

## The Primal 1

### Chapter 1: Another Monday morning

It was just another boring Monday morning. The sparse rays of sunlight that found their way through the blinders' narrow gaps did little to disturb the man sleeping deeply on the bed. However, the serene peace was short-lived as the accursed sound of his alarm began its daily ritual of ruining a good dream.

Jake, previously enjoying the sweet embrace of his blankets, was startled awake, fumbling around until his hand finally found his phone. Grumbling, he rolled out of bed and started his usual morning routine, preparing for yet another day at work.

He went for a warm shower, a quick breakfast, got himself dressed, before he finally grabbed his stuff and headed out the door. The entire morning routine was done in less than half an hour.

Walking down the stairs to his car, he had an intuition that the day was going to be interesting. He didn't know why as everything was as usual so far, but he couldn't entirely dispel the feeling. Maybe someone brought donuts?

Traffic was terrible as usual, living in a big city and all. He spent most of the time not actually driving but sitting in the endless queues of the morning rush. He had considered cycling or maybe running to work, but then he would have to shower and get dressed at work, and that just sounded bothersome.

As he finally pulled into the parking lot, he got out, grabbed his bag, and headed on inside the corporate office that had been his workplace for the last couple of years. The building itself was a massive monstrosity of glass, with way too many floors. It wasn't all that out of place, though, being surrounded by similar structures.

As he got inside, he was greeted by the receptionist, Joanna. She was a middle-aged woman, who always wore these large earrings, and more makeup than an entire class of high school girls would need in a week. If Jake had to describe Joanna in the easiest way possible, it would be a soccer-mom stuck in a perpetual mid-life crisis. The reception was located only a couple of meters away from the elevators, so greeting her in the morning was a natural routine for most employees.

"Morning, Jake, had a good weekend?" she asked, with far too much energy for this early in the morning.

“Same as always, how about you?” Jake answered politely, knowing what was to come.

“Oh, it was great! You know me and Mike tried to...” she replied with vigor, explaining in great detail, giving Jake déjà-vu to last week, where the exact same scenario seemed to have played out.

After the far too long conversation about inane subjects with her, the arrival of the elevator finally saved him, allowing his escape as he headed on up to the 14th floor.

Stepping out of the elevator, Jake was met by a calm, open-office space. Seems like I was one of the first to arrive today, he thought, as he found his way to his desk. Booting up the computer, he started going through the emails that came during the weekend.

Jake had worked in this office for a bit over two years now. His job was what many would describe as boring, yet he somehow found it peaceful to immerse himself in the spreadsheets, financial reports, and whatnot. He worked in the financial department, and if he said so himself, he was rather good at what he did.

He mainly worked with investments, his official title being a business analyst. Jake had a knack for picking out the excellent stocks and avoiding the bad ones. He had always had a good gut feeling about those kinds of things.

The office slowly got filled up as more and more made their way off the elevator. After the initial morning greetings and polite social exchanges, the noise slowly died down as everyone got busy with their respective tasks. No donuts, he noted internally with great disappointment.

As he sat there, having finished up the most immediate tasks, he began to feel a bit tired once more, clearly having not gotten enough sleep. Most others in the office had learned by now that he wasn't one for small talk, so most left him alone. Just the way he wanted it.

Jake had always been a rather laid-back person. Cautious and a bit withdrawn. He had always been a bit of a loner and chose activities based on not interacting with others. Heck, when his dad forced him into doing some kind of sport to get him out of his room, he chose archery as he could do that entirely on his own.

All in all? Jake was content with his life. He had a well-paying job, a good family, a nice apartment, great colleagues, and his future was looking bright if he said so himself. He wasn't an extraordinary person, but just another face in the crowd. And he kind of liked it that way. Standing out meant unnecessary attention, and he would prefer to avoid that.

As he finished his thoughts, his superior, Jacob, walked over with a big smile on his face.

"Hey there buddy! Me and the others are heading out for lunch, you wanna come?" he asked cheerfully.

"Eh, sure, sounds good," Jake replied tentatively.

He liked Jacob. Jacob was the kind of guy that people would call a born leader. Excellent social skills, an affinity for reading people, and making you feel comfortable around him. He was one of the few people that Jake called a friend.

Following him was a guy called Bertram. Big and brooding would be one's first assumption, but he was actually a big softie. Apparently, he had taken care of Jacob while growing up and was something like a butler or something.

All he knew is that Jacob's family was filthy rich. It was quite honestly a miracle that Jacob hadn't turned out to be an entitled brat, instead of the man he was today. He was popular in the office by every metric, especially with a certain clientele.

His handsome looks, tall stature, and overall charm certainly did him no harm when it came to the women in the office. His hair always seemed to sit impossibly perfect, his suit always worn perfectly, and what seemed like an eternal relaxed smile adorning his face.

They managed to get along mainly due to the man's ability to carry a conversation longer than a few sentences, even with someone like Jake. The fact that Jake wasn't the type to create problems in the office, but only deliver reliable results, naturally only made their relationship easier for both sides.

Which was also the reason why Jake agreed on going to lunch. Because with Jacob along, he knew it wouldn't be entirely awkward.

Jake got up and made his way to the elevator together with Jacob and Bertram. Talking along the way about work and the meeting they had planned for after the lunch break.

He spotted Joanna with Mike, her husband, getting into the same elevator he, Jacob, and Bertram were heading into. Said elevator quickly got cramped, as three others were already in the elevator waiting to go down.

One of these three being Caroline. Caroline was a coworker working in the human resources department, who shared their office space with Jake's department. She was a year younger than him, slim, blonde, and quite frankly everything that Jake would refer to as 'his type'.

He was aware that this was likely just due to her being one of the only women around his age that he interacted with regularly. Just two people of the opposite sex in close proximity. Which is one of the reasons why he never acted on the emotion. Along with quite a few others. He wasn't really the romantic type, and his prior experience in romance didn't exactly pan out. Well, he thought, her cheating on me with my best friend, does count as 'not panning out', right?

Thus he only managed to give her a nod and a small "good morning" to her, despite it being noon. Jake was barely able to hold his embarrassment back from showing, but luckily she appeared to just take it as a bad joke.

Jake was perfectly aware that Caroline barely saw him as a friend and had no romantic interest in him whatsoever. Jacob, on the other hand, she clearly had her eyes on. Not that he could blame her. Jacob was a great dude, no matter how you put it, and he could simply not bring himself to dislike him, despite him being Jake's unaware, one-sided, rival in love.

Jake himself was what one would describe as rather average in the looks department. Not too fat, not too slim, short brown hair, brown eyes, and a face that couldn't be described as handsome nor ugly.

The only thing he had going for him was his above-average physique, mainly stemming from him still doing archery for fun in his free time, even having a homemade practice range at his parent's place. This, coupled with his gym membership (and actually going), made him maintain his healthy lifestyle from back during a time he still dreamed of being an athlete.

\*DING!\*

The sound of the elevator closing quickly brought him back to reality, as the descent towards the ground level began. And just as his thoughts began to wander on what to get for lunch, his thought-process was interrupted once again.

\*DING!\*

A sound, eerily similar to the elevator, filled his head, while simultaneously, words appeared before his eyes; in his mind. He barely managed to make them out before he blacked out.

\*Initiation of the 93rd Universe confirmed. Introduction and tutorial sequence commencing\*