

## CHAPTER 154

Langdon POV

The drive back to the pack house is quiet, pensive. The two children, Milly and Jinx are watching us from the backseats, wide eyed, a very uncomfortable looking Drake, sitting in the middle. The two had taken to Drake, as though he was a favored uncle of theirs, and had not let go of his hands the entire time we'd been in the car. The little girl, Milly, was staring out the window, her lower lip trembling and I could discern there was tears in the corner of her eyes. She was trying not to cry, her hair disheveled, her body covered in bruises and dirt. Jinx was in roughly the same condition and I wondered how long they had been in that building, and what exactly they had gone through.

“Langdon” Milly says quietly, a hitch in her breath, “what’s going to happen to us?”

I keep my eyes on the road, trying to think about what to say. “I’m not sure” I finally admit “do you have any other family? Do you know what pack you came from?”

She sniffles. “No. Mummy and daddy were all we had.”

Silence. Drake pats the child awkwardly on the back while Jinx sticks his thumb in his mouth and begins to suck at it.

“We’ll see if maybe you have family out there” I say “maybe your mummy and daddy had a brother or sister that could take you in.”

She looks at me with dead eyes. “We don’t have anyone else” she says, turning to Drake and leaning into him “we want to stay with you guys.”

Jinx pulls his thumb out of his mouth. “Stay with you” he squeals and puts the thumb back in.

Damien looks at me with concern. “Can we do that?” he asks in a whisper “can we take them in.”

We pull up into the driveway to our home. It was late. Simon was hopefully asleep in the pack house and we would check on him tomorrow.

“I don’t know” I tell Damien honestly. I climb out of the driver’s side door while Damien goes and unlocks the front door of our place. The kids open the side doors to the SUV on their own, and scramble out, staring at me anxiously.

“I think you both must be tired” I say as kindly as possible as they stare up at me “maybe we should get you into a bath and then bed.”

“I’m hungry” they both say in unison, stomachs growling loudly.

I have to laugh. “Alright food first.”

We sit at the dining table. Drake orders pizza and when it arrives, the children’s eyes open in disbelief, mouths open in shock. I frown. Have they never had pizza before? Ever? It was like a staple in my house, especially when I couldn’t be bothered to cook. I didn’t expect Damien and Drake to always cook either. The pizza smelt heavenly and I inhaled it, watching the kids’ faces grow with excitement. Carefully I placed a slice in front of each of them, before the rest of us helped ourselves.

Milly was cautious, sniffing it curiously, before taking a tentative bite of the cheesy concoction. Her eyes widened and then she licked her lips, turning to Jinx who was holding his piece limply in one hand.

“It’s yummy” she told him excitedly and he nodded, carefully eyeing it, before taking the smallest nibble. He swallowed and then greedily took several large bites, almost inhaling the food, while his sister Milly followed suit. It was adorable and concerning. When was the last time these two had eaten?

They ate several slices between them, their eyes growing sleepy as they sat there, consuming the last piece on their plates.

“Whoa” whispered Damien “those two were hungry.”

“Shhh, it’s probably been a while since those two have gotten a chance to eat” muttered Drake “in which case I say have at it. Let them eat what they can.”

I was more worried about them being sick after such a large meal. Milly sat back in her chair, looking very dwarfed in it, her chin barely reaching the table, and patted her stomach looking extremely satisfied, a yawn escaping her lips. Jinx smacked his lips together, let out a large burp and sat back, content and tired. I stifled a sigh. It had been a big day for everyone and it was growing exceedingly late, but I wanted to get them nice and clean. Then realization dawned, we had no clothes for the children to sleep in. I wanted to smack the palm of my hand against my face in frustration.

“Drake” I said turning to him “can you go and ask one of the pack families with kids around the same age, for some nightclothes to borrow? We can try and get them some clothes tomorrow but for now, this is the easiest solution.”

He nods and gives me a wink. Despite myself, my heart flutters. He just has that effect on me. “I know just the family” he declares and gets up, leaving the table and two disappointed looking children, who then look to me and Damien for instructions.

“In the meantime,” I say, yawning myself, “time for a quick bath you two.”

They actually look excited at the prospect as Damien begins to get them up from the chairs and herd them upstairs towards our bathroom.

I fill the tub and then turn to Milly who is hovering in the doorway, watching my every move, her big blue eyes blinking at me.

“Come here sweetheart” I urge and she walks to me, a little apprehensive, looking over her shoulder at Jinx who is behind her. “Let’s get your clothes off” I say kindly and without needing help or prompting, she wriggles out of her messy and dirty top, pulling her pants and underwear down and kicking them off. Her feet were bare and covered in scratches. I gingerly pulled out her hair tie which was almost completely buried in her matted hair and then lifted her into the tub as she gave a squeal and giggled.

I felt a hand on my chest and looked over to see that Jinx was standing there, unclothed, Damien holding the clothes in his hands and giving me a sad smile. Jinx has bruises on his body and scratches as well. I lift him up and place him in the bath with his sister, Jinx happily plopping himself down in the water and splashing it.

“We need to do their hair” Damien says, eyeing Milly’s worriedly “it needs to be untangled.”

“It’s also late” I say tiredly “and we can’t have them go to bed with wet hair. That will have to wait until tomorrow morning” I conclude grimly “when we have several hours to do it. These guys are sleepy and need to rest.”

He sighs but sees my point. “I’ll go and prepare some beds for them.”

Milly’s ears prick up. “I thought we were sleeping with you?” she says, pouting.

“I want to sleep with you” Jinx says to us, looking worried now.

I want to groan out loud. Thank heavens I’d gotten a larger bed now that Drake was my mate as well, but it would still be a bit of a tight fit with two children between all three of us. But I also didn’t have the heart to separate them from each other, or force them to sleep away from us. They had been through enough; I wouldn’t traumatize them any further if I could help it.

“You can sleep with us” I say as Damien nods at them “but it’s only for one night” I add as they give us beaming smiles. Christ, they are so cute, it’s all I can do not to swoop down and hug them. What the hell is wrong with me? My wolf finds them intriguing and likes them. He’s already beginning to look on them as pups.

“I’ll put fresh sheets on” Damien offers.

“Thanks. Is that Drake?” I ask as the door downstairs open and closes.

“Yes” shouts Drake “and I have clothes for them.”

Brilliant. I suspected the water was getting cold from the shivering of the two siblings, but they didn't look like they wanted to get out of the tub.

"Hey guys" I say to Milly and Jinx as Damien disappears and Drake reappears in the room "it's time to get out now, but you can have another bath tomorrow morning."

Milly's l\*ip quivers but she looks at Jinx who is shivering madly now and gives a small smile, getting up and helping her brother up. "Okay" she agrees. Jinx just nods.

"Drake" I said turning to him "can you go and ask one of the pack families with kids around the same age, for some nightclothes to borrow? We can try and get them some clothes tomorrow but for now, this is the easiest solution."

I grab a towel and pick up Milly first, wrapping her in it and drying her off as she giggles at me. I send her into the bedroom where Drake begins to help her get dressed.

"Alright Jinx, your turn" I tell him, grabbing him and a fresh towel and drying him off as he just stayed silent and took it. I take hold of his hand and feel a pang in my chest as I feel how little and how cold his hand was. I pull him into the room where Drake has successfully changed Milly, who is now wearing a nightgown and fresh underwear. Damien has just finished changing the sheets and blankets on the bed as well.

Jinx lets go of my hand and Drake kneels down, holding out the clothes. They are flannelette pajamas with dinosaurs on them, and the little boy's eyes light up.

"Here Jinx" Drake says softly, helping him into the underwear, pants and then helping to do up the buttons on the shirt "now you'll be nice and warm" he adds. The boy beams at him and my breath catches in my throat. How sweet this all seems. How right. I blink back tears and then glance at the bed meaningfully. Milly glances at it as well and goes over to it, touching the sheets and looking happy.

"Bed" she says jumping up and down on her toes. Then she looks over at Damien. "Story?" she asks.

"You want me to read you a story?" Damien asks. The little girl nods. Jinx nods.

Damien looks a bit uncertain. I shrug. I don't exactly possess children's books. Something else that I'd have to consider while shopping.

"Make it up" Drake tells him cheerfully, swiping the clothes off the bathroom floor and putting them in the hamper.

Damien glares at him. Then his eyes soften. "Alright, but both of you get into bed" he says and they shake their heads.



“You first” demands Milly.

Damien sighs. He slowly pulls the covers back and gets in, Jinx and Millie climbing in beside him. They stare at me and Drake and I begin to feel uncomfortable.

“Get in” Milly says stubbornly. She points at the bed. Drake gives a small huff of laughter and gets in beside Milly, while I hesitate. There was so much I still needed to do. Pack business and all that, not to mention that Winter and Kai had gone to Prince Jasper’s castle. But I couldn’t deny this sweet little girl’s request. I doubt any grown man could. You would have to have a heart of stone, and I sadly do not possess that.

I turn the light off and get in, Drake snuggling against me, while the children snuggle against each other and Damien.

“Story” chirps Jinx.

I stifle my grin and wait for Damien to start, wondering what kind of story he was going to be able to make up on the spot. Damien clears his throat.

“Ahem” he says, “once upon a time there lived a girl with her parents and her older brother” he continued.

I knew what he was doing. He was going to tell them about his and Winter’s story. But within minutes the sound of soft snores fills the room

as Milly and Jinx fall asleep. Damien lets out a relieved sigh and ends the story abruptly.

All of us are silent for a moment, listening to the children, feeling warm and content in the bed.

“Hey Langdon” Damien says quietly.

“Yeah” I say gruffly, as Drake’s arm winds around my waist.

“Can we keep them?” he asks.

Drake’s voice sounds just then as well “please.”

I knew then, that if we couldn’t find their family, we would be adopting these two little rascals. Within hours, Damien, Drake and I had all lost our hearts to them and each other. A family was at our fingertips, and the possibility, instead of scaring me filled me with excitement. I had always wanted a family, now, it was entirely possible I might have one of my very own.