The minute I arrived in Sanctuary, Rhode Island, I learned two things: one, most of the state actually didn’t live on the eponymous island, and two, the residents absolutely loved their clam chowder. I found quite a few restaurants selling variations of the soup like hamburgers in Burger Knight. They sold ‘red’ clam chowder with tomatoes mixed in, ‘white’ clam chowder without dairy mixed in, plus ‘green’ clam chowder with basil sprinkled heavily in. I made a promise to myself to try at least one of each during my few days in Rhode Island.

 Originally, I thought of staying at a posh hotel within the city’s wealthier neighborhood. I didn’t care for the upper crust parties I’d no doubt be societally required to visit, if they didn’t invite me already. From what I’d gathered when attending some of the wealthy New England parties in the past, they didn’t look kindly on half-breed mutts like me, nor towards the Germans given their mostly English backgrounds, and not to mention my unapologetic homosexuality. I remembered once attending such a party in Sanctuary years ago, after a mutual friend invited me to it, and how awkward it felt when most of the partygoers learned about my ‘promiscuous lifestyle’, muttering it behind my back, acting like nothing was wrong.

 None of that again, I promised myself. So, I went southward. The coastal culture and maritime atmosphere did draw me in, but not as much as the prospective attractions in town, the lads included. One of these attractions sat just a few kilometers south of Sanctuary: The Hazelnut Lighthouse Bed & Breakfast, a historic inn once operating as a lighthouse until the late 1950s, when renovations and expansion led to it turning into a comfy place to stay compared to boring hotels. It had old-style dining, some electronics, an utterly gorgeous view of the bay, plus an alleged ghost roaming the halls. Honestly, how could I resist spending a night or two?

 The two-storied colonial style building wore its chipped white paint as a badge of aged honor, standing just walking distance from the Hazelnut Lighthouse itself. The old structure stood on the edge of a cliffside beach staring out to the foggy bay, already flashing its spotlight in circles at twilight like it did in the days before automation. As much as I wanted a closer look of the archaic marvel, perhaps even get a tour of the place, aches from the tiring drive compelled me to first book a room inside the inn.

 Speaking of the inn, its interior certainly enraptured my curiosity for New England Americana, from the warmth of a vintage fireplace in the corner of the lobby, to black-and-white photographs of patrons and guests from years passed along the walls, plus collected memorabilia of Rhode Island’s maritime history. These included but weren’t limited to anchors or old models of boats and trawlers I’d never heard of.

 After checking in and bringing my bags to my room, I walked into my suite to find it immaculately clean. I opted to take a hot shower, standing inside the enclosed tiled room as the stresses of the day went down the drain, and partly wondering if any local lads on Howlr were willing to travel to such a rural area. Either way, I didn’t plan on leaving the hotel that night.

 It felt unexpectedly chilly when I turned off the shower head, then stood in front of the vanity. Shivering as I felt my teeth clatter together, I snatched a warm, fluffy towel and dried myself down until the sensation passed. I’d have to turn up the thermostat later. By the time my dark fur became less damp under the bathroom’s built-in fur-dryer, one of the many upscale amenities that tickled my fancy, I fastened the towel around my waistline, then stepped out of the steam-filled bathroom.

 Only to find a younger canine, placing down something on the nightstand. The handsome dog, a mixed bloodhound with floppy black ears and copper-red fur, turned to me with a surprised smile. I stood there in the doorway, forgetting how to react until my eyes fell on his bellhop uniform. Something about it looked odd, but I didn’t dwell on it.

 “Oh! I’m sorry to intrude, sir,” he spoke with a friendly, almost shy wave. On the nightstand, I could spot the room access key. “I just noticed you left your card in the uh, thingamajig, hehe.” His pupils tried their best to stay above my pecs, only to fail as I noticed his left leg squirm while trying to act composed. He didn’t notice the blushing on his cheeks either. “Thought I’d leave it in her for you, so you didn’t forget about it.”

 Smiling, my fingers subtly loosened the wrapped towel. “Thank you for your consideration, uh…Kurt?” I read his nametag. “Stay for a bit, let me give you a tip.”

 A rapid wink in his direction made the bloodhound suppress a whimper. His eyes fluttered back down to my crotch as the towel unveiled my blooming dogcock arisen from its sheath. A bashful grin grew across his cream-furred muzzle.

 “H-How…big of a tip,” he asked with a wagging tail, “…are we talkin’?”

 In response, I simply dropped the rest of the towel. My member sprung free from the obscuring cloth prison, throbbing in the ungodly cold air, desiring warmth. It hypnotized Kurt, who immediately stepped forward to give it an experimental tug. Followed by several firm rubs, then blind strokes as he stared up at me with the most beautiful of mismatched eyes. A reddish-brown orb on his left and a piercing blue marble on his right, both watering after I bent down to kiss him. Panting hotly, he leaned up to lap at my neck, sniffing my nape and licking the fur on my jugular without so much as catching his breath.

 “Been a while?” I laughed.

 “You have no idea,” he whined. “No idea how long.”

 I soothed him with another smooth kiss, running my fingers through the well-groomed fur of his limber thighs. They crawled under his buttocks, then gripped each mound, allowing me to lift him as if he were weightless. Startled at first, the bloodhound held my shoulders for support, then draped his ankles around my bare hips.

 Minutes later, I’d peeled off all his bellhop clothing and discarded it to the floor, rubbing my pecs and our sheaths together as his smaller knot leaked against mine. Kurt’s fingers clawed and caressed along my shoulder blades, my sides, then fondled my flexing ass as I massaged us together. We exchanged tongues, lips, sweet words that meant nothing as well as everything. I broke a sweat several times in the hours we spent on that bed, working each other up and kissing as our bodies brushed together, producing warmth in an otherwise freezing room.

 Kurt had mentioned never being submissive, but I didn’t want to break our serene entwinement, nor bother to rifle through the luggage for some lube. Instead, we stayed there on the soft hotel bed, stewing in slow passion and electric squeezes.

 “Oh, mfh! Ngh, so much…ahhh!”

 “Oh, puppy, I’m—grrrr!”

 Our fingers creased into each other’s sweat-covered shoulders as I erupted a load all over our abdomens. My toes uncurled around the bed sheets, then relaxed as I shifted onto my side, pulling the panting bloodhound into a side hug. As we gathered our haggard breaths, relaxing into the mattress as moonlight trickled through the windows, I realized something that’d been nagging me before I began to drift asleep.

 I never forgot my room access key.

 “You were amazing, sir.” Kurt’s voice echoed as I felt his cold lips touch my forehead, and I stared into those heterochromia eyes again, the sepia and cerulean seemingly glowing. His smile looked more serene than ever before. “Utterly amazing.”

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 The very next morning, I abruptly woke up to the sounds of seagulls and crashing waves. One of my windows was open, letting soft sea breeze wash over my sore, naked body. My unnamed paramour from the previous night was gone.

 After getting showered once again and then dressed, I asked the front desk if they knew about a bloodhound bellhop named Kurt working the night before. He had heterochromia.

 “We don’t have any bloodhounds in our employment, Mr. Drakos,” answered the receptionist. “You must have confused him for another bellhop in our employment or something.”

 I blinked once, twice, thrice. My brain momentarily went into shutdown mode, only to be rebooted seconds later after trying to comprehend her words. “Do you have tours of the lighthouse?” I asked, immediately changing the subject.

“Oh, yes, we do!” She then went on to tell me about them, and I nodded with her words.

 Whether or not I actually fucked a ghost was debatable, but I never did find Kurt after that wonderful night. However, I did learn from hearsay that the alleged hauntings involved a dog, even though they never specified it being a bloodhound. Maybe I did fuck a specter, maybe not, but it did give me an amazing story to tell Bram Heathcliff on his paranormal podcast.