

Chapter 5

Denton left Zee and Marcus' house at four in the morning, after getting no more than four hours of sleep. The bucks didn't stir when he left the bed. They were utterly exhausted. Zee was exclusively a bottom, and Marcus claimed to be a total top, except for Denton. When Denton was in their bed, both bucks kept their tails raised.

Back at his small apartment he grabbed a shower, and changed clothes. He had to get a full night of sleep in the next twenty four hours. He'd be okay for the day, but if he had another interrupted night, he was going to be a zombie.

He envied Zee and his husband' luxury of getting up whenever they wanted, unless in the middle of an emergency. Maybe he should consider joining the bureau. Zee would certainly support that decision.

But not today, he decided, as he drove to the precinct.

The day was busy. He and Alice had three robberies to look into, a gun fight, which was investigated in conjunction with vice since gangs were involved. And because the department was over loaded with calls, just before they were to leave, they had to intervene in a marital dispute turned violent.

Denton left it with a small cut on his left arm, from the wife trying to knife him when he cuffed her husband. That was after he'd punched Alice in the face, and she decked him. The paramedic cleaned the cut and put two stitches on it.

Alice's eye would swell shut over the next few days, but there was no permanent damage. The man, a heavy set boar, had landed a good punch, but he wasn't the first one to solidly connect with Alice's face. She was the current boxing champion of all the city's police departments. She could take one hell of a beating, and gave far worse than she got.

Back at the precinct, they got in their respective cars and headed home. Denton stopped there only long enough to shower and change, then headed to his parents place.

He parked in front of the house. Their parking only had space for one car, and his mother's Camry was already in it. He entered the house. "Mom? Dad?"

A cow peeked out of the kitchen. "Denton! what a surprise!" She rushed to him and gave him a hug, keeping her dirty hands away from his back. "You should have called!"

"Sorry mom. Work was hectic today and I didn't have the time. I'm just here to talk with dad."

"Nonsense, you're staying for dinner."

Denton knew better than argue with his mother.

"He's in his study."

"Thanks." he knocked on the door.

"Come on in," a deep voice resounded.

His father's study wasn't big. The bull and the desk he sat behind filled almost all of it. His father looked up from the blueprints he was studying. "This is a surprise Denton. We weren't expecting you until Sunday."

"I know, it's just that I have some questions about my parents."

Stanley looked at him for a moment, then sighed, putting away the papers. "You never asked about them before."

"I don't remember them, so I've never particularly cared, but something happened recently and I'm hoping you can shed some light on it."

He folded his hands in front of him. "I'll try."

"You knew them well, right?"

The bull nodded. "Your mother more than your father, yes."

"Did they know the Lewistons?"

"You mean the Lewistons who were murdered?"

Denton nodded.

"No, they didn't. Your mother was a secretary at the plumbing company I worked at. Your father worked for the city." Which was his father's way of saying he had been a garbage man, Denton knew. "I don't think they could be any further apart from the Lewistons."

"Could they have visited there? Maybe through their work?"

Stanley shook his head. "No, I don't think so. I don't recall that company ever doing work in that area. And even if they had, there wouldn't have been any reasons for your mother to go there. I suppose it's possible your father's work took him by there, but he wouldn't have gone inside. Standards wouldn't have allowed it. Why do you ask?"

"I was on site when the bodies were found. It felt like I'd been there before."

Stanley nodded somberly. "Nasty business that." He pulled the bottle of whiskey out of his desk and poured a splash of it in two glasses. He handed one to Denton, and put the bottle away. "I'm sorry I couldn't provide answers."

"It's okay dad. Was a long shot anyway." He took a sip and kept his face from reacting as it burned down his throat. Hard liquor wasn't his thing. He was strictly a beer kind of guy, but his dad enjoyed a glass on rare occasions. He'd had that bottle for the last five years, and he hadn't even drank a quarter of it.

Stanley sipped his and leveled his gaze on the cheetah. "Is there any chance you'll tell me you're settling down any time soon?"

Denton laughed. "No dad. That's not going to happen."

"But why, son? You can't just keep sowing your oats for the rest of your life. You have to have found a special guy by now, one you could see yourself spending the rest of your life with."

"No, dad. I haven't. And even if there was such a guy out there, I'm a cop. I'm not going to put him through the stress of wondering if tonight is the night one of my coworkers shows up to his door to inform him I won't be coming home, ever."

"Plenty of straight police officers are married," the bull offered.

"Dad, do you have any idea what the divorce rate is among cops? Infidelity? How many of those marriage are unhappy? I get that you were raised to feel everyone needs to be in a stable relationship to be happy, but you should see I'm perfectly happy being single."

Stanley sighed. "It's not natural, son. We're made to pair off, to find that special someone and settle down."

"Come on dad, you can't really believe that. Hell, you didn't even blink when you caught me fooling around with Steven when we were fourteen. You just closed the door, and when I came down you gave me a speech about being careful, and a box of condoms. Dad, if it was that easy for you to get I was gay, why is this so difficult?"

Stanley finished his whiskey, and raised a hand. "How about we pick this up another time. I can smell that dinner is ready."

Denton could too, so he forced himself to down the rest of his drink when his dad had left the room so he wouldn't see him grimace, and followed him down the stairs.

The front door opened as he reached the bottom and another bull entered.

"Tim! what are you doing here?" Denton crossed the distance and hugged his brother.

"Hey bro," Tim answered, wrapping his arms around him. He was a foot and a half taller, and out massed him by a few hundred pounds, but the embrace was gentle. "Mom called to say you were over for dinner so I should be too."

Denton released him. "You didn't have to."

Tim patted his shoulder. "Right, 'cause you've figured out how to say no to mom?"

Denton shrugged and gave the bull an embarrassed smile.

"Yeah, that's what I thought." They entered the kitchen, and

the Sunday dinner wares were on the table.

"Tim! I'm so happy you were able to make it." Aileen said.

"Was there any doubt?" Tim replied, kissing her on the cheek.

He then joined Denton in eying the large meatloaf in the middle of the table. It could serve ten, easy. Had she known they would be over? Or did she always cook like this? They looked at their father, but he didn't give any indication this was unusual.

"Is you wife joining us?" Stanley asked.

"No, Jen couldn't make it on such short notice. The contract she's working on is due by the end of the week."

"And the wee ones?" Aileen asked, "Where are they?"

"They're still at Jen's mother's. She was okay with keeping them until after dinner."

"You could have brought them, I would have loved to see them again."

Tim laughed. "No, not without their mother to keep them under control. Those two hellions never listen to me."

"Tim, language," She admonished.

"Well, it's true. You promised me the terrible twos would only last while there were two, well, Rackun is six, and I swear, he's still throwing tantrums like when he was two."

"Maybe he's due a good spanking," Stanley offered, his tone serious.

"Dad, corporal punishment doesn't help anything."

Denton stared at his brother. "It certainly kept us in line." Tim's ears turned red.

"We don't," Tim stammered, "I mean, I...well, Jenifer's family doesn't believe in it."

Stanley harrumphed. He liked Jenifer well enough, Denton knew, but he didn't have many good things to say about her family, which was why he remained mostly silent on the subject.

Over dinner they talked about banal things, mostly Tim's son and daughter. It seemed that while he might claim they were monsters, he had nothing but good things to say about them when it came to recounting their misadventures.

Denton excused himself after dessert. His mother didn't insist he stay longer, so he went home. He turned his phone on, and found he had seven messages from friends wanting to come over for some fun.

He wasn't even tempted. He declined them. The only relief he took was with his hand, then he was out like a light.