

CRIMSON (Ashton Grove M.C. #4) – EXCERPT

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The ground quaked under his boots as lightning streaked the sky. Crimson blew out a steady stream of smoke before tossing the nub of his cigarette out into the rain. The deluge had started an hour ago, and if it kept up, they'd be gathering animals two by two. Already the parking lot in front of the bar had small lakes forming. Thank god he'd had the foresight not to ride his bike tonight.

Thunder boomed again, making the ground tremble. Turning his back on Mother Nature's temper tantrum, he went back inside Laguna Paradise to join his brothers and the local wolf pack. Ghost, the new President of the M.C., had decided it would be good for some of the club members to hang out with the pack, further relations between them. They'd worked together on a few rescue missions so far, but the wolf pack still seemed wary of the M.C.

Crimson slid onto a stool between Pistol and Hunter. He'd noticed the wolf sneaking glances at one of the waitresses and wondered if there was something between them. She was a looker, even if she was fuller figured than what Crimson usually went for. All that long, glossy, dark hair would look spectacular spread across his pillows though.

"She yours?" Crimson asked, nodding toward the brunette.

"No." Hunter tore his gaze away from the woman and took a swallow of his beer. "I just like the look of her is all."

"So you've never talked to her?" Crimson asked. "Never asked her out?"

Hunter shrugged. "What would she want with a shifter? I mean, look at her! She's gorgeous and can have any man she wants. Why take up with a wolf when she can have a human and pop out some normal kids?"

Crimson studied the woman, watched as she pushed a wayward strand of hair behind her ear. The smile on her face looked forced as she approached a rather rowdy table. He wondered how long she'd been on her feet, and how many assholes she'd had to deal with today. Crimson watched and waited, wondering if she was going to need assistance, or if the crew at the table was going to mind their manners.

"You like her," Hunter said, his gaze swinging from Crimson to the waitress and back again. "You like Holly."

"That's her name?" Crimson asked, thinking it suited her.

"Yeah. I asked around about her, but I've never approached her. She's never paid any attention to me." Hunter stared into his beer. "So, if you want to make a move on her or something, she's free. I don't hold a claim on her or anything like that."

"She's not your mate?"

Hunter shrugged. "I haven't gotten close enough to be sure, but I don't think so. I just really like her. But I've been coming here for over a year now and have yet to so much as say hi to her. She deserves better than that. If you have the balls to approach her, then go for it. You have my blessing."