

# Last for All Time & Now & Forever

By Morrbran

## Last for All Time

Justin and Brian meet outside Babylon when Justin moves to Pittsburgh to attend PIFA. Brian is looking for a relationship even if he tries to keep up his I don't believe in love mantra.

### Chapter One

Justin moved the last of his stuff out of the moving truck into his third floor walk-up apartment. He had just moved to Pittsburg with his friend Daphne from Chicago. They both started college in two weeks. Him at the Pittsburg Institute of Fine Art and Daphne at Carnegie Mellon. He was excited to have his best friend with him. He had wanted to attend PIFA, but was nervous about moving to the new city alone. When Daphne told him she was going to school in Pittsburg, they knew they would live together.

This was also a good time for him to get away from home. When he had come out to his parents, it didn't go as well as he had hoped. He knew it was going to be difficult, but he never expected his dad's reaction. His dad had shown his true colors as a homophobe while his mother didn't know what to think. At first she sided with his father on the matter, but after seeing how hurt and confused her son was feeling and it wasn't just a phase he'd grow out of, she became somewhat supportive of him. Even though she didn't understand the whole gay thing, she wanted to be there for her son.

Justin's father, Craig, became enraged anytime Justin mentioned any part of what he deemed, 'His disgusting lifestyle.' Jennifer soon realized that her husband was not the same man she married. Justin left for Pittsburg while Jennifer was in the process of divorcing his father. At first Justin thought it was his entire fault because all the problems started when he announced he was gay. His mother assured him they were having problems long before then.

Justin felt bad about leaving his mother with his little sister Molly while all this was going on, yet he was also glad to be away from all the fighting. He knew his mom was strong enough to handle his father. He would miss his living in Chicago. Leaving his hometown and coming to Pittsburg was a step down, but PIFA was a great art school. He could always go back after he graduated he supposed.

Daphne plopped down on the sofa exhausted. It was tough work going up and down those stairs. She was glad she had Justin here so that she didn't have to do it all herself. They had a nice two bedroom apartment close to both of their schools so they didn't have to worry too much about taking the bus. They could pretty much walk if they were so inclined. Daphne couldn't believe her luck that she and Justin wound up in the same town. She had feared that going to different college would cause them to lose touch. This way they could only strengthen their relationship.

Justin sat next to Daphne and reclined against her shoulder. He knew it wouldn't be weird living with Daphne since they spent so many nights sleeping over each other's houses. It was practice for when they were college students.

"We have two weeks before classes begin." Daphne said like Justin didn't already know. "What should we do?"

"I need to find a job." Justin said. His college tuition was all taken care of, but he still needed money for rent and food.

Daphne grinned. "I already have a job at the college, but it doesn't start until school does." She was going to be all alone if Justin was working.

Justin sat up and playfully punched Daphne. "Then you can help me find a job then." Justin knew she would help him any way she could. "But first let's find somewhere to eat."

Daphne jumped up all excited. "Do you want to check out Liberty Avenue?" They had done their research before coming and found out it was the gay area of Pittsburgh.

"God Daphne, you're so lame." Justin teased, but he was just as excited. He was always too afraid to go to any of the clubs in Chicago alone. Now he had his very own fag hag to push him to live his life as he wanted.

They found Liberty Avenue fairly easily since it was close to where they lived. Justin loved how colorful everything was. They wanted to look around more, but Justin's stomach growled demanding food. Daphne saw the Liberty Diner first and dragged Justin over.

"Hey look, they're hiring." Daphne pointed out the help wanted sign in the window. When they walked inside the place was packed. "They definitely need help here."

They took a seat at the empty spots at the counter while a single waitress ran around trying to get everyone their orders. By the time he got to them, she looked exhausted. "What can I get for you?" She asked pad and pen ready.

"Actually, I saw you were looking for help." Justin said to the red haired woman.

"Honey, aren't we all." She laughed at her own joke. "Do have experience?"

"I worked as a waiter in Chicago. It wasn't a diner though." Justin hoped his experience working at his uncle's restaurant got him the job.

"When can you start?"

"Right away. I have school though in two weeks." Justin explained.

"Honey, you've got experience and we're swamped, we'll work it out. How about lunch then you can start your first shift." Justin gave one of his bright smiles and nodded. "Now what'll it be sunshine."

Brian stepped out of his shower and grabbed a towel off of the warming rack. After his long day at work, he was meeting the boys at Woody's to unwind. He was a junior advertising executive at Ryder Advertising. He worked his ass off to get to where he was today. Now he had to prove himself at work as more than his co-workers with mediocre talent. He was the best at what he did.

Brian dressed in his normal club clothes of tight black jeans and a black sleeveless shirt that clung to his upper body. He worked hard at sculpting his body to perfection so he liked to show it off. He walked into Woody's and all eyes are on him. They all wanted him and he could have the pick of who he wanted. He saw the boys over at a pool table. He fended off a couple of advances as he made his way to his friends.

"Hey boys." He kissed Michael quickly in greeting. He had been best friends with Michael since they were fourteen. He was the only part of his past that he wanted to remember. He was the reason he could survive for this long.

Ted and Emmett were setting up the table so that they could play another game. It was always Ted and Emmett against Brian and Michael with the latter always winning with not much help from Michael.

“What time is it?” Michael asked.

“Time for Babylon.” Brian said finishing his beer and setting the bottle on the table. “You guys coming?”

“Of course. Time to shake our groove thing, right Teddy.” Emmett bumped his hip into Ted’s side.

“Sure thing Emmett.” Ted grunted out.

The gang took up station on the second floor bar so that they can see the entire dance floor. Brian was leaning over the edge lazily watching the men dancing for the guy he wanted to take first to the backroom. Not seeing anyone of interest to him he grabbed Michael. “Come on Mikey, let’s dance.” He pulled Michael through the mass of withering bodies to the middle of the floor. While they’re dancing, Brian felt another move in behind him. Usually he liked to make the first move, but looking at the tall brunette, he didn’t seem to mind. He took him to the backroom.

After an unsatisfying blowjob, he rejoined the guys and ordered another beer. This night out wasn’t as stress relieving as he had hoped. This whole scene was getting tiring. Sometimes he wondered what it’d be like to not go out every night and have someone to go home to everyday. Random tricks in the back room didn’t hold the same excitement they once did. Coming to Babylon every night was losing its appeal. It actually just put more stress onto him having to live up to his reputation.

He knew his friends would make fun of him to no end if they knew what he was thinking. After all he had always put down anything that had to do with relationships. He was always saying he didn’t do dates or boyfriends and he didn’t believe in love. He was never shown any as a child so how was he supposed to know what it was now. Everyone who was supposed to love him hurt him. It was better for him to build his walls around his heart and pretend he didn’t want what everybody else did. Besides, what good was the great Brian Kinney without his image?

Only it was getting harder and harder to get away from this heartless self he constructed to survive. He knew it would only be too easy to fall so deep and build his walls so high he could never escape them. Even though he knew he didn’t want to be a Babylon regular ten years from now, Brian didn’t know how to become the person who could believe in love.

Brian called it an early night and said goodbye to the guys before making it out of the club. He was walking down Liberty Avenue towards his car. That’s when he saw him.

Justin finished his first day at the diner having done a double shift. Debbie wasn’t exaggerating when she said she needed help right away. He got great tips and if they kept up he would make rent in the first week. That would free up money to spend on his art supplies. He couldn’t believe how expensive art could be.

It was almost one in the morning and the buses were no longer running so he was forced to walk. He hoped he could find his apartment in the dark since he had only seen it during the day. Otherwise he was screwed.

Justin was nearing the corner that Babylon was on. The music coming out of the doors was calling to him. He overheard conversations of the guys eating at the diner all about Babylon. It was just the place he was dying to go, but he’d wait until he could go with Daphne. He watched as all the happy couples kissed on the street as he passed. How he wanted to have a relationship like that. He had never even kissed a man before. He was eighteen and a virgin and he was soon to be nineteen. He definitely wanted to lose the virgin title before he turned nineteen. He thought he’d waited long enough.

That’s when he saw the most beautiful man walking away from Babylon toward him. He was tall with a great body and beautiful auburn hair. He wore all black, but Justin thought it suited him instead of being intimidating. The man caught sight of him staring and smirked.

Brian was amazed by the blond in front of him. He looked like a ray of light on the dimly lit street and when he smiled nervously, he thought he saw a little bit of sunshine. Brian knew he had to have him. There was this strong pulling force that told him he'd regret it if he just passed the blond by.

Brian stopped right in front of the blond who had frozen in place the moment he was spotted. Brian looked into deep blue eyes and saw the future. Suddenly he thought for his sake he should run while he still could, but his legs wouldn't let him. Instead he heard himself speaking. "Hi, had a busy night?"

"Yeah." The blond let out in a rush of air he didn't know he was holding. "I just started at the Liberty Diner."

"Where you headed?" The smirk was back.

Justin almost blurted out home, but that was the last place he wanted to be right now. "No place special."

Brian smiled at the kid's balls. "I can change that."

"I'm sure you can." Justin smiled brightly at the chance to go home with this handsome stranger.

## Chapter Two

The drive to the loft was done in comfortable silence. Neither knew what to make of the strange connection they felt to the other. The need for words didn't exist between them at that moment. They got off the elevator on the top floor. Justin was in awe of this man's apartment. He couldn't believe he had been so excited about his own apartment earlier when people lived like this. His home in Chicago was nice, but this was the kind of place you dream about when you think of your first apartment.

"This is all yours?" Justin could hear the admiration in his voice. He never learned how to hide how he was really feeling.

Brian smiled clearly proud of his place. "I just got it after my last promotion at work."

Justin's eyes swept the whole open floor plan before landing on the man again. "I'm Justin by the way."

"Brian." Usually he didn't care to get the names of his tricks, but he was glad Justin volunteered the information. He began stripping his clothes off. Justin stood staring not believing he was going to see this beautiful man naked, up close and he was going to get to touch him.

Brian smirked, pausing after he unbuttoned his jeans, his shirt gone. He loved the attention the blond was giving him. Most men liked to look at him, but in the teen's eyes he saw adoration. "Come here."

Justin had to struggle not to run over. Brian pulled him close bringing their lips together. Justin was shocked at being kissed so forcefully, but recovered quickly and let his lips fall open to the kiss. The kiss started out slow becoming rushed when they couldn't get enough of each other. Brian's hands slid under Justin's shirt to feel soft bare skin. They broke the kiss long enough to get Justin's shirt off. Brian couldn't wait any longer to feel the smooth skin touching his.

Brian began to lead Justin to the bedroom when he felt the other's hesitation. Brian wrapped his arms around him loosely so that he could pull back and look in the younger man's eyes. "What's wrong?"

"I've never done anything like this before." He felt his whole body turn red. He's afraid Brian wouldn't want him now.

“It’s okay. We’ll take it slow. That is if you still want to.”

“I want to.”

Brian smiled and they moved the rest of the way into the bedroom. They made quick work of undressing each other and took a moment to take in the other’s beauty before Brian led Justin to lie down on the bed. Brian set a slow pace wanting to make this special for the blond and for himself. He knew he’d remember the teen even if they never saw each other again. For some reason Brian’s heart ached at the thought. Brian was just going to make sure the teen always remembered him. That way he’d always be with him. He trailed kisses down his throat to his chest where he laved at the rosy nipples that he was the first to kiss. He spent time on each while taking pleasure in listening to Justin’s moans of pleasure before moving further down to take him in his mouth.

Justin surged up when he felt Brian’s lips wrap around his cock. He was sure he was going to come any second. Brian couldn’t wait any longer. He wanted to taste the teen. It didn’t take long before Justin was shooting down his throat. Justin felt his whole body explode as he arched into Brian. He fell back to the bed as Brian licked him clean.

Brian moved so he was face to face with Justin. He kissed him sharing his taste with the boy. “That was...wow.” Justin found himself lost for words. It was too good to explain.

“It’s not over yet.” Brian grabbed the lube and a condom from the bedside table. He was glad to see that Justin was hard again as he cautiously pushed one lubed finger into Justin’s virgin hole. When he felt Justin relaxing into it, he added a second finger, stretching the teen. Justin felt some pain but it passed as he enjoyed the sensations Brian was causing inside him. By the time Brian had three fingers in he was moving against them.

Brian pulled out the fingers feeling that Justin was ready. He quickly sheathed himself and spread more lube on his aching member. Justin felt Brian’s cock at his entrance and nodded that he was ready. As Brian pushed in, Justin contracted in pain. He rubbed the boy’s stomach until he felt like he was ready again and pushed all the way in.

Justin felt all the pleasure that Brian was giving him. On every thrust Brian made sure to hit his prostate. They moved together slowly until the need overwhelmed them and Brian sped up his movements. Justin felt his second orgasm coming at the same time that Brian did. Brian began pumping Justin in time with his thrust. Brian took a final swipe over the head of Justin’s cock with his thumb causing Justin to climax. The contracting of Justin’s ass had Brian coming only seconds later. He lay across the teen until their breathing slowed and pulled away to dispose of the condom.

Justin felt the emptiness right away. He wished Brian could have stayed inside him longer. Brian lay next to him on his back. The blond turned so that he was lying on his side looking at the older man. “That was amazing. You’re really good at that.”

“So I’ve been told.”

Justin yawned falling onto his back. “I’m really tired.”

“You can stay if you want.” He never let his tricks stay. Not only did he not kick Justin out as soon as he was done, he offered to let him stay. He looked at the man next to him and realized Justin stopped being a trick long ago.

“Thanks. I should call my roommate though. She’d e pissed if she had to stay up all night worrying that I got lost.”

Brian handed him the phone from the table and Justin made the quick call. "Now get some sleep. We had a busy night." Justin was already lightly dozing as he moved to curl his body into Brian's and rested his head on the brunette's chest. Brian pretended he didn't like it. He also pretended he didn't hear the whispered 'I love you' come from the blond. He knew without a doubt he was in a load of trouble.

Brain woke at the sound of his alarm clock buzzing incessantly. He leaned over the sleeping blond next to him to turn it off. The kid was still out like a light. The glories of youth when you can sleep through anything Brian mused. He was only twenty-five, but he knew it wouldn't be long before he turned thirty and it was all down hill from there. He climbed out of bed and started the coffee before going to the bathroom. The last words the blond said kept running through his mind. He couldn't have possibly believed he loved me, Brian thought to himself. It was probably just a reaction to having sex for the first time. Only why did that make him frown. He couldn't possibly want the kid falling in love with him. He told himself he didn't want to change his life.

Sure, he thought, that's why he wanted to leave Babylon early last night because he was bored with his life. Brian was having an internal struggle with himself between who he pretended to be and who he wanted to be and it was entirely the blond's fault that was currently asleep in his bed. Before he never had to face the fact that he wanted to change. Before he could just pretend he had no reason to face what his life has become. Now with Justin in the picture, he saw exactly what he could have if he was brave enough to take it.

Maybe Justin was only looking for a one night stand. Brian climbed into the shower with all kinds of worries now. He didn't consider before that Justin wasn't that interested in him. What if he put himself out there only to be shot down? He'd still be alone and his reputation would be ruined if word got out he was turned down by a twink who until very recently was a virgin.

Justin woke up and reached over to where Brian was sleeping before, but the bed was cold. What did that mean that he was already gone? Did it mean the other man wanted him gone? Justin was sure that Brian might have had some feelings for him, maybe he read him wrong. It could just be that he had to get up early for work and didn't want to wake Justin until he had to. Justin didn't know how much stock he could put into that outcome. He was only a naïve virgin until yesterday. Why would a man like Brian want anything further to do with him?

He remembered thinking that he loved this man before falling asleep curled up to his side. The feeling was still just as strong today, but was it love? He didn't know, however he could see himself falling deeply if Brian gave him the chance.

He got out of the bed and found his underwear on the floor. The smell of coffee led him to where Brian was perched on a barstool sipping a cup of coffee. Justin noticed that he was deep in thought as he helped himself to his own cup.

Brian was sitting at the kitchen island when Justin walked out in only his underwear, rubbing the sleep from his eyes. Brian knew there was something special about Justin. He looked completely adorable and just perfect standing in his kitchen barely dressed. He could see them spending mornings here before they had to go to work or to school. His mind was whirling at thoughts of them as a couple.

Brian looked at the blond who was helping himself to coffee and wondered if it was worth it to let down his barriers and let someone in. Would Justin even be interested in an emotionally crippled man like himself? The blond could have his pick of anyone he wanted. Why should he settle for him? Brian figured there was only one way to find out. He was tired of being afraid.

Brian grabbed a hold of Justin's wrist and pulled him to his body. "Are you busy Friday night?" He asked.

Justin smiled confused, but hopeful the man wanted to see him again. "Not after my shift at work."

“Would you want to go out with me then?” Brian knew he sounded nervous. He was always so good at hiding his emotions, yet with Justin he couldn’t seem to keep them locked away.

“On a date?”

“Yes, we can call it that.” Brian joked to hide how anxious he was that Justin hadn’t answered yet.

Justin smiled. “I’d love to.” Brian let out the air he was holding in relief. Now all he had to do was worry about the actual date.

“Do you need a ride home?” Brian asked knowing he needed to get into the office soon. He wasn’t important enough that he could show up any time he wanted. He still had to impress his bosses.

“That would be great. I actually don’t know how to get to my apartment from here. I just moved to Pittsburg yesterday.” He’s quick to explain so he didn’t come off flaky.

“Lucky Pittsburg.”

When Brian pulled up to Justin’s apartment building he handed Justin his number. “Call me when you know what time you’re getting off Friday.”

Justin tucked the paper into his pocket. He paused before opening the door. He really wanted to kiss Brian again, but he didn’t know how much Brian would like that so settled on pecking him on the cheek before getting out of the car.

Brian drove to work with a smile on his face and the faint tingling where Justin’s lips had kissed him.

### Chapter Three

Justin couldn’t get the grin off his face as he walked into his apartment. Not only had he met the man of his dreams, been kissed like he’d never be kissed again, and had sex for the first time, he had a date. He was sure that Brian would have just sent him on his way this morning, but the man totally surprised him. He couldn’t believe a man like that wanted him, Justin Taylor, scared kid from Chicago.

Daphne was already up eating in front of the TV. She knew something was up seeing her best friend in such a great mood. He was usually the walking dead in the morning. “So?” She prompted when he sat next to her.

“I saw the face of god. His name’s Brian Kinney.”

“Huh?”

“Oh my god Daph, you should have seen this guy. He walked right up to me and took me home with him.” Justin sighed remembering the night.

“Did you guys do it?” She’s lost interest in both her cereal and the TV show.

“It was so amazing. I wanted him to stay in me forever.” Justin’s voice drifted off at the memory.

“Are you going to see him again?” Daphne was excited for her friend.

“He asked me on a date.” From Justin’s smile she knew he had accepted.

“It’s not fair that you got a boyfriend the first day that we’re here in Pittsburgh. Nobody even talked to me.” She pretended to be depressed.

"Daph, he's not my boyfriend. We just met."

"But you want him to be." She stated more than asked. She knew him long enough to read him. All she could see was that he was happy.

Justin became serious. "I think I could really see myself falling for this guy. I only hope he feels the same way."

Daphne hugged her friend. "Who wouldn't love you?"

Brian was at the loft changing from after work when Michael called inviting him to the diner. He didn't spend as much time with his friends since he started at Ryder. He was so focused on his work and climbing the corporate ladder he didn't make enough time for the things he used to do. Now that he was finally getting the recognition he deserved he had to be his best everyday now that it was what they came to expect.

The moment he stepped into the diner his eyes were drawn to the blond. He faintly remembered now that Justin had mentioned he had started working here. He didn't expect his soon to be first date to be here though. He didn't know how he felt yet about his friends knowing about him and Justin. He hoped he would have had the time to get to know the teen more and see if anything could come of them. If things didn't work out he'd never hear the end of it about his failed attempt of a relationship with the waiter.

Justin looked up from cleaning the counter to see Brian standing in the doorway staring at him. He smiled slightly unsure if Brian was glad to see him. He didn't know if Brian was there to see him or it was just a coincidence. He was answered when a short dark haired man called to him.

"Hey Brian over here." Michael called shifting Brian's attention to him. Justin could feel the resentment toward this man already. Brian kissed the guy right on the mouth and Justin now knew that he didn't like him. He didn't know he could be this jealous of someone he barely knew. He never was the jealous type before, but he hadn't ever felt this way about someone before either.

"Hey Mikey." Brian said sitting down next to his friend.

Justin couldn't believe Brian was just ignoring him. Did the older man already regret being with him? Justin felt used as he walked over to the table to take Brian's order. "Hi Justin." Brian said before he could even think about complaining. So maybe he was just distracted after all.

Justin smiled. "Hi Brian. Do you know what you want or do you need a minute to decide?"

"Well I already know what I want, but I don't think it's on the menu." Brian's corny attempt at a joke made him blush. Brian found he liked being able to make Justin turn red so easily. "Can I just get a turkey sandwich, no mayo."

"Sure thing." Justin was off to put in the order.

"Brian, how do you know him?" Michael whined. He didn't like the blond twink stealing Brian's attention away from him. He barely got to see his best friend anymore. He wished things could be like they were before work and now cute blond waiters. When it was just Brian and Mikey reading comics up in his bedroom.

"We met last night." Brian was acting more interested in the sugar packet than the conversation. He wasn't ready for this.

"After you left Babylon?" Ted asked.



Brian looked over seeing Justin serving coffee at the counter. "Yeah we hooked up. He's actually kind of sweet."

Ted choked on his water. "Did you just say sweet and not follow it with ass?" Ted sputtered.

"I think it's cute." Emmett defended him surprising Brian. "It's about time you found someone."

Justin overheard the end of what Emmett said and couldn't stop himself from grinning a little. He set Brian's plate in front of him and refilled the group's coffee. "Do you need anything else?"

"For you to go away." Michael was having a fit in the corner of the booth. Brian was supposed to be his. He took pleasure in knowing that Brian would not keep the kid around too long though. Soon things would be back to normal.

Emmett swatted Michael's hand. "Don't you listen to him." Emmett said turning his attention to Justin. "My aren't you a cutie. What on earth are you doing with our Brian Kinney."

Brian glared at Emmett from across the table, but Justin picked up on the playfulness in Emmett's tone. "Who wouldn't want to be with Brian?" he asked instead, winking at Brian before walking away.

This was just one more thing Brian found himself liking about Justin Taylor, he could take on his friends. He knew he'd fit right in.

Brian left work on time for once on Friday. He wanted to be on time picking up Justin so he didn't stay later like normal. He knew it looked good to the boss if you put in more work than the minimum required. However, he also knew it would look good for him if he showed up at Justin's on time and not looking like he just came from the office.

He wasn't this anxious about anything his entire life. It was just a date he kept telling himself. Deep down he knew he was so worried was he didn't know how to go on a date. This was his first date. He was a little embarrassed that Justin might have more experience than him. He doubted he was fretting this much.

When Brian knocked on Justin's door, a cute young caramel skinned woman answered. He thought he might have had the wrong place then remembered that Justin's roommate was female. "Hi, um I'm here for Justin." For some reason this girl intimidated him and he wasn't easily cowered. It was almost how Debbie could get him to do things he didn't want. She had that look that he couldn't deny. He knew if he ever hurt Justin he would have her to answer to and he suspected it wouldn't be pretty.

"Come in." She ushered him in to see Justin at the couch putting on his shoes.

"Hi Brian. I'm almost ready." He rushed into a room Brian assumed was his.

He turned when he felt eyes on him. Daphne was looking him over. "Justin was right. You are the hottest guy I've ever seen." She smiled innocently at him like she did this everyday. "I'm Daphne. Justin has poor manners."

Brian was saved from replying by Justin running toward him. "Daph stop hitting on Brian." He turned to Brian. "She hasn't had a boyfriend in a while so she's living vicariously through me."

Daphne punched Justin's arm. "I was not. We were just talking." She said as Justin rubbed his arm.

"I'm ready." They said goodnight to Daphne and headed down to the car. "So what are we going?" He jumped down on the last step excited about being near Brian again.

“I thought maybe we’d just go to my place and watch movies or something.” He suggested. He had no idea where people actually went on dates. He didn’t know how comfortable he was with this whole dating thing. He only suggested it so that he could see the blond again.

Justin loved the idea of being alone with Brian again. It was all he thought about, them making love in Brian’s large plush bed when he was alone in his twin sized bed. He wouldn’t care if they skipped over the movies and got to something. “I like that idea.” He finally told the anxious man. He liked to keep Brian on his toes so he wouldn’t get bored with him.

“Are you hungry?” Brian suddenly thought to ask. He didn’t even consider food. “We can stop somewhere or get takeout.”

“Takeout.” Justin decided quickly. Brian smirked seeing how Justin was dying to get him alone.

The two order Thai and settle into Brian’s couch to watch a movie. Justin’s stomach told him that he would have to at least eat tonight. Brian only gave him his patented smirk when he heard the loud grumble.

That night Justin stayed at Brian’s again. In the morning Brian found how much he liked waking up next to the blond. He thought his first date was a success. They had dinner, watched half a movie before fucking all night long. It was his kind of date. He couldn’t do that whole flowers and fancy dinners kind of thing. He was a queer and what he liked to do most was fuck. It seemed as if Justin had the same thoughts. He was the one who attacked him first. The kid tried all night to make up for lost time now that he wasn’t a virgin any more. Justin had almost as big a sexual appetite as him. Brian was amazed that he wasn’t bored with him either after the first time. He kept finding new things he wanted to do with the blond young man.

Settling down with one person didn’t seem so scary when it was with a person like Justin. He could spend a long time with him and not tire of him. It’s no wonder he always made excuses before for not taking a chance with someone. He was waiting for just the right person who could challenge him. Who could fit into his life just right.

#### Chapter Four

A month went by in a blur for the pair. They spent as much time as they could together. Justin spent so many nights over at Brian’s loft he practically lived there. Brian loved having him there but wasn’t ready to share his space permanently. He liked that he could have Justin over and then when he wanted to be alone he could send Justin home. He wasn’t the cohabitation type person. Although when Justin wasn’t there he kind of wished he was. Brian found himself spending less and less time at Babylon. He knew his friends would be there and he didn’t want to bring Justin there with him.

It was at this time that Debbie found out they were somewhat dating each other and demanded Brian bring Justin to the next family dinner. Brian knew better than to argue with Debbie. She always got her way anyways no matter how much he grumbled about it. It was how she got him to the dinners each week. It was one thing to have Justin meet his friends when they went to the diner and another to bring him to Debbie’s. This seemed a little too couples thing to him. Debbie always invited over the significant others of her boys. Right now they were all single.

Walking into Deb’s with Justin everybody stopped to watch them. This is the first time Justin is getting to meet Lindsay. Brian told him she is a friend from college. Her partner Melanie is there too, but Brian just grumbled something about her. Justin took it that Brian isn’t too fond of his friend’s partner. They are late so the whole gang is sitting at the table already. Justin looks past Brian at the assembled friends to see one in particular glaring back at him. Michael has been anything but nice to him every time they see each other. He can see the jealousy in his eyes every time Brian kisses him or shows him any kind of affection. He wonders if Brian knows how in love with him his best friend is. He acts oblivious, but with Brian you can’t always take that as the truth. Brian isn’t the most open of individuals.

Two seats are left empty for them next to each other. "About time you showed up." Debbie says to Brian. "You always have to make an entrance." Justin blushes because it was his fault they were late. He wanted to fuck one more time in the shower. Brian didn't put up much of a fight about it though.

Lindsay breaks the silence as everyone was busy filling their dishes with spaghetti and chicken parmesan. "I'm Lindsay." She introduced herself. "And this is my partner Melanie." Justin smiled at both of them.

"Brian's told me all about you." He says to Lindsay. He doesn't mention the lack of conversation about Melanie.

"I hope nothing bad." She looks knowingly at Brian. They had been so close in college that they continued to keep in contact afterwards. They were each others touchstones when it came to important issues. Brian may be close to Michael, but he couldn't talk to him about work or now his relationships. Michael just wasn't mature enough to understand his problems. What Michael lacked in sophistication he more than made up for in helping to make them feel young. After working hard at Ryder, sometimes he just wanted to kick back and have no worries.

"You're working at the diner?" Melanie asks him. Justin didn't expect to be the center of conversation.

"Yeah. Deb gave me the job herself." Justin smiles at Deb. They had gotten to know each other over the last month. She took him into her growing list of lost boys. "I go to PIFA, that's why I moved here."

"Where are you from?" Ted asks.

"Chicago."

"PIFA's a really good school." Lindsay says impressed. She knew how hard it was to get into.

"Lindsay's an artist." Melanie tells him.

"Art teacher." She corrects her partner.

Justin sits forward intrigued. "Really. That's awesome. I want to go into graphic design."

"Maybe you can work with Brian one day Baby, he'd be the idea man and you'd put his thoughts into beautiful creations."

Brian coughs audibly. "Yeah Emmett, only in your nelly brain could you come up with something like that." Justin elbows him in the side for being rude.

"Look at that, they already act like a married couple." Melanie remarks. There's no worse insult to Brian Kinney than to mention marriage.

For the rest of dinner Melanie's comment did the trick. Brian was sullen until the moment they left. On the drive to Justin's apartment, he broached the topic. "Why were you so withdrawn throughout dinner?"

Brian grunts something about not being an old married couple.

"Is it so bad to think about having just one man in your life for the rest of your life?" He asks upset by Brian's displeasure at the idea of monogamy. He had always wanted that. He wanted a family some day. It didn't look like Brian wanted the same things out of life. They never talked about it and it was wrong of him to assume since Brian wanted to spend so much time together.

"Yes, I don't know." He says confused. "We haven't even been together that long to even be thinking about spending a lifetime together. I've never even seen a guy after we've had sex. This is all so complicated."

"It's clear to me. I like you a lot. I could even be falling in love with you. I can picture us together for a long time. And I've never dated a guy before either." Justin says to him as they pull up in front of his building. "I really like you, but I don't want to just be the guy you fucked for a while then got tired of. Call me I you decide that I'm worth it." He said and climbed out of the car.

Brian sat there for a good ten minutes going over in his head what the blond said. He didn't like being made an ultimatum and that was what Justin wanted him to do. Either be with only him and make a commitment or that was it. The kid was too young to be thinking about settling down for life. He was eighteen, he should be experiencing life. Brian finally drove off angry and headed towards Babylon.

Justin sat in his apartment contemplating what he said to Brian. What if the man didn't choose to be with him? It was such an easy decision for him, he would pick Brian over anyone. Brian was different than him though. He didn't know much about Brian's past, but he heard enough to know he didn't have the best of childhoods. Up until recently his home life had been relatively normal. His parents both loved him and showed him it everyday. If he didn't have that kind of relationship with his parents he could see how hard it would be to try and mimic it. Brian didn't know how to show he cared for someone.

Justin realized the terrible mistake he made. He did what Brian feared the most, try to trap him in a relationship he's not ready for. He wasn't ready to let the older man out of his life no matter what he said before. All of his dreams for a future with Brian were going to be destroyed because Brian wouldn't take a demand like that. Brian was a proud man if not anything else.

Deciding he needed to do some damage control, he borrowed Daphne's car and raced over to the loft hoping he wasn't too late. Maybe if he was quick Brian wouldn't have time to think about the conversation and will let them go back to the way things were going. Justin knew that they would get to where he wanted them to be eventually.

Brian arrived at Babylon in a sour mood. He wasn't in the mood for dancing. He just wanted to let go. He went straight to the bar and order a double beam. He downed it quickly and signaled for another. He watched the dance floor until he saw who he wanted. He approached him but didn't take him to the backroom. He would take him home. He didn't do that anymore. It would be a fuck you to Justin's ultimatum.

They ride up the elevator once they get to the loft building. Brian and the trick were all over each other when the elevator stopped at the top floor. Brian lifted the gate to come face to face with Justin. He could see the devastation in the teen's eyes as he looked past him at the trick standing behind him. He didn't like seeing that look on Justin's face and know he caused it. "What are you doing here?" Brian asks after a long moment of starrng.

"I came to apologize for what I said. But I see you already made your decision." He nods to the trick. "It didn't take you long." He tries to hide his pain behind angry words. "You know what, you're just a coward. I see right through you. You want to be with someone, have a relationship, but you're too afraid to take what you want." He walks away. "I hope he knows all the things you like to do in bed or you're going to be having a busy night teaching him." He takes the stairs not wanting to stand there waiting for the elevator. He doesn't let the tears fall until he's behind the wheel.

He sits for a few moments getting it together when he's pleasantly surprised to see the trick exit minutes after him. He looks pissed, but Justin doesn't care that he ruined the man's night. It might mean Brian actually took his words to heart. He pulls away from the loft with emptiness in his stomach he never felt before.

Brian sent the trick away as soon as Justin left. He wasn't in the mood any longer. He really messed up. He didn't want Justin out of his life. In fact he wanted him to be the one he shares his life with. He just wasn't

ready to admit it and give Justin that much power over him. It would be only too easy for the blond to hurt him if he wanted to. Justin was right about him being scared. Justin revealed his feelings for him and he just spit all over them by going to Babylon the first chance he got. Justin would be better off without him, but he wouldn't be. He felt better about himself when Justin was around. If someone like Justin could be interested in him then he must have something more than his looks and his charm going for him. Justin could see right through those to the true Brian underneath all the masks he showed to the world.

He didn't sleep that night. He kept going over what Justin said. He was a coward. It took a twink to make him fess up to this, but it was his twink. He wanted Justin in his life, but he didn't know quite how to protect himself in the process.

By the time he was heading into the diner for breakfast he had it all figured out. Now all he had to do was get Justin to forgive him. He knew Justin was working the breakfast shift before school. Justin didn't look like he had any sleep either as he wasn't his usual cheerful self. He was still friendly, but he was just missing that spark.

They locked eyes as Brian made his way to Justin. "Can we talk for a minute?" Justin nodded shouting he was taking a break. They sit across from each other at a booth in the corner. Justin just looks at him waiting for him to talk. "I'm sorry about last night. I don't usually apologize for things so this should show you I really mean it."

Justin isn't impressed by this. "Just because you don't apologize for many things doesn't make it any more sincere. You really hurt me. I know I shouldn't have made you choose the course of the rest of your life in one night like that, but to just go off to a club and bring a trick back to your loft. That was low."

"I know." Brian hated talking about his feelings. It was too lesbionic to him. "You have to understand that's who I am. I fuck. It doesn't mean anything between us. It's just fucking."

"So you want to keep me and still trick on the side?" Justin asks.

"Yes."

"And I'm just supposed to be okay with this?"

"I'd hope so." Brian bit the inside of his cheek waiting to see if Justin excepted this or smacked him for even considering he'd go along with it.

"Okay. So I get to trick too?" Brian nods. "I need to get back to work."

Brian stands with him. "Are we still on for Babylon tonight?"

Justin nods. "Pick me up when you're ready." He goes to wait on a customer. Brian watches as the guy gets really friendly and Justin doesn't brush him off like usual. The guy is actually quite attractive. Brian's heart sinks as he sees Justin slip a piece of paper into his pants no doubt the other mans phone number. He leaves quickly before he has to watch Justin flirt with anyone else.

At Babylon that night they head to the bar to get drinks and meet up with the boys. Brian is distracted watching a hot blond when he looks over to see Justin is gone. He turns to the guys. "Do you guys know where Justin went?" All three point to where Justin is dancing with two men. Brian's blood boils at seeing them with there hands on his baby. Without caring what the guys think, he tears into the crowd toward where Justin is. He moves so that he separates Justin from the group of men around the teen ogling him.

"What's up?" He asks amused at Brian's reaction. He knew Brian wouldn't like seeing him with other men.

"I'm ready to go."

“We just got here.” Justin says moving to the beat while Brian stays still.

“So what. It’s just the same old thing.” Brian tries pulling Justin with him but he’s stopped.

“It isn’t for me. This is all still new and exciting.” He smiles brightly. “And all these men. I never noticed how many want me.”

“Well they can’t have you. I changed my mind.” He states. “I don’t want to share you with all these men. I want you for myself.”

“And that’s that. I don’t get a choice? I’m starting to see the allure of casual sex.” Justin smiles to himself. He had been counting on Brian not liking having to share. He’d still get what he wanted but it would be Brian’s decision. He won’t feel trapped. “Why should I just settle for you when I can have both?”

Brian sighs heavily. He was going to have to say it. “Because I’m jealous.” He’d never admitted that in his life. Even when he was jealous of all the other kids at school for having good parents. Justin was making him say a lot of things he never had before. He drew the line here. There was no way he would utter those three little words.

Justin beamed at him. “You had this planned all along.” He’s surprised he’s not mad. Justin nods and he knew he had been had. The blond was smarter than he gave him credit for and a lot less naïve. “I’m never going to get rid of you am I?”

Justin grins. “Don’t count on it.”

“Come on, let’s get out of here.” This time Justin let him lead him out of the club. He was hooked around a blond twink’s finger.

## Chapter Five

Justin decided to spend the night with Daphne since he was always with Brian these days. He barely saw his friend anymore, usually only in passing when he went home to change or on his way to see Brian. He felt bad for ditching his friend for a guy. He’d always told himself he wouldn’t be one of those people. Only he didn’t realized he’d fall so hard for someone like he did for Brian. He knew Daphne didn’t know anyone else in Pittsburg but him. Tonight he wanted to catch up with Daphne.

They ordered pizza and settled on watching a movie. “How’s things with Brian?” Daphne asks before biting into her pizza.

Justin beams. “Things are great. I think I love him. He’s all I think about when we’re together and when we’re not I want to be with him. Its lame isn’t it? To be so obsessed over a guy.” Justin looks at her questioningly. They used to obsess over guys in high school. He thought he would have matured past that by now.

“It’s not the same Jus.” She says reading his mind. “You really like this guy. You want to spend your life with him.”

“I do. I think he might feel the same way. I always hear guys talking about him at the dinner, about how much he changed. The way they describe him is nothing like how I know him.” Justin tells her.

“See he’s changing for you.”

“He’s not changing for me. I just happened to meet him when he was ready to have a relationship.” Justin corrects her. Daphne was a hopeless romantic. “Brian’s not the guy who changes anything unless he already wanted to.”

“It’s still cool.”

“So what’s new for you?” Justin asks realizing all they were doing was talking about Brian again.

Daphne grins. “I met this guy.” She tells him.

“This guy huh?” Justin asks her. “Where did you meet this guy?” He teases.

Daphne playfully hits him. “He’s in one of my classes. His name’s Alex.” She tells him all about her very own dream guy. They spend the night catching up and promising to never let things get to how they were. They said they had to make time for each other no matter how into their guys they get.

Since Justin was with Daphne, Brian went to Woody’s with Michael. He didn’t like to be around him when Justin was with him. For some reason Michael didn’t like the blond. Brian had a suspicion it had to do with Michael being afraid Justin was going to become more important to him than his best friend. Brian couldn’t say he wouldn’t if they continued the way they were, but he knew he would always need his friend around. Sometimes you needed a break from your relationship. Michael was always a good way of distracting himself from the real world seeing as sometimes it seemed that Michael lived off in his own little world.

The two sat at a table sipping their beers. “I’m surprised the wife let you come out tonight.” Michael gripes.

Brian glares at him. “He is not my wife or any other such thing. He’s my boyfriend.” Brian finally admits to it. It was the first time he said it to anyone other than Justin.

“Well whatever he is, it’s because of him you never spend any time with me anymore.” He whines. “Can’t you just get rid of him? He’s taking over your life. I know you never wanted a boyfriend. He trapped you into it. Just break up with him and things will be like they were before.”

Brian looks down at his beer disappointed. “Why can’t you be happy that I’ve found someone I could actually like? You know it’s not easy for me to trust people.” Brian is upset that his so called best friend can’t see this. “I don’t want things to go back to the way they were before. I wasn’t really that happy for a while now.” He admits how he really felt for some time about being in a relationship. How he wanted something like what he has now.

Michael looks away ashamed. “I’m sorry. I just miss having you around.” He was also jealous of the teen, but he wouldn’t tell Brian that. He wanted Brian to figure out that he should be with him on his own.

“Can’t you just give him a chance?” He asks and gives him a sad look. “For me?”

Michael smiles at Brian’s antics. “Fine. I’m not saying I’ll automatically like him though.” He acquiesces.

“You will once you get to know him. I never knew I’d meet someone like him. It’s not a drag to be around him.” Brian had never been so open with Michael. Not even when they were kids would he have revealed so much. Justin taught him it was okay to show your emotions sometimes.

Michael watched as Brian completely ignored the tenth pass at him in fifteen minutes. Usually by now he would have ditched him to get a blowjob in the bathroom. “Brian, are you feeling alright?” He asks concerned.

“I’m fine.” He answers puzzled by Mikey’s concern.

“That last guy was hot.” Mikey nods to the guy who just gave the look to Brian.

Brian becomes very interested in his beer as he answers Michael, not even looking at him because he knew what he’d see. “I’m not tricking anymore.” He says muted by speaking towards the table.

Michael heard clearly. “What?” Brian was surprised he sounded angry. “This is all that twink’s idea isn’t it.”

Brian looks up at him. “I didn’t like him tricking. I couldn’t tell him he couldn’t and go out and do it myself.” Brian knew Justin would never make that demand, but he would feel hypocritical if he tricked. Plus, he just didn’t want to.

“He isn’t here though. I’d understand you wouldn’t want to trick in front of him. The kid is probably all sensitive about it. But you’re not gong to at all?”

“I’m not lying to him.” Brian was finding spending time with Michael not as much fun as it used to be. “I’m really not interested anyways.”

Michael could see he wouldn’t get anywhere in convincing the brunette that Justin wasn’t good for him. For some reason the blond had his best friend smitten. Michael couldn’t see the appeal of Justin. He wasn’t his type at all. He wasn’t Brian usual type either, but his innocent blue eyes drew Brian right to him. He didn’t understand it at all.

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Brian groaned as he pushed inside the blond. He had missed him the night before and had taken him to the bedroom as soon as he came over. Justin didn’t mind at all. He smiled at Brian and allowed himself to be taken by the older man. He loved every minute he spent in Brian’s bed.

They kissed as Brian sped up the pace, he couldn’t control himself when Justin moaned like that. They were both so lost in their passion that neither noticed when the condom broke. It wasn’t until he pulled out that Brian went cold. “Fuck.” He said out loud.

Justin sat up quickly. “What?” He didn’t like the way Brian sounded.

Brian looked down to the failed condom in his hand. “It broke.” He managed to say.

Justin didn’t know if he should be panicking or not. Brian had told him to make sure always to use a condom no matter what some guy said about being clean, but this was Brian he thought naively. “Do I... what should I do?” He asks clearly out of his depth.

“It should be okay. I was tested a month ago and it was clean and I’ve only been with you these last two months.” He states. He looks at Justin to see how he’s taking it and sees a wide grin at his last words. “You can gloat later. This is serious.” He shakes his head at the innocence of the teen. “We’ll go get tested tomorrow to be safe.”

Justin moves to straddle Brian’s lap. “Only me huh?” He asks kissing Brian’s neck in all the spots he knew drove Brian wild.

“Shut up twat.” He runs his hands down Justin’s back to cup his bottom. They kiss as Brian pushes him onto his back and grabs another condom from the table.

Justin takes it out of his fingers. “When am I going to get to fuck you?” He asks.

Brian laughs softly. “Not going to happen.” He takes the packet back and rips it open with his teeth.



Justin pouted. "I've never fucked anyone."

"See. You're too inexperienced. I only let the best top me." He says pushing into the blond again.

"But that's...a catch...twenty-two." He gasps out as Brian thrusts into him. "I'll never...have experience...if you don't...let me...fuck you." He shouts the last loudly as Brian hits his sensitive nerves.

"Exactly." He smirks. He covers Justin's mouth with his before he can get any other words out.

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As promised, Brian took Justin with him to get tested in the morning before work. They sat waiting impatiently. Brian had a thing about doctor's offices and hospitals. He spent too much time in them as a child. Justin thought it was reassuring that something could scare Brian. He thought the man was perfect, too perfect. He had flaws, but Justin didn't consider them bad. They were just what made up Brian. He loved every part of the man he sat next to.

The whole thing was over quickly. Now all they had to do was wait. They didn't really think there was much to worry about, but one could never be too sure. Brian took Justin to school on his way to the office. "I'll see you tonight?" Justin questioned.

"Yeah. I'll stop by the diner when you get off." Justin smiles and kisses him before leaving the jeep. Brian watches him walk into school before driving off.

Justin had hung back in his life drawing class to put the last touches to his sketch. He was pleased with it he decided stepping back to get perspective.

"It's really good." He hears from behind him. He turns to see a student from his class looking at his work. "I didn't mean to intrude. You just looked like you wanted another opinion."

Justin smiles. "It's always nice. Especially when it's good." He says as he puts his supplies away.

"I'm Tyler by the way." He puts out his hand.

Justin shakes it. "I'm Justin."

"I noticed you before, but you were always really into your work." Tyler tells him shouldering his own bag.

"Yeah, I get into this whole other world when I create." He blushes. He didn't know what to think of all this attention about his work.

"A couple of us from class are going to hang out tonight. You want to come?" He asks him as they walk down the hall.

"That'd be cool." He pauses remembering Brian. "Oh, wait. I'm supposed to see my boyfriend tonight."

"That's alright. Maybe next time."

Justin thinks about it. He really wanted to meet people here. He still felt so out of place in Pittsburgh. "I'm sure he won't care. We'll see each other later."

"Cool. We're going to be at the coffee shop on campus at eight." They part ways as Justin heads toward the diner. He pulls out his cell to call Brian.

"Hey, what's up?" Brian asks when he gets the call.

“Do you mind if I cancel tonight? Some people from class invited me to hang out.” He tells him.

“No. That’s fine. You should make some friends your own age.” Brian is a little disappointed he won’t see him, but he knows how important it is to fit in during college.

“Are you sure?”

“Yes. Have fun.” Brian replies. “We’re not attached at the hip. I’ll be fine if you’re not here. I actually survive all day at work without seeing you.”

“Are you going to miss me?” He goads.

“I’m hanging up.” He had a smile on his face just thinking of that question. He did miss the blond when he wasn’t there.

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Brian went out with the boys to Woody’s. He had a good time just hanging out and not visiting the bathroom with several different men. He went home when the boys went to Babylon. He wasn’t in the mood since he wouldn’t have his favorite dance partner. When he got home, it was only a little after eleven. He had just removed his shirt when he heard the knock on the loft door. Sliding it open he came face to face with Justin.

“What are you doing here? I thought you were out.” He steps aside to let him in.

“I missed you.” He says kissing Brian quickly. “I didn’t know if you’d be here. I thought you might have gone out with the guys.”

“I did.” He pulls Justin to his body. “I just got back when you knocked.” Justin kisses his bare chest, laps at a nipple eagerly. “How was the school mates?”

“It was okay. They seem pretty cool. It was nice talking about art with them. I never had that before.” He pulls off his own shirt as they walk together to the bedroom.

“I got our results. Everything’s a-okay.” He pulls Justin down onto the bed with him once they were undressed.

“That was fast.”

“They know not to mess around when it comes to this. The waiting could drive you crazy.” Brian kisses down his chest. “Now let’s celebrate.”

Brian makes love to him slowly. He wants to remind Justin just what he had so he didn’t bail on him again. He liked that Justin had friends, but he was selfish and wanted him to himself. Justin cuddled into Brian’s arms after they climaxed. “I love you.” Justin felt Brian freeze under him. “You don’t have to say anything. I just wanted you to know.”

Brian just held him tighter. He didn’t know how he felt about it. He kind of guessed it would come up eventually. It made him feel warm inside hearing the words. He just didn’t think he’d ever say them back.

## Chapter Six

Brian woke up to Justin getting sick in the bathroom. It was the third time this week. Brian groaned at being woken up at such an ungodly hour like nine on a Saturday. He rolled out of bed reluctantly to see if

the teen needed anything. He remembered mornings like these when he had too much to drink the night before. He hadn't had any of those lately. He found he didn't need to get drunk anymore. He was actually happy for the first time in probably his whole life.

"Jus, you woke me up." He mumbles pushing the head away from the bowl so that he could piss. Justin almost didn't make it long enough before he was sick again.

"I'm so sorry my getting sick is such a bother to you. I'll just keep it in." He snipes getting up to rinse his mouth out when he feels his stomach calm down.

"Somebody's a grump this morning." Brian sets the shower to the hottest temperature Justin's skin could handle. He liked his showers hot, but Justin's skin was too sensitive. He marvels at the changes he's made for the blond as he steps inside followed by Justin.

"Somebody didn't get much sleep. I feel like shit. My head hurts and I throw up everything I eat."

Brian runs the soap over Justin's front. "Maybe you should go to the doctors."

Justin scrunches up his nose. "I'd rather not. If I'm not better Monday I'll make an appointment." He concedes. "It's just a bug I probably picked up from school."

"And there I told you not to play with bugs."

"That's not funny." Justin sneers.

"You're really unpleasant when you're sick." He says turning off the water and getting out. He dries off Justin even if he grumbled about being able to dry himself. "Don't want you to get any sicker honey." He said in a mocking falsetto voice.

Justin begins to get dressed as Brian comes out in only a towel. "Where are you going?"

"Home. You don't have any food here." He replies pulling on his pants.

"We can go somewhere." Brian suggests starting to dress too.

"I am not going to the diner." He shudders at the thought. "If I have to eat there one more time I'm going to hurl."

"I thought you loved the greasy food there." Brian was becoming worried about him now. The day Justin turned down greasy food meant things were seriously wrong.

"Well right now I don't want it." He knew he sounded like a petulant child, but Brian was driving him crazy.

"Okay. I'll just take you home." Brian hated calling someplace else his home. It just seemed like he belonged at the loft, with him, full time.

Justin's eyes started to water. "You don't want me around." His lip quivered with the force of keeping his tears in.

Brian holds him in his arms. "No baby, I thought you were upset with me." He didn't know what was wrong with him. These mood swings were killing him. He was not equipped to deal with teenage hormones. Justin sniffled against his chest. Brian prayed he wasn't getting snot on his shirt. "We can go eat somewhere else."

“Can we get some food for here?” Justin looks up at him with pleading eyes. “I don’t like to have to go home every time I want something other than take out and water.”

Brian rolled his eyes but nodded. “I hate grocery shopping Jus.”

“You’ll have fun with me there.” He says chipper now. Brian wonders if this was all some tactic Justin had for getting what he wanted. Confuse the hell out of him and then ask for what he wanted. It sure seemed to work on him.

Brian found himself trailing Justin as he loaded a cart with all kinds of food that he never would eat himself. There was so much carbs and fat in the food Justin liked. It looked like Justin was planning on moving in with him at the amount of food he was putting into the cart. “You could do well to eat something that doesn’t come in a take out container.” Justin told him when he voiced his concerns.

“But I don’t drink apple juice.” He said as Justin put it in the cart. “Or most of the stuff you picked out.” He continues to show him everything he didn’t eat.

“I get the picture.” Justin huffs. “I won’t leave anything there.” He stalks off with the cart with Brian left to wonder what happened. One minute he was his normal cheerful self and the next he was angry at him again.

Brian catches up to him. “Hey. It’s okay. I was just giving you a hard time. It’s what I do.” He explains.

“I just thought it would be nice to have something other than take out when I’m over.” Brian thought the pout on the blond was cute. He pulled Justin into his arms.

“Yeah, maybe.” Brian concedes. Life with Justin was harder than he realized it would be.

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Brian pulled on a clean shirt as Justin watched from the bed. “Are you sure you don’t want to come?” He asks again. For some reason Mel and Linds wanted to have him over for dinner.

Justin shakes his head and crawls out from under the sheets. “I have to work on that project I told you about.” Justin reminds him getting dressed too.

“You’re sending me off to the land of the munchers all alone.” He acts put upon. “What kind of person would do that?”

Justin hugs him from behind. “You’ll be fine.” He kisses the back of his neck before moving away to find his shoes. “And I told Tyler I’d meet him at seven.”

“Wait.” Brian follows him into the living area. “Who’s this Tyler?”

“I told you before. He’s the guy from my life class.” Justin replies grabbing his bag.

“And you’re just working on this project together?”

Justin smiles. “Yes.” He kisses Brian quickly. “I love you.” Brian smiled as Justin left. He still loved hearing Justin say that to him no matter how many times he’d hear it.

Brian sat at the table with Melanie and Lindsay. They were in the middle of dinner when Brian had a sneaking suspicion that there was more to this invitation than dinner. Never before had the couple insisted so heavily that he attend dinner with them. In fact he doesn’t ever remember having dinner alone with them at their house. Sure he had with just Lindsay, but only when Melanie wasn’t around.

“How’s Justin?” Lindsay asks.

“He’s fine. Doing a project for school.” He still wasn’t comfortable with people asking about his and Justin’s relationship. Twenty-five years of despising any kind of relationship besides friendship is hard to overcome for him. It would take time before he could be open about that kind of thing.

“How’s the chicken?” Melanie asks pleasantly. That was a sure sign that they wanted something. Melanie hadn’t said one negative comment all night.

“What do you want?” He asks pushing his plate away.

“What makes you think we want something?” Lindsay smiles at him. Brian just looks at her knowingly. “Alright, we kind of wanted to talk to you about something.” She admits. “Mel and I want to have a baby.”

“That’s good for you, but what does it have to do with me?” He asks confused.

Lindsay looks to Mel before turning back to Brian. “I want you to be the father.” She tells him finally.

Brian is speechless. This was not even in the realm of possibilities he considered for tonight. “I don’t really know what to say.”

“You don’t have to decide right away.” Mel is quick to tell him. She knew better than to put pressure on him.

“Why me?”

Lindsay smiled at him. “We’ve been friends for years now. I trust you and you have such great genes.”

“Wouldn’t it be easier to use a sperm bank?” Brian knew it would be. All you had to was go in and pay for it.

“That’s what I said.” Mel agreed.

“I don’t want just anyone.” Lindsay gave a sharp look at Melanie. “You won’t have to be a part of the baby’s life if you don’t want. It would just be a favor to me.” Lindsay gives him her pleading look.

“But I’d still be its father no matter how you put it. It’d be half part of me.” Brian didn’t know how he felt about having kids. He was afraid he’d be just like his parents. He also didn’t know how he’d feel about not having a part of his child’s life if he did agree to this. Would he care about only seeing it if his mothers thought it was okay? It was a lot to think about.

“Please Brian, just think about it before you make a decision.” Lindsay asked.

Brian sighed. “Fine. I’ll at least think about it.”

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Justin rushed to the bathroom before he was sick all over the bed. He knew Brian would have a fit if that happened. He made it to the toilet in time to lose his dinner from the night before. He didn’t understand why he was still getting sick like this. He felt fine yesterday when he went to bed. Now he had a headache and he felt so nauseas. He heard Brian groan from the bed where he was no doubt woken by his sudden rush to the bathroom. Justin knew Brian was a light sleeper since this was the third time he woke him up like this.

“Justin you said you’d go to the doctors.” Brian shouted from under the covers. “You better of not have given me whatever it is you have.”

When Justin felt like he had stopped throwing up he brushed his teeth and crawled back into bed. “You’re not very concerned that I’m puking my guts out.” He says curling around Brian’s back for warmth. The man gave off a lot of heat.

“Did you brush your teeth?”

“Yes.” Justin huffed.

Brian turned over to hold him in his arms. “I just hate that pukey smell.” He kissed Justin’s brow. “Are you okay?”

“I feel all achy.” He admits.

“Maybe it’s the flu. We’ll go to the doctors today.”

Justin looked up at him surprised. “You want to go with me?”

Brian tightened his hold. “I have to make sure my twink’s in top form.” Justin just sighed and tried to go back to sleep for a little while before they got up for the morning.

“So how was dinner with Mel and Linds?” Justin asked as they had lunch after the doctor’s visit.

“I was right. They did want something.”

“What?” He asks curious what they could want.

“My sperm.” Brian smirks at Justin’s confused look. “You’re not the only one who wants it.”

Justin rolls his eyes. “I’m guessing they want a baby, but why you?”

“Lindsay wanted someone she knew. Plus my devastatingly good looks would make a gorgeous baby.”

“You have like the best self image out of anyone I’ve ever known.” Justin looked up at him. “What did you say?”

“I told them I’d think about it.”

“Would you actually do it?” He asks.

Brian had actually thought about it quite a bit. He was pretty sure he knew how he felt about it. “I’d just be the sperm donor, the baby wouldn’t even be mine. I don’t think I’d like to have a kid that I didn’t have any rights to. What if I change my mind and want to be part of its life? I’d be completely at Mel and Lindsay’s mercy and its not a secret Mel doesn’t like me.”

“So you don’t want to do it?” Brian shakes his head. “It’s all your decision. You could always work it out with them so that you have a part of your child’s life.” Justin reminds him he could still negotiate the situation. If it was that important Lindsay had him for the donor then she’d probably make some concessions.

“It would mean I wouldn’t really have to change my life. I’d only be a part time dad.” Brian agreed it did have its merits along the lines of time he had to put in and having to make a total life change. It wouldn’t be that big of a deal.

“So do you want to do it?” Justin asks seeing the change come over Brian. “It’d be nice to have a little Brian in the world. I’ve always wanted kids.”

“I never did.” Brian replies. “I don’t think I’d make a good father. I had a really shitty example.” Brian hardly ever talked about his childhood so Justin had to put the little pieces that Brian did tell him together.

“I think you’d surprise yourself.” Justin only had to look at how well he took care of him even if he did complain while he was doing it. Brian just liked to take care of things Justin found out fairly quickly. He didn’t even need to get credit for his good deeds.

## Chapter Seven

“Did you give any more thought about what we asked you?” Lindsay asks as they had dinner at Debbie’s.

Brian shakes his head. “It’s only been two days Linds. This isn’t the kind of thing you decide over night.” Brian tells her. She just nods disappointed.

“What did you ask him?” Emmett asks curiosity getting the best of him.

Lindsay smiles at Melanie. “We asked him to donate sperm so we can have a baby.” She answers. The whole table goes quiet at the news.

“Why Brian?” Debbie looks puzzled. He was the last person she would have thought to ask.

Mel nods her head. “I had the same thoughts, but Lindsay demands it be Brian and no one else.” Lindsay shoots her a warning glare.

“You know I’m still here.” Brian speaks up. “If you don’t want me then fine. I won’t have to tell you no.”

“Brian.” Justin chastises. “We talked about this.”

Michael glares at the blond. “You talked to him about it and not me. I haven’t heard anything about this.”

“I’m his boyfriend.” Justin reminds him.

“For how long? You’ll be gone before anyone even remembers your name.” Michael snarks.

“Michael.” Debbie shouts reprimanding her rude son.

Brian turns to Justin. “Just because you suddenly think it’s a good idea for me to have a baby with Lindsay doesn’t mean I do.” He tells him angry at the whole situation and Lindsay bringing it up in front of everyone. Now he’ll look like the bad guy if he says no. They would blame him anyways. He’s the cause of all the problems in this little group.

“Justin has no part in this.” Lindsay says upset at Brian.

“Justin’s a part of my life.” Brian replies. “Of course he would be a part of it.”

Lindsay looks at him pitying him. “Brian you really don’t think he’ll be around for that long. He’s just your little experiment at being in a relationship. We all know it won’t last.”

Brian looks around at his so called friends and sees they all think the same thing. “Are you guys all betting to see when we end?” He couldn’t believe this. He thought his friends would be supportive. They all told him how he should have a relationship, but turns out they didn’t think he was capable of sustaining one. He

didn't think they even really wanted him to succeed. Then who would they have to blame about being single or to mock saying how much better they are than him because they are in relationships. "Well fuck you." He stood up looking down on them. "You can find somebody else to hound for sperm. Justin isn't going anywhere, I love him." The whole table is in shock, but Brian is oblivious. "Come on Justin." He storms out leaving a very surprised blond.

Justin realizes Brian said he loved him. He smiled as he quickly followed after his angry lover. Brian was already in the car waiting for him. "What the fuck are you smiling about?"

"You said you loved me." He couldn't wipe the grin from his face.

"No I didn't." Brian thought back and realized he did. "Fuck." He quickly sped away from the curb.

Justin realized they were headed to his apartment. "Brian, why are we going here?" He was panicking. Did Brian change his mind about keeping him around?

"I just want to be alone."

"I'm sorry about them treating you like that."

"Sorry's bullshit. You have no control over them." He snaps. He didn't mean to be so harsh. "I can't believe they all thought I was using you."

Justin laces his fingers through Brian's hand not on the steering wheel. "We know the truth. That's all that matters." Brian smiles a little at him. When they pull up in front of the building, Justin kisses him chastely. "I love you." He doesn't wait to see if Brian will say it back, he knows he won't. He's up the stairs before Brian registers he's gone.

He really didn't mean to admit his feelings about the blond. Now that he said the words he had nothing left. No shield to protect him. Justin knew everything he felt and he could use it to hurt him if he wanted to. Nobody had ever been that close to him that them just leaving would destroy him. It left him feeling too vulnerable. He couldn't face Justin after that. For some reason he thought now Justin would see everything he felt in his face. His mask would be useless if Justin could see through it. He used it to protect himself and the person he needed to most protect himself against was Justin. His betrayal would hurt the worst if it ever came.

Brian didn't see Justin for three days. Didn't answer the phone when he called, didn't let him into the loft if he came by. He didn't go to the diner and didn't go to Woody's or Babylon where Justin went looking for him. He was avoiding the blond until he had it all figured out. He didn't know why he was doing this. He wanted to see Justin every minute of the day he wasn't there. He just needed to know what he was going to do about it. He missed Justin when he wasn't with him. He was missing waking up next to him. He was missing the way he would look at him with all the love he had to give. He missed feeling like he was the most precious being on earth because he had Justin's love. He wanted to feel that smile that made it feel like looking into pure sunshine directed at him all the time.

He listened to the messages Justin left on his machine again for the fourth time that day. They got more distressed at each time he didn't answer the phone. He didn't want Justin to live somewhere else anymore. He had felt this way for a while, but was too afraid Justin would shut him down if he brought it up. He thought they were in a good place now to think about it. He would just bring up the idea with Justin and see what he thought. If he liked the idea he would suggest him moving into the loft.

Brian marveled that he wanted someone to live with him. He never liked anyone in his space before. One time he let Michael sleep on his sofa for a couple days while his apartment was being fumigated and he nearly killed the man. He had to end up sending him to Debbie's because he couldn't stand it. But Justin wasn't Michael. He felt comfortable having Justin staying with him. He actually hated seeing him go. He would almost go as far as to think they belonged together.



He pulled up to the building Justin lived in and pulled his thoughts together. It was no big deal. People move in together all the time. He knocked on the door, glad it was Justin who answered, but he didn't look pleased to see him.

"Why have you been avoiding me?" Justin asks not letting Brian in.

Brian sighed. He was afraid Justin would be pissed. "I was scared. Can I come in or do I have to bare my soul in your hallway?" Justin stepped aside letting him in. Justin looked at him expectantly. "I've never told anyone that before." He couldn't say the words again. "I wasn't trying to get away from you. I just needed some time to figure out exactly what it is I want."

"That's great for you, but I was a wreck thinking you didn't want me in your life." Justin allows Brian to hold him in his arms. "I missed you."

"Me too." Brian kisses him softly on the lips. "Do you want to go eat somewhere? There's something I want to talk about."

"Sure, let me go put my shoes on." Justin disappeared into his bedroom as the phone rang.

"Jus, your phone's ringing." Brian didn't understand what the teen shouted back. The machine clicked on.

"Mr. Taylor your test results have come back. The reason you haven't been feeling well is because you're pregnant. You'll need to make a follow up appointment."

Brian tuned out the rest of the message after pregnant. He stood in shock at this news.

Justin came out in time to hear the news. He went cold at the thought of being pregnant. Not that he was, but because of Brian's reaction. He just stood there gaping. Brian didn't want a kid, he made that clear at dinner at Debbie's. What was he going to do now? Brian wouldn't want him now. Tears started to come down his cheeks until he found himself sobbing.

Brian found the idea that Justin was going to have his baby not as horrible as he thought news like this would be. He liked the thought of having a family with Justin. He never had a family that was loving and he knew that's what he would have with Justin and their baby. He is brought out of his shock by the sound of Justin crying. He must have heard Brian surmises. The idea must be scary for Justin. He was only eighteen and a college student.

Brian pulls him into his arms. "Jus, its okay. I love you." He finds saying it this time so much easier and doesn't terrify him. "You'll have me. You won't be alone." Justin looks up at him amazed. He thought Brian would be unhappy.

"You want to raise our baby together?" He asks to be sure.

"Yes. I want to be with you and our baby." He smiles back when he gets that blinding smile. He wipes Justin's tears away with his thumbs. "I was going to ask you to move in with me. That's why I came over." He pauses to wait for Justin to say something but he doesn't. This time he's the one in shock. "So will you? Move in with me."

"Yes." He hugs Brian tight. "We're going to have a baby." He says trying to digest all the information.

Brian smiles. "We're going to have a baby."

Chapter Eight

Brian took Justin back to the loft with him. He kept replaying the phone message over in his head. It was all so foreign to him. He was going to have a kid. Even though he had seriously contemplated giving into Lindsay and giving her his sperm, this was a totally different situation. He wouldn't have had to be a part of his kid's life with Lindsay. Now it was going to be there everyday. It surprised him this didn't make him want to run the other way. This was with Justin, not some random guy. He wanted this with Justin. He knew that he couldn't say yes to Lindsay now. He was realizing how important to him his child would be and he couldn't stand not being a part of its life.

"You really want me to live here?" Justin was still in shock that he would be able to call the loft home.

"Do I ever say anything I don't mean?" He asks. Justin shakes his head.

Justin gets comfortable on the couch next to Brian. "I thought for sure you were going to dump me when you wouldn't talk to me these last days." Justin admits his concern. "And then with this news, I didn't think you'd be happy about it."

"How come?"

"Because of the thing with Lindsay. You said you didn't want to go through with it. Have a kid."

Brian turned Justin's face to look at him. "I didn't want a kid with Lindsay. The way she said you couldn't be a part of the baby's life made me realize that's the same way she'd treat me. I wouldn't be the father only the sperm donor." Brian tells him. "I want more than just a guest starring roll."

"Who do you think they'll get instead of you?" Justin asks.

"Maybe Michael?" Brian speculates. "I don't think he's ready yet though for a kid."

"What about me? Do you think I am?"

"Yes. You're a lot more mature than Mikey is." Brian assures him. Justin smiles at him.

"How are we supposed to tell everyone?" The smile disappears from his face. "How am I supposed to tell my mom?" He panics. "This is not what she sent me to Pittsburgh for."

Brian holds him, grounding him. "It'll be fine."

Justin looks up into his eyes. "I haven't told her about you."

"I haven't told my mom about you either." He teases.

Justin smiles softly at him. "That's because you don't talk to your mom." He sees a shadow pass over Brian's eyes before he shakes it off and smiles back.

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Justin waited for Daphne to come home from class to tell her all the latest developments of the last couple days. Daphne had sat with him while he worried about what Brian was thinking. If maybe he didn't want to be with him. She was always such a good friend to him that he felt bad leaving her.

"Hey Jus." She says when she sees him waiting. "You must have made up with Brian last night."

"I forgot to leave a note. Sorry." He forgot she wasn't expecting him to not be there like usual.

Daphne sits next to him. "So he finally called?"

Justin shakes his head. "He came over. He asked me to move in with him."

Daphne jumped in her seat excited. "That's great." She exclaims. "You said yes didn't you?"

"Yeah. I was afraid you'd be mad."

Daphne hugs him. "I'm not mad. You want to be with the person you love."

"He told me he loved me again." Justin remembers she hasn't heard any of it.

Daphne's happy for him. "I'm glad he finally came around. He was being an ass. I thought I'd have to go knock some sense into him."

Justin grins. He knew Daphne would always stick up for him. He was glad he had her. He thought Brian would do good to have friends like her instead of the ones he had now. "There's more Daph." Justin didn't know how to ease into it so he just blurted it out. "I'm pregnant."

It takes Daphne a minute to react. "You're sure?"

"The doctor called."

"Oh my god. Does Brian know?"

"He found out at the same time as me." Justin was actually grateful for that. He didn't know if he would have been able to tell Brian. He would have been second guessing what Brian's reaction would be the whole time. Justin tells his friend exactly what happened.

"Are you going to get all mood swingy on me now?" She says laughing at Justin crying when Brian didn't react.

"Shut up." He pouts at her teasing. "I was terrified he wouldn't want us."

"I can't believe you have a human being growing inside you." Daphne says amazed. "I'm glad Brian is being great about this. Sometimes guys will totally bail."

"Not Brian. He doesn't run away from his responsibilities. I think he's actually looking forward to the baby." Justin confides. "He was pretty upset about Lindsay and Melanie not wanting him to be a part of the baby's life they wanted him to help create even if he didn't admit it."

"Is he still considering doing it?" Daphne would be shocked if he did.

Justin shakes his head. "No, I don't think he's ready to have two babies at the same time. Even if one doesn't live with him. He also doesn't think he could have a child who wasn't part of his everyday life."

"This is so exciting." Daphne bounces on her knees.

Justin smiles glad Daphne is happy. "What are you going to do with out me here?"

"Like you're here very often anyways." She teases. "I'll probably get a new roommate."

"Replacing me already."

"Never." She assures. They talk about everything that they want to do before the baby is born. Daphne was happy her friend was getting the life he always wanted with the man of his dreams.

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Telling the family was not as easy as they hoped. Justin and Brian had hoped to not have to say anything right away but as usual weren't given the chance to keep it to themselves. Lindsay was on his case everyday to give her his sperm. She left messages everyday, several times a day. Brian knew he would have to confront her about the issue. He didn't want to ruin a friendship which he knows would happen since Lindsay would think it's an insult against her that he doesn't want to have a kid with her.

Justin and Brian went over to their house for brunch that Saturday. Brian hated the idea of brunch let alone with Lindsay and Melanie. The whole concept seemed country club to him. Justin though, insisted that he tell them once and for all the firm no he had been dancing around actually stating.

When Lindsay answered the door, she smiled at Brian. The smile was wiped from her face when she noticed Justin was with him. "I see you've brought Justin." She puts on a fake smile. "How nice." The contempt was almost unnoticeable. Lindsay saw Justin as the true threat he was to getting what she wanted. Before he came along Brian could be swayed more easily by her. Somehow she had a power over him that allowed her to get him to see things her way. Now Brian was completely enamored by Justin and looked to him for his opinion. Never before had Brian listened to somebody else. He did what he wanted and didn't apologize to those he offended. Lindsay could see Justin was more important to Brian than she was. This didn't sit well with her. She'd always have a love for Brian even if they never would be together. She loved Mel, but there were still feelings for Brian.

The four of them settled in the dining room with coffee. "How's school Justin?" Lindsay asks politely. She knows now she'll need Justin on her side if she was to get what she wanted. He might be able to convince Brian to go ahead with her plans. She'd do anything to have Brian's baby.

"It's fine." He says pausing from eating his bagel.

"That's good." She pauses and looks at Brian. "Have you decided yet on what we asked you?" She asks. "We really want to have a child soon."

Brian looks uncomfortable as he shifts around a little trying to come up with a good explanation. "Actually I have." Lindsay looks on expectantly. "I've decided that I don't want to be the sperm donor. I can't be."

Lindsay stands up angry. "This is all his doing." She spats angrily at Justin.

"Lindsay." Mel was actually relieved to hear Brian would not be the father. Now that these crazy notions of Lindsay's couldn't come true they could look at more reasonable options for having a child.

"No, ever since he came along Brian's been different." She looks desperately at Brian. "This may be your only chance at having a kid."

Brian is getting angry too as Justin watches the drama unfold not knowing what to do. "Justin didn't change my mind. He's the one who actually made me consider doing this. But things changed." He tells the upset couple. "Justin's pregnant. I already have a child on the way so I actually have the chance to have a kid that doesn't involve having him raised in a different home."

Lindsay and Mel are speechless at the news. This had no way factored into their plans for having a child with Brian. It was the last thing they expected. "You can't be serious." Lindsay snarks. "Is this some kind of joke? You can't have a baby. He's still a kid himself." Lindsay rants.

"You don't know anything about taking care of a baby." Mel adds.

"No less than what you do." Brian points out.

"How do you even know it's yours?" Lindsay asks.

Justin's mouth drops open in shock. He always thought Lindsay was so nice until recently. This whole wanting a baby thing has turned her into a maniac. He just couldn't believe she would say that.

Brian stands up pissed. "We're leaving. Find someone else to harass." Brian pulls Justin out with him. Justin still had his bagel in his hand when they got into the car. He shrugs and keeps eating it. "I can't believe them."

Justin watches the anger cloud Brian's eyes as they speed away. "They are just upset because they really want a baby." Justin was mad too, but he could understand where they are coming from. Now that he was having a child he knew how important it was. He would be devastated if that was taken from him.

"I don't understand why it's so important to Lindsay that I be the father." Brian starts to calm down.

Justin knew. "A part of her wishes that you two could be together. It's pretty obvious."

Brian gives him a dubious look. "She's a dyke."

Justin rolls his eyes. "You told me about college." Justin reminds him. "Sure she loves Melanie, but she also still loves you."

Brian huffs a laugh. "That's all in your head sunshine." Justin just smiles and lets Brian go on pretending to be oblivious.

"You know you better tell Michael about the baby before he hears it from Mel or Linds or worse, some random guy on Liberty Avenue. These things have a way of getting out. He'll blow up if he doesn't think you told him first." Justin reminds him. "He'll probably be mad that I knew before him."

Brian had a feeling that could be true.

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Brian decided to tell Michael separately. He called him over to the loft so that they could be alone. Michael was only too happy to spend time with Brian. He knew the brunette couldn't stay mad at him. Michael knew Brian understood what he said about Justin was for his own good. He was concerned about his best friend. He knew Justin was no good for him.

"Hey Mikey." Brian says when he opens the door.

Michael smiled and moved into the loft. "I'm glad you called me over. I knew you wouldn't be mad about before."

Brian rolls his lips in taking a moment to calm himself. "I am mad about what you said at Deb's." Brian informs him. "I thought maybe you would apologize for treating my relationship with Justin as worth nothing."

Michael narrows his eyes. "Is that why you wanted me to come here? To apologize."

"No, actually I wanted to give you the news before you hear it from someone else." Michael waits expectantly. He hoped it was that Brian got rid of the blond. "Justin's pregnant. With my baby." He's quick to add so he doesn't have another inappropriate comment.

Michael's mouth drops open. It's a moment before he gets his bearings. "He's fooling you." Was what he finally came up with. "I doubt he's even pregnant."

Brian glares at him. "He's pregnant. I heard the doctor say it myself."

“It’s a trap to make you stay with him.”

“He doesn’t have to trap me. I want to be with him.” Brian is upset that Michael could still think what he feels for Justin isn’t real.

“What happened to the Brian Kinney who didn’t care about anyone but himself? Who would never fall in love?” Michael accuses.

“He grew up. Just like you should.” Brian snaps. Michael gives him one last look before leaving.

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Brian helps load the last of Justin’s stuff from his apartment into his jeep. They didn’t need anything bigger since he wasn’t bringing any furniture with him. Brian takes the box that Justin was holding from him. “Are you sure you’re supposed to be lifting that much?” He asks concerned.

Justin sighs annoyed. Brian was becoming a little overbearing since he found out about the baby. “It’s fine. I’m not that far along yet.”

Brian sets the box in the jeep. “I still think you should be cautious until we talk to the doctor.”

“Whatever.” Justin turns to say goodbye to Daphne.

Daphne tears up seeing that Justin’s really going. “I’m going to miss you Jus.”

Justin hugs his friend. “I’m only going to be like ten minutes away.” He reminds Daphne. “We’ll see each other all the time.”

“You better mean that.” Daphne warns.

“Don’t worry, when Brian gets in one of his moods I’ll be right over to sleep on the couch.” Justin smiles at the look Brian shoots him.

“Let’s go Sunshine.” Brian calls from the car.

“See ya Daph.” Justin smiles widely on the way to the loft.

After everything is loaded into the loft, the pair rest on the couch. “I can’t believe I live here now.” Justin takes in everything in new eyes. “I remember the first time I came here I wanted to live someplace like this.”

“And now you do.”

Justin curls into Brian’s side. “You’re really sure about this?” He asks. “I’m not going to be back with Daphne next week.”

“I’m sure.” He pulls Justin into his lap. “I want you here. I want you around for a very long time.”

## Chapter Nine

Brian waited impatiently by the door. Every few seconds he looks up to the bedroom to see what is keeping his partner. Finally after ten minutes he makes his way up to the bedroom. “Come on Jus, what are you doing in there?” Brian demands to the closed bathroom door. Since when did he shut the door? Brian questions as he slides it open. “We’ve got an appointment in twenty minutes.”

Justin looks up from the ground where he was getting sick. "I know that Brian." He says with pure venom. "I can't help that your baby is making me sick." He stands and makes his way to wash his face.

Brian snickers. "It's my baby now. You were there too." Justin glares at him as he stomps past him to get some water. Brian follows him and wraps his arms around him from behind. He knew that Justin didn't mean to be nasty to him, he was just hormonal because of the pregnancy. Even though he knows this sometimes it was hard to just let it slide. "Are you okay now?" He says kissing the side of his face.

Justin nods drinking down his water. "Sorry." He couldn't control himself and he hated that. There was only so much Brian would take from him before it would be too far.

"It's okay." Brian assures him. He pulls away from the blond and turns him around. "You ready to go? We're going to be late. You know I hate being late."

"Unless it's fashionably late." Justin teases. Everyone knew Brian was known for showing up late to places he was supposed to be. That was except for work and important appointments like these.

Justin started to take his clothes off with Brian's eyes directly on him. "Stop looking at me." Justin knew there was no way he wouldn't respond to that look and it would be embarrassing if the doctor saw. He quickly pulled on the thin gown the nurse had given him to wear. He shivered in the thin material. Brian was busy flipping through a pamphlet as Justin hoisted himself up onto the exam table.

"You look kind of cute in that gown." Brian remarks setting aside his reading and getting the full effect of Justin in his thin gown. He got up to examine it. "Hey it doesn't even close all the way." He was enjoying the non-obscured view when the doctor entered.

"Good afternoon Mr. Taylor." He says in greeting shaking Justin's hand. "I'm Dr. Murphy." He then turns to Brian assessing him. "Are you the partner?"

"Brian Kinney." He shakes his hand too. He's all business and the doctor could tell.

Dr. Murphy pulled his stool out so he could sit and write. They spent the next ten minutes answering questions the doctor wanted to know about medical histories and health concerns.

Brian sat anxiously as Justin was examined. He didn't like another man's hands all over his blond even if it was in a purely medical sense. Touching Justin was only for him. Brian wanted to have a woman doctor, but Justin said he'd be uncomfortable. So here they were, Brian ready to strangle a man if he even gets a little too friendly and Justin all too aware of it. He didn't know whether to laugh or to get angry. Brian was being ridiculous. He was thinking he'd leave him at home when the exams got more personal. He didn't think Brian would take it very well.

"Do you have any questions?" Dr. Murphy addressed them both.

Brian pulled out the list he added to every time he and Justin disagreed on something. Justin rolled his eyes as Brian fired questions at the unsuspecting doctor. "Should he still be working?"

"Brian." They hadn't even talked about asking that. He gives him a warning glance but Brian ignores it waiting to hear what Dr. Murphy had to say.

"During the first trimester there shouldn't be any problem. You'll have to reevaluate the working situation later on in his pregnancy depending on how his body is handling everything." He tells the men. Justin grins gloating in his victory. Brian had wanted him to quit the diner and he said he didn't need to.

“Hey Sunshine.” Debbie says loudly when he gets back behind the counter with her. “When were you going to tell me about the baby?” She asks hands on hips and popping her gum.

“Sorry Deb. Things have just been going so fast.” Justin apologizes. “I take it Michael told you.”

“You bet he did.” Debbie replies. “He’s not very happy about it.”

“Like I would have thought any differently.”

“Well I’m thrilled.” She pulls him into a tight hug. “I’m so glad Brian has finally found someone.” She lets him go finally. Justin was thinking she was going to squeeze the baby right out of him. “He’ll take very good care of you and that baby.”

“I know.” Justin had no question about it. He knew Brian was fully there for him.

“I can’t believe two of my boys are having a child together. Brian has always been like a son to me. It’s almost like my first grandchild.” She smiled at the thought of having a baby around again.

Justin’s glad someone’s finally happy that he and Brian are having a baby. “I’m sure he feels the same way.” He knew Brian thought highly of his surrogate mom. “Oh, we’re living together too if you didn’t hear that. I don’t think Brian got to telling Michael that. They haven’t been talking.”

“They’ve been friends since they were kids. They better work this out. He’s always had a thing for Brian. Maybe now he’ll get over it.” She shakes her head disappointed. She thought she had raised her son better than this.

Brian walked into the diner just before Justin was supposed to get off. Justin smiled up at him getting a quick kiss. “What are you doing here?” Justin asks not expecting him.

Brian sat on a stool at the counter then pulled Justin to him. “Cant I just visit my boyfriend without a reason?” He asks. Justin raises his eyebrow not buying it. “Alright, I wanted to know if you wanted to go to Babylon.”

Justin grins. “Sure. I haven’t been there in a while.” He looked at the clock and saw he had ten minutes left. “Do you want anything while you wait?”

“Coffee.” He lets go of Justin so he can finish his shift.

Debbie walks by swiping Brian in the back of the head. “Hey asshole. I hear you’re going to be a daddy.” she had her hands on her hips letting him know she was upset he didn’t tell her himself.

Brian groaned. So it already got around. “Mikey?” He asks knowing it had to be him.

“Yep. He came over whining about it.”

Brian looks down at his hands. “I wish he could be happy for me.” He says softly.

“He’ll come around. It’s just different you being with someone. It’s always been just the two of you. Now you have Justin and soon a baby. He’s not used to being second.” Deb tells him all he already knew.

Brian looks up and smirks. “It’s weird. He’s the one who always talked about having a family and I detested the idea. Now it seems the opposite.”



"He still believes in that. He just never thought you would. None of us did." She smiles at him. "You've done well for yourself. I'm proud of you for not running away from this."

Brian kisses her cheek. "Thanks...mom."

Justin came out of the back then seeing the touching moment. His hormones were going berserk and he had to struggle not to cry. He cleared his throat when they came apart. "I'm ready." He lets Brian lead him out. "Night Debbie." He called before the door shut.

Walking into Babylon Brian didn't feel weird about his absence lately. It still felt comfortable being there. It just felt better with Justin by his side. Justin smiled at him as they made their way towards the bar where he was sure his friends were. He knew Debbie was right about thinking he'd never want to have a family. Now if someone tried to take it away he'd fight with everything he had to keep it. It was all thanks to Justin. He owed his current happiness to him. Brian couldn't think back to when he was this happy.

"Hey sweetie." Emmett says when he sees Justin. "And Brian." He hugs the blond. "Congratulations. Our baby is having a baby." He claps his hands together. "We need to celebrate."

"Oh no. I'm not going to any of your baby themed parties." Brian says putting a stop to it right there. Emmett always went over the top when it came to his parties.

Emmett pouted. "You're no fun."

"I didn't think you'd be here anymore." Michael snarks at him.

Brian stops himself from sniping back remembering what Debbie said. He reminded himself Michael was jealous of what he had. "Why not? I've always come here." He moves around the man to order a beer and water handing the second to Justin.

"I just didn't think this would be the kind of place you would like anymore."

Brian raises his eyebrow. "I don't see anything wrong with coming to Babylon. Just because Justin is pregnant doesn't mean I'll change who I've always been." He knew things would have to change in his life, but that didn't change who he was.

"Come on Brian, I want to dance." Justin wanted to get away from Michael's glare. He was worried Michael's dislike for him would ruin Brian's friendship with him. He knew how important Michael was to Brian. He didn't like seeing the hurt look in his hazel eyes when he and Michael fought.

The trio watched them dance close on the dance floor. "You can't even tell he's pregnant." Emmett states.

"That's because he just found out. Give it time." Ted replies.

Michael didn't like what he saw. "Brian never wanted this. That twink is just trapping him into staying with him."

"Baby, you're the only one that doesn't notice it." Emmett put an arm around his friend. "Its obvious Brian loves Justin."

After dancing several songs, Brian pulled Justin close so he could hear him. "You ready to go?" Justin nodded. He didn't want to admit that he was getting worn out after having a packed day. They quickly said goodbye to their friends and made their way to the car.

By the time the elevator stopped on their floor, Brian already had almost all Justin's clothes off him. He had missed being inside his blond all day. He never thought one person would make him yearn so much for them. And after dancing at Babylon he really needed his Sunshine. Justin wrapped his arms around him as Brian struggled to get the door open. Justin was distracting him too much. "Hurry up Bri. I want you to fuck me."

Brian slid the door closed behind them and attacked Justin's lips. He walked him backwards toward the stairs, lifting him when they got there and setting him onto the bed. He quickly got rid of the rest of their clothes and laid down on top of the teen. "Fuck, you're so hot Jus." He pants out reaching for supplies.

Justin spread his legs so that Brian could settle between them. "Brian." He moaned out when he felt Brian moving inside him. He was barely conscious of how they got to this point. It was all a blur of Brian. It didn't take long for them to finish each other off after being ready all night for it.

Justin curled his body around Brian's. He rests his head in the crook of his arm. Brian put his arms around him glad that he had him there. "I know I don't say it enough, but I love you." He says softly into Justin's hair.

Justin smiles lifting his head to look at him. "I know. I love you." He kisses him then lays back down. "I talked to my mom today." He changes the subject.

"Did you tell her?"

"No. I want to do that in person. I told her about you though." He pauses before the next part knowing Brian wouldn't like it. "She wants to come here for thanksgiving." He tenses immediately. "She wants to meet you and see me."

"Jus, I don't think I'm really the meeting the parents kind of person." He was never in this position before so he had no idea what it would entail. Frankly it scared the crap out of him. This was Justin's mom. She could take Justin away from him.

"You'll have to eventually."

"I'd rather wait for eventually."

Justin frowns not liking Brian blowing this off. "Debbie already said it was okay for her to come to dinner along with my sister." He says settling the matter. "She wants me to go to Chicago for Christmas. I was thinking you'd come with me." He says when Brian doesn't respond.

"No way." He says it slowly making it clear it wouldn't happen.

"It's our first Christmas together." He pouts giving him his pleading eyes.

Brian shakes his head. "I don't get into the holidays so it's not really a big deal."

"Is that what you're going to tell our kid. You just don't get into the holidays?" He frowns at him.

Brian shrugs. "It's what my parents did. I turned out fine."

"If you call being emotionally closed off fine." He mumbles, but Brian hears clearly. "Please just think about it."

"Fine." He sees Justin smile. "That hardly means yes. Now go to sleep."

"She's going to love you because I do." He wasn't ready to let Brian off the hook. This was important to him. He wanted his child to have at least one grandparent in its life.

Brian wasn't as sure as Justin. He didn't think Justin's mom would be so thrilled. She sent her son to Pittsburgh to go to college, not get pregnant and an older boyfriend. What was she going to think of him being seven years older than her son. It wasn't a big deal to him, but parents were strange about those types of things. He just knew she wasn't going to like him.

## Chapter Ten

Brian watched Justin looking at himself in the mirror. He kept laying a hand on his stomach then running it down his front then doing it all over again a second later. "Justin, what are you doing?" He asks amused.

"I think I'm getting bigger." He states pushing out his stomach.

Brian shakes his head. "You are not getting bigger. You look the same." Brian pulls him away from the mirror. "You're only eight weeks along."

"I feel bigger." Justin tries instead. "Do you think my moms going to notice?" He was nervous about her finding out about his pregnancy. He really wanted her to be supportive. He couldn't go through what he did when he came out again.

"No. You're telling her anyways so what does it matter?" Brian could tell he was nervous about it. He was nervous himself. "Remind me again why I have to go with you to pick them up from the airport."

"Because you love me." Brian rolls his lips into his mouth waiting for a different response. "Because I don't have a car and it will be a good first impression if you're there." He tries to give him a 'you can't deny me anything look' that never works.

Nevertheless Brian found himself standing beside Justin as they waited for his mom and his sister to come through the gate. Brian saw who he figured had to be them. A blond woman with a girl that looked just like her. He could even see Justin in the two. She had that aura that he knew he wouldn't be able to get anything past her. The smile on Justin's face made him glad he was there to see it. "That's them." He says nodding over to the pair he already spotted. Brian just gives him a nervous smile and followed him to meet his family.

Jennifer hugs her son tightly. It had been too long since she saw him. She immediately noticed the man with her son. He was nothing like she was expecting. Jennifer thought he would be with another student at his school. This man clearly wasn't a college student. It was obvious just by his stance. Justin hadn't told her much about the man, only he had a boyfriend. "Justin it's so good to see you." She tears up at the reunion.

"You too mom." He then turned to his sister. "Hey Molly. Do I get a hug?" The youngest Taylor quickly hugs him embarrassed in front of the stranger with her brother. She thought he was the best looking man she'd ever seen. "Mom, this is Brian." Justin steps back next to him.

"It's nice to meet you Mrs. Taylor." Brian felt like he was a teenager again in her presence. He was really meeting his first boyfriend's mother. This was something he never planned on doing in his lifetime.

"Call me Jennifer." She was determined to give him a shot if he was important to Justin.

They stand there, no one making a move to continue conversation. "I thought we'd take you out to dinner after you get settled in your hotel." Justin says breaking the uneasy silence around them.

"That sounds great honey." She smiles at him all her attention back on her son.

Brian loads the suitcases into the trunk before joining the Taylor family in the jeep. They chatted away the whole way thankfully not forcing him into the conversation. Brian and Justin waited down in the lobby as Jennifer and Molly checked in. "See, it wasn't so bad." Justin puts his arms around Brian's waist as they wait.

"Just wait. She won't be so polite once she finds out I got her little boy pregnant." He caressed his hair as they waited. He'd be on his best behavior. He knew he was capable of making anyone fall for him. It was one of the reasons he was so good at his job.

Jennifer clears her throat when they come back down. The men separate grudgingly. "Are we ready to go?" She looks to both of them, drilling them with her easy glance. They both could feel the power behind it.

Brian took them to Justin's favorite Italian restaurant. It was nice without being too formal. It was definitely not a place he would take prospective clients. It was more of a place you could feel comfortable in and that's what he needed.

"So Brian." Jennifer turns to him. "I assume you're not still in school."

Brian was about to answer but Justin beat him to it. "Brian an ad exec at Ryder Advertising here in town. He's really good." Justin says smiling proudly at him.

"Then how did you meet?" She didn't like how Justin looked at this man. She remembered having those feelings of adoration with Craig and it didn't turn out well at all. Justin was just giving this man too much power over him.

"We met on liberty Avenue the first day I lived here. It was like it was meant to be." Justin tells her. Brian wouldn't have put it that way at all. He got lucky that night sure, but he didn't believe in fate. Justin liked to think they were both there at the same time for a reason.

"So this is serious then." She didn't let the emotion show on her face.

Justin looks over to Brian for courage. "Actually mom, it's more serious than you know." He doesn't know how to tell her.

Jennifer gets a panicked feeling in her stomach when Justin doesn't continue. "You didn't get married did you?" She gasps. "You're too young for that Justin. Rushing into marriage isn't a good plan." She was panicking inside knowing her son was never going to break free of this Brian.

"Mom no. And I'm almost nineteen. I'm not too young." He hated when his mother treated him like a child.

Brian could see Justin was having a difficult time so he decided to take care of it. Jennifer didn't like him anyways. "Congratulations. You're going to be a grandmother." He gives her a fake smile and put an arm around Justin's shoulder.

Jennifer chokes on her water and Justin goes red. "You're serious." She says when she gets herself under control.

"I wanted to wait to tell you in person." Justin says quickly trying to diffuse the situation before it got out of hand. He turned glaring at Brian for saying it the way he did.

"But Justin you're too young. What about school?" She was worried now that Justin would throw away all he worked for just for this man. She didn't want him in the same position she was when she had Justin. Being totally reliant on someone else.

"The baby isn't due until July." Justin felt she was being unreasonable.

"What about next year? Are you going back to school?"

Brian cuts him off this time. "He's going back to school." There was no arguing it.

"Do you have a plan?" Jennifer's mind was whirling. Never did she envision herself having this conversation with Justin. Molly maybe, but not Justin. He was so level headed usually. She knew exactly what had come over him and he was sitting across from her with a smirk on his face.

Justin looks down at the table upset. "Mom cant you just be happy for me. I am." He knew he should have expected this. Brian did.

Jennifer reaches across the table and puts a hand over Justin's. "I am happy for you. I'm going to have a grandchild. But I'm also worried for you."

Justin smiles slightly knowing his mom isn't totally against this. "You don't need to be. I have Brian."

Jennifer looks over to the silent man. "Yes. You have Brian." The wariness and distaste was clear in her voice to Brian even if Justin missed it.

Molly speaks up for the first time. She didn't know what to make of all the tension at their table. "Mom, is Justin really having a baby?" She asks looking closely at Justin as if suddenly he'll look pregnant.

"Yes Molly, he is." She softened her tone to speak to her daughter.

"That's so cool." She loved the idea of being an aunt and it showed all over her face. "I can baby-sit."

"That would be great Mol, but you live in Chicago." Justin lets her down easily.

Molly frowned at that. "You better visit a lot then."

Justin smiled at the obvious excitement in his sister. Now that she was growing up he could share a lot more with her. He hoped that Molly would be able to get his mom to come around to the idea that he was having her first grandchild. He was sure she would eventually see it in a better light.

Brian had been pretty quiet all night after their visit with Justin's family. He didn't need to tell Justin he was right about his mom's reaction. Justin was already upset about it enough. When they went to pick them up the next day Jennifer was polite as usual. It was in her nature not to let on something was bothering her. By the time they got to Debbie's Justin was once again happily chatting with his family.

"Debbie, this is my mom, Jennifer." Justin says introducing the woman.

"It's nice to meet you. I just want to thank you for opening up your home to us." Jennifer politely greets her.

Debbie waves it off. "You're like family now." Justin smiles at her. "Brian is like a son to me. Our boys are together." Debbie cups Justin's chin. "This is a fine young man you have here."

"Thank you. I've thought so too." She says not quite sure what to make of the garishly dressed woman. Her son really seemed taken with her so she wanted to get to know this person who was important to him. "Will Brian's mother be joining us?" Jennifer asks the two.

Justin and Debbie look at each other not sure what to say. "Brian's not close with his family." Debbie simply states. "I should put the finishing touches on dinner." She changes the subject quickly.

Jennifer follows her into the kitchen offering to help.

Dinner went by fairly well with few quips from Michael. Justin had a feeling Debbie had a talk with him about being on his best behavior. Whatever it was Justin was just glad he could sit through one meal with the family and not get ostracized by the man. They weren't so lucky with Lindsay however. She kept making little suggestions on how much she wanted a child until Brian just tuned anything she said out. He had hoped she would have moved on from it by now, but it seemed she only wanted him for her baby's father. It was too bad she couldn't see it would never happen.

After dinner Jennifer spent a good deal of time with Debbie. Even though they came from different worlds the two hit it off. They had similar interests including having gay children. Jennifer found she could talk openly with Debbie. She never had someone she could discuss her concerns over Justin with and have them understand. Justin was glad that his two worlds were fitting together.

Justin went out to lunch alone with his mom while Molly stayed with Brian. Jennifer was wary about leaving his daughter with the man her son lived with, but Molly was more than okay with it. Jennifer was worried that both of her children were being ensnared by this man. After having spent Thanksgiving with Brian and his family she was growing more to liking the man. It would take a while for her to become comfortable with Justin being with him. Debbie assured her how much Brian cared about her son. That the last thing he would want to do was hurt him. Only time would tell she thought.

"Brian really has a nice place." Jennifer says as they sit and wait for their meal. "You know I'm becoming a realtor."

"That's great." Justin was happy she was getting back on her feet now that the divorce was finalized.

"How long have you been living with him?" Her tone changes suddenly. Justin could tell she wasn't happy that he didn't tell her.

"Only for a month." He defends. "It was around when we found out about the baby. We were just really busy then."

Her look softens. "What are you going to tell your father?" She hated bringing him up, but it was something they had to deal with.

Justin looks at her alarmed. "I wasn't planning on saying anything. He hasn't spoken to me in over six months. It's none of his business."

"He's still your father Justin. He'll find out somehow."

"Why bother? It will just be more for him to hate me about." He says softly. It was still painful for him to think about the look on his father's face when he told him he wasn't his son if he was gay.

"He doesn't hate you. He just doesn't understand." It sounded wrong to her when she said it, but she hated hearing the pain in her son's voice. She wished that her ex-husband could come around like she had.

"He does. That's why I really want you to like Brian. I love him and he's always going to be a part of my life now." His eyes plead with hers.

Jennifer looked at her son and knew this was true. "Is he coming with you for Christmas?" She asks trying to show support.

He wondered if she was trying to prepare to having Brian around again. "I don't think so. I was hoping to be able to convince him to come, but now that he thinks you don't like him he won't come." Justin looks at her like she caused this.

Jennifer toys with her cup. "Its not that I don't like him. He's just not the person I pictured for you." She holds up her hand stopping him from protesting. "And I'm not talking about you being straight. I meant someone more your level."

Justin was speechless. Did his mother just say Brian wasn't good enough? "Mom if you're implying Brian isn't good enough for your family you're wrong. Brian's the best person I know. He's truthful and generous and loving and he cares so much for me. He'd do anything for his family which even if you don't like it, I'm part of."

"Justin I didn't mean it that way. I meant like someone at your school." She argued. Justin didn't quite believe her. He had a feeling she meant exactly what he thought. "I just hope you're right about him."

Justin was relieved when his mother was safely back in Chicago. Even though he had missed her, he was upset that Brian was right. He was a fool not to have known his mother wouldn't be supportive of his relationship with Brian. He had really wanted her to like him since Brian was so important to him.

Brian hugged Justin to him as they lay in bed. He knew Justin was upset. "Just give it time. I'm hard to take at first."

"I liked you the first time I saw you." He says thinking that everyone should.

Brian smiles and kisses his forehead. "That was a bit different. You wanted me to fuck you." He reminds him.

"Yeah, but I wanted more too. I was afraid you wouldn't want to see me again." He finally tells him how he felt that first night. He thought about it a lot. How lucky he was that Brian had asked to see him again. Even if he didn't Justin knew he wouldn't have regretted the time he did get with the man.

Brian turns onto his side to look at him. "I was afraid because I did want to see you again. I never felt like that with anyone." He lets Justin see a little of his vulnerable side that he hardly showed the world.

"Why did you decide to ask me out again?" He had always been curious why Brian had broken all his rules to be with him.

Brian was quiet for a while. Justin was afraid of what he was going to say if he couldn't put words to it. "I got a glimpse of what life could be like with you. I didn't want to give it up. And I didn't want anyone else to have it." He answers him. It was the truth he lived with everyday. He almost missed out on this because of his pride.

"Well I'm glad you did. I wouldn't have you or our baby." He smiles brightly at the older man. He was happy even if not everyone else was.

## Chapter Eleven

Justin finished putting his books in his bag getting ready to leave. Brian was drinking coffee at the counter watching Justin fumble around for the last five minutes as he kept remembering things he needed. "What time do you want me to pick you up?" Brian asks getting up and rinsing out his cup.

"You don't have to come to every appointment." Justin says letting him off.

Brian walks over to him. "I know, but I want to be there for everything."

"It's not going to be that exciting every time. I just don't want you to feel you have to be there." Justin corrects himself from before. "I know how demanding your job is. I don't want you to lose opportunities just to take me to the doctors."

"Today we get to see our little one. I at least want to see that." Brian says understanding what Justin was trying to do. He still wanted to be there for him, but Justin was right. It might not be practical.

Justin nods. "Fine three-thirty." He kisses Brian quickly. "I'll see you later."

Justin lay on the exam table as Dr. Murphy prepared the ultra sound. Brian was a bundle of nerves at getting to see the baby. He would never have admitted he'd get so excited about something like this. Justin smiled at him. He was happy Brian insisted he come. This was something he wanted to do with him.

"Hmm." The doctor says running the wand over Justin's stomach.

"What?" Justin asks concerned.

"Oh it's nothing bad. There's two heart beats." He informs them.

Brian sits up suddenly. "You mean two babies?"

"Yes, twins." He confirms. He turns the monitor for them. "Here's one head and here's the other." He points out for the pair. "Two strong heartbeats. They are very healthy."

"It's twins." Brian couldn't think of anything else to say. "So there is going to be two babies inside Justin?"

Dr. Murphy smiled. He was used to people reacting differently when he tells them its twins. "That's usually how it works, yes."

"That's pretty awesome, isn't it Justin?" Brian turns to Justin realizing he hadn't said anything. The look on the blonds face was pure shock. He still hadn't even registered what they were talking about. "Justin?"

His eyes snap from the screen to Brian. "Yeah. Amazing." He tries to give him a smile. Inside he was screaming. He just couldn't seem to get his feelings out. There were two babies.

Brian couldn't help but notice how quiet Justin had become since leaving the doctors. Actually since they found out there was more than one baby. Justin had been so excited about having this child that Brian didn't understand how he could become so despondent because they were having two. It should have been double the joy. He thought it could just be the shock. He was still taking it in that instead of having one baby they would have two. It was a little daunting to have the number double in just one day.

Brian went up to the bedroom to see Justin lying in bed fully clothed. "You ready to go to dinner?" He asks sitting on the bed next to him. Just looking at the blond he could tell he was exhausted. Brian knew that he had been overdoing it lately, but Justin had assured him he was fine.

"I think I'm going to stay here. I'm feeling kind of tired." He tells him shutting his eyes not being able to stay awake much longer. "You go though."



“Are you sure?” He asks concerned about leaving him.

Justin turned over toward him. “Uhm-hmm.” He moans sleepily. “I’m just going to sleep.”

Brian kisses him on the temple before leaving. Before he even stood up Justin was out to the world. During their appointment the doctor had said that with twins Justin could feel more tired than with just one having to support two lives inside him. What Brian was really afraid of was the higher risk it was to carry multiples. He just wanted Justin and the babies to be healthy.

“Where’s sunshine?” Debbie asks as soon as Brian sat down at the table.

Brian gives her a brief smile before frowning. “It’s good to see you too Debbie.” He pauses before answering her. “He stayed home to get some rest.” Brian didn’t want to get into it all.

“He’s been tired a lot lately.” Emmett points out. “Is he going to be okay?” He had been worried about Justin lately too. Every time he saw him at the diner the blond looked worn out.

“He’ll be fine. The babies are just taking a lot out of him.” He didn’t want to talk about it. Here he had hoped he could get away from the stress around worrying about Justin.

It takes them all a minute to catch onto his slip. “Did you say babies?” Debbie gasps.

“No.” He couldn’t believe he did that. Justin didn’t want to tell everybody yet. He was afraid they would make a big deal and he wasn’t ready for that.

“Yes you did.” Ted interjects smirking at Brian. He never missed a thing.

Brian looked at all the faces concentrating on him. “Don’t say anything to Justin. He didn’t want everyone to know.” Brian was kicking himself for the stupid mistake.

“Why not? That’s great news.” Debbie shouts.

Lindsay huffs. “That’s real fair, you get two babies and I get none.” She gripes.

“Lindsay.” Mel’s voice holds a warning tone. She had seen Lindsay get worse and worse about the baby situation. She was becoming delusional.

“They should give us one.” She announces stunning everyone there.

“You’ve got to be kidding. I’m not giving you one of my kids.” Brian couldn’t believe this was the same Lindsay he was friends with since college. She had changed so much since he had told her he wouldn’t be the father of her child. Now this was just over the line.

“I can’t believe you even said that.” Mel was just as shocked as the rest. She may have been more privy to Lindsay’s state, but she didn’t think it was this bad.

“Like they’ll be able to take care of two babies’ at once.” She scoffs.

Mel stands up. “I think its time we leave.” Lindsay was going to argue, but saw that Mel was serious and she didn’t want to get into an argument here.

There was silence at the table after the couple was gone. “What has gotten into Lindsay?” Emmett asks concerned.

“She did have a point.” Michael speaks up. “Do you really think two babies are going to fit into your life?” He directs at Brian. “You’ll never have a free moment now. Or are you planning on leaving it all to Justin.”

Even though Brian didn’t like hearing it, Michael was right. He was beginning to understand Justin’s attitude lately. Everything Michael said was what he was worried about. Brian knew he wouldn’t do that, but did Justin? Before he could say anything else he heard Debbie taking care of it. Brian quickly got out of there needing to see Justin.

Justin was still in bed, but roused when the door shut loudly. He sat up to see Brian muttering to himself as he took off his coat and shoes. He stopped when he saw Justin sitting up in bed. “Are you well rested now?” He asks softly looking at the sleep mussed hair that made him want the blond.

“Yeah. Sorry I couldn’t come.” He stretches and looks at the clock. “You’re back early. Did Michael say something?”

“Yeah and Lindsay has gone off the deep end.” He shakes his head getting back to what he wanted to ask him. “Michael said something that got me thinking.” Justin nods urging him to go on. “Are you happy about the twins?”

“Yeah, of course.” He looks at Brian seriously. “Aren’t you?”

“Yes. It’s just that every time I even mention the babies now you tense up.” Brian points out.

Justin looks away from him not able to meet his eyes. “It isn’t that I don’t want them both, it’s that two babies are a lot more responsibility. Are we even ready for that?” He kept going over in his head what life would be like now. He didn’t know if he had it in him to juggle it all when he couldn’t even handle it right now. “Doesn’t that scare you at all?”

“Yeah, but you can’t let that control you.” Brian reasons with him. “Whatever happens happens. We just have to try to prepare as best we can.”

Brian moves so that he’s sitting next to the blond on the bed. “Do you think we’ll have boys or girls?” Justin asks looking over to him to see his reaction.

“Maybe one of each.” Brian adds. “I don’t care what we have, but it’d be nice to have a boy and a girl.”

Justin smiles at him glad that he could finally voice his concerns. He had been afraid to mention anything in case Brian thought he didn’t want the babies. It was nice to know Brian worried too.

“How were your exams?” Brian asks when Justin gets back from his last class of the semester.

Justin falls onto the couch exhausted. “I’m pretty sure they went well. I’m so glad the semester is over.” He lays back and closes his eyes. “Three weeks without having to go to class.” He smiles thinking of all the rest he would get.

Brian moves to straddle Justin’s legs. “How long are you going to be in Chicago for?” He asks running his hands through the blond strands.

Justin moans moving into the touch. He loved when Brian unconsciously played with his hair. It was like he couldn’t help but touch him. “A week.” He answers finally.

“Are you sure you should travel by yourself?” He asks not wanting him to leave. He never thought he would feel this way. When it was first brought up Justin was going to Chicago for Christmas he really

didn't care. He didn't hold any sentimental value to the holiday, but a whole week without Justin was different.

Justin liked the concern Brian had for him. It let him know how much he meant to the man. "I won't be alone. Daphne's flying back with me."

"Right. I forgot about Daphne." He replies with false happiness. "It's gonna be like you never left with your best friend along."

"I guess." He says upset that Brian still wouldn't go. "It will be cool to see all my old friends again. I haven't kept up with any of them."

"No one ever does." Brian assures him. He flattens his body to Justin's then kisses him, prolonging the action not wanting to think of Justin's imminent departure. How would he get through a whole week without this when he had started feeling so comfortable with having Justin around whenever he needed him.

"It's going to be really weird." Justin tells him. "This is the first time my whole family won't be together. It's the first time I'll be home after the divorce." It was still sad for him to think that the family he grew up with was no longer together. That when he went home it won't all be as he left it. Justin wondered what their Christmas was going to be like.

"It'll be fine. You'll see." Brian didn't have a clue if he was right or not, but it felt right to alleviate Justin's fears. The silence is broken by Justin's rumbling stomach. Brian gets up laughing. "I guess we better get you something to eat."

Justin laughed too standing up. "The babies have spoken." He smiles up at Brian. "I could really go for a cheeseburger." Brian rolls his eyes. That was nothing new.

## Chapter Twelve

Justin sat with Daphne at a table in the food court at the mall. They had wanted to get their shopping done before they had to leave in two days. They watched as the packed mall whirled around them. Shoppers were moving about quickly trying to get last minute shopping done.

"Do you think you'll see your dad when you're at your mom's?" Daphne asks what Justin had been avoiding talking about.

"I hope not. Why would he be there anyways?" Justin answers.

Daphne shrugs. "Maybe to see Molly or maybe even you." She says cautiously.

Justin rolls his eyes at her. "Yeah sure Daph. I'm sure he's just waiting for me to get back so we can have a touching reunion." He says sarcastically.

"More extraordinary things have happened before. Just look at you and Brian."

Justin smiles knowing it was true. He had ensnared the unobtainable. "I want to get him something for Christmas since we won't be together. I know he doesn't believe in all this holiday stuff, but it's our first one together." He frowns. "I really had hoped I could convince him to come with me. He's just so stubborn."

"What is he going to tell the babies when they are old enough why daddy doesn't let them have Christmas?"

“We’re Jewish?” He jokes without humor in his voice.

Daphne laughed anyways. “He’s too willful.” She announces. “Are you done eating? We need to finish up our shopping.” Justin nods following Daphne to the waste can.

“Why did I have to find the most closed off man in Pittsburgh?” Justin pouted walking beside his friend. “He never lets me know what he’s thinking or feeling. Most of the time I’m just guessing and hoping I’m right and that he does care.” When he sees Daphne about to defend Brian he continues. “I know he’s told me he loves me and I don’t doubt he means it, but why can’t he just let me in more often.”

Daphne gave him a sympathetic look. She knew how tough a time Justin was having. “Just give it time. You’ll see it will come out of him.”

“Thanks Daph. You always make me feel better.” He felt lighter not having to carry the doubts around. He just needed to be reminded from an outside source what he had.

Brian moved above Justin, thrusting in and out of him. He was desperate to get as close to the blond as he could get. He had to make up for missing a whole week of being with the young man. He didn’t want him to go. He had too much pride to actually ask Justin to stay so he tried to convey through his moves that he wanted Justin with him. He tried to tell him he would miss him even if he couldn’t say the words. Brian tried to pretend it was no big deal. It shouldn’t be he reasoned, but it was.

After they climax, Brian rests on top of the teen. “I love you.” Justin whispers into his ear. He wasn’t afraid to voice his feelings, but he understood why Brian was. “I’m going to miss you.”

“It won’t be that bad. You’re only going to be gone a week.” Brian brushes it off not wanting to reveal his true feelings.

Justin frowned up at him. Even though he knew that Brian couldn’t always say what he wanted, it sometimes upset him not knowing for sure that he’s cared for. “I guess not.” He lied. “I’m just used to waking up with you and seeing you before I fall asleep. It’ll be hard not to.”

“You probably won’t even realize I’m not there. You’ll have your real family.” He gets off him and heads to the bathroom to take a shower.

Justin laid there not sure if he should follow. Sometimes Brian’s aloofness put him off. Yes he knew what he was getting into when he agreed to only see Brian, but he had already fallen for him the first night. There was no going back after the one night with the man. Justin didn’t want him to change, just let him know how he truly felt every now and then. Brian was acting like he didn’t even care that he wouldn’t be around and Justin was sure that wasn’t true. Deciding he didn’t want to leave on bad terms he joined Brian in the shower. He wraps his arms around him from behind, resting his head on his shoulder. “I will realize you’re not there because you’re part of my real family now.” It was all he would say on it as he continued with his shower.

Brian sat at the diner with Emmett and Ted forgetting Justin wouldn’t be working today. He had turned expecting to see the blond taking their order only to see Deb instead. She went around taking their orders. “The usual Brian?”

“Just coffee.” He answered not bothering to even look up.

“You have to eat something. I doubt you are without Justin here to make you.” She says looking at him concerned. She had never seen him so despondent before.

“Justin doesn’t make me do anything. I can take care of myself.” He snaps at her making the whole table sit back in shock. Brian never talks to Deb that way. He may tell her to mind her own business but never shout at the woman he considered like a mother. Deb was too worried to say anything going to put their orders in.

Michael comes in and tries to get Brian’s attention. Even though Brian wasn’t a usually talkative person, this level of quiet was unusual. When Brian got up to use the restroom, Michael turned to his friends. “What’s wrong with him?”

“He misses Sunshine.” Deb said as she came over overhearing her son’s question.

Michael frowned. “He’s only been gone three days.”

“He really loves that kid.” Deb smiles as she walks away. She was so pleased that Brian had found Justin. She only hoped Michael could have the same luck. Debbie worried about him being completely stuck on Brian for the rest of his life if he didn’t move on and soon.

Brian sat back down next to Michael. “Hey Brian lets go to Woody’s tonight. It’ll be just like old times.” Michael says excited to have Brian all to himself again.

Brian was about to say no. He really wasn’t feeling up to going out, but he could see how much Michael wanted him there. He thought maybe it would be a good chance to repair the damage to their friendship. “Sure.” He says and watches as Michael’s face brightens up. It made him smile just seeing how happy Michael was to hang out with him.

Justin sat in his bed with his back propped up with pillows against the wall and his legs bent in front of him. He had his sketch book out drawing Brian once again. He had been waiting for Brian’s call for hours. The older man had told him he’d call, but not what time so he sat waiting the whole time. It was lonely being back home. Nothing was the same as it used to be. The people he was once friends with didn’t have anything in common with anymore. They had all moved on in different directions. His mom even had a different life. She was busy with her job and her new friends she had made while he was away. He didn’t know any of the people that came by for dinner so he just stayed quiet when they weren’t talking to him.

What made him lonely was not having Brian with him when he went to sleep. He didn’t realize how much he relied on the other man being there. Justin found it hard to fall asleep without his human pillow. He looked up when Molly knocked coming into the room. “Mom wanted me to tell you dinners ready.” She comes in and sits next to him knowing how down Justin was. “How come you sleep so much?”

“The babies use up all my energy since they need it to grow.” He answers as simply as he could.

Molly smiled. “It’s so cool that you’re having twins. What if they look exactly alike? How will you tell them apart?”

Justin laughed softly at her. “I think I’d know.”

“You could always put name tags on them.” She decides. “Can I help name them?” She bounces excited.

“I’ll have to ask Brian.” He tells her.

“He already said to tell him if I come up with any good names.” Molly states proudly.

Justin narrows his eyes at her. “When have you been talking to Brian?” He asks worried Molly had been bothering him.

"He said I could e-mail him when you and mom went out for lunch and I stayed with him." Molly explains. Justin could see his sister was quite taken with Brian. He was glad at least one person in his family was happy he was with Brian.

"Just don't bug him too much. He might think it's a family trait." He warns getting up from the bed.

Molly ran ahead of him down the stairs as Justin made his way more slowly. He was too mature to go running around he told himself. It wasn't because he was still lethargic from the poor amount of sleep he was getting.

During dessert his cell started ringing. Checking it and seeing it was Brian, he made his way to his room so he could speak to him in private. "Brian." he smiles answering the phone.

"Hey. How are you?" Justin hears the genuine concern in his voice.

"I'm fine. It's weird being here. Everything has changed so much." He confesses. He hadn't been able to tell Brian the truth the first time they talked. He didn't want Brian to know how much he regretted coming.

"It probably only seems like everything's changed. You'll get used to it." Brian assures him. "So everything really is okay. You're not feeling sick or anything?"

Justin grins. "Yes. Stop worrying. I miss you though. I wish that I was with you." He says softly, afraid that Brian would laugh. He hears the noise in the background. It sounded like a bunch of people. "Are you at home?" He asks.

"No, I went with the guys to Woody's." He tells him moving away from the crowd so he could hear well. "I forgot I was supposed to call when we got here Emmett said something that reminded me I needed to."

Justin frowns suddenly. "Here I am thinking about you and you couldn't even remember to call me." Justin says angrily into the phone. "No wonder you didn't want to come with me, you wanted to go out and party and not have me around."

"Justin." Brian tries to calm him down but he won't have any of it.

"Don't Justin me." He shouts. "I'm such a fool. Do you even think of me at all?"

"Justin, what the fuck is wrong with you? You're being ridiculous." Brian didn't know where Justin was getting all this. Didn't he know that he missed him?

"I'm not ridiculous. If you loved me you would have come with me." He yelled before slamming the phone shut. He curled up on his bed crying. It hurt too much that Brian didn't love him like he loved him. Justin ignored the ringing of his phone knowing it was Brian.

Back in Pittsburg Brian was fuming. How dare the little twat yell at him then hang up. He waited a few minutes before calling him back only to have the phone go to voice mail. He tried again and the same thing. "Fuck it." Brian muttered giving up.

Michael watched as Brian talked with Justin. At first he was upset when Brian suddenly remembered he needed to call Justin. It was just supposed to be the two of them, but Brian always had to bring the blond into it. He gloated when Brian started arguing with the teen. He always thought Justin demanded too much of his friend and now Brian saw it too. Maybe this was a sign that Justin was on his way out of their lives. Michael was glad when he heard Brian didn't want to go to Chicago with Justin. It gave Brian a chance to see what he was giving up and he could change his mind.

Yet when he looked over at his long time friend he could see how unhappy he was. Michael never wanted to consider that Brian actually did truly love Justin. In his mind he would always write it off to strong lust. Brian looked utterly defeated for a moment before his mask fell back into place, but it was gone long enough for Michael to glimpse beyond it. He didn't like what he saw.

"Hey Brian, are you going to play?" Michael called trying to keep all the attention on him for now. He knew it wouldn't last long. Soon he won't be all that important to Brian's life.

Brian turned to him and nodded, hiding his pain away. If Justin wanted to act like a child he'd let him have his tantrum and when he grew up they could talk. Now he had to pretend like it didn't bother him and have a good time with his childhood friend so nobody suspected anything. The last thing he needed was for this to get back to Deb. She would make it her business even if it wasn't.

Molly went up to Justin room when he didn't come back down for dessert. What she saw was Justin curled up sobbing into his pillow. When Justin went upstairs when he got the phone call she knew it was Brian. The smile on his face was enough to let her know. She wondered what could have happened between then and now. She went over and sat beside him on the bed. "Justin, what happened? Is Brian okay?"

Justin pulled his head up to look at her. "I messed up. Brian's never going to forgive me." He cries out.

"Jus, you didn't do anything." She says softly trying to calm him down by stroking his hair.

"I yelled at him and accused him of not loving me." He says gasping. He knew it was his hormones working overtime that had him so upset, but that didn't stop him from being upset. In his mind he was going to lose Brian because he was so cold.

"I'm sure he knows you didn't mean it." She didn't know how to deal with an emotionally overcharged pregnant brother. She was about to get her mom when Justin started moaning in pain. She rushed back to his bed. "What is it?"

Justin's hands flew to his stomach and clutched to it. "Oh god. The babies..." He moaned before Molly took off to get their mother. She was terrified by the time they got back to Justin's room. "Mom." He cries out. He was just so scared he killed his babies.

Jennifer rushed to his side. "Justin calm down. You have to calm down." She tells him but she was panicking herself and that just made him even worse. "Come on Justin." She helped him sit up. "We have to go to the hospital." Together they get him standing. "Molly help me get him to the car."

Brian was leaving Woody's with Michael when his phone vibrated. He was tempted to ignore it, but something told him to take the call. It was Justin's phone so he was surprised to hear Molly's voice. He turned cold when he heard Justin and hospital in the same sentence. "I'll be there." He quickly answers shutting the phone.

Michael braces him when he sees Brian sway on his feet. "Brian, what is it?" He asks concerned.

"Justin. He's at the hospital." He answers in a monotone. He couldn't feel anything. "I have to get there."

Michael knew this wasn't the time to be jealous. His friend really needed him. "Come on I'll get you to the airport." Brian easily hands him the keys and lets himself be led to the jeep.

Brian went through the motion of getting to Chicago. It wasn't the first time he'd been there, but he couldn't remember anything about it. He took a cab to the hospital not even remembering the plane ride or the drive to the hospital. He found Molly and Jennifer sitting together in the waiting room when he arrived. Molly ran to him and threw her arms around him. He couldn't move his arms to hug her back. He looked to Jennifer for answers.

"He went into premature labor." She tells him softly. They were all shook up by it that she forgot all about what caused it.

Brian couldn't understand it. He was only three months. That was way too early. "Is he okay?" Was his voice as weak as it sounded to him?

Jennifer nodded. "They stopped the labor and he and the babies should be fine, but the doctor said he needs to calm down." She explains. "He's blaming himself for this."

"It's my fault. I never should have let him come here alone." Brian knew it was all his fault. He was the one who got Justin all worked up to cause his stress.

"He's resting right now, but he was asking for you earlier." Jennifer tells him looking at him sympathetically. She saw him a different light now. He dropped everything to come right away and he looked like he was dying inside.

"I want to see him." He says letting her know there was no argument. She nods and gets the nurse for him.

Brian watched from the door Justin's sleeping form. He looked so peaceful now, but he could only imagine what he went through earlier. He slowly made his way over to Justin's bedside afraid to wake him. Jennifer told him he needed rest. No sooner had he stood beside him did Justin's eyes flutter open. He gave a weak smile when he saw Brian.

"You came." He moans softly.

"Of course I did." Brian kisses him softly before sitting on the edge of the bed.

"I'm sorry." Justin says with tears running down his face. "I know you love me. I let my emotions take over and I almost killed our babies." He cries.

"Shh." Brian brushes his blond hair back. "You have to stay calm." He gets him to even his breathing. "I should have come with you. You were right. I was just too proud to give in. I did miss you." Justin smiled at him brightly.

"We could have skipped all this drama if you just admitted that."

Brian rolls his eyes. "You hung up on me before I could." Justin smirked laying his head on Brian's shoulder feeling tired again.

"I really am sorry." He says somber thinking about what could have happened tonight. He was surprised Brian didn't hate him for it.

Brian held him around the waist. "It's okay, just don't think about it."

Brian slept in the chair by the bed refusing to leave Justin's side. After arguing with her, Brian had convinced Jennifer to go home with Molly. They both didn't need to be there. Justin had to stay overnight and they would decide tomorrow when he could leave. He was on an IV to stop the labor right now and he needed to be on it for at least twelve hours.



Brian woke when the nurse came in to check on Justin and monitor how he was doing. He watched silently as she wrote in the chart before leaving. It was hard for him to watch Justin hooked up to the machines and lying in a hospital bed. He couldn't help but think that if he had been with him this wouldn't have happened. It was all his fault according to him. He should have been with Justin. Then the blond wouldn't have had to worry if he actually cared about him.

He sat forward towards the bed when he saw Justin was slowly waking up. "Hey baby." He says looking into tired blue eyes. "How are you feeling?"

"A little tired." He says even if he just woke up. His body felt exhausted. "Did you stay here all night?"

"Yeah. I didn't want you to wake up alone." That as only half the reason. Brian couldn't stay away if they made him. He needed to know Justin was going to be alright.

Justin smiled slightly knowing the truth. He lightly grasps Brian's hand. "It's okay now." He could feel it inside that everything was back to normal. He had been so afraid last night and not having Brian with him made it even worse. Now everything was right again. "When can we go home?"

Brian could tell he was anxious to get out of there. He was never very big on hospitals either, but he didn't want to rush it out of there. It was important to him that they stay until they were sure there weren't any complications left over. "Let's just not rush it okay? This was really serious."

"I know Brian. I was here." He snaps. He hated when Brian didn't thought things were over his head. Brian didn't say anything back not wanting to stress Justin out again. He was also feeling guilty that he wasn't there. Justin sees the guilt on Brian's face and regrets snapping at him. "I'm sorry Bri. I know you're just worried."

Brian lays his head next to Justin's. "God you scared me." He finally lets Justin know just how afraid he had been. He came close to losing everything that mattered to him.

Before Justin could say anything back, the doctor came in to make his round. "Good, you're both up." He says looking over his notes. "How are you feeling this morning Justin?"

"Good. Are the babies going to fine?" He's immediately concerned about his twins.

"They are doing fine. We need to keep a close eye on them however. I understand that your doctor is out of state?" He asks looking between the two men.

"We live in Pittsburgh. When will it be safe to travel back?" Brian asks wanting to get Justin back to where he knows he can take care of him. It'd be much more comfortable if they were in their own home.

"You should rest here a few days before any travel. I also want Justin on bed rest for at least two weeks. When he sees his prenatal care provider they can discuss what precautions need to be taken."

Brian puts on a fake smile while Justin's is beaming when the doctor leaves. He had gotten Brian to Chicago anyways. He knew Brian wouldn't go back now until he did. Justin just hoped Brian didn't ruin the whole holiday for him by griping.

"Will you come lay with me." He asks moving over to make room. Brian couldn't deny him anything with him lying in a hospital. In truth he lied that he could be even closer to the teen. He just wanted to hold him all day. Brian lays next to him pulling him close careful of the IV line. He softly rubbed comforting circle on his stomach.

Jennifer stops at the door watching the interaction between her son and his lover. She didn't want to admit it, but they really looked like they were I love. She was impressed by how quickly Brian had gotten to

Chicago the night before. He had to have just dropped everything and left to have gotten to the hospital so fast. It made her see maybe Justin had some good sense after all in picking a man. She definitely saw Brian in a new light. He was a man that would be there for her son.

“Hey mom.” Justin says seeing her watching them from the doorway. He thought she was uncomfortable with seeing them in the bed together rather than just taking at all in.

“Hello Mrs. Taylor.” Brian said looking up at her while trying to move away only to have Justin hold him there.

“Jennifer.” She offers.

Brian smiled slightly. “Jennifer.” He repeated back.

Jennifer turned her attention to her son. “How are you honey?” She asks kissing his forehead.

“I’m fine. The doctor said I had to go on bed rest for at least two weeks.”

“I’m just glad you’re okay.” She says tearing up remembering the fear last night. “I guess you’ll be staying then?” She asks Brian without taking her attention off of her son.

“Yes, but I can stay in a hotel.” He offers not wanting to stay at Jennifer’s house. It was one of the reasons he didn’t want to come. He hated staying at other people’s houses. It made him feel awkward and out of place.

Justin grabbed his hand. “No I want you to stay with me.” He says looking into his eyes pleading silently. He was still scared even if he didn’t say it. “That’s okay right mom?”

Jennifer recovers quickly. “Yes of course Brian is welcome.” She answers fast so as not to stress Justin out.

The next day they can take Justin home after suffering through his raving about being okay to leave. He didn’t understand that everyone was just worried not trying to make him pay for stressing out too much. Brian was glad that Michael had convinced him to stop and pack a bag figuring he wouldn’t be back right away. Brian had wanted to just go, but he did see the convenience in having his stuff on hand in case he did have to stay for an extended period without time to fly home.

When they got to the Taylor’s, Brian could see why Justin had wanted to come home for Christmas. Just walking in the feelings of the holiday he never had before assaulted him. In the foyer was a tiny Christmas tree more festive than any he had ever had at his family home. There were no decorations, only the precursory tree with white lights and an angel, that was it. Brian remembered when he was very little, before he realized not everybody had Christmas like them. He would sit in front of the tree just looking at the lights until his father yelled at him for wasting electricity and turned it off. However, Jennifer did a tasteful job of decorating while keeping the warm feeling in the home.

“Do you want to stay here or go up to your bed?” Jennifer asks when they get into the living room.

“I’d rather stay here. I’ve been in a bed for two days.” Justin didn’t want to be locked away again while all the activity happened downstairs. This way he could follow his doctor’s orders and still be part of the family.

Brian gets him situated laying down. “You’re actually going to stay here right? If you move I’ll put you up in your bed.” He warns giving him the look Debbie always did to let him know he’s serious. It worked for eleven years on Brian and now he made it work on Justin.

"I promise." He says pulling Brian down so he could kiss him. When Justin parted his lips, Brian let his tongue explore the familiar taste of his blond. They only pulled apart when they heard a giggle from the archway. "Molly." Justin shouted at her for spying. She ran off probably to tell their mother.

"We're just educating the girl." Brian laughs it off while Justin turns red from embarrassment.

"I don't think my mom would see it that way."

"It's not like we were fucking." He already knew this would put him even lower to Jennifer. At this rate she'd never accept him. It wasn't so important to him that Jennifer like him, but it was to Justin and he wanted that for him.

"Shh, be quiet." He looked around just to make sure his mom didn't hear.

Brian kissed his forehead before moving to sit next to him. "I hope you do realize your mom knows we did it at least once." He teases him patting his stomach.

Justin lays back feeling tired again. Leaving the hospital had been a lot more exhausting than he would have guessed. "I'm gonna rest my eyes for a bit." He says already falling asleep.

Brian got up to see the rest of the house. He was kind of curious what Justin's room looked like even if he wouldn't tell him. He found himself picturing the blond growing up here. From what Justin had told him he had a happy childhood. Brian was glad that he had. It made him the loving man that could put up with him today. He was looking at the pictures of Justin as a kid on the table in the hall and smiled. He was a cute kid. Maybe their kids would take after him he wondered. It wouldn't be the worst thing. He picked up the one that was taken on Justin's graduation. Beside him stood a grim faced man. Brian knew it had to be his father. It was the first time he had seen a picture of him. He figured it was only there because of it being Justin's graduation. He noticed that Jennifer cleared out all the other pictures containing her ex-husband.

Brian looks up when he hears Jennifer's heels. He sets the picture back while she watched him. "I was just looking at how different he was." He explains not knowing why he felt he needed to.

"He was my little angel." She says with a far off look in her eyes remembering the little boy that was now a man. A man starting his own family.

"He's sleeping right now." Brian says when he couldn't think of what else to tell her. "I'm sorry about intruding on your family thing."

"Justin was really upset that you didn't come along with him. I was worried about how much he relied on you being with him." Jennifer confessed.

Brian smirked, it was nothing he didn't already suspect. "Would you rather he be with someone he doesn't love?" He asks twisting what she said.

"I want him to be with the person he loves. I don't want him hurt though."

He looks back at the table and the younger Justin. He couldn't deny that he hurt him. Not coming to Chicago with him hurt him. Justin's doubts about him hurt him and his unborn babies. Brian knew he hurt him by not letting him into his heart completely. It was something he didn't want to do again. "I just...I love him." His voice shook with the admission.

"I know." She was sure of it by the way Brian was around her son. He looked like he never wanted to be parted. "It's just I'm still wary of you. I wonder why you want to be with my son from what I heard you were so against relationships."

Brian rolls his eyes back cursing whichever member of his family told her about that. "I didn't ever want a relationship until I met Justin and I wanted him only for myself." He didn't think he should have to tell her all this, but maybe she deserved to know his true feelings. If it was his son he'd want to know that he was truly loved. "I never thought I would be happy with one person, but I am." Saying it made him realize how true it really was. He hadn't thought about tricking in so long. He was satisfied by just Justin. He didn't know if it would last for long, but it was something he was willing to try.

Brian sat on the floor with his back propped up against the sofa that Justin was laying on. Brian smiled as he rubbed Justin's stomach. "You can feel the bump starting." He couldn't believe he was growing their children right at that moment inside Justin. "It wasn't there when you left Pittsburgh."

Justin was enjoying the light massage. "You just didn't notice because you see me everyday. I told you I was getting bigger all the time." He smirks knowing Brian was remembering it. It wasn't often he got to prove him wrong. He catches Brian's hand threading his fingers through his. "What if something happened to the babies?" He asks softly.

Brian turns around so he could face him still holding onto Justin's hand. "What's the point in playing the what if game. The doctor said they are fine and so are you." He says evading the question. He didn't want to think about it. It was what he always did when he didn't want to admit something happened.

"I just..." Justin couldn't get the words out when he tried to choke back the tears that were determined to come. "I couldn't live with myself if I lost them." He says losing his battle as the tears stream down his face.

Watching Justin cry was heartbreaking for Brian. He moved up onto the couch and wrapped Justin in his arms. His hand went up to stroke his hair to comfort and calm him. "I know and I hate that you had to go through that." He lightly kisses his hair. "I'm going to make sure it never happens again. I promise." He rarely makes promises, but this was something he knew he needed to do. He wouldn't let it get to where Justin wasn't sure how much he cared for him. Keeping this promise wouldn't be a problem.

Justin snuffles as his tears stop streaming. "Hey it's Christmas morning." Justin says noticing the time on the clock as two twenty in the morning. He didn't realize they had stayed awake for so long. "Merry Christmas Brian." He says curling into his arms. "I'm really glad you're actually here with me."

Brian just tightened his hold. They stay that way for a while just taking in the calmness that had become of the evening. After Justin admitted how scared he was it became easier to handle. He just needed to get out his feelings and was glad that Brian didn't just brush it off. He actually listened and offered him silent support.

Brian fumbled around in his pocket and pulled out a small box. Justin looks down at it curious what was in it. Brian sets it in his lap nervously. He had very little experience with these things. "What is it?" Justin asks just as wary as Brian, but for different reasons.

"It's a present. I know I made a big deal about not caring about the holiday, but I know it means a lot to you." He pauses not able to meet Justin's eyes too anxious about actually giving him a present. "I wanted to give you something. I was going to wait so it wouldn't be a Christmas present, but I realized it really doesn't matter." He rambles trying to get Justin to understand how hard this was for him to go against what he believed for so long.

Justin carefully pulled the top off and moved the paper to reveal a platinum medallion with a raised symbol on one side and a smooth finish on the other. It has a thin chain connected through the top. He was amazed Brian actually got this for him as he weighed it in his palm. "The symbol stands for life. I thought it appropriate since you're giving life to our children." He takes a nervous pause before going on. "And it feels like a whole new life since I've met you. A better life."

Justin smiles at him with tears in his eyes. It held such deeper meaning now and he would cherish the gift. "I love it. It's the best present I've ever been given." He states honestly. Nobody had ever thought that much about him before. Justin puts a hand behind Brian's neck to pull him into a kiss. "I love you." He murmurs against his lips. "Can I wear it now?"

Brian nods, his forehead rubbing against the blond's. "It's yours." He adds watching Justin clasp it behind his neck. Brian traces the chain down Justin's collarbone. The metal contrasted perfectly with his pale skin. "It looks beautiful on you." Justin beamed hearing the words. He could tell Brian was feeling emotionally exhausted if he was allowing his feelings to show so clearly. Usually he had to pry these sentiments out of the older man, but tonight he was being so open. Justin knew that it wouldn't last forever. When he woke up in the morning Brian would be closed off again, but he didn't mind. It was the man he fell in love with and while he did relish these moments, the fact that they happened infrequently made him value them much more. People who threw around romantic words usually didn't put much feeling or honesty into them. When Brian said them, he knew he could believe every word.

"We should try to get some sleep." Justin suggests feeling worn out as well. Brian helps him up stairs without Justin grumbling about being able to do it. He was too happy to care. As he laid in bed before falling asleep he clasped the medallion on top of his chest. He never planned on taking it off.

Justin stared at the falling snow out the window thinking about how great his trip turned out to be. After he was sure the babies were okay he could enjoy having Brian being with him. It turned out to be one of the best Christmas's he ever had. Somehow it reiterated how much he wanted to spend the rest of his life with Brian. He knew it would always be a battle to get Brian to go against his rules of how he should act, but it was something he was willing to do. It was always worth it in the end he was learning.

Jennifer walked in and sat next to her son. She watched as he played with the chain around his neck. Justin couldn't seem to keep his hands off it. "Where'd this come from?" She asks picking it off his chest to get a better view.

Justin smiled. "Brian gave it to me." He couldn't keep the pride out of his voice.

"It's an interesting piece." She didn't exactly know what the appropriate response was when it involved her son's boyfriend. She was still working it all out in her head. She knew the situation would arise some day when she would have to accept her baby would meet someone and bring him around and expect to be able to talk about him.

Justin rubbed the raised letters. "It means life. Brian said for the babies." He explains. Jennifer could see that he was really pleased with the gift.

Jennifer strokes the back of his neck just remembering doing that when he was younger. "It seems like you just got here, now you're leaving." She says hating saying goodbye each time Justin parted from her. "I don't like you living so far away."

"I hate it too, but I like living in Pittsburgh. I feel like I fit in so much better there than I ever did here." He admits to her. He was always afraid she'd take it personally. "I have real friends for once besides Daphne and I have Brian."

Jennifer never realized Justin didn't like it in Chicago. He was always such a happy kid. Daphne must have been the only reason he could be happy. She knew he had other friends, but maybe they weren't the kind he wanted. The friends she met of his in Pittsburgh were basically all gay. It must be easier to be around people who understood him. She also knew it was because of Brian that he met them. It seemed every time she spoke with her son she found more reasons not to hate the man. She actually was starting to like him, something she never saw happening the first time she saw him.

"I know you might not believe this, but I'm glad you have Brian. I know he'll take care of you when you need it and let you take care of things when you don't."

Justin gives her a little smile. "Thanks." Jennifer isn't quite sure what he's thanking her for. It could be any number of things. Maybe for all of them. She doesn't get a chance to ask when Brian comes back just hanging up his phone. He comes over and kisses Justin not caring that Jennifer's right there. "Is everything okay?"

"Yeah. Those new guys that Ryder hired can't get anything right." Brian says offhand not wanting to have to deal with it until they were back in Pittsburgh. "Are you ready to go?"

Justin nods. "Yeah." He didn't want to say it in front of his mom, but he was looking forward to being back in the loft. He wanted to start having his normal life again. After saying goodbye to his mom and Molly, he and Brian took a cab to the airport both happy to be going back home.

### Chapter Thirteen

Brian was glad to be back in Pittsburgh. He worried it was too soon for Justin to travel, but he was given the go ahead and he was anxious enough to get out of Justin's mom's house. He felt like he was always being watched even when nobody was in the room. He was just grateful it would be a while before he will be expected to spend time with Justin's family. He just couldn't be the kind of boyfriend that you show off to the family. It pained him because he wanted to be able to give anything to Justin, but he felt like he was forcing Justin away from his family because he couldn't handle that type of situation.

As soon as they were back at the loft, Brian made Justin head straight to bed while he handle all the bags from the car. This wasn't one of those things he was taking lightly. There wasn't a moment he was alone with his thoughts that he didn't escape from the thought that he could have lost Justin. The pain that he felt throughout his whole body made him see just how much he had come to love his young lover. His feelings must have been showing on his face when he came into the bedroom when Justin questioned him.

"Brian, what is it?" Justin asks pulling Brian down by his hand to sit next to him. When Brian looks away not answering, Justin presses on. "Come on tell me?"

"I'm glad you're here." He replies softly. It was always a difficult thing for him to bare his soul even if he could admit how much Justin means to him.

"Me too." Justin smiles up at him not quite getting what he meant.

"I was so scared when I heard. I just went into shock and that never happens to me. If Michael wasn't with me I don't know how I would have managed to get to you."

"Michael?" He asks completely confused. Michael didn't want them together. He didn't make it a secret what he thought of their relationship.

"I know, but he really helped me get the things done to be able to get a flight." Brian was well aware of how Michael felt about them and he understood Justin's reaction. He would have felt the same way if he wasn't there when Michael came through for him.

"I don't think this means he's going to like me any more than he did before." Justin says not willing to get his hopes up.

"Yeah, probably not. Michael gets pretty stubborn if he feels wronged." Brian agrees.

"You know what's strange." He begins and when Brian waited he continued. "When I was in Chicago I felt so out of place, but then as soon as we came back here, everything just felt so right. This feels like home now." He looks up to Brian to see if he had a reaction, but all he did was give him a little smile. "I always thought I would leave after I was done with school, but now I don't want to."

"This isn't just about the babies is it?" Brian asks. "You shouldn't give up on your dreams just like that."

"I'm not. They just changed." His lips turned up in a smile thinking of all the things he was going to have. He thought about what he had gained, all the things he was going to be able to do with his twins and nothing else seemed to matter. Nothing except Brian and that just made everything even better. He pictured the life he could have and knew he wouldn't change anything about it.

"I want you to have everything you've ever wanted."

Justin lays down next to Brian feeling tired again from the trip. He knew he already had almost everything he ever thought he wanted. There were some things he wanted that he knew most likely would never happen like his father ever accepting him again, but he had enough that he didn't miss him too much anymore. It gave him a lesson on how he didn't want to treat his own children. And he had someone who accepted him no matter what.

Life was getting back to normal for Brian and Justin. Brian had stayed home with Justin for a few days before going back to his job hoping his absence didn't destroy all the hard work he put in to get that far. Justin was now going back to school and to work at the diner. His first shift back at the diner wasn't going as well as he was hoping it to be. Being out of practice and still recuperating wasn't a good combination for working in a busy diner. He found himself needing to rest quite often.

When he walked in for his shift, Debbie was the first to greet him. "Sunshine, it's so good to have you back." Debbie says bring him into a bone crushing hug. He realized that he hadn't seen her or any of the rest of the family in nearly a month. After spending two weeks in Chicago, Brian was adamant to the family that Justin didn't need to be stressed out and considering the attitudes they had lately about their relationship he was sure that would happen if they came to see Justin. The only solution he saw fit was to keep Justin segregated from the family. He wouldn't let any of them visit until Justin's bed rest was over. Now that Justin was back to work at the diner, it couldn't be helped that he would see people who might not have the best intentions in mind for his partner.

"Thanks Debbie." He says when she lets him go. Part of him was thanking her for letting him go. When you were in one of her hugs you never thought it would end and that was how you would die, smothered lacking oxygen.

"That boyfriend of yours wouldn't let any of us come see you." She didn't try to hide her displeasure for what Brian did out of her voice. "We all wanted to make sure you were alright."

"I'm fine, I was fine. Brian just didn't want anyone stressing me out." He defends Brian. Sometimes he wondered how these people could call Brian family and still treat him so terribly. They acted like everything he did was wrong when actual fact he always tried to do the right thing. "He was really worried."

"I'm sure he was." Debbie softened her stance about the brunet. "I saw how much he missed you when you were out of town. It was something I never saw before." The order bell sounded letting her know her orders up. "Anyways I'm glad to see you and well." Debbie says going to get her order while Justin went to begin taking orders.

While Justin was at work, Brian came home to see he had a visitor waiting for him. Lindsay was waiting outside his door smiling as he exited the elevator. She was probably one of the last people he wanted to see.

The only positive was that Justin wouldn't be home for a few hours and eh didn't plan on Lindsay sticking around that long. Lindsay smiled when he approached her. "Hey Brian, I was hoping I'd catch you here."

"I live here." Brian moves around her to go open the door. "Of course if you camped out in front of my door you'd see me." He leaves the door open so that she can follow him in. Even if he was still mad at her for all her snide comments about his not being fit for fatherhood. Or even worse, what she said about Justin when he wasn't even there to defend himself.

"I can't believe it's been so long since we've talked." She smiles as she looks around the room at all of Justin's things interspersed with Brian's. "I don't think I've ever seen you let the loft get this cluttered." She remarks.

"Lindsay, what do you want?" Brian stops her before she can continue on making small talk.

"I actually did want to talk to you about something." She nervously folds her hands together. "I was hoping you'd reconsider being the sperm donator for me." She rushes the words out.

"You can't be serious." He turns to her incredulous at her audacity. "Why would I?"

"Please Brian, I really want a child and before you say it I don't want anybody else. I want my baby to know its father." She pleads through her voice.

Brian could tell how much she really wanted this and he could understand that too, but he couldn't do what she wanted. "Lindsay, I'm not going to change my mind so will you stop asking me." He says annoyed at having to tell her yet again that he wasn't going to father a child for her.

"You were going to do it before Justin had to go and get pregnant. Why is it any different now?"

"First off it wasn't because Justin was pregnant that I didn't want to. I didn't think it would be such a good idea having me as the father with the way Mel feels about me. I grew up in a household where my parents hated each other. I would never do that to my kid. Second, the way you treated Justin, just dismissing him as a part of my life and any future children I have lives opened my eyes to how you would treat him. He would be a much a part of their lives as me. Third, I don't want to be a part time dad. And what would any child we have think when they can't stay with me when my other kids with Justin can? It wouldn't be fair. Have you thought of any of that?" He stops his speech that he had worked out since the last time Lindsay brought up the subject. He just never thought he would have to use it. "Wouldn't it just be a lot easier to have an anonymous donor?"

"You know for not liking Mel too much, you sound just like her." Lindsay storms off angry, but not ready to give up on her dream just yet.

Brian had a feeling this wasn't over yet too. He had a bad feeling about how far Lindsay would go to get what she wanted. He knew how she was used to get everything she asked for. This was something though he couldn't back down on.

Brian returned from work late for the third time that week. It seemed he had a lot of catching up to do with the other junior execs gunning for the next promotion. His absence left many of them thinking he could easily be overlooked for a better position. They didn't have the kind of obligations Brian now had and he knew it would only become harder as time went on. He was unsure of whether or not he would be discriminated against since he was starting a family. That meant he wouldn't be able to put everything into his work, he'd be distracted. Now he had to do all he could to reestablish his place.

When he walked through the door he wasn't all that surprised to see Justin asleep on the couch. Everyday that he had come home Justin would either be already asleep or still working at the diner. When he got home he always just wanted to take a shower and go to sleep. Even though they lived together, Brian felt



like he never saw the blond. The only time they had together was in the mornings before Brian went to work and Justin to school or an early shift at the diner. Then it was trying to rush to get ready for a long day for both of them. Brian was really missing his partner and he was right there in the same room.

He went into the bathroom and took a shower. After changing into his casual clothes he went and woke Justin up to move him to the bedroom. He knew that he would have a backache if he slept there all night. Plus he wouldn't be able to sleep well without him in bed with him. "Hey Jus." He says softly trying to wake him as gently as he could.

Blue eyes fluttered open to slowly focus on his face. A little smile turned up his mouth. "You're back." He says stretching out the dormant muscles. "I fell asleep." He explains what was obvious.

"You've been doing that a lot lately." Brian remarks helping Justin to sit up.

"Tired I guess."

Justin was about to stand up, but Brian sits down next to him, holding his hand to keep him there. "You're overdoing it. This can't be good for the babies. You saw what happens when you get too stressed. "

"I'm fine." Justin argues not liking where this was going.

"No you're not, you're exhausted. I don't think you should continue working at the diner." Brian thought it was the only option. He wasn't going to let Justin quit school and if he kept wearing himself out like he was, that would be the end result anyways.

Justin shakes his head. "Brian, I have to work." He argues.

"Why? You don't have to work there. I make enough to take care of both of us." Brian tells him pleading with his eyes for Justin to agree with him that this is best. "And we never see each other anymore. I know it's partly my fault for the long hours I work, but you're always sleeping or at work when I'm here."

"I don't want you to always take care of me."

Brian turns in his seat resting on his leg so he's eye to eye with Justin. "But it's my job to take care of the babies you're carrying as it's yours. Don't you think you should do everything you can for them?" He knew it was a dirty move bringing the babies into it, but it was the last card he had to play. "It isn't like you will be working and going to school once they are born. You'll never see them."

Brian watched as Justin took it all in. He could tell the blond hadn't thought about that beforehand. "Well I guess not." He finally agrees. "You're right about the diner. I don't have time for my art anymore and I'm always worn out from working there." He pauses and looks up at Brian. "And I miss you, a lot." Brian pulls him to him to wrap his arms around him. "I tried to stay awake until you got home but I fell asleep."

Brian presses a kiss to his hair. "I know I'm working a lot, but you have to in order to get noticed and get the good accounts. As soon as I catch back up I'll cut back on how long I stay at the office." He hadn't planned on saying that, he hadn't even thought about what his work schedule meant to Justin. He only was thinking of what he wanted and what he thought was best for Justin. He was still learning he would have to make changes to his life too.

"I'll put my notice in at the diner." Justin maneuvers himself so that he's resting with his head on Brian's chest while he stretched out on the sofa. "Is this okay?" He asks getting comfortable.

Brian nods. It was perfect. He had his blond back where he belonged.

Chapter Fourteen

Justin lay with his head resting on Brian's chest. It was early still and Brian was still asleep, but he had woken up early and was just content to lay curled up to the man he loved. Everything had fallen into place once they had their talk about his over working. After putting in his notice at work, Justin felt relieved to not have that to worry about. Debbie wasn't happy to see him go, but understood why he was doing it. Now that he was only going to school he was feeling much better. He no longer felt exhausted all the time and needing to sleep whenever he had a minute at home. Justin liked that he was up when Brian came home and they could have dinner together like a normal couple. It were these moments that really solidified for Justin that they were truly together.

Brian began to move under his head so he knew his peaceful moment was over. They would soon have to get ready for a day apart from each other, but first they had an appointment with their doctor. They had made the earliest appointment so that they both could go together before school and work. Arms tightened around him signaling to Justin he was indeed awake. Justin tilts his head up to give Brian a kiss good morning. Brian's hands move down to feel over his protruding belly. Everyday it was getting bigger. Justin was amazed at how fast his waistline was growing. He didn't expect to get this big so fast, but since it was twins he figured he would get twice as wide. That thought wasn't settling too well with him. He had always been thin and he felt uncomfortable with his new size. His biggest worry was that Brian would find him too disgusting to look at.

Brian kisses the side of his head. "You're thinking too much." He says into his hair. "What would you have to think so hard about this early?"

"You." He smiles up at him his sunshine smile. "We could find out what sex the babies are today." Justin brings up steering himself from his previous thoughts. "What do you think?"

"I think it's your decision. I'll go with whatever you want." Brian says while rubbing his stomach.

Justin sighs in annoyance. "I want to know how you feel about it. Cant you just give me your honest opinion?"

"Fine, I'd rather not know. There's little in life still a mystery." He gives him the truth.

"What if I had decided to find out then you wouldn't have gotten what you wanted." Justin points out.

"What I want is for you to do what you wanted. I just told you my opinion."

"You always have to be so difficult." He says sitting up dislodging Brian's arms from around him.

Brian grabs him back and pulls him on top of him. "Are you mad at me?" He playfully tickles his sides.

"No." He shouts laughing. "No." He gets lose of Brian's hold and runs to the shower followed by the other man.

After having only enough time for a mutual hand job in the shower and a quick breakfast, they found themselves waiting for their doctor to see them. Brian looked around the exam room slowly becoming very familiar with sitting in rooms like this one. He had no idea how much time he would have been spending in doctors offices when he first found out Justin was pregnant and he wasn't even there for every visit. The number of appointments seemed to double since Justin's hospital stay. They had both known that they would be going more than if Justin was only pregnant with one baby, yet this was not what they imagined.

While Justin had his exam, Brian clenched his fist just on the verge of wanting to punch something or someone. He just couldn't get over having someone else touch his boyfriend. He had never remembered being jealous before, maybe a little envious when he was a kid of all the other kids with happy families, but not jealous. He never had anything worthy enough to be jealous. That was until Justin came into his life

then he turned into this thing he barely recognized anymore. It wasn't a bad change mostly, just a very different life than he ever imagined he'd have.

Soon they were looking at the image of their babies on the monitor. It was amazing at how much they had changed and grown since the last time they saw the babies. "Do you want to know the sex, I can tell you right now."

Justin looks back at Brian before looking back at the doctor. "No." He says shaking his head. "We want to be surprised." Justin thought about it and there was something he did want to know. "Are they the same? I mean two boys or two girls?"

"They're the same sex." The doctor tells them not giving anything else away. Justin smiles softly as the exam is concluded. "The babies are both very healthy and growing right on schedule."

Brian sighs in relief. He was feeling worried that Justin's stress would have affected the twins, but he hoped that they contained it in time. "That's great."

Justin sat up on the exam table. "Am I supposed to be gaining so much weight?" He looks down, but the loose gown hid his growing belly.

"Now that you're halfway through your second trimester you'll be gaining weight and growing much quicker than before. You won't gain much more than if you were having a single pregnancy." After going through their questions, they were ready to go.

Justin finished getting dressed as Brian folded the papers given to him. "Can you believe it? We're going to have either two boys or two girls."

"If he told us otherwise we would have known both sexes." Brian points out the flaw in his little plan.

"I didn't think of that." He admits. "Do you think he lied so we wouldn't know?"

Brian shakes his head. "I don't think they are supposed to lie about that if you ask." He says standing with him. He checks his watch and sees they need to go if Justin would make his class. "We've got to go."

When Brian got home, Justin was sitting on the couch with his sketchpad open on his lap. He smiled up at Brian before going back to his work. He didn't take it personally knowing how into his work Justin got. It was luck enough that he even got some kind of acknowledgement. While walking past the couch, he bent down and gave him a kiss on the top of his head then proceeded to the bedroom. After work he liked to take a shower to wash away the day so he can forget about his accounts until the next day. Most nights he's able to do that, but he always brought home work in case inspiration struck or he wanted to get a lead on the other execs.

Brian changed into jeans and a tank top leaving his feet bare just like he always did when he was home. Going over to the fridge he wasn't surprised to see they didn't have much food in it. They hadn't had time to do any shopping lately and the way Justin ate, especially lately, had them going through food more rapidly than they could restock. Brian resigned himself to making a shopping trip this weekend, but until then they'd just have to sustain themselves on takeout and eating at the diner. He went back over to Justin with the phone. "Have you eaten yet?" He asks him.

"I had a sandwich a couple of hours ago, but I'm getting kind of hungry again." Justin says giving him his full attention now that his sketch was done.

Brian didn't know why he asked. He knew what Justin would say. "Of course you could. Anything in particular you want?"

Justin perked up getting to choose. "Chinese. I want that noodle stuff and sesame chicken. Oh and rice." Brian didn't make any other comments just went and put in the order. He never knew what would upset his partner these days. He knew it wasn't Justin's fault that being pregnant was making him emotional, but he still avoided the mood swings at all costs.

After dinner, they sat together on the couch deciding to watch a movie rather than go out. Another of firsts that Brian was finding he actually enjoyed. Never before would he have admitted that he would like just staying home doing absolutely nothing. What made it even better was having a cute blond that he could admit to loving in his arms as they watched the movie. This was the most shocking to his system that he liked the act of cuddling and the thought didn't automatically send him to the nearest nameless trick.

Justin scooted around against his chest shifting to a new position resting his head on Brian's chest. The brunet's hands moved unconsciously to rub his partner's belly. He couldn't get enough of touching the bulge there. Justin put his hands over Brian's moving them with his. "Is everything okay Brian? You've been quieter than usual tonight?" Justin brings up his concerns when the movie was over. He was falling asleep, but first he wanted to know what was up with the older man.

"I've just had a lot to think about." He should have known his vague answer wouldn't please his ever curious lover.

"What about? Maybe I can help." He suggests. Brian smiles ruefully at how young he sounded just then. He never thought Justin was too young because of how mature he was, but sometimes he couldn't escape the reality of him actually still being a teenager.

"I don't think so." Brian dismisses him only Justin wouldn't be so easily set aside. ""Can you take away this guilt I have inside me?"

That got Justin immediately sitting up. To think that Brian was regretting anything was too much of a shock. "What happened?"

Brian sighs knowing that he was going to have to learn to talk to Justin. He wasn't used to anyone being interested in how he felt or worried about the things that bothered him. It was only prudent that he not shrug this off as nothing. Justin genuinely cared about him. If he shut him out too much he knew he would lose the blond. "Lindsay..." He begins, but that was all he needed to say for Justin to get it.

"What did she try now?" He asks fed up with her. He hated that she was the one making Brian so miserable when she was supposed to be one of his best friends. "Why won't she just leave you alone?"

"I kind of know where she's coming from. I know how it feels to be a parent now and I can see why she wants it so badly. To her I'm her only chance to have a child. It's just I can't do it." Brian shakes his head free of the thoughts. "I don't think she gets why I don't want to father a child with her. She thinks it's just because of her. You're the only one I want that with. If you went off and had another kid with somebody else I would hate it. It's something intimate between two people who love each other."

Justin was beginning to think this was the most thoughtful thing Brian had ever thought about them when he felt Brian's hand moving down beneath him, but not trying to touch him. "What are you doing?"

"Just trying to see if I still have a dick." He answers seeming to be satisfied. Justin just laughed at him. "I was sounding too much like a lesbian."

"Is it all still there?" Justin asks amused by his actions.

Brian holds his hands out. "I think so, but why don't you look closer."

Justin kisses him before moving down to do just that. He was no longer tired having moved onto desire and want. Soon Brian is pulling him along to the bedroom. After only one bout of lovemaking Justin was sound asleep. While Justin was ready to sleep, Brian was still awake with his thoughts. He found himself having trouble falling asleep lately with too much on his mind. It was thoughts of his future that kept him up most nights. Thinking about fatherhood and worries that he won't be a good dad were always enough to keep him up half the night. Now he had this extra burden to carry thinking he was destroying his friends chances at being a mother had him rethinking everything he had said to Justin. He knew his decision had been right, but he wished there was a way for everyone to get what they wanted.

## Chapter Fifteen

Daphne watched out of the corner of her eye as Brian stood in front of the closet with only a towel around his waist. Water droplets raced down his back from his wet hair from just getting out of the shower. Justin hits her with the couch pillow having caught her watching him from their vantage point on the couch. "Stop staring at the father of my children." He tells her hating that Brian still looked incredibly hot while he was ballooning up. Nobody ever looked at him with the same raw lust they did Brian. Most of the looks were people gawking at him at school being the only pregnant man on campus, at least that he knew of.

"Well if he didn't walk around in only a towel I wouldn't." Daphne defends looking innocent, but Justin looks at her not buying it one bit. "Okay, maybe I look at him fully clothed as well." She admits not feeling ashamed. All she planned on doing was looking. Not that she stood a chance, Brian was completely smitten with her best friend and she knew it.

Brian finally comes down fully clothed in his staying home clothes. "Brian." Justin whines to him. "I'm hungry."

"I thought you and Daphne had pizza." Brian had asked him when he got home if he wanted anything and he had told him they had just had something before he got home. He saw the almost empty pizza box on the counter already knowing Justin ate most of it.

"I don't want pizza." He found that pouting and whining really worked on the older man because he would do anything to get him to stop. "I want ice cream."

"You have two legs, get it." Brian tells him turning on his computer. He decided to get some extra work done with Daphne over.

Justin pouts not getting his way right away. "We don't have the kind I like." He didn't want to cry, but he was about to if he didn't get it. Brian never listens to him. Justin always felt pushed aside when he wanted something. He turns back to Daphne. "He got me fat free ice cream. That's not what I wanted. He hates that I'm fat."

"That's not why I got fat free. I just grabbed one. It happened to be fat free." Brian defends himself hearing Justin's accusations. He gets up and goes to the freezer to get the tub of ice cream and a spoon bringing it to the hormonal mess that used to be his Justin.

Justin takes it and looks at the ice cream confused. "Where did this come from?" It was the kind he liked that wasn't in the freezer earlier.

"I stopped and picked it up on my way home." Brian explains like it was no big deal. Then he looked down and saw Justin's bottom lip trembling and the blond trying to hold back tears. "It's not what you want." He felt like going crazy wasn't too far from where he was at that moment.

"No it is. I just got mad at you and you got me my ice cream." The tears gave out pooling down his cheeks.

Brian moves around the couch to sit beside him and hold him as the tears ride themselves out. "Jus, don't cry. It's just ice cream." He runs his fingers through his hair trying to soothe him.

"I don't deserve it." He hiccups into Brian's shoulder. Daphne looks on never seeing her friend break down so easily and over something so silly.

Brian moves back as Justin's crying starts to subside. He wipes away the tears with the pads of his thumbs. "You deserve anything you want. I know its tough being pregnant. I'll do anything to make it easier including getting every type of ice cream the store has until you're happy." Justin smiles a little at that, pleased Brian realizes what he's going through. "Okay now?" Justin nods as Brian stands. He bends and kisses the top of the blond head before going back to his work as Justin dug into his treat, his mood shifting to content.

"You're a little psycho." Daphne remarks not quite sure how to react.

"Shut up." Justin says with the spoon still in his mouth making it come out mumbled.

Daphne takes this as a regular occurrence and ready to pass it off as such. It was then that she was aware of how little they see each other if she didn't know about his strange behavior. "It's too bad you can't come with us for spring break." She never went on a traditional spring break before and really would have liked to have her best friend with her.

"There's no way Brian would ever let me go anywhere he couldn't police my every movement." Justin says upset with Brian again. "He never takes me with him when he goes out anymore."

"I could if you didn't go to bed by ten o'clock each night." Brian says not looking up from his computer screen.

"Stop listening to my private conversation."

Brian actually laughs at that. "I would if it wasn't five feet from me." He remarks. "I can't help but hear it. Would you prefer if I wore headphones?" Daphne laughs with him making Justin angrier.

"You just use that as an excuse. I would stay up if I thought you would actually want to be seen with me. You don't like having your pregnant boyfriend around cramping your style. God forbid if anyone even knew you had a boyfriend." His voice raises to just below yelling at him.

"I don't even go out much anymore and if I do its just to see the guys. You know I don't go out to hook up with anyone." Brian was getting upset with him too.

Daphne knew she had to diffuse the situation before it got out of hand again. "So what are you doing over break?"

Justin crossed his arms over his stomach reminding Daphne of when they were younger. He would do that exact thing when he wasn't getting his way. "Nothing."

"Nothing?" Brian questions. "I'm taking you shopping."

"For the babies. That's a wild time we'll have at babies-r-us." Justin snarks at him then goes back to pouting.

"You're the one who has been bugging me to go."

Justin turns to him with outrage all over his face. "I asked one time when you were planning to go. That does not entail bugging you." He corrects him. "And you love shopping no matter what it's for so don't try to sound like you are suffering." Before Brian can say anything he adds a correction of his own. "Sorry, you

don't like grocery shopping which is evident because we never have any food. And don't say I can go myself because I can't haul grocery bags on the bus as the doctor said so and if I did you'd give me a lecture about how I'm not taking care of myself."

"We'd have food if you didn't eat it all." Brian and Daphne start laughing when Justin throws his spoon at Brian and misses by over a foot. Justin looks down upset that he didn't hit him and now he had nothing to eat his food with. "I'd leave now Daphne. After he starts throwing things he gets really cranky."

Daphne decides to take his advice and quickly says goodbye and gets out while she still could. She wasn't worried about them, she'd seen the couple fight and make up within minutes before, although she'd never seen Justin get so emotional about it. If that was what it was like to be pregnant than she hoped she never would be.

After Daphne's gone, Brian shuts down the computer and picks up the thrown spoon bringing it to the kitchen. He continues to tidy up giving Justin ample time to cool down. When he deems enough time had passed he goes and joins Justin on the couch pulling the blond to him. Justin back against the strong body of his partners feeling content again now that Brian was holding him. "Truce." Brian offers. Justin nods getting comfortable. He ends up lying sideways resting his head on Brian's chest. "I didn't know you were feeling so suffocated." He admits rubbing the side of his face into the blond hair.

Justin looks up at him and knows he means it. "I know it's only because you're worried. I'm glad someone is thinking ahead after what almost happened to the babies before."

"We can do something special for your spring break, just not Cancun or wherever Daphne's going."

"I wouldn't have gone anyways even if I wasn't pregnant. It wouldn't have been fun without you. I'd just be missing you." He didn't need to look up to know that Brian was pleased with what he said. It was the truth too. He would just want to be with Brian wherever he went. "Do you think we fight too much?"

"No, the normal amount." He replies wrapping his arms around the blond to rest on his belly. "If we didn't everything would build up and fester to the point we hated each other."

"I want you to take me on a date for our something special during my break." Justin announces taking Brian off guard. "You've only taken me on one date. Then we only went here. It was a great first date, but I live here now."

"That's all you want? A date?" Brian knew he was getting off easy. "And it has to be outside the loft?"

Justin hits him lightly on his leg. "Yes. You still have a week to come up with something."

"I think you think too highly of me. I'm not an expert on dating. I might not meet your expectations." Brian worried that he wouldn't know what to do. He had only chosen the loft the first time since he had no previous experience to go on and thought he'd be most comfortable there. When he doesn't get a response from Justin. He looks down and sees he's fast asleep.

Brian smacks Justin's butt on his way out of the bedroom. "Come on, let's get this over with."

Justin drags his feet following him out. "Why do we have to go today. It's my first day of break." He whines wanting to sleep in like they normally did on Saturdays. He was hoping they could just spend all weekend in bed, but Brian had other plans.

"Because I don't get a week off work." Brian explains slowly. "I already took too much time off ten weeks ago."

"Why can't we wait until tomorrow?"

Brian pulls him into his arms. "We have to go to Debbie's dinner and I already tried getting out of it again, but she's already mad at me and I don't want her mad at you too. I'm only looking out for you."

Justin had a feeling that wasn't all there was to it. "You're not going to leave me there alone are you?" He looks up worried.

"While the thought had crossed my mind, no I won't abandon you to the wolves. I don't think you could handle Lindsay and Michael all by yourself."

"We're not going to be there all day." Justin tried one more tactic to get out of shopping.

Brian shakes his head fervently. He planned to spend the least amount of time as possible involving arriving late and leaving as soon as dinner was over. He would have put in his perfunctory appearance and gotten out relatively unscathed. "This thing might take awhile though."

"Alright, but if I get tired you're going to carry me." He says sitting down to put his shoes on. Brian knew better than make a crack about him being too big to carry lest he get a crying or angry Justin for the rest of the day. Justin sits up after taking too long tying his shoes. "Do you know how hard it is to tie your shoes when you're pregnant." He states knowing it would only get harder the farther his belly extended.

"I have no clue." And he was glad for that.

Walking into the store, they both felt over their heads with baby things. Brian was glad he had the list of all the things recommended they get and also everything in the extras category. He was determined not to be unprepared once the babies arrived. Brian motioned for Justin to get a cart since he didn't want to be the one to push it. Justin takes a look at the list and his eyes go wide. "That is a lot of stuff."

"It takes a lot to care for a baby and we need enough for two." Brian says just throwing things in the cart when he sees them.

Justin stops him suddenly when he sees the cart half full with stuff they didn't even need. "Brian you can't just throw things in. You have to make sure they are for newborns."

"Well if it's not right then they can grow into it." Brian reasons.

"What if everything we get they have to grow into and we have nothing to take care of them in the mean time." Justin makes him realize. "We need help." He says defeated.

Brian pushes the cart away and gets an empty one starting over. "It's not difficult, just take the time and look at what you're putting in the cart." Justin opens his mouth to tell him it wasn't him, but Brian walks away.

After they started shopping again, it got easier and Justin was finding he was actually enjoying shopping for the first time in his life. He kept picturing using the baby things with his twins. Soon they have all they needed to get for now. Since they didn't know whether they were having boys or girls, they only got enough close for when they are first home. It was easier to just get something neutral and then go back later. It wasn't like they wouldn't have to anyways because they were bound to need more of something.

Brian had to take all the bags and large boxes up to the loft since Justin fell asleep in the car on the way back. He didn't want him lifting the heavy things anyways, but he could have gotten the bags. After taking Justin up first, he spent a good deal of time loading the elevator a few times before everything was inside



and he was worn out. He shuts the door once it's all inside only to see that the blond was up looking for lunch in one of the bags he brought in.

Justin looks over to Brian staring at him. "What, its time for lunch." He shrugs sitting down.

"You let me bring in everything when I thought you were going to sleep."

"You can't leave it all in front of the door. That's a fire hazard." He points out to him with a smug smile.

"Where am I supposed to put it?" He looked around the loft and for the first time he thought it was too small. Where was he going to put two cribs and still keep the place looking sleek. He pictured two babies crawling all over his hardwood floors with sticky fingers. How would his white furniture survive bottles and sippy cups? He was about to have a break down just imagining his loft getting destroyed.

"Just put it in the corner." Justin had finished setting everything out on the table along with plates and utensils. "Are you going to eat with me?"

Brian felt too sick to eat. "I'm not hungry anymore." He started to push the boxes with the cribs in them toward the area where his television was always kept. Now he had to move it somewhere else along with his arm chairs. This was the only area he really thought they could fit all the new stuff they bought today.

Justin got up and helped him move everything. "What is it?" He knew something was up to change his attitude so fast.

Brian considered not telling him, but it wouldn't accomplish anything if he kept his concerns from him. "I was just realizing how different the loft is going to be once the babies are born. All my white furniture." He sighs heavily.

Justin hugs him from behind, pressed close to him so he could get his arms tight around him. "We'll be careful on the furniture." He promises.

Before he can say anything he felt the movement at his back. He turns around amazed feeling his back where the movement was. "The kid kicked me."

Justin smiles already having felt it for a while. He forgot Brian couldn't before. "He or she heard your whining. I don't think they like that."

Brian puts his hand to the middle of Justin's stomach feeling another movement. Justin takes his other hand and puts it to where the other baby is kicking him. "How long have you felt this?" He couldn't keep the smile off his face feeling his children moving for the first time.

"About a month." He loved that they could share it now. "I didn't tell you so you wouldn't get jealous you couldn't feel it too."

"You're the one who has to carry them. It's only right that you feel them first." He couldn't believe how much movement was going on inside his partner. "Wow, they really move a lot. How do you sleep with that going on?"

Justin shrugs. "You get used to it. They're hungry for their lunch now and letting me know."

"Do babies really do that because they are hungry?"

"I have no clue. I was just trying to get you to come eat." Brian rolls his eyes but follows him to the table none the less.

"Come on, we have to go in." Justin says pulling Brian with him up the sidewalk. He would be surprised if dinner wasn't already over with how late they were leaving home. Then Brian was reluctant to enter the house he used to call his safe place. Now it was the place where he tried to avoid. If it wasn't for wanting to see Deb and Vic he probably would. It wasn't their fault that Michael and Lindsay were acting as they were. Brian had been optimistic about Michael getting over himself and supporting him after he helped him when Justin was in Chicago, but he was still unyielding when it came to accepting Justin. Then there was the Lindsay he never knew existed. She had always been so reasonable with him before and now she turned into the obsessed person who wouldn't hold back anything to getting what she wanted.

The only thing he could hope for now was that they leave Justin out of it. As soon as they walk in, they get lit into. "I didn't think you two were going to show and without calling." Debbie says loudly from the table. They take off their coats and enter the kitchen. "My god Justin, you look like you've doubled in size since the last time we saw you." Debbie says when she gets a good look at him.

Justin and Brian notice at the same time that the only open chairs are across from each other. Brian decides to forgo an outburst by taking the one between Michael and Ted and leaving Justin to sit between Mel and Emmett, most likely the safest seat to sit in. He could just hear Michael's whining if he didn't sit by him. He was pretty sure that Michael purposefully let the seat next to him vacant. "Sorry we're late." Justin announces to the whole table.

"What was so important that you couldn't be here?" Lindsay asks still angry with him Brian could see.

"Fucking." Ted mutters but so everyone could hear.

"Not that you would know much about that." Was the anticipated response from Brian.

Justin kicks Brian under the table for implying that was why they were late. Maybe it was true, but they didn't need to know. "It was my fault. I fell asleep." Which he had done as well.

"That's okay honey, you need to get all the rest you can get." Emmett pats Justin's shoulder like he understood.

"Brian, are you coming to Babylon tonight?" Michael asks never getting a clue as Brian hadn't gone with him in a while. It wasn't that he didn't enjoy still going, that was who he was once upon a time before a certain blond stumbled into his life. He was sure they would be going there tonight if Justin could, but since he couldn't Brian knew it wouldn't be much fun without him. Somehow Justin became what Michael used to be for him. Now it is Justin he wanted to spend all his time with even if it's just staying home.

Justin surprised him though. "I want to go."

"No one was inviting you." Michael snares at him.

"It doesn't matter, he's not going." Brian says with finality.

"Just for a little while." Justin wouldn't give up. He was tired of being left behind. "I miss dancing." He knew he didn't need Brian's approval, but it would be easier if he had it.

"Oh let the boy have some fun." Emmett says. "We'll all look out that he doesn't get into trouble." Michael didn't like being included in the we, but if it was the only way to have Brian with them was to also have Justin, then he would have to take it. He could just show Brian what he was missing getting himself into the arrangement he was in.

Brian sighs resigned to having to go along with it. "Fine, but we're not staying long."

Lindsay speaks up then. "If it was me who was pregnant, I wouldn't take those kinds of risks." She puts on a fake smile for Justin. Brian takes a deep breath. Now Lindsay was harassing Justin too.

Justin looks down ashamed that he was putting himself and his own fun above the safety of his children. Debbie though wasn't letting it happen. "Nonsense. I worked everyday up until Michael was born and he's just fine." She corrects Lindsay. "Sunshine, you deserve a night out too."

Vic sat back taking in all the animosity going on in one simple dinner. The whole family was in the cross fire of what really came down to petty jealousy. He wasn't the only one worried looking around the table. Mel looked uncomfortable with the way Lindsay was acting trying to get Brian to donate sperm for their child. Vic was sure she was just as surprised as him to see this side of her. Then there was Emmett who was constantly having to diffuse Michael's rude comments. And Ted who really didn't know what to say, but his loyalty to Michael was almost as evident as his long time crush on the man. But it was Brian that got most of the shit thrown at him. They all assumed Brian would fulfill their needs and when he can't they get angry. This wasn't a family anymore and it had the chance of breaking apart. He knew he would need to talk to Debbie about the situation.

When dinner is over, the group splits off in different directions. Mel and Lindsay head home as the men head to Woody's until Babylon opens. Before going in, Brian holds Justin back. "Are you sure you can handle this. If you're tired we can go. You don't need to prove anything."

"I'm just tired of being at home all the time. We never go out and I know you miss it even just a little."

Brian rolls his lips in his mouth considering. "Alright, lets go." He leads him up the stairs and to a table the guys are already at near the pool tables. Brian goes to get drinks for everyone giving Emmett a warning to watch Justin. He didn't need to say anything, Emmett understood. He comes back with beers for everyone and a coke for the blond. He looks between Michael and Justin and was pleased to see they weren't fighting, so he reasoned Michael kept his comments to himself.

"Lets play a game, Brian you and me against Emmett and Ted." Michael stands ignoring Justin being there.

"I'll just watch then." Justin props leans against the table to get a good view of the game.

After three games, Brian watches as Justin lays his head on the table, his eyes having trouble staying open. Emmett announces its time for Babylon and Justin sits up trying to shake the sleepiness from his head. When they get out in front of the bar, Brian turns to him. "Want to go home?" Justin just nods knowing he can't fit the exhaustion any longer. He turns to the guys. "You know what, I have an early meeting so we're gonna call it a night." He puts on a fake yawn to strengthen the façade.

Getting them into bed, Brian hated to admit he was actually tired as well. He was getting used to this new life and wasn't used to pull an all-nighter anymore. Justin turned over curling up to Brian's side. "I had fun tonight." He says, sleep muddling his voice. Brian wanted to know who he thought he was with because fun wasn't the word he would use to describe their night. More like a nightmare. He thought maybe Justin really did need to get out more if he thought tonight was fun. He resigned himself to making sure he made that happen.

## Chapter Sixteen

Justin sat sullen at the table eating his breakfast. Today was Saturday and he had to go back to school Monday and still no date. He wondered if Brian forgot all about saying he would take him out or if he considered when they went to Woody's as their date. If he did, than Justin swore he would make Brian miserable for the rest of his pregnancy. He knew he could get away with it by guilting him into thinking he is just as miserable carrying his two children. As he got up to wash his dish he thinks he should have known better than think Brian could be the least bit romantic. After all, he had known him for seven months and he knew Brian didn't like to do things traditionally like date for a while before impregnating

your boyfriend. Justin wondered if he was even considered his boyfriend at the time he got pregnant, he knew he was by the time they found out about it.

The baby's had woken him up early pressing into his bladder making him have to get up to use the bathroom several times to the point where he thought it would just be better to just stay awake since he was bound to be woken again right when he was falling asleep by their kicking. That added to his poor attitude as Brian slept soundly. Justin was so deep in his thoughts that he didn't know Brian was up until he felt him kiss the back of his head.

"What were you doing up so early?" Brian ask going pour himself coffee. "You usually like to stay in bed for as long as you can on the weekend."

"I couldn't sleep." He suddenly pushes his bowl away when Brian sits next to him. "What's in that coffee?" He says making a disgusted face.

"Nothing. You know I like it black." Brian takes a sip trying to figure out what Justin was talking about, he was acting strange this morning.

"The smell is making me sick. I can't even eat." He puts a hand over his nose to block out most of it.

"I drink coffee everyday Justin." He points out.

He stands up suddenly. "Get rid of it." He runs to the bathroom the best he could before getting sick. "Brian, I mean it, I don't want to smell that anymore." He yells from the bathroom. He wouldn't come out until all the coffee was poured down the sink.

"It's a good thing you don't work at the diner anymore." Brian grumbles feeling irritated not having his coffee in the morning. It was his routine and it he had a hard time getting on with the day without that cup of coffee.

Justin slowly comes out making sure that the smell was gone. "I'm sorry for ruining your morning." Justin sits on the couch upset.

"It doesn't matter. Anyways, we don't have time, we need to get going." He says checking the clock. He goes back up the stairs to finish getting ready.

Justin follows him curious of where they have to rush off. "Brian, what's going on?" He asks watching Brian getting dressed.

"Justin, if you're coming then you better get dressed."

Justin didn't know what he was agreeing to, but started getting dressed anyways. "Where are we going?" He asks again only to be ignored as Brian put his wallet in his back pocket.

Brian watches as Justin does the same. "Do you have your ID?" Justin looks at him funny, but nods yes.

"Brian." Justin whines once they find themselves in front of the jeep. "Why won't you tell me where we're going?"

Only once they are in the car does he answer. "We're going on a trip."

"A trip?" Justin smiles while asking. "What kind of trip?"

"The kind where you get on a plane a fly off somewhere."

Justin turns to him excited. "We're going on a plane?" Brian nods. "To where?" Brian hands him their flight plans. Justin's whole face lights up. "New York. I've always wanted to go. They have some of the best art museums in the world."

"I know." Brian might act like he didn't care sometimes, but he always listened to everything Justin had to say.

"Why now?" Justin was confused to his motives.

"You won't be able to fly much longer and a car ride while pregnant doesn't sound too enjoyable." Brian points out. "This might be our only chance to go somewhere together alone for a while after the babies are born." He gives the real reason.

Justin couldn't wipe the smile from his face if he tried. "This is going to be great, just you and me. There always seems to be someone around when we want to be alone." Justin couldn't believe just this morning he thought Brian could never pull off anything like this. "I just can't believe you're doing this. I wouldn't even let you have your coffee." Brian laughs it off as nothing although he could really use that coffee now.

Soon they were at the airport and waiting for their plane to board. Justin couldn't stop talking about all the things he wanted to see. Brian was beginning to wonder if they could fit that much into one weekend. They would definitely have to cut out some of it, but he was sure he would be bringing Justin back if he enjoyed himself as much as he was anticipating.

Justin looked at the tickets again. "First class?" He asks. Brian had told him on the way back from Chicago that he rode first class whenever possible because there was more room for his long legs. The only tickets they could get from Chicago had been coach and Brian complained all the way about his lack of space. If he had waited to leave at a later time they could have gotten better seats, but Brian was too anxious to get out of his mother's house. "I don't think I've ever rode first class."

"Trust me, you'll appreciate the wider seats." Brian tells him.

"Because I'm wide." Justin glares at him.

Brian wished he could take that back hearing it said back to him. "No, I just thought you'd be more comfortable. You won't have people elbowing you in the side or kicking your seat." He tries to backtrack before Justin got upset.

Justin spent a few minutes pouting before putting it all behind him. "Can I have the window seat?"

"You can have whatever you want." Brian promised.

"Brian, look at them." Justin says pointing at a mother and baby across the waiting area from them. "Whenever I see someone with a baby I always think, that will be me soon. I can't wait until I get to hold them and look into their little faces and see a combination of you and me." Brian wonders why this is the first time they really talked about the babies as real. Everything else always involved them being still inside Justin. Maybe now that they could feel them moving around and Justin was growing bigger everyday that it seemed much more real.

Arriving in the city, they first went to the hotel to check in and drop off their bags. Justin had been surprised to find that Brian had packed for him and stowed the bags in the car without him ever being aware. Although he had been wondering where his red sweater was that he wanted to wear today, but he just figured it was with the dirty laundry. Right away Justin wanted to visit all the museums he could in one morning. It was around midday that he slowed down due to exhaustion. The adrenaline had kept him going,

but it wore off when he started to get hungry for lunch. The whole time Brian had dutifully followed behind him as Justin rambled about every piece of art he saw. He seemed to have an opinion on everything.

Justin soon let his hunger be heard as they walked out side. "Brian, when are we eating?" He couldn't keep the smile off his face though that Brian let him hold his hand the whole time they were walking on the sidewalk looking for somewhere they could both agree to eat. Justin couldn't remember Brian ever letting him hold his hand in public. He thought maybe since no one knew them here Brian didn't need to keep up the persona he had in Pittsburgh. Justin knew it was more like Brian didn't want to lose him in a city so crowded it would take hours to find each other again. Still he would enjoy it while it lasted.

Brian practically pulled Justin along after him. He didn't understand that he walked much faster than Justin having longer legs and that Justin was pregnant. He stops when he hears Justin's question. "Pick a place already."

"I thought you were deciding." Justin says annoyed they were wasting time not communicating. He and his babies were practically starving. He didn't think he ever went this long without food, even before he got pregnant. The excitement of being in New York had overruled the voice that told him to eat. Justin notices the hotdog vendor just steps ahead of them. "Hot dogs." Was all he got out already salivating over them. They smelt so good and he was so hungry.

"You are not eating hot dogs off the street." Brian says yanking a reluctant Justin away from them. "Those things are disgusting."

"They looked good to me." Justin watched behind him as the vendor's cart shrunk from his vision.

Brian stops again suddenly. "Here, they sell sandwiches. You can eat those." Only Justin wasn't listening, he was looking next door at the pizza place.

"Brian, pizza."

He shakes his head. "The last two times I got you pizza you said it makes you sick." When Justin was going to say something, he holds up two fingers. "Twice." Justin decides maybe a sandwich did sound good once he got a sell of the pizza when someone was leaving the restaurant. It was almost enough to make him lose his appetite. It made him sad because pizza was always one of his favorite foods.

"Can I get two?" He asks as they stand in line waiting.

"Justin, those sandwiches are big, you don't need two."

"I can eat one now and the other later when I get hungry." Brian sighs, but lets him get whatever he wanted. For some reason he was finding it very hard to say no to the blond lately. When Justin suggested eating outside despite the cool weather, he obliged without giving an argument. He could stand the cold a lot better than Justin so it wouldn't be him getting cold first.

They were walking down the sidewalk when Justin stopped suddenly in front of a store specializing in authentic baby supplies. Just by the display in the window, Justin had to go inside and getting out of the cold for a few minutes didn't seem like a bad idea. Brian wasn't yet comfortable with going into places with baby things all over the place. Stores like these he would never give a second glance to, but Justin always liked looking into each window as they passed. It was the artist eye in him to look at displays. Some had a lot of artistic qualities. Looking around, they saw a few other expectant parents checking out the store. Justin's eye was drawn to a mobile with hand painted animals. They were wooden and maybe even carved by the same person. He could see how unique they were only ever seeing plastic ones in the big department stores. There were only four left. Brian noticed Justin studying them.

"Do you want them?" He asks knowing already the answer. He knew when Justin liked something he would look at it closely, examining every detail.

"They kind of remind me of the one I had when I was a baby." He answers him without really answering the question. Brian took the two that used a lot of green. They had picked out mostly green, yellow, and white as the color scheme for the baby's things since those were neutral colors and work for either boys or girls.

Brian took his hand again and led him to check out after they were done looking. He was finding he liked the way Justin's hand felt in his. He had never felt close enough to anybody to be able to be that open with them. It was a nice feeling flowing through him knowing he had someone who truly loved him for all that he is, not all that he could do for them.

"Are you having twins?" The checkout woman asks noticing everything they picked out was in pairs. Justin nodded excited to tell someone he didn't even know. It still puzzled him why he wanted to tell everyone he saw that he was carrying two babies for the man he loved more than anything. "Twins are just so adorable." She sates ringing them up. "Do you know what you're having?"

"No, we're waiting until they're born." Justin tells her not minding at all talking about his children. Brian just stood back and listened. He wondered if that was all this woman got to do all day. She was surrounded by baby supplies and by expectant parents and those with children already. He didn't think he could stand to work one day in this store. Never being a baby person, he knew it would be different with his own kids, but he wasn't going to fawn over anybody else's. Justin on the other hand had always loved kids and felt right at home discussing them with anybody who wanted to.

After paying, Brian was glad to walk out of there. Walking for a little while with no destination in mind, Justin stops him. "Can we go back to the hotel and take a nap?" He asks zapped of energy. Brian nods and hails a cab to take them back having no clue how to get back themselves. They get a cab immediately. Brian holds the door open for Justin to slide in and then he follows after. "You're really good at that." Justin remarks.

Brian shrugs. "I have many talents that you have yet to see." He pus his arm around the blond as the younger man rests his head on his shoulder ready to sleep anywhere that he can use Brian as his pillow.

After a short nap, which even Brian indulged in, Justin announced he was ready for dinner. Brian was becoming very aware that Justin's appetite was how he told time. It was just unreal how much food someone so small could put away. If he had known how much he ate without seeing him, Brian would have sworn he had to be at least three hundred pounds. Even back at Justin's age he remembered being conscious of his food intake. If he really looked at it critically, he would see he had unhealthy obsession with his weight, but back when he lived at home, it seemed the only thing he had control over.

Justin was surprised to find Brian had packed him some clothes that he'd never seen before. "Brian, what's with this?" He asks looking at his new clothes.

"You keep telling me your clothes don't fit anymore, except, miraculously those damn cargo pants you have in the dozens." He wasn't afraid to let it be known how much he hated those pants. "I picked you up something to wear tonight because you cant where your normal clothes out tonight." Brian explains to him. Justin didn't care much about fashion like Brian so he was happy to wear whatever it was that Brian picked out especially for him. He liked the feeling he got that he was special enough that Brian would take the time and buy something for him without him being there.

When they got to the restaurant, Justin was glad that Brian insisted that he not wear his everyday clothes. He would have felt out of place with all the nicely dressed diners. The place was very nice and Justin could

tell Brian had planned this in advance. This was much better than anything he ever expected him to do. Once they were seated, Justin got the chance to look around the restaurant. It might actually be the nicest one he ever went to. His parents always took them out to nice places, but the upscale places like this they always went with just the two of them. It really made him feel grown up to be sitting at a nice place with his boyfriend.

During dinner, the conversation flowed smoothly. Justin couldn't stop saying how happy he was to be there with him. It made Brian feel like he finally got something right. He was afraid Justin wouldn't like what he had planned, but the day went by fast with them both having a good time. The waiter kept coming back over offering to get them anything they wanted. It was obvious to Justin what he wanted the way he kept looking at Brian, but he acted oblivious to the waiter's advances. It made him feel all the more special to have all that attention focused on him.

Brian watched as Justin's attention was drawn toward the couples dancing in the middle of the room. He had that longing in his eyes he got sometimes when he really wanted something. To Brian nothing was more hetero than dinner and dancing, unless it was at Babylon, but he had a feeling it would make his blonds night even better. He stood and held out his hand for Justin to join him. He knew what he was silently asking and eagerly accepted.

As Brian twirls him around the dance floor, people can't help but watch them. Justin never knew Brian knew how to dance like that only ever dancing with him in Babylon and there he didn't need any fancy moves, it was him that people watched no matter what he did. He knew he would have been envious if he was watching someone else in his place, but now he was the one people were jealous of. He thought for a moment it might all be because he was so desperately in love with him that everything seemed ten times better in his eyes, but he dismissed it when Brian pulled him close and he caught a glimpse of the faces of those watching.

Brian moves his mouth close to Justin's ear. "Does this count as a date then? You said you missed dancing." Justin looked up surprised Brian even remembered him saying that. He would think nothing would surprise him anymore when it came to Brian, the man always knew exactly what he was doing.

Justin nods before setting his head against his chest. "I think this has been the best day of my life." Brian runs his fingers through his hair. He did think it was a good day.

After making love when they got back to the hotel, Justin sat up next to Brian as he lay in the bed. "I never knew you could dance like that." Justin says rubbing his bare stomach. "There's a lot I don't know about you." He says with sudden clarity. They had gotten together so fast and then things got so distracted that they never got a chance to learn things that they couldn't in everyday life.

"You love how mysterious I am." Brian smirks at him. "Life would be boring if you knew everything."

"Yeah, I suppose so." He lays down next to Brian ready to get some much-needed rest. It had been a day full of excitement and he needed to restore his energy for tomorrow. "Thanks for bring me there. It was a lot of fun."

"Does it make up for not going on spring break with Daphne?"

Justin smiled. "It more than makes up. I don't think I would have had so much fun if I had gone with her. We did a lot of things I never got to do before." He yawns against his chest. "Seeing the art up close was amazing."

Brian caressed his hair as he fell asleep. Seeing the happiness in Justin's eyes had been more than worth making a special effort for him. He started to think about coming back again, this time with his children



and seeing the city through their eyes as he did Justin's. Looking forward to the future wasn't so daunting after all.

## Chapter Seventeen

Arriving back in Pittsburgh late Sunday night, Brian and Justin were exhausted. The weekend had been a lot of fun, but also very draining. Brian now knew better than to try to jam a weeks worth of activity into less than forty-eight hours. Justin was especially tired having to share his energy with two other growing bodies. As he crawled into the bed still fully clothed, he was prepared to stay there for the next two days. Brian quickly takes off his own clothes never understanding how Justin could sleep with his clothes on. Sitting on the side of the bed, Brian took off Justin's shoes and socks then pants. Moving forward, he slipped off the jacket with difficulty not having any cooperation from the blond. Finally, he had him down to his t-shirt and underwear and decided that was good enough. Not bothering to take the energy to walk around the bed, he crawled over the slumbering man and pulled the blankets up over them, pulling Justin to him as his final act before joining his lover in sleep.

Waking to the alarm in the morning was pure torture. Brian, with the threat of losing his job on his mind, finally rose to turn the sound off. Justin only buried his face under the pillows. He reminds himself not to go directly to the coffee pot and start brewing a pot and instead changes his intended direction for the bathroom. Starting the water, he heads back to get Justin out of bed. It becomes a stressful situation to get him to stay awake long enough to get him out of the bed. Once that was accomplished, Brian was sure the shower would awaken him the rest of the way. Justin stumbles along in front of him guided by Brian's hands on his shoulders.

When the water hits him, Justin finally wakes up enough to speak clearly instead of the mumbling he had been doing. "Why can't I just stay home today?" Justin whines making Brian feel like his father more than his partner. It was a disturbing thought as he washes the boy's body.

"Because you need to learn how to become a success." Brian tells him washing the blond's hair. He noticed how long it was getting as he rubbed his fingers through it. When they met it had been short, but now he was either growing it out or too lazy to get it cut. Brian was pretty sure it was the latter. He had a sinking suspicion that Justin's mother used to take him to get it cut and now living far away, he had no one to push him to keep up proper grooming procedures. He refused to act like his mommy and he would not take him along to get a haircut. When it started to bother the teen then he'll think enough to do it himself.

Justin turned when Brian led him to wash out his hair. He loved the way that Brian would wash his hair for him. The feel of his lover's fingers in his hair always spread tingles through his body. He was growing his hair out so that Brian would have more to play with when they cuddled. He mentally slapped himself for using the word cuddle even if just in his thoughts. It was a sure bet to turn Brian off. Once the soap was out of his hair, he leans forward to rest his head against Brian's chest. "I'm not really feeling up for school."

"Just finish getting ready and if you still don't want to go, you don't have to." It's not like he could make him go, but if he was all ready to go, it was more likely he would just go along to school like a good boy.

By the time they were set to go, Justin had decided to go to school just like Brian suspected. Justin told him he would take the bus home instead of waiting for him to come pick him up. Some days he liked to stay after to work in the studio he shared with another student. He got most of his schoolwork down there not wanting to make a mess at the loft. When he worked he didn't have the good sense to make sure he wasn't making a mess. His art took over and he couldn't be bothered with not getting paint or charcoal on white furniture. Brian appreciated that he worked in his studio when he was sure it would be messy.

Coming home, Brian was in least surprised to find Justin passed out on the couch with the stereo up loud. He didn't understand how he slept with it on that loud. Switching off the stereo, he took in the sleeping figure of his boyfriend. He really did look young when he slept. There was a very peaceful look on his face. It often came over him when he dreamed about his children. As if on cue, he started to rub his belly in his sleep. Brian couldn't keep the smile off his face watching this. He noticed when the dream must have changed. Brian was about to wake him thinking he was having a bad dream when he heard him softly speak his name. Not knowing if he was up, he waited until he heard it again, definitely not awake. Brian smirked knowing Justin was dreaming about him.

"Brian, you feel so good." Justin's voice softly came out, the desire stopped Brian dead in his tracks. He never heard Justin talk in his sleep before, sometimes he mumbled something, but this was very clear. He knelt down next to the couch not wanting to miss one bit of what was coming out of his blond. As Justin continued to enjoy his dream, Brian looked to see he was hard. Very carefully so as not to wake him, he slid the pants down freeing the erection trapped beneath. As he started to pump it in his fist, he heard moaning coming from the teen deep in his dream. "Yes Brian. I've wanted to fuck you for so long." Brian's hand stopped. He did not hear what he thought he did. "Please don't stop moving, you feel so good inside." Justin panted as he thrust into Brian's stilled hand. Brian backs up not wanting to be part of that fantasy. Suddenly Justin's eyes open and he looks around confused. First to his pants not knowing how they got off, then to Brian realizing how they got off, then back to his pants blushing at the dream he was having. It was one of his favorites made even better by Brian's helping hand. "Why did you stop? I was having a wonderful dream."

"I know." Brian says arching an eyebrow. "Care to share it?"

"Can you go back to doing what you were?" Justin pouts wanting to go back to his dream. "Or better, we can reenact my dream."

Brian shakes his head. "Let's reenact one of mine." He smirks at him knowing exactly what he wanted to do with the blond. He was painfully hard after the little performance Justin was putting on. Justin forgot all about his dream when Brian kissed him. Reality was so much better.

"Hey Jus, come here." Brian calls from his seat at the computer. He smiled seeing the way Justin was waddling over toward him. At seven months, Justin was looking bigger than he ever thought he would get. Brian found it hard to believe someone's skin could stretch that far so fast. Another miracle of life that any of this was possible. Justin comes to stand next to him only to have Brian to pull him onto his lap. He had to scoot his chair back to accommodate the large stomach.

"What is it?" Justin asks curious if Brian actually had something on his mind or if he just wanted him to sit on his knee. Either way he didn't mind as one of Brian's hands kneaded the muscles at the base of his back. That was where it always ached the most.

"I was thinking that we need a new car." Brian states drawing Justin's attention to the computer screen where Brian was looking at different models of cars.

"Why, is there something wrong with the jeep?" He asks turning away from the computer to look at him.

"The jeeps fine. I just know we're going to need another car with the babies and the jeep isn't really equipped for two car seats." Brian tells him. "And I'll feel better if I'm not around you're not taking them on the bus."

"So this will be a car for me to drive?" Justin asks knowing now what he was trying to say.

"Yes. I want to start looking now so you don't have to carry that big art bag all around. It can't be good to have that added stress on your body."

Justin kisses his cheek affectionately. He really loved his man. Not because he was getting him a car, but because he included him in discussion and his obvious care that he's taken care of. "So what are we getting?" Brian clicks on a minivan picture. "Brian, I am not driving a minivan." Justin whines thinking Brian was serious.

"You're right, I might have to be seen in this." Brian continues to look around with Justin right there. "How about this one, it has a third row that you can fold away for extra space." Brian points out.

"That's a big car. Do we really need that many seats?" Justin moves closer to the monitor to get a better look.

"We will when we have more kids." Brian points out.

Justin turns around suddenly to look at him. "You want to have more kids?" He was shocked to hear it, he would have thought Brian wouldn't want anymore.

"We shouldn't discount the idea. If we're not total failures with these two than why not?" Brian shrugged, he also was surprised to find that he wanted more children. It was Justin that enabled him to have the chance to believe he could have the family he never had. He loved the thought of having more babies with Justin. He felt like he and Justin could last for a very long time together and now they had a shared bond that would no doubt to him bring them closer.

Justin beams at him. "I'd have a dozen of your kids if you wanted." He imagined having a house in the country with all their little children running around and them watching over the little ones. He knew it was a little too much of a fantasy, but he could see maybe four or five in their future.

Brian kisses the back of his neck. "A dozen, we'd need a bus."

"What color car are we getting?" Justin's mind drifts back to what they were supposed to be thinking about. "Not black."

"What color do you want?"

"Red, like that one shirt you have that looks so hot on you." Justin loved that color on Brian and driving around in a car the same color would remind him of Brian all day.

Brian aches an eyebrow while he searched for available colors. "You think of the weirdest things. A dozen kids and the color of a shirt." He loved that part of him, he had a way of looking at things that he would never think of.

"Would you still want me if I had a dozen kids?"

Brian pressed his face into the blond hair. "Always."

Justin was thankful for the new car. It made things so much easier getting home than walking o bus stop, waiting for the bus and then walking from the bus to the loft. His whole body was throbbing. His feet hurt, his back hurt, and he was sure the twins were ganging up on him taking turns kicking him and stepping on his bladder. There were a few close calls at school where he didn't think he would make it to the bathroom. It would have been embarrassing to have that happen in his school. It was bad enough that he had to run out of class without explanation several times a day.

Once he got home, he didn't feel like doing his homework, he really didn't feel like doing anything. He really wished Brian were there to hold him because that was the only thing he thought would make him feel

better. He just felt like he wanted to cry all the time now, everything made him upset. He cried wanting Brian to come home and comfort him.

Justin woke up suddenly hearing some noise coming from the living room. The TV was on so he knew Brian was home. He hadn't even realized he had fallen asleep. After making a trip to the bathroom, he sluggishly padded over to where Brian was sitting on the couch and wordlessly snuggled up to him, resting his head on his chest. He sighed in relief when Brian's arm went around to pull him closer.

"What's wrong?" Brian asks softly.

"I feel horrible." Justin murmurs into his chest.

"Maybe we should go to the doctors." Brian suggests worrying it's something serious.

"No." Justin almost cried. "I don't want to move. My body just aches all over."

Brian wasn't convinced. "Are you sure?"

"Yes. I just want you to hold me." He says snuggling into the warmth of the older man's arms.

Brian tightened his arms feeling sympathy for his partner. He didn't think there was anything for him to do to help otherwise he would. "Do you want anything?" Justin shakes his head. "Do you want to watch Yellow Submarine?" He looked down to see the blond head nodding yes. Figuring the tape more than likely was still in the VCR, he reaches for the remote on the coffee table without letting go of Justin. Like he guessed, it was and soon the video played across screen with an audience of one. Brian was too busy worried to pay attention to the film. Justin had been like this for the last couple of days. He missed the smiling Justin being around. He just had to hope it would pass or the doctor could do something for him when they saw him Thursday.

Thursday came quick enough and Brian knew he had to go with the blond to make sure he was taken care of. He was aware of the competence of the doctor or else they would have gotten another, but sometimes you had to make sure they did something. Dr. Murphy does his exam and asks them a few questions. "You're putting too much stress on your body. If you keep going like this then you're going to deliver too prematurely." He says seriously to Justin.

"I don't mean to." Justin felt like he had to defend himself against the chastisement. He wasn't doing anything overly strenuous.

"Sometimes even just the smallest amount of stress can play a big factor in certain pregnancies." He wrote down on his chart then looked back up. "I'm putting you on bed rest. The only time I want you moving around is to go to the bathroom."

"For how long?" He asks feeling like he already knew.

"For the duration of this pregnancy. You have a higher risk to go into labor prematurely since this is a multiples pregnancy." The doctor responds giving the news he dreaded to hear.

"What about his school?" Brian asks.

"He'll have to do whatever he can from home. It really would be a risk to continue to go for both Justin and the babies." Brian made a note of making it possible for Justin to finish the semester at home. There were only three weeks left so he couldn't see the problem.

"What can I do?" Brian asks as Justin sat and digested what the next few months would entail.

"The best thing the partner can do is make him as comfortable as possible and keep the stress levels down." Brian nodded to this already devising of ways to make sure Justin followed the doctor's orders. He could already see him not listening. Brian knew if he was in Justin's position he would not like the thought of being stuck in bed all day for months.

When they got home, Brian got Justin situated in bed right away. Justin didn't argue, what the doctor said about the risk to the babies was enough to make him want to do everything exactly right. He wouldn't put his unborn children at risk because he wasn't doing what he was supposed to.

"Do you want anything? Are you hungry?" Brian fusses over him propping pillows up behind him and pulling the blankets up.

"I'm just a little tired." Justin tells him wanting to take a nap.

Brian frowned, usually the mention of food had Justin listing off what he wanted even if he just ate. He was seeing that maybe he really was uncomfortable. "Do you want me to stay until you fall asleep?" Justin nods cuddling up to him when Brian laid next to him. Brian rubbed his stomach as the blond fell asleep. He could feel the babies moving around inside as he moved his hand. He just knew they were going to be alright, all three of them. They had to be.

## Chapter Eighteen

Justin was bored. He was alone and sitting in bed having nothing to do. He had completed all the work from his classes the first day. No one was available to come over and keep him company. Brian had been cutting back at work, but that still left at least eight hours of the day he wasn't there. Daphne came by everyday on her lunch break from class, but that was only an hour to break up his long, empty day. To make use of the time he had started reading books on taking care of the babies, but it got tedious really quickly. So instead he looked for names that he would like for the twins. He hated the idea of cutesy names that sounded alike for twins. He was sure Brian was even more against it than him. Not being sure yet what they were having, it took up more time to look at both boy and girl names, which he was grateful for.

When Brian did come home, he always brought dinner with him. He called when he was about to leave work and see what he wanted and always brought it back for him no matter what it was.

After dinner, Brian decided to get a start on putting together all the things they got for the babies. He started with what he was sure they would need first. The car seats were already in the new car even though it was a few months away. They never knew what going to happen. They both knew that having twins might mean having early labor and with the need for bed rest, Brian wanted to be ready no matter what.

When Justin heard cursing and things banging together loudly, he was too curious to see what Brian was doing. Getting out of bed for anything besides the bathroom was strictly prohibited, but he was just moving to the living room and he could lay down on the couch. The site of Brian surrounded by a clutter of tools and the crib in pieces was hilarious to him. Anything would be he thought at that point. "Hey, you're supposed to be in bed." Brian says when he hears the laughter in front of him.

"I'm bored. I'm just going to watch you from the couch." Justin says laying on the uncomfortable sofa turned so he could watch everything Brian was doing. "You're not very good at that." Justin points out as Brian tries to distinguish which piece the instructions were talking about. "Why don't you just get the handyman to help you."

"I can do it myself. Its not that difficult." Brian gripes spreading the directions out and started putting together the crib. After two hours and Justin falling asleep watching him, Brian had managed to put both together. Justin woke as Brian moved them to where they were going to keep them.

Justin stretches his arms above his head. "You finished it, both of them." He smiles looking at the finished cribs. They were white of course, but he liked them. Brian sat down next to Justin pulling him to lay back against him. He runs his hand up and down Justin's stomach. It was one of his little pleasures to feel him there. He found it made him even more attracted to the blond knowing it was his children he was carrying.

"See, I told you I could do it. Our kids can rely on me." He says from behind him.

"I never doubted that." Justin knew he didn't have to ever worry about that. He knew Brian wouldn't ever let them down.

At the Novotny -Grassi residence, Vic was sitting down with Debbie trying to come up with a solution to their problem. "I don't know if there's anything we can do." Debbie says to her brother while they sat at the kitchen table.

"I can't believe this is coming from you sis. You think you can solve anybody's problems even if it's not your business." Vic points out. "I think the solution is simple."

"And what is that?" Debbie smacks her gum tilting her head to hear his solution.

"We need to give them what they want." Vic folds his arms done.

"Maybe you need a rest. The problem is they can't get what they want."

"What they think they want, we'll just give them what they need and want." Vic explains. "Michael needs a boyfriend so he'll forget about Brian. We all know that would never happen and if it did never work. Lindsay and Melanie want a baby, but Lindsay only wants Brian's. We need to convince her what a horrible idea that is now that Brian has his own children. Ted needs a twink of his own so he'll stop pining after Michael and he won't be jealous of Brian anymore. Emmett's not a problem, he just needs something to do with his life."

"That all sounds great, but that is a lot to do." Debbie knew between the two of them they could accomplish it. "What about Brian and Justin?"

"There's not much we can do for Justin being cooped up all day besides visiting. And Brian I think for once has his life together, he just needs to stop wanting to please everyone."

"Okay, let's start a plan who do we handle first?"

"Michael, he might be the hardest, but once he's out of the way things will seem less daunting."

"Alright. I know just who to set him up with." They both had smiles on their faces knowing their family was going to stay together.

Justin heard the loud knocking on the door interrupting his nap. Daphne had just left and would be in class by now so he knew it wasn't her. Whoever it was probably wanted to see Brian although they should know he worked during the day. Walking to the door, he knew if Brian knew he was walking around so much he would strap him to the bed like he threatened. He was surprised when opening the door to see Lindsay. She hadn't been around in a while after Brian gave her the firm he would never give her sperm speech. "Brian's not here." Justin tells her before she says anything.

"Actually I wanted to see you." Lindsay states twisting her purse handle in her hand. Justin was surprised to see her so on edge.

Not wanting to be rude to Brian's friend, he invited her in. He was also curious why she wanted to see him. Ever since he had gotten pregnant she barely spoke to him. "I have to sit or I'd offer you something. I'm supposed to be on bed rest." He explains.

"I'm sorry for making you get up then." She was being too polite as she sat across the couch from him.

"You wanted to talk to me." He prods.

"Oh yes, I wanted to talk to you about this thing between Brian and me. You see I've been friends with Brian since college and we've always been rather close since then. I hate how things have been between us." She pauses to take a deep breath. "Well Brian told me the reason he won't be the father for my child is because of you. I don't think it's fair that he only knew you for a month before you got him to father your children. I really want this baby with him."

Justin could hardly get his head around what she was saying. "You think just because you've known him longer than you should get to have his sperm?" His voice raised in outrage. "If we followed your logic than just because Michael has known him the longest than he should get to date him."

"That's not what I mean." Lindsay tried to explain but Justin wouldn't let her.

"You want to talk about fair. What I don't find fair is you hounding my partner to have your children when I'm about to have his. Or fair that you could even sit here and say that I'm meaningless to him because we haven't known each other for years. I love him more than anything and he loves me. I'm going to have his twins soon and you never will. I'm just so sick of this. You're so obsessed with Brian that I'm beginning to think you want more than just his sperm. Well you can't have him. He's mine." Justin sits back not believing he actually said all that, but it needed to be said.

"That's what you think. I'm happy to settle for just his sperm because I know that he won't ever be able to live the kind of life you want him to. Right now it's all new, but once the babies start cramping his life he won't want anything to do with you or your brats." Lindsay gets up and storms out of the loft bang the door shut on her way out.

Justin knew he couldn't believe anything she said. He knew how Brian really felt, but just hearing her say it worked him up and he knew it was added undue stress to his body. He had just gotten comfortable in bed when he got his second unexpected visitor. Pushing the blanket back off, he walks slowly to the door. If he wasn't expecting Lindsay, he was definitely not expecting him.

"Dad?"

Craig stood speechless before him. "Your mother told me you were living here, but she didn't tell me you were..." He gestures with his hand at his stomach.

"Pregnant." Justin finishes for him. "I see why she wouldn't. You would be arguing with her."

Craig runs his hand back over his head. "I thought you would be over this gay thing by now."

"It's not something to get over. It's not a disease, it's just part of who I am. I'm sexually attracted to men."

"Justin, Christ, I don't want to hear that." Craig looked around the loft from his vantage point not able to look his son in the eye after hearing that.

Justin rolls his eyes. "Dad, I'm pregnant, obviously I'm sleeping with a man. I live here with my boyfriend." He points out. "What did you come here for anyways? To see if I'm dating a girl?"

"I thought you were living with that Daphne girl?" He could immediately tell this place wasn't a college student's apartment. Everything was too expensive.

"I was, then I met Brian." Justin asks again what he wanted.

"I was hoping we could work things out. I'm in town for business and I thought I'd come see you."

"I'm fine with working things out as long as you accept that I'm gay and you accept Brian." Everything else wouldn't matter then, he knew Brian wouldn't be happy about his father's sudden appearance.

"Who is this Brian, some pervert whose got you convinced he loves you?"

"He's not a pervert." Justin felt a pain in his abdomen, but it went away quickly enough. He'd been having discomfort since Lindsay left. "He's twenty five and he does love me and our bab...ies..." He doubles over in pain.

"Justin, what is it." Craig was near a panic.

"Dad, it hurts." He cries. "I'm not supposed to be out of bed." He panics too thinking Brian was going to be mad at him. When another pain shoots through him, he knows its not good. "I need to call Brian."

"I think I better take you to the hospital." He puts out a steadying hand when it looked like Justin was going to fall over.

"Yes, hospital." Justin groans.

"I'll have to call an ambulance. I took a taxi here."

"I have a car, downstairs. My keys and phone are on the counter." Craig leaves him long enough to get them and then leads him to the car Justin described. Craig didn't have time to question the existence of the car. On the way to the hospital, Justin dialed Brian. He could only get his secretary. He told her he didn't care what Brian was doing, she had to tell him to meet him at the hospital or he would fire her.

When they get to the hospital, Justin is immediately set up in a room and his doctor is called. "Can I get you anything?" Craig asks forgetting all about not approving of his lifestyle and immediately worrying about his son.

"I need Brian." He cries. He was scared and hurting and all he wanted was Brian. He was also worried that the man would be angry at him for not following the doctor's instructions. He just wouldn't be able to look him in the eyes if something was wrong. It hurt too much for nothing to be wrong.

"I'm sure he's coming." He assures him hoping he was right. He had been this anxious when his wife was having their children too. He just didn't do well with intense situations. He hoped this Brian would show up.

Brian showed up at the front desk out of breath. He raced over here barely heeding to any traffic signs, only when he was forced to. Running all the way to the area they said Justin was in all he could think of was him not being there. He should have insisted on staying home with him during his bed rest period, but Justin said he would just drive him crazy. Now Justin was alone and he just needed to get to him.

When he got to the room all he could see was Justin in the hospital bed in a lot of pain. He quickly went to him and kissed his forehead not even noticing the other person in the room. "Jus, are you alright? What happened?"



"I don't know." His tears finally spill seeing Brian. "I'm sorry. I wasn't in bed. I'm going to kill are babies aren't I?" He sobs into Brian's shoulder.

Brian tries to comfort him by rubbing his back. "No, its okay now."

"It hurts so bad." Justin tells him feeling a contraction, he was sure what it was now.

"Where's the doctor?" Brian looked around and saw Craig finally. "Who are you?"

"My dad." Justin tells him. "He was with me when this happened."

"Its all your fault. You did this to him." Brian says rounding on him.

Justin pulls his arm. "No, I wasn't doing what I was supposed to."

"If he wasn't there than you would have been." He was breathing heavily trying with all his might not to strangle the man.

"I didn't know he was pregnant." Craig tries to defend himself. "I wouldn't have bothered him if I knew."

"But you did and he's here and if something happens to him I'm going to kill you."

Justin starts to cry harder. "Brian stop. I'm scared." He turns to the blond not knowing what to do.

Dr. Murphy finally rushes into the room. "What's wrong with him?" Brian demands stepping to the side of the bed, but not letting go of his hand.

"He's gone into labor. The doctor on call said he wasn't able to stop it, he's too far along." He says to Brian.

"But he's not due for six weeks." Brian argues. It was too soon.

"They aren't waiting." Justin tells him knowing they would make their way into the world in the next hour.

The doctor checks him and comes to the same conclusion. "We need to move him to delivery now. If you want to be in the room you need to change into scrubs." Craig moves to a waiting room to call Jennifer.

Once changed, Brian takes his place by Justin's side once again. It wasn't very long before Justin was pushing the first baby out. Brian could tell he was in a lot of pain, maybe too much pain. He was sure to forget it though when he held their babies for the first time. Brian kisses his temple while pushing the hair out of the blond's eyes. "Come on, you can do this." He encouraged him when Justin wanted to give up. Brian looked down to see the head coming through. "You're almost there." He smiles at the little bit of blond hair on top of his babies head. Quickly after that, the baby was all the way out.

"You have a girl." The doctor announces waiting for her to cry. Brian and Justin let out their breath they were holding when the babies' first cries were heard. "The next one is ready. Give me a strong push."

Justin turns to Brian. "I'm so tired."

"Just one more baby and then you can rest." Brian tells him trying to get through it one at a time.

Justin pushes with the only strength he has left as the baby slides from him. "Another baby girl."

Brian goes over to look at his two little girls. They looked too little, but the nurse assured him they were doing great for being premature. "Justin, they're fine." Brian says kissing him quickly. Justin could barely keep his eyes open.

"I want to see them." His voice is a whisper.

Brian watches as the doctor rushes back over to Justin as his vitals change. "Why is he bleeding so much?" Brian asks watching the blood just flowing from his partner. He stood there not able to do anything. He was pushed back, but he pushed back in to Justin's side. "Justin, baby, stop it. Wake up." Justin wasn't moving. "Justin." He says close to his ear. "Please." He cries as he is forced to leave the room. He didn't even make it to the chair before he dropped to his knees, his head resting on the seat on the chair. At some point a nurse came out to talk to him, but the words just went past him so he sent her to talk to Craig.

He called the only person he knew to call as he kneeled there not caring he wasn't supposed to use a cell phone in the hospital. After a while, he felt someone sitting next to him. The fingers in his hair tried to soothe him, but nothing would do that anymore. "He's gone Mikey, he's gone." Brian sobs into his legs, hugging it like it was the only thing keeping him from completely falling apart.

## Chapter Nineteen

Michael couldn't get his mind to process what Brian just said. "He's gone." The only person Michael knew he would become this broken about would be Justin. What could have happened to the blond? Then it hit him, the pregnancy was giving him a difficult time. "Brian, what happened?"

"They were fine and then Justin was bleeding so much. Too much." Brian's broken words reach him.

"The babies are born?" Michael asks thinking that's who 'they' were that he was referring to.

"Two girls, look just like him. He didn't even get to see them." The tears streamed down his face for the man he loved.

Michael got him up off the floor sitting next to him and just held him until a blond woman came rushing over to them. By the distraught look in her face, Michael could assume this was Justin's mother. "Brian." She said once she knew it was him. It was hard to tell, the normally put together man was such a mess.

"Jennifer." He acknowledges her.

"I thought you'd want to go see him. He's unconscious, but maybe if he hears you..." Jennifer doesn't need to finish her thoughts.

Michael took in her words. Somehow, Brian had messed up everything. "You mean he's okay?" Michael asks to make sure.

"Yes, did someone say something else?" She asks panicked that she hadn't heard the latest news.

"No, no, Brian..." Before he finishes, Brian is already standing, straightening out his clothes.

"Where?" He asks realizing the same thing as Michael only not voicing it.

Jennifer gives him the room number. Brian starts walking not saying anything to them before leaving. He stops in the doorway of Justin's room. The sight almost made him lose his balance. His lover looked pale. Almost see through pale. There were monitors all around him and wires running to him, into him. Slowly he allowed himself into the room. He was too afraid to get his hope up. Just moments before he had thought he had lost him forever. It wouldn't be over until he could look into blue eyes that he loved to stare into for hours. So expressive were they that just looking into his eyes Brian could tell exactly what Justin was thinking. Only now he couldn't see them, they were closed. He was glad, he was afraid they would look lifeless and dull, not anything Justin ever was.

Sitting down in the chair next to the bed, Brian takes his cold hand in his warming it against his own. "Justin, this isn't the time to be taking a nap. You scared me so fucking much. I thought I lost you." He says not able to keep the tears from falling. "I kept thinking I couldn't do this without you. For the past year, you've been my reason for living, but now we've got two more so you need to wake up very soon and look at our daughters. I only saw them briefly, but they look so much like you from what I could see. I promise to go see what they did with them after they made me leave you. I didn't want to." He stands and kisses him softly. "I love you. I'll be back soon." He says softly before leaving to find their babies. He hadn't been able to think of them yet and he felt guilty for not being there for them. They were all alone without either of their fathers there for them. On the way back to Michael and the Taylor's, he had time to worry about what could be wrong with them being born prematurely.

When he found his way back to the little group, he couldn't bear to look into Jennifer's expectant eyes. "He's still not awake." He answered the unasked question.

"Do you need me to do anything?" Michael asks needing to do something to get his mind off how much Brian really loved Justin. It was a slap in the face of how selfish he had been.

"I need to find my daughters." Brian states not waiting for them to tell him where they were. He left to go find a nurse with Michael quickly catching up.

"Justin's mom told me where to go." Michael tells him trying to keep up with Brian's long legs.

Brian lets him lead the way. He stops dead in his tracks when they get to the nursery viewing window. From there he could see his daughters curled together in the same bed. He imagined that's what they looked like before they were born. He was glad they had each other because he could just imagine how alone they were feeling not having their father there. It was still unbelievable that he was actually looking at his children after all this time of looking forward to seeing them.

Brian catches the eye of the nurse on duty and she comes out to see what they needed. "I want to see my daughters." He tells her not taking his eyes off of them. After she verified he was their father, she led him over to the babies in the hospital cradle. He lightly caresses each of their heads covered in a fine dusting of blond hair. He smiled when they moved a little into his touch.

"Do you want to feed them?" The nurse asks offering him the bottle she prepared. Brian nodded looking forward to holding his babies. He sat in the chair next to the crib not knowing what he was doing. She saw the look on his face and helped him out. She lifted up one of the babies and instructed Brian on how to hold her to feed her. Once she was in his arms, he felt a little of the weight lift from his shoulders finally knowing for sure his daughters were okay. He looked at the hospital bracelet on her arm that read Baby girl 2 Taylor-Kinney. He thought it looked wrong to see that. It was then that he realized they didn't have names yet. He wanted Justin to pick the names out, but they didn't know how long he would be unconscious. Could they go very long without a name that long? He just couldn't take that away from his partner though.

He looked down at his daughter as he fed her and saw Justin looking back at him. He couldn't see himself in his children, but that didn't matter to him. He was just glad they were alive and healthy. When the first baby was done, he got to feed the second one. He had a feeling that taking care of two babies at once was going to take some adjustment to.

Watching both well fed babies falling asleep, he felt a connection to them finally. They were his. There was a different feeling he got when he held them that he hadn't had the whole pregnancy. He knew he was going to love them, but actually holding them and feeding them, it felt real for the first time.

Brian sat by Justin's bed all night not believing he wouldn't be waking up soon. He knew Justin better than anyone and he couldn't believe that he would miss out on seeing his daughters. There wasn't anything else he was more happy about than seeing his babies. Now that they were here, Brian knew he would be there for them.

He was almost asleep when he heard a sound come from Justin. Brian quickly moved to his side to see two blue eyes starting to open. At first he looks around confused until he meets eyes with Brian. In seconds Brian is sitting over on the side of his bed holding him in a tight embrace. "You scared me." He breathes against his ear.

"Its okay." Justin says caressing the back of his neck. "Where are the babies?" He asks when he pulled away enough to look at him. He was terrified of Brian telling him something happened to their children and it was his fault.

"They're in the nursery. Just wait until you see them." The smile on Brian's face made him smile at his happiness. "I'll go get a doctor so you can see them. I know they want to see you."

"Wait." Justin said when made to leave. "Before everything went dark, I thought I heard we had two girls." Justin looks at him expectantly still be left out of knowing.

"Yeah, they're beautiful." Brian says and Justin let him leave this time. He came in with one of the nurses who had been monitoring Justin.

"Its good to see you awake." She smiled at him. "I'm Carrie an I'll be monitoring you for the night, but I hear you want to go see your daughters so as soon as I'm done you can."

"Thank you, I cant wait to hold them." Justin breathes out in relief when she's done and he can go.

She brings the wheelchair around to the side of the bed. "Sorry, but its policy." She tells him before he could say anything against it.

"I don't care, I just really want to see my daughters." He says as Brian helps him out of bed.

"It wont be long." Brian lays a comforting hand on his shoulder. It was tearing him up inside all the time that was passing without them getting to meet.

When Justin moves from the wheelchair to the rocking chair next to the crib, he looks in to see his babies for the first time. It was just so amazing to him that they were his. Brian gently lifts out the baby that was looking like she was going to cry if she didn't get held first. He carefully passed her over so Justin was holding her. She knew him right away and pressed her face into his chest seeking the closeness she had been denied so far. Once the first baby was picked up, the other started to cry. Brian picked her up and sat next to Justin so that he could look at them both up close.

Justin softly caressed the top of his baby's head feeling the thin hair on top. It was as blond as his was when he was a baby. "Wow, so this is what it feels like to hold your child."

"Its nice isn't it." Brian felt so warm inside when he held them. "The nurse who was in the delivery told me they're identical, if you couldn't tell by looking at them." He added. "They look so much like you."

"They look jut so small." Justin couldn't stop smiling the whole time he held his daughter. While the one he was holding was content, the one Brian was holding kept crying no matter what he did. "Our daughters like me better." He gloats. "She's upset that I'm not holding her."

Brian shakes his head. "No, you have the quiet one, this one wants to be the center of attention. I know, that one didn't cry when I held her either." Brian smiles smugly at him having it figured out.

"I want to switch." Justin tells him wanting to hold his other daughter. It took a little maneuvering to figure out how to switch them, but in the end they both had a different baby. Right away the crying baby stopped just like before. "See told you, I have the touch."

"Good, you can be the official baby crying stopper." Brian tells him knowing for sure he had been right before. The baby cried for everyone but Justin. It must be because she recognized him and felt comforted. Justin could see what Brian meant though about her, she wasn't so quick to hide in his embrace. She looked right up at him wanting his complete attention. "What are we going to name these little guys?"

"Little girls." Justin quickly corrected him. "Well, I had a few names picked out waiting to see which felt right." He starts looking at one baby and the next. "This one's Ava." He says touching the baby Brian held. "And this one is Zoee." He says nodding to the one he held.

Brian thinks about it quickly. "Ava and Zoee. I think they are perfect." He looks to the babies and then to Justin and couldn't be happier.

"How long until we get to take them home?" Justin asks. In his mind he was already picturing them all at home together. He couldn't wait to experience everything. He even looked forward to changing their diapers for the first time, although he knew that excitement would wear off after having done it enough times.

"I'm not exactly sure, but they want to keep the babies here just in case. They told me they are almost fully developed, except they're still so small." Brian didn't remember everything the doctor told him because his mind was on Justin at the time. Now he would need them to tell him again why they couldn't take their children home.

Brian could see that Justin was trying to blame himself for this by the expression on his face. "It wasn't your fault."

"I know, but I just want to take them home and have them be perfectly healthy."

"We will take them home and they will be healthy. We just have to be patient and let the doctors and nurses do their work. Everything will be fine." He kisses the top of his head as he went past to put the baby in the crib. Then he put the baby sleeping in Justin's arms in with the first. They both instinctively moved closer together in their sleep. "Look they already have someone to rely on." Brian says showing Justin how they slept close together.

"It must remind them of when they were inside me. They were always that close." Justin stood up to get a better view. Brian wrapped his arms around him from behind happy just to watch the babies sleep with him. Once he noticed the nurse from before come back, he started to lead him to the wheel chair. "I don't want to leave yet." Justin protested.

"I know, but you need to rest and get your strength for when we take the twins home." Brian tells him as he lets a reluctant Justin be pushed out of the room. When they get close to his room, they both see the blond woman waiting outside for their return. "Oh yeah, your mom is here."

"Thanks, I can see that." Justin couldn't be angry for him not telling him, he was actually really happy to see his mother. It was Christmas the last time they saw each other.

"Justin." She says seeming to let out the breath she was holding in relief. She quickly has him in her arms as soon as they were close. When bending down to the chair became too much for her back, she pulled away, but not before kissing him on the cheek. "It's so good to see you're okay." She was trying to keep her tears from falling. Jennifer stood aside so that Justin could be pushed into his room. Brian helped support him while he got back into his bed.

"I'm going to see the family. I'm sure they're still here." Brian tells him letting Jennifer have some time with her son like she did just now with him. "I love you." Brian says before kissing him. It didn't scare him so much to say those words in front of somebody anymore.

"I love you." Justin says back before letting Brian leave.

Brian walked out to the waiting room and was immediately engulfed in a hug by Debbie. "How's our boy doing?" Debbie asks when she finally lets him go.

"He's great. He needs to get his rest though."

"How about the babies?" Debbie asks concerned not getting much information yet on them.

"They're going to be fine, they just have to stay here for a while to be watched over." Brian looked around and noticed the whole family was there except Mel and Linds. He expected that and was actually glad they weren't there. He didn't want to have to deal with Lindsay right then.

"Can we go see them?" Emmett asks pleading with his eyes.

Brian leads them to the window looking in on the nursery. "Wow, you really are a dad." Michael says watching the babies sleep curled together.

"How can you tell them apart. They look so much like." Emmett asks peering into the window close up.

Brian looks at the babies closely, trying to answer that question himself. Then one of the babies moved, ducking its head down. "That's Ava." He says pointing to the one that moved. "Justin does that exact thing when he sleeps. She's already a lot like him." Everyone looks at him amazed to see such openness in him. "What?"

"Nothing." They all said at once.

Finally, Brian had convinced everyone to go home, including Justin's mother. He was alone with Justin for the first time in hours. "Did you check on them?" Justin asks resting on his side already half asleep.

"Yeah, they're sleeping soundly." Brian answers stroking the blond's hair trying to lull him into sleep.

"Do you think I can go see them again tonight?"

"Later, just sleep." He says knowing just how tired Justin was. Brian was starting to feel sleep coming over him too, but he wanted to stay with Justin through the night.

## Chapter Twenty

Justin smiled as he put Zoe in the stroller along with Ava. As soon as Brian finished signing the discharge papers, they could bring their daughters home. It had been a month since they were born and both Brian and Justin were anxious to get them home. It pained them every time they had to go home and leave their daughters behind. Justin spent most of his day at the hospital now that he was out of school for the summer. He wanted to be there for all the little things the girls did, he didn't want to miss out on all the firsts in their lives. Brian had to go back to work, but since they had decided Justin would stay home with them during summer, he had nowhere he needed to be so he was free to spend all his time with the girls.

Brian came back into the nursery seeing Justin had their daughters all set to go. He knew how much Justin was looking forward to having them home. He felt the exact same way. They would get to be all together at the home they should have been the whole time. Brian understood though the importance of them not leaving the hospital until it was certain they were completely ready. Justin looked up at him when he heard the door open. "Is everything done?"

"Yep, we are free to take them home." Brian felt good saying that. He had never imagined this would make him happy. A family wasn't something that was ever in his plans. Justin wasn't in his plans, but from the first day he met him, he knew everything had changed. When he met him, he was still a party boy, but deep inside he was tiring of it. There was something more he wanted and he found out it was someone like Justin that he wanted in his life. Then when he found out Justin was pregnant, it finally gave him the extra push to become what he desperately wanted. It was then that he knew he wanted a family and he wanted that with the blond. He didn't think this would all have worked out if it hadn't been for Justin. He never believed in the soul mates thing, but he did think Justin was the perfect match for him.

Justin wrapped his arms around the brunet wondering what had him so deep in thought. It was strange still that he could read the older man so well. When Brian felt Justin hugging him, he looked down. "What were you thinking about?" Justin asks.

"Just how so much has changed. If you told me a year ago that this was where I would be, I would have laughed at you. I would have also hoped it was true. I knew I wanted something like this, I just couldn't admit it."

"I don't think I would have believed I would be here either before I moved to Pittsburgh. I never thought someone would love me like you do." Justin says looking up to him.

"You're easy to love, you would have had many men want you and love you." Brian says shaking his head. He sometimes thought of how much good timing had with the way things worked out. If he hadn't left the club early that night, he would maybe never have met the blond. Except maybe at the diner and by then he would probably have had met someone else.

Justin was shaking his head no. "Maybe someone else would have, but their words wouldn't mean the same as what I get from you."

He didn't want to argue with that because he actually could believe it. "Let's take our daughters home, I've had enough of hospitals to last me a good while."

The loft was already set up for the babies once they got home. Justin had spent a lot of time making sure everything they would need was there and ready. It was how he got through the time when he had to go home without his daughters. He hated that part the most and he felt bad that Brian usually had to pull him away from the nursery when he knew Brian hated leaving just as much. Now he hoped that they never had to go through anything like that again.

Having stocked up on everything two baby girls would need for the next few months while the twins were in the hospital, they didn't have to worry about needing much. They set down the car seats, which held the babies on the table. Justin kissed each of his daughters happy to have them here. "This is your home. I'll never have to leave you alone again." Justin promises stroking each face he loved so much.

Brian steps up behind him. "I kept thinking someone was going to come and tell us to put them back, but here they are, finally home." Justin put his arm around Brian feeling like the loft was once again home now that they had their daughters with them.

"Do you think we can do this?" Justin asks knowing it's all up to them now, they didn't have the nurses around to help anymore.

"Yeah, I know we can." Brian kisses the top of his head. "How hard can it be if my sorry excuse for parents could do it?"

"Do you think you'll ever tell them about our girls?" Justin asks. Brian doesn't answer, only gives a shrug. "I know you go see them sometimes. You always come back with this disappointed look on your face."

Brian was shocked that Justin knew anything about his visits with his parents. The blond really did know him better than he knew he did.

Seeing that Brian didn't want to talk about it, Justin didn't push. "I'm going to put them in their beds since they're falling asleep already."

Daphne held Ava as she watched Justin tend to Zoe's dirty diaper. She could see Justin was already a pro at it having changed enough diapers when they were still in the hospital. "You look like you actually enjoy doing that." Daphne says watching the way Justin interacted with his daughter as he changed her.

"It's a time to bond with her. I'm not letting any moment I have with my girls go by without cherishing them all. I already missed so much with them." Justin finishes redressing the baby then lifting her up.

Daphne sits with him on the couch, both of them holding a baby. "I can't get over how adorable your daughters are. They definitely take after you more than Brian."

Justin smiles proudly. "Yeah, he's so jealous of that." He was too pleased by it.

"You never told me what happened with your dad." Daphne changes the subject.

"He says he's trying to understand me, but it will take time to accept the kind of life I have." Justin lost his smile thinking of his dad. "I have too much going on to have to worry about pleasing him right now. He wants to be a part of my life and even Ava and Zoe's, but he's not willing to accept Brian. My life involves Brian in every way. We have kids together. I don't see how my dad thinks he can be a part of my life without Brian."

"Parents can be so ridiculous sometimes. They think they always know everything."

"Hey, I'm a parent." Justin says. It was hard to believe he had that in common with his own parents. He considered them worlds apart in the way they lived their lives, but they both were raising kids.

"It's always scary when you realize you have something in common with the parents." Daphne agrees reading Justin's thoughts. "Do you think you're going to miss it, your old life?" Daphne asks.

Justin shrugs never really thinking about it. His sights had been set on the day his kids would be born, he never considered what it would mean not having anymore. "Not being able to come and go as I please is going to suck, but right now it hasn't set in that I'm not able to do whatever I want. I love having my babies with me all day." Justin looks down at his sleeping girl. "I hate the idea that I'm going to have to be apart from them all day when the new semester starts."

"Are you thinking about not going back?" Daphne didn't know what to say.

"No. Brian would have a shit if he even heard that. I know I have to go, I just never thought I'd love them this much." Daphne follows him to put the sleeping babies in their crib. "They like to sleep together." Justin explains when he puts Ava in with Zoe. "Sometimes they won't sleep if they aren't together."

"Kind of like you with Brian." Daphne teases.

Justin shakes his head at her not even giving a response because it was sort of true. He did sleep better when Brian was there. He was used to having somebody next to him now when he went to sleep. "I need to make dinner." Justin says looking at the time, plus his stomach was telling him it was ready.



Daphne watched her friend get out everything he needed for the meal. "Why Justin are you becoming too domestic for me?"

"Hardly, I just can't stand to eat take out one more time. That's all I ever got when I was on bed rest because I couldn't cook and Brian's idea of cooking is using a phone." Justin knew it was happening to him no matter how much he protested. He couldn't deny that he had his own family now. "Besides, I like cooking."

"But now you're cooking for your man." Daphne points out.

"You're a freak." Justin mutters glad for his friends company. He missed spending time with her now that he barely saw her. "Today is the day the babies were supposed to be born." When Daphne gives him a blank look, he explains. "That means it's been six weeks since they were born, the doctor recommended amount of time we abstain from sex."

"I can't believe you could go that long. Every time I'm around you two you're practically fucking."

Justin put the vegetables he chopped into a pan. "I don't want any distractions, well besides the girls, tonight."

"I'll watch them." Daphne offers.

"No way, I'm saving up all my babysitting favors for when I'm going crazy needing to be alone."

Daphne was stopped from responding when they heard the door open and Brian coming through. "Hey Brian." She smiles at him as he came over to where she was sitting at the kitchen island.

"Hey beautiful." He kisses her on the cheek making her blush. She couldn't get past that point where he could turn her into a blushing school girl.

Brian smirked as he went and wrapped his arms around Justin from behind. "Hey." Justin smiled turning his head to get a kiss.

"Something smells good." He watches over Justin shoulder as he worked like a pro preparing something he couldn't begin to even imagine making.

"It's not hard to make." Justin says to his unspoken thoughts.

"I hate it when you do that."

"Read your thoughts." Justin finishes for him knowing what he would say. Justin loved that he could anticipate what his partner was thinking. Brian hated it never having thought someone could get that close to know him that well. Mikey didn't even come close to knowing him like Justin did despite what the man thought.

Brian kisses him on the back of the neck before leaving to go get changed. Coming out of the bedroom he watched as the two old friends laughed about something before he went over to see his daughters. They were both still asleep though for how long he didn't know. He liked to watch them sleep, they always looked so peaceful. It was at these times when he really saw a lot of Justin in them. He got that same content look when he was sleeping. He heard Justin saying goodbye to Daphne as he made his way back to the kitchen.

He sat in the chair Daphne vacated to watch Justin. "Was today the check up for the girls?"

"Yeah. They are in perfect health. They're even growing on schedule. The doctor said they'll catch up to the right size in the next couple months." Justin says filling him in on everything that he learned as they ate.

As Brian cleaned up from dinner, Justin fed the twins having woken up hungry. He found it easier to keep them on the same schedule so when one got fed, the other one did too. That way they both slept at the same time and he could get things done without being interrupted. Sometimes his system didn't work and one or both babies were wanting attention or couldn't sleep. It was hard to anticipate what they would do and he just went with what they wanted then.

Brian held Zoe after she was done with her bottle and it was Ava's turn. While sitting on the couch, he rested the girl in his lap. "How's my baby girl." He cooed over her while Zoe wrapped her little hand around his finger. He smiles at the tight grip she had on him. He smiled and kisses her forehead feeling his bond with his daughter strengthen. He was a little envious of the innate bond Justin had with both of their daughters, but he was also glad he had it.

When the girls were once again asleep, Brian pulled Justin with him to the bedroom for some time together not including babies. Brian pulled at Justin shirt until he roughly pulled it over his head. They could play nice later, but right now he was too wound up to take his time. Justin had the same idea forcefully tore open Brian's jeans and started pushing them down as far as he could with Brian on top of him. Brian moved off him to remove his pants the rest of the way as his shirt before ripping Justin's pants and underwear off at the same time. Justin pulled at Brian's hair as he ground up into his hardness. "Brian, fuck me." Justin says between clenched teeth so he didn't scream it like he wanted to.

Brian kisses all over his face, his eyes, his nose, his chin down to his jaw. "Are you sure you're ready?" He asks making himself calm.

"Yes, I'll tell you if you're hurting me." Justin promises while wrapping his legs around the older man's waist and pulling him closer. "I miss feeling you. I don't want to wait anymore."

Brian sat back looking down on the blond. He ran his hands over the once again flat stomach. It amazed him how fast the weight came off him. They both chalked it up to his still fast metabolism and that the only place he really did put on weight was the stomach. "You're so hot."

Justin smiled up at him. "Stop just looking and hurry up." He says almost on the verge of begging. Brian reaches over for the condom and lube. "Just do it. I need you now." Brian quickly prepares him and slowly pushes into him. In a few movements he was deep inside.

"Are you okay?" Brian asks resting his head against Justin's shoulder. Justin nodded not getting the words out. Brian had to concentrate on not coming right away. They had both been ready since he had come home. It had been too long since Brian was able to make love to Justin. After being put on bed rest it was too much of a risk for them to take and after giving birth to the twins, it was both unwise and too painful to even try.

They both tried to keep as quiet as they could so not to wake the babies as the need for release came too quickly for both of them, they found themselves speeding toward a climax. "I love you." Justin breathes into Brian's ear when the man collapsed onto him. They had just started kissing when one of their daughters started crying. Brian pulls away seeing on Justin's face that it was his turn to deal with their daughters.

Brian gives him a last kiss before pulling on his pants quickly trying to get to the girl before she woke her sister too. Brian lifted the crying girl out of the crib and her cries quieted to little whimpers. Moving out of the area the girls slept, he realized she needed to be changed. Stopping by the steps up to the bedroom, Brian looked in to see Justin lying there still. "Jus, your daughter wants you."

"Brian, just change the diaper." Justin sighs at Brian trying to get out of doing the dirty work.

Brian smirked and took the baby to the change table. "I didn't really think that would work." He tells the little girl. She just looked up at him not understanding and only wanting him to clean her. When she had a fresh diaper on and redressed, Brian took her back to the bedroom with him. Getting into bed again, he set her down between him and Justin.

"It was Zoe that was causing all the noise." Justin kisses each of her hands.

"At least she waited until we were done. She's got perfect timing." Brian could only hope it would always be like that. It wasn't long before Ava woke up crying for her fathers. "That ones yours." Brian smirk at him picking up Zoe and putting her in his lap.

"You're already dressed." Justin points out, but Brian shakes his head and goes back to looking at Zoe. Justin heaves an annoyed sigh in his direction and goes for the other baby. He knew he could always get back at Brian later. Justin comes back after tending to Ava's needs with the baby in one arm and two bottles in his other. After getting situated on the bed next to Brian, he gives him one of the bottles. "It's a little early, but they're up now and I don't want to wake them if they do fall asleep." Justin explained needlessly since Brian had no idea what schedule Justin went by. He just fed them and changed them when the girls told him they needed it. Justin watched as Brian fed their daughter then looked down at the baby he held. It wasn't what he envisioned for his perfect night with Brian, but it might have been better. He loved spending time with his little family all together.

## Chapter Twenty-One

Justin paced in front of the door with Zoe in his arms. She was crying and he couldn't get her to stop. He didn't know what to do. She didn't need to be changed, she wasn't hungry, and she wasn't sick. This wasn't the first time he couldn't get her to stop crying, then only Brian could get her to stop, but he wasn't here right then. Justin hated to hear his baby cry and there wasn't anything she wanted from him to make it better. Justin switched Zoe to his other arm and stroking her back with the other. "Don't worry, Daddy will be home soon." Justin says more for himself. He continued to watch the door while he paced.

After what seemed like hours, but was only minutes later, Justin heard the elevator stop at the top floor and let out a large sigh of relief. Moments later, Brian stepped through the door to find Justin waiting for him. As soon as he was near, Justin handed the baby over to him. "Where's my hello kiss?" Brian asks while comforting his daughter.

"I can't get her to stop crying." Just as he was saying this, she got quiet. Justin closed his eyes relieved for the quiet before going to the bedroom and lying down.

Brian watched him go before tending to his daughters. After they were both fed and asleep, he changed then lay down next to Justin. He rubbed his back just like he did with the girls to comfort him. "What's wrong?"

"Why does she stop crying for you like that?" Justin asks hurt by it.

"Because you were stressed and she could feel it." Brian explains. He knew how upset Justin got when their daughters cried and he didn't know what to do for them. He was the same way, but he knew how to not let stress get to him. He wouldn't be able to do his job if he couldn't.

Justin turned to lie on his back. "My mom wants to come see the babies." He tells him while staring at the ceiling. He didn't need to look at Brian to know what his face looked like. He knew he wouldn't be happy.

Brian groaned right after he heard his words. "Justin." He whined. "Why does she have to come, she saw them when they were at the hospital."

"That was almost three months ago. They've grown and changed so much already." Justin says looking over at him. "Why can't you just pretend to like her while she's here?"

"It's not me who doesn't like her. It's the other way around." Brian reminds him. "I don't even know why."

"That's because she likes you, she just doesn't know you that well so it might seem like she doesn't."

"Jus, you're rambling." Brian sighed pulling Justin into his arms. "Whatever, I don't care if she's here. It's always going to be awkward around her anyways. She still sees me as the man who took her baby boy away from her."

"Its time she sees I'm not a baby anymore and that I actually have two of my own with a man that I love." He snuggles closer to Brian's body.

"I think she'll see you as a grown up when she sees how well you are taking care of Zoe and Ava." Brian agrees with him.

"Unless I cant get Zoe to stop crying without your help and she sees she was right that I was too young." Justin points out upset again about the situation. Now he wished his mother wasn't coming. He was looking forward to seeing her, but now he sees her face not revealing how right she felt, but he would know it was what she was thinking.

"You forget she had two babies herself, I bet you were just like Zoe." He teases trying to put his partner at ease.

"Yeah, I guess." He says not completely convinced. They stayed silent for a while before Justin brought up what else had him stressed. "We have to decide soon if we want to have a nanny or put the girls in daycare." Justin changes the subject. "My school starts again at the end of the month." They had been putting it off not liking the idea of putting their daughters in the hands of strangers.

"I was thinking we should just hire a nanny until they are a little older. That way we know that they are getting the attention they need." Brian says giving his opinion. "When they are older I think they would do better in a day care."

"Yeah, now we just need to find the perfect person." Justin knew it would be harder finding this person knowing he didn't want anyone taking care of his children but him.

The family had all been summoned to dinner at Debbie's Sunday night. Nobody was exempt from showing up. Debbie was determined to get the whole family together for dinner like they used to. It had been too long since the whole group had been together like they used to be all the time. Everybody had stuff going on that got in the way of their usual random get together's that Debbie found she had to plan in advance a chance for them all to be in once place.

Brian was surprised they weren't the last ones to arrive. He was always the last to dinner since he usually dragged his feet about leaving. He was always punctual everywhere else in life other than when he had to meet up with the family. Usually then he would be berated for something that may or may not be his fault. Now with Justin pushing him to go, they would only be slightly late. Having to get the babies ready to go someplace, they got ready extra early and had no excuse but to leave when they were ready or risk one or both needing something just when they walked out the door.

Debbie was right there when they came in. "Let me see my gorgeous girls." Brian handed her Ava after setting down her car seat. Zoe was still asleep in the one that Justin was carrying so he set it in the living room where it was quieter that way she could sleep while they ate and talked at the table. Debbie was busy fussing over Ava. "Aren't you just the most beautiful girl ever."

"Where are the munchers?" Brian asks taking a seat at the table next to Michael.

"They'll be here." Debbie says overhearing the question. "Nobody is allowed to miss this dinner."

"Is something wrong Deb?" Justin asks with concern in his voice.

"Yes there is. We haven't all been together for months." Debbie kept her voice soft as to not scare the baby, but they all knew what it would have sounded like. "Its important to have family stick close. It would be too easy for it to fall apart if we stopped thinking about each other."

They all looked around at each other realizing that they had been neglecting keeping each other in their lives. With all the fighting that was going on it was easy to step away from the rest of the group and forget the last time they saw each other was weeks ago. The last time everybody was together was months. It wasn't long before Lindsay and Melanie arrived and they could have dinner. It was noticeable to the whole group there was something going on between the two women. Nobody wanted to bring it up though so they just tried to pretend it wasn't there. This was hard though when they hardly would speak a word to each other.

When dinner was done and they were sitting around the table, Debbie decided to bring up the problem with their family. "I'm sure I'm not the only one who has noticed the divide in our family. It seems everyone thinks that they are wronged by someone. Its time you just got the fuck over it before it's irreparable."

"Ma, what are you talking about? Nobody hates anybody." Michael whines not getting it.

"Michael, that's not what she means. Its that some people are not happy with how things are right now." Vic explains as best he could for Michael.

Lindsay gets a cold look. "She means me. I'm mad because Brian doesn't want a child with me."

"Linds, its not with you, its for you and Melanie. There's a big difference." Justin points out automatically stepping up to defend Brian.

"Stay out of it. You're always putting your opinion in when nobody wanted it. Its because of you that I don't have a baby." Lindsay says getting upset. "Then you go and bring them here to shove it in my face that you have Brian's babies and I don't."

The whole table was speechless except for Justin. "Brian and I are both here. That's why the babies are here. I wont just leave them with babysitters all the time and not when others in the family want to see them." Justin says not taking anyone talking about his children that way.

"You know, we didn't have problems in our family until you showed up. Everybody was happier without you ever being here." Justin could only gasp at what Lindsay said. He knew Lindsay blamed him for Brian not wanting to have a child with her, but he never knew she would rather him never have met any of them.

Before anyone could say anything, Brian did. "I wasn't happier without him here. I was just going through the motions. I thank whatever brought Justin to me everyday for having him in my life." Justin gave him a little smile being reassured that the only person that mattered was happy to have him in their lives.

Everybody started talking at once finally being able to get their thoughts together as Lindsay stormed out when nobody defended her. It quieted down as Mel stood looking grim. "Mel, honey, what's going on?" Debbie asks.

"Lindsay hasn't been herself since Justin had the babies, even before that really, but more so since then. She's desperate for a child, so am I, but its consumed her. She refuses to consider any other option but Brian." She looked down having revealed all this for the first time. It was less of a weight being able to tell other people what she was going through. "Its causing a strain between us because she blames me for not getting her baby from Brian because we don't always get along."

"That's not it." Brian didn't want to have to voice yet again why he couldn't do it.

"I know, but she just won't accept it." Mel looks to the door knowing she had to go after Lindsay before she lost her. "Thanks for dinner Deb." She says before leaving.

The table was silent as they mulled over the new bit of information. They all knew Deb wasn't just referring to Lindsay before, but none of them were ready to voice that. Debbie was seeing that even she couldn't push the issue. It was something Lindsay needed to realize on her own since she wouldn't even listen to Mel. One of the babies started to cry, breaking the silence of the table. They all started moving at once.

After dinner, Justin was helping Vic put away the leftover food. He marveled at how Debbie even made too much food still with the whole family at dinner. He was just finishing putting the last away when he noticed Michael had been staring at him. Justin wondered what he did now to have the man's disdain. He was surprised when Michael came over to stand next to him. He looked to where Michael was. It didn't shock him that it was Brian he was looking at. He was holding Zoe as he fed her a bottle. It was still so beautiful to him to see them together.

"I've never seen Brian like this." Justin was startled when Michael spoke. "He seems so..." He trailed off trying to think of the word.

"Happy?" Justin tries to finish.

"No, well yes he does look extremely happy. I was talking about him being more content with life." Michael tells him.

Vic looks up overhearing them. "Like having his own children could finally put to rest the memories of his own childhood." Vic voiced what Michael couldn't understand about the way Brian seemed to be.

"Yeah." Michael simply says. Vic looked between the two men and knew this was the most time they ever spent without sniping at each other. He decides to leave them alone hoping they could call some kind of truce. "It's weird seeing Brian with a baby, but at the same time the way he's with them seems so natural."

"He loves them more than anything." Justin smiles watching him.

"Maybe not more than anything, just in a different way." Michael didn't look away from Brian as he talked. He didn't want to see the smug expression on Justin's face. Yet, when he finally did, it wasn't a self-satisfied Justin looking at him, but a confused and hopeful one. "I know everyone thinks I'm dense and maybe I am." Justin couldn't believe what he was hearing. This wasn't what he ever expected hearing from Michael. "But I'm not completely blind. I saw how devastated he was when he thought he lost you. I had never seen him act like that. He wanted to give up and if it wasn't for Ava and Zoe, he would have without you."

Justin didn't know what to say. No one really told him much about that time after he gave birth. He hated to have to think of Brian being hurt and he wasn't there for him. Even worse for him was that he was the one who had caused him so much pain. The only saving grace was that it wasn't intentional. He couldn't see himself ever intentionally hurting the man. "He loves me and our family."

"I know. I'm not saying this because I want us to be friends or anything." Of course not, Justin thought to himself. It wasn't like he wanted to be friends with his either. He just wanted Michael to accept him as a big part of Brian's life just like he tried to accept Michael as a part of Brian's life. "You're good for him and I know that he loves you. And I want to tell you if you ever do anything to hurt him that you'll have a lot of angry people to answer to."

Justin would have laughed if he weren't actually glad Brian had someone other than him willing to look out for him. Plus, he knew Brian got this same talk from his mom. It was only fair. "I'd never try to hurt him."

Justin states strongly. "Since you are giving out fair warnings, I'll give you one of my own. Don't try to get between us and make him choose because I know you won't like the outcome. Not only am I his partner, I'm the father of his children. We'll always have that bond together. I'll always be part of his life." Justin was done with the conversation. He didn't want to start a battle over Brian again. The last time that happened, he went into early labor. So instead he walked away to join his family on the couch.

Brian played with the babies as much as he could at their age, which was really only making noises at them, and contact with them. Justin told him that's how babies communicated was through touch and Brian wanted to assure his girls as much as he could that he was there and he loved them. The little gurgling sounds he got back told him they knew who he was. Justin had gone to pick his mother and sister up from the airport leaving Brian with the babies alone really for the first time for that long. Brian hadn't realized Justin was always there until Justin was leaving and he panicked about being alone. Justin had assured him it would be fine and he finally let him leave. Now that he was alone he found he really did know what he was doing. It was almost like Justin being there, but asleep.

The twins were always so good when he was home anyways. Zoe was already Dada's little girl. She always stopped crying when he held her and generally more content when she was with Brian. Ava was just a happy baby whenever either of her fathers was near. Zoe always wanted to give Justin trouble when he was with her. Brian was starting to think she actually knew what she was doing giving him grief. He knew they would find out, as she got older.

Brian checked the time seeing they were due for a feeding. Justin had taught him that it was much easier to feed them before they told him they needed to be fed. That way he wouldn't have two crying babies screaming because their bellies were empty. He lifted up Zoe first. "Come on my fussy girl." He cradled her in his arm and watched as she sucked down her formula like she just realized she was hungry. When the bottle was empty, he lifted her so he could rub her back and get all the air bubbles out. He knew she was done when she started to snuggle into him. He hated to set her down after she was in her happy place, but he had to feed his other daughter. He put her in the empty cradle next to him and picked up Ava. "How's my quiet little Ava?" He cooed getting her to settle in his arms. "You don't have much to say yet do you, not like your sister who likes to drive Daddy crazy." He could have sworn she was smiling at him. "I think you're going to have a bright smile just like Daddy." He soon had her fed and back in the cradle too. "Now the mean lady who doesn't like Dada too much is coming soon. Feel free to throw up on her all you want and I'll give you a prize." He grinned and if he was just seeing things or not, he was pretty sure that was a smirk quite like the patented Kinney smirk on Zoe's tiny face. So he had a co-conspirator after all.

Not much later, Brian heard the elevator coming up to the top floor. He got up as the door opened to let in his torture for the next few days.

"Hello Brian." Jennifer says looking at him. Brian didn't know how to read her anymore.

"Jennifer." He nods in her direction. "Hey Molly." He smiled at her feeling much more affection to the younger Taylor girl.

"Hey Brian." Molly smiled back.

Justin turns to his mom. "You've got to see them, the girls have already grown so much." Brian sighed in relief not having to talk with the woman as Justin led her over to the babies.

"I know, I hate not seeing them all the time." Jennifer tells him as she watched them look up at her curiously. "Justin they look just like you." She gushes as she picks up Zoe. "Hey I'm your grandma. You probably don't remember me, huh."

As soon as she had Zoe settled, the baby burped up some of her milk. Brian had to turn away and hide the smile that was trying to burst forth. He knew that it was just a coincidence that Zoe chose then to spit up, but he still had to think she knew what he was talking about before. Justin quickly takes her away so that Jennifer could clean up. "I'm sorry mom, but didn't I tell you she was a little monster."

"It's okay Justin, babies spit up all the time." She says as she wiped her jacket clean.

Brian went over to take Zoe from Justin. "Give me my little girl." He couldn't hide the smile any longer and Justin glared at him knowing what he was grinning about. Brian kisses her head ignoring Justin's look. "You're not a little monster, you're my perfect angel." She was happy to be with him as he took her to clean her up and put clean clothes on her.

Justin lets his mother take Ava from him having picked her up when Brian took Zoe. Molly comes up to his side to get a closer look. "Can I hold the babies?" She asks seeing them for the first time.

"Sure, you haven't seen me since December and I'm completely ignored." Justin pretends to be offended.

"But the babies are cute." Molly tells him with a grin. "So can I?" Justin knew she wasn't going to quit until she got to hold the babies.

"You can hold Zoe when Brian is done cleaning her up." Justin barely finished speaking before the girl went off to find Brian.

Brian looked up to see Molly watching him as he finished dressing Zoe. "Yes?"

"Justin said that I could hold Zoe." She tells him almost bursting with excitement.

Brian looks at her and then toward where Justin and Jennifer were fussing over Ava, then back to her. "How old are you?"

"Thirteen." She says like it was obvious. "Can I hold her now?"

"I don't know, thirteen is a little under the age restriction." Molly huffs indignantly. "Alright, but you have to be very careful, she's very delicate." Brian instructs her how to hold the baby before reluctantly letting Zoe out of his hold. He was braced to save the girl if there was even a slight hint of trouble.

Soon Molly got bored when the baby only squirmed around a little. "I'm done holding the baby." She says making Brian take her back. He breathed a sigh of relief once he had the little girl safely back in his arms. "They don't do much do they."

"Not right now. Just eat, sleep, cry, and poop." Brian lists off the girl's daily routine. "Just like Justin" He got Molly laughing.

"Hey, I heard that." Justin says coming up to them. That only got Molly laughing harder.

"It's true." Molly goads him.

"You're such a pest Molly." Justin pushes her a little.

"Alright children, break it up." Brian ignores the glare from both of the siblings. Molly stuck her tongue at them before going to see what her mother was doing. "You might actually be more mature than her."

Justin raised his eyebrows but didn't say anything. He knew he was more mature than most the people the older man knew. "I'm going to order take out, Mom and Molly are probably hungry after traveling and I'm starving."



"What's new." He rubbed the spot the blond hit him in the arm for his comment and probably the ones before. "Why don't you just take them out. I'll stay with the girls." He knew then he would get out of dinner with Justin's family too.

"My mom is in grandmother heaven right now. I doubt I'll be able to pry her away from the twins to go out."

Brian watched him go. He knew this was going to be one long weekend.

## Chapter Twenty Two

Jennifer loved having a baby in her arms again. There was a unique feeling you got when holding a baby. She already was loving being a grandmother to her two granddaughters. While it was quite a shock to learn that Justin was pregnant, she had really looked forward to being a grand parent. It was taking some getting used to, but she was starting to accept Brian into their lives. She knew now he wasn't going anywhere and there was no way Justin would part from him. The more she got to know him, the more she saw what Justin did in him. Jennifer could imagine much worse a partner for her son than Brian. It was also hard to miss how much they loved each other by just being in the same room as them. It put her more at ease that Justin was with someone who truly cared about him.

Jennifer found herself watching Justin with his babies and remembering when he was that little. It was remarkable to see the baby she raised taking care of his own babies.

Justin put the girls down for their nap. He was turning the mobiles on when his mother came over to see how he was doing. Jennifer lightly ran her fingers over the mobile in remembrance. "These are just like the one you had." She remarks.

"I know. I got them in New York in this little shop."

"When did you go to New York?" She asks feeling like she hardly knew what was going on in her son's life anymore.

"Brian took me for a weekend during my spring break." Justin smiled remembering the way Brian surprised him with the trip. It had been one of the best times of his life. Everything was so perfect. It was one of those times when he could always look back on the memory and know how much Brian loves him.

"That was nice of him." Jennifer didn't put much emotion in her voice.

Justin grinned again. "It was so great. I got to see a lot of art, but I want to go again. There is so much that I want to see still." Jennifer couldn't help but smile along with her son because of the pure happiness radiating off him. "Brian said we should go back when the girls are a little older. I think they'd like it too."

"I'm sure they will." Jennifer agreed. "I'm so happy you made me a grandmother. I never thought you would." Jennifer tells him. She had thought that when he told her he was gay, he wouldn't want children. Back then, she didn't understand that gay or straight, he was still the same person who had always wanted to have a family. Now she could see how happy it made him. He now had his own family that he made all on his own. She was grateful that he still included her in it even after she had made her displeasure known about who he had decided to have his family with. While she had warmed up to Brian, she still didn't know him well enough to deem him worthy of her son.

"Sometimes I didn't think I would either. A lot of gay men don't want kids." Justin remarked. Jennifer didn't know much about the difference in his world.

"What about Brian? Did he?" Jennifer asks curious about the answer.

"He said he didn't really think much about having them before he met me. His friend Lindsay is a lesbian and she asked him to be the father for her and her partner's baby. He was going to before we found out I was pregnant."

"Why did he change his mind?"

"He wouldn't really be a part of the kid's everyday life, just a visitor. He told me that after he found out we were having a kid of our own, he could see us raising it together. Brian couldn't handle having a kid he didn't see everyday. He knew he would love it too much to give up his rights. And he didn't think it would be fair to any child he had with Lindsay. This other kid would feel unwanted seeing mine and Brian's baby lived with us and they hardly saw Brian. Lindsay can't understand that." Justin says still upset at how Lindsay had been treating Brian and himself.

Jennifer was seeing that she had only seen one side to Brian. While she had seen how great he was with the twins and she did believe he truly loved her son, especially after seeing him at the hospital, this was the first time she really understood part of the man's life and how Justin fit into it all. "Have you thought about wanting more kids or is this it for you?"

"Definitely more, just not for a while. Ava and Zoe are quite the handful already for me."

"I'm sure Brian doesn't want anymore. These two were quite unexpected." Jennifer notes looking in on the babies snuggled together.

Justin smiled at the way they had to be toughing while they slept. "Actually, Brian is the one who brought it up. He really wants more babies." Justin corrects her. "He is such a great father and we do make some beautiful babies. It would be such a waste not to have more."

"Are you sure it's wise though?" When Justin gave her a questioning glare, she was quick to continue. "I mean, the stress was too much for you. Just think of how stressful it will be with twins added to everything you had before." She had been scared twice during his pregnancy that she would lose him. Jennifer wasn't sure if she herself could do that again.

"That was only because it was my first pregnancy and with twins, plus I was still young. The doctor said that could be the same or have no complications at all. There's always a risk you have to be willing to take. I think the reward is well worth it."

They walked back out to the living room where Molly was flipping through the channels while slouched on the couch. "Mom, I'm bored. When is Brian getting home?" Molly whined.

"He usually gets home around six." Justin answers for his mother knowing she had no idea. Justin was still intrigued on how Brian had won over his thirteen year old sister. It would seem that Brian would be uncomfortable around a teenage girl, but somehow they had formed a bond.

Molly got up and followed Justin into the kitchen. "Justin, is this what you do all day? Just sit around and watch the babies sleep while Brian has to go to boring work?"

Justin hated the image he got from her words. He wondered if anybody else looked at them and thought he used Brian as his sugar daddy. It wasn't that way for him at all. He would still love Brian even if he were penniless. Things would be a lot harder if that were true, but it wouldn't change his feelings for Brian. "The babies aren't always this quiet. You just got here when they were falling asleep. It's a lot of work caring for two babies." Justin felt the need to defend himself even if he knew the truth.

"It doesn't look that hard."

"Believe me, it is." Jennifer steps in to set her daughter right. "Just you wait and see. It always looks easy when you're not around all the time."

"Well, I'm not having any kids. Ava and Zoe are cool, but I'd rather not have to stay home with babies. They're boring." Molly declares having decided after holding the babies that it was so much fun.

"They'll do more as they grow up." Jennifer tells her, but she knew it was most likely a phase right now her not wanting kids. She had felt that way too once.

"Mom, why do we have to stay here so long? I wanted to go to my friend's party." Molly went back to whining.

Jennifer rolled her eyes. "This what you have to look forward to, but double."

By the time six o'clock rolled around, Justin was ready to run away due to Molly's constant talking. He had forgotten how much the girl would talk. She seemed to want to tell him everything that happened since he had last seen her. His mother had taken over everything that had to do with the babies. She claimed she had to take in all the time she had with her granddaughters since she barely got to see them. So Justin found himself left with entertaining Molly.

When Brian opened the door, Justin jumped up to meet him. "Greeting me at the door, how sweet." Brian smirked before bending to kiss him.

"I can not listen to another story about how some girl looked fat in her miniskirt for one more second." Justin whines as he pulls Brian along with him to hide in the bedroom. "My mom won't let me near Ava or Zoe. She's taking over everything. I haven't held either one since before lunch."

"Who knew Mother Taylor would be an overbearing grandmother. Debbie, I could see, but this is her first grandchildren." Brian laughed as he started to change.

"It's not funny Brian." Justin shouts.

"It's only for a few days. Let her have her time with the babies. It might make up for the lack of other grandparents in their lives." Brian says, the smile gone thinking of how his parents would never even accept his children because they come from two men.

Justin rubbed the back of his neck trying to stop the depressing thoughts going through Brian's mind. "Maybe if they saw the girls, they wouldn't care. They are their granddaughters."

"Justin, they don't even know I'm gay." Brian shakes his head. "It doesn't matter anyways. It's not their life. I won't make our daughters go through their rejection."

Justin was quiet as Brian finished changing. He knew no matter what Brian said, he still cared and wanted his parents to accept him. He knew this the same way he wanted his father to accept him. It was what every kid wanted from their parents. "Brian..." He stops when Brian gives him a look that told him he was done talking about it.

Justin found himself once again following Brian, only this time to the area with the nursery. Ava was awake in her crib and smiled a toothless grin when she saw Brian. Brian thought the only smile that shone more was Justin's. He picked her up forgetting all about his parents when looking at his little angel. "That's your smile Sunshine." Brian says to him seeing his trademark smile in place.

Jennifer came over to them with Zoe propped against her shoulder trying to burp her. "You're home. I didn't even see you come in." Jennifer remarks. "I just fed Zoe so I can take Ava now and feed her." She put Zoe in her bouncer chair that had lights and moving animals that fascinated the girl. She was already falling asleep as she watched the monkey move back and forth.

When she moved to take Ava, Brian stopped her. "Justin says you've been hogging the girls all day. Now is the time they always spend with me since I'm gone all day." Brian wasn't going to back down. He loved the time when he first got home when the babies were happy to see him for the first time all day. "I'll feed her. It's our thing." He moved around her to go get the bottle from the kitchen.

Justin stopped her from following him. "Mom, he doesn't get to see them all day, just let him have his time with them." Jennifer nodded in understanding.

After they had dinner, Jennifer noticed the looks the two men were giving each other. She didn't want to think about what they normally did after dinner while the twins were sound asleep after their bottles. "When was the last time you two went out without the babies?" She asks.

"How about never." Justin says with a bit of sarcasm in his voice.

"If you wanted to go out alone, I'd be more than happy to watch the twins for you." She suggests just sensing that they needed time alone. It was what is most missed when you have young children at home.

"I don't know." Justin wasn't too sure about being away from the girls. It would be the first time he was away for longer than an hour.

"Justin, sometimes it's okay to take a break. You won't get too many opportunities." His mother spoke from experience.

Justin looked to Brian for his opinion. "It's your decision, but I wouldn't mind having you all to myself." Justin smiles making up his mind.

"Alright, but promise to call right away if anything happens." Justin says still not sure about leaving his daughters.

"It will be fine." Jennifer assures him.

Justin walked with Brian up Liberty Avenue on the way to Babylon. "I haven't been away from them at night since they came home from the hospital." Justin remarks starting to regret going out.

"Just think of this as practice for when you go back to school." Brian suggests. He was used to having to be away from his daughters now since he left for work everyday. "And who better than your mother to watch them. She won't let anything go wrong."

"Yeah. You're right." He concedes. Justin gripped Brian's hand in his when they entered the building. He looked around not remembering clearly the last time he had been to Babylon. It had been nearly five or six months. When he remembered that time in his life, all he could remember was always feeling so tired and cranky. He was sure that was why he never felt up to going out dancing. Justin felt his arm tugged as he tried to head for the dance floor and Brian to the bar. "I want to dance." Justin tells him when he's pulled to Brian.

"Let's go get a drink and say hello to the boys first." Brian pulls Justin along with him to where the guys were stationed near the bar.

Emmett was the first to notice them. "Look who's here." He gushed at the two men. "Finally tore yourself away from those gorgeous girls of yours to see us?"

"I'm surprised to see you here." Ted states. "I wouldn't think this would be your scene anymore."

"Teddy, even though Brian and Justin are daddies now, I'm sure they still enjoy Babylon. Right?" Emmett asks turning to them.

Justin nodded his head even if he felt Ted was a little right. It didn't feel the same way it used to and he wished he could feel as free as he did at Babylon, but he couldn't help thinking he'd rather be somewhere else. The desire to be with his daughters was constantly in his head. The only thing that stopped it from coming out was that he was with Brian. While the part of him wanted to go home, the bigger part of him was desperate to spend some baby free time with Brian. He pulled on Brian's arm to signal he wanted to go. "Come on."

As Brian joined Justin, he couldn't help but notice how Michael didn't say anything to him. The only time he ever was like that was when he was upset with him. Brian wondered what it could be since he hardly saw him much lately. He was about to ask Justin, but decided against it knowing Justin wouldn't want to discuss Michael. He would just have to look into it later. Pushing all thoughts besides his blond out of his mind was easy with him pressed against him. He found it was nice to have this time alone, even with a crowded dance floor it felt like just the two of them. Soon they would go home and become parents again. Before this thought would have him running in the other direction, but he discovered he really liked the life he had with Justin and his babies. It amazed him that something he never thought he wanted had made him so happy. Now all he had to do was get rid of the in laws.

### Chapter Twenty-Three

After a long search to find a nanny that they could both agree would be the best for their children, Brian and Justin settled on Julie, a twenty eight year old who had just ended a five year job with another family as the child started school and no longer needed a full time nanny. Both men instantly liked her and knew that unlike some of the older applicants who thought they knew what was best for the twins better than Brian or Justin, she would take care of Ava and Zoe as they thought correct. Justin really liked how she handled the babies so well. He could actually see himself able to leave each day knowing they would be cared for. They were both glad they could finally find someone since it was soon time for Justin's school to start.

The first few days the nanny was there, Justin was there to make sure she knew how to handle the twin's. He was reassured that she was the right choice just by watching her. He felt a little less trepidation leaving his daughters during the day after getting to see her in action.

Justin sat in the cafeteria at the school just having finished making his usual call to Brian at work. He couldn't seem to get through the day without talking to the man he loved and he knew it was the same for Brian. Before that was the first opportunity he got to call home and check on his daughters. After being reassured everything was fine, he grudgingly hung up. He still had two hours to go before he could go home for the day. They seemed like the longest he ever had to wait. Brian had teased him about how worrisome he was about the twins and guessed before Justin could tell him that he had called home as soon as he could. He could help the feeling that he was abandoning his babies since he was a first time parent and this was the longest he'd been away.

Justin was lost in his thoughts and didn't notice the two students taking seats across from him. "Hey Justin."

Justin looked up suddenly hearing his name. "Oh Tyler." Justin smiles seeing a friend of his from school. They had hung out a few times outside of school, but mostly just during breaks between classes. He remembered the girl with him from one of his classes the last semester. "How was your summer?" Justin was glad for the distraction.

"It was good. Mostly working though." Tyler answers. He tilts his head to the side toward his friend. "This is Cassie."

"I remember, from color theory right?" Justin tried to remember which class it was.

"Yeah. I'm glad that's over with." She laughed softly.

"I heard you had your babies." Tyler says just recalling. "How are they?"

Justin grinned getting to brag about his daughters. "They're great, two girls, Ava and Zoe. They're almost four months already." He beamed taking out the pictures he had of them. He showed anyone who was interested.

"They are so adorable. They take right after you. It must be hard leaving them." Cassie spoke up.

"I almost had to be forced to leave today. But we have a really good nanny and I only have to be gone six hours a day." He says trying to convince himself he was okay.

"Are you still working at the diner? I haven't seen you there in a while and I always forget to ask."

"No, I quit there back in January since it was too much stress on my body along with school. It wasn't good for the babies or me." He explains not wanting to get into all the complications he had back then. "Now my job is taking care of my children." He says it with a smile knowing it was the best job he could have.

"That's right, you have an older man for a boyfriend." Tyler teases.

"He's not that much older, he just makes enough to cover all our expenses without me working." He defends although he knew that his friend wasn't seriously making fun of him.

Justin spent the rest of lunch talking to his two classmates. It was nice talking to people his own age, other than Daphne, and at similar points in their lives, only his involved a little family of his own. He found that he had missed a lot during the summer having been preoccupied with the twins. He remembered when he wanted to do all the things that Tyler and Cassie talked about, but now his priorities had shifted and he found while he did miss the freedom to come and go as he pleased, he was much happier with what he did have.

Justin returned home to find Julie in the kitchen washing cleaning up. She looked up at the sound of the door. "Hey, I thought you'd be back early." She says seeing him. "The girls should be waking up soon."

"Thanks." He murmured before going to the girl's cribs. He looked into Zoe's to see that she was still asleep, but when he looked down at Ava, he saw two blue eyes staring back up at him. He gently scooped her up into his arms. It felt like a weight was lifted holding his daughter. "I missed you baby girl." He says placing a kiss onto her head. "How did everything go?" Justin asks when he walked back over to the kitchen with Ava still in his arms.

"They missed you, but adjusted fine." She assures him. No parent wanted their child to suffer, but they also wanted to know that they were wanted and missed just a little. "The girls will get used to you being gone during the day."

"It's so hard since we've been inseparable since they came home from the hospital." Justin sighs. "Brian thinks that I need to learn how to be apart from them. I guess I agree." Justin tells her. "I'm lucky though that I don't have to work and go to school. I get to be home more."

Justin sent Julie on her way after she filed him in on the girl's activity for the day. He was surprised at how easy it was to go from college student back to dad so quickly. He had thought everything would be so different with his being away during the day, but the girls didn't seem fazed by it one bit. He reasoned that they were still too young to fully grasp what was going on.

By the time Brian got home, he already had dinner done and the girls fed and changed and once again napping. Brian took in everything once he was done getting changed. He was absolutely amazed by the blond. He felt that he truly won out when it came to partners. He sat down at the table with Justin and couldn't help the smirk that came across his face.

"What?" Justin asks catching it.

"I just can't believe how domesticated we have become." He found himself answering truthfully. It was strange that he didn't find the need to hold back from Justin anymore. He actually enjoyed having someone with whom he could share what he was thinking.

"I know you've always hated that word and never wanted to have it happen to you." Justin says looking down at his plate not wanting to look up at Brian knowing his disappointment would show through his eyes.

"You're right. If you told me that this would be my life a year ago, I would have laughed and asked what you were on." Brian says seeing Justin's shoulders slump further. "But that was before you or the kids." He quickly added. "While I never could do the PTA and all that, I have no regrets with the life we have. I don't even miss all the tricks I used to have since I have the best already."

Justin tried to keep the smile away but couldn't. He knew Brian had reassured him before that he was happy with their life, he still sometimes wondered if the brunet would get bored of it. "You miss some of your old life, and that's okay."

"There are certain perks to being single, but not enough to make me want to give up what we have." Brian assures him. "So how was your first day?" Brian asks changing the subject to less serious matters.

"It was great. I forgot how much I loved going to PIFA. I missed the girls, but the time went by so quickly before school was out and I could come home." Justin continued to fill Brian in on his day as they ate. Brian just smiled and listened to his lover chat endlessly about everything that happened. He could see how happy the blond was and couldn't help but be happy for him. "Did anything interesting happen at work today?" Justin asks turning his attention off himself and onto Brian.

"Not really. I got a big account today that the whole senior staff wanted, but the head of the company demanded he wanted me to handle the account." Brian passes it off as no big deal, but he knew it was if he was being asked for pacifically because of his talent. He just wasn't used to being able to tell anyone about those types of things.

"Brian that's a big deal. This will just shove into their faces just how talented you are." Justin says proud of him. "One day you'll have your own ad agency and get all the accounts. Ryder will be asking you for a job."

"Slow down Sunshine. I have a long way to go before I can even start to thinking about opening my own agency." While he liked how excited Justin got for him, he didn't want him getting carried away and then having him let down.

Never having had anyone to talk to about his day before, he was surprised at how much he liked it. There was no way that he missed to coming home to an empty loft everyday or the lonely nights once he was done with his tricks. Life was so much better now that Justin was in it. He would never have imagined liking being part of a couple as he did with Justin. The only thing he ever knew of family was the one he grew up in. That scared him enough to never want one. Yet, one blond twink he picked up one night changed his whole outlook on love.

Justin walked into the diner during lunch break. He had an added glow of happiness around him that Debbie picked up right away. He sat down at the counter next to Emmett happy to see him there alone. Ever since Justin told Michael how it was going to be if he was going to stay in Brian's life he hadn't been looking forward to seeing him again. He liked Emmett though, he was always so much fun to be around with his bright personality.

"Hey Em." Justin said in greeting.

"Hey baby. Are you on break from school?"

"Yeah and I had a craving for a cheeseburger and fries. I can get that anywhere, but its better company here." Justin explains making Emmett smile at the compliment.

Debbie lean on her elbows on the counter in front of him after putting in the order. "So what's got you so shining so bright today?" She asks knowing it must have something to do with Brian.

Justin looked from Emmett to Deb seeing that he was pretty obvious. "Brian and I have been together for a year today." He announced trying not to sound as happy as he was. He wanted to shout that he had managed to do what no one else was able by keeping Brian interested for more than a few hours. He had the feeling he would get forever with him.

"I never thought I would see this day." Debbie says shaking her head. "Brian actually opened his heart to another and look how far it's gotten him. I'm proud of you both."

"So what's in store for you love birds?" Emmett asks.

"We're just going to stay home." Justin says letting his disappointment show through a little. It had been his decision not thinking it was worth the trouble of getting a babysitter for a couple of hours.

"With the babies?" Debbie jumps in. "That's not much of an anniversary."

"Please don't call it that in front of Brian, he might freak out. He hasn't said anything against celebrating yet and I know if people make a fuss over it, he'll hate the whole thing." Justin pleaded with her. While Brian was okay with showing his feelings with Justin, he knew if everyone made a big thing about them, he would pull away.

"I won't say a word." Debbie promise. "But let me take the babies tonight. I hardly get much time with them and I'm sure it wouldn't hurt for you to have a night off."

Justin thought about it and decided he could like some uninterrupted time with Brian. "Alright, but I have to make sure Brian doesn't care."

"Of course. I'll stop by after my shift if you don't tell me otherwise." Justin agrees that's okay before finishing his meal and returning to campus.

"So Debbie wants to take the girls for the whole night?" Brian asks repeating what Justin just told him to make sure he had it right. "And you are okay with it?"

"Yes and Yes." Justin smiled. "I thought we'd recreate our first night together." He says wrapping his arms around Brian's neck and pulling him close.

Brian raises his eyebrow at him. "You want me to pick you up in front of Babylon?" He asks confused.

"I thought more along the lines of later that night."



"You want me to fuck you all night." He says catching on. "That was a great night. Only I got a virgin that night. I was the first and only one to touch him."

Justin kisses his chin. "You're still the first and only one." Justin says between kisses down Brian's long neck.

Brian tried not to let that affect him so much. Although he had been pretty sure it was true, hearing Justin say he was only his was more than he could ever expect. He found himself liking it entirely too much. It didn't surprise him though since he knew just how much Justin loved him. What did surprise him was that he was completely monogamous for almost a year. It was another of those things that he would never have fathomed he would enjoy, much less actually do. "So when's Debbie going to be here?" He asks with a grin.

Justin didn't even get his answer out before there was a knock. "I guess that's her." Justin says pulling away grudgingly to answer the door.

After Debbie left again with the twins, Brian and Justin found themselves alone for the first time since the babies were brought home. "It's hard to believe that it's already been a year."

Justin rested his head against Brian's chest. "A very good year."

#### Chapter Twenty-Four

Justin sat bouncing Zoe in his lap. He loved the sound of the giggles coming out of his daughter. She was always happiest being the center of attention. She wasn't anywhere near being shy and gladly let anyone hold her as long as she was in a good mood. However, if she was fussy, she wanted to be held by Brian, but if he wasn't available, she would settle for Justin. Both Brian and Justin had thought both girls would be more attached to Justin since he was the birth parent and spent the most time with them, but both girls were really attached to Brian.

Ava was just a happy baby period. She was shyer than her sister preferring to stay close to Justin. With Zoe such a handful most of the time, Justin was glad that Ava had such a sunny disposition. Most anything would please her and she didn't need to have people constantly giving her their attention.

Justin kept his eye on Ava as she played on the floor while still giving Zoe the attention she demanded. It was like the little girl knew if she wasn't the center of attention at any given moment. Most people would think it was just like Brian, but Justin knew him much better. He knew Brian didn't mind being in the background as long as he wasn't forgotten. Most of the time he was more focused on others rather than himself. All of their friends had said Brian was a selfish asshole that would hurt him, but Justin thought they could only see what Brian wanted them to rather than what was actually the truth. He still didn't understand how people who had known him for so long didn't see what he could be the first time they met.

Brian appeared at the edge of the large rug they had set up so the girls had somewhere to play off of the hard wood floor. They had been slowly making changes as the babies grew. It was better for Brian to take it slowly so he didn't have a complete melt down about his loft being changed into a baby safe environment. When he had first found the loft, it was supposed to be his fuck pad that impressed all those who entered. Now it was turning into a family home despite the expensive furniture. There wasn't an area of the loft that hadn't been invaded by baby things. Even his work area wasn't spared. On the desk were pictures of his little girls and ones with the whole family. He was constantly finding toys in his chair. Brian had tried to be firm about not having anything baby related in their bedroom, but with the limited space now available in the once spacious loft, they had to break that rule.

He had just once again put everything back where it belonged even if he knew it would be out of place before the end of the day. He sat down at the edge of the carpeting with Justin and the twins. He twirled

one of the many stuff animals littering the floor in his hands as he watched Justin with their daughter. He could never get enough of watching him with their babies. He had never thought people with babies were all that appealing, but with Justin, he thought there hadn't been a more perfect sight before. Knowing it was his partner and his baby that the blond held was what made it special. If he saw some random guy with a child, he knew he wouldn't feel the same as he did when it was Justin. Sometimes when he caught himself thinking these things he tried to figure out what had happened to him. The thoughts were too lesbionic to think they were coming from his mind. For the most part, he had given in to being changed by Justin and his daughters. He didn't think someone could have such a life changing thing happen and not come out differently. Just one look at his daughters and he forgot all about what life used to be.

Brian listened to Justin talking to Zoe while he watched Ava. He was surprised when she pushed herself up by her arms and took a few tentative movements toward him. He quickly got Justin's attention at that he could see Ava's first attempt at crawling. When she fell forward after her arms gave out, Justin wanted to help her, but Brian held him off knowing she had to do it on her own. She soon was up again and making her way to her daddy. She tried to crawl onto his lap, but Brian could see that was a little beyond her at that point and helped her up.

"I guess she really wanted to get to you." Justin says smiling. With the babies now at six months, they both knew that they would start crawling and hoped that they would be there to see it for the first time. Like usual, it was Ava to do it first. Now that she had, it wouldn't be long before Zoe would follow in her sister's path. Ava was definitely the leader of the two since she was so independent. Zoe constantly tried to mimic her. Justin put Zoe down to see if she would copy her.

Brian could tell what he was doing. "They aren't always going to do things together." He warned the blond, but as soon as he said this, Zoe started to crawl towards him. Soon he had two squirming girls in his lap.

"I wonder why they both chose to crawl to you." Justin voices out loud.

"Jealous?" Brian teased and let Ava move from his lap. Justin just huffed, but the smile was back as Ava made her way to him.

He scooped her up making her giggle. "You were just in their line of sight." He tosses back. He looks down at his daughter in his arms. "You're getting to be such a big girl. Soon you'll be talking and walking."

"Don't rush them. I like them this size." Brian says looking at his own little bundle of energy in his lap. "This one is going to be trouble. I can tell." He let Zoe back down where she wanted. She was content to stay still since she had to upstage her sister. She didn't mind following her, she just wanted to do it better. Soon both girls were worn out from their first foray into crawling and were asleep on the rug with their heads together.

Justin moved so that Brian could wrap him in his arms. "It must be nice to have a twin. They'll always have a friend with them growing up." Justin says watching the way they always wanted to be together in sleep.

"Or a constant pest." Brian remarked. "Not all siblings get along. I know from experience." He would never call his sister Claire a friend.

"Yeah, but you have years between you. Our daughters have a special bond. They'll experience everything together." They both got up to gently pick the sleeping babies up and put them in their cribs.

"We better shower and get ready for tonight." Brian reminded him after he checked the time. "Your first show." Brian says full of pride for the other man.

"It's not my show, I'm just being featured in it." Justin didn't know why he felt so modest about being in a real art show. It was being held at PIFA, but it wouldn't be just students in it. Only a select group of students would have their work featured. All the other students involved only had one piece, but he had

two. He knew his peers were envious of him, but he couldn't let himself get too worked up about it. This was what he had been working towards and he didn't want to be let down if it wasn't all he expected.

"It's still great. How many other students will there be?"

"Four others." Justin answered not knowing why it interested Brian and he knew his curiosity came across in his voice.

"Don't you think being one of five out of the whole school is impressive?" Brian pushed not letting Justin not accept how great he was.

"I guess." He admits softly. "I'm nervous my stuff is not going to go over well."

"If it wasn't good, they wouldn't have picked your work."

Once the nanny had arrived to watch the twins for the night, Brian and Justin left for dinner before the show. Brian could tell Justin was preoccupied by his nerves since he barely talked when usually Brian couldn't get him to shut up. When he passed up dessert, Brian knew it was serious. As they walked from the car to the college, Brian held his hand to ground him. Such an act of hand holding in public didn't happen often for Brian, but he knew Justin needed to know he was close.

Justin took Brian around the whole room even though all Brian wanted was to see his work. He realized though that Justin was building up to being able to show him. "Do you want something to drink?" Justin suggests trying to put off what he knew was coming.

"Come on." Brian says pulling him with him. "You've never been this self-conscious before." Brian points out. They stood in front of Justin's work speechless. Justin for seeing his work on display for the first time and Brian for the images in front of him. Especially the smaller piece. It was him, only it wasn't noticeable right away. "Now I can see why you were stalling." Brian says finally finding words. "Is this how you see me?" Brian says looking away not able to look at the raw love and desire of feeling coming from the piece.

Justin smiled at Brian's reaction. "Yes. Beautiful, open, mine." Justin says mirroring the feeling he had when the vision for the piece came to him. Justin looked closer seeing a red sticker by the title. "Someone bought it." Justin exclaimed.

Brian looked too and it was true. "Someone else thinks you're brilliant."

"They probably think you're hot." Justin couldn't contain his excitement. "I've never sold anything before."

"This is only the beginning." Justin smiled liking the way Brian supported him and his work. He could also tell that Brian was proud of him. He knew it wasn't Brian's way to make too much of something wanting him to see for himself that he was talented.

They left to go get drinks where they ran into Tyler and Cassie from his school. Justin quickly introduced them. "Bri, this is Tyler and Cassie from class and this is my partner Brian."

For Brian's part, he pretended to be interested in what the three were talking about, but he had never much enjoyed small talk and excused himself after a while.

"He's so hot." Cassie gushed as soon as Brian was away. "How did you get a guy like him?" She asks and suddenly realizes how that sounded by the look on both Justin's and Tyler's faces. "I didn't mean you're not desirable, it just seems like all the really hot ones are gay."

"Lucky me." Tyler voiced.

"Your stuff is so good. I can see why you were chosen." Cassie says ignoring Tyler's comment.

"Thanks." Justin blushed a little at the praise. He wasn't used to it yet even if he had heard it a lot already tonight. "I'm just so thrilled that I sold my first painting. I thought it wouldn't happen for years."

Justin stayed talking to them for a while before deciding to rescue Brian from his boredom of having to mingle with the rest of the art crowd.

After walking around for a little while, Brian found himself back in front of Justin's work. He had already purchased Justin's other piece which was much more abstract, but just as great. He wanted Justin to have one of the artwork from his first real show. Now he was admiring the talent Justin had when someone walked up next to him. "The artist is very gifted. He's going to go far in the art world." He said in what Brian would call a hoity tone. "The way he captured the subject's inner beauties as well as his outer are amazing." Brian knew that the man knew it was him. "But with such an intriguing subject, I would expect nothing less." He finally turned to Brian. "I'm Thomas Sullivan, the artist's professor."

Brian shook the offered hand not wanting to do anything to ruin things for Justin at school. "Brian Kinney, the artist's partner." He says behind a smirk.

Thomas Sullivan seemed to be measuring Brian up. "You would make an excellent model." He says like he was the first to discover it.

"Sorry, I only sit for one artist." Brian turned him down. He used to hate having to stay still for Justin to draw him, but now he was relieved when the blond asked him so he knew he was still alluring to the artist's eyes.

Justin found Brian talking with his professor. He had heard the guy could be a little heavy to handle if he saw something he liked. Just about every gay man liked Brian. He quickly made his way over hoping before anything happened. "Hey Brian, I see you've met one of my professors." Justin says letting himself into the conversation.

"We were just chatting about how good your work is." Brian tells him. "It was nice talking, but we should go." Brian says turning away.

"Are you ready?" Justin asks knowing he is. He was ready to go home and be alone with his family. The art world would be there again tomorrow.

## Chapter Twenty-Five

Michael watched as Brian rocked his daughter. He didn't know which one it was. It was never clear to him which girl was which. He wondered how Brian knew. It must be some innate parental thing.

"What have you been doing?" Brian asks giving his attention to Michael while the baby slept in his arms.

"I met someone." Michael says quietly.

Brian grinned. "Mikey, what do you mean you met someone?" He asks teasingly.

Michael rolled his head back. "Mom got it in her head that I needed someone and she wouldn't give up until I went to see this friend of hers that's a matchmaker." Michael explains happy to finally get to talk with his best friend.

"You actually let your mom set you up and actually liked the guy?" Brian said in disbelief.

"No, he was a total loser. But after I ditched him, I literally ran into this guy right outside. His name's Ben." Brian listened as Michael became more animated talking about the guy who had him completely smitten.

"I'm happy for you Mikey." He says truthfully. He hated how depressed his friend had been the last year. It had been easy to rely on each other for a replacement for the lack of boyfriends in their lives before finding Justin. Then it became obvious to Brian how much they were missing out on. He wanted Michael to have the happiness he had. "I hope he's what you want, whatever it is you want."

Michael smiled believing that Brian's words were honest. Sometimes he forgot Brian was on his side. He just became angry with him for not being the person Brian needed or wanted to be with. Now he could see that maybe Brian had it right all along and they weren't meant for each other.

Ava's eyes focused on Justin's face as he held her while feeding her bottle to her. She tried gripping it, but her hands were too small to get a good hold. Instead, she relied on her dad to do what she couldn't yet. "Your belly must have been pretty empty, huh?" Justin says softly to the little girl as she quickly finished off her bottle. Justin brings her up to his shoulder and rubs her back.

Debbie sat down at the table next to Justin. "I remember doing that with Michael." She says brushing Ava's short blond hair back. "Your mother sent me a picture of you as a baby. She was right that the girls look just like you did. Just so fucking adorable."

"You still talk to my mom?" Justin asks shocked and a little concerned. He had no idea his mother had a spy in Pittsburgh.

"Mothers worry. You should call yours more often." She admonishes him. "I worry about Michael still, but hopefully this new guy he's seeing will be good for him."

Justin looked up suddenly. "Michael's dating someone?" He rocks Ava when she starts to get restless.

Debbie just gave him a simple smile. "She seems really happy." She says when Ava starts babbling nonsense.

"She loves to be rocked, but Zoe loves to be bounced. They are so different already, yet rely on each other heavily." Justin says perplexed by his daughters. He turns when he hears Zoe crying. He knew by her cry she needed to be changed. A moment later, he saw Brian going upstairs with the girl glad that he didn't try to hand her off to him. It was surprising Brian really didn't mind taking care of their daughters' needs, not even their dirty diapers.

Brian went upstairs to change Zoe's diaper. He was just finishing when Lindsay came in and suddenly stopped seeing him in the room. "I was just getting something for Debbie." She explained coming into the room.

Brian didn't know what to say to her. They had once been close, but it was awkward now after everything being so tense the last year and a half. "I miss you Linds." He settled on the truth.

It stopped Lindsay from moving. She turned with a regretful look in her eyes. "Me too." She walks back over to him. "How could things get to this point where we don't even say hello anymore?"

Brian shrugged jostling Zoe in his arm. "We said and did things that weren't right."

Lindsay sits down on the bed. "It was me. I was jealous and angry that you had something I wanted. It was never your fault." Brian shrugs neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Instead, he sat next to her showing he was open to listening. "I really wanted a baby and I thought you'd be the perfect father. I can tell now that you would have been a good choice. But I know that it was wrong of me to make such demands of you."

"Maybe if I met Justin later I might have gone along with it. Or it could have been him that made me want to be a parent in the first place. I don't know. Things happened the way they did and we have to live with them." Brian tells her. "I'm happy and I know before you became obsessed with having a baby with me, you were happy too."

Lindsay smiled ruefully. "Do you think we could ever be like we were?"

"I don't know, I'd like to." Brian hated being so open, but he missed his friendship with Lindsay too much to care about his pride. He hated that his daughters didn't know her and she didn't them.

"Your girls are adorable." Lindsay says looking into the big blue eyes staring up at her from Brian's lap. She reached out and stroked the soft strands of blond hair. "Can I hold her?" She asks tentatively knowing it was pushing it. Brian took a moment before nodding and letting Lindsay lift Zoe from his lap onto hers. "Which one is she?"

"Zoe." Brian answers watching as his girl giggled from Lindsay bouncing her on her lap.

"She reminds me of you. You can see it in her eyes when she's happy. It's the same look you have." Lindsay says trying to remember the last time Brian had that look when she was around. It had been a while.

Brian smiled at his little girl as she looked up at him happily taking in all the attention. "She's my little devil always giving Justin a hard time. She seems to enjoy causing trouble for him."

"She doesn't like Justin?" Lindsay asks confused. She had seen Justin with both girls and they always seemed so happy.

"No, she adores him, she just likes a lot of attention. I guess it's her way of competing with her sister." Brian explains.

"You really know them. I can see now why you didn't like the idea of having a child that didn't live with you. I was really selfish." Lindsay says feeling lost. She still desperately wanted a baby and wanted Brian to be the father, but she knew that could never happen with the way things stood between them. She knew she had to show him she was sorry. It just hurt still and holding a child of Brian's that should have been hers, but instead looked so much like Justin felt like a stab in the heart. Yet, she couldn't help but be happy for her friend knowing just from the way he looked at his daughter he had exactly what he wanted. It all was confusing her. "I'm really sorry Brian. I just hope you can forgive me."

"I can forgive you for myself, but I don't know if I can for how you treated Justin. You put so much stress on him with the way you acted and attacked him constantly. I know you went to see him the day he went into early labor." Lindsay gasped not knowing he knew since he never said anything.

"I never meant to cause him harm or the twins." Lindsay said in all honesty. While she was jealous, she would never wish that pain on anyone.

"I know." Brian says when he notices Justin at the door watching them. He could tell Justin was wary of Lindsay holding Zoe. He didn't trust her like Brian did, but he also barely got the chance to get to know the soft, caring side of her before she became obsessed with having Brian's baby. "Justin."

"I just came to get Zoe. It's time for her bottle." Justin lied just wanting to get his daughter safely into his arms. Lindsay didn't say anything as Justin took the girl from her and held her close to his chest. Justin was curious as to what they were talking about, but he decided now wasn't the time to ask. "We should go soon. Ava is getting cranky because she's tired."

"I'll be down in a second." Brian says kissing him softly before the blond left the room. "Let's just give this some time. I'm not quite ready to forgive and forget." Brian tells Lindsay before following Justin's path.

Justin put the girls to bed before joining Brian on the couch. He watched as Brian flipped through channels on the TV without settling on anything. Finally, he just set it on an old movie he had liked. "What were you and Lindsay talking about?" Justin asks when he couldn't hold off any longer.

Brian shrugged. "Just about how things got messed up between us." Brian found himself answering. He never could tell Justin it's none of his business like he did with everyone else. Besides, it did sort of involve him. Everything in his life now seemed to involve the other man.

"No kidding, but I think messed up isn't strong enough to describe what she put us through." Justin says letting all the pent up anger he still had into his words.

"She's sorry, but you're right. She did cause a lot of problems and it's going to take a while before I can begin to really forgive her." Brian agrees with him. "I just think she's ready to change if she was willing to be so open and regretful of what she did. We've been friends a while and I should give her a chance."

"You don't owe her anything, but if you want to believe her then I guess we should give her a shot at being in our lives again."

"You're a good person." Brian says kissing his temple. "So Mikey has a boyfriend."

"I know, Debbie told me all about him. I think she's relieved that he's given up on trying to get you." Justin says with a smile. His day had gotten so much better after hearing that. He had always liked Michael and maybe now that he wasn't chasing after Brian they could be friends.

"I really hope he doesn't screw this up before he gives the guy a chance. Knowing Mikey he will." Brian sighs thinking of his friend's problems. He hoped things worked out for Michael so that he didn't have to come running to him every time he needed support. Brian had his own family to do that for now.

Justin snuggled close to Brian's side. "My mom wants us to go see her over my Thanksgiving break." Justin brings up the topic he had been avoiding all week since his mother's phone call. "I told her that I'd talk to you."

"Justin." Brian starts whining about it already. "Do we have to go through this every year?"

"I know, but I want to see my mom and Molly. I already told her we're staying here for Christmas because I want the twins' first Christmas at home." Justin says moving out of Brian's arms and sitting back a little to face him. "She can't come here because she's hosting Thanksgiving at her house this year."

"I don't want to go and I don't want to have to travel with two six-month-olds. It's too much hassle to bring everything we need and I doubt Ava and Zoe will enjoy being on a plane with so many people and then having to stay in a strange place." Brian tells him like it was final for him as far as he was concerned. "I can't say you can't go, but I'm not."

"Why is everything always your way?" Justin says pouting. He sat back against the sofa obviously put off.

"Because I'm right." Brian replies. He looked at Justin sulking and pulled him into his arms. "Jus, don't be mad at me. She can come for Christmas and I won't complain at all." Justin gives him a disbelieving look. "Okay not too much." He amends.

Justin laughs and settles back into his place by Brian. For the moment, he was appeased, but he knew his mother wouldn't be so easy to convince. He knew that she would say Brian was keeping her from her son and her grandchildren. There was nothing he could do because he hadn't been looking forward to all the trouble it would take to bring the girls to Chicago to see his mother. Brian was right thinking it was better to wait for his mother to come to them.

## Chapter Twenty-Six

Justin hummed along to the music coming from the stereo. He loved this time of year and from the looks of it, so did his daughters. They were fascinated by the blinking lights on the Christmas tree and all the shiny decorations. He had to make sure to keep them from getting at the decorations since they were starting to crawl everywhere and that was exactly where they went to first.

It was the second day of his winter break and he had spent most of the afternoon turning the loft into one big holiday scene. He knew Brian was going to flip when he got home and saw it. The older man had agreed after being pestered for days that they could get a tree. He even helped pick it out, but Justin had decided on his own that it wasn't enough. He wanted his daughters first Christmas to be perfect. It was his first Christmas at the loft too and he wanted it to look festive just like his mom always made their home.

He quickly scooped up Zoe on her way to the tree. "You want to see the tree baby girl." He says bringing her over. She immediately started reaching for the Santa ornament. "I know you like Santa. We'll make Daddy take you to see him. He'll love that." Justin says smiling just thinking about it. He knew Brian would whine and moan about it, but he would do it anyways. Zoe babbled her agreement.

He put both girls in their playpen with some toys to keep them from getting into things they shouldn't as he started cleaning up the clutter he had made. He stood back observing his decorating and concluded that he liked what he had accomplished. Now he just had to sell the idea to Brian. He wished he had the skill Brian had at making people want what they just seconds before thought they didn't.

For a moment he thought back to the nightmare he had last year at this time when he was so scared that he was going to lose his children. He remembered Brian coming to him in the hospital and how horrible he felt for letting himself get into that position where he put all their lives at risk. It was just another reason he wanted this to be a good Christmas. He needed good memories to push the other ones away. He didn't want to forget how Brian had been there for him during that time. It was really then that he knew for sure that they were together for whatever came their way. He knew he could always lean on the older man if things got tough again. He knew their relationship was a forever one.

Brian slid the loft door open to an unrecognizable loft. He was going to kill Justin. There wasn't an area of their home not covered in holiday spirit. He set his coat on one of the barstools and was about to yell Justin's name when he saw him dancing with Ava in his arms. It melted his heart just that little bit more. A small smile crossed his face as he silently watched them. It was simply adorable he thought. That was another thing he would have to berate Justin for later, for making him able to think things were adorable.

Justin finally sees Brian and smiles brightly. Brian raises an eyebrow and gestures to the loft. "What's all this Sunshine?" He let a hint of the annoyance into his voice just so Justin knew he was unhappy without upsetting the girls.

"What are you talking about?" He smiles innocently.



Brian picks Zoe up out of her playpen where she was playing. "Justin, why is my daughter wearing a fat old guy on her shirt?"

"It's Santa." Justin says coming over to him.

"That's supposed to make it better?" Brian asks sarcastically. He crinkled his nose looking at it.

Justin shook his head at him. "She likes it."

Brian looked down and saw that Ava was wearing a matching sweater only with a reindeer on it instead. "Just because you're a freak about this Christmas stuff doesn't mean you have to push it on our innocent daughters."

Justin huffed. "Brian, get over it. I should make you wear a sweater with scrooge on it." He laughed at the offended look on his partner's face.

"Justin, I said one tree, not fill our home full of so much junk it makes Debbie's look tastefully decorated." Brian says since Debbie was known for having garish decorations jammed into her house.

Justin opens his mouth in offense. "That is so wrong Brian." He looked around at his decorating job. "Okay maybe I did over do it a little." He concedes. "But I just wanted everything perfect."

Brian hated to see Justin unhappy so he knew he would just have to put up with the new decorations. "Alright, but this stuff goes away on the twenty sixth." Brian breaks down.

Justin smiled his famous sunshine smile at him. "We need to finish everything before my mom gets in later today. We still need to go to the store for dinner."

"I'll go. You stay here and make this place look somewhat more presentable." He says taking Ava from Justin so that he had both girls. "And I'm taking my girls so that you don't make them wear anything more hideous than these sweaters." Justin's frown followed him out the door.

Jennifer arrived at the loft after checking into her hotel. Molly was upset that she had to spend Christmas away from home just because Justin didn't want to go to them. She was used to Justin always coming first in their mother's eyes, but she had hoped that for once her mom wouldn't bend over backwards to please him. Justin had always been the favorite and she had always liked it that way since their mother didn't smother her like she did Justin. The only time it bothered her was when it directly affected her like having to go to Pittsburgh because Justin wanted to spend Christmas there.

Jennifer hugged her son when he opened the door. "It's so good to see you Justin." She says before placing a kiss on his cheek.

"You too mom." He then hugged his little sister. "I'm happy you decided to come Mol. It wouldn't be the same without you."

"Let me see my little granddaughters." Jennifer says moving inside the loft. "You really went all out here didn't you?" She says taking in the loft.

"I might have went a little overboard with the directions." Justin agreed. "Ava and Zoe are with Brian." Justin says knowing that his mother wanted to see them.

"Why does Brian have the twins?" Jennifer asks.

Justin wasn't sure what that was supposed to mean. "Uh, he's their father." He points out.

"I just meant I didn't know he took them out. I figured they usually stayed with you." Jennifer didn't know why she thought Brian wouldn't take an active part of his children's life. She just had Craig to compare him to and her ex-husband hardly ever did anything with their kids until they were much older. She didn't see Brian as the type that could handle two babies.

"Brian is very much part of our daughters lives." Justin hated how he always had to defend Brian to his mother. He would think by now she would see how great Brian was and how lucky he was to have someone like him. Not everyone was willing to change their lives completely when they had kids.

"That's good to hear." Jennifer says giving him a little smile to let him know she meant it. She decided to change the subject. "How did your finals turn out?"

"They went really well. I don't have the official grades yet, but I know I was in the top of all my classes." Justin had no trouble talking about his accomplishments like Brian did.

"You've always been so talented." Jennifer says proud of her son. "I'm glad you decided to follow your heart and pursue art instead of business. You would never have been happy with that."

"I agree. I see what Brian has to put up with and I don't think I could handle it like he can. I like being able to do my own thing." Justin says showing just how happy he was.

Justin turned when he heard the noise outside the door realizing Brian had to set down the girl's car seat to open the door. He went over to help his man out. The door open just as he got there surprising Brian. He gave Brian a quick kiss before taking the girls inside to his mother leaving Brian to deal with unloading the groceries from the car. Justin immediately started to go through them as Jennifer got to know her granddaughters all over again.

Brian hated coming here, but for some reason he was always pulled back to the house he grew up in. He knew his mother would hold it over him if he didn't come see her at holidays. He knew that he couldn't come on Christmas since Justin would want him with their family so he had to go a few days early. He had told Justin he had to go out for a little while leaving him in the company of his mother and sister. He had chosen to go during the day in hopes of avoiding his father. Every time he had to see him it ended up with him hurt. His father's words could still get to him even after all the time had passed since he had lived at home. There probably would never come a time when he could get beyond the past.

He entered the house not at all surprised to see his mother in the kitchen already with a glass of wine in her hand. She smiled at him, but it didn't reach her eyes. "Was I expecting you?" She asks trying to think through her muddled brain.

"No." He says setting the flowers he brought for her onto the table and going to get a vase to put them in.

"I got your present you sent." She follows him behind the counter. "It's very beautiful, much different than you usually send me." She says referring to the painting he had sent her for Christmas. It was the one he bought at Justin's show. "I asked your father to hang it, but you know how he is. It'll be next Christmas before he even gets the nails out."

"I can do it for you if you know where you want it." He offers knowing Justin's work was too good to not be on display.

"You're a god boy." She let him put it up in the entryway. "So what do I have to thank for this appearance. You hardly come around since you moved out. All I ever have is your father. Your sister is always off doing god knows what."

Brian knew that his mother couldn't just appreciate the fact that he had come. She always had to make a big deal out of it and how lonely she was. He had half a mind to tell her if she weren't so cold and unfeeling that she would have more people around. Instead, he kept it to himself. "I can't come for Christmas day." He tells her.

"You weren't here last year either." She remarks with her back turned to him while straightening the already perfect counter. "I just hope you aren't alone."

"I'm not. I'm seeing someone. For over a year now." Brian looked at his hands as he made his confession. He was tired of hiding Justin from his so-called family. He wouldn't tell her about their daughters, but maybe if in time she can accept his relationship, than maybe he would tell her about Ava and Zoe.

"Why haven't you told me before now?"

"Because I know you wouldn't like it and I'm not ready to share that part of my life with you." He says honestly. He could just see what she would say if she knew he was with a man. She would more than likely never speak to him again. He was sure she would be praying for his soul constantly. It was something he wasn't prepared for yet.

He spent as long as he could stand with her before stating he needed to leave. "You'll miss your father." She tells him when he starts to put on his coat.

"That was pretty much the point." Brian drawls taking a look at Justin's painting on the way out getting some satisfaction that his lovers work was up in his homophobic parent's house. That was only the added bonus, but the real reason he liked it there was because there was something beautiful in a place that was so dreadful for him as a kid. Now going there wouldn't be quite so bad if he had a reminder that he had Justin now to ease his pain.

The family was sitting around Debbie's table having dinner. Justin was pleased to see how well his mother got along with his friends, especially Debbie. It was a little unnerving not knowing what they talked about, but he was sure it was about him. He was glad though that he could be around his whole family right then since this had become his family since he met Brian. Debbie was like his mother in law and she treated the twins as her granddaughters. He still wondered if he ever would meet Brian's birth family, but he understood that his friends were more of a real family to him. Now that Lindsay was being civil to him, it was less tense at the family dinners. He could see that Brian was happier now that he had one of his oldest friends back. While he was still wary of Lindsay, he was willing to put that aside for Brian's sake.

After dinner, everyone moved to the living room. Justin was surprised to find his mother and Brian laughing together about something. He was glad they finally got over whatever it was that was between them. They even had a good conversation last night during dinner. He appreciated them both taking the chance now.

When he got over to them, Brian pulled him down onto his lap and wrapping his arms around his waist holding him close. "Your mom was just telling me about your teddy bear." Brian tells him making Justin blush. He was sure she told him how he would take it everywhere. It wasn't that bad, but it wasn't something he wanted his partner to know.

"Mom." He whines burying his face in Brian's shoulder.

"It was adorable. Just like your daughter loves her blanket." She says smiling at Justin's embarrassment. It was her job to embarrass her children in front of their boyfriends.

The next day Brian was already at work taking down all the decorations around the loft as Justin said goodbye to his mom and sister. Once they were done promising to see each other soon, they were once again on their way to Chicago. Justin relaxed on the couch watching as his winter wonderland was torn apart. "Does it really bother you that much?" He had to ask.

"Yes." Brian says getting frustrated with the lights. Then there was the fact that the girls kept trying to play with what he put in the boxes. They really didn't want the shiny things to go away.

"I'll do it later." He says reaching out for Brian to join him on the couch. Brian joined him forgetting about everything else then. "Thank you for putting up with me." Justin says curling up into Brian's body.

"Yeah, yeah." He grumbles, but tightens his arms around the blond as they watched their children playing in front of them.

## Chapter Twenty-Seven

Justin was busy finishing his projects for his final exams. He was glad his sophomore year was finally over. The year had been completely hectic having to juggle family and his schoolwork. The twins took up most of his time when he wasn't at school and then add in Brian and he felt like he was constantly going. Then to put more strain on him, he was planning Ava and Zoe's first birthday party for that weekend. He had tried to get Brian to handle the party arrangements, but the man had said he didn't know how to throw a birthday party since he'd never had one himself. Part of Justin actually believed him, he was quite aware of Brian's messed up childhood and maybe the man really didn't know how to throw a first birthday party. He also knew it had a lot to do with the man not wanting to do it either. Those were always the types of things he left for Justin to handle.

Justin heard Brian calling him over to him frantically. He rushed over thinking something was wrong, but it was just Brian sitting on the floor with their daughters. He had Ava standing with his help, but that wasn't anything new since they had been doing it for over a month. Brian looked up at him and smiled before turning back to Ava. "Do it again baby girl." Brian prompts her.

Ava bounced a few times before looking up at Brian. "Dada." She states clearly. She was smiling at Brian knowing that was her Dada was smiling at her. "Dada." She repeats happily.

Justin gasped hearing Ava speak for the first time a real word. He kneels down next to Brian resting his chin on his shoulder. "I can't believe it." Justin says amazed.

Zoe felt left out so she climbed onto Brian's bent leg. "Da." She says looking up at Brian.

"You too Zoe?" Justin asks pouting that both their daughters had called Brian Dada, or Da, first.

Brian tried hiding his grin, but was just too thrilled to hear his daughters talk and call him Dada to keep his excitement in. He lifted Ava onto his other knee facing her to Justin. Leaning down to her level, he spoke into her ear. "Can you say Daddy?" He says pointing at Justin.

Ava giggled and shook her head. She turned and reached for his face. "Dada."

Brian turned to Justin sympathetically, but quickly learned that was the last thing he should have done. "Thanks a lot Brian." He says huffing away to the bathroom, slamming the door when he got inside.

"I think I'm in trouble with Daddy." Brian tells his daughters playing in front of him.

Ava looks up and then over to where Justin disappeared. "Daddy." She says and then looks back at Brian.

"Now you say it." Brian sighs laying back. He knew Justin was upset with him and he didn't do anything this time. After a few minutes and Justin still being in the bathroom, Brian stands up and puts the girls in their playpen so he could go see what he could do for Justin.

He knocked on the door and when Justin didn't answer, he went in anyways. "Go away Brian." Justin spats when he sees him.

"Are you pregnant?" Brian asks.

Justin looks up at him completely confused. He was sure Brian would know he wouldn't keep something like that from him. "No. I'm not pregnant."

"It's just that the last time you were this irrationally angry at me you were pregnant." Brian explains his reasoning. "So if you're not pregnant, what the hell's up with you?"

"It's not fair." He says going back to pouting. Brian thought that was better than him being angry at him. "I'm the one who's around all the time. And I'm the one who does everything for them. I'm the one who takes them to the doctors and stays up all night with them when one or both are sick." Justin says getting upset. "You get to be the fun one who gets to play with them because I'm planning their party or making their dinner or washing their clothes and cleaning up the mess they made before you get home and its play time with their favorite parent."

"I'm not that bad." Brian defends himself. Justin was making it sound like he was never around, but he was always there. The only time he was regularly away was when he was at work. It wasn't like he could stop going. He had to support his family.

"I'm not saying you're a bad parent. You take care of us. But why do I always have to be the bad guy? That's why they always like being around you because you spoil them. I have to sit there making them eat their dinner, but you just give them whatever they want. You never say no to them."

"That's because they have your pleading eyes and the same pouty lips. I can't say no to you so how am I supposed to say it to those little girls?" Brian asks with a little smile. Justin couldn't help smiling back.

Justin let Brian hold him feeling better just being able to vent. "I just wish for one time it's me they want."

Brian looked at him like he was deluded. "Justin, do you know how jealous I get because of the strong bond you have with Ava and Zoe?" Justin shakes his head not knowing about it. "Whenever they want to be comforted it's you they want. I bet every accomplishment they have as they grow older they'll want to tell you first because you're the one who makes it possible."

Justin looks up at Brian thankful to have him there to remind him how great he really did have it. So what if he had to be the tough one if he had the stronger connection with his daughters. "Thanks Bri, I guess I was just being silly."

It was the last day of classes and Justin had just turned in his final projects and all he had left to do was wait anxiously for his grades. Usually he didn't get so nervous about his work. He always knew when something was good or not, but having been so wrapped up in other things, he didn't have the same surety. He didn't get the chance to reflect on what he was creating so he had no idea what to expect. Now that school was over for the year, he was looking forward to spending more time with his family. He liked that he would be the one taking care of his daughters during the day again. Now that they were older, they were much more aware of being left behind and he hated hearing their tears when he had to walk out the door.

He just finished giving Ava and Zoe their lunch when the door buzzer sounded. He pushed the release button without checking who it was which drove Brian crazy. He had asked why they even had an intercom if he didn't use it. Justin just shrugged and told him he'd start using it, but now it was just habit to hit the button without asking who it was. He went back over to see if the girls were eating their food or just playing with it. Now that they were older they demanded to be able to feed themselves, but Justin still felt the need to feed them just to make sure they actually ate. He cringed watching Zoe bring a fistful of mashed up carrots to her mouth and getting it mostly on her face. Neither of the girls had mastered yet how to get the majority of the food into their mouths.

When the knock came at the door, he left his messy daughters to go open it. Every time he saw him, it was a shock. It was always his first thought to question why his father would come to see him, especially here where he lived with his partner. Craig had made it clear before he even moved to Pittsburgh that he wouldn't condone his gay lifestyle, yet here he was in his home that he shared with another man and their daughters. The last time he had seen him was the day the twins were born a year ago tomorrow. He remembers how his dad had come through for him and taken him to the hospital. If it wasn't for him, he didn't know what would have happened to him or the babies. After that, he started to let his father in a little by little with tentative phone calls. Usually they stayed clear of anything that both knew they would fight about and basically talked about the twins or his school. Justin just hoped that with time they could address what they were avoiding.

It was still quite a surprise to see him at his home though. "Dad, what are you doing here?" He asks blocking the entryway.

"I thought I could see you and the girls." He tells him. "I know it's their birthday tomorrow, but I didn't want to ruin the day for you if you didn't want me there." He explains. Justin thinks he could sense a little nervousness in him. It was strange, but Justin could see that his father was being sincere in just wanting to see them. There wasn't an ulterior motive in the visit.

Justin steps aside and motions for him to follow inside. "They're having lunch right now." Justin says over his shoulder leading Craig into the kitchen where Ava and Zoe were in their high chairs now just playing with their left over food. "I take it you're done then." He says to Ava taking her plate away. He brought a wash cloth to clean her up only to get a little fist covered in something green to his mouth. He crinkles his nose feeling the gooey mess smeared on his face. "Thanks baby." He says wiping at his face. "But I prefer my food off a fork and slobber less."

While he cleaned up Ava, he watched as his dad talked to Zoe. "You're a messy little girl aren't you?" Craig asks the giggling girl. Justin moved over to her when Ava was clean. Soon both girls were missing the evidence that they had lunch at all. "They remind me of you at that age." Craig remarks. "They're very happy babies. You don't always get lucky like that. Molly was always cranky and she didn't have all those allergies like you did."

Justin looked at his father amazed he remembered all that. With all the recent fights with the man, he forgot that his father was actually very loving when he was younger. "I remember what Molly was like. She's still a little like that now." He joked.

Justin takes Ava out of her seat and was about to put her down so that he could get Zoe, but his dad stopped him first. "Can I pick her up?" He asks. Justin nods and watches the older Taylor pick his daughter up out of her chair. He could see that Zoe was a little confused at first who the strange man was, but seeing his kind face, she felt completely comfortable with him. "I thought I could take you to lunch if you haven't had any yet." He offers.

"Okay. I guess I forgot about myself having to feed the twins." Justin confessed. He did that a lot when the girls distracted him. It was always their needs first. "There's a place down the road we can walk to." He got Ava and Zoe ready and in their stroller before they started down the sidewalk. Justin found it odd how he could feel so comfortable around his dad after the large rift between them the last couple of years. They hadn't mentioned any of the things that tore them apart and both were consciously keeping that going.

Once they had reached the small café down the block, they sat down getting both girls situated in the high chairs Justin knew the restaurant had since he'd been there with Brian many times.

While they talked, Ava started babbling followed by Zoe. Sometimes Justin thought they were communicating to each other in their own language. Not long after, they were clearly saying dada between their attempt at words.

"They're already speaking some clear words." Craig observes surprised. It was shocking to be reminded just how old the twins really were. "It was a while before you started asking for daddy instead of mommy."

Justin smiled uncertainly. "It's not me they are asking for." Just the way he said it made Craig want to question him. "I know that it shouldn't bother me, but it does when they want their dada instead of me. I'm glad that they have such a good relationship with Brian. Did it ever bother you?" He asks feeling as childish as he did when they called Brian dada first.

"Sure, but I understood its just something you cant do anything about." Justin nods trying to accept it too.

They spent lunch talking about anything that wouldn't cause more of a rift between them. They were both aware that things needed to be discussed, but the first day together didn't have to be that time.

Daphne arrived the next day before the rest of the guests to help Justin set up. She couldn't believe how much Justin was getting into the twin's first birthday. They wouldn't remember it, but she figured it was a parent thing. It seemed they all went a little overboard for their kids. She looked around but the place was deserted. "Where are Ava and Zoe?" She paused and added. "And Brian?"

"I sent them out for a walk." Justin tells her. "You know how Brian always gets in the way." They both share a smile. "The girl's like to play with whatever is in reach and I didn't want them getting hold of something they shouldn't." He explains.

"Its hard to think of them as a year old. It hasn't seemed like a year." Daphne remarks trying to fathom how much had happened in one year. "I'm still trying to get used to you being a father."

"I love it you know." Justin says with a sparkle in his eyes. "I've always wanted to be a father, but I really didn't think it would happen. I wasn't with Brian very long before we found out I was pregnant so I never got the chance to know how he felt about kids before it was a real thing instead of a hypothetical situation. I don't know if he would have been so keen on the idea if the choice wasn't taken out of his hands. I'm glad it happened this way so he could feel what he really felt."

Daphne sighed in remembrance. "Yeah, I remember that. He didn't even freak out." Daphne recalls. "It was like only yesterday we were celebrating the news of a baby to come."

"And now we're celebrating a year with the most perfect babies." Justin says completely biased. He turned to more serious topics. "My dad came to see me yesterday."

Daphne hadn't expected that. "What did you think of it?"

"It was okay. I mean it was weird how normal it felt to be around him. Ava and Zoe really liked him too. Its just I don't know if I can trust him again." Justin tells her.

"It will take time to see if he's sincere." Daphne agrees with him.

Justin paused from setting up the table they were working on. "I haven't told Brian. I know he won't like that my dad's came here." Justin admits. "It's like he's more upset about what happened with my dad than I am and he wasn't even around back then."

"That's because he loves you." She says in a singsong voice. Justin throws a plastic cup at her for making fun of him. "So, who all is coming?"

"Just the usual. No kids considering we don't know anyone with kids and Brian promised he wouldn't show up if there were any other than his darling daughters." Justin smiles remembering Brian saying something similar to that, but with more colorful words. "Lindsay and Michael are coming." Justin adds wiping the smile from his face.

Daphne frowns too knowing everything they put Justin through. "That sounds like fun." Her voice was laced with sarcasm.

"Michael's not so bad anymore since he got himself his own boyfriend. We actually get along, sort of." Justin shares a knowing look with Daphne. Neither thought that he'd ever call him a friend. "Lindsay's being all nice all of a sudden. It seems so phony. I know she still wants Brian to have a kid with her and I doubt she stay complacent for much longer. I don't mind Melanie, but she's not much better letting her partner get so out of control. She doesn't like Brian so I'm sure she was happy when Lindsay and Brian were fighting."

"It's all so messed up." Daphne shakes her head at the mess Justin got himself into. "Is your dad coming today?"

"No, I don't think that would make Brian too happy. My mom isn't even coming. Molly is in school and she has to work." He was a little disappointed that the girl's grandmother couldn't come, but he was too excited to really think about it.

Brian came back to see Justin and Daphne laughing on the floor. He had thought they were supposed to be planning the twin's birthday but all they were doing was goofing off. He set the girls on the rug and they immediately crawled over to their daddy. Justin laughed when he got a lap full of squirming blond girls. "Hey, where did you come from?" He asks propping them on each of his knees. He smiles up at Brian when he comes to sit behind him on the couch.

"Hey Daphne. You look lovely today." Brian flirts with her a little like he always did.

"You too Brian." She couldn't believe he could still make her blush.

"I thought you were supposed to be working." Brian points out, but he could see they were probably done.

"We're done." Justin confirms. He leans back into the man's legs. "How was your walk?"

"They fell asleep on me." Brian tells him. "We had fun though when they were awake." He lifted Ava up into his lap. "Right baby girl?" He asks tickling her and making her giggle.

Soon enough, all their family and friends were there to help wish Ava and Zoe happy birthday. They were more confused at all the attention than anything else. They were used to the family fawning all over them, but didn't quite understand the concept of a birthday. There was something they were excited about though. When Debbie put the cake in front of them, they eagerly dug their hands into the frosting and brought their covered fists to their mouths.

Everybody couldn't help laughing at them. "I guess that's a thumbs up on the cake Vic." Debbie remarks.

"Thanks again for making it Vic." Justin says cutting off a slice for each of his daughters that they hadn't smashed up yet.



Debbie stood between the fathers looking over their daughters. "Its still amazes me that my boys are have their own babies." Brian rolled his eyes at her words and Justin smiled. At some point he had become one of her boys and it felt like he actually belonged past just being with Brian.

Everybody stayed for a couple of hours before they slowly left in groups. The twins were asleep exhausted from the long day full of excitement. Once the guests of honor were asleep was when Brian and Justin collapsed on the sofa leaving the clean up for later.

"You throw a pretty good first birthday." Brian complimented Justin.

Justin smiled and curled up against the older man. "You can do it next year." Justin murmurs resting his eyes. "It was a good party though. They are growing up so fast." Brian agreed, but he couldn't be happier with the way things turned out.

## Chapter Twenty-Eight

Justin was really enjoying having the summer off with his daughters. He had thought about working a few shifts at the diner, but both he and Brian had agreed it would be better if he were with Ava and Zoe rather than a nanny. Although he felt guilty for getting to stay with their daughters and Brian didn't, he was grateful that he was able to at all. It also made it easier that Brian didn't get jealous that Justin got more time with them than him knowing that Justin was the primary caregiver.

Now that the twins were walking, Justin found it that much more work to take care of them, but also found that much more fun to play with them. Being older, the twins were now much more aware of what was going on around them. As he set out to make dinner, he had two girls following him on their wobbly legs. It wasn't new having Ava and Zoe following him around everywhere they went. They were both very curious girls and always wanted to know what their daddy was up to. Justin had to constantly look down to see if he was going to step on any little limbs or trip over them every time he moved.

When the twins heard the elevator reaching their floor, they toddled over to wait at the door knowing it meant their Dada was home. A chorus of Dada's went around when they saw Brian instantly clinging to him. Brian picked both up resting one on each hip after they demanded to go up. The twins were already dressed in their pajamas so he knew Justin had already given them their bath for the night. He had stayed late at work and had missed having dinner with his family.

Ava rested her head on his chest blinking sleepily up at him, but Zoe was still ready for a long night. "Dada home." She says happily.

"Yes, Dada's home. Good job baby." He agrees. Justin told him he needed to praise them whenever they said something correctly. Everyday he was amazed at all the new words the girls were learning. Justin also reiterated that he needed to watch what he said around them since they were in the stage of repeating everything they said. He set her on the floor, but kept the almost asleep Ava in his arms. "Now go find daddy and tell him that." He patted her back and watched as she went as quickly as she could on her little legs to the bedroom.

Brian smiled at his baby girl in his arms as he sat back on the couch with her resting on his torso. She had the same sleepy face that Justin had when he was tired. She even burrowed his face in his chest the same way Justin would. He loved how much his daughters took after Justin. It went beyond just the similar features, it was how they emulated Justin's little quirks.

Zoe came running back to bounce on her feet in front of the couch. "Daddy come." She says excited she fulfilled her quest to find Justin.

Brian helped her up onto the couch as she struggled to do it on her own. It still was exciting to him everyday to see how independent they were getting. Just last week he remembered her not even attempting to get up onto something as high as the couch. He lets Zoe curl up into his side just enjoying being close to his girls. Once they were settled, he looked up to see Justin had finally come down from the bedroom. "There's my third blond." The smile was wiped off his face seeing the scowl on Justin's. It was easy to tell when Justin was upset because he couldn't keep his emotions hidden.

Justin reached out his hand to Zoe. "Come Zoe, time for bed." His expression softened when he looked at his daughter.

Zoe shook her head and buried it in her dada's side. "No." She shouts.

Justin sighs in annoyance. Ever since she learned the word no, it had been her mantra to everything he said. At fifteen months old now, she was getting to be very stubborn and always wanting her own way. In that respect, she reminded him so much of Brian. Justin knew he was also stubborn about some things, but not as unrelenting as Brian and now Zoe could be. All he could hope for was it was just a stage and she was just trying to assert her independence because he wasn't sure he'd want Brian's around. "Zoe, this isn't a discussion."

Zoe shakes her head. "Poopy Daddy." She says giggling.

Brian laughs seeing the look of surprise on Justin's face. He guessed this was the first time one of his sweet little angels called him a name. "They can stay up a little longer. It's not going to hurt anything."

"Yes it will. They need to stick to a schedule or they'll be tired tomorrow." Justin argues. "Besides she's getting cranky because she's tired."

Ava was already waking up again from her little nap on her father's lap and looking up to see what all the noise was about. "I just got home." Brian says looking at his girls then back at Justin. "I want to spend some time with them before they have to go to bed."

"It's past their bedtime. If you came home earlier you would have had more time." Justin says trying not to sound angry in front of the girls.

Brian ducks his head accepting that Justin was right. He couldn't work time with his family around his schedule, it should be the other way around, but at the moment, he wasn't secure enough in the company he worked for to be leaving early or passing on accounts. It was just bad timing to be starting a still new family at the same time, as his career was really demanding a lot out of him. "Let me at least put them to bed."

Brian picked both up carrying them to the corner of the loft designated as their bedroom. "Story Dada." Ava demands.

He sets them down and sits down in the rocking chair set up in the corner. "Alright." He pretends to grumble about it, which always entertained the twins. "Go pick one out." Ava ran off to the shelf and grabbed the worn out book. She held it up to her father. "The princess book." Brian says not at all surprised to see it was the one they wanted read every night. By now, he could recite it from memory. "Alright, come up here." He says placing one girl on each knee.

Justin couldn't stay mad at Brian when he looked over and saw him reading to his daughters. It was a sight that always made his heart quicken. He smiled along with his little girls laughs as Brian read to them using different voices for all the characters. Ava and Zoe especially liked it when he made a high pitch voice for the princess or deep growls for the angry beast. When the story was done, Justin went over to watch Brian say goodnight. First, he put Ava in her crib, as she was already asleep. Then he put Zoe in her own crib and was surprised that she didn't try to get to stay up later. Usually she demanded another story, but she must be too tired to even attempt it. "Night baby girl." He says kissing her forehead. "I love you."

"Lub you dada." Se says back in a little sleepy voice.

"Let's not call Daddy poopy anymore okay." Justin had to contain his laughter hearing Brian use the word poopy. No one would believe it if he told them. It was so unlike the Brian Kinney everyone else knew.

"Okay." She agrees closing her eyes and surrendering to sleep.

Brian comes out to see Justin waiting for him. He's sure the blond was just waiting until the girls were asleep to tell him off for being home late from work again. Justin once again surprised him. "Did you have dinner yet?" He asks knowing that Brian skipped meals whenever he got thinking too much on something.

Brian thought about telling him he wasn't hungry, but Justin would see right through him. "No, I was too busy to think about it." He followed Justin into the kitchen and sat at the counter as the blond heated up his dinner. "So are you just not going to say anything?" He asks tired of the anticipation and just wanting to get it over with.

Justin just stares at him for a moment before shrugging. "What's to say? I'm not going to play the jealous little wife role. If you'd rather be somewhere else, I'm not going to get upset." Justin tells him. Brian thought he'd feel better knowing that Justin didn't want to control him and wouldn't make a big deal whenever he had to work late, but instead he felt less wanted. "Just remember that I'm not the only one in your life. You have two little girls who miss you and wait for you to come home." Justin reminds him. "They're old enough now to know when you're not here." He left him alone to think about it.

In the morning, Justin woke up to Ava and Zoe jumping on the bed next to him. He looks up disoriented and curious how they had gotten out of their cribs and up the stairs since they had gates blocking them off. He looked up to see Brian standing at the end of the bed. Justin surmises he must have woke up before the twins and got to them before they called for him. It was always daddy they called for when they wanted to get out of their cribs so Justin was sure Brian tried to let him sleep in as long as he could before the twins simply demanded to see their daddy.

Ava sat on her knees next to him and peers down into his face. "No sleep Daddy." Justin rubs his face with his hands only to have little hands try to move his hands off his face. "No, Daddy."

Justin grabs her and tosses her in the air making her giggle in joy. "I can't sleep in anymore?" He asks her setting her down beside him.

"The girls wanted to make you breakfast." Brian sets a bowl on the table bedside him before laying on the bed bedside him.

Justin sits up and looks into the large bowl to see three different kinds of cereal in chocolate milk. He looks over questioningly at Brian. "What is this?"

"Don't look at me. They made it all by themselves." Brian tells him.

Justin looks at his girls both looking on expectantly then back at Brian. "Our fifteen month old daughters got into the cupboard above the counter to get the cereal and somehow found a way to reach the handle to open the fridge, then poured the milk that weighs half their weight?" He questions.

"Okay, maybe I helped them a little, but it was their idea and they picked out everything." He admits not able to hide the smirk. "They're waiting for you to eat it."

Justin scoops some into his mouth and makes a face as he tried to chew something that he was hoping was only a marshmallow. "What is in here exactly?" He asks once he swallowed.

"They thought you needed a little extra. I stopped them when they wanted to add broccoli." Brian says containing his laughter.

"It's actually pretty good." Justin says after taking a few more bites. Zoe sticks her fist in the bowl and brings some to her mouth. "Zoe." Justin chastises, but he couldn't be taken seriously when he was also laughing at her antics.

She takes another little handful and brings it to Brian's mouth smashing it to his closed lips. "Eat dada."

Brian pretends to eat her hand making the girl squeal. "I like to eat Zoe better." Ava made her way over on wobbly legs wanting to play too. Brian tickled the girls as Justin finished eating his breakfast.

"Daddy." Zoe calls wanting her father to save her from the tickling.

Zoe crawls over into Justin's lap once he set's the empty bowl aside. "Tell daddy where you want to go today." Brian prompts the girls.

"To da swing." Ava says getting excited once again.

"You want to go swing?" Justin asks. "I think we can do that."

Once at the park down the street from the loft, both girls immediately wanted to go on the swings. It was both of their favorite part of the park. Justin enjoyed watching how much the twins were growing up. He loved being able to have conversations with them even if they were simple phrases the twins knew. They were much more like little people than little babies that needed him to do everything for. Now they liked to assert their independence whenever possible. It was a little sad that his children needed him less and less each day, but it was more exciting to see them grow up. What he liked most was being able to spend the day with his family.

When the twins got bored with the swings, the two fathers let them play in the sand box while they sat at a nearby bench. They interacted well with the other kids, which got both men thinking. "Maybe we should think about daycare instead of a nanny this year." Brian suggests. "They're old enough that they don't need the constant one on one attention."

Justin nods agreeing completely. "It would be good for them to be around other kids too. None of our friends have kids and they need to learn how to socialize with more than just us and each other." Justin was surprised they agreed so well on a big subject. Now all they had to do was find the daycare they would trust with their precious daughters.

## Chapter Twenty-Nine

Justin laughs watching his little girls running around in their Halloween costumes. At their daycare, they were having a little Halloween party for the kids and their parents and encouraged the children to wear costumes to encourage their creativity. Since they got home from the store picking out their costumes, which Justin let them do all their own, they kept insisting they wanted to wear them to show Dada what they picked. Justin had a feeling that they weren't going to take them off without a fight.

Ava had picked out a ballerina costume not surprising to Justin. She was the more girly one and what little girl didn't want to be a ballerina. Zoe would make Michael proud picking out a batgirl costume. Justin had no idea what she liked about it, but she was adamant about getting it. Now they were waiting for the Dada to see how cute they looked in their tiny costumes.

Brian came back from picking up their dinner to two blond tornados coming at him. He quickly set the bags on the counter before the girls made him drop them. He looked down getting a good look at his daughters in their costumes. "Hey, where are my girls at?" Brian asks looking around. "Have you seen them?" He goes around pretending to look for the girls while Ava and Zoe giggled. "I have a ballerina and a bat, but no Ava or Zoe. I surely do miss them." Brian fell back onto the couch with a sad face.

Zoe pulled off her mask. "Dada, it me. Zoe." She says climbing up next to him.

Brian opens his mouth in mock shock. "You tricked me." He pulled her onto his lap tickling her. "Then where is your sister at? She can't be tricking me too. I'd know it if I saw her." Ava laughed climbing up onto his other side. "Oh no, this is Ava. I'm too easily fooled."

Justin came over and leans over the back of the sofa to kiss him softly. "They couldn't wait to show off their new costumes." Justin tells him. He goes over to start to dish out their dinner onto plates.

"What you be Dada?" Ava asks.

Brian grimaced. "I don't dress up for Halloween." He answers.

"You haft to." Zoe argues.

Brian thinks it over while two sets of blue eyes stared up at him. "I'm going to dress up as a dad." He finally says.

"No." They both said at the same time.

"What should I be then?"

"Da prince." Ava says excited. He knew she was referring to the prince in her favorite book.

"And Daddy can be the princess?" He asks with a smirk towards Justin and both girls nodded elatedly. Justin stuck his tongue out at him. "I'll be the prince if Daddy's the princess."

Ava and Zoe ran over to Justin chatting away quickly in mostly words they couldn't quite say yet. "We'll discuss this later. It's time for dinner." That got the twins minds off his costume and onto their food. He put them in their chairs with a plate in front of them. Justin shot Brian a look that said he'd pay for that later before sitting down to eat.

After dinner, Brian cleaned up the mess Ava and Zoe made while trying to feed themselves. Justin took them into the bathroom for their bath, but it wasn't going well by the amount of noise coming out into the kitchen. Brian smirked knowing he was the one getting off easy. Justin was trying to undress them, but the twins had other plans.

"You can't wear your costumes in the bath." Justin tells them. "We have to take them off."

"No." Zoe declaims stomping her foot.

"No bath." Ava agrees with her sister.

Justin looked between the girls not liking the new attitude they started having. "You need a bath." Justin takes a firm tone. He was left wondering why it was always him having to be the mean one. "You love your baths." He adds in a softer tone.

As Justin went to start to undress Zoe, Ava took the opportunity with her father's distraction to run out of the bathroom. Brian came up just in time to stop the little whirlwind from jumping off the stairs. He caught her mid jump saving her from falling. He carried her back into the bathroom this time closing the door

behind him. Looking down, he saw Justin had his hands full dealing with just Zoe. If they ever forgot how difficult it was to have twins, they were quickly reminded when the girls were around. They were very precocious now getting into everything and loudly voicing their objections whenever necessary.

"Your daughters are as stubborn as you." Justin says on the brink of just giving up and putting them to bed the way they were.

"Why did you let them wear their costumes now?" Brian asks wondering if they were in a situation that could have been prevented.

Justin sighed aggravated. "Like you ever tell them no." Justin replied sharply. "Besides, they just looked so cute." He looks at his daughters not finding it so cute anymore. "If you don't let me take off your costumes now you won't get to wear them on Halloween." Justin threatens knowing he would never follow through with it. Obviously, Ava and Zoe didn't know this since they went crying to their Dada.

Ava buried her face in her father's chest while Zoe did the same into his leg holding on tight. Brian let them have a few moments before extricating himself from their snotty faces. "You better do what Daddy says." After that, they were complacent and as soon as they were in the water forgot all about their costumes having too much fun playing in the water.

When the girls were asleep in bed, Brian and Justin got a chance to work on things that they had to put off while the twins were awake. Brian had some files from work that he needed to glance over for tomorrow and Justin got busy planning what his next project for school was going to be. Not very surprising to him, he started to sketch Brian in the corner of the paper. It was his doodle of choice whenever he got distracted.

Justin set down his sketchpad to bring up the subject from earlier. "You have to be there at one, but you really don't have to dress up."

Brian looked at Justin for a long time before replying. "You can't seriously think I'd want to go." He says not quite believing Justin wouldn't already know that. Kids' parties were not his thing.

"It's not for me, it's for your daughters." Justin tells him. "It's only an hour and will make them happy."

"Justin, I don't like kids." He complains, but quickly adds, "Except for mine. I don't want to be in a room with a bunch of little midgets running around. They creep me out."

Justin laughed out loud. "Did you say little kids creep you out?" When Brian doesn't deny it, Justin laughs harder. "Do you know how ridiculous that sounds? They're just babies, what could possibly be creepy?"

"They have tiny hands that are always covered in gooey stuff." Brian visibly cringes at just the thought.

Justin laughed again. "You're afraid of them messing up the Armani. I should have known." Brian's little shrug was almost self-deprecating which was too cute to Justin, something he knew not to say out loud if he wanted to get his way.

"We're done with this then?" Brian asks going back to his files.

Justin frowned no longer amused. "Brian."

"Fine, but I thought the point of sending them to daycare was so I didn't have to do these things." Brian asks him.

"No, we send them there because I have school and you have work during the day. It's not some way to get out of being a part of your kids' life." Justin says frowning. Brian's attitude lately had really been bothering him. It seemed that what mattered to him didn't to the other man. "You know what, I don't care if you don't go, it's your daughters that wanted you there in the first place."

"You always say that like they would really care or notice if I wasn't there." Brian says just as agitated. "They're only one."

"They're almost a year and a half and if you didn't notice, they are very perceptive of everything around them." Justin hisses before letting his shoulders drop. "I don't want to fight about this anymore, especially something this meaningless."

Brian lets out the pent up anger he was feeling. "Me neither. Besides, I was going to go anyways." He pulls a hesitant Justin into his arms and instantly felt the tension drain out of the smaller man. "You know I just can't give in easily."

"Yeah, it's really one of your more appealing traits." Justin replies sarcastically. He yawns softly against his chest.

"Come on, let's go to bed." Brian quickly turns off the remaining lights and followed Justin up to bed.

Ava ran up to Justin and Daphne sitting on the couch. She sets her doll on the mans lap. "Daddy watch." She demands before taking off in a rush to find her sister.

"I didn't know you were qualified to baby-sit dolls." Daphne laughs.

"Are you kidding. I got my certification from when Molly was younger." Justin tells her. "At least she's not like Zoe and stores them in the toilet." He frowns just thinking of the mess that had made. He remembered lots of tears when he wouldn't let Zoe have the toy back. He was afraid of all the germs and bacteria the toy now held and considering the twins put everything in their mouths, he wasn't taking the chance.

"It's kind of unbelievable that we've known each other since we were their age." Daphne remarks.

"And we're still friends." Justin adds. "That is a long time with someone. Think of all the dirt we have on each other." They both grinned hoping to never have to use it. "We probably know more about each other than anyone else does since we're best friends, right?"

Daphne sensed the despondency in her friend right away at the question. "I guess so." She answers studying her friend. "Jus, is something going on?" She finally asks concerned.

"No, nothings wrong. Nothing except," He paused sucking a sob. "Brian's bored of me." He breathed deeply to calm his emotions.

"Why would you even think that. You know he loves you." Daphne says surprised at Justin's confession.

Justin shakes his head. "I know he loves me, but he's been acting differently lately and Michael said..." he stopped not wanting to go on.

"What did Michael say?" Daphne demanded. She was tired of Michael always giving Justin a hard time. It was ridiculous that Michael acted like the child and he was seven years older than they were.

"He just mentioned that maybe Brian was tired of playing family." Justin says feeling just as upset as he did when Michael first said it.

"He's such a jerk. You know none of that's true." Daphne chastises him. "If you believe him than you really don't give Brian much credit." Daphne shakes her head.

"I don't want to talk about this anymore." Justin says taking in what she said. It was true that he was letting other people fill his head with doubts. However, now that they were there, he couldn't get them out.

Justin was saved as the girls ran up to him. "Daddy, Daddy." They cried together. "Me hungry." Zoe tells him pointing to her belly.

Justin lifted her up onto his lap. "You hungry." She nodded vigorously. "I think I can do something about that." He says taking the twins to the kitchen for a snack and avoiding Daphne's look that said she wasn't finished.

After dropping the girls off at their daycare all dressed up in their costumes, they continued on to start the rest of the day. Justin looked up from his backpack noticing for the first time they weren't headed towards his school. He looked over to Brian, but the man was acting like nothing was out of the ordinary. "Brian, you do know you have to drop me off at school." He found himself reminding his partner seeing that they were headed downtown in the direction of the building Ryder Advertising was in.

Brian glances over at him acting surprised. "Shit, I forgot you were there sunshine." Justin believed him for all of a few moments before he noticed the smirk on the man's face.

"Brian, where are we going?" Justin asks enjoying Brian's carefree attitude. Lately, he had been so serious unless he was interacting with their daughters and he allowed himself to forget about the rest of the world. Brian just smiled at him and kept driving. When they pulled up in front of a really nice hotel, Justin was completely bewildered. He should have guessed something was up when Brian insisted on driving him to school. Usually Justin took the twins to daycare on the way to school and Brian drove separately to work.

"You coming?" Justin was so lost in his thoughts, he didn't even notice when Brian got out of the car and came around and opened his door. Justin hesitated for just a moment before unbuckling and following Brian.

He had to jog a little to catch up to Brian's longer strides. It was at times like these that he envied Brian his height. Brian stood out and commanded a crowd. Part of it was his powerful presence, but Justin was sure that a man his height could never pull off what Brian did. It was true now as they walked through the lobby. All eyes went to Brian and Justin stood a little straighter just to prove he belonged with Brian, that he was a worthy match. Sometimes he would feel lost in the crowd even with Brian a foot away. That all was dispelled when he felt Brian place a hand to his lower back guiding him through the crowd.

There was a short line to the desk so Justin had the chance to question him again. "Brian, really just answer me. What are we doing here?" He demands an answer.

"If we're going to play hooky, we might as well do it right." He answers before speaking with the counter person. A moment later, he dangles the keys in front of Justin's face. "So are you joining me or am I going to be all alone in the Jacuzzi?" He questions.

Just the mention of a Jacuzzi has Justin's eyes lighting up. "What else does this room have?" Justin grins letting Brian lead him to the elevators. He would leave his more serious questions until they were in their room. Justin walked in and checked out the room. It was probably the nicest he'd ever been in and also the first he ever just was in for no reason at all. Brian suddenly pulled him flush against him. "Bri, what are we doing here?"

Brian sighed audibly. "When was the last time we were alone. I mean completely alone." When Justin can't answer right away, Brian cuts in. "If you can't remember, it's been too long." Brian softly gazes down at him as his hand lightly traces the contours of Justin's face. "I'm not bored of you." As Justin's quizzical blue



eyes bore into him, he admitted what he knew. "I overheard you talking to Daphne. I'm not, nor have I ever been bored of you or the life we have."

Justin looked down uncomfortable at being caught. He never meant for Brian to hear his doubts. "I know this wasn't the way you saw your life turning out." Justin says softly.

"No, its not." When Justin tries to pull away, he holds him firm. "Its not the way I pictured my life was going to be, but it's what I always wanted it to be like." Justin looks up at him confused. "I never thought I could be loved or more so that I could love someone back. Just this conversation would have had me running a while ago. I always wanted a family. A real family that cared for each other. You and the girls are my life now and I wouldn't give that up for all the backrooms in the world." Justin smiled at that. That was his Brian. "Sometimes though, it can be too much. I'm still trying to get used to being part of a family and sometimes it's an overload of family stuff."

"I'm sorry I push all of it on you. I forget sometimes to take a break too." He admits sheepishly. "Promise to tell me when it gets too much."

Brian nods. "Only if you promise to tell me when you feel neglected."

"Deal." Justin agrees feeling the tension leave him completely. "I can't believe you brought me here." Justin says really checking out the place this time. He starts to strip his clothes on the way to the bathroom. Brian follows him thinking he had the right idea. "I want to find this hot tub you promised." Justin threw over his shoulder with a grin.

After spending an enjoyable time in the water until their skin was wrinkled and pruned, Brian demanded they get out before it became a permanent condition. Justin laughed teasing him about getting old. He thought it was funny that lately Brian had started to become obsessed with getting old. His twenty-eighth birthday was coming up and that just brought him closer to the dreaded 3-0. Justin thought it was ridiculous since Brian didn't look any older than he did when they met two years before. Even after Justin told him this, he still found Brian checking his reflection for wrinkles and gray hair. He remembered rolling on the floor laughing the time he found Brian with a hand mirror in front of the bathroom mirror trying to check if there was a bald patch forming on the back of his head. Brian however did not find it so amusing.

Once they were dried off, they left the bathroom with only towels around their waists. Justin fell back on the bed and beckoned for Brian to come to him. When Brian straddled him on the bed, he had thought they would continue what they were doing in the hot tub, but Justin of course had food on his mind. "Can we order room service?" Justin asks looking at him hopefully.

Brian heaved a sigh and moved off the blond. "That's why I brought you here instead of the loft. I knew you'd want food." He tells him. "Plus, this place doesn't have that kid smell ours does now." Brian grimaces at that. His white furniture miraculously had stayed white, but there were some things that he just couldn't control changing, one of them being the clean smell his loft always had. Now it had the combined smells of baby powder and something he was still trying to recognize.

When Justin was once again sustained with food, he turned his attention back to Brian who just picked at the food they ordered. Justin was too used to Brian's fickle appetite to find that surprising. Brian turned to look at him when he felt the blonds gaze boring into him. "Why do I feel like I should be worried about that look?" Brian asks unable to hide the little waver in his voice. He mentally slapped himself for even being the least bit nervous.

Justin grinned pushing Brian onto his back and loomed over him. After a searing kiss, he pulled away enough to stare into the mans hazel eyes that had darkened in lust. "I want to make love to you." He says softly laying kisses on Brian's jaw. He felt the man beneath him tense up right away. He didn't bring the subject up very often, but each time he did, Brian would distract him making him forget all about his desire to top the older man. Justin had to admit Brian's techniques would easily sway him, but this time he didn't

want to back down. It might have been the foreign surroundings, but for some reason he was feeling very bold.

"Justin." Brian says finally finding his voice. When he had planned this, he didn't factor in this surprise. "I haven't done that in a long time." He quietly admits.

Justin sat up on top of him. "Why?" Justin asks curious. He learned that some people just have a preference for topping, but to be completely adversative to bottoming wasn't often heard of.

The Brian of a year ago would have ignored the question or made a snarky comment, but now and especially with Justin, he couldn't do that. "It's a control thing." He finally answers. "I had a not so pleasant experience and haven't been able to allow someone that trust again." Even he was surprised at the level of honesty he was showing.

"I'm sorry." Justin says feeling guilty for a moment for bringing it up, but the feeling passes. "But this is me. If you can't trust me, than whom can you trust?"

Brian thought Justin hit it right on the button. He was with the person he already trusted with everything he was. This was no different. It was time to move forward and put the past to rest. With Justin's help, he did just that.

Like the good parents they were trying to be, they showed up at the twin's daycare for their Halloween party. It was everything Brian feared it would be. There were screaming kids running around touching him with their tiny hands and he cringed each time he felt their gooey hands on his clean pants. However, Ava and Zoe were thrilled to have them there and that made it worth it to the apprehensive one of the pair. Brian had a feeling nothing even fazed Justin as he had a goofy smile on his face the whole time having nothing to do with the kids.

## Chapter Thirty

Brian felt little hands trying to pry his eyelids open. This was not the type of wake up call he genuinely enjoyed. "Dada wake up." Brian opens his eyes to find two big blues only inches from his. He grabbed the girl swinging her up in the middle of the bed as he sat up. Looking over he saw Justin was still fast asleep which was a feat only Justin could accomplish with all the noise and movement going on right next to him.

Brian looks to the end of the bed to see his other daughter watching him. Then it hits him that Justin was still sleeping. "Did you climb out of your cribs?" He asks his girls. They both nodded vigorously obviously pleased by their actions. "I thought we went over this. You're not supposed to get out of your cribs on your own." Ava had the good sense to look contrite while Zoe just stared at him. "Come here." Brian motions for the girls to climb into his arms. "It's not safe for you to get out of your cribs on your own. You could get hurt so promise you will wait for your daddy or me to get you out."

"Tay Dada." Ava answers giving him a sloppy kiss on the chin.

"Tomise." Zoe agreed.

"Now help me wake up daddy." Brian says enlisting the help of his daughters for the daunting task. He sat back as the girls started jumping on Justin to wake him up. It was several minutes before Justin finally rolled onto his back not able to sleep through the jumping going on.

"It's too early." Justin grumbles rubbing at his face to get the sleep out of it. "What are you girls doing up already?"

"Hungry." Zoe tells him. She always left the R's out of her words since they were too hard for her to say. Ava had a much better grasp of language than her sister did and Justin liked to think maybe since Ava was

born first it was just natural for her to be the leader. He knew that not every child progressed at the same rate, but since they were twins, Justin had thought they would. Zoe was't much farther behind and Justin tried to help her keep up as much as he could so she wasn't left too far behind.

Brian took Zoe onto his lap. "I'm surprised you can't cook your own breakfast, you're becoming such a big girl." He says encouraging her. They were no longer little babies anymore and while that caused a little twinge in his heart, he was more excited about seeing the little people his daughters were becoming.

Justin hugs Ava to him. "Don't encourage her, I want them to stay my little babies forever." Justin says not as ready to let them grow up. He loved seeing them accomplish things on their own, but it felt like every small step they made was taking them further from him.

Brian smirked knowing exactly what was going through Justin's head. "They got out of their cribs again." He informs Justin of their daughter's antics. "Maybe it's time to get them new beds."

"They're only two." Justin argues. "It's too young for a real bed. I'll just have to really enforce the crib rule."

"You can't stop them from growing up." Brian tells him.

"I know, but I don't have to push them to grow up too fast." Justin didn't want to continue this so he took his girls into the kitchen to begin breakfast.

"Dada we go play." Ava asks after she was done eating and bored with playing with her food.

Brian took a washcloth to clean off her hands and face before lifting her up. It was good to have a plan so that as little mess got onto his clothes. "Yep, we're going to the park later today." He confirms for her. They had taken to going to the park on Saturdays not only for the girls to get some time outside, but also to have time as a family. No matter what Saturday always meant going out together and it was always something to look forward to when the week gets tough.

"Want go now." Ava demands with the same face Justin makes when he was determined to get his way.

"Ava, don't give me that sad puppy look, you'll go when I say so." Brian hated seeing that pouty look on his daughter and the little tears forming after being chastised so he crumbled like always. "I'll let you pick out a toy at the store to play with at the park." That put a smile right back on her face and Brian knew he would get shit from Justin again for spoiling them.

Ava hugs him around the neck. "I lub you Dada."

"I'm sure you do." Brian chokes out as he tries to loosen the hold she has on his neck. He sets her down on the floor. "Go get your shoes and I'll help you put them on."

"I do it myself." She says running across the floor to the shelf by the door where she kept her shoes.

"Zoe come get your shoes." Brian calls sitting on the chair with her shoes held out for her.

Zoe shakes her head. "No."

Brian rubs a hand over his face and counts to five so he could handle the tantrum he knew would come. He had one daughter who wanted to do everything for herself and another who liked using the word no every chance she got. "Zoe, come here now." His tone becomes sterner.

Zoe sticks her hands on her hips and leans forward. "No." If it weren't so frustrating, Brian would have found her little stance adorable.

"If you don't come over here now you won't get ice cream at the park like Ava will." Brian says pulling out the threats of taking away privileges. He hated that it made him really sound like a parent when he did that. Brian always thought of himself as a hip dad, but it just proved that parenting was all the same only different variations. The one thing he knew he would never do though was any variation on the kind of parents his own were.

Justin walked up behind Zoe scooping her into his arms. "Is Dada going to take away your treats?" Justin asks sympathetically. Justin had a much softer approach when it came to disciplining the kids and trying to get them to do something. He was the one more likely to follow through with a punishment than Brian, but he was gentler about it. Brian hated having to be strict so he was often moody if he had to reprimand the twins.

Sitting down with Zoe on his lap, Justin very easily got her to let him put her shoes on. "How do you do that?" Brian asks almost reverently.

"She likes it when she thinks you're on her side." Justin answers proving again just how perceptive he could be.

Ava toddles over to them awkwardly. "Daddy I do it myself." She states proudly.

Brian and Justin had to stifle a laugh when they looked down. "Ava, doesn't that feel weird?" She looks down at her own feet frowning. Justin couldn't keep the little laugh in. "Honey, you put them on the wrong feet." He helped her switch them onto the right feet. "You did a good job, but next time let's try putting them on the right feet."

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The trip to the store was a disaster with Ava and Zoe whining the whole time that they wanted to go to the park. Even attempts to mollify them with toys didn't do much good. That's how two mopping girls and two parents with headaches entered the Liberty Diner. Brian was beginning to see that maybe Justin had the right idea wanting to keep them babies forever.

Debbie spotted them before they could even take a seat in their booth. "Is that my beautiful little girls?" She gushed stopping what she was doing to come over to them.

"Gram Deb." They squeal together. The girls took turns getting a much gentler than normal hug from Debbie.

"We see you." Ava tells her proudly from her seat next to Justin.

"Yes you do and I'm glad I see you too." She smiled at the little girls being struck at how much they had grown up. She still remembers what it felt like to hold them for the first time. It was so remarkable to hold the babies she thought of as her own grandchildren. Brian had really made a spot for himself in her heart right away and he really had become like a son to her. With time, Justin had also become one of her boys and had become one of the family.

"What are you going to do today?"

"I want to go on the slide." Zoe states proudly. "Ava wants to play with her toys."

"You'll take turns." Justin tells her since she was having so much trouble trying to figure out how they would both get their way.

"Kay."

"So what will it be for lunch?" Debbie asks getting her pen and pad ready. The girls giggled loving being treated like a customer.

"N'cheese." Ava says happily bouncing in her seat.

Debbie looks to Brian and Justin confused. "Mac and Cheese." Justin clarifies.

"Oh." She says making a circle of her mouth. "Do you want me to put in the little cut up hot dogs?"

"Yeah." Ava shouts.

"Me too." Zoe says just as loud jumping up in her seat.

Brian grabs her with an arm around the waist before she flew over the table. "Zoe, be careful." The men gave their order and sat back to wait for their food. Zoe crawled onto Brian's lap. "You want to sit on my lap?" he asks looking down at the girl who was making herself comfortable.

"Yeah." She says craning her neck up to look at him.

Lunch went well even if Brian had to eat with Zoe on his lap. The girls were always happy when they were eating much like Justin. Brian marveled at how much all three of his blonds could eat. They were just finishing when Debbie returned to the table. "You boys are going to be at dinner tonight." It was a demand and they both knew it.

"Yes Debbie, you've only reminded us twenty times this week." Brian says keeping the snark out of his voice.

After they paid the bill, the girls went to say goodbye to Debbie. "Bye Gram Deb."

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Justin felt his pant leg being tugged. He looked down to see Ava staring up at him. "Daddy push me." She demands. Justin picks her up under the arms and places her on one of the swings.

"I push you dada." Zoe tells Brian.

"I think I'm a little too big for you to push baby girl." Brian tells her. He picks her up and sits on the swing with the girl in his lap. "How about we swing together."

Justin stepped back watching his partner and their daughters. It always produced a warm feeling inside to see Brian so open with their kids. It was like he wasn't capable of being that closed off person he first met three years ago when the twins were around. He wasn't afraid of what people thought of him when he played with his daughters. He wasn't the stud of Liberty Avenue in their family. To their daughters all he was is Dada, the man who tucked them in every night and made sure to turn the night light on.

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Brian had one girl on each hip as he let himself and Justin into Debbie's house. He was surprised to see various decorations mixed in along with Debbie's garish décor. He pushed a bundle of balloons out of his way getting the attention of the rest of the family. "What the fuck is all this?" He asks.

"You were supposed to knock asshole." Debbie says throwing her hands up in the air.

"When do I ever knock?" Brian asks. "So what the fuck is going on."

"Brian will you quit swearing, there are little ears listening." Justin says frowning.

"This is your surprise party." Emmett says let down that the surprise was ruined.

It was Brian's turn to frown. "For what?"

"To celebrate three wonderful years between you and Justin." Emmett explains.

Brian looks around at everyone gathered. The whole family was there which surprised him. To see Lindsay and Michael there was the last thing he would expect to find at a party for him and Justin. "Is that it?" Brian shrugs it off not feeling comfortable with this kind of attention. "Fuck that, lets just eat."

"Brian." Justin warns.

"Sorry." He says in a mocking tone. "Forget that, let's eat."

Justin sends a glare at Brian before turning to the rest of the group. "You guys really did this for us?" He asks incredibly touched.

"At least someone is grateful." Melanie remarks turning away to finish setting up the table. There wasn't a secret about her dislike for Brian so the jab went unnoticed.

Brian sets both of his daughters down on the couch. Justin dug out some toys from the oversized bag he constantly carried over his shoulder. His ever constant cargo bag that housed his sketch pads and supplies had grown larger to accommodate the many things he needed to keep his girls happy. There were diapers, extra clothes, and of course, sketch pads littering the floor before he reached the bottom.

"Dada, I play boon." Zoe says tugging on Brian's hand.

"What?" Brian asks looking to Justin.

"She wants the balloon." Justin clarifies. Debbie takes one and ties it around her wrist. "Here sweetie."

Ava sticks out her wrist. "Me, me." Debbie does the same for her and pats her on the head. "Danks."

Brian leaves to lean against the wall next to Michael. "Hey Mikey." He gives him a dazzling smile. He actually felt bad for spending so little time with his long time friend lately. Bath time had taken precedence over shooting pool at Woody's for him and while sometimes Brian really wished he was still that man without responsibilities, the thought was always fleeting.

"Brian." Michael smiled back because no matter what he'd always have that little piece of himself inside that would always love Brian. Then he looked to the other man standing next to him and the feeling dimmed to nothingness. "You remember Ben."

"Ah yes, the professor." Brian deadpans. He actually liked the guy Michael picked this time even if he was too unruffled for him. There was always a reason to be wary around someone that didn't let anything affect him.

"Congratulations Brian. In this day its quite a feat to spend three years with someone." Ben says to him in that calm voice.

Michael watches the uncomfortable look on Brian's face. He lays a hand on Ben's large shoulder getting his attention. He knew Brian hated acknowledgments to himself and wanted to take the attention off of Ben's statement. "We should get some food before Justin makes his way over there." The two friends share a knowing look at how wise that actually was.

"I don't know where he puts it all. He's still got his twink physique as he likes to point out even after having the twins." Brian adds grateful for the change in subject.

Justin was making a plate of food up for Ava and Zoe when he heard Lindsay's angry voice along with Melanie's soothing tone. "That should be mine." Justin isn't sure what she's referring to until Mel speaks.

"Lindsay, its past time you let that go. We'll find another way to have a baby." Melanie tries to reason with her wife.

"I cant believe I let you convince me to come here to celebrate something that never should have happened. You know as well as I that Brian only stayed with him because of the babies." Lindsay says through clenched teeth. "If not for him I would have my baby and Brian wouldn't have to be something he's not."

"You know that's not true." Melanie was clearly exhausted of this same conversation. There was a weariness about her that only could be described as at the end of her rope.

Justin didn't bother to correct Lindsay or even give what she said a second thought. It was clear to him that she had problems and needed to get help for her obsession. He also thought maybe she had suffered enough having spent the last three years obsessed with the idea of having a child with Brian and never having a ray of hope it would come true. Justin had learned not to let anything she said phase him anymore. At some point he was sure she had been someone he could have befriended otherwise Brian wouldn't have been friends with her for so long, but the person she was now prevented him from actually getting to know the real Lindsay.

"Daddy." Justin looks down to his daughter sitting in his lap. "Lub you." She tells him leaning up to give him a kiss.

Justin hugged her little body to his. "Love you too baby." This right here was why he could ignore Lindsay's comments.

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"It was really nice of Debbie to have that party for us." Justin only got a grunt from Brian. He knew that Brian only suffered through that evening for him. "We've been together three years this Tuesday." Justin says leaning into Brian. "Can you actually believe that?"

"It is remarkable seeing as before you just the thought of spending a couple hours with the same man was too much, let alone spend three years with someone and still be completely happy with them. That's just not something I could have ever seen happening, spending my life with just one person, getting everything from one person. I had resigned myself to a lonely existence, but thanks to you I don't have to."

Justin turns his head to gaze up at him. "Awe Brian, that is almost romantic." There was a hint of tease to the remark that made it easy for Brian to take. Justin looked to his sleeping girls not too far away. "I think we turned out to be pretty good parents."

"I definitely had my doubts in the beginning, about me, not you. I knew you would be the perfect Daddy." Brian lets a little smirk turn up his lips.

"This is probably quite obvious, but I really love being a father."

"Yeah." Brian huffs against his hair making it ruffle a little. "So now that it has been proven we make pretty good parents, when are we going to have another?"

Brian's question threw him a little. He remembered the long ago discussion they had where Brian has surprised him with wanting more than just the twins, but that was before the girls had been born. Justin knew he would be happy with just his daughters, but he wouldn't mind the idea of having more of Brian's

babies. "I was thinking we could wait until I'm done with school. Its only a year and the girls will be much less difficult to handle." Brian nods his agreement. "For now we can just enjoy our life together."

END





**This is the sequel to Last for All Time. Brian and Justin face new challenges as they raise their daughters while trying to expand their family.**

## Chapter One

Brian stepped over the toys littering his loft's floor as he walked through the door. He had time to sling his suit jacket over the bar stool before his twin daughters latched themselves around his legs. It was this moment that he looked forward to coming home for. Two smiling faces looked up at him with the same eyes as their daddy, the man he loved.

"Dada's home." They shouted. He bent down and bestowed a kiss on each head.

"Bye Dada." His daughter calls to him as she runs off leaving just her sister behind.

Brian scoops up the remaining girl giving her a kiss on the forehead. His little Zoe, truly a daddy's girl. "Did you have fun with daddy?" He asks knowing she was just bursting to tell him all about her day.

Zoe eagerly shakes her head up and down. "We drew pictures." She tells him showing him the one she had in her hand.

Justin came up to him and gave him a quick kiss. "Did you show Dada your picture?" He asks his daughter. The look Justin flashed Brian gave him a sinking feeling. He started to worry what she had drawn.

"See Dada." Zoe once again pushes the paper she carried into Brian's face.

Brian set her down before taking the drawing to look at. He could tell it was a picture of their family. He could pick out the two larger figures, one with yellow hair and one with brown, and two smaller ones, but there was one extra figure smaller than all that he couldn't place.

"Who's this?" He asks kneeling next to Zoe and pointing it out.

"The baby." Zoe declares happily.

"What baby?" Brian asks wary for the response.

"My brother or sister." She answers.

Justin's tight smile scared Brian a little. He sent Zoe to go play knowing this wasn't going to be good. He holds his hands up. "I had nothing to do with it. I just asked the girls how they would feel about having a younger sibling." He defends himself. "I didn't tell her to do this to convince you."

"You better not have used our daughters to get what you want." Justin warns him.

Brian wonders how he had gotten to this point. He was a family man, something nobody had thought he would be, including himself. He had a partner who loved him, sometimes leaving Brian wondering why. Then he had two daughters that meant the world to him. They were the reason he came home on time from work and no longer even went into the office on the weekends. While he was still trying to reach the top in his career, speed no longer seemed necessary. He knew he could spend long hours making a name for himself in the advertising world, but he would miss out on seeing his children grow up and that was something he wasn't willing to sacrifice for his career.

Sometimes he found himself thinking back to right before he met Justin. It was around that time that he started to admit that he didn't have everything he wanted in life. Brian hadn't been happy for a while and he

knew exactly what was missing from his life. It was only when he met Justin that he felt that missing piece was finally there.

From the start there was something different about Justin, something that made Brian want to see him again, the first time that desire ever came over him. Now he was glad that he let himself take that chance with Justin. He wouldn't have the most precious parts of his life otherwise. That thought brought him back to the dilemma he was in now. When he found out he was going to be a father, it was both thrilling and terrifying. The first time he held his little girls, he felt a love he never thought he'd ever experience. It was different than the love he had for Justin. This was the live and die for them love. The greatest feeling he ever had. It was what made him want to feel it again. That was why he wanted to have another child with the man he loved. It was a surprise to him that Justin wasn't as thrilled about having another child. Brian had been sure that after how well they had done with Zoe and Ava, Justin would be all for more children. So far they hadn't really discussed having a third child, only Brian's little comments on the subject. He knew now that he was really ready, they would have to have that discussion. He needed to find out why Justin was reluctant about having another child right now.

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"Ava, Zoe, lets get ready for your bath." Brian calls to them shutting off the lights around his desk. This was his time to spend with his daughters. No matter what was happening that day, every night he gave his girls their baths and got them ready for bed. Justin may get to spend the daytime with their daughters, but these were their moments.

Brian finished filling up the tub he had installed when the girls had outgrown their portable tubs. The shower didn't work for them at such a young age and part of the ease to get them to take a bath was that they could play in the water. He watched as his daughters toddled into the room dragging their special bath towels behind them. It amazed him to see how grown up they were. It didn't seem like much longer before they were giving themselves their own baths and wouldn't need him around. The thought saddened him, but at the same time, he was proud of how well they were growing up.

Brian took their Disney princess towels and hung them up next to their tiny bathrobes. "Dada, where the bubbles?" Ava asks peering over the edge of the tub.

"Did I forget the bubbles?" Brian asks with mock concern. He knew the girls liked to watch the form so he waited until they were in the room. "Lets get in then I'll add the bubbles." He tells them helping them get undressed before lifting each into the tub.

Brian poured the bath mixture in watching as it mixed with the water. The girls went crazy splashing their arms through the water. "Bubbles." Zoe squealed.

"Lets get cleaned up first then play okay." Brian tells them getting the washcloth wet for each of them.

After they were both cleaned, Brian let them stay in the water until the bubbles started disappearing. Ava held her hand up to her father. "Dada look." She says waving her hand.

Brian takes the little hand in his examining it. "You're all wrinkly. We better get you out of there before it becomes permanent." Brian dried Ava and Zoe off before putting them in their robes and setting them onto the bed. Ava bounced around the bed as he combed through Zoe's hair grateful that it was getting easier as they got older since they stayed still long enough to work through all the tangles. As soon as Zoe was down, she was up jumping around like her sister. Brian caught them in his arms. "I have no idea where you get all this energy." He handed the girls off to Justin.

"Lets get your PJ's on so Dada can read you your story." Justin hoped they would tire out from the story. Usually after their bath they were already falling asleep, but right now they didn't appear to be anywhere

near ready to sleep. "Did you brush your teeth yet?" Both girls showed him their teeth. "I take that as a yes."

Brian came down into the section of the loft designated as the twin's bedroom. He sat down in his customary chair with one girl on each side of him. They pulled in close so that they could both see the pictures as Brian read to them. Halfway through, both girls were struggling to keep their eyes open and by the end of the book, both were fast asleep nuzzled into their fathers side. Justin sat across from them sketching the scene. Whenever he had the chance he liked to sit back and sketch his family all together. They were definitely his favorite subject.

Justin helped tuck in Ava and Zoe who didn't rouse when being transferred from Brian's lap to their cribs. It was getting harder to place them inside their cribs without waking them, another reason he had to put to why they needed new beds. There just wasn't the room right then to put them anywhere. The older the twins got, the more space they took up. It worried him that they were quickly outgrowing the loft.

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Justin lounged with Daphne on the couch. It was his adult time while Ava and Zoe napped. He was glad that his friendship had not only stood the test of time, but had actually strengthened. Whenever he had something he wanted to talk about that he didn't feel he could with Brian, he knew he always had Daphne to turn to.

"Brian's been pushing for us to have another kid." Justin tells Daphne the latest development in his life.

"Oh, I would love another Kinney-Taylor baby." Daphne squeals.

"That's easy for you to say, you're not the one having it." Justin says slouching in his chair not getting the reaction he was expecting. He didn't think he'd get such a positive response from his long time friend. Daphne had always been so adamant about not wanting a family or to be tied down by one. He figured it was different since she would only be Aunt Daphne.

"You don't want anymore kids?" Daphne asks truly surprised. "When you were pregnant before you said you and Brian wanted a lot of kids."

"No I said Brian wanted a lot of kids." Justin corrects her. "Its not that I don't want anymore either. Zoe and Ava are the best things that happened to me along with Brian." Justin pauses to compose his thoughts so that they came out right. "I'm just not ready for an infant again yet. I'm finally graduating and the twins are almost ready to start school. If we have another baby right now, that means I'll be home raising it. I want to be able to get a job. I don't want to always be the one who lives off their partner. I don't want Brian to take care of me like he does one of his kids."

"I doubt that's how he looks at it." Daphne interjects.

"I know he doesn't, but I do." Justin agrees though there were times when they were in private that Brian calls him his third baby. "I think part of him likes that I let him take care of me. He's always wanting to keep me safe even when I don't need him to. It's a quality in him that I both love and hate." Justin tells her. "The bottom line is I'm never going to feel like my own man if I continue to let him take care of me."

"So maybe if he wants the baby than he can have it." Daphne suggests.

Justin had to suppress a snicker. "I cannot see that happening. If there's one thing I can tell you for certain it's that Brian would never willingly become pregnant." A smile spread across Justin's face. "Although, the idea of Brian having my baby is hot." The two friends shared a laugh at the image. "Anyways any job I could get wouldn't come close to making what he does. Our family would starve if I was the provider."

"I guess you're just going to have to tell him how you feel then." Daphne tells him what he was dreading and knew all along.

"I don't see that going well at all. He's so excited about having another baby. He's even got the girls in on it." He felt a little guilty to have to let Brian down.

"How many is he expecting you to have?" Daphne asks finding the whole situation a little funny. Who would ever have thought they would be here having a discussion about how many kids their partners wanted to have.

"I don't know." Justin answers. "He's joked around about having a dozen, but I'm thinking realistically four or five. One more is my limit. I want to be able to focus on my children and the more I have, the less time I have for each one."

"You know I never expected you being the one putting the breaks on expanding the family. I would have thought Brian would only be the accidental pregnancy type man."

"That's what I thought too. I thought we'd never have this conversation. We'd have the twins and be done."

"Maybe you should tell him you want to be married before you have anymore kids." She suggests with an evil glint in her eyes.

Justin made a face. "By the way he's acting now, it wouldn't surprise me if he agreed." Justin tilts his head back letting out a small groan. "This is so ridiculous. I have a partner that loves me so much he wants to have more kids with me. This should be the best time of my life."

"Is it though?" Daphne asks.

Justin didn't have to think about it. "Yes, it is. Maybe I've been looking at this whole situation the wrong way."

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Brian returned to his spot on the couch next to Justin. "She's back asleep."

Justin nods. He had been a little relieved to hear Ava calling out to them from her crib. The conversation they were about to have when they were interrupted was turning too serious. Justin had needed a moment to think without Brian right there demanded to know what he was thinking about. It was a strange occurrence when he was shying away from talking and Brian was the one pushing for a discussion. It just proved to him just how strongly Brian felt about this.

"We've been dancing around the subject of having another baby for a while now. I know I'm ready, but I don't know what's going on with you." Brian starts talking. "Every time I bring it up you avoid the subject."

Justin shifts uncomfortably in his seat. "I just haven't known what to say."

"Just say what you really feel." Brian prompts.

"I don't know if the timing is really right." He lets out slowly not knowing what kind of reaction this would cause.

Brian frowns not getting it. "The timing is perfect. You're graduating, the girls are practically grown up. They'll be going to school in the fall. The timing is much better than the first time around." Brian points out.

"All that is true." He agrees. "But it's not so perfect for me. I want to be able to get a job, use what I've spent so much time learning."

"You have the rest of your life to have a career. What difference will one year make?" Brian asks logically pissing Justin off. "It's better to take time off now than once you already started working." He again uses reason to get what he wanted.

"I do want another child." Justin gives in knowing that Brian was right. The more they talked about it, the more he wanted a little baby again. He had purposely not thought about all the things he missed when the girls were infants. He wanted to relive all those firsts again. There was a large part of him that liked having someone depend on him. The idea of having Brian's baby was what pushed him over to the other side though. A symbol of their love and commitment.

Brian pulls Justin into his lap. "The timing is perfect." He once again repeated.

Justin looks at Brian and can see the excitement radiating from his eyes. "So we're doing this? We're going to have another baby." Just saying it brought the idea into reality. The smile couldn't stay off his face as he pictured their expanding family. For the first time since Brian started bringing it up, he was excited. This was what he wanted, he wanted the family Brian had described.

## Chapter Two

Brian looked down at Justin as he moved above him. Brian was in mid thrust when a little cough stopped him cold. He looked down to Justin's startled face before looking over his shoulder to see Ava standing there staring at them. He felt like panicking, but calmly pulled the sheet up over them.

Justin sits up so he could see Ava through the dim lights. She ran to his side of the bed. "What's wrong baby?" He asks seeing the teary eyes. The only response he got was some sniffing and arms reaching out for him. He lifted her up next to him. She immediately cuddled into his side. "Had a bad dream." Ava gave a little nod of her head.

Justin reached around the edge of the bed trying to find his bottoms. He spared a glance over to Brian to see the man just staring at him. "Brian will you put some clothes on and go check on Zoe." Justin directs him already slipping into the pajama bottoms Brian had ripped from him when he discovered he was wearing clothes to bed.

Brian just put on a robe after Justin fixed a gaze at him when he didn't immediately jump to do his bidding. After doing a quick check to see Zoe still sound asleep, he returned to find Ava asleep curled into Justin's side. "I'll put her to bed." He moved to lift her up, but Justin stopped him.

"I told her she could sleep with us." Justin tells him. "So you'll have to put some bottoms on."

Brian frowned. "I always sleep naked." He says finding the situation more and more disturbing. Everything felt so wrong to him. This wasn't how it was supposed to be. He never factored in Ava and Zoe where his sex life was concerned.

"Brian, you can't sleep naked when the girls will be jumping in at anytime." He tells him softly so he didn't wake up Ava. He felt like he had this conversation before when Brian complained about him wearing pajamas to bed all of a sudden.

Brian reluctantly put a pair of sweat pants on since he didn't own pajamas. It was only then that he was allowed to get back into bed. He looked down to Ava then back up to meet Justin's gaze. "What about..."

"We can make a baby later." Justin finishes for him afraid of what he would say in case Ava was listening.

"I don't like this." He announces lying down onto his back.

Justin turned his head to look over his daughters head to Brian. "And you want another baby?" He asks mockingly. "You're going to have to learn to share me more with your kids."

Brian gives a little snort. "I'm not being jealous." He corrects Justin's statement. "I'm just frustrated. We're always being interrupted because we have no privacy."

"That's what happens when you live somewhere that doesn't have interior walls." Justin points out. He loved the loft, but it wasn't a place for a family of four.

Brian had to agree. "I think its time to start looking at a new place to live." He announces feeling like the last bit of his old life was being left behind. It was time to move forward, the loft no longer fit into his life. This was a bachelor's home, not one for his family.

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"My mom is getting into town around two." Justin tells Brian over breakfast.

"So." Was the only response from Brian as he turned the page in the business section of the paper.

Justin frowns. "You need to be ready to go so we can meet her." He felt like he had reminded the man everyday this week and gotten similar responses.

"Why do I have to." He was not whining, Brian told himself, he didn't whine. However, lately that was exactly what he felt like doing. When Justin came and told him the 'good news' that his mother was moving to Pittsburgh, his first thought was to scream. Even after being with Justin for three and a half years now, he still couldn't tell if the woman liked him. She tolerated him a lot of the time he knew, but that didn't mean it would be her first choice to have him around.

He wasn't exactly pleased to have her around all the time either. Mothers were never his specialty, only their sons. There was no pretending that this wouldn't change their lives. He could just see Jennifer coming over all the time to see her granddaughters. It would put a serious damper in his time. He would have to play host, which he hated to do, and Justin would expect him to have brunch with them. Brian wasn't from that country club world, he always felt out of place when Jennifer was around because everything she did was so proper. He'd just have to put up with it for Justin.

"Brian, you told me you wouldn't be like this." Justin reminds him. "That you would make an effort."

"When did I supposedly say this?" Brian asks.

"Don't try to be cute." Justin gets up to put his dish in the sink.

"Who's trying? I thought you said I was always cute." Now he was being cute and it had its desired effect on Justin as he came to stand beside him.

"She's new here, I just want to help make this place feel like home for her and Molly." There was a pleading tone to his voice that melted Brian.

"Alright, we'll go welcome the newest Taylor's to the neighborhood." Brian relents.

Justin sits down on Brian's lap putting an arm around the man's neck. "There is one positive point even you can agree on."

"And what's that sunshine?" Brian asks letting his hand wander up the back of Justin's shirt.

The girls took that moment to make their presence known. "A babysitter always only a phone call away." Justin says having his point made as the girls started jumping up to get their attention and interrupting them for the second time that morning. Brian had to agree with the point Justin made. It would be nice to have someone who would volunteer to have the girls over for a night or two. Sometimes a man needed some alone time with his man.

Justin reluctantly stood up extracting himself from Brian's arms to feed the twins. Brian watched him go feeling like this was how life was going to go. He didn't like having to share Justin when he didn't get what he wanted. They had always been good about having enough time for each other, but that was before Ava and Zoe could talk and come to them. They demanded much more out of them now that they were older. It was almost like when they first came home and neither he nor Justin knew how to handle two infants. This was another of those times Brian was learning to put someone else first.

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Jennifer hugged Ava and Zoe to her. "Oh my girls, you're so big." She was glad that now she would be able to see them more regularly. Each time she sees them now they won't seem to have grown several inches.

After everything was settled in to Jennifer's approval, she set out the sandwiches she ordered so that they could have a much needed break. "So tell me what's new with you Justin." Jennifer demands lightly.

"Right now I'm just really focused on finishing this last semester of school." Justin tells her. "It feels like it's taken a decade to get here, but hopefully all the work will be well worth it."

"I'm so proud of you Justin. You could have gone the easy route and done as your father wanted and went to business school, but that's not you." Jennifer beamed with pride for her son's success.

"Thanks mom." It meant a lot to hear that from her since she wasn't exactly happy about him leaving town for PIFA. It was good that she came around to support his decision. He looked to Brian trying to decide if he should tell the latest news between him and Brian. He hadn't told anyone yet, not even Daphne so it was right that his mother knew first. "Brian and I have decided to start trying for another baby."

Jennifer's eyes lit up. "That's wonderful honey." She had been waiting for this since the twins had been born. It had annoyed Justin by her constant inquiring about when she would be made a grandmother again.

"If we ever get the chance." Brian remarks under his breath, but loud enough to be heard.

Justin turned red. "Brian."

"Oh like your mother doesn't know we fuck on a regular basis or at least used to." Brian says not keeping anything back.

"That doesn't mean I feel comfortable talking about it in front of her." He argues.

"You WASP types all like to pretend certain things don't happen." Brian mocks.

"You're one to talk, your mother doesn't even know you're gay or that you have kids." Justin blurts out without thinking. He knew it was a sore subject for the man and he generally stayed away from the topic. It was just that Brian's comments sometimes riled him up to the point where he forgot what he was saying.

"Brian, how could you not have told your mother that she has two granddaughters?" Jennifer asks appalled.



Brian squeezes the bridge of his nose trying to ward off the headache coming on. "So she could tell me they are the products of evil. I'd rather not expose them to that kind of thinking." Just the tone of his voice told both Jennifer and Justin that Brian had his reasons for decision to separate his family from his own parents.

"So, your loft is getting to be too small for the four of you." Jennifer says tactfully changing the subject.

"The problem is we don't have any privacy. There's never a chance for us to be alone together even if the girls are just in another room." Brian tells her letting his frustration show through.

"Pretty much what it comes down to is that we need a bigger space, especially if we're going to be adding to our family." Justin explains Brian's little outburst. "I thought maybe you could help mom."

"I'd love to honey. You can be my first clients in Pittsburgh." She loved the idea of being involved in helping her son pick out his home. After the divorce from Justin's father, she had gotten into real-estate and had done pretty well before knowing that she could do better outside such a big city. Pittsburgh was the obvious choice so she could have a bigger part in her son's life. While in Chicago she felt like a rare guest in his life rather than the mother she wanted to be. Being here in Pittsburgh she hoped to remedy many of the things she missed out on. "Do you have anything in mind?" It would be much easier on her if she knew what to look out for.

"At least three bedrooms." Brian started. He began envisioning all the things he had always deemed belonged in a perfect house. Perfect was what he wanted for his family.

"We need a big kitchen." Justin adds. Brian gives him a questioning look. "What, I like to cook." Brian gives a little huff of a laugh. "Sometimes." Justin amends. "If we had more room in the kitchen I would be able to cook more."

Brian watched Jennifer write down Justin's request. "Also I'll need some kind of office space and a studio for Justin."

"I don't need a studio." Justin puts in. He didn't want to be pushy.

"Where are you planning to create those masterpieces of yours? Not near the furniture." Brian corrects him. "If you have a studio at home, it will give you more time to work, but still be at home with Ava and Zoe."

"It would be nice to have a space all my own." Justin comes around imagining all the space he would have to work on his art. Plus, if he had a studio at home he could still work on his art and be with his children. The idea of getting a larger place was becoming more and more appealing. They could have a yard for the girls to play in so they could spend more time outside than they already do. He started to get just as excited imagining their new home.

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They had seen five places before stepping into the house of both their dreams. The architecture was modern, which suited Brian's tastes, but was inviting, which suited Justin's. The most important part for both of them was that it was the kind of home they could raise their children in. With a large backyard equipped with a swimming pool, it was almost everything they would need. There was the den Brian planned on using as his office and a sunroom that really made them agree this was the right house. Justin could use it as his studio since it let in a remarkable amount of light during the day.

It didn't take long to find out that they got the house. Brian and Justin let out a collective sigh of relief. Justin had noticed just how tense Brian had become since Ava walked in on them having sex. It was like he was always watching out in case it happened again. Justin laughed it off, but Brian didn't find it so funny.

"What if we scarred her for life?" Brian had asked.

Justin laughed at the question. "Brian, she's three, she doesn't even know what we were doing." Justin tried to reassure him.

"Maybe you should talk to her anyways." Brian suggests.

"Why me? You're the one worried about it." Justin huffs. "I'm sure you'll have a blast telling your three year old daughter the mechanics of sex and what you were doing to her daddy." Justin adds with a smirk.

"Fine, if she doesn't bring it up then we won't say anything." Brian had agreed. Justin had a very good way of putting everything into perspective.

"She's not going to, she was too scared from her nightmare." Justin once again assures him.

"On another topic, we need to start planning what we're taking to the new house. We'll probably be getting mostly new furniture for the rooms, but we can keep some of the stuff we really like." Brian says changing the direction of the conversation.

"I haven't even begun to think about this gigantic feat we've gotten ourselves into." Justin runs a hand through his hair getting stressed out just thinking about the move. The fun part picking out the house was over, now they had to fill that house so that their family could be comfortable there.

The new house meant giving up the loft though. It was just a place, but it had been the place where he had come home with Brian for the first time. It was where he fell in love with him and decided he wanted to spend his life with him. It was where they brought their daughter's home, the only home they knew up until now. There were so many memories here that even with the excitement of buying a new house, he was saddened that they would never step foot in the loft after they move out. He could take his memories with him, but a part of them would remain in the loft for the next family. Justin knew it was time to move on and start a new chapter in his life. There would be new experiences and soon new babies.

### Chapter Three

Michael leaned against the counter next to Brian. He turned to see what had Brian's attention to see him watching Justin playing on the living room floor with Ava and Zoe. "I can't wait to do that with my child." Michael tells him taking Brian out of his trance.

"Do what?" Brian asks puzzled.

"Just be with them, play with them." Michael clarifies.

Brian looked at his friend a little worried. "Michael, you do know that Melanie and Lindsay only think of you as the sperm donor." He hated having to quash Michael's dreams, but it was better now than when he became too attached.

Michael shakes his head. "We talked about that. I only agreed to be the father of Mel's child if I was a part of the baby's life. The baby will live with Mel and Linds, but I'll still be the father."

"Did you get that in writing?" Brian asks skeptically.

Michael looks at him not understanding. "We're friends, why would they go back on their word."

"We are talking about Mel." Brian points out like that explained everything. She was the reason he had for not wanting to be the sperm donor for Lindsay even before he met Justin. He had been their original choice for the father, but once he had found out Justin's was pregnant, his whole outlook on fatherhood. He couldn't see himself having a child that he didn't see everyday. Or one that he had no say on how it was

raised. The worst though was knowing all the things he would miss as his child grew up. Looking back now, he knew he had made the right decision. Everything he had with his daughters was what made his life more worthy.

"I can't really be too demanding. This is probably my only chance to have a child. Ben and I can't and this is the only way that I can have a child and not feel bad that it's with someone other than Ben." There was genuine despair in Michael's voice that Brian began to see just how much this meant to him. Now he needed to make sure Melanie and Lindsay wouldn't go back on their word to let Michael be a part of his child's life.

"Maybe everything will work out." Brian says trying to be supportive.

Michael gives a little shrug. "This weekend, will you come out to Babylon?" Michael asks looking up at him with puppy dog eyes. "It's been ages since we've hung out."

"I can't." Brian begins to explain, but Michael cut him off.

"Justin won't let you." Michael accuses. "Does he need all of your time?"

"First off, Justin doesn't tell me what to do and he's not the only reason I stay home. If you've forgotten, my daughters are right over there." He says pointing towards the living room. "However, this weekend I can't go out to Babylon because Justin and I are going away."

Michael frowned not liking what he was hearing. So what if he was with Ben now, he still got jealous of how close Brian and Justin were. He accepted they were together, but sometimes he still wished it were him with Brian, not Justin. "Why do you have to go away, you spend all your time with him anyways?"

"We don't get much alone time with the girls always around so we're letting Grandma Jen spend some alone time with them so that we can spend some alone time together." Brian tells him.

"Why do you need to set aside a whole weekend to be with him?" Michael asks. "You see him all the time, I never get to see you."

It was this whining that reminded him why he wasn't putting more of an effort into keeping his friendship with Michael strong. "He's my partner Michael. Don't you like to spend time with Ben?" Brian asks feeling like this was a pointless question. Who asks why you spend time with the person you love. "We're trying to have a baby so the more alone time we have the better." When the words were out of his mouth, he knew he shouldn't have said them just by the look on Michael's face.

"You're what?" Michael's mouth dropped open.

"You have trouble comprehending Mikey?" He mocks.

"How can you even consider having another kid? You never wanted any kids, you got stuck with them."

Brian wasn't going to let Michael talk about his family that way, like he didn't want them. "My daughters weren't planned, but I wouldn't change a thing about having them." His voice told Michael how serious he was.

"You're only doing this because you're jealous that I'm going to be a father. You never mentioned this before." Michael accuses.

If he weren't so angry at him, he would have laughed. "Mikey, I've never been jealous of you. If you remember, Lindsay wanted me to be the father, but I refused. Justin and I wanting another child has nothing to do with you."

"He can't let me have anything." Michael gripes referring to Justin.

"Mikey, I thought you'd be happy for me. Our kids will grow up together just like you and I did." Brian states knowing Michael would eat it up having another connection with him.

"I guess that would be good if we had kids at the same time." Michael grudgingly agrees.

Deb called everyone to dinner putting a halt on anymore conversation about babies, which was perfectly fine to Brian. He knew he shouldn't have said anything, but it wasn't like nobody would notice when Justin started showing.

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Justin hugged his daughters for the fourth time. He was becoming a wreck, but they seemed fine with his leaving. "Come on Justin." Brian says trying to lure him away.

Justin begrudgingly leaves the girls in his mother's living room. The three of them stood in the foyer in front of the door. "I've never been away from them for this long."

"The first time is always the hardest, but it gets easier, trust me." Jennifer tells him with all the experience of being a mother allowed her. "There will come a time when you look forward to a little alone time."

"Are you sure they won't think we abandoned them." Justin asks once again.

Brian frowned not wanting his daughters to think they left because they didn't want them around. He had been assured that they knew, but Justin bringing it up again gave him second thoughts. "Maybe we should just take them with us."

"I thought you needed time for just the two of you and that was what this trip was about." Jennifer reminded them. "It will be fine. We're going to have fun just us girls."

"Okay, but promise to call if they need us." Justin says before hugging his mother. "We really do appreciate you doing this for us, right Brian."

"Yes, we are." Brian sends a glare towards Justin.

Jennifer waves off their thanks. "I'm happy to get to spend the weekend with my granddaughters. I've missed so much of their lives living in Chicago. I'm ready to make up for all the lost time." Her eyes glistened with emotion.

"We'll call when we get there." Brian says pulling Justin out the door wanting to get out of there before things became too emotional.

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The ride was done mostly in silence. Justin fell asleep fifteen minutes outside Pittsburgh and didn't wake again until Brian was shaking him. Justin rubbed the sleep out of his eyes as Brian helped him out of the car. He breathed in the clean country air almost burning in its varied consistency to the city atmosphere he was used to. It was the first time he's ever been out to the country. He grew up in the suburbs outside Chicago and then went straight to an apartment in the city of Pittsburgh. That's why when Brian asked where he wanted to go, that's what he chose. Seeing it now, he almost wished he had the girls with him. He wanted them to be able to see this different setting and promised himself that he would make it a priority to have a trip to the country with them.

"I love how secluded this place is." Justin remarks helping to grab their bags from the back of the car.

"We could even fuck in the great outdoors." Brian hadn't been thrilled about Justin's idea of the ideal place for their getaway. He was never really into the outdoors and never heard anything from Justin about them so it surprised him that Justin wanted to go.

Justin grinned at him. "I always had this fantasy of doing it outside. It will be fun." He states excitedly.

"As long as we stay away from the poison oak." Brian shudders just imagining being exposed to the plant in all the places you didn't ever want to.

Brian heads into the cabin followed by Justin. It was a one room cabin equipped with a bathroom and kitchen off to the side. The main part of the room was taken up by the four poster bed and fireplace. There was a romantic setting in the solitary nature of the cabin. It would just be the two of them for the weekend, something neither of them could remember anymore. They had plenty of time alone before Ava and Zoe were born, but after three years with twins, they had forgotten what it was like.

"Put the food away and I'll try to find somewhere to unpack our stuff." Brian looked at the dressers provided for their belongings. They were actually rather nice in their rustic way. They certainly went with the ambiance of the whole cabin.

Once Justin had all the food put away, he joined Brian by the window. "You can see squirrels in the city." He points out figuring the woodland creatures were what had his partner's attention.

"I never pay any attention to them though." Brian adds.

"Can I have your phone. I'm going to call my mom to tell her we've gotten here." Justin asks holding his hand out. They had only brought his phone to cut back on the phone calls. Everyone was sworn not to call unless it was an emergency.

"Only for a moment. We'll talk to the girls later tonight before bed." Brian instructs already knowing Justin wouldn't listen and spend too long talking with their daughters. Once Justin had Ava and Zoe on the phone, Brian didn't see the harm in saying hello to them himself. He found himself having to force himself to say goodbye. It was more painful being away from them than he had known it would be.

They sat on the bed next to each other after they hung up. "They sounded good, right?" Justin asks playing with the hem of the blanket.

"They're fine. I'm sure they are having a blast with their Aunt Molly." Brian assures him.

Justin nods slightly. "Do you want to go for a walk?" He asks when it became awkward sitting there.

Brian rubs a hand over his face. "Has it been so long since we've been alone that we've forgotten what to do?"

"I haven't forgotten, but maybe you need a refresher." Justin teases.

Brian pushes Justin onto his back with a growl. "I'll show you who needs reminding."

Justin lets out a squeal as he was being pushed onto his back. He loved that look Brian got in his eyes. It was the one where he knew that Brian was thinking of nothing else but him. To be the center of someone's world could be overwhelming, but Justin felt like something precious, not the heavy weight that could come with it. Brian quickly slipped out of his clothes, but when it came to Justin, he took his time as each piece of clothing came off Brian kissed the revealed skin. There was an unhurried pace that Brian rarely had. Justin knew Brian was taking the time to make up for all the rushed encounters they had been having lately.

When Justin was divested of his clothing, Brian laid his body on top of the smaller mans. He met the soft pink lips in a slow kiss. He pulled away reaching to the side table only to remember he didn't bring any condoms, that they wouldn't need them. The idea of being inside Justin raw excited him even more. His pace became hurried as he pushed inside the man groaning from the new sensations. Justin pressed his fingers into his back signaling for Brian to go faster. He had held out as long as he could, but the slow pace Brian had started with had him ready to burst.

Brian falls onto his back with a heavy breath. "That was creating a baby." Brian states confident in himself.

Justin smacks Brian on the stomach. "There might be a baby forming in me right now."

"Maybe." Brian reminds him not wanting his comment to get their hopes up.

Justin smiles at him. "I want this so much that I know it's true. It has to be." Justin says in almost a pleading tone.

"That's quite different than the Justin of a few weeks ago who wasn't sure if he wanted another child." Brian remarks questioning the sudden turn around.

The smile vanishes from Justin's face. "That was before it was real, when it was all still a what if." Justin tells him. He didn't like the way Brian was questioning him like he was only doing this for him. "I was wrong okay, I wasn't thinking of what I could have, instead I was thinking of what I wouldn't have. The gain far outweighs the loss. I'm sure you agree with that."

Brian pulls Justin to him. "I didn't mean to upset you. I'm glad you changed your mind."

Justin let out a laugh. "Only because you got your way." Brian just shrugs. Justin rests his head on Brian's chest getting closer to the man. "It's such a different feeling having no barriers between us." Justin remarks. "Have you ever done it raw before?" He asks promising himself he won't be jealous if Brian's answer is yes.

Brian shakes his head. "Not besides the attempts we made in the last few weeks." Brian tells him. "It never really was an option before you."

Justin smiled hearing his words. Sometimes Brian said the right thing at the right time perfectly. "You have any idea how much I love you?" Justin asks.

"I think I have a good idea." Brian replies kissing the top of Justin's head. Justin stomach rumbled killing the quiet moment. "We better feed the beast." Brian sits up pulling Justin with him.

Sitting at the table, Justin looks up across at Brian. "I'm really glad we came here. It's nice to be just us for a little while." Justin tells him knowing he wasn't sure about being away from his daughters for a whole weekend, but being here with Brian was worth it. He was seeing that it was important to make the time for each other if they wanted to stay a strong couple.

## Chapter Four

Justin bounced on his feet impatiently. Brian watched him calmly from his spot sitting on the edge of the tub.

"Justin, it's not going to go any faster with you freaking out." Brian tells him a little amused by his antics.

Justin looked at him crossly. "Why am I the only one anxious about this. You're the one that makes a big deal of everything."

"Because I know its not going to say what we want if we ask it to." Brian calmly tells him. When Justin paces by him, Brian grabs his hand holding him back. "Whatever it says, won't matter, we're still going to have a baby." He promises him. Justin nods resting his body against Brian's chest.

"How much longer?" Justin asks.

Brian checks his watch. "Thirty seconds." He reads.

After the thirty seconds, Justin moved to the counter. He braces himself before looking down at the test stick. "Negative." He announces, his shoulders slumping.

Brian wraps his arms around the blond. "Its okay, we'll keep trying." Brian murmurs into his hair.

Justin tightens his arms around Brian's waist. "I really wanted to be pregnant. It's just so frustrating. After all that sex we've been having, it feels like it was all for nothing." Justin says getting depressed.

"I wouldn't say for nothing." He says slightly appalled Justin would refer to it as a chore.

"That's not what I meant. I just think it should have worked by now." Justin says more accurately.

Brian rubs his back. "It will happen. Just think of all the fun we'll have trying again."

"It's strange how we had Ava and Zoe without even trying and now that we are, it doesn't happen." Justin remarks.

"We've only been trying a month. We can't get despaired now, it's not as if we're on a deadline. We have time."

Justin looks at him softly glad for the words. "I know you really want this too so I feel like I'm not only disappointing myself, but you too." Justin says looking down a little ashamed.

Brian tilts the blonds' head up. "Hey, don't worry about what I want. Of course I want a baby, but if it doesn't happen right away, it won't be your fault. These things can take time." He tells him. "I love you just for even trying and wanting a baby with me."

Justin kisses along Brian's jaw. Whenever Brian said he loved him had a strong effect on him. He didn't say it often so Justin knew he really meant it when he did. "Let's start trying again now." He says with a lust filled stare at Brian.

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"Ava, Zoe, you need to pick out your beds." Justin says getting the girls focused on what they were there to do. He hadn't been sure about bringing his daughters to the furniture store with him, but his mother had said they would be more excited about their beds if they helped pick them out. It would make the transition from crib to the new beds a lot easier if they actually liked them. "Brian, will you stop playing around." Justin says getting agitated. Every time he got the girls to focus a little, Brian would distract them again.

"What about our bed?" Brian asks enticingly.

Justin bites his bottom lip. "After we pick the twins beds." He promises.

"Come on girls, Daddy wants you to pick out your beds." He calls gathering Ava and Zoe, taking each by the hand.

Justin hated that Brian could so easily create order with their daughters, but was also glad that he was so effective. Brian may spoil them, but Justin knew he was the one that coddled their children. When he finally had his family focused, he quickly went about purchasing the furniture for their new home. Shopping for furniture was the most tedious experience he had to go through. He was glad that he was able to squeeze it all into one afternoon.

Once they were back home and the girls were taking their naps, Brian approached Justin. "Hey, what's wrong?" Brian asks having waited until they could be alone to see what was bothering his partner.

"Why does there have to be a problem?" Justin asks avoiding having to answer.

"Then what's with the pissy attitude?" Brian asks.

Justin frowns at him. "I'm not in a pissy mood."

"Justin." Brian calls his name not believing him.

"Alright, I'm just disappointed. I really thought we'd have our baby by now."

Brian turns Justin towards him. "It will happen, but you can't waste the time you have now though feeling sorry for not getting what you want."

Justin didn't get a chance to say anything when there was a knock at the loft door. He moved around Brian to go answer it surprised to find his mother there. "Mom, what are you doing here?" He asks stepping aside to let her in.

"Cant I come see my son?" She asks.

"Sure." Justin shrugs moving into the kitchen. "Would you like something to drink?" He offers his mother.

"I'll have some tea if you have it." Jennifer sets her bag onto the kitchen island. Justin fills the tea kettle before setting it onto the stove. Brian held in his groan seeing Justin's actions realizing it wouldn't be a short visit.

Justin takes a seat next to her on the stools. "What's new?" He asks still not believing she had nothing to discuss with him.

"I actually have good news. The loft sold." She tells them happily.

"Already?" Brian asks no longer pretending he wasn't paying attention to her.

"This is a great place for someone single." She points out. Jennifer looks around the loft seeing all the packed boxes against the walls. "It looks like you're already ready to move out. At least you won't have to worry about this place when you're getting settled in your new home." To her, it was best to have it all settled as soon as possible. "When are you planning on making the move?"

"Tomorrow." Justin tells her pouring her the cup of tea. "We got all the furniture picked out and it's going to be delivered tomorrow as well."

"That's great." She takes some papers out of her bag. "I thought I'd bring over the papers you need to sign to save you a trip." She addresses Brian. The man came over to the counter signing where he was told. "It's all set now." Jennifer announces. "It's too bad my grandbabies are asleep."

"You're welcome to stay until they wake up." Justin offers.

"I'd love to honey, but I really should get back to work. I'm showing a house later." Jennifer tells him.



"Next time then." Justin promises.

Jennifer kisses her son on the cheek. "Bye honey. Goodbye Brian." Jennifer says with less affection towards Brian before leaving.

Justin turns to Brian once the door had shut. "I guess that's good right?" He asks a little unsure.

Brian nods. "Your mother is right. It'll be easier to move if we're not having to worry about this place too."

Justin smirks at him. "I never thought I'd hear you say my mother is right." He teases.

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The next day kept Brian and Justin busy all day. They spent the morning and afternoon moving all their personal belongings from the loft to their new home. It helped immensely that they had Jennifer to watch Ava and Zoe so they didn't have to worry what the girls were up to all the time.

Brian collapses down onto the newly arranged couch in their new living room. "I think we are done." He announces when Justin takes a seat next to him equally exhausted.

"We still have a lot of unpacking to do." Justin reminds him.

Brian lets out an aggravated groan. Moving was so much of a hassle that he was starting to wish they hadn't at all. However, one look around the spacious living room changed his viewpoint. "We don't have to do it all today." He finally decides.

Justin looks at him warily. "What have you done with my Brian?" He asks a confused Justin. "He would never leave clutter around his house."

"Are trying to call me a control freak?" Brian asks pretending to be appalled.

"I'm not trying. You are a control freak." Justin returns. He moves closer kissing the side of his neck. "That's one of the things that I love about you." He knew Brian obsessive quality was the main reason they had lasted so long in the loft. Otherwise, it would have been a disaster zone there with two young children.

"Oh really." Brian asks pulling Justin onto his lap playfully, but that was all he had the energy for.

Justin nods with his forehead resting near Brian's. "I can't wait until the girls see their room. They are going to love having a space of their own."

"Me too." Brian adds. That was their biggest need, a space for their whole family to call their own.

They both sat up when they heard the front door open and two sets of feet running across the hardwood floors. In moments, the two girls found their fathers sitting together on the sofa. Both of the men stood up taking each a girl. "What do you think of your new home?" Justin asks Zoe.

"It's big." She says with wide eyes.

"It certainly is big." Justin agrees. "Do you want to go see your room?" He got excited nods from both his daughters. He took Zoe by the hand leading her towards the stairs. "Make sure you're careful going up and down the stairs here just like at grandmas." He reminds the girls since they weren't used to having such high stairs.

Once they were upstairs, Justin led them to their room. Ava and Zoe's eyes went even wider seeing their space decorated just as they wanted. Ava ran over to one of the new beds. "This bed mine." She declares. Zoe reluctantly went to the other one even if they were the same thing.

"You did a really good job in here." Jennifer tells her son admiring the way he had decorated the room. "I love how you painted the mural on the wall of the country side with a castle. It really goes with the princess theme."

"Thanks mom." Justin beamed. He was glad that his girls really liked it too. "It was worth the extra time."

Once Ava and Zoe got used to their new rooms, it was time for bath and then bed. Brian and Justin got them tucked into bed after reading them their nightly story. When the girls were asleep they finally got a chance to relax in the own private room.

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Brian looked up as Justin staggered from the bathroom attached to their bedroom over to the bed where he was lounging. He sat up when he saw the dazed look on Justin's face. "What?" It was barely audible, but it was clear what he had said.

Justin takes a moment to get his voice. "It's positive." He says with all the awe that he felt.

Brian stands noticing for the first time Justin had something in his hand. "Justin?" He asks coming to stand in front of him.

"I just had this feeling that I was pregnant. I didn't want to tell you I was taking the test because I didn't want to have to disappoint you again if it was negative again." Justin explains his motives. "But it's positive." Justin's mouth turns up in a grin. "It's positive." He repeats.

Brian swings him up in his arms holding him tight. "I can't believe it." Brian says setting Justin down. The blond shows him the pregnancy test just so he could see the proof in front of him.

"It's really happening." Justin beams. "We're going to have another baby."

Brian pulled him into a kiss that spoke of all the excitement he felt. After several minutes he pulled away setting a hand on Justin's abdomen. "There's a little baby in here." He says a little lost at the thought. They had done all of it before, but it was still an experience that left them feeling like it was all new.

"Or maybe two babies." Justin jokes.

Brian bites his bottom lip considering Justin's statement. "I didn't even consider that." He states honestly. Now that it was brought up, he wasn't sure he could do the multiples thing again.

Justin laughed at Brian's expression. He sets a hand on the man's arm to ground him. "Brian, it's highly unlikely we'll have twins again. Neither of us even have a history of them in our family." Justin felt guilty for putting that thought into Brian's head, but he had no idea it would freak the man out. "Don't get all weird on me. There's no turning back now."

Brian stays silent for a moment before once again taking the smaller man into his arms. "I don't want to turn back." It was all looking forward for him now.

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Brian stepped up the stairs to the bedroom he had shared with Justin for the last four and a half years finding the blond staring down at their now bare bed. He walks up behind him placing a hand on Justin's shoulder. "Hey."

Justin turns his head to the side looking up at him. He gave a weak smile that Brian saw right through. "Hey."

"What's going on in that head of yours?" Brian asks seeing the conflicting emotions in the blondes face.

Justin shrugs at first before deciding to answer. "It's hard to say goodbye to this place." He felt silly for being so attached to the loft, but it was an emotion he hadn't known would come so strongly. "Why am I more effected than you are. This was your place first." Justin points out.

"It was my first place all my own, but at the end of the day, it's just a place to live just like any other." He was so hardwired not to become attached to anything that he had naturally had that mentality when moving into the loft. It was easier to loose something if you didn't have emotional attachments to them. The only thing that was special when he first moved in was that it was his space and no one else's. When Justin moved in and even more when their daughters arrived, that's when he felt that the loft was a home.

"Everything happened here." Justin says not giving up on convincing Brian he had just as much of a connection. "We came here our first night together. It's where I knew I wanted a life with you. We brought our daughters here, they spent almost the first four years of their life here." Justin reminisces.

"We'll bring those memories with us." Brian assures the younger man. "This is just something we need to do for our family."

"I know. I'm excited about our new home. Our family will have room to grow and space so we're not always all over each other." Justin states. "Unless we want to be." He adds with a little grin.

"It's all going to work out fine. You'll forget about this place in no time." Brian tells him.

"Yeah." Justin agrees. "I really did feel at home here. It was hard when my parents divorced and we moved out of the home I grew up in. Then I had three different homes in the space of a year. When I moved in here, I wasn't sure how long it would last, but something told me that it would. That we would last."

"And we did." Brian finishes for him. "Long enough to need someplace bigger."

Justin takes more look at their bedroom before following Brian down the stairs. "Its hard to believe someone else will be living here."

"Maybe the next stud of Liberty Avenue." Brian says ruefully. "Someone eventually has to replace me."

Justin hugs him around the waist. "You'll always be my stud." He promises him. Brian rolled his eyes, but holds back the disparaging remarks. Justin knew what to say when he needed it, even when it was a little pathetic.

Brian guided Justin out the door taking one last look. After a short pause, he slid the door shut for the last time. The lock clicked effectively putting the last piece of his single self behind him. He turned to Justin, ready to walk down the steps and to his future.

## Chapter Five

Brian stood in front of Justin straightening his tie. "Look at you, all grown up." Brian remarks softly.

"Funny how a suit can really make you feel like an adult." Justin adds. "Can you believe that I'm nervous? All I have to do is go up there and get my diploma, but it feels like so much more. Its like I'm being forced to move on and I don't think I'm ready yet." Justin says in a slight panic.

"Justin, you've been ready for this since your first year. This is just nerves getting to you." Brian tries to reassure him, but he wasn't too experienced at the sort of thing.

"Maybe. Or maybe I'm not ready to move on. My future is already set for me so I shouldn't be fearing it. But, maybe that's what I'm nervous about. Is this all there is for me?" He asks never being less sure.

"There's plenty in your future. College was only a small part of you. You have me and our girls and soon our baby. You have everything ahead of you. You're free to work on your art without having to answer to anyone."

Justin lets out the sigh he was holding in while wrapping his arms around Brian's waist. "Thanks Brian, I really needed that." He sighs again. "What would I do without you to ground me?"

"I have no clue." Brian answers pressing a kiss to his lips.

"You couldn't live without me." Justin teases cupping the man's cheek.

Brian lets the comment go. "Com with me." He says taking his hand and leading him down the hall.

They stopped in front of the door to what would be Justin's studio. "What are we doing here?" He asks.

"Go in." Brian prompts. Justin looks at him for a moment before pushing the door open. He couldn't believe his eyes. The room had changed drastically since the last time he had been in it. Everything that he would need as an artist was there. Brian had gone out and put together his dream studio.

"Brian...it's perfect." Justin couldn't think of words to describe how happy he was. He turned and hugged Brian tightly. "You didn't have to do this."

"It's your graduation present." Brian tells him.

"Thank you Brian." Justin kisses him letting him know how much he really appreciated the gift.

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Brian watched with pride as Justin crossed the stage. The blond turned towards the audience to where Brian was sitting flashing him a smile. His whole family was there to watch him graduate. His girls sat on either side of Brian looking a bit bored, but their excitement grew when they saw their daddy. It made his day that much more special having his daughters there. In the row with them was his mother, Molly, Debbie and Daphne, even Ted and Emmett came. Behind them sat an obviously dragged there Lindsay next to Melanie. Most surprising was seeing Michael. They had been getting along a lot better lately, but something told Justin that it was Ben that was the real reason the man was there.

After all the graduates received their diplomas, Justin joined his family standing and chatting outside. He accepted hugs and kisses from most of the family, the obvious excluded.

"Daddy looks funny." Zoe announced not appreciating the cap and gown.

Justin laughed along with the family. "One day you'll wear one of these." He tells her making Zoe scrunch her nose just like him when he didn't like something.

"I think you look fabulous baby." Emmett remarks. "Not everyone can pull off a cardboard hat."

"Thanks Em. I think." He says a little confused as always by Emmett.

Jennifer hugs her son again. "I'm so proud of you baby." She pressed a kiss to his cheek making his cheeks turn pink. He didn't think he'd ever get over being embarrassed by his mother no matter how old he was. Soon he would be the one embarrassing his own children.

Brian pulls him back against his chest wrapping his arms around him from behind. "Let's get this little celebration over with so that we can have our own." He says with his mouth pressed to the blonde's ear, but the rest heard him.

Debbie clasps her hands together. "You heard him, we only have a limited time with the graduate before his highness whisks him away." She announces. "We better get moving."

The group reformed at Jennifer's new home. She already had the house all set up for Justin's graduation party. "Jennifer, you really did a fabulous job with this place." Debbie comments. It wasn't exactly her style, but the women were too different to like the same things. Still she could appreciate all the work Jennifer put into having the house ready for Justin's graduation.

"Why thank you Debbie." She had really grown fond of the woman. Debbie didn't ask questions, just accepted her right into their close nit family. She could really see why Justin liked being a part of it now that she was.

"Thank you mom." Justin says accepting a hug from his mother.

Jennifer smoothed a hand through Justin's hair. "My baby really is all grown up. There's nothing left to do."

Debbie felt for her. Even though Michael never went to college, she still felt that point where he was moving away from needing her all the time. Now he was about to have a child of his own. She still offered some comfort. "Trust me Jen, he'll never not need you."

"I'm standing right here." Justin reminds them. They both smiled seeing his discomfort. "I'm going to go find the guys." He says slipping away.

Justin was surprised when he saw his father enter the room. Despite having forgiven him for everything the man had put him through when he first came out to him, it was always still a shock when he saw his father come to support him. Justin went to him. "Dad, I didn't think you'd be here." Justin remarks standing awkwardly not knowing whether to hug him or not.

"Your mother told me that you were coming here afterwards." Craig explains. "I thought since I was already in town that I'd come and your mother was okay with it."

"Why are you in town?" Justin asks a little skeptical.

"I got your graduation announcement. I guess I just couldn't not see my son graduate." He says surprising Justin.

Justin smiled shyly. "You came to Pittsburgh for me?" He asks with a little awe.

Craig nods. "I hope you don't mind that I didn't call. I came in just before the ceremony." Justin couldn't find it in himself to care.

He looked down when he felt a tugging on his pant leg. "Daddy?" Ava asks looking up at him.

He bends over lifting her into his arms. "Yeah baby?"

Ava looks at Craig for a moment before turning back to her father. "I hungry." She finally tells him.

"I'm hungry." He says emphasizing the I'm. He was really working on getting the girls to pronounce words correctly now that they were old enough to know the difference. Ava gave a little sigh resting her head on his shoulder. It looked like she needed a nap too Justin thought. "We're going to be having lunch very soon." Justin tells her. "Where's Dada?"

Ava tiredly shrugs her shoulders. "I don't know."

Justin turns her to Craig. "You remember my dad right?" He asks never really having felt comfortable calling him their grandfather. Ava looked at him again before shaking her head. He really couldn't blame her, it had been over a year since they had seen him.

Craig felt a wave of shame flow through him because it was his doing why his granddaughters didn't know him. "The last time I saw you, you were much smaller." Craig tells her. "How old are you now?"

Ava held up three fingers. "Three." She answers shyly, burying her face in Justin's neck.

"Only for a few more days then you're going to be four." Justin reminds her.

"Birthday." Ava says brightening.

"Yes your birthday." Justin agrees.

"Justin" Brian called out approaching him, but stopping short when he saw Craig.

"Hello Brian." Craig says not letting on he wasn't glad to see him, but Brian knew. It was the same way he felt about the man.

"Craig," Brian returns.

Justin stepped in before they could start anything. "Brian will you take Ava and get her a snack." Justin asks handing the girl to him. "She says she's hungry."

Brian nods kissing Justin just to throw into Craig's face that he was with his son as if it wasn't obvious. "Come on Zoe." He says taking the girls hand that was hiding behind the wall watching them.

"They grow up so fast." Craig says watching them go.

Justin nods in agreement. "That's why we had to buy a house to fit us all in."

"You bought a house?" He asks shocked.

Justin bites his lip forgetting that his parents didn't talk about everything anymore. "Yeah, mom helped us find it." Justin tells him. "I love it there, so does the girls and Brian. It really feels like a home."

"That's good." He agrees feeling left out of the loop not for the first time. Now that Jennifer and Molly lived in Pittsburgh too, he was really out of all their lives.

Soon they were all seated around the table and focused their attention on the graduate.

"What are you going to do now that you're done with school?" Ted asks Justin.

"I'm going to be working from home. I get to stay home with my daughters while having the freedom to do my art how I want to." Justin tells the table.

"Didn't you focus on graphic arts while at school?" Ted asks always wanting the details.

Justin nods yes. "I've always wanted to be an animator, but I'm really into large scale painting right now." Justin explains. "It really works out well. I have a large studio at home so I can do all my work there and don't even need to go to an office."

"Who wouldn't like not having to go into work everyday and getting to make your own hours." Emmett remarked pretending to be jealous, but they all knew he was happy for Justin.

"Wouldn't that be nice if we all could just live off Brian just because we had his babies." Lindsay remarked disdainfully.

Brian frowned. "Lindsay that's not how it is and you know it." He says not even trying to be nice. He was beyond tired of all the comments she made about Justin. It didn't matter that Justin didn't let them get to him, he didn't want anyone talking about his partner like that.

The rest of lunch was spent a little subdued as the rest of the family pretended like Lindsay hadn't made the comment, but it was on all their minds. It was the first time they got to see just how cruel she was to Justin. None of them could believe that this was the same caring person they've known for years.

Craig retreated to the living room away from the table. Justin found him after putting Zoe in his mother's bed to nap. "Hey dad." He says getting the man's attention.

"You really want to stay home all day?" He asks.

Justin was surprised by his question. "Yes. That's what Brian and I decided."

"Was that what he wanted? For you to stay home and be his housewife?" He asks with contempt.

Justin was shocked by his anger. "It really isn't any of your business what we decide on together. I don't feel like a housewife as you say it and Brian doesn't want me to be one." Justin states just as angry. "I know you didn't want to be around your family as much as you could, but I do. I like being a part of my daughter's everyday accomplishments. I guess that's something you can't understand." Justin says letting all the anger he had felt towards his father in the past release now. "I can count on one hand the number of times I've seen you since I left home. I don't think that entitles you any say in how I live my life now."

"I guess it doesn't." Craig says letting all the progress they had made to rebuilding their relationship go to waste as he walked out.

Brian found Justin slumped over on the couch. He sat next to him rubbing his back. "Hey, what's wrong?"

Justin shook his head. "I'm ready to go home." He tells him weary.

Brian nods not going to push. "I'll get the girls, you want to say goodbye?" Justin gives a slight nod of his head following Brian into the kitchen where most of the family was congregated.

Justin went straight up to bed as soon as they got home. Brian set the girls in the living room and put a movie on to entertain them while he went to see Justin. Justin was laying on his side facing the door so he noticed just when Brian walked in. The older man sat on the bed close enough that he could touch him, but at the moment, he refrained. Before he could even ask, Justin started talking.

"I can't believe I set myself up for this again. Every time I let him into my life he does this. I just...I can't do it again." Justin says with a sigh. "I should have followed your lead and just cut him out of my life. It's not worth this pain."

Brian pulled him into his arms then seeing just how pained his partner was. He tries comforting him by rubbing his back. "I really want to say just fuck him, he doesn't matter, but you have to make your own

decisions on that. Just take some time to put some distance between what happened and see if it's worth it to try to build a relationship with him or if it'd be better to just forget him." Brian advises him.

"He's supposed to love me and accept my choices, not demean them and my family." Justin says sniffing. He rubbed at his nose not wanting to let the tears fall.

"I wish you didn't have to go through this, I really did hope things would work out with your dad." Brian admits to him.

Justin gave a little snort. "You hate him."

"Yes, but I wanted you to have what you wanted and that was having a relationship with him. Now you have to decide if it's all worth it." Brian didn't want to push his own feelings onto Justin, he wanted him to choose for himself.

Justin looked up at Brian smiling through his teary eyes. "That just shows how wrong he really is. He thinks you decide everything for me, but you don't. You always let me choose for myself in the end even if it wasn't what you wanted."

"I just want you to be happy." Brian says in a rare emotional admission. It felt safe to be open with Justin.

Justin kissed him softly. "I really am happy. Happier than I ever thought I could be." He thought of all he had. Brian, the man he knew was his true love, his two daughters who meant the world to him, and now their third child just starting to grow inside him. There really wasn't anything else he could ask for.

## Chapter Six

Ava and Zoe jumped onto their father's bed waking up the men. Justin tried to bury himself in the covers never being one for early morning wake-up calls, which made him an even bigger target. Brian sat up too used to the girls jumping into their bed on the weekend. It was the only time they knew they wouldn't get in trouble for waking the men up early.

"Dada wake up." Zoe demands of Brian.

"I'm up you little monster." He says tackling to the bed and tickling her. Even her squeals didn't pull Justin out of his attempt to stay asleep. He let her go and pulled Ava into his lap. "Do I get a morning kiss?" He asks. Ava gave him a quick peck and sat back rubbing her face.

"All scratchy." Ava says running her hand across his unshaven cheeks.

"Daddy likes me all scratchy in the morning." He says pushing at the lump known as Justin. A moan comes from Justin, but whatever he was trying to say was drowned out. "We're going to have to dig him out." Brian joined the effort of his daughters until the blankets were pulled away from him.

Ava and Zoe took turns climbing on him and kissing him good morning. Justin hugged them on each side of him. "What's today?" He asks.

Both looked up at him. "My birthday." They said at the same time.

"How old are you now?" He asks having been teaching them this all week. Ava held up four fingers in his face. Zoe watched her and then mimicked her sister's actions. "Four. That makes you big girls now." He lifted them up off him and stood getting out of bed. "I'll go make breakfast while Dada helps you get dressed." He tells them before disappearing into the bathroom.



Ava sat in front of Brian as he brushed out her hair. He had long since given up trying to figure out how he had gotten this job. It had to have stemmed from one too many times of complaining Justin made his daughters look like he picked them off the street. Justin had given up leaving the responsibility of dressing the girls for the day leaving it all to Brian.

"How do you want your hair today?" He asks the girl. Ava had much more patience than Zoe did. Most of the time he had to hold her down to get a comb through her blond hair. Ava shrugged leaving it all up to Brian. He pulled the top half back in a barrette and decided to leave it at that. "DO you want to put on your green dress?" Brian asks her. They had picked them out all by themselves for their birthday with considerable influence from Brian. He was all for them thinking they picked out their own clothes when it was really him doing it.

Ava took the dress off her bed. "I do it." Her independent streak grew even stronger by the day. Brian let her struggle for a few moments before helping her to get her arms in the right holes.

"You look beautiful." He declares. "Of course you do, you're my daughter." Ava stared at him not knowing what to make of him. "Go get your shoes while I help your sister." He says sending her in search of her matching shoes. "Zoe, your turn." Zoe unhappily left her toys to join her father on the floor. Brian got her to stay still long enough to pull her hair into a ponytail knowing anything else would be pulled out moments after he put it in.

"Dada." Ava says showing him her shoes. He pulled her into his lap helping her to put the buckle into place.

By the time he was done, Zoe had run from the room. "Zoe, get back here." He called out. He stood to go after her when Justin came in carrying the runaway.

"This what you were looking for?" Justin asks with a teasing glint in his eye.

"That girl is all you." Brian gripes getting her dress ready to put her in. He stood up with a breath of relief looking down at his clothed girls. They looked so grown up. Four years wasn't much, but looking at his babies, he saw they really weren't babies anymore. They were little girls with their own wants and needs.

"See Brian, you're so good at getting them dressed." Justin goaded him.

Brian narrows his eyes at him. "Now you can feed them and make sure they don't get messy." He says gladly taking the dressing on his daughters over having to feed them. There was nothing he was worse at than preparing a meal. It was better for all involved that he stay clear of that area.

"Daddy." Zoe called.

Justin paused from putting the breakfast dishes into the dishwasher. "Yes baby?"

"It's my birthday today." She tells him bouncing happily.

"I know. I was there when you were born and you've told me several times this morning."

"Do I get my party today?" She asks having looked forward to it all week. She asked everyday if it was time for her party.

Justin nods. "Not until later though, Dada and I still need to put the decorations up. Then Uncle Vic is going to come over with your cake." Zoe's face brightened at the mention of her cake. It just wasn't their birthday without one of Uncle Vic's cakes. Every year he made one for them.

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"I cannot believe I agreed to this." Brian complained helping Justin set up the decorations in the backyard.

"You're just a big old softy." Justin says smiling up at him teasingly.

"I'm not old." Brian grumbles under his breath. "I'm twenty nine."

"It's going to be fun." Justin tells him enthusiastic. "This is going to be our first time having people over at the house."

"We've had people over, or more accurate, people just stop by." Brian states still trying to figure out how their friends couldn't learn that it's customary to call before just coming by.

"I meant like a group, not just random people coming over." Justin explains himself.

"I can handle the guys coming over and even Debbie and your mom, but why did you have to invite a bunch of four year olds?"

"This is the first time the girls are having a birthday party with other kids. They're turning four, they're old enough to have a party with other kids." Justin explains once again. He knew going into the party Brian wouldn't be thrilled about having other people's kids over, but he knew also that Brian would give into anything for his daughters. That was why he was currently setting up for their party.

The car pulling into the driveway could be heard from the backyard signaling to the fathers that someone had arrived. "That's Daphne." Justin announces getting down from the step stool. "I was going to have her take the girls out while we set up, but maybe you should. That way you won't have to be here and gripe the whole time."

Brian didn't even attempt to pretend he wanted to be there decorating. "Alright, what time do you want us back?"

"Around one. The party starts at two so make sure you're not fashionably late." Justin warns not wanting to throw a party without the guests of honor even there.

They both get into the house in time to answer the door letting Daphne in. Brian went into the living room to gather up his daughters. "Do you want to come to the park with me?" Brian asks getting Ava and Zoe's attention.

"Time for the party?" Ava asks him.

"Not yet. Daddy needs time to prepare so we're going to go have fun while he works." He conspires with them softly. The girls thought it was fun to get to play while daddy worked.

Once Brian and the girls were gone, Justin and Daphne went out to the backyard. "Have I mentioned lately how much I love your house?" Daphne asks.

"Every time you come over." Justin says with a smirk.

"It's funny, you started out living with me when we first moved to Pittsburgh, then you moved into the loft which is about the coolest place. Now you have this beautiful house. Not to mention the prince it came with." Daphne reminisces. "I just have one question, what am I doing wrong?" She asks with a smile.

Justin lightly pushes her. "Shut up. Your day will come." He says being the reassuring friend even though he knew Daphne was joking. There was still a hint of truth in her words. It made him wonder what he did to get all that he had. Was it only because a condom broke one night or was this where he would end up anyways? He decided in that instant that he didn't care how he had gotten there. He was just glad to be there.

"I'm really glad you decided to stay in Pittsburgh for grad school. I wouldn't know what to do without you." Justin says feeling emotional.

"Relax Justin, I'll probably never leave." Daphne says confused by the sudden change in mood. "What's gotten into you?"

"I'm pregnant." He blurts out. This was the second time he told her this and he still didn't know a better way.

"Oh my god." Daphne gasps caught off guard. "That's great. Right?"

"Of course it is." Justin exclaims realizing that the last time he had spoken to Daphne about possibly conceiving he wasn't so sure it was a good thing himself. "I'm really excited about this. The raging hormones I could do without though." They both shared a laugh before getting back to work. "You're the first person we've told."

"Really?" Daphne asks pleased. "So how far along are you." She asks looking at him and not being able to see the difference.

"Only ten weeks so it's still new." Justin tells her. "We haven't even told Ava and Zoe yet."

"I'm sure they are going to be pleased. I always wanted a younger sibling when I was that age. I hated being an only child." Daphne tells him tying the balloon string to the table.

"They've been hinting at it for a while." Justin says in agreement.

"I can just imagine how excited Brian is." Daphne says knowingly smiling at him.

Justin shakes his head at her smile. "It's weird, it was me that was pushing it a lot more than him when we finally agreed to go for it. Once I knew I was ready for another baby, I wanted it right then."

Daphne nods, that definitely sounded like the Justin she knew. As long as she knew him, he never gave up on what he wanted. "We better stop talking or we'll never get this done." Daphne points out seeing as they barely did anything since she arrived.

A chorus of daddy's got Justin's attention as his family came around the back of the house. Now that the guests of honor were there, the party was ready to begin. Soon the family started arriving all marveling at the new house. For most of them it was the first time seeing it.

The adults sat around the table as the kids got their own little table. "Justin you did a great job with the party." Ben tells him.

"Thanks Ben." Justin was glad his hard work went over well.

"Best four year olds party I've been to." Emmett added.

"It's the only four year olds party you've been to." Drones Ted.

"Well it's still fabulous." Emmett says a little flatly.

"Hey, what about me?" Brian asks playing offended.

Michael scoffs. "Like you had anything to do with the party."

Brian bites his lips hating that Michael knew him so well. "I had to send him away." Justin filled in when he didn't respond. Michael and Justin looked at each other feeling a little uncomfortable after sharing a joke together. It was a far cry from shared insults.

"Justin honey, you've done such a wonderful job with the girls. They've got to be the most adorable four year olds I've ever seen." Jennifer gushes.

"Mom, you're a little biased there." Justin tells her. "And I didn't do it all on my own."

Jennifer looks at Brian. "Oh Brian, you're a great father too." She adds. The relationship between the two of them was becoming easier by the day. She never could have imagined that happening back when they first met. Jennifer had thought Brian was the worst thing that ever happened to her son, but now she could see he might just be the best.

"So when am I gonna get another grandbaby?" Debbie demands completely forgetting about Mel having Michael's child. She didn't support that from the beginning knowing that Michael would be the one hurt in the end.

"Actually Deb..." Justin begins, but is cut off.

"You're pregnant." She shouts.

Justin looks at Brian before turning back to her and nods. "Yes. Ten weeks along."

Most of the table stood up to give him a hug. "What about me?" Brian asks. "I played a vital role in this."

"Of course you did." Ted smirks with a hint of jealousy. It seemed once again Brian Kinney got everything he wanted.

"How are the girls taking it?" Mel asks rubbing her very pregnant stomach.

Justin looks over at the table where the kids were playing more than eating their food. "We haven't told them yet. We wanted to wait until it was further along in case something happened." The whole table looked around at each other praying that wouldn't happen.

Brian and Justin collapsed onto the couch glad that everyone had left. Ava and Zoe were already asleep worn out from their big day. "It wasn't so bad." Justin offers.

"Next year, no kids." Brian says rubbing his nose where a headache was forming. For some reason all the little four year olds wanted to be around him all day.

"Deal." Justin agrees. "Maybe we'll take Deb's and my moms offer and let them throw the party." Brian nods. "Everybody took the pregnancy really well." Justin adds.

"That's because Michael already knew it was coming and Lindsay wasn't here." Brian reminds him. He didn't want to imagine what was going to happen once Lindsay found out. It wasn't his problem though so he wouldn't worry about it. Brian smacks Justin's knee before standing up. "Come on, we better start cleaning up." Justin follows him out reluctantly. He decided they were definitely letting the grandmothers play host next year.

## Chapter Seven

Justin rushed to the bathroom as the nausea hit him. Brian was left there a little confused until he heard the retching sounds from the bathroom. There was a moment of guilt that filled Brian hearing Justin go through

the morning sickness again. Everything that happened with the baby was all on Justin for the next six months and he didn't have to do anything besides try to make the blond more comfortable.

A few minutes later, Justin entered the kitchen and heaved himself up onto one of the barstools at the kitchen island. Brian set a coffee mug in front of him. "What's this?" Justin asks peering into the liquid.

"It's tea." Brian answers setting a plate of toast next to the cup.

"Tea?" Justin gave him a look of disbelief.

Brian shrugs understanding. "Debbie always pushes it on people when they're sick." He explains.

Justin laughed. "Since when did you get your advice from Debbie?" He tested the tea and found it cooled off enough.

"Since I realized I have no fucking clue what to do." Brian answers revealing he wasn't so as sure as he pretended.

"Bri, we did this all before." He reminds him. "It's nothing new."

Brian looks down rubbing at an imaginary speck on the counter top. "It's been so long though, four years. Did you throw up this much before?"

"Worse." Justin could smile about it now. "Maybe because there were two of them in there or what, but I distinctly remember it being worse."

"Are you feeling better now?" He watches Justin down the toast he put in front of him.

"Yeah, it's passed. I'm kind of still hungry though." He says now that the nausea had passed he felt his usual appetite return.

"How about we go to the diner before we drop the girls off at your mom's." Brian suggests.

Justin hops down from his seat and circles the bar to Brian's side. He wraps his arms around the taller man's neck. "That I can definitely agree with." He plants a kiss on Brian's chin. "Are you sure you can miss work this morning?"

"Yes, I told you I worked it out. I don't have any meetings scheduled for this morning." Brian tells him.

"Good, because I want you with me." Justin moves onto the tips of his feet so that he could meet his lips. "You know the girls are being entirely too quiet this morning."

Brian lets out a small groan. "I'll go see what kind of trouble they've caused." He moved out of Justin's grasp. "It's too early for this." He grumbles heading upstairs to see what his darling daughters were up to. Brian was quite surprised to find them in a mess of clothes, but other than that, nothing seemed out of place. He stifled a laugh when he took a closer look at his daughters. "Did you try to dress yourself?"

"We're big now." Ava tells him in a pink and orange monstrosity of an outfit with one red boot on.

"I see." He turns to Zoe who was so much worse. "Are you wearing your bathing suit?"

"Time for swim?" She asks with a wide grin.

"No, time for you to put on real clothes." Brian answers rooting through the mess on the floor for something that matched and wasn't made of lycra.

Justin walks in then not even bothering to pretend not to laugh. "Just let them wear what they want." Justin tells him. "It helps them express themselves."

"They need to learn early to dress like Kinney's. If we let them get away with it now they'll turn into you." Brian dodged Justin's punch aimed at his arm.

"I'll have you know I was never allowed to pick out my own clothes. I even had to wear a uniform to school." Justin says obviously still tortured by that.

"We can't have them going to your mother's like this." Brian knew the minute Justin gave in. They would never hear the end of it if Jennifer saw them like this.

"Fine." He gives up. "But they aren't going to always listen to you. One day you'll have to put up with their choices."

"It's not today so I'm happy." He gives him a smirk before changing the girls into something he found more presentable.

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Justin sat on the exam table when their doctor joined them. "Hello Justin, Brian." She says acknowledging Brian sitting off to the side.

"Hi." Justin says absently kicking his dangling legs.

"Everything going fine since I last saw you?" She asks opening his chart and taking a quick glance over it.

"Everything's fine." Justin answers.

Brian shoots a look at him. "What about this morning?" He reminds him.

"What about this morning?" She asks looking between the couple.

Justin shakes it off. "It's nothing, just a little nausea."

"Isn't it supposed to be in the first months?" Brian asks.

"Morning sickness can happen anytime in a pregnancy. Some don't have any at all." The doctor assures him.

"Lucky them." Justin complains.

"There are some things that you can do to alleviate some of the nausea if it's that bad."

Justin shoots another look at Brian for bringing it up. "Really, its fine."

"Alright, we're going to do an ultrasound today." She instructs him to lie back on the table.

Justin lies back on the exam table staring at the grainy image. "That's your baby." The doctor told the couple. She ran the wand over his stomach taking measurements from all sides.

Brian stared at the image before him. "And there's only one right?" He asks.

Justin hits Brian's stomach lightly with the back of his hand. "Brian."

"Yes, there's only one baby." She proceeds to show him the one head and one body.

"So there's not another baby hiding in there?" He asks again. "I'm just asking because we already have twins."

"There's definitely only one baby." She reassures him. "Would you like to listen to the one heartbeat?" She asks emphasizing one.

Justin shoots a look at Brian warning him not to bring up the number of babies again. "I would like to hear it." Justin tells her. He smiles when the distinct sound of his baby's heartbeat reaches his ears. Justin grips Brian's hand tightly. "That's our baby." Justin's voice comes out choked up.

"I know." He didn't say it in his usual snarky way, but just as awed as Justin was. It was so real, hearing and seeing their child. It was just that easy to completely fall hard and fast in love with someone they had yet to meet.

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"Ava, Zoe, come sit over here." Justin says patting the couch next to him. Both girls ran over jumping onto the couch next to him. They looked up expectantly at him. "Dada and I have something we need to tell you." Justin waited until Brian joined them, picking Ava up and sitting her on his lap so that he could be next to Justin.

"We're going to have a new baby soon." Justin starts out. "You're going to have a new little brother or sister." He says watching their faces to see their reactions. Basically all he could see was confusion.

"The baby's coming here?" Ava asks tilting her head back to look up at Brian.

"The baby is already here." Brian tells her.

Both girls perked up looking around the room like the baby was hidden there. "Where?"

Justin stifled a laugh and patted his stomach. "The baby's in here."

Zoe frowned. "In your belly?"

"Why?" Ava adds equally confused.

"It takes nine months for a baby to grow. It has to stay in my belly until its ready to come out." Justin tries explaining to them.

Brian shows them the ultra sound photo. "See, that's what he looks like inside daddy's belly." He points out. "See, there's its head and there's its arms and legs."

"Why's it stays in Daddy for?" Zoe asks looking closely at Justin's stomach like I would suddenly come out.

"All babies come from their parents bellies." Justin tells her. "You were in daddy's belly too once."

"No way." Zoe says with a shocked expression on her face.

"Yes way." Justin assures her. He reaches forward for the photo album sitting on the coffee table. He flipped to the front of the book to where his life had all started. He shows his daughters the picture of him when he was pregnant. "See, this was when you were in my tummy."

"I'm in there?" Zoe asks touching the photo at Justin's large stomach.

"You both are." Brian tells them.

"How do we fit?" Ava asks not quite believing.

Justin smiled at her question. "You weren't always this big." He says realizing they couldn't remember that far back. To them they were always this big. He turned the page to him holding two little pink bundles in the hospital. "This is you shortly after you were born."

Zoe moved closer trying to get a better look. "Which one's me?" Zoe asks not surprising either of her parents. It was always about Zoe to Zoe.

Justin looked at the picture not quite sure which girl was which. They looked like two identical bundles wrapped in a pink blanket. He knew his daughters would be upset if he didn't remember so he just guessed. "You're the one right here."

"I was small." She was so fascinated by herself as a baby.

"Yes you were." Justin agrees. "You had the tiniest little fingers that could barely wrap around my finger." He smiles remembering how they had him wrapped around their little fingers from the start. One look into their identical blue eyes had him done in for life. He turns the page to a new picture. "Here you are Ava with Dada feeding you for the first time." He knew that was Ava this time since he could clearly see her face. His daughters might have been identical, but even that first day he had been able to distinguish them just on their facial expressions.

Brian hugged the little girl sitting on his lap a little tighter to him. He couldn't forget how scared he had been to hold her that first time. He had been sure he would hold her too tightly for her little frame. There was also that overwhelming love that only grew more each time he had her in his arms. He didn't think he could love her more than he did in that instant, but holding her today proved him wrong.

Ava leaned forward sticking her finger at Brian's face in the photo. "That's my Dada."

The girls got bored with looking at themselves years ago and took off to go play. Justin was starting to feel sentimental looking at all the old pictures of his family. "It feels like it was just yesterday we were bringing them home." Justin remarks looking at the earliest pictures of their daughters.

"It's also felt like a lifetime." Brian adds not as capable of forgetting about all the dirty diapers and crying babies it took to get where they are at.

"Just think, we're going to do this all over again." Justin says as they flip through the album. "The first time we hold our baby, the first words, first steps. The first I love you daddy." Justin was starting to get overly emotional thinking about all the things he'll get to relive again.

Brian could see Justin tearing up and wanted to bring him back to reality. "More changing diapers, late night feedings, all that newborn crying. Trying to teach a new kid not to get the sticky fingers on the Armani."

That got Justin to laugh. "Brian." He says between snorts of laughter. "It always comes back to the clothes."

"Designer clothes." Brian looks him over. "Which you still know nothing about."

Justin shakes his head. "You love the way I look." Justin tossed at him as he stood up only to be pulled back down onto Brian's lap. "Brian." Justin squeals pretending to struggle.

"I do, love the way you look." Brian kisses him leaving no doubt about the truth of his words. "The baggy pants and tight t-shirts are even endearing, at least on you." Justin smiles and turns so that he could face Brian better. His mouth met Brian's again to continue the scorching kiss.



Ava and Zoe sat on the floor in the kitchen coloring in their coloring books. "Ava, I need the red." Zoe complains.

Ava handed her the crayon . "Don't get on the floor." She warns.

"I don't get on the floor." Zoe protested with a frown so similar to Brian's.

"You always do and then Daddy has to clean it before Dada sees it and gets mad." Ava argues with her. Zoe throws a crayon at her and crosses her arms annoyed. "You're going to be in trouble." Ava taunts.

"Na uh. Daddy loves me better." Zoe scoffs back.

Ava shakes her head vigorously. "Daddy loves us the same."

"I ask him." She gets up leaving her book there and runs to the living room with Ava right behind her. They both stop short in front of the couch where Brian and Justin were still making out. "They kissing again." She makes a face watching them.

"They's always do that." Ava tells her leaving to go back to her toys.

Zoe wasn't ready to just let it go. "Daddy." She calls pulling on his leg.

Justin pulled his head away from Brian's quickly hearing her voice. "What is it baby?" He asks not moving from his spot more because Brian had a firm grip on him than anything else.

"I love you." She says looking at him with sparkling blue eyes.

"I love you too baby." Justin says a little choked up as always when his daughters said that.

Brian ruffles her hair. "What about me." He asks letting Justin off of him so that he could pull Zoe into his arms.

Zoe giggles at his fake pout. "Love you Dada." She gave him a quick kiss to the cheek.

Brian let her down to go follow after her sister and watched her go. It made him think maybe Justin had the right line of reasoning. If he could have another child look at him the same way his daughters did than it was well worth having to do all the other stuff that came with a baby.

## Chapter Eight

Justin struggled to pull his pants closed. "Brian." He calls. The brunet turned from his position flipping through his clothes in the closet. "Look." He says with a smile.

Brian looks at him with a raised eyebrow. "What am I supposed to be looking at?" He asks not seeing anything but Justin with his pants undone.

"Look how much I'm showing. My pants are getting tight." His hands cover the small bump of a stomach.

Brian's tongue peaks out between his teeth as his lips turn up in a smile. "I think you're the first person ever glad to have grown out of their pants." Brian remarks as he began pulling on his own pants that fit snug to his body.

"I like seeing my baby growing." Justin tells him. "To know it's healthy. And very active." Justin says with a little giggle feeling the baby move. "It sort of tickles."

Brian moves forward and puts his hand onto Justin's stomach as well. He feels a little ripple under his hand. "That tickles?" He asks with disbelief.

Justin pushes his hand away. "You don't feel it from the inside." Justin huffs at him taking off the pants that didn't fit him anymore. "You are going to have to get my pregnancy clothes out of storage."

"Now?" Brian asks looking over at Justin in just his white briefs and t-shirt just a size too small for him now stretching against his stomach. He didn't think Justin could get any more adorable.

"Yes now. What am I going to wear otherwise? I can't wear my sweatpants." Justin moves to him laying a hand on Brian's chest. "Please." He looks up at him with pleading blue eyes. "I'm not supposed to be lifting heavy boxes."

"You're just like Ava and Zoe when you look at me like that." Brian grumbles giving in.

Justin grins. "Where do you think they learned it?" He asks, the smile not leaving his face. "You're such an easy touch."

"I am not." Brian says, but he goes to get the box anyways.

When he returned, he set the box on the floor next to Justin to go through. "I really should clean these first, but they'll do for now." He dug out a pair of jeans that would fit him now. "I'm really glad I decided to keep these. I had a feeling I'd need them again." He pulled on the pants with just a little room to spare.

"Why do you have all the girls' old clothes down there too?" Brian asks.

"I couldn't bring myself to get rid of them. Those were their baby clothes." Justin shrugs not wanting to get emotional. This pregnancy was always causing his emotions to get out of control. "Maybe we'll be able to use them again if we have another girl."

"Or we could just get new stuff." Brian suggests not into the recycling thing. He liked new and Justin liked to keep everything. Sometimes it wasn't like they fit together, but somehow they made it work.

"We may have to." Justin sets his hands on his stomach. "Something tells me this ones going to be a little boy."

"Really?" Brian asks with a small grin. It never really came up what he wanted this time, a boy or a girl, he just wanted another child period. Hearing Justin say boy though filled him with a sense of rightness.

"Yeah, it's just a feeling though. I could be wrong, but it's the same way I felt when I thought Ava and Zoe would be girls." Justin reveals to him not sure how Brian would react. He had refrained from mentioning his premonitions in fear Brian would find them silly.

"You would probably know better than anyone else." Brian says surprising him by not being derisive.

Justin smiles at him pleased. "Would you be happy with a boy?" He asks. It was very clear that Brian was doing incredibly well with their daughters. They had such a strong bond that neither had predicted.

"I'd love a boy. It'd have to be easier than Ava and Zoe have been." Brian says.

"You think girls are more difficult than boys?"

Brian nods. "Boys I know. Our girls seem to get a lot by us. They're sneaky little things and the way they always work together they're always getting their way." Brian explains.

"Or maybe it's just because you let them have whatever they want." Justin points out with a smirk. "Face it, you're wrapped around their tiny fingers."

"Exactly. I don't think a boy can pull that off." Brian nods feeling like Justin made his point.

Justin smoothed his hand down his front rounding over his stomach. "What do you think? Do I look okay?" He asks biting his lower lip.

Brian pulls him flush against his body and covers his mouth with his. The kiss was meant to speak for him. "Hot." He whispers against his lips.

Justin blushes ducking his head. "Yeah." He smiles shyly feeling overwhelmed at Brian's continued reactions to him. It said a lot to him that they could be together as long as they have and still feel that same heat when near each other.

Justin's the first to break the kiss. "Molly's downstairs."

"And we're upstairs." Brian says moving him back to the bed.

Justin laughs pushing his roving hands away. "If you start that then we'll never leave."

Brian groans giving in knowing he'll have Justin to himself the rest of the evening. "I'll go check in on our girls and you go check on your sister." Brian instructs.

Justin found Molly in the living room flipping through the channels. He sits next to her on the couch. "Are you sure you can handle them?" Justin once again asked his sister.

Molly pushed at him to leave. "Yes. They're already asleep. All I have to do is sit on the couch and watch TV." Molly says rolling her eyes. "I'm not a little kid anymore Jus."

"I know you're not." Justin acknowledges. "You've never spent the night with them."

"You're not going to be gone all night." Molly reminds him.

Justin sighs letting all the tension leave him. "Alright, it's a little unnerving leaving your babies with you little sister." Justin admits. "I'm sure you'll be fine though and you're right, we'll be back around twelve. I'm sure they won't even wake up."

"Yes, so get out of here. Spend some time with your boyfriend before you become too fat." Molly teases.

Justin glares at her. "I'm not fat, I'm pregnant." He tells her feeling a little insecure even if she was only teasing.

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Brian rested his arms on Justin's shoulders as the younger man moved his body to the music. Brian was making an attempt at dancing, but he stuck to slightly swaying letting Justin dance for him. His blond definitely had the dancing skills of the couple and all he could hope for was to be able to keep up with him. Going to Babylon had turned into more of a treat than an everyday occurrence for him. It was something that they had to make time for and schedule in advance, but it was always worth the slight hassle. Brian knew how much Justin liked dancing with him and was happy to make the effort to see the blissful expression Justin got when he danced with him.

After a couple of songs, Justin was feeling tired and they retired to the bar to get a water. Justin soon was caught up talking with Emmett while Brian spent some time catching up with Michael.

Brian watches Michael check his phone for the third time. "What are you doing?" He finally asks.

"Mel can have the baby any moment. I don't want to miss it." Michael tells him, a little sparkle in his eyes.

Brian makes a face. "You can't possibly want to witness Mel give birth." Just saying it sent a shiver through him. There was no way he could be near the hospital when Mel was having the baby.

"You were in the room when Justin had the babies." Michael points out.

"That's different. That's Justin, my partner, the man I sleep with everyday." Brian is quick to correct him. "Have you even ever seen a woman?" He raises an eyebrow hoping not to have to elaborate. The images would be too much for him to bear.

"Well no." Michael stutters a little.

"And you want to start with Melanie?"

"Alright, I get it. Maybe I'll wait until the baby is there before I go into the room." He says seeing Brian's point. "She has Lindsay anyways."

Justin rejoined Brian after taking a trip to the bathroom. He slid up to Brian's side molding himself to the other man's body. Brian slid an arm around his waist pulling Justin even closer. "I forgot how much the bathrooms here are used for so much more than urinating." Justin remarks. "What were you guys talking about?"

"Just Michael's impending fatherhood." Brian tells him.

"Any day now right?" Justin asks with a smile. Mel's pregnancy was really a blessing for him too. Michael no longer treated him like the guy who threatened his place in Brian's life. Justin even dared to believe they were working towards actually being friends. Right now everything was civil and made it much easier on Brian.

"Yeah." Michael replies with all the excitement bubbling up in him.

"So where's Ben?" Justin says with a giggle. Brian was busy kissing and licking his neck hitting a ticklish spot that made him squirm all over.

"He's too busy preparing for his class to come out." Michael says with a pout.

Justin really tried to pay attention, but Brian was much too distracting and honestly he would rather be focusing on Brian than Michael. "Too...bad." His words came out broken as Brian took him by surprise pressing his confined hardness into him from behind.

"Why don't you take it to the backroom." Michael gripes more because he didn't have his boyfriend there than being jealous. It really showed how much he'd moved on from his crush on Brian that it didn't bother him to see him all over Justin right in front of him. He amended that to only being slightly bothered.

Justin smiles turning his head to look at Brian. "Brian's being weird about the backroom." Justin smirks at Brian before facing Michael again. "He doesn't think it's appropriate for an expectant father."

Michael gives Brian a look that let him know that he was onto him. After fourteen years of friendship, he knew how to read him pretty well. "Maybe he just doesn't like to share."

Brian sends a glare at Michael. "I'm getting a drink." Brian moves away before he was accused of anything else.

Justin watched him at the bar. His slight smile turned to a frown when he saw Brian talking to another guy at the bar. They were focusing pretty attentively on what the other was saying. He felt a surge of rage go through him seeing the stranger hand Brian a piece of paper. Brian was too busy watching the man walk off to notice Justin come up to his side. "Do you know him?" Justin asks.

Brian shakes his head. "Never seen him before." He answers downing his drink.

"Looked pretty cozy for two strangers." Justin sneers.

"What the fucks wrong with you?" Brian asks not liking the unspoken accusations flung at him.

"I saw you checking him out." Justin snaps.

Brian rolls his eyes not making it any better. "You're acting like a betrayed housewife. This is a gay club Sunshine, of course I'm going to look."

"You shouldn't do it in front of me." Justin says upset. "I don't feel like staying here anymore." He didn't want to stay when it was no longer any fun.

"Fine, we'll go." Brian agrees. If Justin was going to act like a jealous boyfriend for the rest of the evening, it wasn't worth it to stay out.

"No, I don't want to go with you. You can stay with your new boyfriend." Justin huffs putting a hand up to stop Brian from following him.

"Are you listening to yourself?" Brian scoffs. "You're being ridiculous. How do you even plan on getting home?" Justin gave into Brian points and let him take him home. He wasn't in the mood to wait around for a cab and there was no way he could walk.

As soon as they got home Justin headed up stairs to their bedroom. Brian found Molly asleep on the couch and laid a blanket over her before going to see his girls. They were both sound asleep in their beds and didn't even know they were gone. Next he went into the room he shared with Justin to find him with a half packed bag on the bed. He stood in the doorway trying to get his mind around the sight before him. "Come on Justin." He says annoyed. He had thought Justin's mood would have disappeared once they got home, but the blond really seemed to be angry with him. When Justin doesn't say anything, he continues. "What are you going to do? Leave me? Over something as stupid as looking at another man."

Justin looks up at him with unreadable eyes. "I don't want to be where I'm not wanted." Justin says softly, the anger turning to anguish.

Brian's face softens realizing just how much Justin was letting this get to him. "I want you here." Brian says going to him and pulling a struggling Justin into his arms.

Justin sighs giving into Brian's touch. "Why did you have to look at him in front of me?" Justin says with a sniffle.

Brian pulls back to look into Justin's tear filled eyes. He immediately bit back a snarky remark he was about to make. It was one of the best lessons he learned to sometimes keep his mouth shut. He also knew that Justin normally wouldn't act like this. It was the hormones from his pregnancy that were making him so moody. However, Brian was sure there was some validity to the emotions. The thought had to have been there for Justin to freak out about him watching another man.

"Justin, I've been monogamous with you for almost five years. Something I never thought possible. But it's easier than I thought because I want to be with you." Brian makes sure Justin doesn't turn away. The truth of his words shone through his eyes. "But I'm not dead and I'll notice hot guys. Just like you."

"That doesn't mean you can flirt with them and get random numbers." Justin brushes at his eyes moving out of Brian's reach.

"I wasn't flirting with him I was..." He stops himself before he revealed too much.

Justin moved forward placing a hand on Brian's chest right above his heart. "Brian, what?" He asks with a hint of pleading. "Tell me."

Brian rubbed the back of his neck in irritation. "I was asking him about his ring." He says barely audible, but Justin caught every word. "He gave me the name of the place he got it from."

Justin furrows his brow in confusion. He never knew Brian to be interested in jewelry when it hits him. A ring. "Brian." Justin looks at him almost apologetically. "I'm sorry I assumed..."

Brian cuts him off. "You know what I think about being sorry."

The dismissal could be seen as acceptance, but Justin wasn't willing to settle for that. "Not when it's real." He argues hating the way Brian shuts down anything he believed to be meaningless. Justin rests his forehead against Brian's shoulder. "I'm really a mess. I don't know what's wrong with me." He sniffles again feeling a whole new wave of tears come over him.

Brian huffs. "I do." He rests a hand on the rounded stomach.

Justin laughed softly. "Yeah." He turns serious looking up into Brian's eyes. "Were you really thinking of getting me a ring?"

"I've been thinking about it a lot lately." Brian admits. "It's not like we need a ring. We've been together for a long time and we have two kids and another on the way. I don't think anything would make us more committed." He chews on his bottom lip for a moment. "But I think I might want it." He sighs. "It's stupid."

"It's not stupid." Justin assures him. "And whatever you decide, just know that I would say yes."

Brian hugged Justin to him thinking over what he just said. It was something he should have done a long time ago, he knew that. Hearing Justin say he would say yes really put any doubts he had to rest. Now that it was out in the open he really had to make up his mind.

## Chapter Nine

"Look at her." Brian says peering down into the cradle. "She's got you nose." He says to the grinning new father.

"Really." He beamed. "She's perfect." Michael says not able to stop staring at his daughter.

It was really strange for Brian to be here seeing his long time friend's new baby. The whole situation Michael had with Melanie and Lindsay still baffled him. It just made him really glad that Justin came into his life when he did. Otherwise, he was pretty sure that it would have been him in Michael's place. He couldn't imagine doing what Michael was. He couldn't imagine his babies living away from him.

"Ma was upset she couldn't throw you a party." Michael says like he was sick of hearing about it. "She never wants to throw Ben and me a party."

"She does all the time. She did your housewarming and a baby shower and Ben's birthday. Those were just in the last six months." Brian reminds him.

"It's different though when it's for you. She makes a bigger deal about it." Michael whines.

"She's just happy that I'm actually with someone. I don't think even she thought I was capable of letting that happen." Brian tells him. "Maybe she's trying to make up for my own mother not caring." Brian says reminding Michael just how lucky he was that his mother was always there for him, even if sometimes he wished she wasn't.

"Maybe she would if she knew. You never even gave her a chance to have an opinion of you and Justin. And if she knew about the kids I don't think she could be so careless." Michael states optimistically.

Brian shakes his head. "You know you're pathetic. You think everyone is so good, just like Justin." He frowns not wanting to think about his own jaded view of the world. "Nothing will change he mind about me. Not even Ava and Zoe. Besides, how will I explain them, she doesn't even know I'm gay." He pinches his nose getting a headache from the conversation.

"So what's so important that you can't humor Ma?" He asks.

"That's none of your business." Brian drawls with a raised eyebrow.

"I can't imagine what you have planned. You're pretty hard to predict these days." Michael says giving in.

Lindsay walks into the living room stopping short. "Brian, when did you get here?" She asks with a pleasant smile.

"I just did." He answers not believing that demeanor at all. "I was just admiring your daughter."

Lindsay smiles and Brian knows it's real this time. "She is beautiful." She states standing next to them so that she too could look in on the baby staring up at them. "I think Michael's doing enough admiring for all of us." There was twinkle in her eye that took away the sting.

"You've met my mother." Michael says to her. "What else did you expect?"

"I think that's why you were such a good choice." Lindsay says and Brian thinks it might be a stab at him as well. "Mel and I both wanted the father to be active in the baby's life."

"I'm going to always be around, right honeybun." He says kissing his daughters forehead.

Brian looks at Lindsay over Michael's bent form. "Honeybun?" He says with a laugh.

"Ma called me that." Michael says with that innocent expression making Brian laugh again.

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"So, did you see her?" Justin asks as soon as Brian came into the room. He felt left out that he couldn't go see the baby too. However, he also understood that he didn't belong there. He may be getting along with Michael now, but the situation with Lindsay was even worse. He hadn't seen her since they announced his pregnancy, but he knew that she found out from Mel. The information that trickled back to him was not surprising. He knew Lindsay would be just like she was when he was pregnant with the twins. It was probably worse than what he heard because people were softening her remarks. Justin knew it wouldn't be fair to go see the new baby. That was Lindsay's daughter too and he didn't want her anger at him to ruin the day for her.

"She's cute." Brian tells him. "Looks like both of them. Dark hair brown eyes." He shrugged. "She's nothing compared to our girls though."

Justin grinned. "You're not supposed to say that." Justin chastises, but the smile on his face took the sting out of his words.

"No, you just shouldn't say that in front of the kid's parents." Brian corrects him.

"So Michael must be really happy." Justin says trying to get more information.

Brian nods. "He's taking right after his mother." Brian grimaces. "Poor kid. She's going to be smothered by Michael and have Mel for a mother. Good thing there's still Lindsay."

Justin frowns. "Yeah, she's the perfect mother." Justin mutters under his breath.

"Justin." Brian begins, his voice trying to soothe the hurt man. "I didn't mean she was better than you. Or that I changed my mind about having a child with her. To me you're the perfect parent to my children."

Justin wrapped his arms around Brian's waist. "I know." He murmurs into his chest. "So what's her name?"

Brian snorts. "Jenny Rebecca." It was clear he didn't think too highly of the name. "Mikey's already calling her JR."

"Poor kid." Justin agrees.

Brian pulled him down with him onto the couch. He began to softly rub circles on Justin's stomach. "Seeing their baby makes me want to hold ours." He says pressing his mouth up against Justin's ear.

Justin rests his hands over Brian's on his stomach. "A few more months." He was getting more anxious by the day.

This pregnancy had been so much different than the first from the start. The biggest difference was that they had actually planned to have a child. The twins had been welcomed once they knew they existed, but neither had even thought of children that early in their relationship. Really, they had gotten pregnant right at the beginning and had to get to know each other while trying to build a life for their children. There was always that fear that they wouldn't work out, but it never lingered when they were together. Now Justin was secure in his relationship. He couldn't even see himself without Brian in his life. They were so entwined in each other's existence that he would find it hard to separate them.

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"What exactly are we looking for?" Daphne asks flipping through the rack.

Justin shrugs. "I don't know. Something nice. And something that fits over my stomach. All I have are t-shirts. I just want to look..." He searches for the word he wanted.

"Hot." Daphne supplies.

They share a smile. "Yeah." He couldn't help but blush a little. "I want to remind him that I'm still desirable, that I'm more than just a father."

"I don't think he needs reminding. Every time I see you two together he's all over you." Daphne says with a shake of her head.



Justin bit his lip to try to hide his smirk. He couldn't argue with that. "It's hard to compete with Brian though. He's a walking wet dream. He always looks perfect and I look all frumpy." He frowns looking down at his loose fit clothing.

"Don't get so down on yourself. You're allowed to not look your best. You're just supposed to be comfortable."

"Well that's good to know." He says sarcastically. "Still, I want this day to be amazing and I want him to look at me like he did the day we met."

"After five years, just be glad you're looking at each other at all." Daphne's words rang true to Justin. A lot of couples didn't last this long or stay as close and grow as close as them. They were just as passionate about each other as they were the first night.

"Daddy." Ava calls. Justin looks up to see her pointing at Zoe in a pile of clothes on hangers.

"Zoe." He admonishes going over to put the clothes back on the hooks. "I told you not to touch anything."

"Sorry." She says softly.

Justin smooths a hand over her hair. "I know you're bored, but just give me a few more minutes okay?" He waits for her to nod. "Why don't you color with your sister." He suggests.

Daphne scrunches her nose at the options presented to her. "They really don't make much for pregnant men." She remarks not finding anything.

"Don't I know." Justin agrees with a sigh. "Can you imagine Brian wearing any of this?" He snickers. "He'd die or get all his clothes tailored to fit a growing stomach."

Daphne holds up a vibrant blue button down shirt. "Jus, this one actually would look good on you."

Justin moves closer to get a better look. "Brian really likes me in blue." He tells her. "That is if I have to be wearing clothes." He says softly so the girls didn't hear.

"You're so lucky." Daphne says with a pout. "I wish my boyfriend would surprise me like Brian. Forget that, I wish I had a boyfriend that looked like Brian."

Justin rolls his eyes. "Are you ever going to get over the crush you have on my boyfriend?" He teases.

"I don't have a crush on him. I just think he's hot." She corrects him.

"You didn't the first time you saw him. You said he was old and too skinny." Justin has to remind her. He remembered she changed her opinion soon after that.

"I was just a child. I didn't know any better." She defends herself.

"Daddy look." Zoe shouts holding up her picture.

Justin glances at her. "That's very nice baby" He praises her before so that he could get a better look. He slowly lowers himself to the ground to kneel next to the table he had set up his girls at while he and Daphne shopped. That way they were close and he could still look after them. "You're a little artist aren't you." He beams proudly. Zoe was as much into art as he was at her age. It looked like she inherited his artistic talents.

Now that they finished getting him something to wear, he helped his daughters clean up the mess they made at the store. It was always difficult doing anything away from home with Ava and Zoe around, but

he was learning how to tolerate it and make it easier. "Ready to go to lunch with Daphne?" He asks getting excited nods from both girls.

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Justin was surprised when Brian led him into a French restaurant. He smiled when Brian took him by the hand. The place was really nice and he was glad that he bought something new to wear.

They walked up to the host waiting for their table. "We're celebrating our anniversary." Justin announces with pride.

The host smiles. "How long have you been married?" He asks.

Brian watches Justin's face fall, but he quickly recovers. "We're not married. But we've been together for five years." Justin tells him and with a squeeze of his hand, Brian makes him forget about the disappointment he didn't know he felt.

They sat next to each other at a private table. Brian played with Justin's fingers as they waited for their food to arrive. "This place is pretty traditional for you." Justin voices his opinion since they entered the restaurant. He really liked the place, but it was really much more like a date than anywhere else Brian ever took him.

"Maybe I can't whisk you off to Paris like I want to, but at least for tonight, we can pretend." Brian ducked his head self-consciously.

Justin squeezed his hand. "This is perfect." Justin assures him. When their food arrived, Justin immediately started eating. "I'm starving. I think I forgot to eat today."

"I highly doubt that." Brian teases. They ate in comfortable conversation. Brian didn't eat much and let Justin pick off his plate when he finished his own. "Are you happy with me?"

"Very." Justin answers without hesitation. He wondered why Brian would ask, but he didn't have to think of how he really felt. Everyday he felt happy to wake up next to Brian. That was his truth.

"And you don't feel like you missed out on anything being with me? We got together so soon and were kind of stuck when we had the twins."

"Brian, I feel like I gained more than I might have missed out on. And we didn't have to be together because I was pregnant. We wanted to be together." Justin tells him in all honesty.

"I wanted to be with you." Brian agrees. "You know you're it for me."

"I know." Justin answers.

Brian smirks. "So confident."

Justin nods with his own grin. "Brian, lets go home." He says with a slight plea.

"You don't want to have dessert?" Brian asks with a shocked expression.

Justin took a moment thinking it over, then shook his head. "No, I can get dessert later." He decides not ready to completely give it up.

Justin followed Brian in the opposite direction that they parked earlier. "Brian, where are we going?" He asks.

"I want to show you something." He tells him cryptically.

Justin looked around, but all he could see was the empty darkness of the night. "What?"

Brian points up. "This." He watches Justin's face light up. "You're always saying you can't see the stars in the city."

Justin wraps his arms around Brian never taking his eyes off the overhead sky. "Growing up in the city, I just never got to see them and on the rare chance I did, I was always so awestricken." He turns his eyes to meet Brian's not at all surprised the man was watching him instead of the stars. "Is this the real reason we came here?" He asks putting it together. Brian simply nods. "You really put a lot of thought into this. Thank you." He says leaning up to quickly share a kiss.

Justin felt Brian take his hand and a cold brush of metal. He looked down to see a platinum band around his finger. He brought his head up to meet Brian's eyes. "Promise to be mine forever." Brian asks him, his eyes never wavering.

Justin nods. "Yes."

## Chapter Ten

"Stop staring at it." Brian says batting at Justin's left hand.

Justin takes his eyes off his ring to look up at Brian. "I'm afraid if I don't keep making sure its there it will disappear." Justin tells him.

"I'm not going to take it back." Brian feels himself needing to assure him.

Justin swats at his stomach. "I know you aren't. It's just so unreal." He explains. "After five years I was beginning to give up believing in the possibility that you'd ever ask me to marry you."

"You could have always asked me." Brian tells him.

Justin shakes his head letting his hair brush Brian's face. "No, it had to have been you. Otherwise you would have thought I was cornering you into it."

Brian didn't dispute it because that's probably exactly how he would have felt. "You better not loose that. It's been in my family for over a century." He warns.

Justin looked at his ring in a whole new light. "Why did you give me something so important?" He asks not knowing if he was worth the faith Brian put in him.

"Because you're important to me." Brian answers without hesitation.

"I'm surprised you still have this connection with your family." Justin states a little thrown off.

Justin noticed Brian's eyes got a soft far away look. "My Grandfather wanted me to have it. He was the only one that I really liked and he really supported me. He told me to give the ring to my special someone when I found them." Brian smiles wryly. "I think he probably knew it would be a man before me."

Justin let out a little giggle. "Well I'm glad that it was me that you chose." He leaned over to give him a kiss.

A tap tapping at their door interrupted them. "Daddy." One of the girls calls through the closed door. It had taken a lot of time, but they finally were able to teach the girls to knock before entering a room.

Justin sat up straightening the blankets over himself. "You can come in." Justin calls back.

The door was pushed open quickly and then Brian and Justin were surrounded by excited girls. Each girl took turns giving their fathers good morning kisses. "Daddy, Daddy." Ava patted on his leg impatiently.

"What baby?" He asks giving her all his attention.

"We go now?" She asks expectantly.

Justin brushed the hair off his daughters face. "Not yet, you've got to eat breakfast and get dressed first." He tells her.

Ava tugs on his hand trying to get him moving. "Come on Daddy."

Justin smiled at his daughter pulling her onto his lap. "You're really excited about going to school." He observes.

Ava nods her head enthusiastically. Justin looked over to Zoe curled up to Brian with a frown on her face. "What about you Zoe?" He asks not getting the same behavior all week as Ava. Once Justin explained school to them and that they would be going soon, they both had very different reactions. From the start Ava was excited, but Zoe was pretty indifferent. Now that the day was there, he was worried about how Zoe would react.

"I'll stay home with Daddy." She declares, her tone stating it was final.

"Zoe, you have to go to school." Brian tells her with a little squeeze to her shoulder. "Don't worry, you'll like it."

Zoe looks up at him skeptically, but didn't argue.

Justin picked Ava off his lap and set her standing on the floor. "Go watch cartoons while Dada and I get up okay." He says shooing them out the room so that they could get through their morning routine without having to worry about tripping over a kid.

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Justin felt a pang in his heart seeing his girls didn't even notice him. A part of him was proud of their independence and that they weren't so dependant on him anymore. It was a true testament of the growth they were making, they were growing up right in front of him. It was the part that they didn't need him so much that was tearing at him. Up until now he did everything for his daughters, but he knew the time was coming when they would be able to do it all on their own.

He felt the baby kick inside his stomach. His hand went instinctively to the spot, softly soothing the baby. It reminded him that soon he would have another baby relying on him for everything and it made him feel a little better about his girls growing up. There would be a new child to fill that empty space and open up room for the new reality of having a different relationship with Ava and Zoe.

Ava looks up and sees him standing at the edge of the room. Justin couldn't keep the smile off his face as his daughters lit up. "Daddy." She shouts running to him.

Justin wished he could scoop her up into his arms, but with his large stomach in the way and the doctor's orders not to lift too much, he had to settle for bending down and hugging his daughter. "Hey baby girl. How was your first day?" He asks her.

"It was great. I got to help pass out the crayons and Mrs. Garrett said I was really helpful." She beams proudly.

"That's great Ava." He says smoothing her hair with a gentle hand. Zoe made her way over to him much more slowly. "Come here Zoe." He says stooping down and taking her into his arms. "Did you have fun at school?"

Zoe just shrugs her shoulders. "It's okay." She finally answers.

Justin looked up to see their teacher heading his way. "Girls, go get your stuff together." He instructs them.

"Hello Mr. Taylor." Mrs. Garrett greets him for the second time that day.

A twinge went through Justin's body hearing her call him that. It reminded him of his father. He had to push that thought out of his mind and he reasoned he better get used to being called Mr. Taylor since he was now a father too. A father with kids in school. That thought made him feel much older than his twenty-three years. There was always the fact that he was always going to be younger than Brian that made the realization go over much easier.

"How were my girls?" He asks wanting to know how their first day really went.

"They were very well behaved." She assures him. "Ava didn't need any time to adjust. She's one of the more mature students in this class. She had no problem with any of the activities we did today and even helped the other kids that needed it."

Justin smiles proud of his little girl. "How about Zoe?" He asks with a tinge of worry. He knew how difficult she could be and moody when she didn't get her way. At those times he liked to refer to her as the mini Brian.

"It's going take her a little longer and that's perfectly normal. All children adjust to new situations differently." She tells him. "This was her first day so it is difficult to predict how well she'll acclimate. It might just be first day jitters."

Justin nods not quite as sure. Ava and Zoe returned to his side carrying their backpacks. "Say good bye to Mrs. Garrett." Justin prompts. Both girls said goodbye and took their fathers hand. "How about we go to the diner for lunch and see Gram Deb." He suggests once he had them buckled into the car.

"Yeah." Ava shouts.

"I hungry Daddy." Zoe agreed from the backseat.

"Well then it's a good thing we're going to the diner then." Justin says with a nod. "Should we call Dada and see if he wants to join us for lunch?"

"Yeah." Both girls shouted, no surprise to Justin.

He pulled up on Liberty Avenue near the diner and helped his daughter out of the car. After taking each girl by the hand, he made his way down the sidewalk into the diner. It was odd to be there during the day on a weekday, but it was the only time he would think of bringing his daughters inside. The place was much tamer than it was at night when he would think it would be completely inappropriate to have young children there. During the day the diner was almost just like any other diner, except with Debbie, it stood out.

"Gram Deb." Ava and Zoe shouted as soon as they were inside and spotted the red headed waitress.

Debbie stopped in the middle of taking an order to hug both girls. "What are my angels doing here?" She asks looking them over.

Justin stepped up behind them. "Today was their first day of school so I thought that called for something special." Justin tells her before setting the girls on a side of a booth and then sat down on the other side.

"You girls will have to tell me all about it later." She tells them before going to finish with the other table.

"When's Dada getting here?" Zoe asks with a pout.

"Soon, he's on his way." Justin replies looking over the menu. It was always the same and he long ago memorized it, but for some reason he liked to look through it every time he came in, something that annoyed Brian to no end.

"Daddy can I get cheese sandwich?" Ava asks looking up at him with eyes so similar to his. He knew why Brian had a hard time saying no to him if he looked at him like that.

"Sure Ava." He acquiesces.

"Me too." Zoe shouts a little loudly.

"Okay, but don't yell." Justin tells her looking around to see how many people turned to look at them. It didn't really surprise him that not many did. With Debbie, Zoe was a little tame.

Debbie came to their table with her pad and pen ready. "Okay girls, what'll it be?" She asks as if they were any other customer. The girls loved it and giggled the whole time unable to put their orders in.

"They both want grilled cheese and I'll have the cheeseburger and can I get a chicken sandwich for Brian." Justin rattled off what they wanted. He picked up his water glass to get a drink, that's when Debbie noticed the ring.

"What the hell is that Sunshine?" She shrieked.

Justin's face blanched thrown off by her tone and not knowing what she was talking about. "What?" He asks looking around the table thinking he'd get a clue.

"That." She says pointing at his hand.

Justin sighed. "A hand."

"Don't play coy with me." Debbie placed her hands on her hips waiting for an explanation and obviously wasn't leaving until she got one.

"It's a ring." Justin answered.

"You're right it's a ring and on a very significant finger." She picked up his hand so that she could get a better look at it.

They hadn't talked about how they were going to tell anyone about the engagement or when they wanted to, but seeing as it was already out in the open and Debbie wouldn't settle for anything but the truth, he felt like he had to tell her. "Brian gave it to me. He wants to get married."

"Good for you Sunshine." She exclaimed, a little choked up. She went to put in their orders before making an even bigger scene.

Brian entered the diner and quickly spotted his family in the back booth. He couldn't keep the smile off his face as he joined them. They were a welcome distraction from a long workday. Justin smiled up at him before his mouth was covered with Brian's in a heated kiss. The sound of their daughters giggling pulled them apart. "Can I take that as you missed me?" Justin asks when Brian is sitting next to him.

"You know how much I love sex in public." Brian says close to his ear.

Justin huffed shaking his head with a smile. "Not with our kids across the table."

Before he got a chance to warn Brian about Debbie knowing about their engagement, she came over and smacked Brian in the back of the head. "It's about time you gave him a ring." She says pointing a finger in his face. "You better not screw this up. I want to see both of you happy."

Brian turned to Justin. "How did she find out?" He asks with a grimace.

Justin shrugged. "She has a way of getting these things out of me." He admits in a sheepish voice.

"Well at least we don't have to worry about telling anyone else, the whole of Liberty Avenue will know by the end of the day." Brian grouses.

"Well I'm happy for you boys. You deserve this." Debbie says smiling at both of them. "And I want to be the first to know when the wedding is going to be. I can just see it now." She walks off with thoughts of the perfect wedding that had both men shuddering.

"Dada I went to school today." Ava says tired of being ignored.

"I know. How did you like it?" Brian asks turning his complete attention on her. He listened to her prattle on about everything she did until the food came and she was distracted.

"So how was your day dear?" Brian asks not hiding the smirk watching Justin devour his cheeseburger and fries.

"I met their teacher. He seems nice." Justin tells him after taking another bite. "She said Ava was adjusting really well, but Zoe was being quiet."

Brian was glad he didn't have anything in his mouth. "Our Zoe?" He asks not believing that. "She must have them mixed up."

"That's what I thought at first too, but she wasn't being her usual lively self. I don't think she likes the unfamiliar. She likes to be in control and she couldn't with all the new kids around." Justin tells him. "The teacher said it was normal and she'd get more comfortable once she was used to the new setting."

Once they were done with lunch, the little family left to go to their separate cars. When Zoe saw this, she started to get upset. "Dada I want to go with you." She says with a stomp of her foot.

Brian picked her up setting her on his hip. "I have to go back to work, but I'll see you later." He says trying to soothe her. Usually he wouldn't give into one of her moods, but she already had a tough day and he didn't want to make it harder.

Justin rolled his eyes seeing Zoe wasn't going to let it go. Brian strapped her into the car with a pout still on her face. Brian shut the door so that he and Justin were just outside. "She needs a nap." Justin tells him. "She always gets cranky like this when she hasn't had hers yet."

"I don't envy you for having to put up with that." Brian shakes his head. He gives him a quick kiss. "Later."

"Later." Justin echoes watching him walk away before joining his daughters.

## Chapter Eleven

Justin felt most nervous about telling his mother about the wedding. She was the only one whose opinion would really matter to him. He really wanted her to like Brian and it seemed like that was happening. Now he had to hope that they had come far enough that she would be only happy that they were finally getting married.

Jennifer let him into the house after hugging him closely. "It's good to see you honey."

"You too mom." Justin says following her into the living room.

Jennifer looked him over making sure he was okay. Justin had called wanting to see her. Usually he would just show up so she knew this was something important. "Well don't leave me waiting like this." She started. "You don't know what goes through a mother's head."

"I'm getting married." He tells her, a wary smile on his face.

"What?" Jennifer asks, a mixture of shock and confusion. She needed him to repeat what he just said so she knew she heard right.

"Brian asked me to marry him." Justin elaborates. "We're getting married." His smile turned into a full out beam. Just thinking about the wedding was making him deliriously happy.

Justin watched the changes in Jennifer's face. The shock left to be replaced by something he didn't know how to read. "That's wonderful." She says a little choked up, a smile breaking across her face before she embraced him with a hug.

Justin pulled back from the hug after a moment. "You're okay with me marrying Brian?" He asks to make sure.

"Of course I am." Jennifer answers a little taken off guard. "I've been expecting this for a while. I was starting to wonder what was taking so long."

Justin sighed in relief. It wouldn't have changed his mind if she didn't approve, but it made it a whole lot easier on him that she did. "That's good to hear. I was afraid that you would have a problem with Brian." Justin admits.

"Honey, you've been with him for five years. You have two daughters and another baby on the way. I've realized you two were going to be going to stick together for the long run." She says as if Justin was being silly. "I'd be upset if you weren't together." She smoothed a hand over her son's face. "As long as you're happy that's all that matters."

"Thanks mom." Justin says sincerely.

"Have you and Brian decided when you're going to have the wedding?" Jennifer asks sitting down on the couch.

Justin moved to sit at the other side of the couch. "This weekend." He bit his lower lip after saying this knowing there was going to be a reaction.

"This weekend?" Jennifer repeated as a question. Her face blanched. "That's hardly enough time to put a proper wedding together."



"We don't want a proper wedding mom." Justin started to explain to her. "We just want our family with us. Neither of us wants a big wedding. Its not for us." That had been surprisingly easy for them to settle on. Both men only wanted to be married, they didn't care for all the extras that came with a big wedding. They just wanted a simple union where they could make official what they had been living the last five years. To both of them it was just a formality that they weren't married yet. They already were a strong couple that didn't need a piece of paper to prove their love. To get married was a chose they made because they wanted to be married, not because they felt they should be.

"I know a lot of people would like to be there to see you married, but if it's a small wedding that you want, that's all that matters." Jennifer says in agreement. "May I ask why you're doing this so quickly?"

"We've waited long enough." Justin says with a shrug. "Plus, we want to do it before I grow any bigger so that I can enjoy our wedding more."

"You could wait until after the baby is born." She suggests.

Justin shook his head quickly. "No, I don't to wait that long. Besides the baby will take up all of our attention along with Ava and Zoe that we'd probably keep putting it off." Justin was emphatic about this. "I waited long enough for Brian to ask. I don't want to wait any longer to call him my husband."

Justin gasped putting a hand to his stomach. "What is it?" Jennifer sits forward alarmed.

"The baby just kicked me kind of hard." He assures her. "Here, feel it." He led her hand to the place the baby was busy pushing at with its feet.

"He's really moving around in there." Jennifer says smiling feeling her grandchild move for the first time. She didn't get to experience many of these moments when Justin was pregnant with the twins. They lived in separate cities and she didn't see him very often during that time. Once the babies had been born was when she started visiting a lot more often. Now she lived in Pittsburgh too and wasn't going to miss out on these things anymore.

"You called the baby a he." Justin points out. "I have a feeling it's a boy, but Brian gets upset if I call the baby a boy." Justin didn't understand what Brian's hang up was about, but it went along with him not wanting to know ahead of time if what the sex of the baby is. All Justin understood was it was something about not wanting to jinx the pregnancy.

"He feels like a boy." Jennifer agreed with her son. "You used to kick me that hard when you were inside me too." Jennifer tells him. Before he had ever gotten pregnant, whenever his mother spoke of him before he was born, it always made him uncomfortable. Now that he had gone through the same things she had, he was actually interested.

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Brian met the guys at Woody's to let them know about the engagement and upcoming wedding. He knew no matter how he said it, there was going to be a strong response. "So I asked Justin to marry me." Brian says off hand like it was nothing.

All the guys' mouths dropped open. Ted was the first to get his speech back. "You what?" He gasped.

"You heard me." Brian wasn't going to repeat it.

"What did he say?" Michael asks.

Brian frowns at him. "What do you think he said?" Brian mocked. "Of course he said yes."

Emmett clamped a hand over his chest. "You're getting married." He half squealed, half sobbed. "I can already see it. All the ribbon and taffeta."

Brian cut him off quickly. "I don't think so. What do you think we are?" Brian says in displeasure.

"I can't believe you're finally giving in to marriage." Ted says taking a sip from his drink.

Brian narrowed his eyes at the man. "I'm not giving in to anything. I want Justin to be my husband."

"You've just preached on about how marriage is for heteros and you'd never enter into it." Ted recited what he remembered of Brian's words.

"That was before. Before I met Justin, before we had our children." Brian played with the label on his drink the whole time he spoke. It may have gotten easier to open up to Justin, but he was still wary to do so in front of his friends.

"That's so sweet." Emmett gushed at his admission. "We're so happy for you." Emmett patted Brian's hand awkwardly. Emmett looked sharply at Ted to agree.

"Yeah Bri. I'm sure you and Justin are going to be good together. You've lasted this long with just one man. What's the rest of your life?" Ted says putting Emmett's words into his own.

Brian looked to Michael who hadn't said anything. "I'm sure you'll be happy together." Michael says with a small smile. Brian felt a relief come over him. It wouldn't have changed anything if Michael disapproved, but he was glad he would have his best friend by his side.

"So this is your official invitation to the wedding taking place this weekend." Brian tells them standing up to leave.

"What?" They all said at once.

"This weekend. I'm sure you don't have anything better to do." Brian says with a condescending smirk.

They all wanted to dispute his words, but it was true, all they had going on that weekend was what they did every weekend. "It wouldn't be your wedding if you weren't ordering everyone around." Ted finally settles on feeling he has to say something.

Brian gives a humorless smile. "Michael, come to the bar with me." Brian demanded. Michael dutifully followed his long time friend.

Michael waited while Brian ordered a drink. "Well?" He asks expectantly.

"How would you feel about being my best man?" Brian asks his tone not giving away the fear of being rejected that coursed through him.

"Really?" Michael asks with a goofy grin.

"You've always been there for me." Brian replies. Except when it came to Justin at first. That was in the past though so he wasn't going to dwell on it.

"What about Justin?" Michael asks understandably wary of how the blond would feel about him being part of their wedding.

"He suggested it." Brian tells him. "He's asking Daphne." They both shared a grin at that. "So, will you be my best man." Brian drawled out slowly.

"Of course." Michael agreed just a little bit giddily. It finally felt like their friendship was back to normal or as close as it was going to be.

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"What are we going to do on our last night as single men?" Justin asks as he towel dried Brian's back.

Brian turned around so that he could return the favor. "What are you talking about?" Brian asks not sure where Justin was going with his line of thinking.

"Well my mom has the twins for the next couple of nights." He wrapped his arms around Brian's waist, his hands resting in the little dip in his back. "We could do whatever we want. One last crazy thing before we're married."

Brian lets his hands splay across the bare flesh of Justin's round midsection. "I think this little one might limit us." Brian says lightly.

Justin's face fall. "I kind of forgot about that." He admits disappointed. "We shouldn't just do what we do every night. Its like we're married already." Justin says trying put words to his thoughts. "Don't you want to do the single thing one more time?"

Brian shrugs. "What for? It's not like it will change anything. I'll still be marrying you tomorrow." Brian says offhand not giving it much thought.

Justin looks at him critically. "Are you having second thoughts?" Justin asks on the verge of becoming upset at Brian's seemingly disinterest in the topic. "Did you ever ask me to marry you because you wanted to marry me or because everyone was drilling you about it, myself included?"

Brian just stared at him a moment. "I cant believe you're even asking me that." He says as soon as he got over the shock. "I asked you to marry me because I wanted to be your husband. I thought you wanted to mine too."

"Brian I do. I just meant that our getting married will change some things. More like the way we view ourselves than anything.

When we met, you were free to do whatever you wanted. Then all of a sudden, you were with me and had to change your life completely. Don't you ever wish that you could have had one more day knowing you were going to be with me exclusively maybe for the rest of your life?" He asks.

Brian gives a shrug. "There stopped being anyone else I wanted a long time ago." He answered honestly. "What about you. I was your first and since then your only. Don't you ever wonder what being with another man is like?" He asks. "Have you ever wondered what its like to be single and to fuck any guy you want, a different guy every night?"

Justin took a moment to think about it. "Maybe sometimes I wonder what it would be like with someone else, just for one night, but I'd never give up what we have for it. As for the fucking a different guy every night, well I never pictured myself doing that. Its just not something that I would like. I like being with the same person, having feelings for that person. Having the sex mean more than just getting my needs met. It sounds like it would be empty and lonely." He answers him honestly. "I've always pictured myself with a family. I wanted a partner, someone I love, someone to spend my life with. I wanted kids I've always loved children. I never would have guessed that I'd find everything I wanted my first night with you."

"Have you ever considered that's exactly how I feel too? Maybe not the part about always knowing I wanted a family, but as soon as I had one, I knew that it was something I always longed for." Brian asks him.

"But before you met me your life was so different. I came around and turned it all around." Justin points out.

"You know, you sound an awful lot like Michael and Lindsay. They think I'm incapable of change as well." Brian says with a shake of his head.

Justin gulps around the tightness in his throat. "That's not what I think at all. I've seen you change. I just want to make sure its change that you want, not one that is pressed upon you."

Brian takes his hand in his own. "This is change I want." He promises.

Justin leans forward pressing a kiss to Brian's chin. "I'm glad to hear that."

They decided to do what they liked to do best, stay home in bed where it could be just the two of them.

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Justin smooths a hand over his middle looking sideways into the mirror. On those rare times when he imagined his wedding to Brian, he never saw himself seven months pregnant. It wasn't the ideal situation, but it was one he didn't want to change. So, instead of just the two of them, there would be three standing at the altar.

Justin stood in the mirror straightening his tie. "This is it." He says with a sigh. He turned around to get Daphne's opinion.

Daphne stood from where she was lounging watching Justin primp in the mirror. "You look good." Daphne tells him.

"Just good?" Justin huffs. "This is my wedding day. You're supposed to say I look incredible. All eyes will be on me."

"I think its safe to say all eyes will be on you." Daphne teases. "Seriously, you look fabulous. I'd marry you. Except I don't think Brian would let me take you from him."

Justin turned back to the mirror with a grin. "He really loves me."

"You're all he has eyes for." Daphne says in agreement. "There's no one else in the room but you for him."

Justin lightly shoves Daphne away from him. "Shut up Daph." He says picking up on the teasing note in his friend's voice.

"What if you go into labor before you can say your vows?" Daphne asks.

Justin gives his head a little shake. "Daph, I'm not due for another six weeks." He reminds her.

"You went into early labor with Ava and Zoe." Daphne reasons.

"That's different. They're twins, they tend to come early." Justin turned and moved to sit on the chair opposite Daphne. The baby was putting too much pressure on his back for him to stand that long. He gave an annoyed sound as he lowered into the chair.

"What?" Daphne asks.

"I'm going to be waddling down the aisle instead of walking." He says with a red face already embarrassed.

Daphne patted his knee. "But its so adorable." Daphne tells him. "Besides, I doubt Brian will even notice. He's probably in the next room nervous as hell."

Justin smiled. "Yeah, Michael's probably had to block all the exits." He says with a laugh. "I know Brian, he's trying to figure out why he's doing this."

"Then he'll remember you and that's all the answer he'll need." Daphne finishes dreamily.

Justin just grinned slightly knowing that was more than likely true.

A light knocking at the door took both their attention. The door opened before either could get up. Through the crack, Justin got his first glimpse of Brian in his tux. They may have picked out their tuxes together, but seeing him completely dressed in one just before their wedding was a whole different thing.

Brian stepped through the door, leaving it open behind him. Brian turned to Daphne first. "You look particularly enchanting today." He says giving her a kiss on the cheek.

Even after all these years, Brian still could make her blush. "Thanks Brian." She says, her cheeks tinged slightly pink. "You look awfully handsome yourself."

Brian smirked at her like he already knew that. "Can you give me a moment alone with my bride?" he asks not taking his eyes off Justin and didn't miss the face Justin gave him.

Daphne nodded and stepped out closing the door behind her.

"Your bride?" Justin asks lightly smacking his chest. Brian shrugged. "Couldn't wait to see me?"

"Something like that." Brian says averting his gaze so as not reveal how true that statement was. Brian placed his hands on Justin's waist. "Are you feeling okay?" He asks with concern.

Even though Brian's constant concern for him would get annoying, there was still that part that was thrilled by it. "I'm fine Brian. I got over the pregnancy sickness a long time ago."

"I meant your back. You said it was bothering you earlier." Brian says leading Justin to sit down on the couch with him.

"Oh, yeah that." He was thrown that Brian remembered when he had so much more going on. "Its nothing." He assures him.

Brian nods accepting his answer. "By the way, you look beautiful."

Justin looks down flashing a beaming smile. "Really?" He ran a hand over his protruding midsection self-consciously. "Even with this?" He asks pointing to his stomach.

"Especially with this." He says placing his own hand on the stomach full with their child. Brian checked his watch. "Its time." He announces. "Are you ready to become Mrs. Brian Kinney?"

Justin laughed. "Only if you're ready to be Mrs. Justin Taylor."

"I think I can live with that." Brian says smiling down at him.

A knock on the door announced that it was time to start the ceremony.

It was just how they wanted it to be, small, intimate, and with the people who really cared about them present. Their vows meant much more to them. It was already something they had been living by for years.

They had already committed themselves to each other before their twins were born. This was just repeating what they already promised each other. Now they were officially a married couple.

## Chapter Twelve

Justin was still flying on the memories of his wedding to Brian days later. He was still in the stage of wondering if it really happened, had they really become a married couple. Nothing major had changed. They woke up the same way they did everyday before the wedding. The marriage had been more to make everything official than to bring them together. They already had the marriage, they just didn't have the ceremony or the legal papers.

Justin got a thrill out of the first time he referred to Brian as his husband. He smiled remembering it. They had decided to meet up for dinner and he had arrived before Brian. He had told the waiter he was waiting for his husband.

He remembered the way it felt right after they were married. He loved that his friends and family had come to celebrate his and Brian's commitment to each other. Everyone seemed so happy to see them happy together and getting to spend a day just for the two of them.

It all seemed to be over so quickly though. His mother took the girls for the night so that they could have their wedding night to themselves, but much to fast for both of them, they had to return to their normal everyday lives. Brian had to return to work and Justin had to return to preparing for the baby while still trying to manage to make sure his daughters were well taken care of.

It wasn't even a week later when he was back into his old routine getting the girls their lunch while the baby inside him demanded to be fed.

"Okay girls, what are we going to have for lunch?" Justin asks his daughters while looking through the fridge for inspiration. He could feel the hunger pangs grow stronger just thinking about food. "How about grilled cheese?" He asks figuring it would be fast and the girls loved them.

"Yeah." They agreed enthusiastically. "Cheese."

"Alright, grilled cheese it is." He says taking out everything he'd need.

Once the sandwiches were done, Justin brought them to the table setting one on each of his daughters plates and then two on his.

"Daddy, why do you get two?" Zoe asks eyeing his plate.

"Because I'm eating for me and the baby." He answers. It seemed a good enough one when Zoe just went back to eating her own sandwich.

A knock at the door interrupted their lunch. The girls both jumped up from their seats and were headed for the door before Justin had the chance to heave himself off the chair. "Don't open that door." He called to them as he wobbled his way to the front door. Both girls were waiting impatiently for their father to join them.

Justin opened the door to find an older woman standing on the other side. He had the odd feeling that he'd seen her before, but he couldn't place where. "Can I help you?" He asks pleasantly.

Justin placed a protective hand over his stomach when he realized the woman was staring at it. Something about her put him off.

"I think I have the wrong house." She says obviously uncomfortable.

"Who is it Daddy?" Ava asks looking around her father.

Justin looked down to her head poking around his middle. "I don't know baby. Go back inside with your sister." He instructs her not getting a good feeling from this woman.

"I was looking for my son. My daughter told me he bought a new house and gave me this address. She must have wrote it down wrong." She explains. She looks around the neighborhood making sure no one was witnessing her speaking with Justin.

"I'm sorry, but she must have." Justin was about to shut the door when she stopped him.

"I'm looking for Brian Kinney." She sees the recognition flash across his face. "Does he live near here."

Justin wanted to slam the door on her, but his good manners refused to let him. This was also Brian's mother. He didn't want her first impression of him even worse. "You had the right house. Brian lives here."

Joan narrows her eyes at him suspiciously. "He lives here with you?" She asks refusing to make the connection. Justin made it for her.

"He is my husband and the father of my children." Justin could have laughed at the expression on Joan's face if not for feeling horrible about being the one to tell her about Brian's family. It wasn't his place to reveal the things Brian hadn't wanted to tell her.

"I don't believe you. My son wouldn't live in sin like this." Joan snaps at him. "He's never mention you or any kids."

"Maybe he didn't tell you because he knew you would condemn him." Justin suggests really just wanting her to go away.

Joan scowled at him. "He was right to fear reproach for his sinful lifestyle."

Justin was at the end of his patience. "Mrs. Kinney, our lifestyle is none of your business until Brian decides to include you." Justin tells her. "I think you should leave, I'm trying to feed my children their lunch." With that he slowly shut the door with Joan still standing on their front porch.

Justin leaned back against the closed door letting out a loud sigh. He knew this wasn't going to go over well with Brian. He felt like he really disappointed Brian. Now that he was away from Joan, he was sure there was a better way for him to have handled the situation. Only at the time, that cold stare that came from the woman unnerved him and all he wanted was to distance her from his family.

Justin looked down when he felt a tugging on his hand. "Daddy, who was that?" Ava asks uncertain.

Justin pulled her against his body in an embrace. "It was no one baby." He assures her. "Lets go finish our lunch." Another knock on the door had Justin worried that Joan had come back for another round. "Go into the kitchen." He tells her before once again opening the door.

He let out a sigh of relief when it was his own mother on the other side. "Hey honey, you don't look so well." Jennifer says coming in.

"Its nothing, I'm just glad its you." He says shutting the door behind her.

"Who was that pulling out of the driveway in such a hurry?" Jennifer asks. "Nearly backed into me."

"Brian's mother. I suspect she was drinking." Justin tells her.

Jennifer gasped in shock. "Doesn't Brian's mom not know about any of you?" Jennifer asks. Justin nodded. "That must have been a shock to see you and the kids."

"She said we were living in sin." Justin reveals leading her to the kitchen where the girls were finished with their sandwiches. He had lost his own appetite.

"I cant believe she would say that to you, especially with the children around." She was angered that this woman would pass judgment on her son without even knowing him. It made her want to confront this woman and ask her what gave her the right to make her son listen to her hateful words.

"I don't know what I'm going to tell Brian." Justin lowered himself into a chair at the table. "he didn't want his mother to know about the girls and I told her. I outed him to her."

"Justin, there wasn't much else you could do. She would have figured it out soon enough anyways." Jennifer says trying to relieve his fears.

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When Brian came home, Justin was ready to tell him about his mothers visit. After speaking with his own mother, he realized he wasn't the one at fault. It was Joan that had said those hurtful words to him and it was his natural response to want to defend his family.

After Brian was greeted by the girls and they went back to playing in their room, Justin followed Brian into their room. He sat on the bed as Brian changed out of his work clothes and into jeans and a t-shirt.

"Brian, I have to tell you something." Justin speaks.

Just the tone of Justin's voice gave Brian pause. There was a seriousness that told Brian that he better give him his whole attention. "What is it?" Brian asks sitting down next to Justin on the bed. All the things he thought Justin would say ran through his head. None of them were close to what he would say.

"Your mother showed up at the house today." Justin tells him. "She said she was looking for you."

Brian had no idea what to say. "What did she want?" He asks not yet piecing together that she didn't know who Justin was.

Justin shrugs. "She never said." Justin answers. He pauses for a while before continuing. "I told her you are my husband." He reveals softly. "I didn't really think about it before I said it. I know I had no right." His voice carried all the remorse he felt for outing Brian to his mother.

"Justin, I don't blame you for any of this. I know how my mother can be." Brian assures him laying a comforting hand on Justin's back. He slowly rubbed circles there until Justin calmed.

Justin nodded his head. "I just cant believe someone could be so cold." Justin felt a shiver run through him remembering the emotionless gaze she fixed on him. It sucked all the life out of him when she was near.

"What did she say to you?" Brian asks needing to know.

Justin really didn't want to say, but he felt like he owed it to Brian to tell the truth. "She was shocked to see the girls and to find out they were yours. I think it was worse because I'm pregnant." Justin begins to tell him. "She basically said we were heathens for being together and having children and that we have a sinful lifestyle."

"I'm sorry you had to listen to that." Brian says standing and slowly pacing the room. He couldn't get his mind around his mother just showing up at their home. This was exactly why he never wanted her to find



out about Justin and their kids. He didn't want any of them to have to listen to the hate she believed in. "Did she talk to Ava and Zoe?" Brian asks.

Justin shakes his head. "No, I didn't even tell them who she was. My mom came over just as yours was leaving." Justin explains. "I wanted it to be your decision if they knew who she was."

"It's yours too Justin." Brian tells him. "You've met her now so you should be able to decide whether you want our girls exposed to that."

"I know it's my decision to, but I'm not going to tell you I don't want your mother around. I know how I'd feel if you said that about my mother." Justin tells him. "I think that if you think that she deserves a chance than we should give her a chance."

"That's if she even wants one." Brian remarks. He didn't think he'd ever be hearing from her again now that she knew his secrets.

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Jennifer walked down the sidewalk on her way to her favorite coffee café. Just before she entered the building, she bumped into someone. Stepping back, she immediately recognized her. Just from the brief meeting outside her son's house, she knew this was Joan Kinney, Brian's mother.

"Excuse me." Jennifer says getting the woman's attention. "Mrs. Kinney?"

"Yes?" Joan asks slowly, skeptical of this well-dressed woman. It was clear she wasn't from the same class as her.

"I'm Jennifer Taylor." She introduces herself. "You met my son yesterday, Justin." She doesn't see any recognition in her eyes. "He may have mentioned he is married to your son."

A look of horror came over Joan's face before she could hide it. "I don't know how you can speak so freely about it." She accuses. "It's not right."

"I thought that at first too, but if you saw them together, you'd think differently." Jennifer tells her.

Joan shakes her head. "My son has always been trouble."

Jennifer knew that she owed it to her son and Brian to at least try with this woman. "Look, I'm going to get a cup of coffee. If you join me I could tell you a little about my son, Brian, my grandchildren, your grandchildren." Jennifer could see that Joan was warring with herself between wanting to know and not wanting any part of their life. "What could it hurt. At least you'll understand them better."

"I suppose one cup won't hurt." She concedes.

They entered the café and found a table at the back with some privacy. Jennifer started by telling her a little about her son and how he met Brian. "My son moved to Pittsburgh to go to college and he met Brian right away. The first time I met Brian, Justin also told me he was pregnant." Jennifer paused remembering how hard that was to take back then. "I have to admit I wasn't pleased, but my son was so happy and I came around because I wanted to be a part of my grandchildren's life."

"They weren't married?" Joan asks.

"No, but they were committed to each other." Jennifer tells her. "They had twin girls. Identical. Ava and Zoe. They are the most adorable little girls." Jennifer beamed obviously loving them very much. "They are four years old. Justin is going to have another child soon. They planned this one." She tells her. "They only got married this last month, but they have been together for five years and are very much in love."

"What they are doing is still wrong." Joan says not wanting to give in and let go of her long held beliefs.

"You should see Brian with his daughters. They are the light of his life. You should ask him about them." She suggests.

Joan stood. "I need to be going." She was uncomfortable. This woman knew more about her son than she did. She didn't even know he had children for the last four years.

Jennifer watched her walk out having a good feeling she would contact Brian again.

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Brian was leaving the building his office was held in surprised to find his mother lingering outside it as if summoning the courage to walk in. It had been two weeks since the day she had shown up at his house and he was ready to forget off the whole situation. He never expected her to approach him again. Brian figured she would write him out of her life and be done with it for good.

Brian made to move like he hadn't seen her, but Joan stopped him with a hand on his arm. "Brian, please, wait." She pleads with him.

He turns to her with an impatient look. "What?" He asks. "I need to return to my family." He threw in just so she couldn't pretend who he was.

"Brian, you don't need to be so hostile." Joan says taken aback by his tone towards her. Brian wasn't always exactly nice to her, but not this openly angry at her either.

Brian stopped when he heard that. "Oh, like the way you told my husband that he lived in sin with me right in front of our children?" Brian asks still very angry at her for the way she spoke to Justin.

Joan had the good sense to look away ashamed. "I know I said some things I shouldn't. I was shocked. You have this secret family hidden away." She says, her voice lined with hurt.

This time it was Brian who looked away guiltily. He agreed to sit at the bench with her knowing he could get up and leave anytime he wanted. "It wasn't like I could tell you about them." Brian says accusingly. "I couldn't come to you and tell you I met a guy I really wanted to be with or that we were going to have children together. You would have slammed the door in my face the moment I told you I was gay." Brian knew he spoke the truth and it hurt him, but he refused to let it show on his face.

"I just don't understand." Joan admits. "Why would you choose to be this way?" She asks.

Brian hated having to explain his life to Joan, but the fact that she was actually asking and not just condemning him made him want to give her a shot at understanding him. "It isn't a choice I made and even if it were, I'd still choose this life so that I could be with Justin." He starts out letting her know in no uncertain terms that he would be even considering changing his life. He already did that once for Justin, but that was a choice he was more than willing to make. "I don't believe there is anything wrong with the way I am. I'm loved and able to love which I believed was impossible until Justin. I have two beautiful daughters and another baby coming soon. I have a good life."

Joan was surprised to hear the loving tone that over took her sons voice when he spoke about his family. To hear his say he was happy and actually sound it could have been a first in his lifetime that she had ever heard. It almost made her want to rethink some of her beliefs if something she always viewed as wrong could make Brian so fulfilled.

"I spoke with that boys mother." Joan tells Brian. She could tell by the look on his face that Jennifer hadn't mentioned it. "She told me a little about you and...Justin?" Brian nodded at her questioning tone. "How

you had gotten together. She said she wasn't too thrilled about you being with her son either at first." Joan remarks. 'She didn't tell me anything about your daughters though.'

Brian nodded not surprised that Jennifer would keep that private. She knew how Brian felt about keeping his girls safe and even said he didn't want his mother knowing about them.

"Could you tell me something about them?" She asks a little unsure and prepared for Brian to deny her.

Brian took a moment to consider her request before deciding. "Ava and Zoe, Ava is older by two minutes. They are four and look just like Justin. Ava is a natural leader and very calm and quiet. Zoe likes to follow Ava and demands everyone's attention." Brian smiled as he talked about his daughters without even realizing it.

Joan felt like she had missed out on something important. She didn't even know these two little girls that were her grandchildren. There would be another child soon that she wouldn't know.

"They sound wonderful." Joan says a little sadly. Brian thought it was the most emotion he had heard from his mother his whole life.

"Maybe you could come meet them, if you ever want to." Brian suggests a little warily. "Maybe when you can accept who I am and who I love."

Joan nodded understanding. "I'd like to meet them."

Brian stood up from the bench ready to go. "I really need to get home." He says feeling awkward. He didn't ever quite figure out how to say goodbye to his mother. It was like with Justin and his mom who hugged goodbye.

Joan watched him go knowing she had some tough decisions to make.

### Chapter Thirteen

"Your birthday is coming up. I thought we could do something, maybe have a party." Justin brought up the subject he had been trying to work up the courage to for a while.

"I swear Justin, I do not want a party." Brian says slowly.

"Come on Brian. This is a big birthday. It's my duty to throw you a party." Justin says with a pout feeling like he was getting shorted.

"No parties. I want this day to pass without acknowledging it." Brian reiterated. "If you even think about throwing me a party I'll leave you."

"Stop being so melodramatic. So you're going to be thirty."

Brian quickly stopped him. "Don't say it."

"It's just a number. It's not like you're going to change completely because you're a year older." Justin says not understanding Brian's obsession with this birthday.

"Of course you don't understand. You're only twenty-three." Brian grumbles.

"What's with all these old age comments lately? You're still young and beautiful." Justin says softly caressing Brian's cheek only to have the man pull away.

"Not for long. First it's thirty then its downhill from there." Brian sulked.

"Brian this isn't like you. You're always so sure of yourself, at least where your appearance is in question. I guess I don't understand." Justin sat down on the bed to watch Brian change out of his work clothes.

"You can't understand." Brian repeated.

"What, because I'm not turning thirty?" Justin asks and gets a nod from Brian. "Don't you think I have doubts about myself too? I wonder if youth and beauty are so important to you that you'll get bored of me once I'm not so young anymore or if I can't loose my baby weight you'll be repulsed by me."

"Justin you know that will never happen." Brian tells him pulling on a t-shirt.

"Just like you should know it doesn't matter to me how old you get." Justin returns.

Brian drops his head with a slight nod. "I would just rather we not make a big thing about this birthday."

Justin reached out for Brian's hand pulling him forward. "Alright." He finally agrees. "It will just be us and the twins. You know they're going to want to do something for your birthday and they won't be making any age cracks."

"I guess I can live with that." Brian says with a put upon sigh.

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Justin wobbled himself into the diner followed by Daphne. They had decided to get together on Daphne's lunch break and before Justin had to pick up Ava and Zoe from school. Debbie greeted them right away.

"Look at you sunshine, you look about ready to burst." She says watching Daphne help Justin squeeze into a booth.

"I feel like I'm about ready to burst." Justin says relaxing into the seat. Any movement was causing him discomfort.

"If I was you, I don't think I'd even leave my bed." Daphne remarks.

"When you have two four year olds, that's really not an option." Justin reminds her. "At least when Brian gets home I can just sit back on the couch." He sighs once again glad to have a partner who was just as apt at caring for the girls as him.

"So, are you looking forward to your baby shower? Daphne asks.

Justin frowned. "If it even happens." He says gloomily. He finally had something to look forward to before the baby was born and he wasn't even sure if it would happen.

"Brian refused to have it?" Daphne asks just as disappointed.

"I haven't told him yet." Justin says softly knowing he should have told his husband about the baby shower Daphne and Emmett had been planning a while ago.

"How could you not have told him?" Daphne asks incredulous.

Justin shrugged. "It hasn't come up."

"You better tell him fast or Saturday he'll walk into a room full of people unaware what's going on."

"Maybe that's a better plan." Justin says knowing it wouldn't go over well.

Later that day he had to finally give in and try to convince Brian a baby shower would be a good idea.

"Come on Brian." Justin whines at him. "It's not like you have to do anything, just show up."

"When have you ever thought I'd be caught at a baby shower?" Brian asks seriously because he thought something was wrong with his partner if he thought he would ever willingly go to one.

"I know, Brian Kinney can't be seen as having any kind of soft side even when it comes to his own children." Justin remarks obviously very upset.

Brian pinches the bridge of his nose between his thumb and fore finger. This headache was only going to get worse. "Justin." Brian groans.

Justin turns his back to him so that he was facing the countertop. "Just forget it."

Brian found it difficult to deal with Justin when he was pregnant and hormonal. Usually the blond was so level headed and easy to talk to, but when he didn't get his way, he easily got upset and moody. A moody Justin was something that Brian couldn't handle. An upset Justin was something he definitely couldn't be around. The minute his blue eyes got all teary, Brian felt himself giving in.

"Alright, I'll go." Brian says completely surrendering. Justin turned around and let out a gleeful sound as he hugged Brian. He let Justin hug him for a moment before pulling back slightly to look into his face. "But that's it. I'm not doing any planning or taking part in any of those stupid games I'm sure Emmett has planned."

"That's fine." Justin quickly agrees. "I'm really happy you changed your mind." Justin tells him resting his hands at the back of Brian's neck.

Brian was slightly distracted feeling Justin's fingers playing with the hairs at the back of his head. "I give in to you too easily." Brian remarks, but he wasn't going to take anything back. "It's that little pout you do that gets me every time."

"You just want to make me happy." Justin says with a self satisfied grin. "You love me so much."

"Yeah, I do. And don't forget it." Usually, Brian would change the subject when Justin became all mushy, but this time he didn't let him being uncomfortable ruin the moment. Justin was too happy and Brian didn't want to take that away from him especially with his moods shifting so drastically.

Justin rests his head on Brian's shoulder letting his face nuzzle Brian's neck a little. "It won't be too bad. I promise."

Brian let his own arms circle the blond curling up to him. "This is Emmett, I don't think he knows the idea of being subtle." Brian reminds him.

"Daphne is helping him so I'll make sure she helps tone down anything he comes up with." Justin assures him. He was just ecstatic that Brian would come to their baby shower that he was prepared to agree to any of the mans terms.

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Brian felt out of place as he watched the way his new husband interacted with all their guests. It was no question that Justin was the more social of the couple. His ingrained country club manners came in handy

when entertaining a large group of people. Brian had learned how to be a good host from always needing to impress clients, but naturally, he would rather leave that all to Justin when in their home.

Justin, however, was in his element. He loved mingling with his friends and family. He especially liked it now since he didn't get the chance to get out and about as much as he would like. He was finding that his pregnancies were hard on him. This time wasn't as bad as it was when he was pregnant with the twins, but it wasn't easy either. He wasn't sure what it was about him, but his body reacted badly near the end of his pregnancy. Justin was just glad that he wasn't put on complete bed rest again like he had been the first time. His doctor had told him he needed to rest more and keep his activity down to only what was necessary. It was both easy and hard to follow his orders. Being tired much of the time, Justin didn't mind taking a nap or just lying down. It was his daughters that made following them hard. He wanted to spend as time with them as he could before they had another baby in the house knowing his attention would have to be more divided up. The girls also demanded his attention. They were still very young and needed an adult always around them.

"So Justin, are you going to tell us if it's a girl or a boy?" Daphne prodded him.

"I thought I would just let you be surprised." Justin says trying to be serious about it, but a teasing smile appeared on his face.

Daphne lightly punched him in the arm. "I cant wait any longer." She whines. "Its not fair that you only know."

"And Brian." He adds.

"Well, as the grandmother, I think I should have the right to know if I'm going to have a granddaughter or a grandson." Jennifer speaks up.

"Mom, you'll know soon enough." Justin promises her. "Its not like I can keep it a secret once the baby is born."

"You just like denying us something that you could easily tell us." Emmett points out. "You just want to be cruel."

"Alright already, I'll tell you." Justin says with a put upon sigh.

"Don't if you don't want to." Michael tells him not wanting to put pressure on him. He also didn't see what the big deal was. They would find out eventually.

"Don't tell him that." Debbie said smacking Michael in the back of the head.

"Ma." He whined rubbing at the hurt spot.

Justin smiled finding it amusing how much his family wanted to know the gender of the baby. He never had any intention of keeping it from them, he had just found out himself. "Alright, we're having a baby boy." He says, the smile on his face getting wider.

Everyone had their own opinion to put in, but they were all happy that they were going to have the first little boy of the group.

After all the presents were opened, everyone spread out to talk while Justin got up to into the kitchen to pick at the left over food form the big lunch served. He was surprised to see Lindsay hidden in there. "I have to say I was really surprised to see you here." Justin remarks when he finds himself alone with Lindsay in the kitchen.

Lindsay didn't know what to say. She knew Justin's words were completely justified. She had been acting unbelievably childish and jealous about the whole situation after Brian denied her the child she had wanted with him. She could now see how wrong it had been to take it all out on Justin. When she first met the blond, she had liked him, but her feelings still warred within herself. She had been jealous that he had been the one to steal Brian's heart. While she couldn't be happier than she was with Melanie, there was the part of her that would always want to be the happy straight couple with Brian. Part of it was that was how she was raised to believe and it would make her parents happy, and partly it was she just fell for Brian's charm. Now she knew to just be happy with what she had. It was an awful lot of good in her life. She had a partner that loved her dearly, a beautiful daughter she couldn't see herself without, and she still had Brian in her life, just in a more limited sense.

She decided telling Justin the truth was the best action and hope that one day he could forgive her. "I know my actions have been horrible to you pretty much ever since you came into our family and I have to apologize for all that." She began feeling incredibly humbled. "I realize now just how wrong I was and you didn't deserve any of what I put you through. Basically I didn't get what I wanted and I acted like a child." She paused meeting his eyes surprised at what she saw there. Not pity or anger or even disinterest, but kindness. After all she did, Justin could still look at her and not feel disdain. "I hope one day you could forgive me and we can move on maybe as friends."

Justin smiled slightly knowing just how much it took for Lindsay to approach him and actually sincerely apologize. "I'd like that. I always thought we could be good friends. We have a lot in common and not only Brian."

"Thank you." Lindsay says purely relieved to have the fight over with.

"Well I think I would react the same way if I thought someone was taking Brian away from me. I'd go insane." Justin couldn't even picture how he would act if someone tried stealing Brian from him.

"Yeah, but I never had Brian to begin with. He was always yours, even before you met. It was like he was waiting for you to arrive and give him everything he didn't know he wanted."

Justin was touched by Lindsay's words. "Sometimes I like to think that too." Justin says like it was Brian he had been waiting for.

He left when Melanie joined Lindsay to find his own missing partner. Justin was sure he had had enough of the baby shower to last a lifetime. He found Brian in the playroom with the girls.

"Hi Daddy." Ave smiled up at him.

"Hi Daddy." Zoe echoed her sister.

Justin ruffled their hair as he moved into the room. "What are you doing in here?" He asked Brian as he slowly lowered himself to the couch with a sigh as his feet were given a rest.

"Spending time with my girls." Brian answers unapologetic for skipping out on the party.

"I figured you would be off hiding somewhere." Justin tells Brian.

"I'm not hiding." Brian grumbles. "I have nothing to hide from."

Justin leaned forward as much as he could and rubs Brian's shoulders. "You're not still grouchy about turning thirty tomorrow?" He asks in a teasing lilt.

Brian shrugs Justin's hands off him. "Don't talk about it." Brian groans.

Justin laughed lightly and kissed him before struggling back to his feet. Brian stood and helped pull him forward. "I really cant wait until this is over." Justin says patting his stomach. "My whole body feels exhausted."

Brian held him letting Justin lean into him to take some of the weight off himself. "Maybe its time we send everyone on their way so that you can take a nap." Brian suggests quickly. It was just also a plus that he could put an end to his torture.

Justin patted the arm wrapped around his middle. "You cant just kick them out, you have to be gentle." Justin tells him as the made their way back towards the living area.

Brian ignored Justin's last comment. "Alright, party's over, Justin's too tired to go on." Brian announces to the whole room.

Soon enough, they were saying goodbye to the last of their guests.

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Brian woke up the next morning to find the bed next to him empty. Lately, that was an uncommon occurrence. Usually Justin would try to get as much sleep in as he could. This late in the pregnancy Justin was feeling worn out most of the time.

He felt waking up to an empty bed was a bad omen for this day. He thought that at least if he had to face it, he'd have Justin to help him through it. Instead, he was forcing himself to roll out of bed and stumble through his morning routine alone.

After using the bathroom, Brian went downstairs to investigate where his husband went off to. He heard the sounds of his family coming from the kitchen. He walked through the dining room towards the kitchen stopping at the sight before him. The table was set up for breakfast and decorated with handmade banners that read Happy Birthday. At the head of the table sat two construction paper cards.

He picked up the first yellow one with a crayon drawing of what he was sure was supposed to be him and one of his daughters holding hands. Brian flipped it open to find Justin's handwriting. 'Dada, I want you to have a good birthday cause I love you.' and it was signed by Ava.

Brian already felt his day brightening as he picked up the second red card. He wasn't quite sure what the picture on the cover was supposed to be, it was too abstract. He had always thought Zoe picked up on Justin's creative side. Inside was the same as Ava's. It said something different again in Justin's writing. 'I don't care how old you get Dada, I'll still love you.' signed Zoe.

Brian smiled at what was written in Zoe's card. He was sure that Justin only wrote what the girls told him to. He was realizing that the girls were picking up on his bad attitude about getting older. He didn't want them to have the same hang ups as he had and knew that he would have to rethink how he saw himself and turning thirty. Maybe it wasn't so bad if he had a family around. He already had so much to be thankful for that could only come with age. He liked the thought of spending many more years with Justin and raising his children and seeing them grow with each passing year.

He was taken out of his thoughts as his family came into the room carrying the food. Justin stopped feeling caught before he was ready. "Hey, you're up." He says with a smile. "The girls wanted to surprise you with breakfast."

"I can see." Brian says not even surprised that he felt happy. It was the first time in several weeks that he felt truly content.

Ava pulled on his hand. "Dada, you have to sit here." She says pulling him to the chair at the end of the table.



Once he was sitting, Ava and Zee took the seats to both sides of him. "I helped make the waffles Dada." Zee tells him proudly.

"They're delicious." Brian declares after taking a bite out of them.

Brian met Justin's eyes sharing a look with him. He saw relief on Justin's face that Brian seemed over the mood he had been in over his birthday.

After breakfast was finished, Ava and Zee brought in the presents they picked out. "Wow, I get presents too?" Brian asks in amazement just for his daughters benefit.

The first box held a deep red tie. "They picked it out all by themselves." Justin tells him.

"Do you like it Dada?" Ava asks.

"I love it." He assures her. "I'll have to wear it to work." He knew he had come a long way just by his last statement. Never before would he have worn something he hadn't picked himself. Now he would be happy to wear it because it would remind him of his girls while at the office.

The second box held a book of photographs that Justin was sure Brian would like. He was always looking through old books to get inspiration for his campaigns. Brian looked up knowing this was Justin's pick. "This is great." He says giving the blond a kiss.

"Dada." Zee called getting his attention by pulling on his pant leg. "Daddy said we can have the cake he made after dinner."

"He did?" He asks looking to Justin.

Justin smiled. "You have no idea how hard it is for me not to go in there now and eat it." He says rubbing his stomach.

Once the girls left, Brian turned to Justin. "Thanks."

Justin turned to him surprised. "For what?" He asks confused.

"For knowing me better than I know myself." Brian answers. "This has been the perfect birthday even if I turned thirty." He says for the first time without shuddering.

## Chapter Fourteen

Ava tentatively made her way into her parent's bedroom. She knew she wasn't supposed to be in there when Justin took a nap, but she was getting scared when he didn't come out after a long time. She walked forward, but stopped when she saw that he was awake.

"Hey baby." Justin says wearily once he notices her. "You can come in."

Ava moved closer to the bed until she was standing right next to Justin's head. She set a hand on his forehead. "Are you sick Daddy?" She asks.

Justin was touched by her concern. "No honey." He assures her.

"Then why are you in bed?" She asks climbing onto the bed and kneels next to him.

"I'm just tired." He tells her.

"How come?" She tilted her head in question.

Justin smiles at her mannerisms so much like Brian. "The baby is making me tired." He tells her. "It's very normal when the baby is this big."

"He is pretty big." Ava agrees with a giggle. She placed her hand on Justin's stomach feeling the stretched skin. "He feels weird."

Justin laughed pulling her into his arms so that she was lying next to him. "He's getting ready to come meet his big sister." Justin says rubbing his stomach to soothe the cramps he was feeling.

Ava moved out of Justin's hold after a moment and slid down off the bed. "I really hope the baby is born soon so that you're not tired." Ava says pressing a kiss to Justin's stomach.

"Me too baby." Justin couldn't agree more. He wanted the baby to arrive sooner rather than later.

Brian watches them from the doorway. "Are you bothering Daddy when he's trying to rest?" Brian asks Ava.

The little girl turned at her father's voice. "No." She answers him. "Daddy said I can come in."

"That's right." Justin says ruffling her hair. "She's just checking on me."

"You'll have to take a break from your duties, lunch is ready." Brian tells his daughter.

Ava gave a little frown. "Alright." She gives in because she really wanted her lunch. She bent over the bed giving Justin a kiss and then his stomach a kiss before running out of the room.

"You can tell she's your daughter. I've only ever seen you move that fast for food." Brian teases his husband. He also gave Justin a kiss and gave a little rub to the swollen stomach before tracking his daughter down again.

Justin got up to use the bathroom before he decided he wanted to go downstairs and join his family for lunch. He only made it a few feet from the bed before a contraction hit him causing him to double over at the sudden pain.

Justin lowered himself onto the bed as another contraction hit him. He had thought he would be able to make it down stairs by himself, but the pain was coming too fast. Instead, he had to break down and call for Brian. After calling him a few times, Zoe came into the room.

"Daddy?" She asks concerned.

"Zoe, where's your dad?" Justin asks trying to keep his voice even.

"Downstairs." She answers lingering by the door.

"Go tell him to come up here please." He says just as another contraction racked his body.

Brian was running into the room in no time panicking slightly trying to remember what he was supposed to do. He rushed to the closet and pulled out the bag sitting ready for this day.

"Brian, you have to call someone to stay with the girls." Justin reminded him, his teeth clenched as another painful contraction hit. Brian nodded and left the room to call Jennifer.

Brian rushed Justin to the hospital as soon as Jennifer has arrived to stay with the girls. Even though he had gone through this all before, it was still a terrifying experience none the less. His last experience with the birth of his child was not one he wanted to repeat. His mind flashed back to when Justin had last lain in a hospital bed about to give birth. There seemed something wrong from the beginning. Then the way Justin completely left him as he lost consciousness when the twins were born had been the worse thing he ever had to live through. There had been so much blood that he couldn't help having the worse thoughts come into his head. Even after Justin had recovered, their daughters were kept in the NICU for a month before they were allowed to take them home. It was torture every time they had to leave the girls behind. He didn't want to have to wait that long to have his family all together again.

Justin sat next to him trying to stay calm, but the pain was too much. He just wanted to get the whole thing over with as soon as possible. He just couldn't wait to have his little boy in his arms for the first time. He hoped that it went a lot better this time around for himself too.

He felt the pain building again. "Oh god Brian." He groaned as he squeezed Brian's hand in his until the pain lessened. "I cant do this."

Brian spared a glance at him before turning back to the road. "Yes you can. You'll do this because you have to in order to have our baby." He says as soothingly as possible.

The hospital came into view as a relief to both men. Brian pulled into a space as close as he could get before running around the car and helping Justin out of his seat. He wrapped an arm around the blonde's waist being all the support he needed as he walked to the entrance of the hospital. Almost right away Justin was seated in a wheel chair on his way to his room to be set up ready to deliver his baby.

Justin looked small to Brian as he lay in the bed hooked up to the monitors and tubes. The sight of them sent a chill through his body. All he wanted was his husband to come through this safe and with a little baby to show for all the hard work he went through.

It was hard to believe that they soon would have another little baby in their family. Brian was surprised how much he wanted a big family. Before Justin and the twins, he didn't think he wanted a family at all. It all changed when Justin told him he was pregnant. At first, he was terrified he wouldn't be able to do it, that he couldn't be a good father for his children. At the same time he was feeling fear, there was an incredible anticipation running through him. He couldn't wait to hold his babies in his arms, watch them grow into little people. He wanted his family.

After several hours of being told he wasn't ready to give birth yet, Justin was beginning to believe he would forever be pregnant and in labor with his baby. The next time the doctor came in to check on him, he didn't even bother to give hope that he was ready.

"Justin, you're ready to start pushing." The doctor tells him from his position at the end of the bed. A smile graced his face seeing the sheer relief Justin was feeling. It was soon wiped off the blonde's face as pain shot through his body.

Brian held Justin's hand even as it threatened to cut off the circulation as the next contraction hit and Justin began to push with all the energy he had left.

Justin screamed with the pain searing through his body. When he felt like he just wanted to give up, he was given hope. "I can see the top of the head. You're almost there." The doctor says encouragingly.

Brian wiped the hair from Justin's brow. "You're doing great Jus." Brian says and presses a kiss to his sweaty forehead. Justin turned his attention to Brian meeting his eyes and saying more through one look than words could.

He was brought back to the task by the doctor's words. "Alright, give me another big push and we'll have your baby out in no time."

Justin faced forward again and pushed until the doctor told him he could stop. He slumped back exhausted only given a moments rest before the next contraction hit him. He bit onto his bottom lip to keep from screaming as loudly as he wanted to. Even so, as he pushed he couldn't control the groans coming from his throat.

"The head is almost out." The doctor announces.

Brian couldn't decide where he should look. He felt like he would miss something if he didn't see every moment of his child's birth, but he also wanted to stay by his husband's side. When he heard Justin's cry, his mind was made up for him. He leant forward kissing Justin's forehead to let him know he was there for him. "You're doing so good." He murmurs before pulling back.

"Just one more big push." The doctor encourages. Justin bore down and used the rest of his reserved energy to push the baby the rest of the way out of his body.

The baby slid easily into the doctors hands. It wasn't until Justin heard his child's cry that he knew the baby was finally with them. He sank back into the pillows without taking his eyes off the tiny baby in the doctor's hands. "A baby boy." He announces and set the boy on his father's chest. Justin laid his hand across his sons back recreating the bond between their bodies.

"That's him." Brian says unable to tear his eyes from the small form on his lover's chest. "That's our son." It wasn't sinking in that he had a son. Everything was feeling unreal.

Justin beamed up at him, his exhausted gaze finding Brian's. "He's ours."

When the nurse went to take the baby, Justin instinctively held him closer before realizing the baby needed to be checked over. His eyes followed as the nurse carried his son across the room to the little medical cradle sitting ready.

Brian stayed by Justin's side brushing the hair off his face. He leaned forward and placed a soft kiss to the blondes lips. "Are you okay?" Brian asks still worried about him.

Justin squeezed Brian's hand in his. "I'm fine." he assures him. "Go check on our son." Justin tells him wanting at least one of them with their son.

Brian arrived at the cradle just as the nurse was finishing. He wasn't quite prepared when the nurse handed the baby to him. He looked down into the face of his son bundled in a blue blanket for the first time really getting a look at him. He was surprised how different he looked than Ava and Zoe when they were born. Instead of the bright blond hair, his head was lightly covered with downy soft brown hair.

He walked with him back over to Justin's side. He lowered down so that he was sitting on the side of the bed and holding the baby so that Justin could see him as well.

"He's so beautiful." Justin says running a hand down his son's cheek. "So perfect."

"Do you want to hold him?" Brian asks. Justin nods his head shifting so that he was sitting up against the pillows. He held out his hands ready to accept the boy. When Brian placed him in his arms, Justin felt the love he already felt for his son surge through him. It was the most amazing feeling he had felt in a long time. It felt unreal to be holding his son in his arms after so long of carrying him inside his body.

The nurse came over to take the sleeping baby. "Have you decided on a name?" She asks.

Justin shared a look with Brian before looking down at the baby in his arms. "Noah." He answers. "Noah Taylor-Kinney."

The nurse smiled at him. "Alright Noah, why don't you come with me so your Daddy can get some rest." She says once the boy was in her arms. "I'll get the paper work n little Noah here ready for you." She tells them before leaving the room.

Justin gave a long sigh missing his son already. It was soon followed by a long yawn. "You should get some sleep. You look exhausted." Brian tells him, the circles around Justin's eyes giving away how tired he actually was.

Justin looked back into Brian's tired face. "You need to sleep too." He tells him already snuggling down into his bed, his eyes barely staying open.

"I'm fine." Brian tells him. "I didn't just have a kid come out of my body."

"Sleep by me." Justin says moving over slowly so not to hurt his sore body. As soon as Brian lay down next to him, Justin put his head onto Brian's shoulder and shut his eyes. In mere moments he was fast asleep.

When he awoke, it was to his sons cry, something so familiar even after hearing it one time. He rubbed the sleep from his eyes feeling somewhat refreshed. He looked over to see that Brian wasn't in the room.

"Your husband is just out in the waiting room with your family." The same nurse as before assured him. "It seems though that your son is hungry. I thought you'd like to give him his first bottle." She waited until Justin was sitting propped up by pillows before handing the baby to him along with a bottle. "I'll let you two alone."

Justin barely acknowledged her departure as he gazed down into his baby's face now quiet. "Hey there." Justin says with a smile bringing the bottle to that baby's mouth. Without and trouble, Justin had Noah sucking down his formula. "You're going to be such a good little boy, aren't you?" The baby made a little gurgle.

Justin's attention was only torn from Noah at the arrival of Brian. "You're awake." He states needlessly. Brian moved to his side so that he could gaze down at their son.

"He looks just like you Brian." Justin tells him, a grin spreading across his face at the look of adoration on Brian's. "I heard the family is here."

"They all showed up a while ago while you were sleeping." Brian fills him in. "They're all excited about meeting Noah, especially his big sisters."

"Ava and Zoe are here?" Justin asks, his voice giving away how much he wanted to see them.

Brian nods. "Your mother brought them along. According to her, the girls wouldn't stop asking when they were going to see their little brother." He tells him. "Since you're both here and Noah seems content, I'll go get them." Brian bent down and gave the blond a kiss before leaving.

In just moments, Brian was coming back through the door with both girls staying very close to his side. Justin couldn't blame them for being wary in a hospital. Even at his age he wasn't too fond of them. "Hey girls, are you ready to meet your brother?" Justin asks softly. Both girls nodded their heads, but still stayed close to Brian. "Its okay to come over." Justin assures them.

They looked up at their Dad, before slowly walking to the hospital bed. Peering up at Justin, they say the little bundle in his arms begin to move.

Brian came over and lifted them so that they were sitting on both sides of Justin on his bed. Justin moved Noah so that both could get a good look at him.

Ava tentatively reached out a hand to touch him. "Baby." She says in wonder.

"Yes, this is Noah, your baby brother." Justin tells her. "He's very glad to meet you both."

"How do you know?" Zoe asks following her sisters lead and softly touching the baby.

"Doesn't he look happy to see you?" Justin asks looking at the baby, his eyes slowly drifting close.

Zoe just shrugged her shoulders. "He just lays there."

"You did too when you were born." Brian tells her. "You were that small when you first came into our lives."

"Can I hold him Daddy?" Ava asks.

"Not right now baby. How about we wait to try that until we get home." Justin suggests. Ava nodded her head accepting that she would have to wait.

After Ava and Zoe left, the whole family took turns coming into the room to meet the newest member of the family. By the time the last family member was gone, both Justin and Noah were worn out.

Brian took Noah from Justin's arms holding the sleeping baby close to him. "Sleep tight sonny boy." Brian says placing a kiss on the top of his head before setting him into his cradle. Once he was sure the boy was safely tucked away, he returned to Justin's bedside.

Justin smiled as Brian laid down next to him. "Can you believe it, we have the perfect family now." Justin states, his words slurring slightly as sleep began to take him.

Brian couldn't agree more. He couldn't wait to take his boys home and watch as his children grew each day. This was the perfect life he had always wanted.

## Chapter Fifteen

Justin cradled Noah in his arms as Brian unlocked the door. Brian pushed the door open and waited for Justin to follow him in. "This is your home Noah." Justin tells the little boy staring back up at him.

"I think he's a little young for the tour Jus." Brian says placing Justin's over night bag down in the living room.

Justin gives him a dull stare. "I know. I just want him to know this is where he belongs."

Brian smiled down at his son. "He knows." Brian assures him. "All he cares about now is that his Daddy is right there for him."

"I'm his daddy." Justin says with a beaming smile. He had no idea having another baby could make him this happy. Just the feeling of having a little baby in his arms again caused a warm feeling to fill his body. This time, everything would be different. There was just one baby to care for this time and he could devote more of his energy to the child. There were also the girls he had to think of as well. He had two children to raise along with taking care of Noah. He hoped that he could handle it all. The twins were complete handfuls as baby's and they were still a bit of a handful. Still, through the worries, he still looked forward to what the future would bring for them and watching who his children became and experience it with them.

"What time did my mom say she was going to bring the girls home?" Justin asks sitting down on the couch and propping Noah up on his chest.

"She told me she'll bring them over after dinner so that its one less thing we have to worry about and gives us a little time to adjust to being home and get Noah settled." Brian tells him bringing him a bottle of warmed milk.

"Thanks." Justin says taking the bottle and bringing it to the baby's mouth. "I miss this." Justin tells Brian as Noah began sucking on the nipple. "I've missed having a little baby and doing these things for them. I miss the way a baby feels in my arms." Justin says all while staring at his son. "Ava and Zoe are so independent now. It's been so long since they let me just hold them." He says with a bit of longing.

"Baby's grow up." Brian says offhand not quite getting how Justin was feeling. "But I get what you mean about having a baby around. There is a bond that only can happen with someone that has to rely on you."

It wasn't long before they were used to having a baby around the house. There were definitely going to have to be major changes, but for the most part, Noah just fit right into their life.

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The front door opened and Ava and Zoe ran through on a search for their parents. Never before had they been away from their parents for this long. The longest was for a short weekend with their grandmother. Both girls were anxious to see Brian and Justin and more importantly, Noah.

"Daddy." Zoe shouted running to Justin and wanting to jump into his arms, but remembered Brian's words about being careful around Daddy.

Justin solved her dilemma by stooping down and wrapping her in his arms. "I missed you baby girl." Justin says holding her close and pressing his face into her soft blond curls.

"You were gone a long time." Zoe says pulling back a little but staying in her Daddy's arms.

"I know honey, but I won't be away again." He assures her. "Both Noah and I are home for good."

Brian carried Ava over to Justin so that she could get reacquainted with him as well. Zoe left Justin's arms and went into Brian's. "Hey Zoe, how was your grandmothers?" Brian asks her.

"It was okay, but I wanted to go home." Zoe tells him holding on tight to Brian. He felt bad because she seemed so distressed He had no idea that she would be so affected. Both girls had spent time away from them, but maybe it was different because there was a new baby involved now.

"Okay girls lets say goodbye to grandma, it's almost time for bed." Justin tells Ava and Zoe.

Both girls hugged their grandmother and said goodnight before taking Brian's hand and letting him lead them upstairs to get ready for bed.

"Let me see my grandson." Jennifer demands once the girls had been reassured they would be staying home with their fathers. She had no idea how troubled the felt being away from Brian and Justin. Had she known, she would have done better to assure them they were only staying with her for a few days as Justin recovered from having Noah.

Justin led her to the cradle Noah was sleeping in. "Here he is." Justin states proudly.

Jennifer looked down at the little baby bundled in a blanket sleeping peacefully. "He is just perfect." Jennifer says looking at what she thought was the most beautiful baby since Ava and Zoe. "I can't wait to hold you little guy." Jennifer speaks softly not wanting to wake the sleeping boy.

"Don't worry, you wont have to wait long." Justin assures her. "He'll be up soon for either a feeding or diaper change."

"I forgot how wonderful it was to have a little baby around." Jennifer hugged her son. "I'm glad you made me a grandmother again." She says close to his ear before letting him go.

"Me too." Justin agrees with a smile. "I'll make you some tea and you can tell me everything I missed with the girls." Justin says leading Jennifer into the kitchen to wait for Noah to wake.

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Brian was upstairs busy tucking the girls in. He decided now was the best time to explain to them how some things would change.

"Your Daddy is going to be a little busy for the next couple of weeks. He has to get Noah used to being home, but also used to having Noah home." Brian explains to his daughters. "Little baby's like Noah need a lot of attention, but that doesn't mean Daddy's ignoring you. He's just trying his best. If you ever feel like you need Daddy or me, just tell us. Okay?"

"Okay Dada." Ava agrees.

"Alright." Zoe adds. "Why does Noah cry all the time?" She asks. "It's annoying."

"Noah doesn't cry all the time, just when he needs something." Brian says. "It's the only way he knows how to let us know his needs. He can't talk or do things on his own like the rest of us." He explains.

"Oh." Zoe says beginning to understand. "How do you know what he wants then?"

"You've got a million and one questions today." Brian says only to be given the stare from Zoe demanding he answer. "We just check and see what he needs. Sometimes it's to be changed, sometimes to be fed or sometimes he just wants to be held."

"I can help with that. I'm good at holding my brother." Ava offers.

"I know you are baby." Brian ruffles her hair. He was glad that the girls were handling the change so well. It was still early though, they were still new to having a baby around. Only time would show how they would really react to having a new baby around. "It's going to take us all a little time to get used to having another member to our family. It's been just the four of us for a long time."

"Dada?" Zoe asks.

"Yeah baby?" Brian folds the blanket down over Zoe.

"How long will it be before Noah is the same size as us?" She asks looking up at him with the same quizzical eyes as Justin's. It sometimes baffled Brian how much his girls looked like their other father.

"Well, how old are you?" He asks.

"I'm four Dada." Zoe answers him with a smile.

Brian pretends to think it over. "Well, I guess he'll be four then."

"But then we'll be older." Ava points out always quick to grasp everything.

Zoe looks at Ava with a frown. "Then how old will we be when Noah is four?" She asks.

"You'll be eight." Brian answers going over to tuck Ava in.



"We'll be really old." Ava says laying back onto her pillow.

"Make sure not to grow up too fast." Brian warns kissing her on her forehead.

Ava looks up at him puzzled. "Why not?"

Brian was at the door ready to turn out the light. "Because I want you to stay my little girls forever." He tells them shutting off the light.

"I promise Dada." He hears before he shuts the door. A small part of him wished that was a promise they could keep, but he knew he would miss out on much more if they didn't grow up.

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Noah woke up later giving a long cry trying to notify his daddies he wanted to be given attention. Justin had his bottle ready when he went to pick him up. Once the baby was in his arms, he turned to his mother. "Want to feed him?" He offers.

Jennifer nodded taking the baby carefully from her son's arms. The baby started to squirm right away not liking having to leave his Daddy's arms. He didn't know this person. "Hey Noah, you're alright." Jennifer soothes him. It was the gentle sound of her voice that calmed him. He stared at her as she fed him his bottle. "I'm your grandma." She tells him. Jennifer sat down in the chair just enjoying holding Noah.

When he was done, Jennifer propped him up against her shoulder to burp him. "Wow, you're a pro at that." Brian remarks returning to the living room. "We'll know who to call when we need a break."

Jennifer nodded. "I'm always happy to spend some time with my grandchildren." She reminds him.

After Jennifer left, it was just the little Taylor-Kinney family left to adjust once again. Brian went to check on the girls and make sure they were sleeping as Justin took care of Noah's needs. When Brian returned, it was to Noah crying while Justin tried to wash him with a washcloth.

"Hey Sonny boy, what's with all the noise?" Brian asks taking a flailing fist into his hand.

"He doesn't like to be wet I guess." Justin tells Brian trying to hold Noah while the other hand cleaned him. "Can you hold him?" Justin asks already handing the baby over.

"Ava and Zoe always loved their baths." Brian says confused holding the crying baby.

"Not when they were this little." Justin reminds him. "They were just like this, only there were two of them." He shakes his head remembering. "They were such handfuls. Its lucky we only got Noah this time."

Brian wrapped Noah in a soft towel when Justin was done. "I'm glad we only have Noah too. He's enough as well as our girls."

Justin took Noah back into his arms still wrapped snugly in his towel. "Alright Noah, we're done now." He says lightly bouncing the boy to stop his cries. "You wont have to go through that gain until tomorrow." He assures him.

Brian could see the weariness on Justin's face as he walked around the room with Noah hoping the motion would calm the baby's cries. The last thing they needed on their first night home as a family was for Noah to wake his sisters.

When the couple finally had Noah asleep, they headed for their bedroom prepared to get as much sleep as possible before Noah woke them again.

Brian places his hand on Justin's stomach. "It feels so empty." He says feeling it was no longer firm and full of their child.

"I know." Justin places his hand over Brian's. "I miss the feeling of our child inside me, but I'm more happy about having Noah to hold." He looks over to the cradle where Noah was sound asleep. "He is just so precious." Justin's voice was soft and filled with love for his child.

"And he's asleep so we should be sleeping." Brian says pulling Justin to him so that the blondes back was pressed to his chest. He wrapped his arms around his husband's waist careful not to hold too tightly.

"I know I should get some sleep, but I just like watching him sleep. Its only his first night home." Justin says relaxing into the strong body behind him. It felt safe there, he knew his family was safe with him and Brian just by that simple comfort.

It wasn't long after they fell asleep that a low cry awoke both. Justin stretched and rubbed his eyes not quite alert enough to understand what woke him. Brian however, sat up quickly ready to take care of whatever his son needed.

"Jus, its Noah." Brian nudges him trying to speed up his awareness.

Justin rolled out of bed feeling lethargic and once again remembering what it was like to get up in the middle of the night to feed or change a baby. He wasn't good about missing out on sleep and he didn't like making Brian do it all since he had to be at work in the morning. He didn't get time off like him.

Justin lifted Noah from his crib while Brian went to prepare the bottle. He came back to Justin rocking the baby in his arms in the chair placed by the crib. He handed the bottle to Justin getting a silent thanks.

Noah sucked on the bottle, his eyes locking with Justin's. He loved looking into his baby's eyes, trying to see the person he would become. It was still early, but Justin was sure that Noah would look just like Brian. He had his skin coloring with that fresh smell only babies could produce and he had Brian's eyes. They had the same shape and Justin could guess they would have the same hazel color. He found it quite fitting that their first two would look so much like him and their third would look like Brian. He was glad that at least one of their children would look like the man he loved.

"You're really hungry aren't you little guy?" Justin asks watching the baby not slow his intake.

"He never eats that well for me." Brian points out getting in bed next to them. "You must have the magic touch." He trails a finger down his sons arm feeling the smooth skin of the baby.

"He just likes his Daddy better." Justin teases. "Then again, he hardly cries when he's with you." He gives a shrug at the contradictions. Once Noah was done, Justin placed him against his shoulder patting his back. Once he gave a loud burp, Justin moved him to lay across his chest. "That feels better doesn't it, now that you have a full belly. Are you going to let your Daddy's sleep for a little while until you need us again?" Justin asks getting up and setting the nearly asleep baby back in his cradle.

Justin returned to bed and curled around Brian only being able to fall asleep in that position. It was the easiest way for Brian to fall asleep as well, with Justin in his arms. Justin thought they made a great pair, depending on each other to be able to sleep. It was a habit they picked up from being together for so long. The familiar feel of their partner was comforting.

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Justin placed Noah in his swing as he started to prepare lunch for him and the girls. Since Brian had to go into work for a few hours, it was the first time Justin got to experience what it was going to be like as a stay at home dad to three children. It seemed an almost daunting task since one of those children were an infant, but Justin knew he could handle it just like he handled Ava and Zoe as babies at the same time. Then there

was the fact that he wasn't in this alone. Brian would come home everyday to help when things would seem to be getting too much for him. He was glad the girls were so excited about having a little brother rather than jealous or he wouldn't know how to deal with that and Noah at the same time.

"Daddy." Ava says pulling on his shirt.

"Yeah Ava?" Justin asks putting the sandwiches together just how his family liked them.

"Can I hold Noah now?" She asks looking up at him with pleading blue eyes.

Justin found it really hard to say no to her when she looked at him like that. "Not right now Ava. I'm busy making lunch. Remember what we told you, you can only hold Noah if an adult is around?" He asks.

Ava nods her head. "But I really want to hold him."

Justin smiled thinking she was too cute and she probably knew it. "You can hold him after we eat lunch okay." Ava seemed to accept that because she went to sit at the table to wait for her lunch.

The three of them sat down for lunch with Noah watching them nearby from his swing. It was the first time Justin allowed himself to eat with both hands instead of holding Noah with one arm. It was always hard for him to set the baby down since it was still so new having him home. He didn't want to miss a moment of his life, even a tiny moment. But he knew it was also important to give his daughters his undivided attention so they wouldn't feel like second best to Noah.

Once they were done, Justin took Noah to the living room to feed him his bottle. When he was done, Justin rocked him trying to get him to burp.

"Can I hold him now?" Ava asks watching Justin rock the baby.

"Alright." Justin agrees seeing that she wouldn't be put off any longer. "Sit down on the couch." He instructs. Once she's seated, he places a pillow below her arm to prop it up. "He's very small so you have to be careful."

"I will Daddy." Ava says exasperated at Justin's constant worry.

"Okay." Justin says with a smile. He gently placed Noah onto Ava's lap with his head resting on her arm. "You can only hold him when Dada or I am around. Alright?"

"Okay Daddy." Ava replies staring down at her little brother. "He's so small." She says amazed at holding the baby.

"That's why we have to be very careful with him." Justin explains.

Ava took one of Noah's flailing hands into her own. She smiled as brightly as Justin when the little hand squeezed around her finger. "Hey Noah." She spoke to him. "I'm your big sister. When you're big and Daddy lets me, I promise to play with you."

"You're such a good big sister." Justin praises her. That just made her smile even bigger.

Zoe entered the living room to see Ava holding Noah. "Hey, why does she get to hold him?" Zoe asks with her hands on her hips and giving Justin as much attitude as she could come up with.

"I asked." Ava tells her.

"Ava's been asking all day." Justin tells Zoe trying to put down the outburst before it began. "Noah is not a toy. You'll be able to hold him in a moment, but he's not something you can fight over. Okay?"

"Okay." Zoe gives in sitting down on the couch next to Ava so that she could look at the baby as well. "Hi baby." She says patting his head.

Noah cooed at Zoe's touch. He was a happy baby already taken with his sisters. After Ava got to hold him for a while, he lifted the baby and set Zoe just like he did Ava before setting the baby in her lap.

"You have to sit really still Zoe." Justin warns staying close to her side. He worried more about Zoe holding Noah than Ava. Zoe had a hard time sitting still and was very unpredictable.

"Okay, I'm done." Zoe announces once she started squirming around. "He's not doing anything."

Justin smiled shaking his head and lifted Noah off Zoe. "Just give him some time. He needs to grow up some more before you'll be able to play with him." Justin tells her. He watched her shrug her shoulders and run off not wanting to wait around for when that day would come.

Justin heard the front door open and a minute later Brian walked into the room. Brian pressed a kiss to Justin's lips before accepting Noah from Justin's arms. "Hey little guy, your dada's home." Brian spoke to the little baby. He then turned to Justin. "How did everything go today without me?" He asks.

Justin smiled at the way Brian's whole face lit up when he was holding Noah. He wondered if that was what he looked like. "It was fine, pretty much what I expected." He answers sitting next to Brian on the couch. "The girls are interested in Noah, but they also prefer to do their own thing away from him. I think it will take more time to see how they really feel about having a new baby around."

"I think they'll be fine." Brian says playing with his sons hands.

Justin scoots closer so that he was pressed against Brian. "Can you imagine this, us with three kids, married, and completely happy with everything." Justin says with a little shake of his head. It was sometimes hard to believe just how far they had come from that night they first met under a street light.

"Not if you told me back then this was what we'd become." Brian admits. "There was no way I would tell you I would enjoy being a family man."

Justin's smile broadened. "No, you were all about being your own man, never having a relationship and never having anything tie you down." He remembers what Brian was like when they first met. "That all changed because of me. Because you couldn't live without me."

"And our daughters." Brian reminds him. "You may have made me think about a different life, but they're the ones who made me want that life."

Justin turned to Brian getting serious. "Do you ever have regrets?" He asks.

Brian shakes his head. "Not one." He answers sincerely. "I've got you, Ava and Zoe, and now Noah. I want you now and forever."

END