The big drakeling had been flirting with Duke all night. Every time he ordered a round for his companions, he tried to chat him up, and he’d caught him giving a wink across the bar more than once.

He was handsome, with predatory features, sharp sharp teeth, and a broad chest he left bare even in the winter weather. Duke had heard from Daisy, the other server at the tavern, that drakelings produced more than enough heat and never cared much for clothes. She claimed back in their homeland, they all went naked all the time. It sounded far fetched. But Duke had caught himself admiring the drakeling’s firm pectorals, totally flat and covered in small orange scales.

Duke hefted the pitcher when the drakeling waved for another round of refills. The small crowd of men, a human, a warg and two felinids, had been celebrating some victory on behalf of the drakeling, by the way they kept shouting his name and cheering for him when a new round arrived. He was conveniently also paying their tab, so Duke supposed they had more than one thing to celebrate.

He was very aware of the reptilian’s body heat as he leaned in to pour another pint. Two blue, slitted eyes watched him, almost never blinking. He watched as the drakeling’s long tongue flicked out for a moment to taste the air, and got a shiver in his belly.

“Is that all, Sir?” Duke went to pull back.

The drakeling wrapped a large hand around his wrist. It was hot on his skin, almost hot enough to burn. “Where could I find a ….” He paused and cocked his head. “I do not know the word.” The drakeling looked to the warg beside him, a huge wolfine creature, who swivelled his ears to listen as the two conversed in a fast tongue.

The warg spoke for the drakeling, in a perfect capital accent. “He would like to know where he could find a flesh den.”

Duke’s stomach got that shiver back again. “I… we don’t have one in town, sorry. We’re only a very small town.” The Fleshdens were an easy, legal way for the more carnivorous sort to find their kicks. Drakelings, Wargs, the large Felinids, Orcs, they sometimes got a taste for the flesh of another thinking being. In the big cities, there were often people willing to be their meal for a price. Humans bred fast, but there were races who could multiply even faster, and life was cheap.

“No one who… would take coin for family?” The drakeling spoke haltingly. “I can be very… careful. No blood.”

Duke was about to answer when Joe, the tavernkeeper, barreled into their conversation with his usual tact. A huge man, in muscles now gone to seed, height, and voice. “Gentlemen, is there a problem?”

The Warg flicked his ears back. If stray dogs and their two legged companions had much in common, Duke guessed he was annoyed. “No, Sir.” His voice didn’t betray it.

“I wouldn’t want to disappoint my best customers. Anything I can get you?” Joe wrapped a big arm around Duke’s shoulder. “Has the boy's service been good?”

Duke chafed under the grip, and being called ‘the boy’, but he shut up and tried to look anywhere but at the men.

“Yes, grand.” The drakeling nodded so quickly, and much, it couldn’t have felt natural to him. “I just… wanted to know where find dinner.”

“We have a cook here, Sir. I can get you anything you want.” Joe grinned. He seemed happy to have found an easy way to get more coin from the visitors.

The warg pitched in, showing his teeth in a smile that made Duke shiver. “Xay was hoping to find something alive.”

Joe made a sound. “Oh. Well.” He seemed to be thinking, and Duke tried to wiggle out from under his arm while he wasn’t paying attention. He almost freed himself when Joe remembered him and clasped his arm harder. “What about the boy here? I assure you, he is most succulent.”

Duke’s heart froze. He knew Joe was a bastard, but this was a new low. The warg and the drakeling, Xay, conversed rapidly in their own language, and Joe smiled, very pleased with himself. Xay turned back to them. “How much?” Xay said.

Joe rubbed his chin. “He is a strapping lad, just turned nineteen summers, very fit. How does four hundred silver sound?”

“Three hundred.”

“Four seventy.”

Xay’s tongue tasted the air. “Two eighty.”

Joe rubbed his chin. “That isn’t how negotiating works, Sir. You already said three hundred.”

“Too late. I offer two seventy.”

Joe gaped at him, but he saw his opportunity for a payday slipping away. Duke tried to slip out from under his arm again, wiggling, but Joe grabbed Xay’s hand, and shook it firmly, then pushed Duke forward. He caught himself on the edge of the table, eyes wide, as Xay looked him over. He knew now that the look he’d seen all night had been hunger, not attraction as he’d hoped.

“I… Sir…” Duke turned towards Joe, but the big man was already exchanging silver with the warg. Xay’s big orange-clawed hand grabbed his chin and turned him back towards his fate.

“Good.” Xay rose from the seat, and Duke realised for the first time how tall the man was. His legs were longer in proportion to his torso, and he towered over all the other men as he took Duke’s hand, and said a word to the warg in their language.

Duke was lost. Should he run? He didn’t have anywhere to run. Joe technically owned him and would just get the guard to search for him. He’d have to skip town, with no money and no way to get a lift. He stumbled up the stairs, without really thinking about the fact he was being led to Xay’s rented room.

It was only when Xay unlocked his room and led Duke inside that he snapped out of it. Xay undid the belt that held up the leather kilt that covered his bottom half, and let it drop on the floor. Duke couldn’t stop himself, he had a look. He frowned when he saw the blank groin.

Xay saw his confused look and made a barking sound. “I am male. Nothing here.” Xay ran a claw over the soft scales between his thighs. “Not like your kind. Male have nothing.”

“Oh.” Duke realised how silly his curiosity was at this moment. “I guess you’ll eat me now.” He swallowed, and fidgeted on the spot. Xay took two large steps, which closed the gap between them. He had a small knife in his hand, and Duke froze in fear. Oh god he was going to die.

Xay slashed down the front of his tunic, and then tore it off Duke’s shoulders. The knife divested him of all his clothes, but didn’t gut him like he’d feared. And to his shame, when his breeches ended up on the floor, and Xay knelt to tug off his boots, his cock had risen to attention and bobbed in the air.

Xay gave it a poke, more out of curiosity than anything, then rose up and smiled, or at least, peeled back his lips from his row of razor sharp teeth in an attempt. “This won’t hurt, boy.”

“My name is Duke. I’m not a boy.”

“Duke. Good name for food.” Xay licked his lips with that long, dexterous tongue, and grabbed Duke under his armpits. Duke gave a small shout of fear, which settled down in his stomach as odd arousal, and stared down the pit between two rows of sharp teeth.

Xay was gentle about it. He pushed Duke between his lips, careful to avoid anything more than scraping him with his teeth. His tongue was strong and it licked over Duke, getting a good taste of him. Duke’s cock ached like steel, but his heart hammered as the light disappeared.

Down and down. He couldn’t see much, but he could feel the hot, squishy surroundings. His cock slid over Xay’s tongue, but he didn’t get the respite he wanted. It was hot inside the drakeling. He sweated and his lungs burned with every laboured gasp. He soon began to realise that he wasn’t just hot, he was melting. He couldn’t feel his fingers anymore. His toes still wiggled out in the cold air, but that ended with a snap of Xay’s jaw, and Duke was closed away from the world forever.

His skin began to soften and his vision began to fade. He was vaguely aware of his hard cock, but he couldn’t find the energy to do anything about it. He felt sleepy. Duke let out a soft little sigh. It wouldn’t hurt to have a little nap.

Xay patted his stomach as it softened. The unique digestive system of a drakeling, more a furnace than a stomach, was melting Duke down fast. He let out a little burp to release some of the air he had swallowed with Duke, and curled up on the bed. The human had been delicious. He should try them more often. No stringy bits like ratkin, and softer on the tongue than kobolds.