

Jennie walked over to the usual table her friends sat, balancing her water, salad with grilled chicken, and a bowl of fruit on her tray.

"Guess who I saw coming out of the administrative office earlier this morning?" the tigress asked as the raccoon took her seat. "It was Alex."

"Do you think they are going to expel him after that fight in the cafeteria?" the red panda at the table asked.

"Naw, I heard him and Brian just got detention for it," Jennie commented.

"Even after he punched Brian?" the red panda inquired.

"Yeah, well I heard Brian did bite him," the tigress said.

"Ew! That's so primitive and gross" the red panda scoffed.

They all looked up briefly when a cougar joined their table. Like everyone else, she had a salad, though with steak like the tigress. She also brought some new news with her. "Did you guys hear they closed the gym?"

"What? Why? Where are we suppose to practice?" the red panda wondered.

"Not the sports one, the old one," the cougar stated.

"That place is old, I'm surprised they didn't close it earlier," the tigress added.

"Yeah, I overheard one of the gym teachers say someone got hurt in there, which is why they had to close it," the cougar continued.

"Do you know who?" Jennie asked, more interested in the news now.

"No, they didn't say," the cougar said finally digging into her salad.

"It must have happened outside of class or we would have heard about it," Jennie surmised.

"Who would use that gym outside of class when we have the sports one?," the red panda asked.

Jennie thought about it for a moment wondered what student that played sports would use the old gym when the sports one was much nicer. It didn't make sense, at least not if you played a sport that is. *Who indeed...*

Alex walked around like a zombie the next day, a mad irritated zombie that everyone did well to avoid. That brown bear from the cafeteria, Mr. Schultz, caught him after his first period and escorted him to his office to have a little talk. The administrator wanted to know about the incident that happened with David in the gym and how the bull and lioness were involved. Alex jumped out of his seat in anger when

the bear asked if he was the one that hurt David. He was about to blurt out that it was Ben who was responsible when he remembered what the husky had told the horse. So instead, he bit his tongue, literally, and said that he and Stacy had David like that and didn't see the husky hurt himself. Just when Alex thought it was over, Mr. Schultz reminded him not to skip detention today. The bear excused yesterday's absence due to Alex's friend's injury, but the bull was not to miss another one, or else.

Other than it being Friday, Alex didn't have much to look forward too. Tim had told him yesterday that David was stuck at home for the rest of the week due to his injuries, so Alex didn't get to have lunch with the husky in the library. He still went to the library for lunch, but all he did was stare at the empty seat across from him. After school let out, Stacy found him and said that they were going to visit David at home and they wanted him to come. He used detention as an excuse and that he had to help his mother with something when Stacy insisted that someone will pick him up after detention. Alex couldn't face the husky after what happened, after what he let happen, after he said that he would protect David. The whole time in detention, that is all he thought about. He doubted David wanted to see him at all. He was surprised any of them still wanted to associate with him.

The long walk home he spent thinking of all the ways he could punch Ben and Brian, his tail whipping behind him. That was, until he imagined one of the beat-up bodies lying on the floor was David. That sent him into a spiral of resentment, self loathing, and depression. By the time he got in the door of his house and took off his jacket, his ears were down, his tail still, and he was staring at the ground with a blank expression. Something moved in the periphery of his vision and his mom came into view when he looked up.

"Hey Alex. I'm just about to head out to-" she stopped mid sentence when she looked up at her son. "Aw honey, what's wrong?"

"Nothing," Alex tried to brush her off.

"It's about your friend isn't it. One of the girls at work told me they saw you there with two of your friends and one of them was injured." She walked over to her son and wrapped as much of him as she could into a hug. "Don't worry, your friend will be alright. I'm sure."

Alex sighed deeply and gave into the comforting hug. It was easy for him to completely wrap around his mother with his reach and return the hug. His mom could quiet reach all the way around him, but she rubbed his back and comforted him as much as she could.

"Now come on, chin up," she said kissing the underside of Alex's muzzle. "I'll give you a ride in the afternoon if you want to visit him tomorrow. I have to get to work now." She released her son and went about gathering her things before turning around and saying an "I love you" goodbye as she left out the door.

Alex trudged up to his room, threw his backpack to the side and started stripping, tossing his clothes to the corner where he threw all the dirty laundry. He plopped onto his bed in just his boxers and lied there trying to think of nothing.

The sound of the doorbell ringing was such a foreign noise to Alex that he woke up instantly from his dream. It was a bit of a shock, the sudden awakening. He couldn't remember what time he fell asleep last night, nor did he even know what time it was now. He shook his head and took a deep breath before looking over to the night stand to see that the clock read eleven thirty eight in the morning, much later than he normally would let himself sleep. The doorbell made another series of rings reminding him that someone was waiting impatiently outside. He couldn't think of who would even be out there.

Alex begrudgingly made his way to the door, hooves stomping along the wooden floor. The doorbell rang again just as he reached for the handle. "Hello?" he said gruffly with a scowl on his face from the brightness outside and having just woken up unexpectedly. A shiver ran down his spine when the cool air hit him, he was still in his boxers.

"Well someone's not a morning fur."

Alex snorted, his bullring lifting off his nose, at the sight of the sassy lioness. A honking noise from the driveway caught his attention and he saw another lion and fox waving out the windows of a jeep. Alex only gave an ear flick in the direction of the car and turned back to the lioness on his porch. "What do you guys want?"

"You," the lioness purred. "We're going to visit David. So hurry up and get dressed."

"I can't go." Alex still didn't want to face David. He was going to leave it at that and was about to turn around and let the door close when Stacy spoke again.

"Oh, that's too bad," she said somewhat mournfully, "for David." Stacy saw the bull's ears flick at the husky's name and knew she had him now. "He was *SO* sad yesterday when you didn't show up and I had to tell him you weren't coming. His tail stopped wagging after that." She was laying it on thick, soft sorrowful voice, ears down, tail tucked and all.

Alex sighed, "I don't think he wants to see me."

"He asked for you specifically," she said poking the bull in his bare chest. "Now go put some cloths on and lets go."

Alex sighed in defeat. "I'll be right back," he said as he turned back into the house to get dressed.

Alex was quiet for most of the car ride, only giving short answers whenever someone asked him something. There was still a lot on his mind and he wasn't sure what would happen when he saw David. He was thinking about turning around, but by that time they were parking in the driveway of a large single family home with a two car garage and a large well kept yard. Alex recognized David's car sitting in the driveway as they got out of Justin's jeep and made their way to the door.

Tim hopped up to the door and rang the doorbell, though Alex didn't know what for because the fox then just turned the door knob and let himself in calling David's name and announcing their arrival. David's voice called out from somewhere in the house notifying them that he was in the living room.

Alex followed the lions and fox past the stairway and into a huge living room that was opened to an equally impressive kitchen and dining room. Justin said hello and a pair of ears perked up from the black leather sectional that was arranged with other furniture in front of a large TV hanging above a nice looking fireplace.

"Hey guys," David said as he looked behind him to see who entered. The husky mood brighten when he saw the big bull filling the entrance way to the living room. He winced as he twisted his body more to face them, but that didn't stop a big grin from appear on his muzzle. "Hey Alex!" A rhythmic thumping sound came from the couch as the husky's tail wagged happily.

Justin jumped onto the loveseat, sprawling his lion self out, tail flopping off to the side. "I don't know about you guys, but I'm starving. You want to order some pizza and watch a movie or something."

Stacy walked over to the loveseat and pushed Justin aside so she could sit comfortably. "You just ate."

"But I'm hungry now," Justin pouted with his muzzle lying on the armrest.

"I think it's a good idea. We'll all be hungry by the time we order and it arrives," Tim said from an armchair.

Alex made his way into the living and sat on the couch that David was on, although he sat all the way on the opposite side. David continued to smile and wag his tail as everyone made themselves comfortable. "I think that's a good idea. Everyone want the usual?," David asked. A round of 'yups' echoed before the husky turned to Alex. "What about you? Like anything in particular? Justin usually gets a medium everything."

"I'm good," Alex said.

"I'll make that two medium everythings and a large veggie then," David said as he took out his phone and began typing on it.

"Hey, you guys want to play a round of Mario Party while we wait?" Justin asked as he sprung up from the couch and walked over to the entertainment shelf on the side of the fireplace.

Alex refused a controller when the lion approached. Thankfully there were only four and everyone else was happy to play. He never played videogames that much, the newest system he owned was a N64 and he hadn't turned that thing on for years. He did recall playing Mario Party when he was a kid and having fun, but that was ages ago. The game started up and he was content with watching everyone else play.

It was David's turn when his green dinosaur character landed on some challenge square and he had to fight off some monsters with a sword. This required the husky to swing his control around like a weapon which he couldn't do in his current state. "Someone want to do this game for me, I don't think I can," David asked the room.

"Oh, pass it to Alex," Stacy said with Tim adding a 'Yeah' to that.

"I can't," Alex said when he tried to brush off the offer.

"Oh, common. It will be fun. Just give it a try," the husky said to him holding out the controller. With everyone else encouraging him, he sighed and grabbed the controller from David's paw.

"How do I-"

"Just follow the instructions on the screen," Tim pointed at the TV.

Alex found himself standing up in the middle of the room fighting off a big ghost with his magic light sword of some sort being cheered on by a crowd. From that point, David was passing him the controller every other turn and he found himself trying to beat the others in whatever silly game they were playing. He was starting to remember why he liked playing this game on the N64. Just as Stacy was finishing up her turn the doorbell rang.

"Pizzas here!" Justin sprang up excitedly and hopped to the door. David offered to get the plates, but Stacy was already on her way to the kitchen. The delicious smell wafted into the room before the lion reappeared, practically drooling over the four boxes. Justin was purring with a slice of pizza logged in his muzzle as Tim switched the TV from the game to Netflix. They decided on some superhero action movie when Alex and Tim said they hadn't seen it.

Not even half way through the movie Alex had already finished a whole pizza and was still hungry. He hadn't eaten anything all day and didn't realize just how hungry he was until the smell of the pizza hit his nose and made his stomach rumble.

David noticed Alex setting down his empty pizza box and looking at the left over veggie pizza that Stacy, Tim, and he were sharing. "You can have the rest if you want," he offered.

"I'm okay," Alex declined.

"It's alright, we're not going to finish it. We never do," David said quietly.

Alex thanked him as he grabbed two slices of pizza and put it on his plate.

After the first movie, they had to watch the sequel upon Justin's insistence. No one objected. Alex actually liked the first one and the little teaser at the end made him want to know what happened in the next one. By the time the second movie ended it was getting dark outside. Justin got up from the loveseat that he and Stacy ended up cuddling on and stretched his body like only a feline could. David watched a little enviously as the lion twisted and bent his body, doing something like that would cause the husky great pain. Just looking over his shoulder caused his side to hurt, thankfully the painkillers that were prescribed to him helped to dull the pain.

"We should get going if we want to go to Cory's party," Stacy said looking at the occupants of the couch.

"What? It's still early," Justin said.

"Yeah, but I have to go home and get ready."

"Get what ready? Can't you just wear that?" Justin asked looking at his girlfriend. She looked fine to him.

"No, I bought an outfit for this party remember."

"I remember," Justin said thinking back to having to wait in the department store while Stacy tried an endless number of outfits.

Tim and David just laughed at the two before the fox got up. "Plus, I want to get ready as well," Tim said with a ear flick in the lioness' direction.

"Whatever. Let's hurry up then." Justin turned to Alex sitting on the couch. "You want to come or do you want a ride home?"

Alex was a little surprised that the lion just invited him to a party like that. The bull had never been invited to, well, anything really since he'd been in high school. Not that he wanted to go to the party, though he might take the lion up on the offer to drive him home.

"I can drive him home if he wants to stay," David added.

"Are you sure?" Tim asked.

"It's not like I'm offering to take him home in a rickshaw. I'll be sitting in a car, pushing a pedal, and turning a wheel. I think I can manage that," David said sarcastically.

"Fine, fine. Is that okay with you Alex?" Justin asked.

Alex didn't see any harm in it and agreed to let David take him home, that way the others wouldn't have to go out of their way for him. David managed to get up and see everyone out of the house before sitting back down on the couch in the quiet living room.

"Well that was fun. I hope you had a good time," David said fiddling with his tail.

"I did."

"That's good. Hehe. I'm glad you came."

With all the activity today, Alex forgot about the self loathing he'd been going through until now, now that he was alone with the injured husky. The thoughts of feeling useless, being useless, and helpless returned to him and seeing the husky wince reminded him that he failed to keep David safe like he said he would. Alex looked away from the husky and stared at the empty pizza boxes on the coffee table as an awkward silence filled the room.

David couldn't help, but fidget with his tail as he looked up at the bull sitting on the other side of the couch. Alex looked a little sad to him, but he couldn't figure out why. David was starting to worry he'd done something to make the bull upset. He was so happy when he saw Alex came with the others, so

much so, that he did a double take causing his side to hurt when he turned too far. He was hoping that he'd be able to speak with Alex to thank him for helping him in the gym and for staying with him. Now that he got his opportunity, he was starting to get those butterflies in his stomach and the silence was stretching on.

David took a big breath, but before he could get a word out Alex muttered an apology, saying that he was sorry to the husky. The canine husked out his breathe, dumfounded by what Alex could be apologizing for. "Wait, what? Why are you apologizing?" David asked.

"Because I couldn't do anything to help you," the bull said in an uncharacteristically quiet voice for the large bovine. David tried to comprehend how the bull who found him lying hurt in the gym and took him to the clinic wasn't helpful. Alex continued after a short pause. "I just sat there while you were hurt. I didn't even know what to do. When I tried to help, it only hurt you more."

Alex sounded so mournful, like this had been eating away at him for some time. David got up and sat right next to Alex and placed a paw on his arm. "Don't be stupid." The bull let out a snort, that probably wasn't the response he was expecting. David chuckled a little, "I actually wanted to thank you, you and Stacy, for helping me."

This time Alex turned to look at the husky. "For what? I didn't do anything."

"You found me and got me out from under that weight rack, stayed with me until help came and even took me to the clinic. My parents told me you even stayed there until they arrived."

"But I didn't protect you like I said I would."

David leaned against the big bull's shoulder giving the arm a hug.

"You did though, and it made me feel safe and whenever you were around, I was safe. I can't expect you to be around all the time and it's my fault that this even happened." David let out a sigh and glanced up to see Alex was looking at him curiously now.

"I'm sorry if I made you feel that, like you had to protect me when I should be able to do it on my own. If I had confronted those two or went to someone about them like Tim had said, I wouldn't be in this predicament." David's words were tinged with emotion as he started to open up.

"But... but if I did confront them. If I did tell someone that they were bullying me, everyone would find out and I would be known as the gay kid that got beat up." Sniffles filled the husky's voice.

"Then my parents would find out and make an even bigger scene. My dad would think I'm some big pussy. A little pansy that's not macho enough to handle it myself. And my mom would only make things worse. The whole town would know I was the faggot that got beat up. And I didn't want any of that to happen so. That's why I keep quiet about it." David was crying now, tears matting down the fur around his eyes and a stream flowing down on either side of his muzzle.

The slight movement startled David when Alex shook his arm free of the husky. David thought the bull was trying to push him away because he was crying like a little bitch, a sissy, an annoying little baby. Alex was pushing him away because of all the problems and trouble he was causing the crying puppy thought. Suddenly, something heavy wrapped around his shoulder and pulled him in closer to the bull. The husky gasped in shock, but leaned into the hug, despite the pain in his rib, and buried his face into the bull's torso.

"I'm sorry," David said repeating it a couple of times.

"I'm sorry too," Alex responded rubbing the husky's side.

It was about two minutes before David could bring his weeping down to just sniffles again, all the time he still leaned into Alex's side with the bull's arm around him. It was a little liberating to let it all out, all the worry about what to do about his bully problems and what his parents would think and do if they found out. He still had no solution to the situation, but it was nice to finally tell someone how he was feeling without having to worry about them making a big fuss about it.

David took a deep breath to calm himself and his nose was filled with the scent of bull, a little earthy and very masculine. It suddenly became very warm when he realized how close he was to the Alex. He could hear the bull's heart beating with the side of his head right up against the bull's pec. The bull's arm around him was heavy on his shoulders, which caused some pain on his side, but the strong arm holding him close made him feel safe.

"I'm sorry about that," David said sitting up and wiping his eyes to dry them and hide his blush. "I'm being a big drama queen."

"It's alright." Alex's arm still hadn't moved.

"Hey, why don't we start up another movie?" David offered reaching for the remote. He didn't want to sit there awkwardly after his little breakdown. He was flipping through the list of movies until he spotted a mystery movie that he remembered to be good and started it up. It wasn't until part way through the movie that he got up to readjust his position that he realized he was still sitting right up next to Alex who had kept his arm around him the whole time. He wondered if he should put some space between them now or if it would be awkward for the bull if he sat back up against him. *Fuck it*, he thought. He'd already cried like a little baby in front of Alex if that wasn't awkward enough, plus it was so warm to be snuggled up to the bull like that, so he sat back down just as close to the bull as before. To his tail wagging delight as the heavy, strong arm fell right back around him.

Alex climbed into David's tiny sports car as the husky carefully took the driver's seat with some wincing. The husky had refused to let him walk home especially with it being this late, though it was only nine on a Saturday. After the movie had finished they were about to start another one when David had insisted he finish reading the book first before watching the movie. At which point, the canine went to fetch a copy of said book so that he could continue reading. They must have spent two hours sitting on

the couch and reading together and eating another round of pizzas that David ordered. Admittedly, Alex enjoyed the afternoon a lot more than he anticipated, spending time with everyone watching movies and reading books.

Alex actually didn't remember much of the movie after Stacy, Tim, and Justin left. So much was on his mind after David's confession. He was actually relieved when he found out the husky wasn't mad at him for what he thought was his inability to do anything to help. David was actually very understanding and that's when he found out the husky was bottling up his feelings and why he didn't want to do anything for fear of what others might think. Alex didn't like seeing David cry and at that point wanted to do anything he could to help, but once again, he felt so helpless when he didn't know what to do other than to hold the husky close hoping it would provide some comfort. It seemed to have worked from what he could tell, but he was a little worried if it was weird for him to continue holding the husky after he settled down. David didn't seem to mind, in fact, every time the husky got up, he kept sitting right back next to him and it was so easy to put his arm around the little canine.

The silent car ride was interrupted when Alex's phone started ringing. The bull dug around in pocket until he pulled out the old brick style cell phone and saw that it was his mom calling.

"Hello," Alex said answering the call.

"Oh honey, I'm so sorry! It got super busy and I just lost track of time. I'm going to have to stay an extra shift and it's just been hectic down here," the sad voice said coming through the speaker.

"It's alright, some of my friends came and picked me up to go see David." The husky's ears perked at the mention of his name, but he kept his attention on the road.

"Oh that's great! How is he doing?"

"Fine. He's driving me home right now."

"Wait, what?"

"He's driving me home I said."

"When was the last time he took his medication?" Alex thought that was an odd question. David overheard the question and told him it was just before they ate that second round of pizza.

"About an hour ago," Alex answered.

"He should not be driving. The doctor told him to be careful after taking his medication right? That medicine he's on will make him drowse."

David vaguely remembered being told something like that and to avoid operating heavy machinery, but he felt fine he said as much.

"I don't care if he feels fine now, he might not later."

"What am I suppose to do?" Alex asked.

"Just have him spend the night. He should be clear to drive back in the morning. Just make sure he doesn't take his medication before driving." There was some noise in the background followed by some voices calling out. "I have to go now, be safe. I love you." The car fell into silence again as the line dropped.

"I'll be fine driving back," David said after a moment.

Alex thought about it. The husky appeared to be fine the bull thought. Then, the image of the black, white, and brown canine lying alone and injured on the side of the road surfaced in his mind. No way was he letting David drive back. They pulled up to the front of his house. "You should stay," he told David. His mom was a nurse after all, so she had to have known what she was talking about.

David looked out to the white two story house then back to the him. "Are you sure? I don't want to be a bother."

Alex simply snorted and told the husky to "come" before he got out of the car and walked to the front door with the canine in tow.

David glanced around the quaint house as he followed the bull up to the second floor and down the hall to a bed room.

Alex moved over to the edge of his bed and watched the husky observe the surroundings of the room, his room. Alex realized this was the first time in... forever that he let anyone come up here into his private and very personal space. He glanced around at the familiar surroundings. All things he was use to seeing everyday and not really paying particular attention to any of it, except for now. He was a little embarrassed at how messy everything appeared to be. Some cloths thrown at the corner after he just shucked them off before bed, the mess of crumpled papers, old pizza and general un-orderliness of the things on his desk and the layer of dust on his dresser. He was grateful his closet was closed, it was a catastrophe in there.

David surveyed the room, it definitely belonged to the big bull sitting on the edge of the bed, the bull's scent was everywhere, not that it bothered him. He noted Alex had a pretty big bed, judging by the looks of it, it was a king sized bed. It was more bed then the bull needed David thought, but Alex as a pretty big guy so, practically, it made sense he guessed. The room itself was pretty spacious considering there was still plenty of room to move around even with the bed. The tan-ish carpet wasn't plush, but it was soft under his footpads. There wasn't much in the way of decorations, no posters or pictures, just bare white walls illuminated by the light on the fan in the middle of the room. Brown seemed to be the main color palette of the room, there were two windows in the room, both covered with light brown curtains, Alex's desk and dresser were both of a wood similar to the color of his fur, and the bed sat on a dark brown wooden frame that matched the night stand on the corner separating the bed from the wall. The only think that stood out in the room was the bed set which was a dark blue.

"This is a nice room."

"Uh, thanks. Sorry about the mess."

It wasn't that bad David thought as he looked around the room again. He saw that Alex used the corner near the closet and dresser as an open hamper. The desk to his right, position in front of the bed, had an old CRT monitor on it and from the looks of it, Alex used it to eat on as well. It was messier than he would allow his desk to be, but he didn't think any less of Alex for it.

"Aw, it's not that bad. You should see Justin's room. Now that's a pig sty," David chuckled.

The medicine must have been taking affect because David let out a big yawn.

"You should lie down and get some sleep."

"Yeah, I guess your mother was right. Do you have an air mattress or spare bed up here?"

"You can just use my bed."

"Oh, no, you don't have to do that. Where would you sleep?"

"In the bed too," Alex said as he got up and began to pull off his shirt.

David's ear's flicked in surprise and his tail smacked the back of his calves. "Wait, what?" David didn't expect Alex to offer his bed... with him in it. It didn't help that the bull was stripping right in front of him.

Alex saw David just standing there, once he cleared his shirt of his horns. "It's big enough," Alex snorted.

"I... well... isn't there..." David found it hard to form a straight sentence. Alex was asking him to get in bed together and the bull apparently slept with little clothing on as he began buckling his belt.

"The only other place is my mom's room, which is taken, or those old couches downstairs which wouldn't be good for your injuries."

Alex did have a point, the couches probably wouldn't be a good option and the bed was very big. David also had to admit that secretly, deep down inside him, he wanted to do this. The husky could hear his heart thumping through his ears that were flat against this skull.

"I... I guess so," David said with a shaky voice and slowly made his way to the side of the bed.

Alex was down to just his boxers as he made his way to the other side of the bed closet to the wall and pulled back the covers as he got into the bed. David admitted that there was still plenty of room on the unoccupied side of the bed, even with the big bull taking up space a lot of space. That didn't cure the nervous feeling in the pit of his stomach though. The canine took a deep breath, which only served to fill his nose with the Alex's scent which was much stronger now, and slowly crawled under the covers. He positioned himself at the edge of the bed, to provide adequate separation between them.

David looked over his shoulder to see Alex reach over for something on the night stand and then, in an instant, the room went black. After a couple of blinking sessions his eyes began to adjust to the dark

environment. Alex shifted around a bit before he settled down and became still. Another yawn escaped David's mouth and he closed his eyes trying to force himself to sleep. He was tired and could feel the medicines effects making him drowsy, but the constant hammering of his heart and the nervous energy coursing through him kept him awake. It didn't help that he couldn't get himself comfortable, he wasn't used to sleeping in his cloths and it made his skin itch under his fur. He tried adjusting his position several times before the large mound shape next to him stirred.

"Are you alright?" Alex's voice floated through the room loud and clear.

"I'm sorry, just trying to get comfortable," David whispered.

"Did you want to try this side of the bed?"

"Oh, no. It's not the bed, it's just... I usually sleep in.... um..."

Alex snorted again. "Then take them off," he said turning back over ending the conversation.

It took some time for David to process what Alex just told him to do. The bovine literally told him to take off his cloths... and then get back in bed with him... also naked... well, almost naked, but still. David tried to lie still hoping that he could just will himself to sleep if he ignored the itchy feeling that was crawling around his skin. His heart was beating fast causing him to generate more heat which only added to the irritating feeling.

David's ears flicked as he tried to focus on the steady breathing coming from the sleeping bull lying just a few feet away. It sounded like Alex was completely relaxed and sound asleep, the rhythmic breathing only broken by the occasional deep huff. In contrast, he was to the point of panting and he started to feel even more uncomfortable under the layers of the blanket, his clothes and his fur.

Five minutes past before David quietly pulled back the covers, doing his best not to remove any portion that was covering Alex, and slipped out of bed. The bed creaked as he got up. He looked behind him to see if he disturbed Alex or if he was watching, but all he was a big mound covered by a blanket just lying there. He was hesitant at first to remove his cloths and kept glancing at Alex, worried that the bull was watching him or would wake up and see him undressing, but each time he looked over his shoulder he only saw the sleeping form of the large bull lying with his back facing the nervous husky. David relented and pulled off his clothing, placing them neatly at the edge of the bed. He turned around expecting Alex to be sitting there wide awake and watching the spectacle of him undressing, as unsexy as he thought it would be to watch an overweight husky stripe, but once again, the bull had not moved an inch and was perfectly still expect for the gentle rise and fall of his torso.

David breathe a sigh of relief and instantly felt more relaxed, now that he could feel the cool night air against his skin and fur. His tail even gave a couple of content wags to get some air flow through his fur. He found himself feeling sleepier so he snaked his way back onto the bed and under the blanket, ears flicking to listen to any change in the bull's breathing. David was much more comfortable, but the nervous feeling was still battling against the drowsiness that was trying to over take him. He closed his

eyes to aid in his battle for sleep and soon drifted off into unconsciousness listening to the heavy, steady breathing coming from the fur behind him.