

Bear Shorts #1

by
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This is (obviously) a work of fiction, and no real persons or events are depicted. Safe sex practices are not depicted; but in real life, get tested and always play safe. If you have comments, you can contact the author at UrsusMajr@makaw.net)

The knock came softly at the door. In the dim firelight, the dozing half bear-half man stirred and returned to softly snoring. His thick golden fur was tinged red by the dying fire. The knock was repeated, this time more insistent. Grumbling, the were roused himself and shuffled naked towards the door.

“Vic? It's Kurt...Kurt Larson. We met some time ago, in Toronto. At Boris' place.” There was a pause while Vic used the peep hole in the heavy door to scan his visitor. Unable to resist, Kurt, too, put his eye to the small opening, knowing that he wouldn't see much, if anything. Eyeball met eyeball. The name meant nothing to Vic, but the man on the porch seemed innocent enough. Reluctantly, Vic changed back to his fully human form and reached for the robe he kept on a hook by the door for just such situations

Vic growled, “This had better be good,” as he opened the door.

Kurt stood expectantly as the door swung open. It took a moment, but suddenly Vic's bearded face was split by a grin. “Well, I'll be damned! Come on in, buddy!” He pulled Kurt in and enveloped him in a massive bear hug, which Kurt returned with equal vigor. “Here, let's get a look at you!” Vic held the big man at arm's length. “I may forget a name but I never forget a face. Damn, it's been a while.”

“Must be, oh, fifteen years? More, maybe,” Kurt said, smiling back. “Boris was still in Toronto then, buying and selling banks, or some such. He had one of his annual 'Loins and Groins' bear bashes up at that lodge of his. You were visiting from out here, and I was up from New York. I remember you had the prettiest pink cock I ever did see!”

Vic shed the robe and hung it back on the hook as he made sure the door was latched. He turned to face Kurt, hands on his hips. “Well, it ain't changed color none!”

“So I see,” Kurt chuckled. “Can we stoke that?” he said, pointing to the fire. “I do like a fire, and it's cold up here, even if spring's on its way.”

Vic nodded and reached for a couple of logs from the pile by the hearth. Kurt sighed as the flames grew. “I should apologize for barging in like this, but...”

Vic waved a paw. “Nah... hospitality before explanations. Shed those clothes and make yourself comfy. You want something to drink? Beer? Mead? Applejack?”

Kurt started to pull off his heavy shirt. “Mead? Real mead?”

“Yep. Fermented honey and berries, the ancestor of all alcoholic drinks . I make it myself, and it's

damned good. Got a kick like a cranky mule,” Vic said.

“A drink fit for bears. I shall try some of yours.” Kurt was struggling to pull off his pants while Vic disappeared into the kitchen. He returned shortly with a bottle of blackberry mead and two glasses. He sat them down on the table in front of the couch and motioned for Kurt to join him.

Kurt was about Vic's size, big and thick. He was very nearly as hairy as Vic, but where Vic was blond, Kurt's fur was coal black. They both sank back in the ample cushions of the sturdy couch. Kurt looked around.

“Mein Gott, this is nice. You build this?” Vic nodded and poured some of the golden liquid into both glasses. “Years ago. It's my favorite hidey-hole.” He held up his glass. “To absent friends.”

“To absent friends.” Kurt clinked his glass against Vic's and took a sip. He swallowed carefully, then took another. “Mmmmm... nice. Very...warming.” He took a third gulp that emptied the glass. Vic grinned and refilled the bear's glass.

“Thanks, man. You say you make this?” Vic nodded, still grinning. Kurt was making steady inroads on the second glass-full. “Oh, listen, I have got a question about that map Boris gave me.” Kurt started to get up and promptly plopped back down on his butt.

Vic chuckled. “Told you it had a kick on it. Goes down smooth, though, don't it?” Vic's eyes danced with glee as he sipped his glass. “It's not beer... you sip it, you don't gulp it.”

Kurt shook his head. “I must be more tired than I thought.” He sat still for a bit as the room slowed, then cautiously took another sip, slower this time.

“That's right, take it slow and savor it,” Vic said, pouring himself a second glass.

The two sat in companionable silence for a while, sipping and watching the renewed fire slowly burn to embers in the fireplace. Bears are generally patient creatures in most cases, and Vic didn't want to rush his guest, so he waited a bit before asking the question that had formed when he first opened the door. “So...what brings you to my neck of the woods?”

Kurt sat his glass down on the massive wood burl table in front of the couch. “Well, it's time. Again.”

“You mean to move?” Vic asked.

“Yes. You know, this is my least favorite part of being were. I know some guys like that they can start over in someplace new, new life, new job, new neighbors and ways. But I don't. I liked where I was, I liked what I was doing.” The big bear paused. “I guess I don't much like change.”

“Well, we ain't got much choice,” Vic rumbled. “Part and parcel of the territory. What triggered it?”

“Oh, the usual. A few comments about how good I looked 'for my age'. Then more pointed ones about how old *was* I, and *how* long had I lived here? I'd hoped an old carpenter's age might not make so much difference, but I guess 'better be safe than sorry'. But I hated to go. I'd fixed my cave up real nice. Anyway, I made a trip up to BC and laid some plans with Boris. He gave me some tips for fading away and handling my money, and made arrangements for me to see a couple of bears down here to fix

up a new identity. Apparently, they're training a new kid, some sort of were computer genius.” Kurt stared into the dying fire for a bit. “I don't know scheisse about all these new databases and electronic records and such. It used to be pretty easy to pack up and move on; easy to set up a new identity.”

“Not anymore, it ain't.”

“You've got that right. Seems like everything's interconnected nowadays.”

Vic rose to pick up the glasses. “Well, you know you can stay here as long as you need to. I take it Boris gave contact information along with that map?” Kurt nodded. “Good.” Vic ambled towards the kitchen. He looked over his shoulder to Kurt and said, “Me, I am heading to bed. Come on when you're ready.”

Kurt smiled. “No, I'm good here. I haven't forgotten how to sleep rough, and this couch is anything but rough. Besides, don't you have your cub here?”

“Heh. My cub has a cub of his own now, and yes, they're here. But I'd be a poor bear host if I didn't offer a more comfortable sleeping arrangement than a couch. You're welcome to share my bed, and just for sleep, if that's your pleasure.

“Now, that's a friendly offer! 'Never turn down a hot meal or a comfy bed', Boris told me once, and I intend to follow his good advice. Lead on!” Kurt rose, and padded after Vic as he put the glasses in the sink, banked the embers, and headed down the hall.

Vic entered his bedroom and turned on a small bedside lamp. “Bathroom's in there if you need to pee or wash up.”

“Thanks, Vic. I really appreciate this.” Kurt headed into the bathroom, lifted the lid on the toilet and directed a strong stream into the bowl of water. He shook off and washed his hands and face in the sink, then padded back into the bedroom.

“Heh. Your tanks musta been full.” Vic paused. “I DID mean what I said... you can just sleep if you like.” The naked blond bear had eased into bed, and folded back the covers so Kurt could climb in. The bed itself was huge, with what looked like several bear skins and other assorted bed clothes making a comfortable sleeping nest. Kurt, his thick black fur nearly hiding his pink skin and erected nipples, sighed, and snuggled up against Vic. The mead had mellowed him, but had not blunted his ursine desires.

“Ach, you know I couldn't refuse the chance to play with you. Ever since that weekend at Boris's place, I've had a thing for big blond bears.” He growled softly. “Why don't we just let what happens, happen.”

“Well, hell... you *know* what will happen!” Vic grinned and rolled so he was facing Kurt and pulled him into a tight hug that developed into a prolonged tongue wrestle. Hands caressed bodies, and fondled all the places that sent special thrills. The pair broke their kiss, panting.

“Mind if we half-change? I really like playing in that form.”

“Hell, no! I find I spend more and more time in that shape,” Vic growled as he started his

metamorphosis. Kurt kept pace with him until they were both more bearish than human looking, with thick pelts and muzzles instead of noses; and the thicker, more massive musculature of a true bear. Both were grizzlies, so they shared the dished face and hump of muscle between their shoulders. They retained their ability to speak, though with roughened voices, along with their human hands. But their balls were bigger, and their cocks now partially protruded from fur-covered sheaths, and were rigid with the internal baculum all bears had.

Kurt nosed his muzzle into the thick fur on Vic's chest and found the pink nubbin he was searching for and latched on. Vic moaned and moved one paw behind Kurt's ursine head, gently cradling it and pulling it in closer. "Oh, yeah... oh fuck, yeah." His paw moved down Kurt's back, stroking and rubbing while the black-furred bear nursed and chewed.

"I'll give you 'til next Tuesday to stop that," Vic growled. His cock was now fully extended and starting to drool precum.

Vic pulled the black-furred bear over on top of him, grunting as Kurt's weight settled on him. The two thrust and ground their hips together, growling as their penises extended fully from their sheaths. Vic felt a sudden warm wetness at his crotch. "Didja cum?" he asked Kurt.

"No... why?" Kurt said, raising up on all fours.

"Dang! And I thought I leaked a lot," Vic chuckled, eyeing the patch of soaked wet fur and the sticky strands of clear precum stretching from both their groins.

Kurt chuffed and settled back down. "Ja, that's me. I always leaked like a sieve. It was embarrassing sometimes. Wet spots in public don't always go over well. Once in school kids made fun because they thought I had pissed my pants. I'd been thinking about the man who delivered coal to the school. Big ol' bear with a huge iron-gray beard. The schoolmaster sent me home to change." Kurt thrust a few more times, driving his thick cock through the slimed fur in Vic's crotch. "Makes good lube, though."

"How 'bout we put that leaky faucet to work somewhere else?" When Kurt nodded, Vic raised his thick furry legs up and rested them on Kurt's wide shoulders. Kurt hunched forward, but when Vic put his hand down to help guide Kurt's fuckpole, Kurt growled. "Let him find his own way in... part of the fun!" Vic backed off and let Kurt find his way in through the thicket of blond fur covering his ass.

"AH!" Kurt breathed as his cock found what it had been searching for. Vic's pucker twitched as Kurt slowly pushed in. A big blob of precum made the passage easier, but there was still a lot of friction. "Am I hurting?"

"Oh, hell, no... knock yourself out, man!" Vic grinned up at the bear in his ass.

Kurt put his paws on Vic's shoulders and sighed. "It's been WAY too long." He began to pump Vic's ass, steadily increasing his speed until he was hammering the big bear's butt. Grunting and snorting, he drove himself to his climax, filling Vic's ass with spurt after spurt of bear seed. "FUUUUCCCCCKK!" Kurt roared as he came. After giving Vic's filled ass two more deep strokes, he collapsed on top of him.

"Hey, sorry I came so fast."

"Well, you DID say it had been a while. And I've never minded a quickie." Vic shifted his bulk onto

his side as Kurt eased off him, his meat making a sucking sound as he withdrew. "You want to sleep now?"

"Nein!... it's your turn, you horny fucker. Climb on board."

"Nah. Me and the cub and the grandcub played a lot today, so I'm good. For now," he said, baring his fangs in a toothy bear grin at Kurt. "Can't guarantee I won't plunder that sweet ass of yours in the middle of the night."

"I look forward to it!" Kurt turned and cuddled Vic close to him, putting his thick forearm over Vic's side and caressing his belly. He reached down and fondled the tip of Vic's member, rubbing an almost human thumb across the wet tip. "This is a great way to go to sleep, isn't it?"

"You bet," Vic said, pulling Kurt's arm tight to him. The mead had more than done it's work, and soon both bears were snoring softly, their furred sides rising and falling with their breathing, legs and arms tangled.

* * *

Walt yawned and stretched, scratching his thick belly fur as he padded to the kitchen to start breakfast for his still-sleeping cub and papa. He stopped short when he saw a large, black-haired man sitting at the table, staring out the window at the rising sun gilding the mountain peaks across the meadow. Vic had said nothing about expecting guests, and while it wasn't unusual to entertain traveling bears, Vic rarely forgot to mention their impending arrival. There were no signs of a break-in, and besides, he was more curious than worried, confident in his ability to take on just about anything that might threaten. "Ummm... can I help you?"

Kurt turned quickly around and smiled as he rose. Like Walt, he was in human form, and naked. He extended his hand. "You must be Walt. I'm Kurt. Vic told me about you last night. I know Vic from years ago, when I lived back east."

Walt shook hands and said, "Vic didn't say anything about expecting guests, but you're welcome here. I'm just going to start breakfast. You like waffles or pancakes?"

"Oh, I eat just about anything. Your papa pretty much wore me out very early this morning, and changing always gives me an appetite. Can I help?" Kurt stepped out from behind the table and moved into the kitchen.

"Spoken like a true bear. Sure, dishes are up there, mugs, too. How about getting the table set for four and then grinding the coffee?" Casual nudity was a bearish trait, but not an exclusive one. Kurt's comment about changing did more to let Walt know that this was a bear brother, not a hunting or fishing acquaintance of Vic's. Walt relaxed and concentrated on pancake batter.

Once the first round of pancakes were on the plates and eggs and sausages heaped beside them, Walt sat at the table while Kurt poured coffee for them both.

"Himmel, but Vic's got a nice cave here. That is some view. I'm just passing through on my way south, but I knew Vic had a place somewhere near Tahoe, and Boris's directions made it easy to find; but I certainly wasn't expecting something like this," he said, waving his hand at the view and the interior of

the lodge.

“Papa's lived up here for years, off and on. Bought the land and built the place after coming west. He keeps updating it, but it's pretty much like it was when he built the place. It was all wilderness then.” Walt was sipping his coffee when two thick arms encircled his shoulders.

“Morning, sexy bear,” Mitch said, hugging his papa tight from behind. “Who's this?” Mitch straightened up and looked at Kurt.

“This is Kurt, a bear friend of Vic's. Kurt, this is Mitch, my cub; and the finest one around, too!” He turned in his seat and nuzzled Mitch's belly while Mitch shook hands with Kurt.

Kurt poured a mug of coffee for Mitch, while Walt got up and heaped a plate for his cub and refilled his and Kurt's at the same time. When all three were seated again, Mitch said, “What brings you to the Sierras? Business, or pleasure?”

“In a way, both. Let's see... where to start? I was getting too old for where I was living... or rather, I *wasn't* getting too old, if you follow.” He looked first at Walt, then Mitch. “Vic told me about you, Mitch, so I know you are new to all this. But I'm sure he's told you that one of the problems of being a bear is not aging anywhere near as fast as others do. After a while, it gets noticed. An older looking bear like me can usually get away with it for twenty, maybe thirty years, but eventually it catches up with you and you have to fade away and go someplace else. Trouble is, these days, that ain't so easy as it used to be.” He swallowed more coffee. “So, I knew Boris from back in New York, and he's the go-to bear for financial advice these days, so I figured I'd, how you say, 'hit him up' for some investment advice and maybe help in getting my new identity. He arranged with some bears down south of here for that. I'm on my way there now, but took the chance to see Vic again. We met at a summer gathering at Boris's place years ago, and I've had a fondness for blonde bear butt ever since.”

“I'm curious,” Mitch said, “because I *am* new to this, but how old are you? Walt and I are almost the same age, but he's been a bear a lot longer than me. And I hope that isn't a violation of bear etiquette... to ask age, I mean.”

“Oh, no problem among bears. I'm almost 180. I was born in Magdeburg, in Germany, in 1830. Hey, you want the long story, or the short one? If you got things to do, I mean. And I get long-winded, I don't want to bore you.”

Walt shook his head. “No problemo... we like stories, don't we?” he said, giving Mitch's thigh a squeeze.

“Sure do,” Mitch answered, “but why don't we take the coffee outside and sit on the porch? It's going to be a nice day, and you'll like the fresh air we have up here, Kurt. We make it special for guests.”

Walt swatted his cub as he rose and went out onto the porch that wrapped around the lodge. They pulled up padded wood chairs and propped their feet up on the railing.

“Well, like I said, I was born in Germany. My given name was Heinrich. I picked Kurt the last time I had to move on. I've always used German names, but it's best not to keep using the same name too much over the years. Anyway, I was the youngest of three sons. Father had a farm, but I was never much interested in farming. That was OK, Karl, my oldest brother, would inherit the farm anyway, and

Hans, the middle son, would be there to help, too. Me, I wanted to go to Hamburg, to the Technical University. I was fascinated with anything mechanical. But Hans died when a hay cart overturned, so I was taken out of the gymnasium...”

“The what? You were working out?” Walt asked.

“Umm, no? Oh, I see. No, 'gymnasium' was the word for, I guess the closest would be high school. Anyway, my sister Ursula and my mother made and sold butter and cheese in town, but there was too much heavy work for just my father and Karl alone when Hans died, so I had to go to work on the farm. No university for me. And I wouldn't even get any of the land, either. That would all go to Karl when Father died. I would just live on the farm and work.” Kurt sipped his coffee as it cooled. “Not much of a future.

“I don't mean to sound like a typical adolescent. But my father was never very close to any of us, mostly fixated on the farm, and pretty cold. Karl was like a carbon copy of Father. There was twelve years between me and Ursula, so I was sort of an accident. Father didn't think much of me, and he certainly didn't think much of anyone interested in mechanics. 'Land ist alles. Land ist all that matters. Farming was good enough for my Vater und Grossvater, und it will be good enough for you.’” Karl had lapsed into a thick German accent as he imitated his father's stern voice. “And then he'd poke me in the chest and nearly knock me down. Karl was almost 20 years older than me and he never stood up for me, he always sided with Father. So, at twenty years of age, I ran away from home!”

“Heh,” barked Walt. “Most of us do that a bit earlier in life!”

“Yeah, but I didn't come back. Ever. I headed for Hamburg. It took a while, but when I got there, I looked around for whatever work I could find. When I asked at the University, they stuck their noses up and said I had to have my diploma from the gymna... high school before they would even consider me for entrance. So I took whatever work there was, and after about ten years, I was working at a small shop that made springs for watches and other clockwork items, like music boxes and such. I learned a lot there. One day, a customer came into the shop, needing some special springs. We get to talking, discussing the various properties of metals used in springs, and their suitability for outdoor use. We are impressed with each other. On my next day off, I go to see him and ask if he is in need of an apprentice. He was a guild master, so he could take and train apprentices. He looked me over, asked me if I was as strong as I looked, and then peppered me with technical questions about gears and ratios and all sorts of things technical. I must have answered to his satisfaction, even if I didn't understand some of what he was asking. He took me on.

“For the next ten years I worked at Otto's side. He taught me everything he knew about mechanics. He was fascinated with engines. If it moved, Otto wanted to put an engine on it. He was very gruff at first, but he was a thorough teacher. He grew more patient with me. After a year or so, he trusted me enough to run the shop while he was away for a couple of days. He never would tell me why, or where he went, but every month or so he'd go away for a few days. He'd come back and growl at me if I asked too many questions. He usually has some crazy new idea to try out. Some of his stuff really was crazy, but a lot of it was practical, just a bit too far ahead of it's time. He was born in Bavaria, and worked on the design of the Bayerische Ludwigseisenbahn, the first steam railroad in Germany, in the 1830's, before he moved to Hamburg. He'd continued thinking about various ways to make steam engines smaller and more efficient.

“Time passed and I passed my journeyman's exam with ease, and continued to work with Otto. We

designed things together now, and we made a good team, each of us contributing ideas. He corrected my few mistakes with good humor and gave me honest praise when I deserved it. There was a growing sense of warmth between us. One day, Otto looked at me while we were eating lunch in the back of the workshop. He kept staring at me. 'What?' I asked. He doesn't say anything for a minute, just stares. Then he asks me why I don't ask for afternoons off to go courting, or take in a dance in the evening. 'Never, in all these years,' he says.

"I go out, I go the *stube*,' I say."

"*Stube*?" Walt asked.

"Um, bar; well, more like a pub than a bar. Social place as well as a drinking place. So, off and on for the next couple of days Otto asks me if I have a Fraulein or 'someone special' that I haven't told him about. It kind of got on my nerves. I'd known about myself for some time by then. I never got hard watching the girls in the marketplace, or on the street, but I sure got hard watching the workmen unloading goods from a wagon, or Otto straining to lift and move some big metal part. Finally, he asked once too often and I turned on him and yelled that I didn't have anyone 'special' and there wouldn't BE any Fraulein, because I was *schwul*." Before Walt could ask, Kurt said, "Gay. It means gay.

"I thought that I had just lost my job for myself. I was just about to take my master's exam from the guild, with Otto as my sponsor. I was sure that was *kaput*. But Otto just reached out and hugged me tight, and said that I shouldn't worry. That night, when I was getting ready for bed in my room behind the workshop, Otto knocked quietly on my door. When I answered, he looked at me and shook his head. 'No. You should sleep upstairs. The bed is better, and there is a fire. Much more *gemutlich*.'"

"I know that one!" Mitch said. "Cozy, comfortable."

"Exactly. Climbing the stairs, it struck me that Otto never mentioned a wife or children, and that he never went dancing with the Frauleins, either; and that more than likely he was *schwul*, too. Well, from then on, I slept in Otto's bed. Otto looked to be in his late 60's, and I was a bit over 30 by this time, so I guess it was natural that he took the lead. I had no idea what was going to happen, but I was game. Well, he held me and hugged me and told me stories until I fell asleep! I'd had no experiences before this, if you don't count the usual fooling around behind the haystacks that farm boys do. But for the longest time, all Otto would do, or let me do, was a nice long hand job, or a really long session of kissing and nuzzling. I was getting very hairy by then, and Otto was a walking carpet, so it was fun to nuzzle in all that fur. And that beard of his! Wonderful. Things moved along, nice and low-keyed."

Kurt paused and gazed off into the distance, watching a hawk ride the warming air currents. The sun felt good on the bodies of all three naked bears. Walt and Mitch were content to let Kurt take his time in telling his tale. They sat quietly, enjoying the pale sun and the warmth.

"You know, it's odd. Otto always said that he was attracted to me from our first meeting, but that he always held back, knowing what having a true relationship would mean. I had always liked Otto, but I was just so focused on learning all I could that I never picked up on the cues. I was oblivious. But over that next year, I grew to love the old man. Truly love him. His gruffness melted when he was with me, and I loved to do things for him, to care for him as he cared for me. It was, I think, the happiest time in my life. Oh, there were a few problems, of course. I wanted to suck him as he had me, but he wouldn't allow it. He taught me to fuck, and loved to have me fuck him, but he refused to fuck me.

And that's what led to the few arguments we had, and to my finding out his big secret. I thought he didn't really love me, because he wouldn't fuck me. But of course, that wasn't it at all." Kurt paused and looked at Mitch and Walt. "You *sure* you want to hear all this?" Both nodded.

"One night late, we got into a fight, a big one, our worst. I yelled that he didn't love me, couldn't love me, if he wouldn't make proper love to me. He growled that I had no idea what I was asking and that he knew best. I behaved like some stupid love-sick child. We got louder and louder until the neighbors yelled out the windows and threw stones and shoes to get us to shut up. Finally I started to pack some clothes in a bag and stormed out of the bedroom and down the stairs. Otto caught up with me at the front door of the shop. He grabbed me and held me tight with his great arms. I struggled. He held on. Finally, when I couldn't struggle any more, he whispered, 'Don't go. Please.' He gulped. 'I love you. I don't want to hurt you...ever.'

"Hurt me? HURT me?" I cried. 'How can you hurt me any more than by not loving me... or letting me love you?' I wasn't making much sense. Otto just shook his head and trudged off towards the workroom. He turned and asked me to follow. 'Please' was all he said, and held out his hand. I followed.

"Sit,' he said. I sat. And before my eyes, he changed into a great huge bear. I tell you, I thought I would go mad. Actually, I thought I WAS mad. It was like the fairy tales we used to read in school, but this was happening before my eyes. I could reach out and touch it. *Gott im Himmel*, I was too scared to do that, so Otto took my hand in his paw and *made* me touch him. And then like some little girl, I fainted."

Mitch raised an eyebrow at that.

"Really," Kurt said, smiling faintly.

"Later, I came to in our bed, with Otto sitting next to me, still formed as a bear. I nearly screamed, but he shook his head and changed back to a human, right there in front of me. When he was finished, he told me to be calm, that he would never hurt me, but that he had to explain some things to me, that I had a right to know and that he had been wrong to keep them from me. And then the whole story came out. He told me about werebears, that they were real and not just legends or tales used to scare little kids. That he was one. About all the persecutions through the centuries. Throughout that morning, he told me his whole story. About how he'd been changed. About how he aged so very slowly. About why he couldn't fuck me, or let me suck him. About how he would have to move on soon, having been in Hamburg almost too long now. About how I would grow old and die and he would live on, alone. It was almost too much to believe, certainly too much to take in all at once.

"We had orders to fill in the shop, and so we began the day's work. Otto would touch me as he passed by, but I would flinch away from his touch. That hurt him, I knew. But I had to think, and I couldn't think when he touched me. I was helpless under his touch.

"A week passed. One evening at supper, Otto said, 'It is time for me to leave now. I have stayed too long, and I have heard comments about my age. I will go to visit a customer with a special project in mind. I will die on the trip in an accident, and start life anew somewhere else. The shop is yours. No, do not object. You will pass your master's exam easily and then your ownership of the shop will be legal in the guild's eyes. You will do well. And no, you cannot go with me,' he said, seeing that I was about to object. 'I must go, and you cannot. I will not stand and watch you grow old and die. Better to

leave now than drag it out for years, always knowing.'

"I jumped up and said, 'No! Take me with you if you cannot stay. Take me with you!'

"Otto shook his head. 'You cannot go with me. You still have your life to lead, and you should do that here. '

"Then make me one of your kind,' I cried. 'Bite me or fuck me or whatever it takes, but don't leave me here alone!'

"Otto just looked at me with the saddest look I've ever seen on a man's face. 'You do not know what you ask of me. I cannot make you into something that is no longer human. I cannot.'

"We argued back and forth, but nothing was settled. I know now he was testing me in his way, seeing if I had really understood what being changed would mean. 'The only way a man should be changed to a bear is if he really truly wants it, without any reservation.'

"I took that as a small sign of weakening in his resolve. I pushed ahead. 'Then give me a week. Please, just one week before you go.' He agreed, reluctantly.

"I talked, I begged, I pleaded during that week. I used every argument I could muster. I told him I was as good as dead to my family. I told him we could both go on that trip to the customer with the special project in mind, and we could both die in the accident. I told him I wanted nothing except to be with him, no matter the cost. I threatened to follow him, to find him wherever he went. I kept at him every waking hour. And in the end, I wore him down.

"On Sunday morning, he looked at me and said, 'Heinrich, I want you to take all of today, all of it, and do nothing but think about what this would all mean. Not here, go somewhere you can think clearly. Think of everything, front to back, top to bottom. Don't skip over anything, and especially don't skip over anything bad. Most of all remember that your life, our life, will always have to be a secret. If anyone *ever* finds out, or even suspects, they will do their best to kill you. To kill us.' I looked him straight in the eye and said, 'I already know a lot about that, you know. The secrets. And the hate.' He nodded and thought for a moment. 'In some ways this is worse than the other. Think on it, carefully. Now, go.'

"I spent the day walking the town and ended up in one of the parks on the edge of the city. I already knew what my decision was, but I had promised Otto I would think things through, and I did. Everything. Front to back, top to bottom. When dusk fell, I walked back.

"I walked into the shop and embraced Otto. 'Otto, I am sure. Never doubt that. Take me to bed. Make love to me. Make me a bear.'

"Otto was silent for a long time, then put out his hand. We climbed the stairs together.

"And that's it. It was the most wonderful night. We did everything we'd ever wanted to do. There were no limits and no restraints. When he came in me, I thought my heart would burst. Later that week, we had our 'trip' and our 'accident'. I never found out what happened to the shop. Otto had left it to me in his will, but I was 'dead' along with him. I suppose the guild took it over. We kept mostly to remote wooded areas, and a few months later I had my first change in the Schwartzwald. We made our way

first to Austria, then later to Switzerland. Otto died there. We'd gotten interested in this new-fangled sport of skiing when Seiler introduced Nordic gear in 1900. We were out one day, looking for a good run, and we heard this booming crack, like loud thunder. Otto dropped his skis and grabbed my arm and yelled for me to run. We ran as fast as we could, but the avalanche overtook us. I managed to struggle out of the drift and I kept waiting for Otto's great arms and legs to come churning out of the snow. It didn't happen. Then men and dogs looked for two days, but they couldn't find him. Later, in the spring, they found his body when the snow melted. His head had been crushed by a boulder."

Both Walt and Mitch put their hands on Kurt's arms.

"Thanks, guys. I miss him. Always will." He paused, gazing off in the distance. "For months I didn't know what to do. I finally went back to our farm and cleared out all our stuff. I saved a few things, kept them with me. Small stuff. I knocked around for a year or so, aimless. Otto told me that some bears have one mate in their lives, and never want or look for another. I think Boris is like that. Others are lucky and find another. Who knows. We had forty very good years together. I guess I had hoped for forever, but eventually, even werebears die. Anyway, there was nothing to keep me in Europe any longer, and I came to America with the other waves of European immigrants. That made it easy to set up a new life. Thankfully, I missed the Great War. I settled first in Boston, then in upstate New York. That's where I got interested in woodworking. And now, I'm here."

"And I, for one, am glad you are!" Vic said. How long he had been standing there, none of the bears knew. He yawned and stretched, his spine audibly cracking. "It's good for these young'uns to hear another bear's stories, they get really tired of hearing mine, that's for sure!" He chuckled as Walt made a face.

"I see that no one bothered to make *me* any breakfast. Selfish buggers" Hhrrumph-ing, but with a slight smile at the corners of his mouth, Vic padded back inside and tied on an apron to protect his naked body and began to fry eggs and sausage. Soon the smells drew the three outdoor bears inside.

"What do you think you will do now," asked Mitch as they once again sat at the table.

"Oh, I'm still interested in engineering, but where's the fun in a computer controlled lathe? I *like* making things by hand. I really enjoy, um, *enjoyed*, carpentry. It would be nice if I could do that again in the next life. But science attracts me, too. I guess there's time to sort all this out later."

"Meanwhile, if you don't feel like you have to get on the road right away..." Vic looked expectantly at Kurt. His thickening cock gave him away.

"You know, my papa is always poking fun at me for being the horn dog around here," Walt said, with a mock glare at Vic. "But really, he's the one with the insatiable appetite. Really. Am I right, or am I right? Come on, cub... back me up here," Walt growled at Mitch.

Mitch grinned over the last of his coffee. "Oh, I don't know. You do a pretty good imitation of a horny bear yourself... for an old fart, that is."

"Old fart? OLD FART?!? You gonna pay for that one, BOY!" With that, Walt was out of his seat and lunging towards Mitch. Mitch avoided the lunge and managed to scoot for the living room before Walt regained his balance. Soon both of them were on the floor, wrestling. Vic and Kurt followed them into the larger room.

Vic stood with his hands on his hips, shaking his head... but a bigger smile flickered at the corners of his mouth. "See what I have to put up with? All the time. Sex, sex, sex. It never stops. What's a bear to do?"

Kurt grinned. "Join in?"

Soon all four were rolling on the floor, attempting pin one another and escaping from the attempts, but not trying too hard. The casual observer might have been reminded of bear cubs playing, if it weren't for their still-human shapes, and their erections.

One of the great joys of werebear life is the ability to lose oneself in the pure joy of sexual play. The four bears were anything but youngsters, and their bodies were intent on very adult forms of pleasure; but their frolic had the aspect of childhood play as well. For all their seniority, Kurt and Vic rolled and tumbled with Mitch and Walt as young cubs would. Bodies coupled and legs intertwined, mouths met and tongues wrestled. When Kurt's balls finally contracted and pumped out ropes of bear seed deep in Mitch's ass, Vic and Walt growled in approval. When Mitch fed his papa, Vic and Kurt stopped their fucking to watch approvingly. And later, when Walt hammered Vic's ass and roared mightily as he came, Kurt growled in Vic's ear, 'He does you proud. They both do.'

The sun slipped below the ridge line and the shadows lengthened. The four bears, tangled now in a tired heap in front of the fireplace, snored rhythmically. The room cooled, but their ursine body heat kept them warm. Kurt woke briefly and blinked. He gazed around and thought that he should rouse himself and head back on the road to southern California and his new identity. He felt Mitch's erection prod his backside, and felt the comfortable bulk and warmth of the other bears. 'Nah. No rush. After all, I've got all the time in the world.'