

**Without proper identification, up to 90 percent of lost pets will never find their way home again**

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# **Without proper identification, up to 90 percent of lost pets will never find their way home again**

by [Azifall](#)

## Summary

Whumptober 2020, #1: Let's Hang Out Sometime: "Shackled"

Whumptober 2020, #6: Please: "No More"

Whumptober 2020, #14: Is Something Burning? "Branding"

Colm's lips spread into something that was neither grin nor sneer nor smirk, not any sort of expression at all, serving only to bare his chipped and dulled teeth, "A good dog wears his master's information on his tags," he said, and nothing else as though that were supposed to make great sense and *oh shit*

“Where the hell is it?!”

Colm was *furious*.

Arthur, though he’d never admit it, was *terrified*.

His arm was burning, his whole body was throbbing. His head, god, his head, he was no doctor but surely it couldn’t be healthy to dangle upside down for so long?

How long had he been down here? Four days? Five? More? Colm had been down seven times, although that was just by his count, how many times had Colm come down while he was unconscious?

And even when Colm wasn’t there, he was hurting. The other O’Driscolls enjoyed taking their pound of flesh from him - a punch here for ‘Tommy’, a kick there for ‘Danel’, though they weren’t half as cruel as Colm. Colm always aimed for the crater in his shoulder, enjoyed shoving the spoons of food down his throat ‘gotta make sure you don’t starve ‘son”, put out his cigarettes on his skin as he demanded, over and over ‘where is the Blackwater money?’

Every time, Arthur would tell him exactly where to shove it. Had gotten creative, even (his personal favorite was “up your ass!” which, while not the *most* creative thing he’d ever said, he was rather proud of considering the sepsis raging through his veins and the blood pooling in his head), with his answers.

By his count, it had been two weeks since the ‘parley’. No one had come looking, and he was still refusing to give up the location of the Blackwater money.

Colm was coming unhinged.

“*WHERE THE HELL IS IT?!* ”

Arthur would admit, it scared the *shit* out of him.

He didn't respond, just stared at Colm. He was *tired* and *weak* and he *hurt*, so instead he just blinked long and slow, wheezed in his frantic attempts for air.

Colm drew his foot back, wound up for a kick - then paused. "Know what? Naw, naw." and the glee that lit up his face bode well for no one. "This is all because of Dutch's famous *cha~ris~ma~* isn't it?" he laughed and, if Arthur were a traveled man, he would have compared it to a hyena's cackle but he wasn't so could only call it a coyote's yipping though it were too deep, rapid and huffed, "Got you wrapped around his finger, bein' his good boy?"

He didn't even seem to notice the lit cigarette that was crushed between his hands when he clapped. "Have to give it to ya Morgan, wish my men were half as loyal as you."

And then all the mirth left his face, the transition so abrupt Arthur felt a twinge in his neck like the time Boadicea had bucked so harshly the back of his head had touched between his shoulder blades. "So. You're not gonna tell me."

Arthur narrowed his eyes and shook his head, regretted it when his head spun, his pulse roared in his ears.

"Well." Colm brought his hand up as though to take a drag from his cigarette, looked surprised to find it dropped, crushed on the ground, "Well."

A cold chill ran through Arthur when the man did an abrupt about face and clambered up the stairs.

Colm cut him down, but he was too weak to stand.

He'd brought a few men with him, and they were more than happy to drag him onto his knees, grabbing his arms tight enough to bruise to keep him there though he was weak and shackled. "What're y' doin' Colm," Arthur snarled, baring his teeth like the dog he was often called, but Colm ignored him, watching the largest of them heat a knife over the candle that Arthur'd been eyeing while Colm was gone.

Colm's lips spread into something that was neither grin nor sneer nor smirk, not any sort of expression at all, serving only to bare his chipped and dulled teeth, "A good dog wears his master's information on his tags," he said, and nothing else as though that were supposed to make great sense and *oh shit*

*"Let's just have some fun... geld him."*

*"Oh yeah!"*

*Bill pulled the tongs off the fire, red hot.*

The man passed Colm the knife, so hot it glowed red, and held another over the candle and he began to struggle as best he could. But the shackles were still clasped tight, and the men's grips were bruising, so all he could do was waste away what little energy he had left.

The red-haired bastard holding his left arm let go for a moment to tear open his shirt, baring his chest, and he had a moment to struggle before Colm was slicing through his pectoral, writing in straight lines as easily as a hot knife cuts through butter D U T and oh that screaming was him, wasn't it? at least the knife was hot enough to cauterize the wound instantly though he supposed that was the point, Colm was branding Dutch's name on him not scarring it, and there was an H and oh thank god Colm was done he'd stopped being able to scream a long time ago.

Colm patted him on his filthy hair ("Good boy,") and stepped back, wiping the blade, not even bloodied it had been so hot, clean on his pants leg before handing it back to the man,

exchanging it for the now red-hot other knife and *oh god what was he going to do with that one?*

V A N

“C-C-” he tried but his throat was *raw*, he’d screamed it so bloody it oozed from the corner of his mouth and he tasted metal, ‘*No more, please, god, no more,*’ but Colm simply patted him on the head, scratched him behind the ear, and went back to work.

D E R

L I N D E

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