

It's amazing how a single afternoon can turn your whole life around. For years you can spend dreaming of some fanciful event - a fantasy - praying that it would one day become reality no matter how outrageously impossible it might be. I was the same: a dreamer. Someone who, rather than coming to terms with the reality before them, desperately want something more. Something more to what they desire.

I had been doing nothing that day - it was nothing but a boring early Sunday afternoon. I was busy browsing the web, stuck in the internet loop once again, enjoying the peace and serenity that came with an empty house for once. Parents were out of town, sister was off doing who knows what, and I had the whole house to myself. This usually invited the ability to let loose and do the things I was too closeted to do while others were around, but I was feeling too uninspired and lazy to really do much. I just sat there in my boxers, feet propped up on the desk just below the monitors as I basked in the glow of the screens.

Suddenly the doorbell rang, drawing my out of my stupor. It was a rare occurrence for anyone to visit the home at all. It sparked my curiosity enough to get up out of my chair and slink into the hall to peek around the corner and see if anyone could be seen through the glass of the door. I didn't see anyone standing on the porch so I quickly snuck into the living room to peer out the blinds for any signs of movement. Maybe I had just been dropping something off and I could see them walking down the drive, but still nothing. Shrugging it off, I just returned to my room and slipped on some flannels, not bothering with a shirt when I was just going to check for a package delivery.

I returned to the living room and unlocked the front door, struggling with the metallic screen door that often stuck this time of the year, and hopped out onto the porch. The concrete landing felt warm beneath my bare feet - the sun's warmth heating the stone and mildly stinging my skin in tandem with the rough surface below - but I enjoyed it. I couldn't help stretching my toes as I got some actual fresh air, peering around to see what had been left by the mysterious visitor.

Nothing.

I sighed and grumbled to myself, slightly annoyed at being forced to get pants on for nothing. I turned around and was about to slip back into the house when the sound of shifting rock hit my ears and a deep voice spoke up.

"Leaving so soon?"

I whipped around as soon as I heard the voice, my instincts wanting me to dash back into the house, but the voice compelled me to stay. I'm not sure I should have, though, as my eyes soon bore witness to the most terrifyingly hot sight imaginable: a massive beast - its build so wide and muscular it exceeded the width of my small porch - stood before me. Its body was covered in a lush black and brown fur that glistened in the afternoon sun, giving its bulging and defined muscles a soft, heavenly glow. It stood before me, looming over me with its wolf-like face

sneering down at me past its pecs. It's large, pointed ears just barely disappeared past the underside of the porch roof even as it stood on the ground 2-3 inches below the landing. This beast was hulking - muscles greater than any Mr. Olympia competitor packed beneath its bristling fur as it stood with his claws paws on its hips.

I was completely at a loss for words, my jaw dropping as I took in the monster before me. I wanted to flee in terror - I had read enough stories to see where this could be going - but my legs refused to move. I could only watch as the beast before me grinned wickedly, licking its lips, a look of hunger in its eyes.

"What's the matter? Don't recognize me anymore?" The beast chuckled as he flexed an arm - a bicep the size of a watermelon bulging up beneath its skin. "I guess I *have* gone through a few changes since the last time you saw me."

My stomach immediately flipped, my brain going wild as it attempted to make sense of the reality before me. This beast knew me? I knew IT? It's voice did sound familiar, albeit deeper than it usually was. I rifled through my personal rolodex in the hopes of connecting the dots. It was a rather small one and I was able to narrow it down to a few people who actually knew where I lived. I was able to get it down to maybe 3 or 4 people and I began to sweat as one name in particular scrolled past.

The beast must have seen the change in my disposition as its wolfy grin grew slightly wider. "Figured it out, huh? Guess that stalking you do online only works if I keep updating my profile, huh?"

That clinched it. My heart completely stopped, my stomach exploding into butterflies as realization dawned on me. There was only one person I had come to "stalk" on the internet. I watched in stunned silence as the creature reached its thick paws up - each digit thicker than my own arm - and grabbed the base of its head. Its grin caved into itself as it slipped its fingers up below its chin and slid its skin off. My friend gave a small grunt and a sigh of relief as the wolf mask flopped lifelessly off of his head, his jet black hair seemingly pristine even after being confined within a mask for who knows how long. He shook his head as if to clear his thoughts and turned a pair of stunningly vibrant emerald wolf eyes down at me, a cockily smirk brimming across his face.

"So..." he spoke in a slight higher, but definitely deeper than normal voice, "recognize me now, runt?"

I stared up at him in horror. My mind couldn't make heads or tails of what I was seeing. I tried to form a coherent sentence, but my vocal chords had slammed shut. I could hardly even whisper.

"J-...Joe?"