvery halo over his dark hair and the expanse of those broad, toned shoulders, and then I feel the strangest sensation deep in my gourd core.

The melty-gooey feeling hardens like candy coating over an apple. Wet and slippery one minute, then bam! Solid and sticky the next. Pain shoots through me as I feel my pumpkin flesh contort and stretch like melted mozzarella cheese. Only a lot more painful.

I feel like I'm going to fucking explode, spontaneously combust or something as I grow larger, and then...

I fall off the dresser to the floor with a thud.

A very loud thud, and some deodorant or something hits me in the fucking head, causing me to curse.

"What the hell?" I gasp-whisper as the pain starts to subside, giving way to a fading tingle as I rub my head where I've been bludgeoned.

And then it hits me.

I touched my fucking head.

My fingers grasp my soft locks, and I realize all at once, two things:

One, I am not a fucking pumpkin anymore.

Two, I am very, very fucking naked and in a stranger's house.

Shit. Shit, shit. Shit.

Hot Pumpkin Whisperer groans in his sleep, turning, and for a moment I panic. What the hell do I say if he wakes up and finds me? How the hell do I explain five seconds ago I was a Goddamn Halloween decoration and now I'm—what exactly?

I suck in a breath as the anxiety threatens to take hold.

I could just leave. That would be the smart thing to do, obviously.

Except, I don't think I'd get very far in my birthday suit, especially at this hour.

With Halloween around the corner, the police are usually patrolling frequently at this time of night on account of all the stupid teenagers who love to tee-pee houses and throw parties or cause havoc.

Yeah, a naked guy rolling around in the dead of night looks hella sketchy.

And even if I could snatch some of Hot Halloween Daddy's clothes over here, I doubt his clothes would fit me, given the fact that he's all tapered waist and perfectly toned muscles built by protein shakes and quinoa, and I've got a body built by Grandma's award-winning pies and beer.

I'm not the biggest guy around, and I've got muscle, mostly from working on the farm, but most of my hard-earned muscle is in my chest and arms because that's what

I use more than anything. My six pack is more like a four pack if I'm lucky.

There's also this irritatingly overwhelming voice in my head that keeps yelling at me not to leave, a delusional, weird inner voice that is all mine, but somehow, it's not.

It's like a sixth sense or something, and I have the strangest understanding that leaving this perfect specimen now, of all times, might actually fucking kill me.

I hold my breath for a moment, watching as he shifts again in his bed, and I let out a sigh of relief when he doesn't wake.

I run both hands over my face before I look to the side where his fucking deodorant spray landed.

I pick up the small black aerosol, sniffing it.

The scent of spicy cedar makes my damn mouth water and my cock stiffen, and then I realize another terrifying truth.

I glance down at my cock, thick and solid between my legs and note the amount of dried cum coating my fucking nether regions.

Embarrassment floods my cheeks and makes my stomach flip as I think about all the times I felt that mushy, gooey vibration in my gourd, my vibrating stump, and my growing vines.

I must've come like five times at least, which I'd garnered wasn't actually coming, because I didn't have a fucking dick to come with.

I'd be lying if I said it didn't feel good; the weird gooey-mushy feeling I got watching him fuck himself, or licking God damn mayo off his fingers while he sat and just

talked to me like I was a real person.

The fact I got all turned on while the guy was just talking to me had to be a new level of desperation, even for me.

But the reality that apparently whatever happened to my pumpkin self transfers onto my human self is startling to say the least. I glance at the open door adjacent to where I am sitting, recognizing even in the dark that it's his bathroom.

I know I probably shouldn't, and it's weird to just use other people's shit without their permission, but unless I want the Hot Pumpkin Whisperer to wake up and find me naked, covered in cum on his bedroom floor, I know I need to get cleaned up.

And maybe a shower will help me clear my mind.

I can be fast. I'm a guy, it's not like I need a ten-minute shower to freshen the fuck up.

I do my best to quietly set his deodorant back down on his dresser, tiptoeing to the bathroom. The floorboards squeak, but my mystery owner doesn't move, and I breathe a sigh of relief.

When I'm in the bathroom, I shut the door and let out another sigh of relief.

Turning the light on, I can appreciate the simplicity of the design. Everything is sleek and modern, with tones of grey, white, and pale blue. I do my best to acclimate to the surroundings, but I have to admit my size is an issue. When I get into the shower itself, it's a lot roomier than I expect.

Nice, big showers are definitely a luxury for a guy like me, and when I turn on the hot water, I nearly moan out of delight when I realize the showerhead is one of those

high-tech fancy showerheads that feel like an out of body experience.

The showerhead above me pours water over me while the two showerheads against the wall spray at my chest and groin.

Three fucking showerheads spraying me feels better than I ever thought it would.

I glance at the products in the tiled alcove, settling on what I hope to be shampoo. It's in an elegant, black bottle that has no label, and once I pick it up, I realize it's glass .

Who keeps a glass bottle of anything in the shower?

Hot guys who are way out of your league, obviously.

I don't waste time as I pump some liquid out, taking a whiff, and again, my cock twitches. It smells expensive, so I try to only use a little bit. Steam builds around me as I roughly suds up my hair, making for a bar of soap that smells just as good and unlike anything I've ever smelled before.

It's earthy, but somehow sensual too. Notes of teakwood and coconut mixed with something that smells like cologne.

I lather up my body and pull the small, detachable showerhead to rinse myself from head to toe. It doesn't take long, and before I can prolong the best shower of my life, I turn it off, realizing I didn't think to look for a fucking towel.

"Shit," I curse, dripping wet in his shower like an idiot. One look around the place informs me that there's only one towel, and it's hanging on the back of the door.

I gingerly make my way across the floor to grab it, and immediately I am accosted with his scent.

Not just the scent of his shampoo and soap, but him.

The same smell I'd noticed when he held me close now fills my lungs, and I realize this is his towel.

The one he probably used today after his shower.

It feels personal, my fist in his towel, knowing it's been all over his naked form.

My cock twitches as guilt and desire bloom inside me.

But I know I can't very well leave this bathroom without drying off, and I don't want to leave wet footprints either.

So I still my racing thoughts and wrap the towel around me, knocking off his robe in the process. It crumples to the floor, and I curse again, bending to pick it up. Its soft, thick fabric feels good in my hands, and I note it's huge.

So, Mr. Pumpkin Whisperer likes things nice and luxe.

Noted.

I use the towel to dry my hair and my body before hanging it back up on the hook. I'm about to hang the robe back up, but a part of me is intrigued, and I know I'd feel a lot less weird if I was covered in something.

So I slip my arms in the sleeves, relishing in the smooth, warm feel. Thankfully the robe kind of fits me pretty snugly, and I tie it in the front, if only to keep my stupid fucking cock in line, though I have to say the soft fabric against my deflating cock feels really, really, nice.

Like, I could totally take a nap in this thing.

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I shut the light out, opening the door quietly as I peer into his bedroom, noting he's still in the same position he was before. My stomach grumbles, and I have to stifle a moan while I tell my consciousness to shut up with its guilt trips.

I've already commandeered the man's robe and shower, really, is food off limits?

I sigh as I make my way out of his room, down the hall as I think about the legend of Stingy Jack, about the stories Grandpa always told me every Halloween.

About our lineage. As a kid, I'd eaten up every word, but as a teenager and adult, it seemed less likely that a person could actually shift into a fucking Jack-O-Lantern.

Werewolves? Sure, I'd buy that.

Vampires? I mean lots of people had blood fetishes, so was that really a stretch?

But actual shifters who could turn into pumpkins because of a family curse? Hard pass. But I know as I stroll through the dark hallways, there's no denying that is exactly what happened. I shifted, like Grandpa always talked about, but I'd also shifted back .

The moonlight pours through his kitchen, and my stomach growls again. His place isn't big by any means, but it's neat. Even in the dark I can see everything has its place, and though it's sparsely decorated, it has an elegance to it.

But there are no seasonal decorations. Nothing autumn or Halloween related, unless you count all the black furniture.

It's almost like there is no inkling at least in this place that Halloween is happening at all.

Just a pumpkin he picked up at a farm.

Guilt floods me, because a part of me wants to tell him the truth. About me. About the unexplainable feeling I get in my damn stomach when I look at him.

Or even the truth about the way I melted when his lips touched my stump. Never mind the fact that touch made me explode into a pile of goo.

Which I now know is the pumpkin equivalent of a good nut.

I open his refrigerator, looking for something that is either on its way to expire, or something that he won't likely miss. The fridge doesn't have much more than coconut water, kale, and what looks like a batch of overnight oats.

I don't have any luck, so instead I quietly open the cabinets until I find a box of opened granola bars and decide to lift one of them.

It tastes like cardboard, but for the moment it's enough.

Not even the granola bar can sate the true hunger in me as I find my gaze drifting over his bedroom door.

I don't even know his name, but I know that I can feel his presence, like a magnet calling me.

I crumple up the wrapper, pitching it in the corner trash as I debate what to do. I know I should probably stay far away from my Pumpkin Master, but as fucked as I am, I'm also curious.

Grandpa kept going on and on about finding my mate before my thirty-first birthday, but I always just assumed it was old Stingy Jack folklore and nothing important.

Suddenly, I am wracking my brain trying to remember his exact words, and how one was supposed to know they were in the presence of their mate.

My mind wanders as I find my way back to his bedroom.

The comforter is all bunched up, twisted in between his legs and has fallen down to his hips. His upper torso and back are on full display, and for a moment, I appreciate the sight.

If legend is correct, I'll turn back into a pumpkin, and he won't have any idea who or what I really am.

I'll be forced again into my gourd prison to look on in wonder at this specimen of a man as my insides turn to pumpkin goo, as I wish I could answer him back.

He shivers, and I don't think twice about pulling up his comforter, only freezing when I realize the motion puts my hand against his skin.

His flesh is chilled from the air, but there is an undeniable heat where I touch him, against my palm.

I flatten my hand to his back, relishing in the softness of his skin mixed with the hardness of his muscle.

His body curls toward me, and without thinking I settle in the space in front of him, tracing my fingers up his hips, over those wicked muscles.

My gaze falls to the prominent V that his hip bones and muscles cut beneath his

comforter, and I swear I'm not trying to be an absolute perv, but ...

His cock practically punches its way out of his tangled sheets.

Without thinking, my fingers trace the outline of his cock, and he lets out a deep groan, thrusting himself against my touch.

I know I shouldn't.

I really, really fucking shouldn't, but after being cooped up inside a gourd all day with no cock of my own to touch, I can't help the desperation that laces my own throat, or the selfish touch of my fingertips.

I watched him come undone in so many ways, and all I wanted was to make it better, but I couldn't.

I can now, at least for the moment. Give him the comfort he seeks, even if I know the moment will be fleeting.

I cup the head of his velveteen cock in my palm, squeezing just the slightest, and he groans again.

"Fuck, that feels good," he murmurs in his sleep, and a soft smile tugs at my lips.

I run my thumb over his cockhead, pressing it into the wet spot that's started to form. I drag my fingernail across the sliver of indentation, my own cock beneath his bathrobe coming back to life. With my free hand I adjust my own cock, licking my lips.

"You like that, huh?" I whisper as I grip my hand around his solid shaft. He thrusts into my palm again, his voice dark and desperate.

“Yes,” he moans, sliding closer to me, to where I sit on his bed, until he’s encasing me. I run my hand up and down his cock, the friction of his thickness against my palm somehow a mix of painful and pleasurable. “I want to come,” he whispers. “So fucking bad, baby.”

My cock twitches at the endearment as my lips form a traitorous smile. The moonlight falls on his shoulders, illuminating his gorgeous features.

“Then come for me.” My voice trails off with sadness because I realize once again that I don’t know his name.

“Mason,” he whispers, almost as if he can hear my thoughts.

A soft smile forms on my lips as I slowly pump him, pressing my thumb into the ever-growing wet spot that's formed against my palm.

“Jax,” I whisper as I settle on my side, angling myself better to service him. The motion pushes him back a bit, and his hand anchors itself on my fluffy robe-clad hip.

“Jax,” he breathes, his voice catching.

“Yes, my little treat?” I lick my lips, enjoying the feeling of him wet in my hand, of his breath against my skin.

If I turn into a pumpkin forever, I’ll never forget him. Not like this, warm against my skin, fueling me like fire.

“I’m so close,” he thrusts himself against me, his rhythm erratic, and I know he’s telling the truth.

“Come for me, Mason,” I whisper, squeezing him.

His deep, gravely, sleepy groan makes me come immediately as he comes against my hand. Warm moisture blossoms in my hand, soaking my fist, and I curse as I realize I should have been paying equally as good attention to myself as I was to him.

His breathing evens, and I think the moment is over, shame and guilt racking me as I feel his release, his pulsing cock in my hold.

“I don’t want to wake up,” he sighs, burrowing his face against my chest, and time stops.

I stroke his cock, a few more slow pulses telling me he’s finally coming to the end of his release. Absentmindedly, I run my hand along his cock and thigh, spreading his release over his warm skin. Exhaustion hits me, and my eyes feel heavy.

Mason settles his hand on my hip, pulling me closer, into his chest, and I don’t fight him.

Because I don’t want to wake up either.

“Me either,” I say as I let him pull me under with him.

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Mason

I squint my eyes tight against the blazing sun streaming through my curtains. My head throbs, and I let go of the pumpkin I'm hugging to press my hand to my aching—

Wait ... I let go of the pumpkin? I jerk fully awake and sit up, catching the pumpkin before it can roll off the bed. How did it end up in bed with me, wrapped in my robe?

Note to self: Lay off the sleeping pills.

I throw off the covers and discover that, in addition to fondling my pumpkin during the night, I also had a vivid wet dream while I slept. I'd thought it was just a lonely man's horny dream, but when I look down, my dick drips sticky cum that I've somehow managed to smear all over myself. Fuck.

Second note to self: Also lay off the wine at bedtime.

The dream, which seemed so real, lingers in my mind. I know there was no hot, beefy man in my bed last night, not really, but I can almost still feel his touch, almost still smell the fucking pumpkin spice smell, almost still hear him talking to me.

Since I'm already late, I rush through a shower and slip into some clothes before flying out the door, leaving the pumpkin on the bed.

To her credit, the manager only chews me out for the first thirty minutes of my belated shift.

I can handle a half hour of scathing comments.

What I can't handle is waking up cuddling a pumpkin, of all things.

What happened, anyway? All I really remember is talking to the pumpkin, to Jack—No, Jax— before I fell asleep.

Why did I suddenly change the pumpkin's name to Jax?

The questions simmer in the back of my mind all day, but I have no answers. I don't remember bringing the pumpkin to bed with me, and aside from my wet dream, I have no memory of calling the pumpkin anything but Jack.

Jax sounds so much more ... right, though.

The customers come and go, and I make it through the day on pure autopilot.

After work, I head to the store. I know my fridge is pretty bare, and for some reason I get the feeling I should take care of that now rather than later.

Not that I get many houseguests, but I suppose it's the principle of it all.

I fill the cart with the usual suspects: granola bars, quinoa, healthy stuff.

Then, just as I'm about to check out, I find myself staring at a display of warm, fresh-baked apple pies.

For some reason, they look amazing. I grab a pie, then circle around to the freezer section for some vanilla ice cream to go with them.

Pie a la mode sounds great, though I know it's gonna go straight to my hips.

I add some whipped cream to the cart, then go check out.

The cashier looks at all my healthy food like it's garbage then raises an eyebrow at the final dessert. "That's ... interesting," she comments as she scans my pie. "Doesn't quite jive with the rest of your stuff."

Not that it's any of her business. I shrug it off. "It just looks really good."

"You know, Appleseed's Orchard has fresh apple pies that are way better than these store ones. You should go try them out."

Why does that farm sound familiar? "No, thanks. I'll just take these. It's just to fulfill a craving. No point in driving somewhere else when all I want is a taste."

For some reason, the idea of going to the apple farm feels almost like cheating. I know I only went to the pumpkin farm that one time, but I have this weird feeling like I should remain loyal to the pumpkin farm with its odd elderly couple that runs the place.

I get home just before dark and start unloading the car. The ice cream goes in the freezer while I set the pie on the windowsill to cool a bit more while I fix dinner.

The quinoa is just about ready when a loud thump from the bedroom startles me. I jump back from the stove and run to check on that sound. I hope my pumpkin didn't roll off! I feel oddly attached to the thing, and I'd hate for it to get smashed.

To my dismay, the pumpkin's not on the bed anymore when I rush in. Fuck.

"Oh, shit, Jax! I'm so sorry, dude. I didn't think you'd roll off ..." My voice trails off as a naked man stands up on the opposite side of the bed, rubbing his head like he bumped it on the nightstand or something.

It's the beefcake from my dream!

It's the beefcake from my dream ... naked ... in my room.

"How did you get in my house?" I shout, my voice shaking more than I mean it to. The question that I'd intended to sound intimidating comes out more timid and awkward. No way I'd scare this guy outta my house like that.

But do I really want to scare him away? He's buff and toned and has that sexy two-day scruff on his chin and ...

"Please, wait! I can explain!" He holds his hands over his crotch before grabbing my robe from the bed to cover himself.

The fuzzy fabric slides over his toned muscles, and I'm a little disappointed that he's donning clothes.

I kinda liked staring at him, intruder or not.

His green gaze catches mine, eyebrows furrowing in panic.

For an intruder, he seems almost as panicked as I am.

"How did you get in?" I ask again, a little sterner this time. "And what did you do with the pumpkin that was on the bed?"

The beefcake blushes and holds the robe closed. "Please, Mason, just give me a chance to explain."

How does he know my name?

“You’ve got two minutes before I call the cops.”

“Mason, please ! You brought me in here yourself. Carried me right into this bedroom. Please remember.”

I cross my arms over my chest. “I think I’d remember carrying you over the threshold into my house,” I mutter, annoyed. “I may work out, but there’s no way I could carry you. You’re ...” Built. Stacked. Hung. “You’re a fully-grown man.”

“I wasn’t when you brought me in here,” he says. “I was a pumpkin.”

Wait ... what?

“That’s ridiculous. People aren’t pumpkins.”

He grunts with frustration. “I was, though. Er, am ... I was the pumpkin from the Gallagher farm. Please, Mason, I’m not lying.”

I wish he’d stop saying my name. It would make it easier for me to kick him out on his toned ass.

“That makes absolutely no sense. A pumpkin. Psh.” I make a show of rolling my eyes at the notion, but all I can think about is how crazy somebody would have to be to make this up.

A pumpkin! What kind of nutso comes up with that?

And how nuts am I for considering it?

“Just think about it. Where did I come from, and where’s your pumpkin now? We’re the same person. Thing. We’re the same.”

My eyes narrow at him. “What did you do with my pumpkin?”

“Would you forget the damned pumpkin? I am the pumpkin!”

“Prove it.”

He sighs and lowers his head. “I can’t. Not until daybreak.”

“What happens at daybreak?”

“Never mind,” he says. “Just never mind. It doesn’t matter.”

I’d ask him more, but his stomach breaks the awkward silence by rumbling loudly.

“Dude, have you eaten?”

He shrugs one shoulder. “Like, a granola bar. That’s about all I’ve had in the past two days.”

I shouldn’t. I really shouldn’t.

“Well, I’ve got some quinoa on the stove. Come on. We’ll at least get you fed.”

The stranger looks at me with doubt written all over his ruggedly handsome face.

“You’re actually gonna feed me? You’re not gonna call the cops on me for showing up out of nowhere?”

“Against my better judgment, yeah.” I gesture for him to follow me. “C’mon. Food first. Questions later, I guess.”

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Jax

If you had told me a week ago I'd be dining in some stranger's house, naked under his bathrobe, I would not have believed you. And I certainly wouldn't have believed you if you said I'd turn into a pumpkin by dawn, but here we are.

With the lights on, Mason's kitchen looks a lot different. For one, I can make out the nineties vineyard decor that looks embedded around the edge of the top of the walls, which doesn't fit the rest of his sleek, minimalistic vibe at all, but something about it is ... soothing.

He could have changed it, I'm sure. Or at least taken it down, but for some reason it remains like an eyesore amidst all the grey, white, and black of his living room which blends right into the kitchen.

I push my quinoa around on my plate a bit, stealing a glance at the perfect specimen across the other end of the table.

The light from overhead shines on him like a golden halo, his dark hair falling in his face.

I feel like I should say something, but I also don't want to jinx whatever is going on right now and risk pushing the man over the edge.

I mean, it's one thing to discover a naked man in your apartment; it's another to have to contend with the fact he's a literal gourd. Well, half the time anyway.

Shit, how long am I going to be doing this? I pause as the thought lands.

I vaguely remember the legend of Stingy Jack talking about a handful of days to prove himself, but I can't remember how long that was. After all, I didn't pay much attention to the stories on account of they were just stories.

I should have paid better attention.

"Everything okay? You've barely touched your food," Mason says calmly, catching my gaze.

I feel my cheeks flush as I shake my head, realizing I must look like a complete idiot staring off into space.

"Oh, I, uh ..." I try to find my words like a functional human, but it's kind of hard given the way Mason's looking at me right now.

His dark amber eyes glisten underneath the incandescent lighting, and the tee shirt he's wearing does nothing to hide his perfectly sculpted muscles or the pronounced vein underneath his bicep.

His lips part just the slightest, and my gaze falls to their perfect shape, remembering his mouth inches from my skin. His warm breath and his desperate moans echo through my mind.

Fuck, now I'm hard. Again.

I clear my throat, doing my best to fight off a wildly inappropriate boner right now.

Not helping the "I'm not a pervert" case very much, are you, Jax?

“No, it’s great,” I lie, because really it isn’t. Granted, it tastes a hundred times better than the granola bar, what with all the feta cheese and vegetables added in, but it’s still not exactly what I would call dinner .

Then again, my idea of dinner is usually something with a hefty portion of meat and carbs.

Or pizza.

But despite my personal tastes, I can acknowledge Mason’s temporary generosity, and my grandma raised me to never be rude, especially in the presence of a host.

“I mean, it’s weird, right? I get it,” I say as I shovel some quinoa and veggies into my mouth.

Mason’s shoulders relax just the slightest, and he resumes his own shoveling, though he looks far more graceful than any man should doing such a task.

I swear, he’s so fucking hot he could sell me ice in the middle of winter, and I’d gobble that shit up.

Mason doesn’t say anything, so I continue.

“Like, I know it sounds crazy, and I didn’t think it was possible either, but ...”

Mason sets his silverware down, giving me his full attention. His eyebrows furrow, and for a moment I feel the gooey-warm, mushy pumpkin gut feeling.

My body flushes with heat as my cock twitches beneath his robe.

“But what, Jax?”

The way in which he says my name, the way his voice drags out the X ... Fuck me. I want to hear my name on his tongue over and over again ...

With one hand I adjust my unruly cock, and the other I use to stab some stray pieces of red pepper.

“One minute I’m fighting with my grandparents about my damn love life, and the next ...” I grip my fork a little tighter, even as I set it down. “The next, I’m screaming, and no one can hear me because I’m a pumpkin.”

Mason’s lips twist, the hint of a smile playing at his face.

“I tried to tell you, but uh ... you know, apparently pumpkins can’t talk.”

Mason cocks his head to the side, his gaze appraising me.

“What?” I ask, bringing my fingers to my face. “Do I have something on my face?”

Mason shakes his head as he leans back in his chair.

“No,” he says, biting his lip. Suddenly, I feel very nervous. I can’t tell if he’s going to tell me to get the fuck out or to get on my fucking knees, and that’s a very drastic difference.

“Then what is it?” I ask as I get up from my chair, if only to take my attention off my fucking cock with a mind of its own. I need to move. I need to do something.

So I grab my plate, and rise. I stop a few inches away from him and move to grab his. I watch the way his gaze follows my hand, the way his eyes rove over my form, and then it hits me.

“I hope you don’t mind, but, uh, I’ve been using your robe.”

Mason bites his lip again. At this angle, I’m acutely aware that his face is level with my stupid cock, but thankfully, the robe is thick and fluffy enough to hide any evidence of what’s really going on below.

“It, uh, looks good on you,” he says, his cheeks reddening. “I mean, the color.” He swallows. It’s only then that I realize as my gaze dips to the sleeve, that the robe is the same color as a ...

“Pumpkin,” I say, my lips turning up in the corner.

“The salesperson said it was creamsicle, actually.”

I roll my eyes at the words of a woman who clearly doesn’t know that creamsicle and pumpkin are two entirely different shades of orange, stifling a chuckle. A feeling of comfort washes over me at his humorous tone. So far, so good.

I move to pick up his plate, but he stops me with his hand on my wrist. The touch of his heated palm, his soft fingertips is jarring.

Just like when he’d touched me at the farm, or when he touched me last night, the jolt of energy is back.

“Stop, you don’t have to—”

“I mean you cooked,” I say, my voice cracking just the slightest. A shockwave courses through me, and I pull away, taking his dishes with me.

“Seriously, it’s the least I can do.” I bring the dishes to the sink, setting about to wash them if only to keep myself busy.

I'd be lying if I said I wasn't nervous. Mason might be playing nice host right now, but he could easily ask me to leave, or he could still call the cops. Not that I think he'd do either, even though I can't explain why I think that, but still, I know I can't just trust him because he's hot.

And to be clear, he is very hot . But I'm also a stranger claiming to be a gourd.

I'd call the cops on my ass, too.

I close my eyes, knowing what I need to do, even though I don't want to.

But now that we're both awake, both somewhat on the same wavelength, I know I need to respect Mason's space, and I probably should get home to see my grandparents and figure out what to do about this curse.

"Do you like apple pie?" Mason asks, his words pulling me from my thoughts. I finish drying my plate, turning to look at him as he holds a box of pie in one hand and a tub of ice cream in the other.

My gaze flashes between the sugary goodness and his perfect face. My eyes travel once again to those pouty, plump lips. I swallow hard at the sight of my two favorite things.

"I love apple pie," I say softly. Biting my own lip, I attempt to stifle my craving for both the delectable desert and the man in front of me.

He offers me a sweet smile that makes my insides twist with the warm, gooey mushy feeling again. "Me, too," he says as he sets both items on the table. He nods to me. "To your left, there are dessert plates in the top cabinet."

I don't waste a second as I turn, giving him my back as I open the cupboard and find

the plates in question.

Simple, white square plates trimmed in gold.

I set them out on the table, Mason brushes past me to grab fresh silverware from the drawer.

His kitchen isn't terribly big, and with both of us in the same room, touching one another is damn near unavoidable.

"Sorry," I say, feeling both a flush of heat to my face and a burst of energy to my system. My stupid, unruly cock twitches from the proximity, and I do my best to adjust my position so he won't notice.

His amber eyes meet mine, and I realize now that I'm standing right next to him that we're nearly the same height. I might have a few inches on him, but not enough to consider myself bigger by any means.

And the way he's looking at me right now ... Fuck!

"It's fine," he says, his voice a bit raspy.

I shift my weight as I move past him. I slide my hands into the stolen robe, cursing as I realize the inevitable is upon me.

For starters, I can't stay here, living like a nomad, and I'm going to have to go home at some point if only because I can't live in the guy's creamsicle fluffy robe.

Which I came in last night.

My entire body heats as I realize I should probably tell him this thing needs washing.

“I, uh ... I should probably shower before I—”

“Oh, okay,” Mason says, clutching silverware to his chest.

“I mean, if it’s okay with you.” I run a hand through my hair, suddenly feeling like I’ve put myself on the spot because I know what I should tell him, but now that he’s looking at me, those perfect biceps bulging out of his sleeves, those glittering amber eyes staring back at me, that perfect, pouty mouth open just the slightest.

I really am fucking cursed.

“Yeah, of course,” he says, clearing his throat. “I’ll just be here, with my pie.” He blinks. “Oh! The bathroom, it’s ...”

“I know where it is,” I say sheepishly, avoiding his gaze.

“Oh,” is all he says, and there is a strange sort of tension that befalls us, and I’m more than glad to get away from it.

I smile as I head towards the bathroom. When I’m behind the door, only then do I let out a deep sigh of relief. “Okay, Jax, you can do this. Just get a shower, and ...” And what? Ask Hot Pumpkin Whisperer to do what exactly? Take my naked ass home to Grandpa?

Even I know that is problematic. Not only can I not take the sinfully fluffy robe I’ve been living in with me, but showing up naked on my grandparent’s doorstep after being a pumpkin—Scratch that, as a pumpkin—makes my insides swirl with anxiety.

No, we’d have to stop somewhere first, obviously, or I could just ask him to grab me something so I could change.

I put the thought out of my mind, instead focusing on the task at the moment. A part of me feels like I'm being watched somehow, despite the fact I know I'm alone.

And I'm also certain if Mason was in this bathroom, there'd be no way he could keep his presence a secret. We'd both be squished together, unless we were in the shower. That thing is roomy as fuck.

I groan as my stupid cock twitches, deciding to finally remove my—er, Mason's—robe. My cock springs free, bouncing back like a damn rubber band. I can't remember the last time I was this fucking horny, to this extent.

Seriously, between my pumpkin goo-gasms and my dick that can't seem to stay soft while in Mason's proximity, I am both annoyed and hard as hell.

I drop the robe over the side of the sink before finding my way into the shower, relishing once again the feel of the warm water spraying me from all angles.

I fall back against the tile, letting it rain on me as I take my cock in my hands, my thumb sliding over my sensitive slit.

I can already feel the beginnings of my precum, warm and sticky.

I close my eyes, groaning in both frustration and desperation.

I know there's only one way to get rid of this, but I'd be lying if I said I didn't feel guilty as fuck about it.

About everything, really.

Mason's been nothing but nice, caring, even, despite the fact he didn't know I was ... well, me. But even after he stumbled on me today, naked in his bedroom, he's been

decidedly not an asshole, even though I know he should be.

The last thing I'd do if I found a naked guy in my bedroom is serve him dinner and pie.

Panic floods me as the truth makes its way through my psyche again.

I need to leave, I need to get back home and figure out what to do about this damn jack-o-lantern shifting thing.

But right now, all I can do is focus on the warm water on my skin and my throbbing cock in my hand.

I barely hear the door open.

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Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:48 am

Jax

I have all of five seconds before I realize what is actually happening, because I can barely comprehend anything except the weight of my cock in my hand.

I snap open my eyes, turning to see Mason through the glass shower door, his amber eyes flashing from the robe on the floor to me .

My cock pulses, despite the fact I feel frozen in place.

A part of me thinks maybe he's just in here to take a piss or something, but when I see him casually remove his shirt, then his pants, leaving them atop the robe on the floor, I can't deny that every ounce of me perks up with delight.

Heat envelopes me, and I know it's not entirely from the rainfall showerhead, or the water itself.

I let out a slow breath as I rub my finger over my leaking slit, my gaze locked on his as he saunters across the small divide, opening the glass door. Up close like this, with the light illuminating him from behind, he looks every bit like a devil; tempting and so fucking divine.

"Thought you were tied up with dessert," I say, my voice betraying no hint of how nervous his proximity is making me.

I fight really hard not to look down at his cock, which I know is on full display.

I don't want him to think I'm that easy, but the truth is ...

My gaze dips without much resistance, because I am that easy.

"I am," he says, his voice thick with lust as he closes the door. He takes a step closer to me, which makes me take a step backward, though I don't feel uncomfortable, like I know I should. In fact, it's the exact opposite .

My cock throbs in my hand as I lay my gaze on his.

Last night I hadn't gotten the best look because it was dark, but I could tell by the way he filled my hand he was sizable, and my judgment had been more than correct.

His thick, solid cock on display before me makes my mouth water, and my own cock throbs as a flurry of very inappropriate thoughts perpetuate my brain. If insanity is part of this Jack-O-Lantern curse, I think I might be in trouble.

My back hits the tile wall, the side sprayers hitting both of us like kamikaze fountains of rain.

I've never been backed up against the fucking wall before, and I know I should be concerned—worried, even.

But I'm not in the least, and certainly not when Mason leans one hand out, bracing his palm against the tile by my shoulder. His gaze implores mine.

"I'm not much of a fan of apples, but—" Mason stops midsentence.

His amber eyes of fire glisten with a gold sheen that makes me think of Grandpa's stories.

In all the ones he'd told me, the part that always stood out to me was the part where all my ancestors got to find their treasure.

I'd always assumed it was gold, because what ten-year-old thinks treasure means anything else.

I'd always imagined maybe I would grow up to find some fabled treasure, some pirate chest full of gold and gems or something—like that was my legacy as a Gallagher, not turning into a fucking pumpkin.

Looking in Mason's eyes, something clicks. It's like I know this man is my treasure, even if it makes not a lick of sense.

"But what, Mason?" My voice lowers an octave, my gaze falling to his perfect lips.

I struggle to inhale when I feel his hand on mine. The one covering my dick, to be exact. I let him push my hand away, relishing in the warmth of his hand around my cock.

"I've always been more of a pumpkin guy."

My lips turn up into a wicked grin as I lay my hand on his hip. He makes no move to push me away. Instead, he settles his grip on my cock, slowly pumping my shaft, the same way I did for him last night.

"You don't say," I taunt as I lift my chin, thrusting against his hand. My head is spinning, and I don't want him to stop, but he does. And for a moment, I think he's going to realize what's happening, and things are going to go up in fucking smoke, but they don't.

Instead, Mason drops to his knees, taking my cock into his damn mouth, drawing out

a surprised cry from my throat. It's been a good while since anyone has had their mouth on my cock, but Goddamn!

My eyes shut as my entire body tenses, like every nerve, every part of my body is controlled by him. His hands slide up my thighs, and I reach out one hand to brace myself against the wall. Instead, I find soft, wet hair. It feels good between my fingers, so I don't fight it.

"Mhmm," he murmurs around my cock, his tongue circling me before pressing into my slit. With one hand, he cradles my balls while the other squeezes my ass, pulling me closer, deeper, until I hit the back of his throat.

"Oh fuck," I curse, my pleasure building as that familiar gooey-warm-mushy feeling returns. Everything feels like at any minute, I might explode into a million tiny pieces.

Instinct takes over as my hips thrust forward, eliciting a deep moan from the man with my cock down his throat.

Pumpkin Whisperer, indeed ...

"Mason," I try to speak coherently, but it's hard to focus on anything other than the fact I feel like I might come any blasted second.

His fingernails sink into my ass, and he doubles down, until my eyes can barely stay open, until my legs feel like they might give out.

My grip in his hair tightens as I come undone with a groan that is strained and euphoric, because I'm acutely aware that nothing and no one has ever felt this good sucking my damn cock. I want to fucking scream as I brace my free arm against the tile wall.

I come—hard. So hard, I think I see spots behind my eyelids, but Mason just keeps on sucking, drinking me like I’m his favorite dessert.

“Mm,” he moans, his tongue lapping at me as he squeezes my ass, swallowing every fucking drop.

I’m somewhat embarrassed to say there’s a lot, way more than usual.

When I return to earth, the water’s run cold.

Mason stands, wiping the back of his mouth with his hand, the grin on his face truly a work of art.

Maybe I kiss him because he’s damn perfect. Maybe it’s because I’ve never felt so fucking amazing in my life. Either way, I don’t fight what feels so right.

I pull him against me, taking his lips against my own. As my tongue strokes his, all I can taste is the sweetness of pumpkin spice, and I melt all over again.

Mason

I don't know what came over me. I know what—er, who—came in me, but what made me go into that shower? The whole situation is completely nuts, but with Jax parading around in nothing but my bathrobe all evening, I couldn't control myself.

At least now I know where the pumpkin spice smell is coming from ... emphasis on coming. If anyone had told me that I'd be swallowing down pumpkin spice cum tonight, I would have driven them straight to the looney bin.

I'm wondering if I shouldn't just drive myself there tonight. Am I really considering his story? Family curses and sentient pumpkins ... It's all a bit much.

I can't deny that I haven't seen Jax and the pumpkin in the same place at the same time, though it would be a simple matter to hide the gourd somewhere in the house.

That doesn't explain how he got in, though, or how he ended up buck naked in my house.

Surely, someone would have noticed a tall, hot guy running around in the buff, and I don't recall seeing any discarded clothing outside anywhere when I got home.

For both our sakes, I really have to do something about that nudity. I can't think straight when he's parading around in nothing but my robe, but unfortunately, we're different sizes. I could never hope to have anything big enough for my beefcake houseguest.

Once we're done making out, we head back to the kitchen for the now-cold apple pie. I forgot I'd gotten the ice cream out of the freezer to serve with it, and now there's a melted puddle of vanilla all over the counter.

"Shit." I reach for the paper towels and start cleaning up the mess. Jax's hand meets mine and gently takes the wad of towels from me.

"Let me," he says. "Go. Sit. I'll take care of this."

He's so close that every nerve ending lights up at his touch. My eyes rise to meet his, and I get so lost in their green depths that I forget what I'm doing.

After a scorchingly tense few minutes, he backs away and tosses the paper towels in the trash. "There. All clean."

Why do the words "all clean" just remind me of the shower?

I shake my head to clear it and turn to grab a pie server out of the drawer.

"Thanks. So, uh, big slice or little slice?" I know I can't afford to eat a big slice of this decadent pie—it'll go straight to my hips—but something tells me Jax is one of those guys who can just eat whatever and stay nice and cut.

"Big," he says, and I cut him a slice that's twice as big as mine.

I'll say one thing for Jax: for someone without an ounce of fat on his body, he sure can put away plenty of food! Even after I've fed him quinoa and pie, his stomach still rumbles for more. Jax's cheeks turn a cute shade of pink at the sound, and I offer a smile to lessen the embarrassment.

"Still hungry?" I ask as I take my turn clearing the dishes.

“Yeah. I don’t know what it is, but it’s like I can’t get enough in me. I think the shifting burns extra calories or something.”

Hmm. What else can I feed him? I get the feeling he’s more the meat-and-potatoes than side-salad type, but my dumb ass didn’t grab anything of the sort at the store. I rifle through my cupboards until I find the perfect snack.

With the box of popcorn in hand, I turn around. “Movie night?”

Jax perks up at the suggestion. “Ooh! That’s my favorite brand, too.”

Three and a half minutes later, we head to the living room.

I grab the remote and start scrolling through the streaming service in search of something we can enjoy together.

I’m struck by a sudden burst of devilish humor, and after perusing the “featured seasonal film” menu, I stop on the one I’m looking for and turn to Jax with a grin.

“Oh, hell no!” he says, laughing as he tosses a handful of popcorn at me. “We are not watching Pumpkinhead !”

I throw some fluffy kernels back at him. “What? It’s perfect for this time of year! It’s even featured!”

The popcorn fight quickly devolves into full-blown roughhousing, and before I know it, Jax slips off the couch, landing on his tight ass and dragging me down with him. We end up chest-to-chest on the floor, heaving for breath, with me sprawled on top of him.

My lips are mere inches from Jax’s, and our dicks press together.

Suddenly, the mood in the room shifts from playful to freakin' hot, and for the second time this evening, my hormones get the better of me.

I descend on Jax like I'm the one who's starving, burying my hands in his thick, dark hair and delving in for a heavy kiss.

He tastes of light cinnamon and sugary apples, contrasting with the earlier pumpkin spice taste I shared with him in the shower.

As we make out, Jax's dick hardens beneath me. I reach between us and slip my hand inside the robe, stroking his velvety shaft. He moans into my mouth and thrusts against my hand, and I know the movie is all but forgotten.

The next few seconds are a mad dash to see who can strip first, and despite the fact that I've got more clothes on, I win.

"Turn over," I say, my voice surprising even me with the amount of sheer lust in the words.

I watch Jax's Adam's apple bob as he swallows hard and nods.

I let up just enough to give him room to roll over.

His smooth, tight ass taunts me, and I run my hand over one perfect cheek before giving him a playful smack.

Jax trembles as I spread his cheeks, and I marvel at the perfection before me. I slide backwards, sitting on his legs and half pinning him in place.

"Don't move."

He nods again, and I bend to run my tongue down his divide, ending at his tight hole.

Jax groans as I lick the edge before wetting two fingers in my mouth.

I spread his cheeks wider and spit on his hole before sliding my fingers inside him.

His body erupts in a delicious shudder as I slowly finger him.

“I’m starting slow,” I say as Jax whimpers for more. “I’m a big dude, and I don’t want to hurt you. Just be patient.”

When I add a third finger to the mix, he cries out.

“Shit! You okay?” I pause with my fingers buried inside him.

Jax’s toned body shakes, and his voice is breathless and husky as he answers.

“I’m fine. That feels fucking amazing.”

I grin at his encouragement and slide my free hand underneath him to stroke his cock while I work his ass. He’s already wet with precum, and when I curl my fingers inside him, he shoots a few bursts into my palm. The air fills with the now-familiar pumpkin spice scent, and I breathe it in.

Without removing my fingers, I scoot up and put my cum-slick hand in front of his face.

“Lick it.”

I watch as his eyes roll back in his head while he licks my hand clean.

“Please, Mason,” he moans when I go back to jerking his cock. “Don’t tease me.”

He has no idea. I’m not teasing; I’m prepping . I lick and nibble his neck until he stiffens with his next release, which I catch in my palm. I pull my fingers from his delicious ass, and he whimpers again.

“Just a sec, baby,” I croon into his ear, nipping the lobe. “I promise, you’re gonna love this.”

With my cum-filled palm, I stroke my cock a few times, coating it. A little spit won’t be enough to lube me for him, but this should do just fine.

Inching my way in, I take my time with him.

Every time he gasps or freezes or clenches, I pause, waiting until he relaxes a bit and nods for me to continue.

The Essence of Jax I’m using as lube works perfectly.

I’m able to ease in without too much trouble, and once I’m all the way in, Jax starts fisting his cock.

I give Jax a few seconds to adjust before even I can’t hold back any longer.

As soon as I’m sure I won’t wreck his ass, I grab his hips and thrust like there’s no tomorrow.

Jax jerks his dick hard, his arm almost moving faster than I can see.

I grunt each time my balls slap against his ass, and his moans get louder and louder the faster I move.

Before long, those moans turn to screams.

Screams that stretch into one long, drawn-out shout.

His voice breaks as he pumpkin spices my throw rug, and I'm not far behind him.

I come so hard that it spurts out and drips down his taint and balls.

When I pull out, a fresh load oozes down.

I push it back in with my fingers as Jax lets out a shuddering sigh.

After giving Jax a hand to his feet, I pick up the robe and lay it on the couch to give us a relatively clean spot to sit. We snuggle close, with me as the big spoon, just resting quietly in the afterglow.

When the dawn sun wakes me, I set the pumpkin—Jax—on the coffee table before heading for a shower. I'm off work today, but I've still got a busy day ahead of me.

I've gotta go to a pumpkin farm and see a guy about borrowing some clothes.

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Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:48 am

Mason

Nervous sweat drips down the back of my neck as I drive to Gallagher's Pumpkin Farm. His grandpa, Robert, hadn't been the friendliest of folks when I was there before, and I don't get the impression that the guy approves of Jax's, erm, lifestyle.

Of our lifestyle.

Just what I wanted to do with my day: Beg a homophobe for his grandson's clothing.

Maybe I'll luck out, and Mrs. Gallagher will be around instead.

She seemed nice enough when I went to pick out a pumpkin, even giving away her grandson to a total stranger.

I'd have no issues asking her for a few outfits for Jax to wear while he's at my house.

She'd probably let me inside and help me pick something out.

Robert would probably just chase me off the property with a shotgun.

Society may have come a long way towards tolerance in recent years, but something tells me the less I admit to Robert about my relationship with Jax, the better. I doubt I'll score any points with the old man if I admit I know what his family's secret recipe tastes like ...

When I pull into the parking lot, Gallagher's is hopping.

It's getting closer to Halloween, so people are heading there in droves to find pumpkins for their porches or recipes.

I shudder to think what might've happened to Jax if anyone else had picked him out.

Would they have cut into him? Scooped out his innards?

I shake my head to clear it of such morbid thoughts. If Robert didn't want to sell Jax to me, maybe he would've kept some unsuspecting family from purchasing and murdering his grandson.

Bracing myself for what could be the most awkward conversation I'll ever have, I turn off the car and head for the front of the farmhouse, where the biggest pumpkins are on display.

My heart sinks as I see that my worst fears have come true: Grandpa is the only one working the counter. Jax's grandma is nowhere to be seen.

Despite the fact that he's supposed to be selling these pumpkins, Robert Gallagher is as salty as ever. He snarls at every single customer, and I wonder how the hell the farm stays in business. Doesn't he know you have to smile every now and then to sell a product?

As I approach, I watch him strike out with no fewer than three potential customers. At this rate, poor Jax won't have a farm to come back to!

I spot a spare Gallagher's apron hanging near the sales counter, and inspiration strikes. Throwing the apron on and tying it around my waist, I walk up to Robert's latest customer. The woman looks about ready to leave, so I turn on the charm.

"Welcome to Gallagher's Pumpkin Farm! I'm Mason.

” I shake the woman’s hand and look at the pumpkin she’s inspecting.

“Nice choice. Round, solid, good texture.” I thump the skin of the gourd as though I know the first thing about testing a pumpkin.

Robert glares daggers at me, but I’m stubborn.

If he wants me to stop, he’s gonna have to physically kick me out of here.

Five minutes later, not only have I sold the woman on the pumpkin she initially had, I’ve sold her three more. I walk her over to the register and make a show of trying to open it. “Hey, Grandpa! The register’s stuck again.” I wink at the customer. “Silly thing jams a few times a day.”

“Oh, he’s your grandfather?” the woman asks as Robert shuffles over and opens the till.

“Sort of,” I say, taking her cash and counting out some change. “His grandson is my boyfriend, so I’m practically family.”

To my immense relief, Robert’s wife, Annie, shows up right at that moment. “Practically? Son, you need to stop selling yourself short.” She beams at the customer and helps me load the pumpkins in the woman’s car.

As the woman drives off, I take the opportunity to talk to Annie, the more reasonable of Jax’s grandparents in my experience. I explain that I know the whole Stingy Jack story— and that Jax needs some clothes if he’s going to stick around my house.

“Oh, my!” Annie shakes her head. “Unfortunate, that. Terribly sorry if it’s made you uncomfortable.” She gives me a weird, searching look, and I’d wager good money that her handing Jax over to me was no accident.

“No, not at all. But he really needs something more than my bathrobe to wear, and we’re not the same size. I have nothing to share that’ll fit him.”

Annie gives me a once-over and tuts. “You need fattening up, young man. If you lived on the farm here, you two would be the same size in no time. Some of my famous apple pie will do you good.”

The mention of apple pie reminds me of the night before, and a blush scorches my cheeks.

“Well, come on! Let’s go inside. Robert can handle the crowd.”

I follow Grandma Annie into the farmhouse, which is decked out much like I’d expect.

Decorative vines cover nearly every surface, and a cute display of pumpkin-painted China sits in a prominent cabinet just inside the door.

There’s not a speck of dust anywhere, and the now-familiar scent of pumpkin spice wars with the aroma of fresh-baked apple pie.

I find it odd that Grandma Annie spends so much time baking apple pies when pumpkins are their bread and butter.

Didn’t Jax mention something about the apple farmers being the Gallaghers’ rivals?

Annie offers me a seat at the large oak dining table as she bustles off upstairs to grab some clothes for Jax.

I tap my fingers on the tabletop nervously as I wait, hoping Robert doesn’t come storming in.

Annie seems to like me, but even upselling a difficult customer didn't seem to win me any points with Jax's grandpa.

Ten minutes later, Annie reappears lugging two huge suitcases stuffed to overflowing with clothes. I leap to my feet to take them from her, so she doesn't hurt herself trying to carry them all the way to my car. "Mrs. Gallagher! Did you pack all of Jax's clothes?"

Her round, plump cheeks pink with a blush, and she looks down at the bags in my hands. "He's going to want options," she mumbles, "and I threw in his toothbrush and a few other things."

It's more than I ever expected. I was hoping for a pair of sweatpants and a t-shirt, something for Jax to wear on the ride back to the farm.

"This is ... It's so generous, Annie! Jax'll feel right at home now.

" I smile to hide my sense of overwhelm.

Does Annie think Jax is moving in with me?

That certainly rushes things a bit. I mean, I like the guy, but we only just met. I don't even know if Jax wants to stay.

Annie pats my hand. "Well, off you go now. Robert's a handful, and he's in no mood today. Jax's birthday is just ... Well, it's coming soon." Her mood grows somber, and tears well in her eyes.

That's right; Jax mentioned something about this curse being connected to his birthday. I'd forgotten that part of the story. I wish I knew how to help, but I'm no witch or wizard. What can I do to break a curse?

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Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:48 am

Jax

When I shift back to my human self, the first thing I see is Mason sitting in the oversized chair across from me, with a pile of clothes in his lap.

“Where did you get those?”

He smirks at me, and the sight makes me feel warm and gooey all over again. How is it that this man has the power to turn me on with just a fucking look?

“I took a trip today to this adorable little pumpkin farm. I think you’d like it.”

It’s my turn to grin as I push myself off the couch and saunter over to him.

I don’t bother covering up, because at this point I’ve lost embarrassment, but also because I know he likes me like this.

He’s made that more than clear. I give my already hard cock a quick palm as I make my way over to where he stands, and he doesn’t move.

His gaze catches mine as I lean one arm over him, my fingers gripping the back of the chair.

I keep my other hand on my cock, noting the bead of precum that’s already started to form.

“Really now? Is that so?” I ask sarcastically. Mason’s eyes glitter like flames through

a Jack-O-Lantern on Halloween night.

Halloween night is in two days. My birthday is tomorrow.

I blink as reality settles on me. If I remember correctly, Grandpa said I had until my birthday to find my mate.

I'd chalked his ramblings up to folklore at the time, or just an old man's way of trying to light a fire under his grandson's ass to settle down, but now...

What if this is it? What if tonight is my last night on earth as a person?

What if, after I shift tonight, I don't shift back?

Because that's the curse, after all. Finding a mate is what is supposed to save me from being a gourd for the rest of my life.

I hadn't believed in such things, but now...

The thought of losing Mason, of never being able to touch him again, makes my heart ache.

His mischievous gaze shifts to one of concern, and he advances into my space, rising from his chair and setting my clothes on the cushion. His movement pushes me back just a hair, but not enough I drop my hand from its grip on the back of his chair.

"Hey, what's—?"

I don't think, I just act. Pain and anxiety lace me as I'm overcome with a deep feeling of desperation. I kiss him, savoring the taste of his mouth. He tastes like coffee and cream, like perfection and heaven.

Mason relaxes as I slip my tongue into his mouth. He pushes against me, dislodging my hand from the back of the chair as he slips one hand up my chest.

His free hand finds mine once more, covering my wet cock, and he tries to bat me away, but I don't let him.

As bad as I want him to touch me, I want to touch him. I want to feel every inch of his perfection beneath me, his cock rubbing against my own, slick with our combined precum.

And then I want to fuck him until he knows how grateful I am for him, so that he remembers me in every part of his being.

"Jax," he breathes my name as I swat him away from my cock, then grip his hips. I frantically work at his belt, and he sinks against me, his deep groan running through me like electricity.

"You are amazing, you know that?" I say as I let my lips assault his neck. Mason helps me with his pants, nearly shoving them to the floor.

"It's just clothes," he says, his voice laced in darkness.

I nip at his flesh, my hand finding his sizable cock with ease. He's so fucking hard and wet already, which only elicits a deep moan from my chest.

He's fucking perfect.

Could he be my mate? I know the thought of never touching, seeing, or kissing him again makes my heart ache, and I'm more than certain he enjoys me—at least in the physical sense—otherwise he would have thrown my ass out.

Is it fate? Does he feel the way I feel? Does he count down the hours until I'm me? Until he can feel my touch? Does just the sight of me make him feel like a puddle of pumpkin goo?

"I don't even want to know how you got those," I say as I suck on the flesh of his neck. I know I need to be careful, or he'll end up with a hickey, which at our age should be embarrassing as fuck, but something inside me pushes me to continue despite that notion.

Mason's hand slides over my hip until he finds my ass, digging his fingers into my flesh, drawing me closer. He grinds his cock against mine, his head falling back as he says, "Good, because I don't want to talk about it."

We stumble around like idiots, a mess of tongues and hands, and wet, throbbing cocks until we find his bedroom, and every last bit of Mason's clothes have hit the floor.

Overcome with desire, I push him down, angling myself over him. I stare down at his fiery amber eyes and reach out to brush some dark hair out of his eyes. My fingers trace the lines of his jaw, which is now thicker with stubble, and the touch is coarse against my fingers.

I'm overwhelmed not just by his looks—because he is so fucking gorgeous, it should be a crime—but by the knot in my chest, in my stomach, and my throat that I get when I look at him.

I've never wanted anything in my life as badly as I want him.

Mine, mine, mine.

I open my mouth, but suddenly I can't remember how to speak.

Mason gazes up at me, my abdomen wet with the trails of his precum as he thrusts himself against me. His gaze is full of heat, and I have to remember to fucking breathe .

“Jax?” His voice is low, full of lust and desperation.

“You are so fucking perfect,” I say, my voice not betraying a hint of the overwhelm that I feel.

Mason’s eyebrows furrow as he shifts himself underneath me, wrapping his legs around my waist. His ankles lock, and he pushes me closer, a wicked smile forming on his face.

“I know,” he says as he kisses me, and I think I really am a puddle of goo masquerading as a man.

My hands trace their way down his chest, across that delicious, cut V.

I grip our cocks together, squeezing us both.

Mason’s eyes fall shut as his mouth parts just the slightest. A deep moan escapes him.

My hand easily slips and slides along our shafts due to the amount of precum we’re both leaking.

“Mason,” I breathe his name, but it’s all I’m able to get out.

Because when he looks at me with that familiar golden glow, once again I forget how to speak. All I can do is kiss him everywhere my mouth has access to—his lips, his neck, that sweet spot in the midst of his clavicle. It’s a bit uncomfortable, but I even manage to take a nipple in my mouth.

“Jax, please ...” His voice is strained, but it is hypnotic.

I let go of our cocks, sitting back on my heels for a moment to take full stock of him before me. His thick, large cock, wet and bouncing, the valleys of his sculpted abs and chest, his kiss-swollen lips and his furrowed brows.

God, I want all of him, and knowing my time as a man may be up soon, I intend to take all he is willing to give me.

Stingy Jax, indeed.

Suddenly, I feel the strangest sensation as I palm my cock—I feel extra wet.

I blink for a moment, as I realize I’m practically oozing precum.

A lot more than usual, which should freak me out, but I barely have time to comprehend what’s happening before the thick scent of pumpkin spice permeates the air.

I pull my hand away, noting that I’m pretty well lubricated. I don’t waste a second as I lean down, slipping one finger into Mason’s tight hole, testing my newfound ability.

I mean, this has got to be a Jack-O-Lantern thing, right? Self-lubricating cocks sound like something you’d find at the sex shop, not on a person.

Mason writhes beneath me, and I stop. I don’t want to hurt him, and I think maybe I’ve gone too far, but before I can remove myself, he grabs me, stopping me.

“Keep going,” he says, breathless. “Please don’t stop.”

I blink, swallowing hard.

How could I ever resist this man?

I resume my onslaught as I continue to pump two fingers in and out of him with one hand, while I use my free hand to stroke his cock.

“Are ...?” I struggle to find the words I want to say, and instead try to focus on words I know that are easier. “Are you ready for me?” I ask, watching the rise and fall of his chest.

Mason nods. “Just fucking do it, already.”

If any other man had said such a thing in the tone Mason did, I might be offended. But Mason’s bite is full of desperation and need, and something else I can’t quite place.

I remove my hands, lining myself up. I watch his face as I press my head against his entrance.

He opens his eyes, thick lashes standing out against his perfect complexion.

I inch myself inside of him, fully intending to go slow, but the moment Mason arches his back to meet my thrust, I lose all sense of everything around me.

My cock is so wet and hard that I slide into him with ease, bottoming out in no time.

“Oh fuck,” Mason curses, one hand finding my shoulder, while his other cups my ass. He digs his fingernails into my ass cheek, pushing me until I’m so deep it feels like I’ll never escape.

And I would be lying if I said I wanted to escape the clutches of my Pumpkin Master.

I pull out, relishing in the feel of the drag. I thrust into him harder, rocking him until the headboard rattles against the wall.

“Mine.” The word falls out of my mouth without warning.

It’s not enough to convey what I feel, what I know in my heart, my soul, deep in my pumpkin guts.

Mason’s cry shatters the world around me as his hot cum splatters across my stomach.

It’s like a domino effect, and instantly I still, my entire body tensing as I come. I take his mouth against mine, thrusting into him lazily as I ride out the euphoria.

My brain feels foggy, and I am semi-aware that my cum has started to run out of room inside of Mason, and for some reason, that’s what brings me back to the here and now.

I slide out of him, falling back onto my knees, and the scent of pumpkin spice is thick like a fog. Mason doesn’t move, except for the steady rise and fall of his chest, so I take the moment to grab a towel from his bathroom to clean us up.

“Shit, if that’s the thanks I get for some clothes ...” he jokes, and I laugh.

“It’s more than the clothes,” I say. “If you had to deal with my grandfather, you deserve a fucking medal.”

Mason shrugs as he heads for his dresser, pulling out a pair of clean underwear and some fresh sweatpants.

“Get dressed,” he says, shooting me a wicked glance.

It's my turn to grin seductively.

Mason blushes momentarily. "I'm not having dinner with you naked."

"Fine, I'll be civilized," I say as he disappears around the corner. A moment later, I meet him in the doorway, and he hands me my clothes from the living room.

"There's still apple pie, too," he says with a smirk.

"I've already had my dessert," I tell him, kissing him lightly as I take my clothes from him. As good as I feel, there's still a part of me that feels like something is missing. Or rather, there's something I should have said.

Mason shakes his head, his amber eyes imploring mine.

"How does pizza sound?" he asks, his lips twisting up in the corners.

Could this man be any more perfect?

I put my underwear and pants on, slipping my shirt over my head as I respond. "Sounds like my favorite."

Mason nods. "Cool. You want to browse for a movie, and I'll make the call?"

I realize at that moment that this is it. Somehow, I know this is the last time I'm going to see him. It doesn't make sense, but it's like I just know something this good can't be real. Or at least, it can't be real for me, because I'm fucking cursed. I fight the urge to break down.

Mason leads me out of his room, picking up his clothes and dressing himself along the way.

As I settle onto the couch, I distract myself by browsing for a movie. Everything is themed to Halloween, but I don't want to watch something scary.

I want something romantic.

When I see his recently watched list, I note the movie he'd watched the first night he'd brought me home ... as a pumpkin.

The one he cried watching, because he was alone and upset.

I don't think twice about selecting it, and Mason finds his way next to me.

"That's an odd choice," he says as he leans back into the cushions. My heart is in my throat again as I look at him, slipping my arm around his shoulders. He leans into me with ease, and I let my fingertips trace circles on his bicep.

"We can change it if you want. I just thought—"

Mason sets a hand on my thigh and squeezes lightly. "It's fine." His gaze settles on my lips then flashes up at me. "It's no Pumpkinhead or Trick Or Treat , but if it's what you want ..."

I can't resist kissing him once more, relishing the taste of his sweetness. He really is a treat.

I wake up with a numb arm. I turn to note a softly snoring Mason is passed out on me.

I don't remember falling asleep, but I guess after the euphoria of sex, pizza, and cuddling the hottest man on the planet, it was inevitable.

One glance at the television screensaver, and I note it's almost three thirty.

The witching hour. I know Mason has to get up early, and I also know sleeping on the couch on top of a person is not the best support for anyone, so I don't think twice about picking him up.

Mason isn't a small guy by any means, but in my arms he feels different. He curls into my chest, murmuring something in his sleep that is incoherent.

I carry him to bed, taking care not to wake him as I settle him under the covers. When he's comfortable, I remove my clothes and get behind him, pulling him against my chest as I drape my arm over his hip.

I plant a soft kiss in his hair, and regrettably close my eyes.

Because I know before long, I'll turn into a pumpkin.

So I focus on his breath, on his warmth, and the feel of him in my arms until the sun comes up and curses me once more.

Jax

I watch Mason go about his morning, listening as he talks to me about wishing he could stay home instead with me, his prized pumpkin. I'll admit, the sweet sentiment makes my stump vibrate and my little vines want to come out and wrap themselves around his legs and never let him leave.

He carries me from the bed to the kitchen table so I can watch him make coffee and eat breakfast, chatting up a one- sided storm. I appreciate his attempts to make me feel human, nonetheless, because I'm not.

It's my birthday today, and I never even told him. Not that I expect it would have changed anything for either of us. Besides, what man wants to admit he's officially on the other side of his thirties?

Thirty was bad enough, now I'm officially thirty-one and a pumpkin? Ugh, worst birthday ever.

"Try to stay out of trouble while I'm gone," Mason wisecracks, and I wish I could laugh. I mean, how much trouble can one person get into if they are, you know, a pumpkin? It's not like I'm gonna grow pumpkin vine legs and walk away or something.

I do my best to give off good vibes, wishing there was some way for pumpkins to telepathically communicate or something, even if it is just a Jack-O-Lantern thing.

Mason grabs his keys, kisses my stump, and then he leaves.

The place is always unnaturally quiet without him around, but the silence this morning is decidedly more ominous.

When the door opens, I perk up, hoping maybe Mason forgot something, or even more embarrassing, hoping he picks me up and takes me with him.

But I am soon ripped of all my good thoughts and vibes, because it's not Mason who walks into the kitchen.

It's Grandpa.

What the...

"There ya' are," he says in his gruff, stern voice. He gets closer, and I try with all my might to make myself move, to roll off the counter and out of the room.

The feeling of helplessness pervades, because I can't do anything. Grandpa scoops me up with ease.

No, no, no. He shouldn't be here. My insides flutter with alarm as he starts walking, and I realize two things at once: That my sweet, old Grandpa apparently knows how to break into homes, and that I'm truly never going to see Mason again, even as a pumpkin.

When we get into the truck, he sets me on the seat next to him. Panic laces through me, and I feel like if I had eyes, I'd be bawling them out right about now. Grandpa sighs as he turns the truck on.

"This all could have been avoided, you know, if ya listened to your dear old Grandpa in the first place."

How dare he pin this situation on me! I didn't ask for this stupid family curse.

The car starts, and I roll on the seat as it moves.

"I told ya, if you found yer mate before your birthday, you wouldn't have to go through this, but no.

You insisted every chance you got that ya didn't want to settle down.

" He grips the steering wheel tightly, looking straight through the windshield at the rising sun.

"But the truth is, son, that if ya would have found yourself a nice girl, like yer daddy did, like I did, like my father did ..."

He sighs, and for a split second, I almost feel bad for him. Almost.

"Ain't none of us ever chose to be as stubborn as you, and now look at you."

The words cut deep, and I want to yell, to scream. But I can't do shit, because I'm a fucking gourd.

He turns to raise a thick eyebrow at me. "Least you ain't talking back to me now."

Fuck you, Grandpa.

"Annie might think that man's little stunt is enough, but I think you and I both know it ain't," he says gruffly. The car stops, but he doesn't move immediately. Instead he picks me up, holding me in front of him.

"Happy Birthday, Jax," he says, and I think I see his eyes glisten a bit. His voice

shakes, and my insides feel cold and hard. Not warm and gooey as I know they should.

“Well, at least you’re home where you belong,” he says softly, and with that he opens the car door, and carries me off to the farm.

All I can think about is the fact I never told Mason I loved him when I had the chance.

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Mason

Something's wrong. I don't know what's wrong or even how I know something's wrong, but I can't shake the feeling.

The sense is so strong that I start getting a stress itch in my arm. An angry red line appears on my right bicep, its shape twisting and curling in on itself. Fuck, do I have ringworm or something?

I don't even make it to the coffee shop for work. My gut screams at me that I can't leave, that I have to go back home.

So I do, and the devastation in my heart when I get there shatters me.

Whoever came to my house didn't bother closing the door after they busted the lock. It hangs open, gently batting against the jam in the light fall breeze. The scene chills me to the bone as I realize that the vandal didn't pick an empty house.

Jax is in there. Alone. As a pumpkin.

I don't have any weapons on me, but I stuff my keyring in my palm with the keys jutting out from between my fingers, curling my hand into a fist. As long as the scumbag who broke in doesn't have a gun, I should have a chance to stop them before they find and hurt Jax.

Creeping through the open front door, I stalk through my house in search of the intruder, in search of Jax.

My heart falls into an endless abyss as I come up empty on both.

Whoever broke in took Jax. My kitchen table is as bare as always, no pumpkin boyfriend, who I know I left there not even an hour ago. He couldn't have wandered away.

The wind through the door catches a piece of paper on the floor, and I bend to pick it up. It's a business card. Who leaves their fucking business card at a crime scene? I squint at the tiny gold lettering on the orange background, then I cringe as realization hits.

A crotchety old man might leave his business card at the scene, an old man with a family curse and an attitude problem.

Oh, Jax. What's Robert going to do with you? I can only pray he won't hurt Jax, but I can't guarantee that. I mean, he took Jax away from somewhere warm and safe. Who does that to their own grandkid?

Calm down, Mason. Jax isn't a kid anymore.

He's ... Fuck, I don't think I even know how old he is!

There's no doubt he's an adult—you don't get fucking built like that when you're under eighteen—but I don't know his actual age.

I feel like an asshole of a boyfriend for that.

We haven't had a ton of time together where we were both human, but I should've asked what his birthday was.

Well, Robert's about to find out what a mistake he made. I'm about to go to

Gallagher's Farm and steal my man back, no matter what it takes.

I leave again in such a rush that I don't even close my front door behind me. I don't waste a second, not even taking the time to change out of my coffee shop polo shirt. I need to find Jax and bring him home with me, where he belongs.

My anxiety grows the longer the car drive takes.

Halloween traffic is thick today, despite the early hour, and I have to take care to dodge kids in costumes riding their bikes to school, parties, wherever they're going dressed like little demons and clowns.

Each red light, each traffic jam, each little hiccup in my journey sends a fresh pool of worry to sit in my stomach.

I'm gonna need some antacid when I get Jax back.

Finally, after what feels like forever but was probably only about twenty minutes, I pull up to the curb in front of Gallagher's Pumpkin Farm. I don't bother with the parking lot, don't even bother to cut the engine.

Robert's lucky I put the damn thing in park.

I rush through the crowded throng of patrons in search of the perfect pumpkin for the festivities, elbowing my way past middle-aged witches and dodging pint-sized Pokémon with a singular goal: That perfect pumpkin, the gourd I'd recognize anywhere, sitting on a grandiose display at Robert's back.

To my relief, there's no evidence that Robert carved into Jax.

He's decorated my man in gaudy puff paint that's already starting to peel off in

places, but nothing looks cut or carved.

The crooked, hastily drawn Jack-O-Lantern grins at me from across the way, and bits of sequin glitter in the early morning sun.

Robert may be a decent pumpkin salesman, but the dude cannot decorate one to save his miserable life.

He's ruined Jax's perfect appearance with all the glue and paint and ...

Did he seriously glue fucking pumpkin leaves to Jax's pumpkin non-crotch?

I can't believe it. Robert is certifiably insane. I have to rescue Jax from this delusional bastard.

Robert spots me a few seconds before I reach Jax, and he spins around to grab my boyfriend off the display. I leap over the counter and land next to the old man, lunging for the pumpkin in his arms.

"Fucking give him to me, Robert!" I shout, grabbing Jax and getting smeared with wet puff paint and smelly glue in the process.

"Get off me, ya brute!" He latches onto Jax with an iron grip, and we start a violent tug-of-war in front of everyone. "It's my feckin' pumpkin, and I'll do what I want wi' it!"

I could almost laugh at being called a brute. Pansy, fag, fairy, twink, I've heard a slew of insults slung at me in my day, but brute? Never.

"He's more than just a fucking pumpkin, and if you're too blind to see that, then you don't deserve him!" My face burns with anger as I try to wrench Jax out of Robert's

hands. Just a little more ...

Robert plays dirty, though, and his knee connects with my crotch with bruising force. I gasp for air as my world shrinks to a concentrated zone of pure pain.

“Stop,” I wheeze. “Please, Robert. Don’t hurt him.”

The old man scoffs and jabs an elbow in my ribs, knocking even more air from my already strained lungs. “Can’t hurt ‘im anymore. He ain’t a ‘im anymore, anyway. Weren’t much of a man to begin with. Ain’t nothing left now.”

Shouts and gasps erupt from the crowd as our fight draws more and more attention. I can only imagine what it must look like.

His words spark a fresh fire inside me. Nobody talks about Jax like that, grandfather or not! I redouble my efforts to get Jax free as Robert tries another dirty trick by biting at my ear. Jerk.

“He’s more of a man than you’ll ever be!” I shout as loud as my pained lungs will let me. “And I love him!”

My words echo as Robert lets go, shock forming his wrinkled mouth into a wide O. Because I was pulling backwards so hard, my momentum carries me back away from Robert ...

... And my arms lose their grip on Jax.

I freeze for just a fraction of a second, but it’s a fraction of a second too long.

Jax starts to fall to the ground.

Time moves agonizingly slow. I scramble to regain my grip on Jax, but I can't seem to get my arms to move right. Why can't I just grab him?

As his pumpkin form nears the ground, a bright light envelops him. I have to cover my eyes to protect them, and my heart sinks into a deep abyss as I fall to my knees next to the carnage I can't bear to see.

I failed. I didn't save him from Robert, didn't keep him safe from harm, and now he's ...

"Mason?"

My eyes fly open at the familiar voice, at the deep rumble of my name on Jax's tongue.

Jax's human tongue!

He's covered in paint, glitter, and glue, but he's alive—he didn't burst into a million pumpkin bits when he hit the ground.

I didn't kill him.

With all personal, professional, and public protocol already thrown out the window in my fight with Robert, I tackle Jax right where he lies and throw my arms around him, sobbing like a maniac.

Puff paint further stains my shirt and smears my face as I bury it in Jax's chest. Plastic rattles as he shifts position to return my desperate hug, and it takes me a second to realize that the sound is from the copious pumpkin leaves Robert glued to his ...

Oh. That's gonna hurt to take off later.

"Jax! Jax, I'm so sorry. I came as soon as I realized you were gone. I'm so sorry." I babble nonstop as I hold him so tight I wonder if they'll have to peel me off of him like the leaves.

"Shh, Mason, shh. It's okay. You saved me, baby. Stop apologizing."

"But I dropped you! I—"

His kiss ends my lament, and it makes everything right with the world.

"You saved me," he reiterates when we come up for air, cupping my cheeks in his palms. "Do you understand that? I would have been a pumpkin forever ... or however long I managed to last off the vine."

The look of utter adoration is enough to melt me.

When he says, "I love you, Mason," in that hushed, reverent tone, I'm surprised I don't literally melt.

Nothing else matters. No one else matters. Just the two of us, tangled on the ground and covered in puff paint and glitter.

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:48 am

Jax

Words can't even begin to describe the feeling in my fucking pumpkin-person-somewhere-in-between soul, the minute I hear Mason's voice ringing loud and true with the three words that I know are going to change my life forever.

I love him.

I never believed in fairytales, or myths, or legends about men who turn into pumpkins if they don't find true love. I never even really thought true love was something that was meant for me. I'd accepted my fate as a lonely old gay bachelor, and in a sense, I'd made my peace with it.

I never believed something so fantastical and so amazing could happen to me. That someone as hot, sweet, and perfect as Mason could be mine . Not until now, when my reality is kissing me like I am indeed Cinderella and he's my fucking Prince Charming.

My insides feel like pumpkin goo in the best way possible, but a deep cough and the sounds of snapping and clicking cameras pull me from my stupor, and I realize with the most acute clarity I think I've ever felt, that I am naked, covered in puffy paint and glitter, and we are in public.

"Fuck," I curse as I cover my junk, which I realize is already semi-covered by haphazardly glued fake craft vines. Mason laughs, the sound deep and rumble, and I have to focus very hard on not ... getting ... hard.

“Shoo! Shoo! There’s nothing to see here,” Grandma touts as she waves at the throng of people. I lean my heads against Mason’s shoulder and let out a deep sigh.

“I am never going to live this down, am I?” I whine. Mason’s arms encircle me as he chuckles, his lips in my hair.

“Probably not,” he says, his voice full of light and love.

Love.

Grandpa curses, and it’s not just in English. My Gaelic is subpar, but I know the curse words.

“Come on, let’s get you boys inside. There’s fresh pie cooling on the counter,” Grandma says as she sets her arm around us, gently leading us toward the house.

“Thanks, Grandma,” I say, my voice shaking only a fraction. She smiles up at me with kind, knowing blue eyes.

“Of course, sweetheart. Although, if your grandpa manages to sell that display after your display, we may have to come up with a new marketing plan.” She grins, and Mason lets out a deep laugh.

“Well, I’d definitely buy a pumpkin from a hot naked man,” he says. Grandma laughs.

“It wouldn’t be the first time,” she says with a blush.

My eyes widen as she leads us in the door.

Before I can even open my mouth, Grandma shakes her head. “You, shower. No

excuses,” she says as she all but shoves me towards my bedroom.

“But Grandma, I—”

“No buts, Jax. Mason and I have some things to discuss, and you need to get cleaned up.”

I can’t help the sigh that escapes me as I tell her, “Fine.” Although, I’m slightly nervous about just what she wants to discuss with my boyfriend.

No, not boyfriend mate.

Because I know without a doubt, Mason’s declaration is what forced me to shift back.

The legend said that unless I found my mate before my thirty-first birthday, I’d turn into a pumpkin forever. And I am not a pumpkin now.

Because Mason loves me.

Because he is my mate .

It is difficult to watch Grandma lead him away from me, but I know I really do need to shower and dress, if only because having fake vines glued to my dick is probably a health hazard.

Thankfully, the glue Grandpa used is just basic Elmer’s, likely from the pumpkin decorating hut we have for the kids, so it comes off with a little elbow grease and a soapy washcloth and doesn’t hurt as bad as I know it could.

When I finish in my small shower—God, I miss Mason’s shower— I throw a towel around my waist and head for my bedroom.

It looks much the way I left it: my comforter all rumpled, my clothes still hanging over the wicker hamper in the corner. I know I haven't been gone that long, but it feels like forever since I've been in here.

I make my way to my dresser. Grandma packed a lot of my clothes and gave them to Mason the other day, but there's still a good bit of basics left in the drawers.

I settle on a pair of black jeans, smirking when I see the orange Jack-O-Lantern smiley shirt.

It seems fitting, in more ways than one, so that's what I go with.

I run some product through my hair, spritz myself with a fresh bout of cologne after applying my deodorant, and give myself a once over in the mirror.

I don't look any different, at least not on the outside. No sign that I was ever a fucking gourd. Just the same old green-eyed man with unruly hair I've always been, but I feel different.

I feel like, in a way, I finally see myself .

But maybe that has something to do with the fact I'm wearing clothes after living like a nudist for the last few days. Pulling on my boots, I can't help but laugh at the absurdity of the entire situation. But also, I'm strangely glad for it.

I stop just before the kitchen, leaning against the archway, and I just watch them. My grandmother and my mate . Mason's smile is soft as she traces her fingers over his arm, over a red mark that looks oddly like ...

She pulls up her sleeve, showing him her "tattoo" as she always called it.

It's not really a tattoo, because it's not really ink or anything.

It's like a weird, vine-like birthmark. I always thought it was cool, and I can remember tracing my little fingers over it when she and Grandpa would tell me stories when I was really little.

And suddenly I realize why Mason's mark looks so similar. It's not similar at all. It's the same.

"There you are," Grandma says, turning to look at me. Mason turns at the same time, his amber eyes catching the light from above, glistening with golden promise.

My treasure.

She gets up immediately, and I move to stop her, but she holds a hand up.

"Don't even think about it. This pie isn't going to cut itself," she says with that sweet order every grandmother must be known for. I sit my ass down, but I do protest.

"Gram, come on."

"It's your birthday, Jax. I made it just for you."

I blush as I steal a look at Mason, who I notice is staring at me.

Yeah, I'm not the only one who is used to seeing me without clothes.

"It's your birthday?" Mason asks. I set my hand on the table, and he leans closer, resting his hand on top of mine.

I can't help the smile that crosses my face. I know I must look like a lovesick puppy

or some shit, but I can't find it in me to care. The moment his hand settles on top of mine, I feel warm all over, like the pumpkin goo is spreading throughout my veins, making me warm and toasty.

"It is," I say sheepishly.

"Our Halloween baby is thirty-one today," Grandma says as she sets down a plate of apple pie in front of me, and my stomach immediately growls like a damn lion.

Oh, how I've missed my grandmother's apple pie!

Mason squeezes my hand, just as the screen door slams shut. Grandma sets about grabbing another plate, and we both turn to see Grandpa standing in the doorway, wearing his normal scowl. Before I can even say anything, he holds his hand up.

"I don't want to hear a peep from you, Jax," he says.

Grandma sighs. "Robert, today is Jax's birthday—"

"I know what fucking day it is, Annie," he says grumpily.

My grandmother sets a plate of pie down in front of Mason, whose hand is gripping mine tightly.

I watch as she approaches him. Like most of the men in my family, Grandpa is a big guy, and while he insists my grandmother used to be at least five nine, she's been a sweet five foot five most of my life. Yet somehow, she towers over my grandpa when she stands up against him.

Or maybe he just shrinks because he's scared of her, even though I know he'd never admit it.

No one goes against Annie Gallagher.

His green eyes glisten as he looks at Mason, then at me, then at the pie on the counter.

“You made pie,” he says dejectedly.

She crosses her arms. “It’s his favorite, you know. Just like you.”

Just like him? Since when has Grandpa had a thing for apple pie? I’ve never seen him eat it.

He doesn’t say anything, just purses his lips, and sighs.

“You can have a piece if you behave,” she says sweetly.

For a moment, it is as if the other two of us in this kitchen don’t even exist. Grandpa reaches out one shaky hand, tracing my grandmother’s tattoo, and she takes a step forward. His hand settles on her arm, and he looks back at me with watery eyes.

“Okay,” he says calmly, and she grins.

“Have a seat,” she says as she turns away, heading for the pie. I watch intently as Grandpa takes a seat next to Mason. He doesn’t say anything, but maybe that’s a good thing.

Grandma sets the pie down in front of him, and I don’t miss the way his eyes widen like saucers.

“So, do ya have a name, or do I just call you Pumpkin Thief?” Grandpa bites.

Mason chuckles. “It’s Mason. Mason Vance.”

Mason lets go of my hand, and I shovel a bite of pie into my mouth as Grandma sits next to me.

She settles her hand on my thigh and squeezes lightly under the table where no one can see.

I appreciate her warm gesture, but then again, Grandma’s always been like that.

She’s always been the one person in my life who just knew what I needed.

“And what do you do, besides steal pumpkins that don’t belong to you?” Grandpa asked.

Mason shrugs, cutting a chunk of pie with his fork.

“Well, I used to do a bit of modeling, and now, when I’m not entertaining pissy old pumpkin farmers, I work at The Grind.

” He gracefully downs the bite with more poise than I could ever hope to display when eating something as delicious as Grandma’s pie.

“Besides, technically I was given the pumpkin. You’re the thief who broke into my house and stole him. ”

Grandpa stops with his fork mid-air as Grandma curses.

“I thought you said he was on the porch, Robert.” She sighs in exasperation.

Grandpa waves his hand as he purses his lips. “Does it matter? It all worked out in the

end, didn't it?"

Mason is the first to laugh, breaking the tension. "Guess not."

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Grandma shakes her head. “What am I going to do with you, Robert Gallagher?”

Grandpa digs in for another piece of his pie. “Can’t do anything with me, Annie,” he touts. “Ya’s stuck with me.” The way he says the words aren’t harsh or menacing, but humorous and somehow, endearing.

Grandma smirks at me. “That’s the trouble with mates, Jax. You don’t pick them. They pick you.” She sighs, but it’s not an annoyed or angry by any means.

My grandparents have always antagonized one another with a little bit of sweetness to balance out the spice. Grandma always said it was a trick-or-treat kind of love. You never knew what you were going to get, but that was the fun of love. At least to her, I guess.

Grandpa chortles and curses, but the tension seems to have settled.

“Pfft. Apples don’t fall from the tree, do they?” he snarks. Grandma rolls her eyes.

“Even if you are a bitter old man, you’re still the apple of my eye,” she teases him, and I don’t miss the genuine smile on his face.

Grandpa is the first to finish his pie, and he gets up immediately. He looks at me then at Mason.

“Now, if ya’ will excuse me, I got a lot of pumpkins to sell. It’s the biggest day of the year, and this farm ain’t gonna run itself,” he says as he shoots me a scathing look. I rise immediately.

“I can help,” I say, and Mason stands.

“Me, too,” he says. He clears his throat. “I mean, I might be in the market for a new job, if I can’t smooth over my no-call-no-show because I took a side trip to a pumpkin farm today.”

Grandpa curses in Irish, shaking his head.

“I supposed I could put ya’ to work,” he grumbles, and I can’t help the way my face lights up with excitement.

Grandpa settles his hand on Mason’s back.

His mouth doesn’t smile, but his eyes do.

“Alright, enough dilly-dallyin’, Jax. I don’t care if it’s ya’ birthday.

And none of this ‘I’m too old’ bullshit, ya got it? I need you loading up trucks, and—”

“Absolutely, Grandpa. Whatever you say.”

I watch as a contented smirk forms on his face. “Alright, Mason, now remember we’re not just selling pumpkins, we’re selling memories. Think you can handle that?” he gripes as he leads my mate out of the house, and I follow them without question.

It’s nearing six when the farm officially closes the registers. Every year on Halloween, we close an hour before trick or treating, so Grandma and Grandpa can get ready for the kids in the neighborhood.

I casually walk with Mason to his car, stealing little glances at him.

He did an awesome job with Grandpa today, considering between the two of them they sold out of what we had left.

I watched my boyfriend from the hayride wagon in the hot sun as Mason picked up pumpkins with that tight-fitting t-shirt and those jeans.

Yeah, it wasn't a bad sight to ogle all day from the comfort of the truck.

"Hey, it's your birthday. I thought maybe we could grab something to eat," Mason suggests, reaching a hand behind his head. His amber eyes glitter like gold nuggets, his lips twisting into a nervous grin. "I mean, I'm not sure what my job situation is going to be like come tomorrow, but ..."

I shake my head as we come to his car, neither of us making a move to enter it.

"Don't worry about it. We can just ..." I clear my throat, moving towards him slightly. I catch his wary gaze, reaching out to settle my hand on his hip. His golden gaze lights up with a glow that can only be described as pure magic.

Pure fate.

"We can just order some takeout, watch a horror movie and chill."

Mason bites his lip, nodding as he lays his hand on my hip, his fingers brushing over the loops of my jeans.

I know there's no one around, but we're not out of sight, either. Anyone could see us if they were still working on the farm, like Grandma, Grandpa, or one of my many cousins.

But I don't care if anyone does see us. Because Mason isn't going to be some flash in

the pan. He's mine. And I don't intend on hiding him away like an old Halloween costume by any means.

"Are you sure? I mean, if I'd known, I could've planned something," he says, leaning into my space. His lips hover a fraction above mine, and I can feel his warm breath on my skin.

"What would you have done? Carried my little pumpkin ass to the nearest Olive Garden?"

Mason chuckles. "Maybe."

I reach a hand up, sliding my fingers against his soft, silky hair. Mason leans into the touch as he utters, "I could have gotten you something."

I look at him with the utmost certainty and truth, knowing he really is worth more than gold.

"You already did, baby," I say, my voice a whisper. "You are my gift."

I kiss him softly, and when he pulls away, his grin is the greatest gift of all.

"You just got home, I'd hate to pull you away," he says, his fingers entwining themselves in my belt loops.

I smirk at him. "I'm thirty-one years old Mason. I can stay out past my bedtime. I promise."

Mason sighs, relenting. "Fine. Take out and a movie, it is."

I smile victoriously as he opens the passenger door for me.

When I settle into the seat and he closes the door, I feel a tad squished. Things felt so much different when I was a pumpkin, the last time I'd been in his car.

As soon as he gets in and turns the car on, I can't help but smile.

"What?" he asks.

"The last time I was in this car, I was losing my mind," I say, shaking my head.

Mason only chuckles. "You weren't the only one."

The entire ride back to Mason's feels like the blink of an eye despite the pit stop to grab some candy for the trick or treaters.

We still make it back to his apartment by six thirty, just as the shenanigans commence.

We take turns sitting out on the porch, passing out candy while waiting for the Chinese takeout delivery.

Thankfully, trick or treating doesn't take long in our small town, and the veil lifts with the last kid hitting the house at seven thirty just as our food arrives.

Once the lights are out, and our food has settled, Mason puts the popcorn in the microwave while I pull up my favorite Halloween movie to watch on my birthday.

Halloween, naturally.

While the popcorn pops, Mason comes to sit beside me, wrapping his arm around me.

I turn to take in the sight of him, grinning like an idiot.

“What?” he asks. “Do I have something on my face?” He runs his hand down his scruffy jaw, and my heart and my cock both twitch with anticipation.

God, he is so fucking hot. And he’s mine . All mine.

“Oh, nothing,” I say breathlessly.

Mason pulls me closer into his lap. “Doesn’t seem like nothing,” he teases.

I reach my hand out, my fingers tracing his facial hair and his perfectly structured jaw. “I was just thinking about the last time we tried to watch a movie. We didn’t get very far,” I say, my voice darker than I intend it to be.

“We must make it past the opening credits this time,” he says sternly.

I hear the opening score of Halloween, loud and dramatic against the beating of my heart. My insides warm like molten pumpkin from the heat of his stare, and my cock echoes the desire that can be felt between us.

“Right,” I say, clearing my throat as I shift myself onto his lap and straddle his hips.

Mason’s gaze darkens as he licks his lips, shaking his head.

“Jax ...” he purrs.

“It is my birthday,” I say with a grin as I plant my lips on his neck, biting, sucking at his flesh like it’s my favorite dessert.

Mason moans, his head falling back against the couch cushion as his hardness throbs against my own. My jean-clad cocks aches to be released from its denim prison.

“You did say you wanted to get me something,” I tease as I slip my hand between us, popping the buttons on his jeans so I can slide my fingers inside his boxers.

His cock is warm, stiff, and one swipe of my thumb across his tip spreads the fresh precum that has already started to build.

“I did, didn’t I?” he says, his voice seductive and thrilling. Behind me, on the television, someone screams.

Mason wriggles out of his pants easily, despite being beneath me, and I’m not ashamed to say he gets my pants and underwear off in record time.

I lean in and kiss him as he tugs at my shirt.

The score heightens with murderous tension as we kiss and undress, thrusting against one another like two horny teenagers home alone on Halloween night.

Mason’s hands slide up and down my hips as he kisses me everywhere he can reach. My mouth, my jaw, my neck, my shoulder. I grind myself against his cock, and then he fucking flips me over like I’m nothing more than a pancake.

A surprised grunt escapes me as I slide beneath him, the cushions and the pillows moving to accept my body. I steal one glance at the television to see Michael Myers, but Mason’s hand on my jaw pulls me back to the here and now.

I look up into his fiery, glowing eyes, appreciating the sight.

“Trick or treat, baby. Tell me what you want, and maybe I’ll give it to you.”

I grin as he lowers himself against me, his cock poised at my entrance just enough that I can feel his precum spreading against his head where he taunts me. There’s no

denying I'm getting what I want, and he knows it. We both do.

I lean one hand behind my head as he stares down at me with an expression I don't think I'll ever tire of.

"What if I want both?" I say as I thrust my leaking cock against his rock hard abs. I should probably be embarrassed that, once again, I'm wetter than a monsoon with precum, but when I look at Mason's hungry eyes, feeling his cock pulse against my hole, I forget embarrassment.

Mason breathes heavily, his golden gaze like fire. The smell of pumpkin spice permeates the air, and he licks his lips. The score hits that crescendo of intensity as I ease my leg in between his. The couch screeches from our movement.

"What if I want the sugar and the spice?"

Mason grabs my cock, slathering his hand in my pumpkin juice before slipping one finger in his mouth, moaning as he does so.

The rest of his hand is covered in me, and I swallow as he withdraws his finger from his mouth, instead focusing on inserting one finger into me, causing me to nearly levitate off the couch.

"Are you sure you want both?" he purrs. He kisses me as his tongue breaches my mouth. I can taste my sweetness on his tongue, and I groan in response.

I nod vehemently.

"Yes," I say as he fits another finger inside of me.

I wriggle against him, my cock leaving wet trails along his abdomen as he works a

third finger inside me, curling all of them, making me see stars.

Then he abruptly removes them all at once, making me shudder until I come, fast and hard.

I cry out, grinding my pulsing cock against him, spreading my cum along the already wet trails I've left along his stomach.

Mason breaches my hole with his cock easily, his thrusts sharp and deep as I continue to come like a fucking geyser.

"Happy birthday, pumpkin," he whispers, before taking my mouth once more.

Despite the rough thrusts and my oversensitive cock, his kiss is surprisingly soft, and I lose myself in it. In him . My mate.

"I love you," I say the words easily, looking up at him. He smirks as he stills, his warmth filling me from the inside out, literally. I can feel his cum spill out of me as he grins.

"I know," he says smugly before kissing me once more. Somewhere on screen, someone is screaming and getting maimed. "I love you, too," he whispers, kissing me once more.

And as I lose myself in my mate's kiss, with him still buried deep inside me, I think this is only the beginning.

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Epilogue

Mason

One Year Later

If you'd told me at the height of my modeling career that I'd be settling down and working on a pumpkin farm of all places, I would have said you were nuts.

Fast forward to now, a year after Jax's life changed forever—and mine.

I am so blissfully happy at Gallagher's Pumpkin Farm.

While Jax and Grandpa Robert handle the tilling and tractor work, I man the registers with Grandma Annie.

Annie and I discovered that we're a great team, and we're proud to boast that we could sell a whole bushel of pumpkins to an Appleseed.

Of course, Grandma being an Appleseed herself doesn't hurt. Who knew that young love with a rival farmer's daughter would have ended Robert's curse a couple generations back.

Now that there's another pair of Gallagher mates on the farm, Annie isn't as bashful about showing off her mate mark.

We call them "vine tattoos" to the customers, just so we don't weird anybody out, but

yeah, she and I proudly sport our vine-ripened biceps for all the world to see.

Even when there's a chill in the air, I have my sleeves rolled up.

There's so little drama at the farm. No backstabbing like the modeling industry, and no small-town coffee shop stress like The Grind. Just peace and quiet—and maybe the occasional sneaky and literal roll in the hay.

Don't worry; we make sure no pumpkins are harmed during our shenanigans. We both have gained a weird kind of respect for the gorgeous gourds.

Neither Jax nor I knew if the, er, side effects of his curse would remain after I broke it.

Sure, his cum still smelled and tasted like pumpkin spice on his birthday, but would that last or fade?

Would he still have the supernatural self-lubing cock, or would we need to invest in some bottled stuff?

Three hundred and sixty-four days straight, and the pumpkin spice is still strong with this one.

Test day number three sixty-five will commence after we close up at the farm tonight. I have something special planned for Jax's thirty-second birthday.

Watching him pull in the tractor after a day on the fields gets me excited.

I can't wait to help him unload the harvest and line the pumpkins up for tomorrow's sale.

Every little touch, every stolen kiss in the cab of the tractor, every single chance I get

to show this amazing man how much I love him is taken to its full advantage.

Grandma Annie declares Gallagher's closed a couple hours before trick or treating starts, and Jax and I head back to my house to change into our costumes before the kids start showing up.

This year, I found the cutest Skeleton Jack suit and face paint to wear.

The vertical lines make me look even slimmer than normal—despite Annie's best efforts, I haven't put on much since I started working at the farm.

As an added bonus, there's a secret tearaway panel for ... later.

When I see Jax emerge from his wardrobe change in the roundest, goofiest pumpkin costume, I howl with laughter.

The thing looks like an old-school trick or treat pail, complete with suspender "handles" over the shoulders.

Hidden wires shape the fabric gourd, and my poor Jax has to struggle to get through the bedroom door and down the hall.

I have to rescue several of our more fragile Halloween decorations as he shuffles to the front door to set up on the porch.

Yeah, that's right. I decorate now, though no carved pumpkins.

Those remain whole. But ceramics? Wall hangings?

Paintings? I never thought the word kitsch would apply to my house of all places, but here we are.

If it's Halloween or pumpkin-related decor, I snatch it up, especially the pumpkin-shaped stuff.

Gotta represent my main squeeze in our home.

The kids have a blast taking candy from Jax and the Pumpkin King, and we keep a loop of The Nightmare Before Christmas soundtrack playing just inside the house, where approaching kids can hear the classics, but not so loud that neighbors might complain.

After the last kids get their candy, Jax shoots me the most adorable look as we head inside. "Ready for movie night, baby?" he asks.

I smirk and point at his bulbous costume. "I don't think that thing's gonna fit on the couch, mister."

Jax laughs. "Who says I'm going to keep this on all night?"

"Oh, if I have anything to say about it, you're getting out of that ay-sap." I try to go in for a kiss, but the costume's wires hamper me. We share a laugh, and Jax starts to unhook his suspenders.

When the costume drops, revealing some sexy pumpkin-themed body paint, I let out a low whistle of appreciation.

He's managed to outline and enhance those beefcake muscles I love so much with some clever orange-hued shading, and my man has painted a jagged black grin across his lower hips.

His pecs are painted with triangular black "eyes," and the goofball wiggles his shoulders to make the painted eyebrows across his collarbone wiggle.

One guess what he used to make the nose.

I bite my lip to hold in more laughter. “Uh, baby, are you dressing as a pumpkin or as Pinocchio? Because your, er, nose is growing.”

He palms his orange-painted cock with a wink. “Well, I haven’t lied to you yet, and I’m not about to start now.”

Not one to be outdone on the theatrics, I lead Jax to the living room and sit him down on the couch for a special show of his own.

I stop the music and queue up the first song, This Is Halloween , for an exclusive striptease event.

I’ve done enough charity auction events for wealthy women in my modeling days that I know how to strip, and from the look in Jax’s green eyes when I start pumping my hips, he appreciates the show.

Wait ‘til he sees the big reveal.

Just as the song is announcing Jack, the Pumpkin King, I grip the fabric at the back of my suit and rip the whole thing off in one smooth motion.

Jax’s jaw drops, but I keep dancing. At this point, we’re both equally naked, and equally painted. My paint is more in line with the Jack Skellington costume, so I’m covered in white and grey paint.

Edible paint.

“Oh, Bone Daddy, you’d better come over here before I pumpkin spice your couch!”

I dance across the living room, dick bouncing with each pelvic thrust. Jax’s eyes

bounce right along with it, watching its every movement. When I get close enough, he reaches for it, but I twist at the last second, teasing him.

“Hey!” He grins, ruining his chiding tone. “I need that!”

“Uh-uh-uh!” I grab his chin. “Use your mouth.”

Jax opens wide, and I stop my dance to give him a taste of the vanilla-flavored paint I’m covered in. He swallows me down hungrily, not stopping until I hit the back of his throat. I try to back away, give him some breathing room, but he grabs my hips and pulls, holding me firm.

Something about the mess he’s making—the saliva mixed with tears mixed with body paint—combines with the slurping and sucking noises to make me even harder than I already was.

I slide my fingers into his hair and grip tight, slowly and gently thrusting into him.

It’s hard to take it easy when all I really want to do is rut into him, but I’ll save that for later ...

... When I have him bent over the arm of the couch.

Jax makes short work of getting me off, sucking and licking until I shudder to a halt balls-deep inside his mouth. He does his best to swallow it all down, but my cum ends up dripping down his chin. I bend to kiss him and help him clean it up, gently pulling him to his feet as we make out.

It’s time for our favorite part of movie night.

Now, I don’t know if this will change as time goes on, or if, like the pumpkin spice, it’s just a part of our mating. All I know is that we have yet to actually finish a movie

that we've started watching together at home.

I run my free hand along Jax's shaft, coating my fingers in his magical pumpkin lube. Once I have him turned around, I guide him into bending over the arm of the couch. He snags a few pillows to cushion his stomach, and as soon as he's in position, I ease my damp fingers into his ass.

Jax moans, biting into one of the pillows he's amassed.

I pump my hand a few times to prep him, then use the rest of his pumpkin spice to coat my dick before I start.

I inch inside him bit by bit, massaging his firm, round cheeks as I do.

He clenches up at first, but eventually he gives in and relaxes into me.

Since this night is special, I take my time. Sure, I have money to get Jax a gift this year—the farm's profits are popping since my declaration of love went viral—but I know our time together is priceless, and nothing I can find on the shelves or online even comes close to this.

To us.

Keeping one hand on his hip, I reach around to Jax's front and grab his cock. I stroke and caress it while I fuck his ass, providing him as much stimulation as I can. My man deserves the best.

His hard dick throbs in my touch, and he whimpers and moans into the pillow.

Orange paint is getting everywhere, but I don't care.

If it's the same brand I bought, it'll come out—eventually.

Besides, what's a little smeared paint in the grand scheme of things?

Jax is here and alive and human, and that's more important than pristine upholstery.

“More.”

His plea reaches my ears and spurs me into action.

I squeeze his dick harder as I start to thrust into him faster.

Jax's cries get louder and louder, and he clenches his hands into fists on the pillow.

I marvel at the hard lines of his back as I ride him, appreciating the muscles farm life has given him.

“Just a little more Jax. Hang on, baby. I'm almost there.”

My balls slap against his from behind. The rhythmic slap, slap, slap echoes over the sound of whatever fucking movie I put on. I don't even remember at this point. I glance up from the stunning view and realize I never even started a movie. It's just the soundtrack playing.

Shit, that's got to be a new record.

With one hand on his slippery, hard dick, I lean forward just the slightest, grasping his chin with my fingers. Grey vanilla paint smears along his chin, mixing with the orange paint as he parts his lips, gazing up at me with big green eyes.

I crash my lips against his in a heated, slow kiss, and not long after, the scent of pumpkin spice permeates the air as my hand fills with a fresh bout of Jax's cum, and I, too, detonate like a pumpkin spice bomb.

Jax groans into my mouth, his entire body melting beneath mine as we both shudder with ecstasy and a deep warmth spreads within me.

When I break away, I smirk at his verdant gaze, little flecks of gold glittering with love.

For me.

Jax shifts underneath me, which is my cue to move, and I do. The music starts over on the television as Jax turns over, leaning against the couch.

He settles a large hand on my hip as he grins.

“I don’t know about you, but I’m a mess,” he chuckles, squeezing my hip softly. “I could use a shower.” My cock, still dripping with fresh release, slides against his, and I can’t help but shake my head as a mischievous grin spreads.

“Such a dirty little pumpkin.”

Jax chuckles. “You know it.”

I sigh, knowing it’s best not to fight him. He is the birthday boy, after all, and getting clean is almost as fun as getting dirty.

Almost.

So I let him pull me down the hall, into the shower, where we touch and kiss until the water runs cold, and once we’re both in our respective fluffy bathrobes do we finally settle down and attempt to watch our movie.

We make it to the part where Jack decides he’s going to be Santa Clause, and I turn to him with a raised eyebrow, watching as he stuffs his face full of buttered popcorn.

“What?” he asks, mid stuff.

“Oh, nothing. I was just thinking that maybe this Christmas we could do something.”

Jax narrows his eyebrows at me. “Please don’t tell me you want to dress up as Santa,” he says.

“Then I won’t tell you,” I taunt him. He throws some popcorn at me, and I pull him closer, planting a kiss in his hair.

We don’t make it to the end credits, mostly out of exhaustion, but I’d be lying if I said that was the only reason. But that’s okay. Because as far as I’m concerned, Jax is my favorite movie, and I never want it to end.

And because of a curse—a curse, which I broke, thank you very much—it never has to.

Jax’s eyes flutter as he starts to drift off with a groan.

“What?” I yawn.

“We didn’t finish the movie,” he laments sleepily against my arm.

“There’s always next Halloween, baby.”

“Next Halloween,” he sighs as he falls asleep, leaving me with the warmth and happiness I have always dreamed of.

I look forward to next Halloween, and every day after and in between.