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HAWK'S PRETTY BABY

LYNN HAGEN

The
ManLove
Collection



BRAC PACK 2

Brac Pack 2

Hawk's Pretty Baby

Hawk Magnar, commander of twelve sentry wolves, never thought he'd discover his mate in a hospital for an anxiety attack. Under the illusion he was going to comfort a young child the alpha's mate, Cecil, had befriended, he finds a man who needs more protection than even anyone realizes.

Treated as a simpleton all his life, Johnny Stone has never had anything to call his own - until he meets Hawk.

Hawk must keep his emaciated mate safe from a sadistic brother while teaching Johnny to trust him. Hawk is quickly running out of time to convince Johnny that he isn't out to hurt him when his mate inadvertently starts the mating ritual. Will Johnny give Hawk the trust he needs to bind them together or suffer the consequences that fate's wicked sense of humor has unleashed?

Genre: Alternative (M/M or F/F), Paranormal, Vampires/Werewolves

Length: 25,685 words

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A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK
IMPRINT: Everlasting Classic ManLove

HAWK'S PRETTY BABY
Copyright © 2011 by Lynn Hagen
E-book ISBN: 1-61034-056-6

First E-book Publication: March 2011

Cover design by Jinger Heaston
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PUBLISHER
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DEDICATION

To my best friend, Gingerbread, who is still so naïve at forty-five. I love you, girl.

HAWK'S PRETTY BABY

Brac Pack 2

LYNN HAGEN

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Chapter One

Johnny smashed the plastic bowls into the dishwasher, slamming it shut as he grabbed the dish towel and wiped the counter and sink off. Starting the dishwasher while he swept the floor, he frantically looked at the clock and noticed he only had ten minutes to get the kitchen finished before Sean came home.

After emptying the dustpan into the waste bin, he readied his mop water, sloshing the water around the floor until it was clean. The mop water disposed of and cleaning supplies stored away, Johnny closed the closet door as his brother walked through the front door.

“What are you smiling at?” His brother Sean tilted his head to look into the kitchen, seeing it clean. He tossed his jacket on the couch and grabbed a beer from the fridge, tracking dirty footprints on Johnny’s clean floor.

Dang, now I’ll have to do it again.

Johnny waited to see what Sean wanted for dinner. He had to be extra nice. Tomorrow was Friday, and he didn’t want Sean saying he couldn’t go down to the recreation center. His friend Cecil would be there, the guy who treated Johnny like he was normal, like he had a brain. Not like Sean, who constantly called him stupid and a retard. His brother was mean as heck, but he was family and all Johnny had.

Just because he had been diagnosed mildly retarded—Johnny really didn't agree with that one bit—didn't mean Sean could treat him like he was brain-dead. He couldn't figure out why Sean agreed to raise him when the courts found their mother unfit. She was a drug user, which is why he hated drugs. He saw what they did to his mamma. If Sean didn't like him, why did he agree to be his caretaker?

Johnny tried his best to make Sean happy. He cleaned the house, cooked dinner, did the laundry, and even cleaned Sean's nasty room. Some of the things lying around on that disgusting floor seemed to move sometimes. Gosh, he didn't like when Sean had those used condoms lying around in his room. It was one thing to be a slob, but a whole other to be nasty about sex. Being clever and wise, he always used a pencil to pick those up then left the pencil on Sean's desk to use.

Johnny snickered at that. He was a rebel.

"Fix me some spaghetti tonight. And don't screw it up, stupid." Sean leaned back against the couch, drinking his beer and watching football. Same thing he did every night. Johnny was surprised his brother even worked. The man was lazy with a capital L.

Mad at the way Sean spoke to him, Johnny hurriedly browned the ground meat. His heart ached at the way his brother treated him like a slave. He filled a pot with water then placed it on the stove to boil. Once it was ready, he snapped the sticks of hardened spaghetti in half, making sure he kept his sleeves away. For some reason, he always forgot to watch out for the steam that made his hands hot.

Carefully combining the ingredients, Johnny sloshed the mixture around to make sure the sauce got all over the noodles. He saw a few chunks of meat that hadn't broken up all the way but shoved those to the bottom of the pot.

Piling Sean's plate high, Johnny took it to him, returning to the kitchen to eat his snack sized portion. Sean harped about not having a fat brother, so he watched what Johnny ate, making sure it wasn't too much. Sighing, Johnny knew he would still be hungry after dinner,

but Sean refused him seconds. Being resourceful came in handy when he snuck into the kitchen while his brother was gone and nibbled on what he could, things Sean wouldn't notice were gone or gotten into.

Sean was five times larger than him and mean as all get out. Defying him wasn't an option. If he kicked Johnny out, where would he go? Reluctantly, Johnny always did what Sean told him to for fear of being homeless.

He sipped at his water as he ate, hoping it helped to fill him up.

As hard as he tried, Johnny couldn't figure Sean out. They were all each had. Why abuse the only person that loved you unconditionally? He would do anything for his brother, but the feeling wasn't shared. It hurt him deeply. Johnny had no joy in his life. His only bright spot was seeing his friend on Fridays.

Sadness stayed with him constantly. All he ever wanted was someone to love him. To tell him how much he meant to them. Not even his mother had done that. She was too busy leaving them at home alone. He felt so alone, so unwanted, that he had to wipe away the tears that silently ran down his face as he ate.

Finishing his dinner, he cleaned the kitchen...again. Exhausted, Johnny finally turned the light off and went to bed. The springs in the mattress poked him in his back as he pulled his thinning blanket over him, trying his best to go to sleep but excitement at seeing Cecil tomorrow kept the sandman at bay. Touching the necklace that Cecil had helped him make with his pretty pink letters that spelled his name, Johnny smiled as he closed his eyes. The thought of his friend was the only thing that made him smile.

* * * *

Where was he? Cecil should have been here by now. He always came to see Johnny on Friday. Pacing back and forth, he watched every car that pulled in the parking lot. *Nope, not him.* Chewing at his fingernails, Johnny wondered if maybe he made Cecil mad at him. He

tried to remember if he had done something wrong but couldn't come up with anything.

Thomas, one of the counselors, tried to tell him that Cecil might have had to do something important and couldn't come. No, it had to be something he did. He just knew it. Being stupid pushed Cecil away. Cecil might not like spending his Fridays with him. Johnny began to panic. He didn't want to lose Cecil as his friend. He had to find Cecil and say he was sorry for being stupid.

The man was his only friend, his only bright spot in an otherwise lonely life of sorrow and pain.

Johnny became dizzy as his heart was beating too fast. Dots swam before his eyes. He had to find Cecil, he had to...

"Quick, somebody call 911. Johnny just passed out."

* * * *

Johnny sat outside the hospital. They had released him after explaining that he had an anxiety attack. Once Sean found out there was another hospital bill, Johnny may have another one from worrying over what his brother would do to him.

That's exactly why he was sitting on a bench watching the flow of traffic. Fear kept him from going home. Sighing, he knew it was useless to stall. Where else would he go? No friends, no other family, and certainly no money. He wasn't sure Cecil would let him stay at his house. Besides, he had no clue where his friend lived. The choices weren't even there to be taken from him.

He ran his finger through the hole in his jeans, playing with the fray that was hanging. What he wouldn't give to have a normal life, someone to love. What was so wrong with him that either they left him or hit on him?

"Hey, Johnny."

Johnny glanced over his shoulder to see Tank and...who was that guy? He knew Tank from the recreation center. When Cecil

volunteered, he always had Tank with him, but the guy standing next to Tank was a complete stranger.

As they neared him the stranger tilted his head up and sniffed. Strange. Johnny sniffed as well and didn't smell anything out of the ordinary. Maybe it was him? He raised his arms up and sniffed his pits. They weren't stinky.

Standing, Johnny faced the two men.

He took a step forward, caught himself then stepped back. Tank was the biggest man Johnny had ever seen, but the man with him...wow. The feelings swirling through his body were confusing. Why did he have an urge to run into the man's arms?

Johnny blushed as the man openly perused his body with his eyes. The thought of this man leaving or hurting him should have stopped Johnny. That's what his mamma and Sean did. Instead, he walked forward, his feet taking him to stand right in front of the large man. He reached out, running his fingers over the man's arm.

The man only smiled gently, running his hands through Johnny's messy hair. Johnny licked his palms, running them over his runaway locks, trying his best to smooth them out and look presentable. The man chuckled and tucked a knuckle under Johnny's chin as raised his head.

"What's your name, pretty baby?"

Johnny melted like a Popsicle. He could feel a big, goofy grin stretch his face. The man was dreamy. "Johnny Stone."

Johnny wanted to curl into a tight ball in the man's arms as he licked his face. Heat crept up his cheeks as the man gave a low growl. That sound was hunky as all get out. "Growl again." He whispered up to the man.

The man chuckled, pulling Johnny into his arms. Although he was terrified of strangers—his brother always yelled at him that his dumb ass was going to get kidnapped if he talked to them—Johnny didn't think this man would hurt him.

"I'm Hawk Magnar," Hawk whispered down to Johnny as he gave

another one of those low, throaty growls. Johnny beamed up at the tall man. He wanted to say more, but his tongue kept getting tangled up in his mouth. Stupid tongue.

"Are you feeling better, pretty baby?" Hawk asked him as he sat Johnny on the bench.

Johnny nodded. "Uh-huh. They let me go." His finger pointed at the hospital. His face was leaning closer and closer to Hawk's, sniffing at his good smell. He leaned back. His face was feeling real hot.

Johnny scratched at his head, wondering if Hawk really liked him, or kinda liked him, or was he just being nice? Johnny was really liking Hawk, and not in a buddy sort of way. His penis was growing hard just sitting next to the guy. Would Hawk think he was a pervert if he saw the puffiness in his pants?

Johnny pulled his legs up onto the bench, wrapping his arms around them. He peeked at Hawk from the corner of his eye. "How tall are you?"

"Six feet and four long inches. Why? Is that too big for you?"

Johnny felt his ears heat up. He could tell Hawk was teasing him. "That's pretty big. I'm five feet and four really, really long inches." He fiddled with the rip in his jeans again.

He didn't have very good social skills. Talking with Hawk was easy though. He didn't have to fumble for words like he normally did, spouting out stupid stuff from his mind. Sean accused him of not having a brain to mouth buffer. Whatever that meant.

"Sounds pretty tall to me." Hawk chuckled.

"Not really." Johnny shrugged. "Kids liked to pick on me when I was in school."

"If you were still in school, I would beat them up for you." There went that growl again, only this time it sounded scary. The sound gave him pause, but he brushed it away.

It registered after a moment what Hawk had said, and Johnny's eyes rounded. "You can't do that. Being a bully is mean." He gasped.

“For you I would. Nobody else, though.” Hawk winked at him.

Johnny looked straight ahead. Why would Hawk beat people up for him? He ripped one of the strings off his frayed jeans, pulling it slowly apart. “It’s a good thing I don’t go to school anymore. I just turned eighteen a few months ago. I graduated.” Johnny had been proud of himself, even if no one was there to congratulate him like the other kids had.

“I’m proud of you.”

Johnny turned his head away, tears threatening to spill out. No one had ever said that to him before, and he was going to cry like a girl. He wiped at his eyes as he watched people walking by, hoping Hawk didn’t notice. Clearing the lump in his throat, he rolled the string around with his fingers, turning it into a ball. “Do you know why Cecil didn’t come to see me?”

“He’s sick, pretty baby.”

“Is he okay?” Johnny turned back to Hawk, concerned.

“He’s getting better.” Hawk moved a little closer to Johnny, and his heart beat a little faster as the man’s thigh touched his. Johnny tossed the fabric ball, grabbing at another loose string.

“Can you take me to see him?”

“I’ll take you anywhere you want to go, pretty baby.” Johnny shivered when Hawk ran a finger across his nape. He leaned into it, wanting desperately to be loved. Hawk seemed to want to love him.

Johnny jumped up. People may call him stupid, but he wasn’t stupid enough to think a guy like Hawk liked him. The guy was just being nice, right? He scratched at his head as he spotted Tank standing off in the distance watching them. Tank was safe because Johnny hadn’t ever wanted to lick *his* face.

He sidestepped Hawk as he scuttled over to Tank. Some weird feeling was making Johnny want to circle right back around and crawl onto Hawk’s lap. *Yeah, and then the man kicks your butt for touching him like that.*

“You okay, buddy?” Tank’s brows were drawn together as he

stared at Johnny.

“Just peachy.” Johnny’s cheeks hurt from the big fake smile he was wearing. Showing teeth and all. Only he didn’t feel like smiling.

“You know Hawk won’t hurt you? I would never bring anyone around you that would.” Tank stepped away from Johnny, making him feel like he was in school all over again, the kids treating him like a disease.

Johnny threw his hands into the air, he just gave up. No use wishing the man on the bench wanted him or hoping Tank wasn’t treating him like an outcast. Making friends was just too dang hard. Having no friends was lonely but easier.

He would go home and face Sean. Johnny winced at the idea of telling Sean he got another hospital bill. His brother wasn’t very understanding. Another one would be sent in the mail once Sean took his anger out on Johnny for going to the hospital in the first place. At this point, Johnny didn’t really care. He was just so tired. No matter what he did, Sean would hit him, so there was no use stalling any longer.

“And where are you taking off to?” Hawk asked from behind him.

Johnny screamed like a girl when he was lifted into the air, his arms flailing around for something solid to hold onto.

“I got you, pretty baby. Let’s go see Cecil.” The tall man folded him into his arms.

Johnny clung to the big man as he was carried to the hospital parking lot. Whether he would get his butt kicked or not, Johnny nestled into Hawk’s neck, inhaling deeply. His penis grew hard again. He moaned softly. He was going to get creamed for this.

Chapter Two

Hawk felt as if the world were right for the first time in his life. Now that his mate was in his arms, he felt what he hadn't known he was missing.

Tank must have known Johnny was his mate because when his little man approached the warrior, Tank was smart enough to step back. Hawk would kill a rock for Johnny, and the warrior knew this.

He set his mate on the seat in the back of the SUV and then climbed in behind him. Hawk grinned when Johnny scooted closer to him. His mate felt the pull. Taking a chance, Hawk sat Johnny on his lap. The little guy didn't fight him.

"Why do I want to curl up like a pill bug and lick your face?" Johnny asked. Those enormous blue-gray eyes had Hawk sinking deep into an abyss. One thing that caught Hawk's attention was the emaciated state his mate was in. If this was how he took care of himself, that responsibility would no longer be Johnny's.

"I'll explain all of that to you later. Can you trust me for now?" He chuckled at his mate.

Johnny nodded, curling into Hawk's lap. Cradling his mate, Hawk felt ten feet tall.

"Where are we?" Johnny asked as they pulled into the gravel drive.

"Home, where you belong."

As they entered, noise was ricocheting off the walls. The music was blasting, video games going while Micah and Storm, two Sentry wolves, were playing a round of nine ball at the pool table. It was a normal day in the Alpha's house, but Johnny wasn't used to all this

noise, and Hawk knew he didn't like strangers.

"Silence!" Hawk bellowed out in a deep commanding voice, which carried over all the chaos. The music was muted, the video game paused, and silence blanketed the room.

All eyes were on the man in Hawk's arms.

Hawk growled, pulling Johnny closer to him, staking his claim in front of every Sentry in the room. There were only six Sentries at present while the other six were out on patrol. Hawk was sure his claim would be related to the rest. He nodded, taking his mate up the flight of stairs two at a time.

* * * *

Cody stared after his Commander, his jaw hanging open. "Oh, shit. Hawk found his mate."

"Yeah, and if you thought he was a prick before now, just wait." Tank laughed. If Hawk's reaction at the hospital was anything to go by, they were all in trouble.

Their Commander was six four and two hundred and fifty-five pounds of ancient warrior. As with their Alpha, Maverick, when Hawk entered a room, the elements bent time and space around him. He exuded power and authority. His body mass ate up oxygen. Long, blue-black hair ran down his back in a plait, and he had eyes so green they resembled the color of Tourmaline Gemstones. Hawk was swift and fierce, bringing down pain in milliseconds. Nobody crossed the wolf.

"Something tells me the only one safe is that kid in his arms." Remi shuddered. That was one scary thought.

"That *guy* happens to be Johnny, Cecil's good friend," Tank interjected.

Remi groaned. "For Pete's sake, all big bad warriors run and hide because the little guys are going to get us killed." He shook his head, unpausing the game.

“Hey, you cheater.” Jasper swatted at Remi, missing him by inches.

“Don’t mess with my man, Remi. I’ll let him kick your ass.” Cody kissed Jasper on the lips, swatting his butt playfully.

Jasper winked at Cody, returning to his game.

Remi couldn’t believe that Cody and Jasper weren’t mates. They’ve been best friends for over two hundred years and adored each other. Fate was a cruel bitch. Cody treated his redheaded lover like a king...queen...whatever.

Remi narrowed his silver eyes on Jasper. He was gonna wipe that wink out of his eye when he kicked his rear at this game. Remi was actually fond of Jasper. He was the queen around here and just dared anyone to comment on it. How he hooked up with a muscle head like Cody, Remi could never guess. Dude did have cool hair, though. Remi had never seen multicolored hair before, but Cody rocked it.

“Get ready to cry and eat bonbons, Jasper. You’re going down.”

“Eat dust.” Jasper laughed as he kicked Remi’s ass.

* * * *

Hawk took Johnny to his room upstairs. He wanted peace and quiet to get to know his mate better. Hawk hadn’t put him down since leaving the SUV. It’s not like the man weighed more than a feather. He was going to rectify that. Hawk couldn’t stand to see him so malnourished. His skin stretched tight over his skeletal frame. “Are you hungry, pretty baby?”

Johnny nodded his head, licking his lips. A spark flared in his eyes, but was it for food or him? “What do you want, love?” Johnny actually blushed. Guess that answered Hawk’s question. “To eat.” Johnny giggled. “Food.” Hawk clarified further.

His mate shrugged his shoulders. “What am I allowed to have?”

Huh? Allowed? “What do you have a taste for? Food.” Hawk quickly added on as he let the wide grin span across his face. Did he

have a wild pup?

The tip of Johnny's little pink tongue stuck out as he thought about it, and Hawk groaned. His pretty baby was going to drive him crazy. He watched the little appendage slide across the bottom lip, moistening as it caressed. Hawk imagined other places it could slide across. He straightened, clearing his throat and shifting his hips to hide his erection. Johnny would have to be taken care of first before Hawk claimed him, starting with putting some padding on those bones. The pull to bind Johnny was strong, but Hawk could resist for a while. His mate's health came first.

"Pizza. Am I allowed to have pizza?" Johnny balled his fists up and tapped them together in excitement.

"Pizza it is. What do you want on it?" Hawk saw the puzzled look his mate gave him. *Please tell me the guy has eaten pizza before.*

"Doesn't all pizza come with mushrooms?" He looked at Hawk like he was daft.

"You can have anything you want on it." Hawk listed the different common toppings and a few uncommon ones, Johnny's eyes grower larger as the list continued.

"No way! I can put pineapples and black olives on it?" He covered his mouth with his hands, giggling. Holy shit, Hawk wanted him. He was too sexy and adorable for words.

"Yes way, whatever you want. Is that your choice?" Johnny's headed bobbed up and down, his body jumping excitedly. Hawk lifted Johnny an inch to relieve his cock from the bouncing bandit. He set his mate on the window seat and pulled his cell phone out.

"Micah, I want you to get me a large pineapple and black olive pizza with extra cheese. Throw in some cheesy breadsticks and...hold on." Hawk covered the mouthpiece. "What kind of soda do you want, pretty baby?"

Johnny was acting like it was Christmas, his little fists pounding together again as he bounced up and down on his knees. "Orange. Orangeorangeorange."

Hawk chuckled, removing his hand from the phone. "Yeah, you heard that? Orange soda it is. Thanks. Just bring it up when it gets here. No! You guys better not fucking touch it!" Hawk hung up the phone. Greedy bastards. He slid it back in his jeans.

He reached for his mate only to find Johnny cringing in the corner of the window seat. Hawk lowered himself to his knees. "Come here, pretty baby. I'm not going to hurt you or let anyone else. Don't be afraid of me." Hawk opened his arms as Johnny scrambled across the cushion to get into them. He sat down, petting his hair. "I would never hurt you. Hawk yells a lot, but never at you. Okay?"

Johnny's head nodded in short bursts, clinging to Hawk's chest. There was a knock at the door as Alpha Maverick walked in. Hawk continued to stare into gorgeous blue-gray eyes. "Yes, Alpha?" He was bonding with his mate right now, so what could be so important to be interrupted?

"I have an irate brother at my front door wanting that young man returned to him." Maverick tipped his head toward Johnny.

Johnny whimpered and pulled tighter at Hawk.

Hawk growled and squeezed his mate close to him, giving him reassurance. There was no way his mate was leaving him. "Tell him to piss off. Johnny is mine."

"You know better than that. This has to be handled. How old is he?"

"Eighteen. Old enough to make his own decisions." Hawk noticed Johnny's fingers twisting in his shirt. He dipped his head to Johnny's ear, "It's okay, pretty baby. That's Cecil's boyfriend." He kissed Johnny's temple.

"Johnny, I need you to tell me if you want to stay with Hawk or go with your brother? Whatever you decide, I'll make sure it happens."

Hawk rubbed his mate's back as Maverick knelt down in front of Johnny. The little guy was trembling, clinging to Hawk's shirt with his face hidden in the fabric. The little guy mumbled into his shirt.

“Hawk.”

“So you are deciding to stay with Hawk?”

Johnny nodded.

“I need you to say yes or no,” Maverick stated.

“He gave you his answer, Alpha. He—”

“Don’t take that tone with me, Commander. I need to hear in clear, spoken words what Johnny wants. I won’t have this coming back to bite me or Johnny on the ass. I’m looking out for him”—his Alpha pointed at Johnny—“and making sure his wishes are abided by.”

Johnny raised his head and spoke clearly, “I. Want. To. Stay. With. Hawk.” Hawk smiled as Johnny spoke to Maverick as if he were daft.

“So be it. Hawk, get ready for a battle. I don’t think his brother is going to give up so easily.”

Hawk nodded and watched his Alpha close the door behind him.

* * * *

Hawk knew the Sentry, Micah, was only trying to make his mate feel welcome when he brought the food up then came at Johnny with an extended hand. But when Johnny shied away, whimpering, Hawk growled and jumped at Micah with his claws extended, giving him a warning scratch across his arm. Micah apologized and ran from the room, his instincts to protect his mate riding him strong.

Johnny watched as Hawk prepared his food, setting two slices in front of him on the pizza box lid he had torn off. Two breadsticks were added as well as dipping sauce. Popping the lid, he handed him an orange soda. Johnny just stared at his food.

“What’s wrong, pretty baby? Don’t you want it?”

Johnny’s bottom lip trembled. He looked up at Hawk with watery eyes. “I’m not used to eating adult size meals. Sean said I’ll get fat if I eat too much.” Johnny visibly tensed when Hawk threw his head back

and howled. "I'm sorry."

"For what, pretty baby?"

"I don't know." He shrugged. "You're mad." Hawk saw Johnny's hand shake as he took his slice of pizza.

"Never at you. Your brother lied to you, Johnny. He kept you from eating for god only knows what reason, and now your body is malnourished and emaciated."

Johnny stared at him with a puzzled look, scrunching his face up in thought. He began to tap his fist against his temple.

Hawk grabbed his wrists. "Stop, why are you doing that?"

"Because I don't know what you just said. I'm stupid."

Hawk let out a low growl. Setting the pizza aside, he cupped Johnny's face. "I don't ever want to hear you calling yourself names again. Do you understand me, Jonathan? And...I said that your brother lied to you and now you're too skinny and it's not healthy. I'm going to take care of that, okay?"

Johnny stared at him with eyes as round as saucers, dropping his head to stare at his shoes. "Yes, sir."

Hawk kissed him on the forehead and gave him his food. Johnny tore into both slices and demolished his bread sticks. Hawk felt angry at Johnny's brother for starving him like this. "Do you want more?"

"Really? I can have seconds?" Johnny threw himself into Hawk's arms, raining kisses all over his face. He giggled as he grabbed two more slices, laying waste to them as well. Johnny lay back on the window seat and groaned.

Hawk picked Johnny up, laying him on the bed, pulling his shoes and socks off, then lay down next to him. Hawk rubbed his belly as little snores came from his mate seconds later.

* * * *

Hawk reached out to grab his mate back into his arms, only to grab air. He rolled onto his back, pushing himself up onto his elbows,

looking around an empty room. Growling, he yanked the blanket back, ready to tear everything apart to find his baby. He stopped when he heard the shower going and singing.

Hawk cracked the bathroom door open to hear Johnny singing a nursery rhyme in an upbeat tempo. It was kinda catchy. Hawk grinned as he heard Johnny start to rap it. Hearing the water shut off, he quietly closed the door, returning to bed, not wanting his mate to be embarrassed by his intrusion. The bathroom door opened, and Hawk's lungs stopped working when his mate walked out stark naked. He was shaking his hips, still humming the tune, his cock bobbing up and down. Hawk couldn't take his eyes off the scene. His mate was sexy as sin. Johnny's long honey colored locks curled around his face, and the slight bubble to his butt made Hawk groan. His creamy white skin glistened with the water still clinging to his body.

Hawk chuckled at the surprised look on Johnny's face as he turned to find himself being watched. His mate quickly covered his groin with his hands. "I'm sorry. I thought you were still sleeping." Johnny jammed his legs back into his jeans, pulling back on the same dirty T-shirt. Crimson colored his face as he stared everywhere but at Hawk.

"Take those dirty clothes off."

Chapter Three

Hawk watched smooth, peachy, bright cheeks turn crimson. “I’ll borrow something from Cecil for you to wear till I get you some new clothes.”

Johnny blushed again, running into the bathroom. He emerged a few moments later with a white towel wrapped around his sparse waist and his clothes folded neatly in his hands. He set them on the floor by the bedroom door, fidgeting with the corner of his towel, his foot toeing something on the floor.

“Come here, pretty baby.”

Johnny looked up at Hawk then back down at the corner of his towel, as if unsure of what to do. His mate sighed as he padded over to the bed, sitting on the edge and smoothing the towel down his thighs.

“I cleaned up our food and wiped the bathroom down. I couldn’t find a vacuum to clean the rug.” His back still faced Hawk.

“You don’t need to clean anything, baby. I could have gotten our mess up.” Hawk reached over, running his fingers up and down Johnny’s arm.

“Sean said that if you don’t work, you have to clean to earn your keep.” Johnny continued to play with his towel, picking nonexistent lint from it. He peeked over at Hawk then back down again. Hawk could tell he was really nervous. The towel around his mate’s waist was tenting. Johnny was trying to push at it to make it disappear.

Hawk pulled Johnny toward him. Resting his head in the palm of his hand, he traced circles around Johnny’s back. “Not here you don’t. Here you let me spoil you rotten.” Hawk kissed Johnny’s shoulder,

watching his mate stiffen. Not wanting to do anything his mate wasn't ready for, Hawk pulled back. Johnny sat a pillow in his lap, petting the case that covered it.

"Yes, sir."

Hawk closed his eyes, reigning in the lust that had sent his cock skyrocketing into a full stance. Gently setting his mate aside, Hawk rolled out of bed, closing the bathroom door behind him. He was in the seventh circle of hell with a bag of popcorn and a front row seat.

Regulating the water, he stripped down and stepped into the shower, letting the water run down his head and back. His hand snaked down to grab his cock. If he didn't relieve the pressure, Johnny wouldn't be safe. Hawk squirted liquid soap into his hand and pumped his cock, thumbing the slit on the head. He groaned at the sensations, imagining his mate on his knees, hands behind his back as he took Hawk's large cock into his mouth. Hawk pumped faster. His mate's tongue slid around the head, sucking and licking, he—

"Oh, my god."

Hawk released himself, grabbing the washcloth and hiding his erection. Johnny stood in the bathroom, his eyes wide and mouth hanging open. "I—I—I wanted to say, uh, sorry, uh, for, uh...I can't remember now."

Was his mate in shock? He just stood there with his eyes fixed on the washcloth. It was driving Hawk mad. He was hornier than hell, and here was temptation standing right in front of him. Fuck, he only had so much willpower. "I'll be out in a minute, pretty baby. Go on, we'll talk when I'm done."

Johnny nodded his head, unmoving.

Hawk closed his eyes, thinking of the ugliest woman he had ever seen in his three hundred and sixty-two years on earth. Didn't help. His cock was so damn hard it hurt. "Johnny, please. I'll be out in a minute." To hell with it, he would beg if he had to. He needed to relieve his load and fast.

Johnny finally looked up at Hawk, his face turning bright red.

“Can I watch?”

Hawk’s eyebrows shot up into his hairline. Was he serious? He was about to come just thinking about his mate watching. Hawk dropped the washcloth, grabbing his cock as he watched Johnny watch him. He squeezed the head, running his fist up and down the steel shaft. Moaning as he cupped his balls, rolling them around while jerking his prick in frenzy. Johnny watching him brought him to orgasm quicker than ever before. Hawk shouted his mate’s name as ropes of white seed shot out, hitting the tile and washing down the drain. He leaned against the stall, rubbing his forehead back and forth.

“I do that, too. Do you want to watch me?”

Oh, fuck! Hawk was going to hell. Yes, he was, because he couldn’t say no. He just looked at Johnny and nodded.

Johnny laid his towel out on the floor, lowering himself until he was lying down, and then he began to pleasure himself. Hawk watched the most erotic sight he had ever seen play out in front of him. He couldn’t take it. He lifted Johnny up and carried him to the bed then lowered him down. Hawk stepped back, nodding at his mate. Johnny continued what he had started as Hawk started jerking off again. His hand faltered as he watched his mate spear two fingers into his tight little hole.

Hawk shook his head, clearing it, trying not to roll his mate over and claim him. He kept telling himself that Johnny only wanted him to watch, not touch.

Johnny was mewling now, his hips gyrating as his fingers fucked his ass and his hand pumped his cock. Hawk’s rhythm picked up as his balls drew close. He was going to come with his mate. It wasn’t sex, per say, but he was willing to take whatever Johnny was comfortable giving. Seed erupted as Johnny’s whole body rocked, Hawk watched in utter fascination, his spunk shooting out again for the second time.

He crawled into bed with Johnny, pulling him over his chest and petting his back. His flaccid cock jerked. *You better not.*

"I liked that. Can we do it again?"

Hawk groaned. His mate was going to kill him for sure.

A knock sounded at the door. Hawk threw the covers over Johnny to his neck. He yelled for them to go away, but the knocking came again.

Hawk, grumbled as he wrapped the towel around his waist and cracked the door opened. Jasper stood there with a food tray in his hand.

"I'm so sorry. Maverick insists that the little guy eats. I'll leave the tray right here." Jasper set the tray on the floor and took off down the hall.

Hawk smiled and picked it up, carrying it into the room. He took the food to the bed. "Hungry, pretty baby?" Lifting the lid, he found carbs. Stuffed Manicotti with rich red sauce and topped with melted mozzarella cheese. Hawk chuckled at the three cans of orange soda. The tray even had Texas garlic toast.

Hawk fed his mate from the piled high plate, laughing as Johnny tried to eat the melted cheese, but the string wouldn't break. He kissed him on the lips after every forkful he fed him. Hawk popped a straw in the can and even held it while Johnny sipped his favorite sugary drink. Johnny grabbed a fork and started feeding Hawk, and he began kissing him after forkful.

Hawk smiled inwardly. His mate was getting used to touch. Intimate touch. He licked the sauce from the corner of Johnny's mouth, giving him another sip of soda. Johnny fell backwards, patting his belly, claiming to be too stuffed to eat anymore. Hawk set the tray outside the door, returning to bed and pulling his mate in his arms.

* * * *

Hawk woke to banging on his bedroom door. Not again. He was still full from the dinner. He covered his mate once again and cracked the door. Again it was Jasper, but his hands were empty. Hawk could

see the stricken look on his face. He pulled the door open and allowed him entrance.

“What’s wrong, Jasper?” Hawk cocked his head as Jasper stood in a military stance.

“Sir, Lonny, Maverick’s assistant, was the one who poisoned Cecil and kidnapped him. We’re looking for him now.”

Hawk growled low, pacing the room. What was he going to do with his mate while he hunted? Maverick had called Hawk to tell him of Cecil’s disappearance, insisting that he stay and protect his own mate. Hawk couldn’t let this betrayal go unpunished.

“Stay with my mate. Protect him with your life. Lonny dies tonight.”

* * * *

Jasper nodded and sat in the window seat, staying safely away from Johnny. Everyone knew Hawk went ballistic if you even approached the guy, which was sad for Johnny. How was he going to make friends if Hawk never let him out of his sight and growled if you came within ten feet of the man?

Jasper took a good look at Johnny for the first time. The man was a contradiction. Taking a quick look at the young man would tell you he was nutritionally abused. Bones stuck out at every joint, and his skin was drawn tight. Jasper was actually shocked no one had stepped in and intervened on behalf of him. If a person stopped to take a closer look at Johnny, they would see the striking beauty. He had honey blond hair all the way to his shoulder blades. His facial features were soft, almost feminine. Long eyelashes kissed his cheeks, and his nose came to a cute little end. Not too pointy, not too flat. Perfect. He was a short little guy though. Jasper stood five foot nine and the shortest of the Sentries. Johnny was no more than five foot four.

How the hell did he and Hawk fit together? The man was six four—did his Commander use a booster seat?

Jasper studied Johnny, wondering what color his eyes were when big blue-gray eyes stared back at him. They were stunning. Jasper watched silently as Johnny grabbed the blanket and pulled it to his chin, scooting further back into the bed. Damn the guy was shaking. Jasper had to think quickly.

"Uh, hi, I'm Jasper." Yeah, that was brilliant. *You can be a national spokesman...not.*

Johnny started whining, which turned into mewling. He became agitated. Now what? "I'm Cecil's friend. Nice to meet you."

Johnny quieted down. He cocked his head, studying Jasper. "I know Cecil, too." Johnny announced proudly.

Well, damn, wasn't he the cutest?

Johnny pulled the cover back, showing part of his naked hip.

Oh, no you don't!

"Hey, little man, can you stay where you are and cover up, hmm? I like my balls where they're at."

Johnny did as Jasper asked, smiling widely. "I like where my balls are at, too."

Jasper burst out laughing. This guy definitely needed to come out of hiding and make friends. He was hilarious. He would fit right in downstairs, perfectly.

"Why is my mate talking about balls?"

Jasper snapped his head around to find Hawk glaring murderously at him. He swallowed hard, praying that his death was quick.

"Hawk!" Johnny jumped up and ran to the Commander.

Jasper quickly covered his eyes and turned his head as Hawk's naked mate streaked across the room. He was dead for sure now. Hawk would probably gouge his eyes out.

"Pretty baby, you don't have clothes on. Jasper is sitting right there. Get back into bed, love."

Jasper inwardly laughed his ass off. *That* was his fierce, ancient warrior Commander? He sounded more like a teacher talking to a young person. Oh, man, the guys were gonna love this one...if he

lived to tell it.

“Answer me, Jasper. Why was my mate talking about his balls?”
Now *that* sounded more like the Hawk he knew. Why couldn’t he get the teacher tone?

“Uh, long story?”

“I have all night.”

“Mate? Is that like in England? I wanna be your mate, Hawk.”
Johnny bounced, smiling up at Hawk.

There was an audible gasp. Johnny had just inadvertently started the mating bond. He had accepted Hawk as his mate.

“Fuck, oh. Man. Shit. Damn. That sucks. Shit. Wow.” Jasper couldn’t shut up. His lips wouldn’t close. Shut up!

“Leave us, Jasper.”

Jasper waved a quick good-bye to Johnny and shot out of the room.

“I like him, Hawk. Why did he have to go?” Johnny got on his knees, looking up at Hawk innocently.

“Because we need to talk, pretty baby.”

* * * *

“Ohmygodohmygodohmygod! Guess what just happened upstairs?” Jasper ran into the den. It seemed to him that the whole Sentry unit was there. He spotted Cody and ran to him.

“What’s up, babe?” Cody grabbed Jasper around the waist, kissing him deeply.

“Get a room,” Remi bit out.

“Screw you, Remi,” Cody snapped.

“Not my type, all brawn and no brain.”

“Whatever.” Jasper rolled his eyes. “Listen dammit.”

“Go on, baby, we’re listening.” Cody flipped Remi off as he sat Jasper in his lap.

“I went upstairs to tell Hawk about Lonny, right? Well, he tossed

me in the room with his mate and tells me to guard him with my life. Since I heard about Micah...oh...hi, Micah. Didn't see you there."

Micah nodded his head, sneering at Remi to say one smart thing to him.

"Anyway, I sit in the window seat because I'm not trying to have Hawk twist me into no pretzel and toss me out of the window. So, the kid wakes up all scared because I'm there and Hawk isn't. He starts getting all worked up. So I tell him I know Cecil. He calms down. Thank goodness. Because Hawk ain't tearing me from limb to limb and shoving me down a garbage disposal. So, the kid goes to get out of bed and the covers fall. I see his naked hip. Aw, fuck. Hawk is going to kill me now. I tell the kid to cover up 'cause I like my balls where they're at. The little shit laughs and says he likes where his are at, too. He's really funny, so Hawk needs to let him out to play."

"Will you get to the important part? There is an important part, right?"

"Shut up, Remi," Cody barked.

Jasper stuck his tongue out. "Anyway, Hawk storms into the room asking why I'm discussing balls with his mate."

"Oh, shit." Micah gasped.

"Yeah, some scary stuff, let me tell you. Anyway, the kid sees Hawk and jumps out the bed, running *naked* across the room. I cover my eyes so Hawk don't remove them painfully."

"Did he kill you then? Because I'm gonna if you don't get to the important part." Remi growled.

Cody shot an empty beer bottle at Remi's head, just missing it. Tank caught it and sat it down.

"Anyway, Hawk asks me again about balls and his mate. The kid gets excited, asking was we talkin' about mates from England, then...then...then...he tells Hawk he wants to be his mate, even says Hawk's name."

Curses rang throughout the room.

"No. He can't handle a claiming right now," Tank said angrily.

“I wouldn’t want to be Hawk.” Storm shook his head.

“Forget Hawk. I wouldn’t want to be Johnny. The kid is nothing but skin and bones. How’s Hawk gonna sink his canines into that without breaking something? And then two sucks later, and the kid’s body is drained of blood. Fuck me, man.” Remi cursed as he paced the den.

“I guess we’ll find out soon enough. He’s got, what, an hour? Either he is going to be crying in pain from the teeth or crying in pain from no claiming. Lose-lose situation.” Murdock punched the wall.

They all were pissed. They saw the condition the poor guy was in. He had no padding to cushion the fierce bite. It was going to be brutal all the way around.

Chapter Four

“Did I say something wrong, Hawk? We don’t have to be mates.” Johnny slid off his knees and covered himself again. He started tapping his temple again with his fist. He had messed things up. He should have known this big man really like him kinda liked him.

“No, pretty baby, I want to be mates. But we think of mates differently. You think of friends and buddies. I think of something like a marriage.”

Johnny looked at Hawk in confusion.

“When someone like me wants to be mates, it’s forever. I would have to have sex with you and bite you.”

Johnny pushed away from Hawk, his hands trembling as he yanked the blanket to his chin. “I want Cecil.” He began to whimper and rock back and forth.

“I wanna go home now, please.” Johnny didn’t want to leave Hawk. Being with the man made him laugh, something he hadn’t done in a long time. Hawk didn’t make fun of him or call him names. He let him eat as much as he wanted to and even had a pretty penis. But Hawk wanted to bite him. Hurt him like Sean did. Why did the people Johnny care about always want to hurt him? Cecil didn’t. He wanted Cecil.

“Baby, please. Listen to me. I have to. If I don’t, you are going to start hurting really bad.”

Johnny cried. *Was he saying he was going to hurt me if I didn’t let him bite me?* Johnny jumped from the bed and ran to the bathroom, locking himself in. He heard Hawk cursing outside the door. The guy was way bigger than Sean, and even fiercer looking. Johnny crawled into the shower stall and hid in the corner of it.

* * * *

Hawk was watching the clock. He had been trying to talk his mate out of the bathroom for forty-five minutes. There was no way he was just going to force Johnny to do it. That was rape. Hawk would sooner die than brutalize his man. He pulled at his hair. There was less than fifteen minutes till the first wave of pain hit Johnny. Hawk paced the bedroom, cursing and praying.

Nature built in a clause when mates found one another. If either mate accepts the other verbally, using their intended's name, the ritual begins. One hour is all you get to claim your mate before pain so fierce overcomes you that you wish you were dead instead. At least that's what he had heard. Hawk guessed it was nature's way of ensuring the claiming took place. Fate must have been smoking crack the day that was thought up.

Johnny cried out.

Why was it hitting him so early? Hawk had forgotten to count the minutes leading up to his sex and biting revelation. He burst through the door, finding his mate balled up in the shower. Hawk pulled him up, carrying him to the bed.

Johnny screamed. "Hawk, make it stop."

"Pretty baby, I can't. You have to do what I said for it to stop." Hawk had tears in his eyes. His mate was suffering because he didn't understand what was going on.

"No, you want to hurt me, just like Sean." Johnny wrapped his arms around his stomach crying.

"No! I would never hurt you. I'm not tricking you, baby, I swear. If I have sex with you and bite you, we stay together forever. I promise. I have to bite you. It's how my people make sure." This explaining shit was hard. Hawk rocked Johnny in his arms, rubbing his stomach to no avail. He had to do something. He felt helpless just sitting here and watching his mate suffer.

Johnny grabbed Hawk's shoulders, pulling himself up. His arms vise-gripped Hawk's neck. "Promise? Promise me you won't hurt me, Hawk. I love you."

The tears fell down Hawk's face. He cradled Johnny's head in his hands. "I promise, pretty baby. Always."

"Then stop it, please." Johnny had grown pale, his skin cold and clammy.

Hawk grabbed the lube, knocking the drawer to the floor as he laid Johnny down.

He prepared him as thoroughly and quickly as possible. He hated this. It wasn't supposed to be like this their first time.

Hawk pulled his fingers free, lining his cock up to Johnny's clenching ass. "Okay, I want you to push out as I push in, okay?"

Johnny nodded, holding his stomach as Hawk breached him.

He knew part of Johnny's pain was from him, and he hated himself for it. He would do whatever it took to keep Johnny from any more pain.

"I'm sorry, so sorry, baby." Hawk cradled Johnny in his arms, slowly rocking them.

Johnny's crying eased and his nails weren't digging into his flesh anymore. "Is it going away, baby?" Hawk tilted his mate's head back, watching him.

Johnny nodded, his body still rigid, but it was slowly relaxing. "Good. I want my baby happy, not hurting. I'll never hurt you, Johnny. I promise."

Johnny began to moan. "Feels good, Hawk."

Hawk watched as pleasure took possession of his mate's face. No longer was he crying in pain but moaning in passion. Fuck if the sight didn't make Hawk's heart sing.

"Your eyes are red, Hawk." Johnny turned his head to the side, Hawk assumed the natural instinct to submit was part of his mate coming out to accept the claiming.

"That's because we are becoming mates. Are you afraid, pretty

baby?” Hawk sniffed at his neck, licking around the shoulder and nipping at the skin. He was trying to figure out the best way to do this.

“No, do you have to bite me now?”

“Yes.”

“Go ahead. I trust you.”

“Do you accept me as your mate, Jonathan?”

“Yes, Hawk.”

Hawk held back the instinctive urge to strike. Instead, he slowly broke the skin and sank his canines in. He only took what he needed for the claiming. Johnny’s blood on his tongue was an aphrodisiac like no other.

Hawk closed his eyes as he drank. He held his fragile mate as their life forces unwound from their individual ribbons and began the process of intertwining their souls together. Their hearts began beating in a synchronized rhythm.

He wanted more, but he pulled back and sealed the wound. Johnny cried out, and ropes of seed splashed between them. Johnny bucked and yelled his release. Hawk growled and thrust faster as his baby was thrashing around.

“Hawk. I love you,” Johnny wailed as he rode Hawk’s cock hard.

Hawk dropped his head, kissing Johnny’s neck, chin, shoulder and lips. He felt the tingling shoot up his spine, and he held onto his mate tight. “I love you, too, pretty baby.” Hawk came, white lights burst behind his eyes. He howled out his release as he filled Johnny’s tight channel with hot explosions of seed. Johnny clung to him, peppering kisses all over him.

“I liked that. Can we do it again?”

Hawk chuckled. “Anytime, Johnny.” He pulled his cock from his mate’s warm heat then carried him to the bathroom. Johnny still clung to him. Hawk regulated the shower then stepped in with Johnny wrapped around his chest. He washed their bodies then wet and shampooed Johnny’s hair, enjoying the feeling of running his fingers through the blond locks. Johnny tilted his head back to allow Hawk to rinse it.

* * * *

He could feel Hawk's penis still hard and tapping at his butt cheeks.

As Johnny was set on his feet, he stared at the huge penis in front of him. He had never seen another naked before.

Fascinated, he pushed it down with his finger and watched it bounce back up. Getting to his knees, he kissed the head, tasting a salty, bittersweet drop on his lips. He liked the taste.

He opened his mouth and sucked on the head, noticing how spongy it was. Hawk braced his hands on the wall, dropping his head and watched him. He liked when Hawk watched him. Feeling like a rebel, Johnny grabbed Hawk's balls, pushing them back and forth, watching Hawk breathe heavy and moan.

Johnny pulled back, pulling the slit open and watching the pre-come drip out. Licking it clean, rolling Hawk's balls in his hand, just the way he liked it to do it to himself. Swallowing the head again, running his tongue around and around, Johnny swallowed a little further each time. His hand pumped Hawk's penis, pushing the salty bittersweet taste onto his tongue.

"Take it out of your mouth, Johnny, I'm about to come." Hawk groaned and tried to pull back, but Johnny shook his head and sucked harder.

"I'm coming, Johnny." Hawk gasped out his release as Johnny sucked the seed down his throat, his cock erupting spurt after spurt, Johnny taking it the best he could. Hawk pulled Johnny up into his arms, nuzzling his neck. "Thank you." Hawk kissed him as if Johnny had down the best job in the world.

Johnny snuggled in his arms as Hawk carried him to bed, laying him down and swallowing Johnny's cock. Johnny screamed and grabbed Hawk's hair. He bucked his hips, fucking Hawk's mouth. A finger pushed into Johnny's ass as Hawk sucked his penis in a frenzy.

"It's coming, Hawk," Johnny shouted as ropes of spunk erupted. Hawk drank it down, sucking every drop from him. "I want you to do that again, too." He giggled.

* * * *

"Do you want to go downstairs and play video games, meet the guys?" Hawk was stripping the sheets from the bed as Johnny ate his pancakes and bacon

"I'm not allowed to talk to strangers. Sean said strangers will hurt me." Johnny sat his fork down, swallowing the bite of pancakes and drinking his milk. He was too nervous to be around all those big men. They looked like mountains. Maybe Cecil would be down there. Hawk had borrowed some of Cecil's clothes for him. They were kind of big, but at least they were clean. He liked the sweatpants. They had strings he could pull to make them tighter.

"I promise they won't hurt you, pretty baby. Hawk would do really bad things to them if they did." Hawk winked at him and Johnny smiled.

"Will you stay with me?"

"I'll be there the whole time." Johnny watched Hawk toss the soiled sheets down the laundry chute and lay fresh ones across the bed. Hawk then came over and set Johnny's breakfast tray on the dresser. "Come on, Johnny, time to meet the men that work for me."

Hawk led him downstairs, Johnny staying close behind him. He heard the chaos coming from the room that Hawk led him right to. He peeked from behind Hawk, watching the graphics on the large flat screen television. His eyes followed the action, transfixed.

"You wanna play?"

Johnny nodded his head. "I don't know how, but it looks fun."

"Jasper," Hawk called out. The redheaded man shot his head up, noticing them for the first time. He paused the game, and the room became silent.

"My mate wants to play. Will you show him how?" Everyone watched Hawk with wary eyes as he led Johnny to the center of the room. Hawk kissed him on the lips then stood back.

"Hey, little man. Remember me?" Jasper wanted to touch his shoulder for reassurance but saw Hawk from the corner of his eye. He wasn't that suicidal.

"Yes. You're Jasper, the funny man." Johnny remembered this man from the bedroom yesterday.

* * * *

"He wishes. You give him too much credit kid." Remi laughed.

"Fu—forget you, Remi." Could they curse around Hawk's mate? Damn, was this going to be a PG room now? Jasper thought that maybe they could get Johnny earplugs.

* * * *

Hawk stayed in the background, watching the interaction between his mate and his men. He watched Johnny's body language and facial expressions to gauge his reaction and mood. The first sign of discomfort and heads would roll. Hawk could feel what his mate felt now that they were bonded, but all Johnny felt was nervousness.

"Come on, little man. Let's show these baboons how a real game is played." Jasper explained to Johnny how the controllers worked and what the game was about. Hawk was amazed his little guy picked it up so quickly. Johnny's face scrunched up as he raced his car around the streets, his whole body moving with his controller. He was adorable, jumping up and down excitedly when his car won.

"You're pretty good. You were hustling me, weren't you?" Jasper laughed.

Hawk stood when he felt Johnny's anxiety.

"Honest, Jasper. I didn't cheat," Johnny said desperately.

“Hey, little buddy. I was only joking. You can beat my a— butt anytime.” Jasper gently chucked him on the arm.

Johnny beamed, Hawk sat back down, and Jasper’s balls unclenched.

“Hey, Johnny!”

Hawk saw Johnny face light up when Cecil came into the room. His mate dropped the controller and ran to Cecil, hugging him tight.

“Cecil. Are you okay? Hawk said you were sick. Are you better now?”

Cecil laughed. “Yes, Johnny. All better. You wanna play?”

Jasper handed Cecil his controller, starting a new game. “Eat my fucking dust, Johnny.” Cecil laughed.

Everyone got quiet. Cecil ignored them.

“Eat my fucking dust, Cecil.” Johnny laughed as he won the race again. He jumped around with his controller in a happy dance.

Hawk laughed. His mate was having fun. It shocked him to hear Johnny curse, but he wasn’t a prude. He didn’t care as long as he was smiling. Hawk motioned Caden over to him. “Can you get those two some orange sodas and some snacks?”

Caden nodded. No way was he telling Hawk no. He grabbed a bucket, filling it with ice. He set a whole six pack of orange soda in it. He pulled Storm to the kitchen with him for help. Storm carried the bucket out as Caden balanced the snacks in his arms. The large bowls had an assortment of every snack in the kitchen. Caden set everything down on the coffee table, letting the mates know it was there. Hawk nodded his thanks, and Caden went back to his game of pool with Storm.

“Cheese puffs, my favorite.” Johnny flicked the snacks around, fishing all the cheese puffs out. His fingers were dusted in orange as he licked them clean. Cecil was trying to dig all the pretzels out. They looked like two little kids at Halloween trying to find their favorite candy in their bags. Hawk sat back, amused.

“I wanna play Johnny next.” Remi strolled over, trying to snatch

the controller from Cecil. Cecil ran around the room, giggling and evading Remi's grasp. Johnny watched.

Hawk eyes followed his mate as he ran to Cecil, helping him hide the controller from Remi. They both ran around laughing as Remi growled.

Hawk sat in the corner of the room on a bar stool. His arms crossed over his chest and one foot resting on the cross bar that ran the length at the bottom of the chair. Smiling at his mate, he was relieved to see Johnny coming out of his shell as he wondered what Johnny's home life had been like to make him so timid. Hawk was going to find out. He needed to learn what buttons set his mate off and what made him happy.

Cecil squealed as Remi tickled him to get the controller. Johnny began to tickle Remi in retaliation. Remi held his hands up in surrender, laughing. He stepped back and knocked Johnny over on accident. A growl ripped through the room. Hawk stormed across, gently lifting his mate up into his arms, checking his backside for any bruising and running his hands along Johnny's skin.

"Hawk! I'm fine." Johnny kissed him. "Can I play now?"

Hawk set him down, shooting daggers at Remi. Remi just rolled his eyes. Hawk was way too protective of his mate. Dude needed to lighten up.

Cecil gave the controller to Remi, still laughing.

Banging sounded at the door, and Cody strolled over to answer it. He rolled his eyes. "It's that asshole again."

Cody shot a glance to Hawk.

"I want my brother returned to me. I gave you guys a week, and he still isn't home. Bring Johnny to me now!"

Johnny ran behind Hawk. "I don't want to go, Hawk," Johnny whispered.

"You're not going anywhere, pretty baby."

The whole room surrounded Johnny, standing in front of him in a protective stance. Hawk nodded his thanks and went to deal with the

brother.

He got his first look at Johnny's caretaker. Hawk wasn't impressed. The guy wasn't that tall, average. He had short blond hair the same color as Johnny's, but his blue-gray eyes weren't stunning. They were calculating. Hawk knew he had to watch this one because he didn't trust the human. His body was fit, as if he lived in a gym, probably steroids. It wasn't natural like the wolves.

"Now who the hell are you? How many of you live here? Where is my brother?" Sean was yelling and cursing, but he also took a step back at Hawk's ominous presence. His face paled slightly.

"I'm Johnny's boyfriend. Who are you?" Hawk shot back.

Sean's pale complexion turned crimson in seconds. "You sick fuck. You're all molesting him in here!" Sean dove at Hawk. If the Sentries hadn't been watching, they would have missed Hawk's swift and agile movement. Hawk threw his arm up, catching Sean around the chest and flipped him over, dropping him onto his back. He dropped to one knee and wrapped his hand around Sean's throat. All in one smooth synchronized stroke.

Chapter Five

Tank grabbed Cecil and Johnny around the waist and hauled them off of their feet. He took them to Maverick's office and deposited them on the leather sofa.

"Can you explain to me why you're carrying mine and Hawk's mates?" Maverick stood from behind his desk, clasping his hands behind his back. Tank took a step back from the six foot nine Alpha.

"Sir, Johnny's brother is at the door. He attacked Hawk. I felt it best to move your mates to a safer place till this is settled." Tank ruffled Cecil and Johnny's hair. He really liked the little dudes and would kill that brother if he harmed either of them. Cecil had already been through hell when Maverick's assistant poisoned then kidnapped him, leaving him for dead. Cecil was just now coming out of his depression from that horror. There was no way he would allow anything else bad to happen on his watch.

"In that case, I am grateful to you for your swift thinking and actions. Please stay with them while I go see what the hell is going on in my home." Tank nodded as Maverick went to knock heads.

"Come on, Johnny. Internet is awaiting us." Cecil pulled Johnny over to Maverick's desk. He logged onto his account that Maverick had set up for him. They skimmed the different websites as Tank stood watch by the door.

"That's pretty. Does it come in pink?" Johnny was looking at a coat Cecil had on the screen.

"I saved this page because I was thinking about getting it for winter. You want me to tell Hawk to get it for you?" Cecil clicked a few buttons and the printer spit the page out. He handed the page to

Johnny. "Just show Hawk this and let him know you like it."

"He would buy it for me?" Johnny never had new clothes. His mamma always shopped in thrift stores, and Sean said new clothes were a waste of money. A new coat just for him? Johnny became excited. "Do you think he will?"

"He's your mate. He'll buy it for you and anything else you need." Cecil had argued with Maverick when they first mated. Maverick had gone overboard by having Cody take him to the mall and going on a spending spree. Cecil had told Cody no, but the Sentry had made a big scene, so Cecil relented. He had learned to accept Maverick's gifts, but a part of him still felt weird letting someone else take care of him. He was too independent.

Johnny was different though. He needed someone to look out for him. His brother was doing a bang-up job. Just look at his physique. Cecil became angry every time he looked at Johnny's bones protruding against his skin. Everyone was making sure he ate as much as possible, sending food to the room four or five times a day, the tray piled high.

"Tank, do you think this coat is pretty?" Johnny took the picture over to the six foot seven, three hundred and twenty pound Sherman tank. He got down on one knee and accepted the page from Johnny.

Tank eyed the picture. It sure was sparkly. He imagined Johnny running around in a pink sparkly coat with fur around the hood. He smiled. Hawk was gonna love this.

"It's very pretty, Johnny. Maybe Cecil can help you find matching boots." Tank winked at Cecil with a mischievous smile. Score one for the Sentries. Johnny was going to get whatever he liked. He knew Hawk would spoil him rotten. It was just hilarious that Johnny's favorite color was pink. Not that pink was a funny color for Johnny to wear but funny for Hawk to have a mate strutting around in it. The big, bad warrior was going down.

Johnny grabbed the page from Tank, crinkling it in excitement, "Can you, Cecil?" Johnny ran back to the desk, shoving the page at

Cecil. "The same sparkly color?"

"Sure can, Johnny my man." Cecil began clicking away, wearing the same mischievous smile.

* * * *

"If you ever threaten me or Johnny again, I will make sure my hand doesn't leave your throat. Are we clear?" Hawk growled at Sean. He felt such rage coursing through him that the thought of actually letting this man go took every ounce of humanity in him to do so.

The purple face nodded. Hawk released him, standing to his feet. Hawk exhaled heavily, fisting his hands to stop them from shooting out and clawing Sean's face off.

Maverick entered the room, standing next to Hawk. The two together? That was some scary shit. One alone made the ions crackle in the room, but two? Static electricity shot a spectacular display of dominance and destruction.

"I see you have decided to grace my doorstep again." Maverick spoke to Sean as if he were discussing the weather.

Sean stood, rubbing his nearly crushed trachea. "I'll make you guys pay for this." Sean stormed out of the house, slamming the door behind him.

"Moronic jerk," Remi bit out from across the room.

Hawk closed his eyes, inhaling deep breaths to calm the firestorm exploding inside of him. He had caught his canines at the last second trying to emerge. It had taken every cell of will power to keep his eyes green and not have them turn crimson. It wouldn't bode well to shift, even partially, in front of a human. Their secret was guarded closely. If anyone found out that there were were-creatures in the world, shit would hit the fan and things would get ugly fast.

Hawk turned to the den. Where was Johnny? "Where the hell is my mate?" Hawk stormed over to the Sentries, searching for his

pretty baby.

“Calm down, Commander. He’s in my office with Cecil and Tank. He’s safe. Go to him.” Maverick led the way back to his office, Hawk hot on his heels. When Maverick and Hawk stepped into the room, Johnny came running.

He jumped into Hawk’s arms, waving two pieces of paper around, “Look, Hawk. Aren’t they pretty? Cecil said you would get them for me. Will you?”

Hawk sat on the sofa with his mate on his lap. His anger quickly fled as his small mate chatted away. Hawk’s breath caught at the chest-seizing love he felt staring into those big blue-gray eyes that shined up at him innocently.

He swallowed repeatedly to chase away the tears that threatened to spill for this little man as he took the papers Johnny offered, studying them.

Pink? Did his mate really want pink sparkly boots and a coat? He didn’t care about buying it, but pink? He saw the excitement Johnny was bubbling with, his hands shaking in anticipation. He kept pointing from one picture to the other, telling Hawk he would keep them clean and only wear them when he had to.

Hawk kissed his temple. He was a goner. “Anything my pretty baby wants.” *Anything in life is yours.*

“In that case,” Cecil interjected, “I took the liberty of putting a few items in his online shopping basket as well. You know, underclothes and jeans, some shirts and sweaters, lots of socks.” Cecil gave Tank a knowing look, biting the insides of his cheeks to stop himself from laughing. “Of course, Johnny picked them all out.”

Hawk groaned, he could just imagine what Johnny picked out to wear. Please don’t let *all* of it be pink.

Johnny bounced on his lap in excitement. “I told Cecil it was too much. I just wanted the coat and boots, but he kept having me pick more and more stuff.”

“No, baby.” Hawk looked over at Cecil and nodded. He slipped

his wallet from his pocket and gave Johnny his credit card to hand to Cecil. "Get it for him, Cecil. Please."

Cecil clicked away, hitting the checkout button and shipping the stuff overnight. Johnny would be running around with his new coat tomorrow. Cecil smiled.

"That's all you had to do? Now my stuff's coming?" Johnny stood next to Cecil, tapping his temple. Hawk shot up and grabbed his mate, wondering why he was frustrated.

"What's wrong, pretty baby?"

Johnny shook his head, looking at Cecil then at Maverick.

"Come on. You've had a long day. Let's get you settled." Hawk picked Johnny up. He took his card from Cecil's extended hand. "Thanks for helping him, Cecil." Cecil inclined his head, and Hawk carried his mate to the door. "Thanks, Tank, for taking care of him." Hawk patted Tank's shoulder as he took his mate to their room.

* * * *

"What just happened?" Tank looked from Cecil to Maverick, bewildered.

"I think he became agitated when he couldn't figure out how I online shopped for him." Cecil's shoulders sagged. He had only been trying to help Johnny.

"He'll be fine. Hawk will take good care of him. Come on, mate, time for you to get settled too." Maverick had a gleam in his eye. Cecil knew that look and giggled. Time to ride his big, bad wolf. He closed the browser and shut the computer down, skipping behind Maverick.

* * * *

Hawk stripped Johnny, settling him in bed. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I just didn't know how Cecil did all that. Will my stuff

really come?” Hawk striped out of his clothes as Johnny pulled the blankets around himself and curled up. He slid into bed, snuggling close. Johnny nuzzled his nose in Hawk’s armpit.

“Yes, it will be here tomorrow. I can have Cecil give you lessons on how to use a computer. Would you like that?”

Johnny nodded, nipping at the skin under Hawk’s arm.

“What are you doing, pretty baby?” Hawk raised his arm to look down at Johnny.

“You smell good.”

Hawk rolled to his side, pulling his mate in his arms. Leaning down, he kissed Johnny’s lips, pushing his tongue for entrance. Johnny opened. Hawk dove in, sucking on his mate’s tongue, squeezing his ass cheeks with his right hand. He pulled Johnny closer, allowing his mate’s cock to grind into his abdomen. Johnny was rock-hard. He was pumping his hips, making little sex noises. Hawk broke the kiss.

“Do you want to have sex again? Is that what my pretty baby wants?”

Johnny nodded. “Do you have to bite me again?”

Johnny was clenching his ass cheeks together as his cock kissed pre-come all over Hawk’s stomach.

“Not if you don’t want me to.”

“What if I want you to?” His mate ran his finger over Hawk’s lips, pushing the top lip up, assuming he was looking for the long teeth.

“Then I will.” Hawk rolled to his knees, hovering over his mate. Johnny ran his hands through Hawk’s long blue-black hair, sending shivers down his spine. “What do you want?”

Johnny blushed. “Can you suck it again?”

Hawk chuckled and nipped one of Johnny’s nipples. Oh, what a monster he had created. Johnny moaned, pulling Hawk’s hair, making his head push in closer. Hawk circled his tongue around the small brown disc, sucking gently and teasing it to a peak. He loved the fact that his mate was so responsive and didn’t hold back. Johnny showed

him every emotion he was feeling. His tongue trailed across Johnny's sternum, finding the other nipple waiting in anticipation. Hawk licked and sucked until it matched its mate.

He dipped lower, swirling his tongue down Johnny's ribs, around his belly then sucked at his naval. He liked the fact that his mate had very little body hair. It was sexy as hell. Hawk nipped at Johnny's pubic hairs that lay softly against his pelvis. His hairs weren't wiry, more like a soft pelt. Hawk inhaled the aroma of his mate, licking the blond velvet. Johnny spread his legs wider, pushing at Hawk's shoulders, wanting him to suck his cock.

His tongue ran down the seam of Johnny's inner thigh, circling around his balls as he suckled on one gently while his hands splayed across his mate's belly. Releasing one side to dine on the other, humming his praise.

"Hawk, oh, Hawk." Johnny pushed his ass further down, trying to feed Hawk more. Hawk smiled and lapped at the hanging sac, slowly working his way up. His tongue followed the large vein to the head, sucking at the bundle of nerves under the hood. Johnny's hips hitched, tightening his hold in Hawk's hair. Hawk welcomed the sting of pain.

"Pull my hair harder, pretty baby." Johnny fisted it tighter, yanking. Hawk moaned and wrapped his lips around Johnny crown. Hawk concaved his cheeks and sucked hard, drawing all the pre-come he could out of the little eye. Spittle ran down as he feasted, and he ran his finger through it, getting it good and wet. Hawk ran the wet digit over Johnny's puckered hole, rimming it. Johnny pushed down on it. Hawk breached it, twisting his finger until he found the beautiful gland. Johnny shouted when Hawk ran his finger over it.

"Do it again, Hawk."

Hawk stroked it. Johnny pulled his hair harder, and Hawk went wild. He speared another finger into the tight heat, fucking his mate's ass. Johnny rocked up and down on the pleasure. He sucked harder, spearing a third finger, stretching Johnny's hole wider.

"I'm coming, Hawk!" Johnny's seed burst into his mouth,

shooting down his throat. Johnny fucked Hawk's mouth with quick snaps, pumping until it seemed his balls were emptied.

Hawk grabbed the lube from the drawer, squirting a generous amount up and down his cock, lathering the cool gel until his hand slipped. He tossed the bottle aside, wiping his soaked hand on the blanket. Flipping Johnny to his knees, his cock head kissed his mate's ring of muscles. "You ready for me, Johnny?"

"Yes. Fuck me, Hawk." Hawk growled and pushed in. His mate's dirty little mouth turned him on. Hawk stopped once the head gained entrance, waiting for Johnny's body to adjust. Johnny slammed down, shocking the shit out of Hawk. His mate pulled up and slammed down again. Hawk held still, letting him take his pleasure.

"That's it, baby. Fuck my cock. Fuck Daddy's cock." Hawk snapped his head back in surprise. Where the hell did that come from? He felt strong and powerful protecting his small mate, but he never thought of himself as his *daddy*. What the fuck was wrong with him? He wasn't a pedophile by any stretch of the imagination. Hell, he was hesitant with Johnny, and he was his mate. Hawk wondered if Johnny had caught the slip.

Johnny's head tilted to the side, "Bite me, Hawk. Please." He continued to slam back, rocking hard on his hands and knees. Hawk's canines punched down, and he leaned over Johnny, nipping at his shoulder. "Yes, do it. Bite me." Hawk sank his canines in, sucking at the heady nectar.

He lost himself for a moment, forgetting to take only a small amount. Hawk sucked hard, drawing his mate's essence in. Johnny damn near shoved his ass through Hawk's pelvis, screaming as his cock burst with seed across the sheets. Johnny collapsed onto the bed as Hawk released his hold and roared, endorphins shattering through him, sending him into the sexual abyss. Hawk rolled over, his lungs burning for oxygen as his chest heaved to draw it in.

Hawk grabbed Johnny, draping him over his chest. He felt something warm run down his side. Hawk sat up, and Johnny

slumped down his body. Rolling him over, Hawk saw that he hadn't closed the wound.

And Johnny wasn't moving.

Chapter Six

Shit. Oh, shit. Hawk licked the wound closed, tapping Johnny's cheek softly. "Come on, pretty baby. Open those beautiful eyes for me."

Johnny moaned, his eyes fluttering.

"That's right, baby. Let me see those peepers." Hawk was relieved to see his mate stir. He cursed himself for losing control. Knew he never should have taken that much from his fragile mate. Johnny's weight didn't allow him such errors.

"Hawk, we have *got* to do that again." Johnny was smiling up at him.

Hawk's jaw dropped open. What had he created? He was realizing that Johnny wasn't as timid in bed as he was out of it. The man was becoming a beast.

Hawk shook his head, amazed. "Not till we get more weight on you, my horny little mate." He tossed the pillows together then lay back, pulling Johnny with him. His mate snuggled in the crook of his arm.

"In that case, I'm going to eat the whole kitchen." Johnny giggled.

"Sleep now, pretty baby. You can eat the whole kitchen tomorrow." Hawk pulled the blanket over them, turning the side lamp off.

"Okay, *Daddy*."

* * * *

Jasper walked into the kitchen and stopped. He walked out, then

back in again. Yep, he was seeing things right. Johnny was sitting at the table with the whole pantry practically in front of him. What the hell? Did he have a tape worm?

"Hey, kiddo. A little hungry?" Jasper began to put things away. He knew Johnny wasn't going to eat all of this. Jasper snagged the two jars of peanut butter along with the three bags of chips. Uncooked pasta was stored back on the shelf as well as Jasper wondered what Johnny had planned with it. He tossed the three cans of tuna and the bag of flour back on the shelf. Jasper was going to have to have a talk with Hawk. The little guy seemed confused about food combinations.

"I was going to eat that stuff. Can I have it back, Jasper?" Johnny grabbed for the bottle of cooking oil, but Jasper was faster.

"And how were you going to eat the flour? Hmm? Mix it with this oil and sprinkle tuna on it?" Jasper finally had everything put away and the table wiped down. He sat across from the little shit and just stared.

"I need to put weight on for Hawk. So he can...never mind." Johnny blushed.

Jasper smiled, patting the back of Johnny's hand. "I know what for. But eating unbleached flour and peanut oil will only make you sick. You tell ole Jasper what you want, and I'll whip it right up for you."

"I like that stuff that you made me and Hawk that one night." Johnny scrunched his face up in concentration. "It was long and round and had meat and little white crumbly pieces of cheese in it. Oh, and it had sauce and cheese on top of it too."

"Manicotti it is then. It's gonna take a while. Wanna help me make it?" Jasper grabbed the items he would need to make the dish, setting everything on the counter.

"Okay." Johnny washed his hands, prepared to help.

Cecil ran into the kitchen. "Johnny, your stuff's here."

* * * *

Johnny and Cecil ran into the den. There were boxes everywhere. Some of the Sentries helped Johnny and Cecil open the boxes and lay his new clothes on the couch for Johnny to examine. The pile kept getting higher as Johnny emptied the last box. His pretty coat was in that one.

"It's the same color as it was on the screen!" Johnny pulled it on, petting the smooth fabric. He pulled the hood up and ran his hand along the fur.

"It looks good on you, little man." Remi smiled.

"Thank you, Remi. Where's my boots?"

Cecil handed them to him. Johnny shoved his feet in them, preening around the den. The Sentries whistled and catcalled. Johnny beamed.

Johnny ran to Maverick's office and burst through the door. He stopped as Maverick stood, looking really big and scary. Johnny looked around to see six people, including Hawk, staring at him. "Sorry." Grabbing his coat closed, he ran from the room. Hawk yelled for him to stop.

Johnny turned around, tears in his eyes. "Did I get you in trouble?"

"No, pretty baby. What did you want?" Hawk got down on one knee, wiping the runaway tears from Johnny's eyes.

"I got my new coat and boots, and I wanted to show you. Are you sure you're not in trouble?"

"I'm not in trouble. Turn around and show me your new coat and boots." Hawk stood, smiling as Johnny turned, adding a little hitch to his hips. He tapped one foot out, turning his ankle back and forth to show his booted foot and then repeated the process with the other.

"You look pretty in your new coat, and your boots are nice, too. I'll have to take you out so you can show them off." Hawk winked at him.

"They look really nice, little man." Maverick complimented him.

Johnny looked past Hawk to see all the guys that had been in the office standing in the hall.

Johnny walked over to Maverick, craning his neck back to look up at him. "I'm sorry for not knocking. Please don't be mad at Hawk."

Maverick laughed. He ruffled Johnny's hair. "You can bust in anytime you want. I'm not mad at Hawk."

Johnny nodded his head and ran back to Hawk, hiding behind him.

"You look real nice, Johnny."

Johnny looked around his mate again. There was a man standing there smiling. He was really tall and had black and blond hair mixed together. Johnny thought he was really handsome.

"Thanks, Gunnar." Hawk took Johnny back to the den, letting him show Hawk all the new clothes he had.

"Can some of you guys help my mate get his things to our room?" Hawk picked him up and gave him a deep and heated kiss.

"All your clothes are very nice, baby."

Johnny whispered in his ear, "Thanks, Daddy." Then he giggled.

"I want you to pick out an outfit. I'm going to take you to dinner tonight." Hawk left Johnny to his clothes as he returned to his meeting.

Caden, Storm, Jasper, and Murdock helped Johnny take all his garments to his room. They even helped him put the stuff away. The four men bickered over what Johnny should wear for his date. Johnny thought it was too funny.

* * * *

Cecil sat on the window seat watching four big warriors fight over what outfit matched Johnny's new pink, sparkly coat. This house had definitely gone through a metamorphosis since his and Johnny's arrival. The Sentries used to just hang out and shoot pool or play darts. They drank and watched sports or played cards. Scratching

balls and burping. *Boring.*

Since their arrival, the men loosened up. Playing video games and blasting the stereo, playing pranks on each other and arguing over the dumbest shit. Cecil loved it. They had even renamed their Alpha's home. It was now known as "The Den." Go figure, since everything happened in the den. The Den had become the 'it' place to hang if not on patrol. They even forgot they had their own homes, crashing on one of two sofas while playing or talking.

"Guys, guys, guys. I think you should let Johnny pick. It is *his* date after all. Lay the outfit out that you think he should wear, and then let him pick from the four." Cecil shook his head. Men.

They all did as Cecil suggested, waiting to see whose outfit won. Johnny walked back and forth in front of the clothing draped on his bed. His hands were clasped behind his back, looking more like a general inspecting his line of troops. Cecil laughed.

Johnny finally stopped, pointing to a pair of low rise black jeans and a sparkly white dress shirt.

Storm whooped, pumping his arm in the air. "Guy's got good taste." Storm rubbed it in as the other three flipped him off. Storm laughed. "Baby losers."

Johnny walked in front of Storm, staring. "How come your eyes change color all the time?"

The other three stepped beside Johnny, pulling him behind them. Cecil watched, curious as to why they were acting this way. He had noticed that, too, but never asked. Johnny spoke what he thought. The warrior pulled his plaited blond hair over his shoulder, stroking it.

"Remind me to tell you later, little man. Now go shower for your date." When Johnny left to do as told, Storm rounded on his friends. "Don't ever do that again. I would never hurt him!"

"Sorry, man, I just remember you knocking out the last guy that asked," Murdock mumbled.

"That guy was an ass, and you know it. He kept hitting on me and groping. *That's* why I knocked him out." Storm grabbed the unchosen

clothes and put them away, trying to calm down. "I couldn't believe my friends actually think that I would hurt him. I'm six foot seven. Johnny is what? Two feet? You bastards."

"Sorry, man." Caden lightly tugged on his waist-length braid.

"It's alright." Storm removed his plait from Caden's fingers, tapping knuckles.

"Okay, then, now that your bonding is out of the way, leave. Johnny needs to get dressed." Cecil ushered the men from the room, closing the door.

Johnny emerged from the bathroom in just a towel, drying his hair with another one. "Let's get you ready, buddy."

Cecil combed Johnny's beautiful hair out, wanting to play in it more than comb it. He added some moisturizer to it, then handed Johnny body lotion to put on. Once Johnny was dressed, he handed him some cologne. Declaring him ready, Cecil took him downstairs.

"Whoa, mama, look at you." Storm whistled.

"Looking sharp, buddy." Murdock winked.

"Oh, my god. You're stunning, Johnny." Jasper had been waiting in the den with Johnny's food. "Guess you won't need this then." Jasper stood to take his plate to the kitchen. "I'll put it away for later, okay?"

* * * *

"Okay. Thank you, Jasper." Johnny sat nervously, waiting for Hawk, wanting to please and impress his mate. He hoped Hawk liked his clothes.

"You look great, pretty baby. Let me go shower and get ready." Hawk came in the room and kissed Johnny on the forehead. He took off up the stairs.

Ten minutes later Hawk was escorting Johnny to his truck, lifting him into the passenger side and buckling him in, giving him a quick peck on the lips before sauntering around to his side. Johnny stared at

him with drool. Hawk always looked good. Tonight he looked lickable. Johnny wanted to run up to their bedroom and have lots of sex with him. He giggled.

“What’s so funny, baby?” Hawk started the truck, pulling down the gravel drive.

“Nothing.” Johnny sat with his hands clasped in his lap, nervous. He hoped he didn’t embarrass Hawk by doing anything stupid. This was their first date, and he wanted it to go right.

“I can feel your nervousness. What’s wrong?”

“You can feel me?” Johnny fidgeted around trying to calm down.

“Yes, I can feel your emotions when we are close to each other, like in the same room or in the truck. Now tell me what’s wrong, pretty baby.”

“I just don’t want to make any mistakes and embarrass you.” Johnny dropped his head, picking at his jeans.

“Don’t you worry about that. You can’t embarrass me. Remember that. I’d have to care what people think, and I don’t.” Hawk reached over and patted his knee.

They pulled in front of a restaurant, and a valet took their truck while they headed inside. Hawk was the perfect gentleman. He took Johnny’s coat for him, pulled his chair out, and even placed the napkin in his lap.

Hawk ordered for both of them.

The food came, and Johnny’s eyes rounded at the delicious looking pasta. Cheese was melted everywhere! He ate very carefully, not wanting to make a mess of himself.

The date was going well so far, and Johnny was having a good time. He asked Hawk where the men’s room was, whispering that he had to tinkle.

Hawk laughed and pointed the way.

Johnny finished and was washing his hands when two men came in. They were staring at him funny. Johnny was trying to hurry up and dry his hands so he could leave.

One of the men cornered him “Are you the big guy’s twink? I’d rent you for a night. Hell, longer if you’re good.” He grabbed Johnny’s penis through his pants.

Johnny knocked his hand away. “Stop. Don’t touch me.”

“Come on, baby. Don’t play hard to get. At least not yet, that is.” The other guy pulled Johnny’s back to his chest, pushing his crotch into Johnny’s butt. He struggled to get free, but the other guy was pushing his crotch in front of Johnny, smashing their penises together.

Johnny began to whimper. He wanted Hawk. He didn’t want these men touching and pushing into him. The guy behind him put his hand down the back of Johnny’s pants, squeezing his butt.

“Stop!” Johnny fought them, thrashing around to break free. The guy behind him stumbled, his hand slipping out of Johnny’s pants. Johnny ran for the door, one of the men calling him a little bitch.

Johnny ran to Hawk, throwing himself at him, crying.

“What’s wrong, Johnny?” Hawk stood, pulling Johnny into his arms.

“Those men in the bathroom were t–t–trying to have sex with me,” Johnny cried into Hawk’s chest.

Hawk pulled Johnny into his arms and shot across the restaurant, slamming the bathroom door open. He set Johnny down then slammed the first guy into the wall, grabbing the second man by the throat and lifting him off of his feet. Hawk growled as the first man stumbled to the door, trying to get away. “No, the fuck you don’t.” He grabbed him by the scruff of his collar, yanking him back. Hawk repeatedly slammed them into the tiled wall until police stormed the bathroom.

Chapter Seven

It took six officers to get Hawk off of the two men. Johnny was crying in the corner as they handcuffed Hawk. Hawk fought the change. He knew he had to calm down or all of these witnesses were going to be mauled by a gigantic Timber wolf. It usually took another Timber wolf to negate the change. Hawk used every cell in him to stay human.

“Johnny. Go to our table and get my cell phone from the inside pocket. Push the number two button then the tic-tac-toe button. Maverick will answer. Tell him to come get you. *Don’t* leave till he comes. Understand me, pretty baby?” Hawk refused to allow the police to haul him away until his mate did as he was instructed. They finally stopped struggling to get Hawk out of there and allowed him to stand at the table as Johnny spoke to Maverick.

* * * *

Johnny sat at the table, waiting for Cecil’s mate to take him home. The police had put Hawk in the back of their car and drove him away.

Johnny was terrified as he sat in the middle of the restaurant with strangers staring at him, giving him mean looks. He wanted Hawk. Johnny began to silently cry. They had gone to the city for dinner. It was too far away for Johnny to walk home. He would just have to wait and hope no one else bothered him.

“Johnny!” Cecil ran across the room, pulling Johnny into his arms. “It’s okay, buddy. Maverick will get Hawk home for you, okay?”

“Okay. Can we go home now?” Johnny grabbed his pink coat and Hawk’s leather. Wanting the smell and comfort of his mate, Johnny donned the oversized jacket.

Maverick paid for their meal and took them home.

The guys swarmed Johnny as soon as he walked in. They wanted to know what had happened. Johnny told them what the two men in the bathroom did to him—everything—then he told them what Hawk did.

Remi walked Johnny over to the couch, sitting down next to him. Draping an arm around Johnny’s shoulder, Remi hugged him to his chest. “Are you okay, little man?”

Johnny ran his hand under his nose, sniffing. “Yeah, they scared me, but I’m okay. They took Hawk from me. Is he coming back?” Fresh tears ran down Johnny’s face as he buried it in Remi’s chest.

“Maverick is getting him right now. Don’t you worry.” Remi ran his hand over Johnny’s hair.

* * * *

Hawk was out of the truck before Maverick even parked it. He slammed through the front door. Hawk grabbed his little mate and crushed him against his chest. “Are you okay, pretty baby? Did they hurt you?”

“Can’t...breathe.” Hawk loosened his hold, staring down at his mate. He had been terrified to leave him in that restaurant by himself. Hunting those two and finishing what he started was forefront on his mind.

“They didn’t hurt me, just scared me. They wouldn’t stop touching me. They called me a bitch and a twink. What’s a twink? They put their hands in my pants, too.” Johnny leaned closer, talking low into Hawk’s ear. “They grabbed my penis, too. And pushed theirs into mine and my butt.”

Hawk threw his head back and howled with the overwhelming

urge to hunt, the change coming over him with the need to finish what he had started.

Johnny continued to whisper in his ear, "Hawk, we're not in our bedroom, you can't do that."

How the hell did his mate make him laugh at a time like this? Hawk crushed Johnny to him again. He knew that if Johnny hadn't escaped, he would have been raped. Hawk fought the madness trying to take over. His mate had been touched by another, two of them. Instincts drove him to kill them, but he sat with his mate, fighting the pull. Closing his eyes, Hawk laid his head back on the couch, just holding Johnny. How had a perfect date gone so wrong?

* * * *

Hawk knocked on Maverick's office door. "Can I talk to you a minute?"

"Sure, come on in."

Hawk took a seat in the plush leather chair in front of his Alpha's desk. Looking around, he noticed something for the first time. "Where's Kota?"

"My Beta is taking care of some business for me out of town. He should be home soon. Why? Did you need him for something?"

"No, just noticed he wasn't around."

"If you are just now noticing, then maybe you need a vacation. He's been gone for days." Maverick watched the Commander carefully. He had noticed changes in him since finding his mate. Most were good, considering he hadn't seen the man laugh in a very long time, but his temper had gotten worse.

"About today. I didn't mean to bring attention to us. My mate was assaulted, and I defended him. I don't regret it and wouldn't change it. I just wanted to apologize for the spotlight that's on us now." Hawk rubbed his temples. He had had a headache since the whole incident, finally calming down enough to release Johnny, which his mate was

grateful for. He kept crying, and he couldn't breathe.

"I understand why you did it, Hawk. I would have done the same. We'll figure out how to get out of this. I retained an excellent attorney. He may be able to get the charges dropped. Just stay in the house and tend to your mate. No more fights."

Maverick pulled on his soul patch, wondering how Hawk had managed not to shift and kill everyone in that bathroom. He would have. Blood would be spilling if Cecil had been hurt. His mate had been through enough. Maverick pushed that thought away because it still angered him.

"Thanks, Maverick." Hawk sighed deeply. All he had wanted to do was take his mate out and show him off.

Going on the hunt for his mate, still wanting to hold him in his arms, Hawk found Johnny in the kitchen, eating the food Jasper had cooked for him earlier. "Still hungry?"

"Yeah, this is really good. Jasper can whip something up for me anytime." Johnny shoved another forkful into his mouth, swallowing it down with his orange soda.

Hawk stood there, watching his mate. He couldn't believe how much the little guy had changed his life, and he couldn't imagine a life without him. Johnny was slowly coming out of his shell and finding out who he was. Hawk was proud to be there to see it all happen. Still, he hadn't asked him about his home life though, fearing it would upset his mate to relive it. Hawk felt humbled to have someone like Johnny to love him.

"You okay, Hawk? Why do you look sad?" Johnny put his fork down and wiped his mouth, scooting his chair back, and hugging Hawk.

"I'm okay, pretty baby. You wanna play some video games?"

"How about pool? I never learned how to play."

"Pool it is. Come on." Hawk held his hand out and led his baby into the den.

Kicking Murdock and Cody away, Hawk showed Johnny how to

play, keeping the rules simple. They started to gain an audience as Johnny got better. Hawk had another epiphany about his mate —show Johnny something once and he mastered it. He was starting to think that the diagnosis had been wrong. Maybe his mate had just been shy and timid. Maybe no one had ever taken the time to show him how things worked. Hawk was starting to believe that Jonathan Stone was *not* mildly retarded, just misunderstood.

“Kick his ass, little man.” Remi laughed.

Johnny lined his pool stick up. “Eight ball in corner pocket.” He tapped the corner he was referring to and took his shot. Bingo.

“I’m beginning to believe Jasper when he said you were a hustler.” Hawk chuckled.

“Nah-uh. Just a good student.” Johnny beamed as he took another shot.

* * * *

“I have next game against the pint-size cutie.”

Johnny looked up to see a stranger walk in. The guy was as big as everyone else. He had the same black eyes as Tank. His hair was short and black, and he had hair around his mouth. His eyes sparkled. Johnny felt safe around him for some reason.

“Hey, Ludo, you’re back,” Caden yelled.

“Yes, my brother. My family has been taken care of and my mother pleased. All is well now, no?” Ludo strolled over to Johnny extending his hand.

Johnny shook it, but the man kissed his knuckles.

“I am Ludo, and who might this beautiful flower be?”

“Hawk’s mate,” Jasper said dryly.

Ludo dropped his hand quickly, shooting a glance at his Commander. “My apologies, sir. I did not know.”

“Now you do. Don’t let it happen again. Hey, Ludo. Glad you’re back.”

"Glad to be back, sir. Have I missed much?"

Jasper filled the wolf in on everything that had been going on. Ludo cursed a few times during the retelling. Jasper whispered a little lower, telling him about Johnny's diagnosis. Ludo glanced at Johnny warmly, seeing him in a whole different light now. He walked over to Cecil and hugged him tight. "I am glad you are well now." Cecil nodded, and Ludo released him.

"I must see my Alpha now. I will catch up later."

"Was that a Russian accent?" Johnny asked.

"No one really knows," Remi replied.

Hawk pulled Cecil to the side. "Hey, little man. Can you show Johnny how to use a computer? Just start him off with the basics?"

"Sure, Hawk. No problemo, no?" Cecil laughed as he pulled Johnny away.

"Little shit," Hawk muttered.

* * * *

"Come in." Maverick was getting a headache from the revolving door his office had seemed to turn into. Sentries and the Commander had popped in and out all day. He had just finished being brought up to speed by Ludo. Now what?

"Hey, Maverick." Kota came in and stood at the door.

"Good. A welcome face. Come in, my friend. Have a seat." Kota was not only Maverick's Beta, but also his best friend. They were only two years apart and had known each other over three hundred years.

"Um, I have someone to introduce you to. Is that okay?" Kota opened the door, waving someone in.

"Sure, you know it is." Maverick stood, wondering who had Kota so calm. He watched as a tall and thin young man walked through the door, standing close to Kota. Judging by Kota's height of six foot eight, the man was at least six foot one. He had jet black hair that ran

all the way down his back and touched his hips. His eyes were a strange brownish orange, and he kept them glued to the floor, glancing only at Maverick long enough to nod. Maverick saw right away the man was fidgeting and repeatedly tucking his hair behind his ear.

“Alpha, this is Blair, my mate.” Kota encouraged Blair to go to Maverick.

Maverick extended his hand. “Nice to meet you, Blair. I’m Maverick.”

Blair shook his hand and immediately went back to Kota’s side.

“Can I fill you in on everything in a little while? I want to introduce him to the pack.” Kota entwined his fingers with Blair’s.

“Of course, Kota. Take your time.” Maverick nodded as Kota and his mate left.

* * * *

“Well, look what the cat dragged in. A dog.” Remi laughed as Kota entered the den. His smile died as he noticed the man next to him, or should he say, hovering behind him. The guy looked nervous. *Don’t tell me, another fucking mate.* What was it? Mate season? The suckers were popping up everywhere. Not that Remi minded. He adored Johnny and Cecil.

“Hey to you, too, Remington.” Kota inclined his head. “This is my mate, Blair.” Kota reached behind him and placed his hand on the small of his mate’s back, bringing him forward.

“Hey, Blair. I’m *Remi*. Nice to meet you.” Remi hated when Kota called him by his first name instead of his nickname. Only his mom called him Remington.

Blair waved. “Hi.” He tucked his hair behind his ear, staring at the floor. Kota whispered in his ear, “Remember what we talked about, sunshine?” Blair nodded and raised his head, staring everyone in the eye.

"Hey, handsome. I'm Jasper."

Blair took a step back, giving Kota a nervous glance.

"He's the queen around here. He means nothing by it, love." Kota softly spoke to him. Blair nodded and looked over at the redheaded wolf. "Hi, Jasper."

"I'll give you *queen*. Bite me, Kota." Jasper stuck his tongue out.

* * * *

Kota laughed. He knew wolves had exceptional hearing. He didn't care, as long as his mate was comfortable. Everyone else introduced themselves. Kota actually had to be introduced to Johnny. He had been gone while Hawk played patty-cake. "Where is that big brute anyway?"

"Right here, old friend." Hawk slapped his back as he shook his hand.

"Congrats on your mate."

"Same to you it seems. Hi. I'm Hawk." Hawk extended his hand to Blair, who hesitantly took it.

* * * *

"Cecil, Johnny, can you show Blair around? I need to talk to Maverick." Dakota kissed him, running his finger along his jaw.

"Sure, *Dakota*. No prob." Cecil winked at Remi, who gave him the thumbs up.

"Little shit." Dakota kissed Blair again then walked with Hawk to the office.

"So, Blair. Where do you come from?" Cecil and Johnny walked him to the kitchen, grabbing the Moose Tracks ice cream. Johnny grabbed three bowls while Cecil dug the sugary heaven from its container. The two of them should be three hundred pounds by now. Thank the gods for youth and high metabolisms.

"I...uh, around." Blair accepted a bowl from Johnny and sat it down. He really wasn't a sweets eater, but he didn't want to offend his hosts. Dakota had told him to start speaking up for himself, but these two were too adorable to resist. He watched as Cecil's little tongue juttied out as he scooped the compacted treat. Very adorable. He thought about his little brother and how he used to do the same thing. Blair pushed the thought away. No way was he crying in front of these guys.

"How many scoops, Blair? I like three." Johnny held his bowl in anticipation. He stood on his tip-toes trying to see how far Cecil had gotten in his battle to extract the ice cream.

"One is fine. Do you need some help, Cecil?" The little guy looked like he was breaking a sweat.

"No. I got it. Just give me a minute." He finally got the scooper to relinquish its hold, giving everyone the serving they asked for.

"So, do you guys live here?" Blair wasn't much for small talk. He always struggled for things to say.

"Yep. I live with Hawk. He's my mate. Not the England kind of mate, though."

Cecil and Blair laughed. Cecil loved the hell out of Johnny.

"Maverick is my mate." Cecil ran his spoon around the rim of his bowl chasing a miniature peanut butter cup.

"You mean Alpha Maverick?" Blair sat his spoon down. Was that tall, gothic man really mated to this little pint-size person? Talk about odd combinations. Cecil probably had to carry a step stool around just to kiss the man. And sex? Blair didn't even want to think of how Cecil probably hurt from that. He looked over at Johnny. The kid was a bag of bones. How could he be mated to that fierce, warrior looking dude? What the hell was going on here? Blair thought about his little brother again and became angry. Were these two being forced?

* * * *

“Blair, what’s wrong? How come you look mad?” Johnny stepped back. He didn’t like mad looking people. They usually hit. He walked over to Cecil, standing behind him. Blair was sitting at the table, clenching his fists, and he wouldn’t look up or answer them. Johnny was getting scared. He whimpered.

Cecil grabbed Johnny’s hand and took him to Maverick’s office, knocking on the door. Cecil didn’t wait for an answer. “Hawk, you need to calm Johnny down. Kota, go get your mate from the kitchen. He needs you.”

Hawk shot up and grabbed Johnny in his arms as Kota took off down the hall. Maverick raised a brow to his mate, so Cecil went to him. “I’ll explain later.” He kissed Maverick and went off to the den to shoot some pool.

Chapter Eight

“What’s wrong, pretty baby?” Hawk was rubbing his back as he took Johnny to their room.

“Blair was getting really mad and wouldn’t tell me or Cecil why. I got scared ’cause Sean used to make those faces, too, right before he hi—never mind.” Johnny buried his face in Hawk’s neck, wrapping his legs around Hawk’s waist.

“Look at me, baby.” Hawk put his finger under Johnny’s chin, making him look into his eyes. “Did Sean hit you?” Johnny tried to pull his chin away, but Hawk held firm. “Answer me, baby.” Hawk gave him a gentle warning.

Johnny gave a slight nod.

“More than one time?”

Johnny nodded again. “He made me go to the hospital sometimes, and he made me lie to the nice people about why I was there. I don’t like lying, Hawk.”

Hawk sat in the window seat, holding Johnny to him. “Where is your mother, Johnny?”

“She uses drugs. The courts said she didn’t know how to take care of me, so they took me from her and gave me to Sean. My mamma may not have taken good care of me, but she loved me. Not like Sean. He calls me names all the time and hits me when he’s mad. I don’t like living with him. Do I have to go back to him?” Johnny looked like he wanted to cry.

“Never. You never have to go back. I promise you that much.” Johnny wrapped his arms around Hawk’s neck. “Thank you.”

“I love you, pretty baby. I only want you happy and safe.”

"I love you, too, Hawk." Johnny spoke a little lower, like someone was in the room to hear them, "Can we have sex now?"

Hawk set him on his feet. "Strip your clothes off, Johnny."

Johnny did as he was told, standing in front of his mate naked. He felt vulnerable being naked when Hawk wasn't. Johnny waited for Hawk to tell him what else to do.

"Do you want to try something new?"

Johnny hesitated then nodded.

"What's your favorite drink?"

Johnny smiled. "You know what it is, Hawk. Orange soda."

"When we try this, if you don't like it and want me to stop, you have to say 'orange soda,' okay?"

"Okay. Why do I have to say that? Can't I just say 'stop?'"

"It's a game."

"Okay."

Hawk got up and went to his drawer, pulling a few things out. He turned to Johnny. "Do you trust me, pretty baby?"

"Yes. Why?" Johnny was getting confused. He didn't understand what Hawk wanted from him.

"Get on the bed and lie on your back. You're not allowed to move or say anything." Johnny knew Hawk used that voice with his men. It meant not to argue with him. He crawled on the bed and laid flat. Nervous chills ran through him, but Hawk said he would stop if he didn't like it. Johnny took a deep breath, relaxing.

"Good boy." Hawk walked over, laying his items next to Johnny.

He peeked from the corner of his eyes to see Hawk pick a feather up.

"Spread your arms and legs apart."

Johnny did as he was told. He tried not to squirm when it ran over his thigh, calf, and ankle, then up the other side. Hawk took it around his hip then up his side, circling his nipple. Then he stroked the feather over his neck and then repeated the process in descending order down the other side. Circling it around Johnny's belly button,

Hawk *finally* caressed it over his balls, taking longer there. The feather ran through his butt cheeks then his inner thigh, circling his penis and over the head.

Hawk repeated the process two more times, driving Johnny crazy. He wanted to moan, squirm, and hump the air, but Hawk had told him no moving.

“You’re being such a good boy.” Hawk leaned down and ran his tongue over Johnny’s lips but pulled back before he could kiss him. “What’s the word I told you to use?”

“Orange soda.”

“Very good. Do you want to use it?”

“No.”

* * * *

Hawk once again looked over his items. Johnny became nervous when Hawk smiled evilly. “Pull your legs up to your chest, pretty baby.”

Johnny hooked his hands under his knees and pulled.

Hawk lubed his butt and stretched him. Johnny felt pressure pushing at him.

“Does it hurt?”

“No. What is it?”

“A butt plug. Put your legs back down. Do you still trust me?”

“Yes.” Johnny didn’t understand what Hawk was talking about or what was put in his butt, but he trusted Hawk.

Hawk picked up two silk scarfs. Johnny’s eyebrows scrunched together as Hawk tied his wrists to the headboard. Hawk stepped back and cursed. Didn’t Johnny do what Hawk wanted the right way?

“Hold on, baby.” Hawk pulled his cell phone out and spoke quickly into it.

Johnny lay there, tied to the bed, wondering why Hawk was calling someone. “You’re not calling someone to watch, are you?”

Johnny asked with fear in his voice. He didn't care about trying new things with his mate, but he didn't want anyone watching. That would be embarrassing.

Hawk leaned down and kissed him. "No, and I said no talking. You're being a bad boy."

Johnny curled his lips in, showing Hawk he was being quiet.

"Good boy."

There was a knock at the door, and Johnny struggled to free his hands. He looked at the blankets, wanting to cover up so no one could see him like this. His toe stretched out as he tried to hook the blanket with it.

"I said no moving, bad boy. No one is going to see you but me. Relax." Hawk cracked the door open then closed it. He turned to Johnny with two small jars in his hand. Johnny tried to see what it was, but Hawk hid them behind his back. "I want you to close your eyes. No peeking. Can you do that?"

"Yes." Johnny closed his eyes, squishing them tight. He felt something warm on his left nipple. It made it tingle, and then he felt Hawk's tongue licking it. Johnny had to fight the urge to push it into his mouth. Hawk said no moving. His other nipple got all warm and tingling next. Johnny could feel his penis getting hard. He wanted Hawk to lick that. Instead, he licked the other nipple. Johnny's body was buzzing. He had to fight really hard not to move.

"I see my baby likes what I'm doing."

"Yes."

Next, Johnny felt the warm feeling down on his belly. He jumped when something cool touched him.

"No moving, bad boy."

"Sorry."

He heard Hawk chuckle. At least he wasn't getting in trouble for disobeying, which was something new to him. He really was trying really hard.

Johnny felt Hawk's tongue licking his belly and navel. The tongue

kept swirling down into his belly button. Johnny wanted to giggle because it tickled, but he held it back. He felt the cold thing going further down. The urge to push his hips up and make it touch his penis was strong, but he wasn't allowed to move.

Something was vibrating up and down his thighs now, and his penis jumped. Johnny was fighting not to move now. He felt it touch his butt cheeks and his crack. Nerve endings fought to push down on it. It felt wonderful. It made his whole body shake. Was he going to get in trouble for moving? He couldn't stop his body from shaking. Did that count?

"You're doing beautifully, baby."

Good, he wasn't going to get in trouble for shaking. He liked when Hawk praised him. It made him want to please his mate even more.

The vibrating touched his balls, and this time Johnny did jump. He felt the warm stuff touch his sac, and then the cool stuff. It was too much, too many different feelings at once. He felt like he was floating. His body was buzzing all over. His mind raced to figure everything out, but he couldn't, Hawk kept giving him too many different feelings at the same time.

His body jerked, sending him even higher. Johnny was floating along, feeling wonderful. His mind stopped trying to figure it all out, it just let him feel. Peacefulness washed over him, letting him breathe deeply, content. He screamed as a burst of light shattered in front of him. He was racing now, racing across the sky. His heart was beating fast and his head was dizzy. He threw his hands out to slow down, but nothing happened. His body started to slow down on its own. He was floating down gently. Slowly.

Johnny opened his eyes and saw Hawk smiling down at him. He felt him untie his hands, pulling him in his arms. Johnny sighed against his mate's chest. Whatever just happened to him, he wanted it again.

"How do you feel, pretty baby?"

“Like Silly Putty.”

Hawk laughed softly, petting Johnny's back.

* * * *

“Wow. Look at all these stores. Where are we going?” Johnny was like a kid at Christmas. His eyes darted everywhere at once. There were so many people that he held Cecil's hand, afraid of getting lost. Hawk and Maverick walked behind them talking about “business.” Boring. He dragged Cecil along when he spotted pretty slippers in a window. They had little pink bows on them. There was even a matching robe with pretty bows on the pockets. Johnny smashed his face into the glass, trying to get a closer look.

“You know, we can always go in and look at it.” Cecil pulled him along, taking him over to where the robe and slippers were. He took one off the rack and had Johnny try it on. With everyone feeding him, Johnny had gained a good ten pounds in the last three weeks. He looked healthier, but he still had a long way to go.

Cecil had made himself Johnny's personal nutritionist. The Internet was a wealth of knowledge, and he scanned the sites for a proper diet that would help him. Cecil had made him step on a scale to see where he was at so he could plan accordingly. Fucking eighty pounds. Cecil almost fell over. One of Hawk's thighs probably weighed that much.

Cecil had him pick out the slippers he wanted as well, and then they headed to the register.

* * * *

Johnny pulled out his wallet that Hawk gave him and got his credit card out that his mate sent away for. It even had his name on it. He was nervous, though, never having used one before. Cecil promised to help if he forgot what Hawk told him.

The cashier rang up his purchase, and Johnny handed him his credit card. He waited for the man to ask if he wanted credit or debit. Excited buzzed through him. He repeated his pin over and over again until he had it memorized.

“Credit or—”

“Debit!” Oops. He was a little *too* excited. Cecil giggled beside him, and Johnny blushed. The man smiled and asked him to enter his pin. Johnny carefully pushed the buttons, repeating the numbers in his head. Hawk said not to tell anyone the numbers even if they asked. His mate said people stole those numbers and spent other people’s money. No one was going to steal Johnny’s money.

The man handed him his card and receipt. He took his bag and ran out to Hawk to show him what he bought. Cecil told Hawk that he didn’t need any help.

“You did good, pretty baby. And the robe and slippers are pretty.” Hawk leaned down and whispered in Johnny’s ear. “You can show them off to me tonight.” He winked at him.

Johnny blushed and nodded.

“Put your credit card away, sweetie. It’s still in your hand.” Johnny looked down and saw the silver plastic clutched in his fist. He folded his receipt and stuffed both away. Grabbing Cecil’s hand, they were off again. Johnny looked over his shoulder to make sure Hawk was still behind them. Hawk winked at him as he talked with Maverick. Johnny smiled then turned back around.

Cecil had taken him into a dark store that had all kinds of weird things, like skulls and crossbones and little elves and fairies. The music was blasting, and it was creepy. People kept bumping into him, and they even had piercings sticking out of their noses and lips. Johnny began to panic. He didn’t like this store and wanted to leave. He pulled on Cecil’s hand, but Cecil kept going deeper into the store.

Johnny pulled his hand from Cecil’s and covered his ears. The music hurt. It wasn’t like the music at home. This music sang about suicide and blood. Johnny bumped into people as he tried to escape.

He wanted Hawk, but he didn't see him. Tears ran down his face as he smashed his eyes closed.

"Hey, kid, are you okay?" Johnny opened his eyes and saw a man with skulls sticking out of his eyebrows, and he cried harder. Where was Hawk? Arms circled around him, making Johnny jump. He spun around to see his mate lifting him in his arms. Hawk took him out of that awful store. He crushed his arms around Hawk's neck, not caring who saw him crying or hugging his mate.

"Shh, Daddy's got you. Stop crying." Hawk wiped his tears and kissed his eyes. Johnny started to calm down. He had the hiccups now. Hawk rubbed his back, rocking him in his arms. They were sitting on a bench outside the store that scared him.

"You're okay now. Stop crying, pretty baby." Hawk just held him, laying his cheek on Johnny's head.

Cecil came running out of the store in a panic. He spotted Johnny and ran to him. "I'm so sorry. I didn't know the store was going to scare you. I was looking everywhere for you when you yanked your hand from mine. Please don't ever run away from me again. You scared ten years off of me." He ran his hand over Johnny's hair.

Johnny buried his face in Hawk's chest, wanting the feeling of being safe, inhaling his mate's scent to calm himself down. He was still hiccupping though.

"You okay now?" Hawk brushed his hand over Johnny's hair and kissed his forehead. Johnny nodded and slipped off his lap.

He grabbed Cecil's hand again and started walking, feeling totally embarrassed for crying like a baby. Cecil squeezed his hand. "It's okay. I still get scared sometimes, too. Don't tell anyone, but I can't sleep in the dark."

Johnny smiled, feeling better. They went to a craft store next, and Johnny's jaw dropped as he slowly spun in a circle. They had everything sparkly he could ever want. They even had sparkly nail polish.

Following Cecil's lead, Johnny picked up a small basket by the

door, and browsed around. After dropping pink toenail polish and sparkly wristbands into his basket, Johnny picked out a pink wallet for Hawk and one for Maverick. He went to the register, not shouting this time, and paid for his items.

Johnny ran the wallet to his mate, excited to give it to him.

“Thank you, baby. It’s...pretty.”

“I bought you one, too, stud. Johnny picked it out.” Cecil handed Maverick a pink wallet with a unicorn on it.

Hungry grumbles led them to the food court and Chinese food. They sat and talked while eating, Johnny babbling on about the damn pink wallets.

Whispering that he had to tinkle, Johnny grabbed Cecil’s hand after Hawk and Maverick insisted the two go together, dragging the other mate along with him.

Chapter Nine

“So, what are you going to put in your wallet?” Hawk snickered. He about fell over when his mate handed him that pink thing. There was no way he would refuse Johnny, but pink? What the hell was up with that color?

“Fuck you, Hawk. Same as you’re gonna put in yours.”

“Well, at least mine doesn’t have a unicorn on it.” Hawk fell over laughing, tears running down his cheeks.

“Again. Fuck you.” Maverick started chuckling. Shit was too bizarre.

“Excuse me, are these seats taken?”

The men looked up to see two buxom blondes standing at the edge of the table with their food trays. They had red lipstick on, and their boobs half hung out of their shirts. Their jeans were skintight, and one of them even had low rider jeans on to show off a racy red thong.

“Sorry, ladies. I’m afraid they are.” Hawk gently turned them down. Just because he wasn’t interested in the opposite sex, he wasn’t a prick.

“That’s too bad. You guys wouldn’t be interested in a little playtime with us and your ladies would you?” The one with the red thong set her tray down and was smashing her boobs in Hawk’s face. He heard a gasp and pushed the female away. Johnny stood there, looking devastated. He took off across the food court and around a corner. Hawk jumped up after him with Cecil and Maverick behind him. Hawk shot around the corner, but Johnny was nowhere in sight.

Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. This couldn’t be happening.

“Cecil and I will go around the other way. Maybe we can cut him

off.” Maverick and his mate turned and ran the opposite way. Ten minutes later Hawk ran into them. No Johnny.

* * * *

“Well, well, well. My little brother is finally out to play.” Sean snatched Johnny by the arm and hauled him out of the mall, pushing him into his car, and then he took off.

Sean was driving like a maniac. Johnny quickly buckled his seat belt, too terrified to speak. He didn’t want to be with Sean. He wanted to go home, Hawk’s home.

“Your boyfriend isn’t around to save you now, you little retard.” Sean reached over and smacked Johnny in the face. “When I say I want you home, that means come home. Why did your dumb ass go to the hospital anyway?”

Johnny whimpered but didn’t answer him. He had to think of a way to get free. How would Hawk find him? How would he find Hawk? Johnny felt himself panicking but calmed himself. He had to think clearly. Hawk would want him to calm down and think. Sean drove down one side street after another. Johnny tried to remember them all, but there were just too many.

Finally, after what felt like hours, Sean turned off the main road and down a dirt road. He drove a little further as he pulled the car behind a cabin. Johnny was shaking so bad his teeth rattled.

“Get the fuck out, and don’t start that crying shit.” Sean grabbed his arm once Johnny was free of the car, shoving him through the back door so hard that he fell to the floor. “Damn retard. Get up.” The brute kicked Johnny, yelling for him to get off of the floor.

Johnny slowly got to his feet. He backed away but not soon enough, Sean punched him so hard in the belly that Johnny fell back over, vomiting.

“I swear you’re too stupid to live. Mom should have drowned you as a baby.” Sean walked away to grab some towels, throwing them at

Johnny while yelling at him to clean the shit up.

Johnny was sobbing on his hands and knees as he wiped his stomach contents up. His belly hurt really bad. Escape was the only way to get away from Sean and his abuse. Sean's cell phone was sitting on the counter. Johnny peeked over at his brother then back down at the floor. If he could get the cell phone, he could call 911. He had to be really careful.

Johnny took the towels to the trash can and dumped them in, pulling the trash bag out. He tied it and headed for the back door.

"Oh no, you don't." Sean grabbed his arm, taking the bag and dropping it by the door. "I'll take that out later. Your retarded ass will try to run, and then I'll really have to teach you a lesson. Besides, I have something really special planned for you."

Johnny backed away, bumping into the counter. He spun around like he was avoiding Sean hitting him while swiping the cell phone and dropping to the floor in a ball.

"I didn't even raise my hand, so get your scary ass up." Johnny kept his hand behind his back as Sean grabbed him from the floor. As Sean dragged him to a back room, Johnny held the phone down at his side and dialed the emergency number, slipping the slim phone into his pants pocket.

Sean opened a bedroom door as Johnny clawed at him to get away. Sean punched him again. This time Johnny used his brain.

"Please, Sean. Don't beat me. I promise to be good. Just don't beat me anymore." Johnny yelled it, making sure he was loud enough for the phone.

"Shut the fuck up, asshole," Sean yelled in his face. Johnny's hands were bound with some rough feeling rope. It hurt his wrists. Sean pulled him up and slid his bound hands over a hook that was dangling from the ceiling. Johnny's toes just barely touched the floor.

Sean took his shirt off and rolled his shoulders back, cracked his knuckles, and swung a punch into Johnny's side.

Johnny cried out, swinging from the hook.

“I’ll teach your ass to fucking run away.”

* * * *

Hawk was going crazy. Where could Johnny have gone? He searched the entire mall for his mate, knocking displays over and pretty much tearing the place apart. No Johnny. Maverick had called all Sentries in. They were searching the surrounding area as well.

Still nothing.

“We’ll find him. Don’t give up hope. He’s smart, Hawk.” Kota was trying to reassure a man who couldn’t be reassured. Hawk would never stop searching for Johnny. He had promised his mate to keep him safe, and now he was lost. What the fuck was he going to do? Pulling the pink wallet out of his back pocket, Hawk crushed it in his hand, giving him a sliver of comfort to have something that reminded him of his mate.

Hawk saw a teenager standing away from the rest of the crowd who was watching them. Hawk watched him for a moment, noticing him constantly rubbing his arm. The teenager tilted his head in a gesture for Hawk to come over to him. Hawk walked over hesitantly. He waited for the kid to say something.

“I saw what happened to the little guy.” The teenager looked around as if someone may be watching him. It made Hawk look around as well.

“Tell me what you saw.” Hawk didn’t have time for games. If this kid was lying, Hawk would lose his damn temper.

“It’ll cost you.”

“What the fuck do you mean ‘cost me?’” Hawk took a menacing step forward, fisting the kid’s shirt, but the kid didn’t back away.

“I need a few bucks, say...fifty.”

“How do I know you saw anything?” Hawk didn’t know why, but something told him to play it cool. There was something about this guy.

“Little guy, about five four. Skinny as hell with long, curly blond hair and a pink coat? Sound familiar?” The guy swiped his hands up and down his arms again.

Hawk watched him. He had seen that movement before but couldn't put his finger on it. His brain was too frazzled to think. It was niggling at the back of his mind of the movement with the guys arms. He dug the fifty out of his wallet and handed it to the kid, but he snatched it back before the guy could grab it. “If you're bullshitting me, you'll have bigger problems than being broke. We clear?”

“Yeah, sure, sure.” The kid snatched the money, shoving it in his front pocket. “Average dude, 'bout five nine, looked just like your little man, grabbed his arm and hauled him out of here. Little man was terrified. Bigger dude said, and I quote, ‘Well, well, well. My little brother is finally out to play.’”

Sean! “Thanks, kid.” Hawk walked back over to Maverick. “Sean has him, that kid over there.” Hawk turned around, but the guy was gone. He turned back to Maverick and said, “There was a guy over there that described Johnny and Sean. He even heard Sean call him ‘little brother.’”

“Let's go.” Maverick called the troops, telling them to meet them at Sean's house. Hawk had gotten the address when he took Johnny from the hospital, remembering the simple house numbers.

The all showed up to an empty house. Hawk cursing up a storm. Where the fuck were they?

* * * *

“Had enough yet, retard?”

Johnny could barely see, let alone hear. Sean had beaten him senseless. Now he really was a retard. His brain felt scrambled, and everything on him hurt. It even hurt to breathe. He wished Sean would end it all for him so the pain would go away.

“Guess not.” Sean picked up a chain and wrapped it around his

fist. Johnny cringed. This was gonna hurt really bad. Sean lifted his fist, ready to crush Johnny's bones.

"Freeze! Move away and put your hands behind your head. Now!"

Johnny watched out of swollen eyes as the police pointed their guns at Sean. He was relieved he wasn't going to feel any more pain. He wanted to cry he was so happy. Then his brother showed everyone how retarded *he* was.

Sean reached behind his back, pulling a gun out. Johnny heard the guns exploding before he passed out.

* * * *

Hawk was yelling and screaming at everyone. He had to find his pretty baby. This was a living nightmare. He had no clue where to look. They found no tracks to follow, not even a hint of one. Timber wolves were superb trackers, even finding clues that no one else would see. But none were here to see.

Sean had to have taken him somewhere else, but where? They had torn the house apart looking for clues and gone through all his personal records, even his bank account statements. Hawk had been shocked to discover Sean was being paid by the county to raise Johnny. At least two grand a month. No wonder he wanted his brother back, it was all about money. Hawk growled at the thought of Sean using Johnny for that. His bank statements also told him that Sean was broke. The guy didn't have a lick of sense when it came to finances and budgeting.

He discovered the room Johnny had been sleeping in as well. Prison cells were more decorated and comfortable. Hawk tore apart the rotten, thin, spring exposed mattress. The blanket that had been laying on it was thinner than a sheet of paper.

He was pacing the house, growling and snapping when his cell phone went off. He snatched it off its clip and hit the send button. "What?"

Hawk fell to his knees, crying.

* * * *

Maverick walked up to the information desk. "I need to see Jonathan Stone."

The nurse craned her neck up at him, and then looked his information up on the computer. "He's in ICU. Take the elevators over there"—she pointed to the three sets behind them—"and go to the fifth floor." Her jaw dropped as fourteen fierce men and two little guys walked to the elevators.

They had to take all three elevators for them to get up to the fifth floor. The nurse sitting behind the desk paled as the warriors, along with Cecil and Blair, stepped into her lobby. "C—can I help you?" She pulled back and craned her neck up at them.

Maverick repeated his request, and the nurse looked Johnny up on her computer as well. "Are all of you his family members?" She looked from one man to the next.

"Yes. We are all his family," Maverick informed her.

"I need to know which one, in particular, has rights over him." The nurse waited for one of the giants to step forward. She actually turned a shade whiter when a man stepped forward with the blackest hair she had ever seen. It actually had a tinge of blue. "And how are you related to the patient?"

"I'm his husband. I want to see him now." Hawk growled at her. Maverick placed his hand on Hawk's forearm, warning him to calm down. Hawk nodded then added, "Please."

"Follow me, sir."

Hawk was led to the back. He passed room after room until the nurse finally stopped at the second to last one, pushing the door open and taking Hawk in.

Hawk skidded to a stop. No. His pretty baby had a breathing tube in and IVs sticking out everywhere. His face wasn't even

recognizable. Hawk placed his palm on the wall, dizzy and nauseated.

He had to stop his teeth from descending and the howl that wanted to rip from his chest. He shook his head back and forth, clearing the fog that was trying to permeate his brain.

“What...what’s wrong with him?” That’s all that Hawk could manage to get out. A lump had formed in his throat, burning as he fought the tears. He couldn’t hold it. A sob broke free then the tears fell.

The nurse hesitated and then patted his arm, “He was pretty bad. The police found his wrists bound, and he was hanging from a meat hook. His brother”—the nurse screwed her face up to show her disgust—“worked him over pretty good.” She grabbed his chart from the table next to Johnny. “In laymen’s terms, he has a fractured cheek, two broken ribs, and we had to do surgery to stop the internal bleeding. He’s pretty critical right now. He crashed on the operating table. His lack of weight wasn’t in his favor.”

Hawk dropped to his knees, covering his face with his hands. He had failed his mate. How was his pretty baby ever going to forgive him? The sight in front of him made Hawk want to tear the world apart. Not his pretty baby.

Hawk pulled himself up and dropped in the chair next to Johnny’s bed. The nurse left him to his privacy.

Hawk just sat there staring at his mate. His precious man was fighting for his life. Hawk pushed a stray hair from his forehead, running the silky strand through his fingers. Tears silently fell as Hawk hummed the nursery rhyme Johnny had been singing in the shower his first morning there.

Hawk continued to hum, stroking his hair gently.

* * * *

Johnny hurt. He hurt everywhere. He wanted the pain to go away. He wanted Hawk. Opening his mouth to call out to his mate, a tube in

his throat prevented the action. He tried to open his eyes, struggled to, but they wouldn't open. Johnny stilled when he heard a beautiful song humming away. The song was familiar. He liked to sing it in the shower. The song ended then began again.

Something was brushing against his hair, and it felt comforting. He didn't want it to stop. It didn't. His hair was being brushed, and his favorite song was being hummed. Johnny sighed inwardly as he started to drift back to sleep.

No. He had to wake up. *Try, Johnny.* Struggling again to open his eyes, he saw a little light, just barely. It was bright. He closed his eyes again.

An angel spoke to him. "Come on, pretty baby. I saw you trying to open your eyes. Come back to me." The voice sounded so far away. Like an echo in a tunnel. He tried again to open his eyes but squished them shut. The light was too bright.

The angel spoke again, "I turned the lights down. Try again." It still sounded far away.

An echo.

He was drifting off again.

* * * *

Hawk had been humming and rubbing his baby's hair when he saw Johnny's eyes flutter. He thought he was seeing things, wanting it so bad that he conjured the image up.

Maybe his mate was trying to open them. "Come on, pretty baby. I saw you trying to open your eyes. Come back to me." There, he saw it again. He noticed his mate's eyes smashing together like the light was too bright. Hawk ran and turned them down, going back to his mate. "I turned the lights down. Try again." Johnny's features were relaxing too much. He was losing him again. Hawk had to reach him.

"Come on, baby. I know it hurts, but you have to come back to me. Please." Hawk's voice broke on the last word. "Fight it, pretty

baby. Fight for Daddy.”

Johnny’s eyes open slightly again. Hawk could tell he was struggling. He brushed his hair back, needing the contact. Johnny opened them again and stared at Hawk. A single tear rolled down the side of his face, disappearing into his hairline.

“Hi, pretty baby. Will you stay with me?” Johnny gave a slight nod, and another tear rolled. Hawk wiped it away very carefully, barely touching his skin. He put the finger in his mouth and tasted his mate’s salty tear. Hawk’s eyes brimmed over as he smiled down at his pretty baby. “I love you, Johnny.” The tears began to fall now, Johnny’s body shaking.

“Shh, don’t cry. I’m here. I’ll stop crying if you do, deal?” Johnny gave him a slight nod again. Hawk wiped his face clean, sniffing back any more tears that threatened to escape. He gently dabbed his mate’s face with a soft tissue, clearing away the moisture.

Johnny lay there staring at him. Hawk began to hum again as he brushed his hair, smiling down at him.

* * * *

Cecil lay curled up in Maverick’s arms, softly crying. He couldn’t believe his little buddy was lying in an intensive care unit. They had just been running around the mall having a good time.

He shuddered as he remembered his own kidnapping. The pitch black tunnels he had been left in, the bruises and nearly severed wrists. Cecil touched his wrist, looking at the thin scar that traced around the entire circumference. He still couldn’t bend either index finger. Snuggling closer, needing Maverick’s strength right now, his mate hugged him tight.

Hawk walked through the doors, looking like the devil himself had kicked his ass. His eyes were swollen, and his hair was sticking out everywhere. He looked as though he had just lost his best friend.

Cecil’s heart raced. Did something happen to Johnny? Did

he...no. He wasn't dead. Hawk would be a maniac right now if he was.

Maverick stood with Cecil still curled in his arms. "How is he?" Cecil felt Maverick pull him closer to his chest.

"He—" Hawk cleared his throat and tried again. "He died on the operating table, but they brought him back. He, uh, he..." Hawk began to cry, trying his hardest to wipe away the raging river of tears. Maverick handed Cecil off to Kota and grabbed Hawk, holding on to him. Hawk collapsed against him, letting it go. It was a sobering sight to witness.

Hawk stood up straight, clearing his throat as he wiped his face. "I'm good. Thanks." He walked over to one of the hard plastic waiting room chairs and fell into it. "His face is swollen beyond recognition. His cheek bone is cracked and two of his ribs. They had to do surgery to stop internal bleeding." Hawk growled loudly, and the nurse took a file and walked away quickly, leaving the wolves by themselves. "His brother had bound his wrists together and hung him on a meat hook, worked him over like he was a fucking punching bag."

Growls erupted throughout the entire waiting room.

"He opened his eyes, though. That's good, right?" Hawk wiped another runaway tear.

"It's very good." Maverick squeezed his shoulder.

"I'm gonna get back to him. Thank you guys for being here." Hawk stood, looking around the room, and gave a weak smile then disappeared back through the door.

* * * *

Johnny had been home for two weeks now. His body had healed quicker than normal, thanks to Hawk's wolf spit in him. That's how his mate explained it. When he bit Johnny, his spit went into his shoulder. Yuck.

A scar remained on his right cheek from Sean's beating. He tried to hide it, but Hawk told him he was beautiful and to stop hiding his face. Johnny hated it.

He had refused to come out of his room for a week until, one morning, Hawk picked him up and took him downstairs, sitting him on the couch and letting everyone see his ugly face. Jasper kept kissing his scar when Hawk wasn't looking. It made Johnny laugh.

Now he sat on the edge of their bed, his finger tracing the jagged line from Sean's fist, forever reminding him of what his life had been like.

"Don't, pretty baby. Even if you had a thousand scars littering your body, I would still think you are the most stunning man ever born." Hawk cupped Johnny's face, laying butterfly kisses over both cheeks. "You are my pretty baby, no matter how you look."

Johnny tried to turn his head but Hawk kept a firm grasp. "I'm ugly."

"Only a blind person would think so." Hawk pulled Johnny into his arms, running his hands over his back. "You're a strong man that survived a hell that still hurts my heart. I love you, pretty baby."

Johnny wiped the tears running down his face. "You don't want to get rid of me now?"

Hawk growled, "To do so would be the equivalent of getting rid of the heart that beats in my chest, the air that fills my lungs, and the soul that is intertwined with yours."

Johnny smiled up at Hawk. "Yeah, I love you, too."

* * * *

Johnny thought back to the argument Hawk and Remi had the first day he was home. It was weird.

"What the fuck are you doing, man?" Hawk smacked Remi away from him.

"What's that smell on you?" Remi sniffed again.

"Will you stop? You're creeping me out." Hawk swatted at him again.

"Seriously, hold still." Remi inhaled deeply.

Hawk stood still with a disgusted look on his face. "You done sniffing me? I got a pair of underwear in my hamper if you need a fix that bad."

"Fuck you. Who's that smell on you?" Remi asked with a rare serious look. Johnny stared at them from his bed.

"What the hell do you mean, who? What's that supposed to mean? Don't start any shit, man. You trying to make my mate think I was cheating on him?" Hawk growled at Remi.

"No, whose damn smell is on you?" Remi growled back.

"I don't know, man. Here, take my shirt. It's yours. Go sniff it in your room or something. Weirdo." Hawk pulled his shirt off. It was the same shirt he had on the day Johnny was kidnapped. Hawk hadn't left his mate's side, and this was his first day home. He hadn't had a chance to shower before Remi got all sniffing crazy.

"I don't want your damn shirt." Remi threw it down. "I want to know why *my mate's* smell is on *you*."

Hawk stopped. What the hell was Remi talking about?

Mate?

Hawk thought hard about who he had been around. Knowledge dawned on him. The teenager in the mall. *Shit*. That niggling came from the back of his mind to the forefront. He gasped as he realized what that rubbing arm meant. The kid was hurting. But not from a physical blow.

Hawk had given Remi's mate fifty bucks to go get high.

THE END

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lynn Hagen loves writing about the somewhat flawed, but lovable. She also loves a hero who can see past all the rough edges to find the shining diamond of a beautiful heart.

You can find her on any given day curled up with her laptop and a cup of hot java, letting the next set of characters tell their story.

Also by Lynn Hagen

Brac Pack 1: *Maverick's Mate*

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