

Bruce and Danny

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Chapter 2: Danny's POV (now 4 years-old)

I looked around the corner into dad's office. I could see him typing away on his keyboard working on his weekly column for the newspaper he worked for, wearing some grey cargo shorts and one of his usual sleeveless shirts. I slowly crept into the room, making sure I didn't make a sound that would alert him, which was hard seeing that he had animal hearing...and sense of smell. Now I was right behind him, at the back of his chair, I readied myself and...

"RAH!" I shouted, jumping into dad's lap.

"Gah!" Dad jumped. Then he sighed, scratching my head gently, "well looks like you got me this time kiddo."

"Really?" I asked.

"Oh yeah, really made me jump, you're going to have to try extra hard to ever get me again, It won't be so easy next time." He gave me playfully devious smile. Looking back he totally saw me coming, but he knew it would make me feel good if he played along.

"So, what do you want little guy?" He asked, going back to typing his article.

"I'm boooooorred..." I sighed, sprawling out on his lap.

"Well, what do you want me to do about it?" he sarcastically asked.

"Uh...play with me?" I suggested, smiling up at him.

"I'd love to buddy...but," he gestured to the computer screen, "I've got this article I gotta do right now."

"Aw," I whined, "You've been working all day." I said, disappointedly sliding off his lap.

"Sorry buddy, maybe later."

I slowly lumbered out of the office and down the hallway; right when I was about to open the door to my bedroom I hear a familiar voice behind me,

"It's later!" followed by a pair of huge paws grabbing my waist and quickly lifting me up, and running down the hall to mom and dad's room. He threw me onto the bed and then landed next to me immediately. I looked over to, of course, see dad, now ready to play with me.

"Now we're even." He said.

"You're so mean to me!" I joked back,

"Oh, really? Is *that* what you think?" He said, as I tried to crawl off the bed.

"Well I guess that means I'm supposed to do *this*." He then grabbed my ankle with his giant paw and dragged me back to him. Once I was close enough, he wrapped his arm around my chest, just under my underarms.

"No, ugh, stop! No!" I begged playfully, as he proceeded to take his paw and ruffle up my hair with it like he always liked to do. "Stop it! Daddy, Gah!" I struggled to get out of his grasp, but when you're a 4 year-old boy against a 34 year-old Kodiak bear, the odds aren't exactly in your favor.

Finally dad stopped, and fell back against the bed, laughing about how messed up my hair was now. I started trying to get my hair back right.

"See," I pouted, "You are *so* mean to me."

“Aww, I’m just foolin’ around with my cub. Come ‘ere!” He said grabbing me again.

“No.” I said back, laughing a little. Then he pulled me into one of his, literal, bear hugs; that I could never resist, even if I wanted to. All I could do then was put my tiny arms around his neck and hug him back. After a few seconds he let go and I plopped back on the bed.

“Better?” He asked.

“Uh-huh.” I said, smiling back at him.

“How ‘bout we go wash up? I’ll bet dinner’s about ready.” He said.

“Okay.” I agreed, following him to the bathroom.

As he helped me wash my hands I looked at our reflections in the mirror, and I started thinking again. It had finally sunk in a while back that I didn’t look at all like my parents. I would see other kids in the park and restaurants, and most of them looked like their moms and dads, some with just slight differences, but I obviously wasn’t a bear. I had been wanting to bring it up, but at that age I didn’t really know how to ask a question like that, at least not without it sounding weird.

“Everything alright Danny?” Dad asked, breaking me out of my thoughts.

“Uh...Mmhmm.” I nodded.

“Well then let’s go eat.”

For dinner we had chicken Alfredo, it was pretty good, but I still kept thinking about me and dad’s reflection. I feel like that was when it really sunk in,

when I'd finally taken the time to look at me and my dad side by side in a mirror, my young mind was able to grasp just how different I looked from mom and dad.

"Danny, you're not eating very much tonight?" Mom pointed out.

"That's the same look he had before we came downstairs." Dad added. "You feeling alright buddy?"

I don't know exactly what happened, but I just kind of came out and said it, "How come I look different?"

"What do you mean sweetie?" Mom asked, not fully understanding right away what I meant.

"I don't look like you." I pointed out.

Then there was one of the most awkward silences in history. My parents probably knew I'd ask this at some point, but I'm sure it would have been much easier to explain it if I was asking this at 13 as opposed to 4. Then my Dad finally broke the silence.

"Well, Danny...we got you when you were just a little cub...um..."

"We found you." Mom said.

"Found' me?" I asked.

"You were left on our door step." Mom lied.

"Like Superman?" I asked.

"Yeah, kinda like Superman" Dad said, chuckling.

"Oh." I said, sort of understanding now. "So...you aren't my 'real' parents."

"Not necessarily..." Dad said.

“We might not be your ‘real’ parents Danny, but we still love you as if you were our own son.” Mom added.

“You might not look like us, but that doesn’t mean we love you any less, or that you don’t love us any less. Right?” Dad asked, putting his paw on my shoulder.

“Right.” I said, with a smile.

As unbelievably awkward as that family moment was, even more so looking back on it, it was a good way of explaining it to a 4-year-old in a way they’d understand.

I kept thinking about it until I eventually had to get ready for bed. Even though this information was a lot to take in at 4 years old, it made me feel even closer to my parents. Even though I wasn’t their son they still treated me as if I was. And that made me even happier to have them as my mom and dad.