

CHAPTER 160

Simon POV

I look rather helplessly at the twins, Drake and Damien, my so-called brothers as Milly and Jinx crowd me, wanting to be picked up and cuddled.

"Just be careful bro" Drake says easily, picking Milly up, while I tentatively pick up Jinx, who settles against me with his thumb in his hand.

I love how easily the word bro came off his lips, as though he has accepted me as his half-brother already. Damien seems to be a little more cautious of the two and as for Langdon? Well, it's impossible to tell what the man is thinking half the time, but he's polite and civil to me at least.

I get the wariness; believe me I do. After all, our mother was an evil bitch and that's not even me exaggerating. She made my childhood a living hell. All I can remember is the constant tantrums she would throw whenever she didn't get her own way, the very odd occasion father would tell her no. The screaming, the slapping of my face just because she hated seeing it. There was no telling when she would lose her temper, sometimes it was constant for days. It was all I could do to fade into the background.

"Simon" Jinx says happily, as I bounce him on my leg. Thank God for shifter strength, because I'm definitely not the strongest person here.

"Yeah" I say lowly.

He pulls out his thumb. "Bro" he repeats what he heard Drake say. My heart melts instantly. I have always wanted a younger brother or sister, and if Damien, Drake and Langdon adopted these two little ones, then I would have both a niece and a nephew to love and adore. I had my fingers crossed for them. They seemed like such a beautiful family. One day, I hope to have the same, with a mate that I love and adore. There is no way I'll ever take a chosen mate. I shudder at the very thought of it. Not after seeing what mother and father's relationship is like.

"Should we watch a movie" suggests Damien.

Milly gives a happy shriek, wiggling in Drake's grasp now. "Movie, movie" she chants, as Damien gives a low chuckle.

"Sounds good" says Drake, carrying Milly into the lounge room, the rest of us following behind him.

He plonks Milly on the couch and tickles her, making her shriek with laughter. These children look so different now that their hair isn't disheveled and dirty, their bodies now clean and smelling fresh. Damien and Drake had bathed the two of them for hours, washing their hair over and over in an attempt to not have to cut it. In the end they had cut Jinx's, so that it was more manageable for it had been long, and trimmed Milly's. It made a huge difference; you wouldn't believe it. It was like looking at two different children once they had gotten out of the bath.

I awkwardly place Jinx on the couch. He immediately moves and sidles closer to Milly. Those two have such a connection, that I feel envious of their relationship with one another. They are so close, so attuned to each other's mood. Then again, maybe that was a twin thing? Damien and Drake appeared to be just as close and they hadn't known each other long, let alone known about each other's existence their whole lives. They were

also extremely devoted to Langdon and Langdon was just as devoted and fiercely protective of his mates.

"What should we watch?" asks Damien with a wide smile at the two little cherubs, who were watching him with wide eyes, "there's Sleeping beauty, Cinderella, Beauty and the beast. . ." he trails off.

Milly sits upright, bouncing up and down on the sofa with excitement. Jinx appears to be the more sensitive one in the twosome, or rather more of an introvert.

"Cinderella, Cinderella, Cinderella" she yells, her tone shrill as we all wince and try not to cover our ears.

Jinx just nods quietly, his gaze on the television screen, leaning against Milly.

"Cinderella it is" laughs Damien, putting the DVD into the player.

"I will go make some popcorn" says Drake calmly, while Langdon sits down in a recliner, a smile on his face as he watches the two small children. "Simon, want to give me a hand?"

I'm a little surprised by the request, but I just shrug nonchalantly. "Sure" I say, following him into the kitchen.

He hands me the microwave popcorn and points to the microwave, fiddling around in the kitchen for a large bowl. I place it inside the microwave and follow the directions.

"So how are you finding it here little bro?" asks Drake, as he plonks a large bowl next to the microwave.

I look at him, uncertain how to answer. In the end I choose honesty. "I don't know. I mean this pack is so different to what I grew up with. Not

only that but you and Damien seem so nice, so friendly, it's strange to me" I admit.

He gives a friendly smile as he turns towards the refrigerator and begins to dig out sodas for everyone. He waters some down in sippy cups for the two small ones.

"A treat," he says hastily as I watch with a raised eyebrow "they don't get this every day, we all agreed on that. But for now, while they settle in with us."

I nod. That's fair enough. I open the microwave door as it gives a loud ding, putting the fresh, hot popcorn into the bowl. My mouth fairly waters at the smell of it, as I take hold of it, Drake grabbing hold of the sodas, and sippy cups. We go back into the lounge room. Milly and Jinx eagerly hold out their hands for the sippy cups, their eyes wide as they take a little sip, wide smiles on their faces. Damien and Langdon take a soda and I grab one after placing the bowl in the middle of the coffee table, for everyone to share.

I watch the screen as the movie begins. The children reach out and take hold of a handful of popcorn simultaneously and begin to happily munch on it. They are transfixed by the movie, seemingly familiar with it. I sit down on the other recliner, while Drake sits on the lounge, next to the children, Damien on the other side of them. We all lean back, crossing our legs and relaxing.

"Simon, I wonder what you'll think of Winter and Kai when you get to meet them properly" comments Damien, "Winter is lovely by the way, the best sister a bro could ever want."

I smile. I hadn't really gotten to know Winter when we all came back here, so I was hoping to spend time with her when she and Alpha Kai came

back. "She seems really cool" I tell him, "She was really nice and so was Kai. It was good of them to bring me back here. But can I ask something?"

Damien nods. Drake looks curious. "What is Johnathon like? I know he's my half-brother as well. Is he going to come and see me?" I ask trying not to appear too enthusiastic. After all, I had gone from no siblings to four. It was astonishing and awesome to tell the truth.

Damien gives a small cough, Milly turning around and shushing him with a serious look on her face. He apologizes and waits until the little girl is watching the movie again, before he starts to speak. "Johnathon is a cool person. He's strong, as an Alpha and he has his own pack. He's kind, caring and I guess he'll make a pretty awesome brother as well. He did contact me to let you know that he's planning on travelling down here to see you, when he gets his mate settled in at home. I guess it's hard, his mate was in one of the cells at the warehouse, so she's pretty traumatized, so give him some leeway."

I nod but feel glum. I would have liked to have met Johnathon, but who was I to complain when I had two brothers right here with me, wanting to get to know me?

"So, what are your hobbies Simon" asked Drake, looking curious.

I shrug. "I really like to read" I tell him "Any books I can get my hands on. I didn't get given many growing up and I didn't really attend school too much so I would read whenever I did have some."

"Do you like to train?" this was from Langdon, who was leaning forward in his chair.

"Not really. Not because it's hard, but I do find it to be difficult, but because we were whipped if we didn't train to the trainer's satisfaction.

The hunter was a real bastard like that" I mutter, then "sorry" as I realize I've just sworn in front of Milly and Jinx. Thankfully they didn't look up from the television, so I doubt they heard me.

"Would you like to train? We don't punish in that way and the head trainer is really understanding" Langdon pushes.

I think about it. For so long now, I've felt helpless, unable to defend myself and hating that I feel like a coward who tries to hide in the background. Maybe here, it wouldn't be so bad and I could become as good a fighter as Winter and Alpha Kai. All I needed was a little push and Langdon was giving me the choice.

"I'll give it a go" I say hoarsely "but if I want to stop. . ."

"Then you stop, no questions asked" promised Langdon.

I give a sigh of relief.

"What else do you like to do?" Damien.

"I really like to listen to music, I like pop songs and heavy metal" I tell him, "But I've only heard songs from the radio station in cars."

"We'll have to get you some music CDs and a stereo" murmurs Damien thoughtfully.

That would be so awesome. I almost beam at him with my eyes twinkling. For the first time in a long time, I felt like I was surrounded by family and friends. It was a novel concept to me. I had never had friends before and I hated the family I did have. Now it was an entirely different story. This felt like what I imagined, home would feel like.

Drake shoots a look at Langdon who gives an almost imperceptible nod. What was going on? It was almost like they had a secret or something. He

gives me a friendly and warm smile. "So, Simon" he says quietly, Damien also leaning forward, careful to avoid blocking the tv screen for the children "we were wondering something."

This could be ominous. I force myself to speak past the lump in my throat, seized by fear for no good reason "what's that?"

"Relax" says Damien with a laugh "it's nothing serious or bad. It's just that Damien, Langdon and I have been talking about you" he says.

My body instantly relaxes as I glance over at a tight-lipped Langdon, who is listening intently to Damien.

"We were wondering, if you would like to live in this house with us or if you want to live in the pack house with Winter and Kai? Of course, if you want to live with Johnathon, you can, no one's saying you can't. That's entirely up to you" Damien tells me firmly.

My heart skips a beat. Was he asking me to live with them? I was a little confused. "But don't you have enough on your plate with Milly and Jinx?"

Surely it would be too much to throw me into the mix as well. But Damien's eyes are twinkling at me. "We might be busy, but there is always room in our home for family."

I blink back the tears from my eyes. He had just called me family, so casually like it was nothing, but to me it meant everything. I couldn't believe they were opening their home to me.

"The choice is yours, but my home is always open to you" Langdon says gruffly "and we would love for you to stay."

I don't even have to consider it. The house would be chaotic, with the children, but it would also be full of love and laughter. Damien and Drake were awesome and I could help with Milly and Jinx in exchange. I knew

Winter had opened her home to me, but I really, really wanted to live with my older brothers.

"I would like to live here" I tell them and am swamped with hugs, from Damien, Drake and shocker, Langdon as well.

"Then I guess we better show you to your new room" suggests Drake and within seconds I'm up following him, my chest tight. I was finally home, with family that loved me.