

SHOOTING STARS

The first time I met Blake Xavier-Schneider, he was 1) alive, and 2) attending the same Beverly Hills mansion party that I was.

I don't actually think that he's dead now, for the record, I just feel like it's becoming more and more like a good guess with the way he acts.

But at the time of the party, about a year ago, Blake was still a newly rising star in the adult industry, on about the same trajectory as I was really, though I could already predict that he had it in him to stay in the game longer than I would. He lived and breathed this stuff: It was the water to his fish. I was always an actor, and definitely always felt like I was acting. Even at that party, six strong mixed drinks deep and sitting in a hot tub with some twink cuddled up beside me, when Blake slipped into the hot tub opposite me I felt like he had caught me: like he was going to come across the water and pull a mask off of my head and reveal that this was not me, this party-goer fun-haver, and I should go slink away in shame back to the most boring section of the nearest library.

But if that was the impression that he had of me, he didn't show it. "At last we meet, Mr Johnson," said he with a faux wicked grin, and then laughed flamboyantly, and swam up and sat beside me, opposite the twink. "Blake XS," he said, offering a hand.

I reached out towards his hand, very thankful that drunk as I was, some recess of my muscle memory had held out well enough to shake his hand successfully. Watching our hands

shake legitimately felt like some alien operation occurring outside of my body or my input—it didn't help that the firebreathing dragon tattoo sleeve on my right arm was pretty new at the time.

"Sorry if I'm interrupting," he said, glancing at the twink.

"The more the merrier," is what I think I said, or something like it.

The translation of that was, "I do not know why I'm here, but with more of you around maybe you'll talk to each other instead of me."

By that point in the night, the details of what I remembered were pretty slapdash. I remember sitting in the hot tub with Blake, the two of us looking up at the night sky, and I remember that at some point he kissed me on the cheek before leaving.

All this to say, about a year later when I went on vacation to Mexico and was interrupted from my reading of *A Crown of Swords* by a call from my agent telling me that there was a shoot just down the street from my hotel, I was a centimeter away from hanging up on him before he managed to tell me that Blake Xavier-Schneider was the other star, and then just like that, I was suddenly interested.

My agent gave me the address. "The director's name is Vince," he mentioned. "Be there in the next thirty minutes if you want to make me look good, or at least the next hour if you want the job." I wrote all of it down on a slip of paper from the pad that was on the hotel bedside table.

As hotel rooms go, I was staying in a nicer place than I had expected to be staying. Queen bed, color TV, and a legitimate kitchenette, complete with an oven and a stovetop and all the regular pots and pans already stocked.

I hadn't come here expecting to work—or play—so I hadn't packed anything in the way of enemas, but I made do with a plastic water bottle, and then I showered, dressed in my nicest tank top, briefs, and gym shorts, and stepped out into the world, apparently summoned five buildings down to get fucked by someone I had lowkey had a crush on for a year. Quite the unexpected addition to my vacation itinerary, but welcome.

So here we are.

I walk up to the address with my slip of paper in hand, and apparently look sufficiently confused enough for someone standing outside the door to ask, “Tony? Johnson?”

“That’s me,” I answer.

“Juan,” he says, and we shake hands. “Director of photography.”

Usually that means he’ll be holding the camera, but, in this case I really don’t know what scale of thing I’m walking into.

He turns and punches a series of numbers into the keypad beside the door. The keypad lets off a high pitched beep, and then he holds the door open for me. As we walk inside, the air conditioning feels sublime.

We walk down the halls, and he leads the way into our set: it looks like its own apartment, with a bedroom, kitchen, living room, den, and faux hallway outside. Standing around the pool table in the den are three men, and on the pool table is an assortment of camera equipment. I can’t help but notice that Blake isn’t here.

One of the men is talking into a cell phone, and seems to have noticed the same thing as I have. “Are you shitting me?” he’s saying. “Are you shitting me ‘he’s asleep’? No, no. Name a volume of cocaine between a teaspoon and a cement mixer, we’ll fucking keep him awake. We’ll fucking—”

I get the impression he’s been hung up on, because he looks at the flip phone like it’s personally betrayed him, and then he throws it against a wall.

In doing so, he sees me.

“Tony,” I say, giving a little wave.

“Holy shit, a thing that went right today. We have *an* actor, hallelujah. Vince.”

I extend my hand to shake, but he gives a dismissive wave, and I put my hand back down.

“I had heard Blake—”

“Yeah, so had I,” he interrupts. With his arms crossed, he walks off into the living room set. He paces, head down.

After we watch him for a few laps, Juan follows after him into the living room, and says something quietly to the director.

Vince thinks about it, and then I overhear him ask, “How long before it gets here?”

Juan quietly gives an answer.

“Do it and we’ll figure *something* out,” Vince agrees.

Juan nods, and pulls out a flip phone to make a call. As the director of photography begins pacing in the living room on the phone, the director director approaches me. “So, Tony,” he says, “tell me about yourself.”

I dread this kind of question. On-camera, I can at least put on a persona. Off camera, I don’t know what he wants. I’m sure he doesn’t want to know I have a bachelor’s in chemistry, or that my book club is currently reading *The Odyssey*, but that I’m trying to sneak in some other, more genre-y books for my own pleasure, while on my time off, and was pleased to get ahold of the latest *Wheel of Time* at a little bookstore in the airport that I arrived at a few days ago.

Yeah, no. I decide not to burden him. “Sagittarius.”

“Fascinating,” he says, and I’m glad to learn we’re on the same page in that he doesn’t actually want to know about me anyways. “How do you feel about dogs?”

“Um.” This is not the type of pointed question that I expected to hear just now, but I honestly can’t say that I have strong feelings one way or the other, as far as dogs are concerned.

When I don’t answer right away, Vince leans in closer with me. “Look, I won’t sugar coat it: would you do a few scenes with a dog today?”

“Oh! Sure,” I say.

I mean, I’ve done solo shoots before, just playing with toys for the camera. Not having another actor isn’t exactly what I signed up for today, but it isn’t exactly a first. Since I’m already here anyways, I don’t see a problem. “What breed?” I ask.

“Yellow lab.”

“Cute!” I say, kind of reflexively before the entire context catches up with my brain again. “What um... what would we be doing? Me and this yellow lab. Dog.”

“At this point I’m not trying to reinvent the wheel today. Scene of it fucking you, scene of you fucking it too. Probably something brief to go beforehand and afterwards in the way of plot if we have time.”

“Yeah,” I say. As I stand there and visualize the scenes—getting fucked by a dog, and fucking a dog in the ass—geez.

Yeah, I uh. I begin to realize that I'm a bit out of my league here. But, then again, that's kind of how I always feel during these. If they really want to pay me to put my cock in a dog's asshole, I mean, I'm not going to tell them no. A gig is a gig, even if the material isn't what you're into. "What's his name?" I ask.

"Ask Juan," Vince says with a shrug, and then moves past me to talk to the others around the pool table about the update.

I walk out to the living room just as Juan is getting off the phone.

"You like dogs?" he asks me, with a professionally faux-ingenuous smile.

"I don't have any strong feelings," I say honestly.

"Jake makes a good first impression," Juan tells me. "I bet you'll like him fine."

Juan takes a seat on the faux living room couch, and pats the spot beside himself. "We got a while before they get here. Twenty minutes at least. Relax a while. Tell me about yourself."

I take a seat, and have a sneaking suspicion that 'Sagittarius' isn't going to fill twenty minutes on its own.

"Honestly I mostly read," I tell him, and wonder if this is the first time I've admitted that truth while on a set.

"Ooh! Who do you like?"

We end up having a shockingly thorough conversation about different fantasy and sci-fi authors before he gets a call, and leaves the set.

Supposing we're about to start, I stand up and start doing a few stretches. The men who had been in the den start moving their equipment into the living room. Vince comes up beside me. "Ready?" he asks.

"Yeah," I tell him. "Wardrobe, or?"

He looks me up and down, and sighs through his nose. "Let's just get the main shots for now. Naked head to toe."

I nod, and start with my shirt.

As I'm sitting on the couch and getting my socks off, the 'front door' opens, and a yellow lab comes running into the room, with Juan pulled behind on the leash. As soon as he can, Juan unclips the dog's leash, and the dog trots around excitedly from room to room, sniffing around and wagging at everyone.

He comes up to me briefly, gives me a sniff as I say hi, and then trots off to go sniff around the bedroom.

"Jake," Juan reminds me, standing beside me.

"Jake!" I call to him.

He turns, stands at attention, and then bounds right for me. I kneel down and rub his shoulders. He leans into me, wagging. Friendly guy. I like him.

"Ready?" I hear Vince call. Looking up, I realize that the cameras have been positioned, and everyone besides me is standing out of view of them: Front and center in the living room in front of the couch is just me and the yellow lab.

"What uh," I begin, and then glance down at the wagging dog. "Ready, but what do I do?"

"Hands and knees," Vince says, and I hear him add the word 'brainiac' under his breath. "Rolling?"

"Rolling."

"Action!"

With the word Action, my head space is transported to some other realm, and I am a porno actor with a job to do. I stop petting the dog, and get on my hands and knees as instructed. Jake turns to me and sniffs me up and down, and I try—somewhat unsuccessfully—not to giggle at his wet doggy nose prodding me all over. Eventually he's sniffing at my ass, and begins licking me back there. He isn't at it for long before I feel his weight come down on top of me, his pointed claws digging pretty painfully into my flesh, and then just like that he's humping his furry mass of muscles and canine hair against my backside; I feel his tip prodding, but he doesn't get it in, and after a few tries he gets off of me, and goes and stands around by the cameras.

I look to Vince.

"Keep trying," he says, giving a 'go on' motion with his hand.

I look back to the dog, and he seems to get the idea too. Once again he hops onto me and rests his chest on top of my back, locks his paws around my hips, and starts to hump. He gives it a few tries again before again getting off of me and standing nearby.

"Lower," Juan calls.

"What?" I ask.

Juan sighs, and, gesturing in my direction, asks Vince, “May I?”

Vince gives him the go ahead. One of the other men on set gets the dog’s attention for a moment, and Juan walks into the shot. He puts his hand on my lower back, and pushes down until my stature on my hands and knees is considerably lower. “Like that,” he says. “You’re also going to want to angle yourself like... there, like that.”

“Do you... have personal experience with this?”

“I was the DP on *Whores Let The Dogs In* two through eight. Not exactly what I thought my expertise in life would be in but yes, we did figure some things out.”

I nod, and keep the position that Juan has put me in. He backs out of the shot again, and gives a signal to the man who has Jake held back out of shot. With the signal given, the man lets Jake go: the yellow lab runs straight up to me, hops onto me, and in one try is mounting me and fucking my asshole. I cry out with the sudden feeling of it, his dog cock getting inside of me, and I stay there in position and bear it as this yellow lab fucks me, pistoning his dog cock back and forth inside of my colon, all the way until his completion. It’s something kind of new, but also kind of not; it’s different and familiar; it’s weird, basically, but I don’t have a bad time. Afterwards me and the yellow lab are stuck ass to ass, as Juan had warned me about during our conversation: dogs have a part of their penis called the knot that swells up during sex, and holds them together with their partner afterwards, to make sure that the semen stays inside of the partner long enough to make puppies. I don’t predict that will be happening for us tonight, but Jake’s knot holds us together afterwards nonetheless, and who am I to speak against the optimism of that.

When he finally does slide out of me, he licks my fucked hole for a bit and then lies down on his side, lifts a leg, and begins licking himself. After a long while of that, his interesting red dog penis goes back inside of himself.

“Cut!” Vince yells.

I crawl up onto the couch and sprawl back, head lolled back facing the ceiling, arms out to either side on the back of the couch.

As I am recovering, I feel an energetic muzzle and tongue licking my asshole again. I flinch and spread my legs apart a bit more, then after the reflex wears off, I relax again and let it happen. “Hey Jake,” I say. “Yeah, hi there. I’m not gonna be your girlfriend, but I appreciate it.”

Opening my eyes to a squint, I see him wagging at that as he continues to lick.

Eventually he backs off, and then goes to see Juan. I can see him whining about something, but Juan, Vince, and the other men are locked in some type of heated discussion.

Eventually the dog’s whining is enough to break Juan from the conversation, and he turns to see what the yellow lab wants. With some brief back and forth, it is determined that the dog needs to be let outside. Juan confers briefly with Vince, nods, and then approaches me.

“How was it?” Juan asks, to break the ice again.

“No complaints,” I tell him. I’d never exactly considered bottoming for a dog before, but the experience was nothing to sneeze at. That yellow lab was a humping machine, and the time spent being tied together ass to ass was new to say the least, probably nothing I’ll be forgetting any time soon.

“Jake has to go outside,” Juan tells me. “If you could go walk him until he pisses and shits, we’d be ready for our next shot after that.”

I look over to the yellow lab, whose red canine penis was recently fucking my asshole, but who now is laying beside the faux front door, looking at me and Juan to help him because he can’t turn a doorknob.

What the hell. “Yeah,” I tell Juan, “I’m sure I could let him out.”

Juan goes to retrieve the leash, and soon enough, I am dressed again, poop bags are in my pocket, and the leash is in my hand.

“Don’t go too far, but, take as much time as he needs, I suppose,” Juan advises.

I nod, and proceed out of the faux apartment’s front door with the yellow lab taking the lead. He shows me the way to the actual front door, and then right in front of the studio, he lowers

himself down to take a leak. One job taken care of. I stand there as he goes. For like, a while.

When he's finished, he pulls me onwards. At the edge of the studio's lawn I pause, but Jake pulls forward insistently. I lock my stance and remain where I am, steadfast. I'm not trying to get too off track, here: my job is at this studio. Jake still tries to pull forward for a while, and then stops, and turns to me. He looks at me with big eyes.

I look him back. Again, not very long ago, this dog was fucking me in the ass—I can very much still feel it; the sensation of being penetrated sometimes has a way of lingering in the body, it's difficult to explain, but even as I look at him a leash's length away, it also feels as though he still has me bent over, and is doing the deed with my behind. So yes, just a few minutes ago he was fucking me, and now he looks at me with adorable eyes, asking if we could just but go down the sidewalk a ways. Jesus, how could anyone say no? I don't normally go for when guys from work try to act overly friendly with me outside of the shoots, but this actually does feel like the least I could do, now that he's made a point of making those eyes at me because I won't walk him—him, a dog, an animal that is supposed to get walked.

I let up on the leash, and he faces forward and walks happily onward, tail wagging as he trots, leading me along.

We go two more blocks before he stops, sniffs around, and then takes a squat. When I see the size of what he's dropped, all of my concerns about whether he can handle my size feel in hindsight comical. I pick up his shit as he kicks up the grass nearby, and then the two of us return to the studio, with me dropping the bag of shit into the garbage can outside.

By the door, Juan is waiting for us. He lets us in, and the three of us return to the faux apartment set. Inside, I find that the cameras are set up around the bed in the bedroom, and everyone is standing around waiting.

"Ready?" Vince asks.

"Ready," I say with a nod.

"Is *it* ready?" Vince also asks.

Realizing he means the dog, I look to Jake and shrug. "He did his business, I don't really know if more prep work is needed."

“Good enough for me. Get on the bed with it. Do it in the ass whatever way works, take at least ten minutes.”

I nod, and begin disrobing once more. When I hop up onto the bed, Jake hops up with me—I take it he’s done this before. Using some lube on the bedside table, I apply it to my fingertips and massage the lube against the outside of his hole for a minute, which he gives me no complaints over, no signs that he would rather I didn’t. He lies passive. Then after I’ve been massaging him for a while, getting the pooch warmed up—again, not a thing I thought through all the way when I agreed to this, but here we are—there is a moment where he shuffles his position on the bed closer to me and backs his ass against my fingers, and by holding my hand in place, one of my fingers slips into the slick, smooth flesh of his warm, lubed hole, and suddenly he’s more than passive, he’s all wags. He’s definitely done this before. He has all of the pleased yet casual anticipation of someone for whom it is not their first time taking anal, and for whom there is something or other enjoyable that is gotten out of it. His tail wags even more against the back of my hand as I start to work him. Once he seems plenty ready, I lube my own tool and then I do as Vince asked, and stick my cock into a yellow lab’s asshole. It feels pretty much like a dude’s. Pretty much exactly like a dude’s, as far as the insides are concerned. It is not difficult to close my eyes and treat this like it’s normal, pretend like I’m topping any other random actor who I had gotten paired up with, this one just happens to have fur, and four legs instead of two, and a neat tail right over the hole.

After a little over ten minutes, I finish inside of him. He knows as soon as I’m done, and gets himself off of my cock and spins around to lick his asshole and my cock, first the one, then the other. After he’s done addressing both of these matters I lay with him, wrap myself around his back, and pet him for a while.

When all of this is done, we also shoot a scene of me ordering a pizza and him coming to the door, and also a scene of him walking out of the bedroom, through the living room, and back out into the faux hallway.

“That’s a wrap,” Vince says, when we’ve gotten the last shot we need of Jake leaving the apartment. He gathers himself, me,

and Juan into a huddle. “Thank you both. We would’ve gotten nothing done today without you two.”

“Of course,” we both say, more or less.

As the equipment is being packed up, Jake whines to me.

“He has to go out again,” Juan mentions, while working some strap on his bag.

“I got him,” I say, and once more dress, grab the leash and collar, and step outside with this stud who I have now received a load from and blown a load back into. As he sniffs around outside, towards the edge of the studio lawn and then beyond, I follow him wherever he’s going, confident that he knows the way around here better than I do. Eventually he lowers himself and pees once again. It seems different, all of the sudden: this time it seems different that someone is allowed to just pee out here. Just go, and be free, and not worry about it being like, a crime, it’s just what it is, pissing on some grass out in the open where some buildings are nearby.

It’s because he’s a dog, I need to remind myself. But I do need to remind myself of it, because I think, all of the sudden, that this distinction between dog and person is still something that I know, but maybe—maybe—no longer something that I feel as much. Having known this dog—in the archaic sense of the word—just as I have known many other human people, I can’t help but wonder what it really matters, what significance there really is in some of the distinctions. It seems, all of the sudden, like there is some obvious fundamental level on which whether someone is called a dog or whether someone is called a human, it doesn’t actually even matter the slightest little bit. We are all corporeal. We are all squishy on our insides. We are all feeling, and I think, at least when we choose to show it, we are all even caring.

After the yellow lab pees—the bodily functions of a four-legged body that I am no longer entirely unfamiliar with—he leads the way back to the studio. I follow along after him, doing my best to keep up.

When we get there, nobody is waiting outside. I try the door, but no luck. It’s locked. We sit outside for quite a while—probably an hour, if not longer. By that time, I’m sitting on the

doorstep, and Jake is laying down before me, panting in the heat.

“Well,” I tell him. I think about it before I say my next words—it *will* be a first for me, these types of words to someone who I did a scene with. But, yeah: I’m going for it. “Dinner at my place?” I ask the yellow lab.

He perks his head up to me, and seems interested.

We leave the studio, stop into a corner store to buy a few things that I suppose a dog might need or want—including a steak—, and then we continue up to my apartment. Inside, I go to the kitchenette, and cook him the steak that I bought him. He eats it with more enthusiasm than I’ve ever seen anyone eat my cooking with ever before. When it’s done, we lie together on the carpet, and play with the two stuffed toys that I got for him.

As we play, I look into his eyes, and at one moment, he looks back, and all at once I am even more sure than before that there is something different here, now. I don’t think that there will be much of a future with me and Jake. Already, even in this moment, I have a pervasive feeling that this is a fling. He belongs to somebody, which is something that doesn’t sit with me quite the same way it did this morning, but it is how it is. But I do have something new to explore. Whether with Jake or with someone else, my eyes have been opened today to a second world of people on this planet who were always here, but now, with a sudden and unexpected wholeheartedness, I can see them.