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<tr>
<td>Series:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stats:</td>
<td>Published: 2016-10-02 Updated: 2019-05-18 Chapters: 29/? Words: 95110</td>
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**A Burning Sky**

by **DorisNancyGrey**

**Summary**

When the worst hurricane in recorded history is headed straight towards Hawaii, Steve McGarrett has to keep his family safe while the state enacts a drastic new evacuation procedure. Five-0 and HPD are asked to stay behind to maintain order on the temporarily deserted islands, but they soon find they aren't the only ones still in town when someone starts taking advantage of the team's isolation.

**Notes**

Surprise!! A small chapter, but I couldn't resist. No promises on how quickly this work will updated :( I'll try my best!!

Make sure you've read both "When Office Plants Die" and "A Burning Orchard" before you start this one!
Chapter One

"What do you mean my son's been banned from daycare? How do you even get banned from daycare -- what is there some majority vote between snack time and nap time?" Danny snaps, standing up quickly to fire a few rounds over the top of his Camarro with his hand gun.

"Danny, get off the phone," Steve growls, glancing over at him quickly between shots, and uh oh, yeah -- there it is -- aneurism face. "I'm not gonna ask you again."

"Your son got banned from Daycare, Steven," Danny retorts, slumping against the gravely pavement to reload.

They were supposed to follow a lead on reports of gang activity in the area and apparently the Camarro is pretty well known as Five-0, hence the welcoming shower of bullets.

"What?!" Steve turns to stare at him incredulously; "How do you get banned from daycare?!!"

"Thank you! That's what I said," Danny yells as bullets ricochet around them, raining sparks down onto the back of their tack vests as they kneel behind the bullet proof Camarro.

Steve growls and shakes his head, "Tell them we'll be there as soon as we can."

Danny nods, relaying the info. "No, we can't get there in the next ten minutes -- I'm sorry, you're just gonna have to wait. Oh come on, lady, he's not that much of a menace... Hello? Hello?!!"

Steve reaches over and gives Danny's vest a rough shake. "Focus, Danno."

But the blonde turns to him, eyebrows raised to his hairline. "She hung up on me! That's it. We are ending this now!"

Steve feed his eyes widen. "What are you..."

But Danny has rounded the side of the car, a gun in both hands, and is firing as quickly as he can into the open window until he hears a pained grunt. He then jams his guns into their holsters and picks up his radio. "We have a suspect with a GSW -- send an ambo to the corner of sixty eighth and Huana. Just follow the grunts. Second story window. Steven and I have a family emergency."

"They're not gonna let us work together if we pull something like this again," Steve mutters, heading toward the driver side of the Camarro.

Danny pulls a face; "What do you mean 'they'? You're the boss. You make the decisions."

"It's HPD protocol that once you have kids together, you can't work the same calls," Steve sighs, waiting until Danny is buckled before heading down the street. "If the call goes bad, they don't want your kids to be orphaned."

Danny frowns, going quiet at the thought, and the silence hangs heavy in the Camarro like a fog until they reach the daycare.

When they walk in, wrapped in Teflon and straps and holsters, the young blonde receptionist seems uneasy.
"We're here for Sophie and Cooper McGarrett," the alpha says quickly, raising up a hand to stop her as she starts to reach for the phone.

She looks at them blankly, stunned. "What did they do?"

Steve rears back, furrowing his brow. "What do you mean what did they do -- what, like I'm here to arrest them? They're my kids!" He snaps, waving a hand to gesture between he and his mate. "We're their parents!"

The woman's mouth forms a perfect 'O' as she looks from Danny to Steve, realizing that they're a same sex couple, and a blush starts to heat up across her face. Steve can smell the potent scent of embarrassment dissipating into the air and he tries to grin to calm her down as she checks her clipboard.

"They're, uh... Sophie is with the omega's in room O1, Cooper is with the alphas in room A2." She smiles sheepishly at them and they nod in thanks.

"Probably shouldn't have walked in here like this," Danny mutters when he's out of earshot, glancing down at his attire.

"I guess we don't fit their bill of 'Dads,'" Steve sighs. "She honestly thought it was more likely that we were here to arrest a pair of toddlers than be parents."

"Everyone knows that when you have a child you sell your soul to the Satan of Khakis and jean shorts," Danny quips. "Okay. B2, here we are."

The alpha knocks on the door and the top half of the door swings open inward, revealing a chipper but frazzled looking woman in overalls with short auburn hair. "Mr. McGarrett," she bursts out, putting a hand on her chest. "Oh thank the Lord."

Danny narrows his eyes, crossing his arms. "Ma'am, let me get this straight. You've banned our son from daycare?"

She grimaces awkwardly. "Well, it's just -- you'll see. Come in."

Twelve huge pairs of eyes turn to stare up at them when they slowly walk into the room, crossing over a rainbow plush rug and stepping carefully to avoid a few blocks and a rogue, naked barbie.

"Woah -- COPS!" Yells one little boy who instantly starts trying to imitate a police siren, and the rest of the kids all whisper. Danny smiles down at them, waving, and three kids dart into a TeePee in terror.

"Is he alright?" Steve calls out uneasily as the teachers lead them toward a separate room.

"He's... He's not hurt or anything, I mean he's okay I just --" she turns to them, waving her hands frantically. "You'll see."

"I don't like the sound of that," Danny mutters, low enough only for Steve to pick up with his alpha hearing.

They're finally lead to a dark room with two baby gates -- one on top of the other -- blocking the entire door. She unlatches one of the gates and sets it aside, before leaning in to flick on the lights.

It's an empty room, full of similar toys and plush rugs and posters, but there's no one in the room.
"Where is he?" Steve blurts quickly, feeling the hair on his neck start to stand. But at the sound of his voice, there's a rustling in the teepee in the corner of the room.

The woman points awkwardly toward the teepee, but she won't go in the room.

Steve steps over the gate with his long legs and walks over to the teepee, lifting the flap.

A lion cub tumbles out onto the rug.

Danny brings both of his hands up to cover his mouth. "Oh my God."

The cub, which looks like it weighs about twenty pounds, turns to look up at Steve with huge blue eyes and the alpha stares back with his lips parted in surprise. "Cooper..." He bends over to scoop the cub up and it nuzzles into his neck. Steve sniffs the back of the cub's neck as it yowls and purrs. "It smells like him," Steve says slowly, turning to look at Danny. The omega hasn't moved, still standing in the doorway with his hands over his mouth.

"My son..." Danny gasps, and he reaches his hands out.

"He got into an argument with another alpha boy on the playground," the woman says suddenly. "One second he was human and then, well, the next second... He was that."

The way she says it irks Danny as he takes the mewling cub into his arms, and he pauses to shoot her a look. "It's not like he's a three eyed alien, lady, there are still some alphas that can do this."

She grimaces again, stepping out of the way as Steve steps back out of the room. "That may be true, but we can't have this kind of thing happening at a day care -- exposing the other children... All it would take is a bite or a scratch and the liability would shut us down."

Danny grits his jaw, trying not to lose his temper in front of a bunch of children. The cub in his arms snuggles into his neck and he rubs his jaw against the warm fur, sighing. "Let's go, Steven," he says softly, patting Cooper's back.

The alpha follows him out as the woman keeps babbling about liability behind them, waving her hands and smiling nervously as they walk toward room O1 to pick up their daughter.
Wooo! I hope y'all enjoy this update :)

So, Steve," Danny says as he holds the cub out with extended arms. "What are we going to do with your daycare exiled progeny?"

The cub lets out a pitiful noise, staring back at Danny with big blue familiar eyes and the omega sighs, bringing his son back in against his chest where he's standing just inside the garage door.

Steve is hanging the kids' tiny backpacks on a rack by the door with one hand and has Sophie propped against his hip when he turns to look at Cooper. "He'll turn back -- he just needs to calm down."

Sophie stares in wonder at the 'new' cub, reaching out.

"No, no, sweetie," Danny frowns, leaning back out of reach as he glances up. "I don't think Coop would know how to be gentle enough not to scratch her."

"I'll take him upstairs to our bedroom and see if that helps," Steve sighs, setting Sophie down, and Danny holds out their shifted alpha son.

"Come here, buddy," Steve murmurs, kissing the cub's furry forehead as he grabs him underneath the arms. He carries him up stairs, marking the cub with the scent gland under his jaw, and Cooper starts to purr.

As soon as Steve has made it into their room upstairs, he sets the cub on the bed and sheds off his clothes, starting to shift with a pained but familiar process.

Cooper's wide kitten blue eyes watch him intently, and he bounds onto the floor to run closer, happily letting out a hoarse sounding, tiny squeak of a roar.

Steve flicks his tail patiently as the cub starts to jump up to nuzzle his face, but when he feels tiny needle teeth gnawing on his ear he shakes Cooper off, grabbing him carefully by the scruff of his neck with his mouth.

The cub goes instantly still, and Steven holds him like that for a moment, unsure of what to do, and feels the weight of the cub hanging from his jaws. It doesn't seem like it's hurting Cooper, but he's surprised that the cub isn't making any noise, until he remembers something he learned on the discovery channel. Holding a cub like this releases releases a calming hormone as a evolutionary function to keep the cub quiet during a stressful or dangerous situation.

Steve takes him out of his and Danny's bedroom and steps into the hallway. For a few minutes, Steve paces quietly up and down the carpeted hall, past the empty room they used as a nest and the two
rooms at the end of the hall where the pups sleep and back, and then back and forth again until Cooper starts to breathe evenly.

Suddenly, the pup starts to shiver in his mouth, and Steve, alarmed, quickly sets him down on the carpet between his huge paws.

He watches, panting slightly in distress as the cub starts to twist until he realizes what's happening.

Cooper is shifting back. It means that his idea worked, and his son calmed down enough to enter the hazy half-sleep stupor necessary for an inexperienced shifter to change back.

Shifting also, Steve waits patiently, frowning in concern because it looks uncomfortable for Cooper, until his son -- a pale skinned, bright eyed, and dark haired little chubby chub of a toddler -- is sitting in confusion in the cub's place. "Daddy?"

His lip is trembling, and before he can let loose a wail of confusion, Steve bends lower and picks up the toddler, carrying him into the nest to grab himself a pair of sweats.

"I know, little man," Steve murmurs, "I know. You don't know what happened today, huh? You're thinking, what's all this lion business, right? But it's okay -- you're okay. You're fine."

Cooper sniffs against Steve's shoulder and the older alpha kisses his son on the forehead softly, trying not to show how stressed he is, knowing that he and Danny are going to have to have a long talk. They'll have to figure out how to change their living situation and their daily lives to accommodate a child that can shift so early, and it's not how he wants to end a day that started out with being shot at.

He manages to tug the sweats on with his one free hand, knowing that he's not going to be able to pry the toddler off his chest any time soon, and then heads with a sigh toward Cooper's room to fish a tiny pair of firetruck printed Pull-ups (just in case -- it was a weird day for their routine) and a matching pair of pajamas out of a drawer.

He sets the naked, teary eyed pup down on the alphabet rug in the center of the room and holds out the Pull-up diaper and the tiny pair of camo pajama pants for him to step into them.

The toddler reaches out with a wobbling hand to hold his shoulder for balance. "I hungry, Dad," Cooper mumbles. That's what the kids call him -- Danny is Daddy; he's not sure what other kids call their male omega mothers, and he's never asked. Other than the birth control pills Danny takes every day, along with the scars on his lower abdomen, Danny's like any other father.

The kids are too young to know anything about subgenders yet, but this shifting thing is going to sprout some questions, he knows it. Whether it's going to lead to them to eventually explain how the kids were born... Steve's not sure. He always tells himself it's Danny decision, but he also doesn't want the kids to think they're adopted.

He sighs, knowing the complex web of questions is becoming an ever present pink elephant in their family dynamic.

For now, he thinks, Sophie and Cooper are content with just knowing that they have two parents that love them.

"I bet Daddy has your dinner ready downstairs," Steve tugs the pants up and starts trying to get the shirt over his head. "Whaddaya say we go find out, huh?" Steve leans back on his knees to tip the little boy's chin up with a finger tip, earning a small and sad smile.
"Kay," Cooper nods, and Steve sees so much of Danny in those big blue eyes when they meet his own that it breaks his heart to see them so so sad.

When they come downstairs, Danny is spooning a small pile of bow tie pasta onto two plates with some chunks of chicken breast and mandarin oranges. Sophie is between his legs, still in her daycare outfit, which, Steve notices as she grins up at him, has a small mystery stain on it -- as per usual.

"He changed back," Steve calls out, and Danny turns in surprise.

"Already?" He gives the pup a once over, and apparently satisfied, starts to close the Tupperware of pasta. "Thank God."

He sets Cooper in the high chair and walks over to rub Danny's back, looking at the two plates.

"Left overs tonight -- that okay?" Danny grimaces, raising his brows as he looks over at him.

Steve shrugs; "Fine with me. Maybe we can grill out tomorrow -- I saw some lobsters in the cove of the reef out by the bouy."

"I don't like blobster, Daddy," Sophie whines, her little ones distress noise piquing Steve's hearing and he winces at the jolt of pain it sends through his brain.

"Sweetheart, remember -- don't make that noise unless you're actually hurt; we talked about this," Danny says firmly, looking down between his feet as Steve rubs his forehead in surprise.

"When did she learn to do that?" Steve mutters, taking one of the plates to put on Cooper's high chair.

"I think at daycare, don't look at me. It wasn't me," Danny sighs shoving Tupperware in the fridge.

"I sorry, Dad," Sophie huffs, running over to grab her alpha father's leg. "I don't like blobsters -- they're icky."

The alpha bends low to pick her up, kissing her cheek. "It's okay baby girl. You don't have to eat the Blobster. You can have grilled corn on the cob -- I know you like that. And Daddy's right, you have to promise me to only make that noise when you're hurt. It's like when we showed you how to call 911 on the alarm system."

"Only for mergencies," Cooper babbles next to them in his high chair, imitating his deep voice, and Steve nods.

"That's right. Only for emergencies."

"Kay," Sophie says with a small sigh, and Steve knows she'll try her best to obey. She's a good girl, and she's happiest when everyone around her is happy.

"Good girl." He sets Sophie down in her high chair and walks into the kitchen to grab two sippy cups of no sugar added Apple juice. Danny sets out their plates of microwaved grilled lemon-pepper chicken and asparagus, and dinner officially begins for the McGarrett-Williams family.

It isn't until the twin pups are each in their cribs that Danny realizes he hasn't unbuckled his bulletproof vest.

Finally unstrapping the thing, he lays it over the back of a chair in the kitchen and finally walks over to collapse onto the cool leather of the couch next to Steve. "What're we gonna do about Coop?"
Danny asks softly, reaching out to drape a limp hand over his mate's knee.

"I dunno, Danno. Something." The alpha exhales a long slow breath. "I can ask my mom what kind of things her parents did with her when she was young."

"No daycare is gonna take him, now. Christ," Danny mutters bitterly. "It had to be a lion. Why not a golden retriever?"

"Most alphas that can shift turn into predators," Steve explains flatly. "Not that there's even many that can, but with omegas back in circulation in Hawaii... more Alphas are starting to turn."

"Hmm." Danny thinks back on the hundreds of Omegas released from the compound two years ago. Some had been raised in the facility, others had been missing for decades, and some had been pronounced dead at THRESH. Families had mourned for the omegas; they had been put into a coma so deep that they actually appeared dead, and the families had consented to post mortem medical examinations, 'a noble effort to advance research,' and even received fake cremated remains. In reality, the omega's had been resuscitated and moved to the compound. It had been a shock for the families, understandably, but also the omegas when they were released back into society.

The Omega Institute, almost two years old now, was helping them adjust.

Danny wondered who was helping the newly shifting alphas. How does one cope after suddenly developing an ability like that?

How would Cooper cope?

"What are they starting to shift into?" Danny asks, flicking his eyes over to look at his exhausted but handsome mate.

Steve tilts his head. "Most of the native alphas around here are Jaguars and boars -- nothing too big. I met a few foxes at the recruiting center last month."

"No wolves or grizzly bears? I thought those were common," Danny asks.

Steve squints, glancing down at him. "It's all about the bloodline your family hails from..."

Danny frowns. "So does that mean you and Doris are related to the alphas in the L-Class?"

"I guess," Steve sighs, gesturing vaguely. "Maybe too far back to really count as family, but yeah. Distantly."

Danny shifts on the couch until his head is in Steve's lap, and he shuts his eyes, turning on his side to curl up. "At least we only have one pup that's an Alpha," he yawns.

Steve smirks. "For now."

Danny's eyes flick open. "I feel like I tell you this every day and it's like you're not hearing me. No."

"No? No what?"

"You know what, Steven," Danny huffs, yanking himself upright with a groan and heading away from the couch toward the stairs.

Steve brings his hands up; "Danny..."

"Do the dishes," the omega snaps loudly from the stairwell and Steve rolls his eyes, letting his hands
In the middle of the night, Steve wakes him up, moving the sheets around him, tugging and pulling and adjusting Danny every few minutes, just when he's on the verge of sleep. He's been so tired lately that all the exhausted omega can do is swat at Steve blindly and groan a string of vicious but half-hearted expletives.

When Danny wakes, however, he realizes that the alpha has been busy re-arranging the pillows and sheets around him. Like a nest.

Their actual rounded, raised edge nest mattress is in storage, and has been for over a year since the pups turned one. They had reclaimed the master bedroom, no longer needing the nest shaped bed that they had instinctively wanted when Danny was carrying, and when the pups were tiny and sharing the bed with them.

Danny frowns down at the makeshift nest and looks over at his sleeping mate, sprawled out on his back with his feet resting over the edge of the ring of pillows and blankets. He has dark circles under his closed eyes, a testament to how he had apparently spent the night too stressed out with instincts to sleep.

Steve may not have even been awake when he did it.

The last time he had done this was when Danny was carrying. But Danny was on birth control now, a subject of contention. They had had a few arguments on whether they would have another litter, but nothing had been agreed on.

"I guess you want them pretty badly then, don't you," Danny sighs under his breath, glancing uneasily down at the nest. He starts to smooth out the sheets again, trying to hide the evidence before it incites another argument about when they should start trying again for more pups.

"I'm just saying that I think it's time -- the kids are almost out of diapers," Steve points out during sex, of all moments to pick a fight. Danny grits his teeth in frustration, leaning low on the bed and shoves his hips back to meet Steve as the alpha thrusts against his O gland repeatedly, edging him closer to an orgasm.

"Steve -- I just -- ugh --" He pants, gripping the headboard. They hadn't been able to have sex for a week and now his mate is ruining it with this fucking conversation.

"I know you want more Danno," Steve purrs, "I can smell it on you every time you see a newborn pup!"

Danny pauses, going still. He hates when Steve uses his biology against him. "Babe, I want more, I
never said I didn't, I just don't think I'm ready to be pregnant again."

Steve thrusts into him harder, almost punishedly so, rougher than usual like he's angry and finally he bends low to inhale again along his scent gland. "If you were a woman I know you wouldn't be this embarrassed about the thought of getting pregnant again."

Danny bares his teeth, "That's it." He wrenches an elbow back, catching Steve in the nose and the Alpha grunts out in pain as Danny shoves him off.

He pulls out and collapses back against the bed, nearly falling off the edge. "Ow! What the fuck, Danny!"

For good measure, he slaps the alpha across the face, leaving nicks in his skin when his claws catch his cheek. "Get out!" He points at the door.

"Steve how did you manage to get two black eyes off duty?" Chin asks, holding an untouched mug of coffee. He's been so distracted by the unknown calamity which has befallen upon Steve's face that he's almost forgotten that he's holding it.

"I punched myself shaving," Steve snaps dryly, earning a few chuckles from Chin's cousin Kono in the break room.

"You look like a raccoon," his youngest beta laughs.

"Where's Danny?" Chin asks, finally sipping his coffee.

"Home with the kids. Cooper got banned from the only reputable daycare chain on the island," Steve sighs, heading into his office.

Chin leans into the doorway. "How does a two year old get banned from daycare?"

"Those are some genes, McGarrett!" Kono cackles at him, walking to stand beside chin.

"Cooper shifted at daycare," he throws up his hands, looking between the betas.

Chin gives a low whistle and crosses his arms, while Kono covers her hand with her mouth.

"Oh, wow," she breathes.

Chin raises a brow. "What did he shift into?"


"Awww, like his Daddy," Kono coos, and Steve drags a palm over his face, nodding.

"And the day care said it was a no go?" Chin winces.

"They don't know how to handle a shifting toddler; said it would be a liability. So, like I said, Danny had to stay home today with the pups. We'll just have to figure something else out. Obviously, I need
my best detective back on the job."

Kono leans in a bit further into the office, giggling: "At least until you guys have more keikis, huh?"
She gives him a beaming grin and walks off toward the break room, cackling.

Chin grins, watching his cousin walk off before he turns with a slightly more serious expression.
"And I'm assuming he's gonna be smart this time around and take time off."

Steve snorts, then grimaces when the action hurts his nose, and he regrets it. "Yeah, well, that's a
touchy subject under my roof right now, Chin."

His lead beta winces. "Danny's not too enthusiastic about the idea then?"

Steve shakes his head. "I can smell it on him that he wants more, Chin, it doesn't make sense. I feel
like we're ready -- I just... he won't even talk about it."

The lead beta pulls a face. "Well, the last time he was carrying, it didn't go so smoothly. It probably
left some bad feelings by association with the whole thing."

Steve purses his lips, realizing that it's definitely a possibility. "Maybe." He shrugs.

Guilt wins Steve over that day, and, because it's a slow day, he ends up taking half of the day off to
go home and help Danny with the kids.

He walks in the garage door right as Danny is settling the kids down for a nap, and the omega stares
for a few seconds in shock at how black his eyes are when they meet at the top of the stairs.

"You look like hell," Danny mutters, walking past him.

"Danny," Steve sighs, reaching out, and he manages to snag one of the omega's wrists. "Are you still
mad?"

The omega snorts, wrenching his wrist away. "What do you think?"

"Then talk to me."

"About what?" The omega huffs, and Steve tilts his head knowingly.

"You know what, Danny! I swear to god, babe, every frickin' day you say something about how --
how I'm not open enough with my feelings, but here I am, with my god damn feelings, and I wanna
talk."

Danny shakes his head. "There's nothing to talk about."

"Babe." Steve pulls Danny closer, and the smaller man resists for a moment before giving in and
trudging closer. "Tell me why you don't want more pups."

Danny looks away evasively; "We can barely handle the ones we've got -- we don't even have
anyone to watch Cooper now!"

"We'll find someone, okay? We'll find someone," Steve whispers calmly. "Is that actually what this
"is about?"

Danny waves his hands up in frustration; "Steven, it's a complex and emotional question for me and I just need time to explain how I fucking feel about it, okay?!"

"Alright, alright," Steve grabs his wrists, shoving them down to Danny's sides. "Don't wake the kids. We don't have to talk about it right now," he sighs, and Danny nods.

The evening, and dinner, pass with a relative lack of drama, with Steve biting his tongue on the question that has been blazing front and center in his thoughts for days. Their newly resolved truce gets them through dinner (with fresh blobsters) and Steve volunteers to bathe the kids and tuck them in so Danny can have a chance to relax with a glass of wine on the lanai as the late summer sun sets out over the ocean.

Their night is typical of their usual evening routine until there's a knock on the door.

"Who the hell would be knocking on our door at 9:30 at night?" Danny mumbles at the sink, drying his hands on a dishrag and tossing it haphazardly toward the hook on the side of the fridge as he leaves the kitchen. Steve stands up, brushing a few crumbs from kale chips away from his chest and mutes the TV where a news anchor is relaying the day's top stories.

Feeling an uneasy edge at the thought of his omega opening the door to what could be a threat, his alpha side has him speed walking to the door to stand beside Danny as he opens the door.

It's the Governor.

"Governor James," Steve sputters, feeling caught of guard in his Navy academy tee and kale chip crumbs.

"What's goin' on?" Danny blurts, bringing a hand up to rest of the doorframe.

The governor is accompanied by his assistant, Natsumi, an Asian woman in a burgundy skirt suit, and a tall pale man that Steve has never seen with unkempt, dark hair parted in the middle. He has thick rimmed glasses on and a greyish blue polo shirt with a small yellow logo on his chest; Steve can't make out the words under the logo in the weak light of the porch light above their heads.

He's been meaning to change the bulb for weeks, and it's now on its paltry last legs, flickering weakly.

He can feel Danny's tension rise beside him when he feels obliged to invite the three people into their home, and Steve's is thankful when they politely decline.

"Thank you gentlemen, but I know your two pups are sleeping, and I don't want to disturb them. In short, there's an emergency, and I'm going to need you both to come with me for a briefing at a third party location."

Steve frowns, "Okay."

"Yeah, okay, but we're gonna have to try to find a sitter for the pups," Danny sighs, turning to look up at Steve.

"Natsumi has agreed to stay at your home for the duration of the meeting," the governor says, and Natsumi smiles, nodding.

"This can't wait until morning?" Danny sighs, and Steve watches as the governor turns to look at the
tall pale man in glasses, as if he's looking for an answer, and the pale man finally speaks up.

"This can't wait," he insists, in an unusually soft spoken voice for such a tall man.

"Look, I don't want to leave the kids until I know what the hell is going on," Danny hisses.

"Gentlemen, I assure you, there is no immediate threat to your family," he explains, raising up his hands to calm the detective. "The emergency we're talking about, it's about an impending event that's going to occur in the near future, we believe, in a few weeks from now possibly."

"Alright," Steve says, putting a hand on Danny's shoulder. "Let's go, Danny."

The omega's lips tighten into a line and he looks from Natsumi to Steve and back again before finally stepping aside to let Natsumi in. He makes the governor and the pale man bear with him as he hands Natsumi the baby monitors and shows her the black and white video feed from the security nest cameras in the pups' rooms. Danny then shows her where the sippy cups are, and opens the fridge to show her the rice milk, instructing her to make a sippy cup of warm rice milk for the pups if they wake up. He finally hands her his cell phone number, and, if all else fails and a crying fit ensues, the Frozen Blu-Ray.

"Okay, okay," Danny mutters, and he follows his mate out of the door. "Let's go see what the hell couldn't wait until morning."

Chapter End Notes

Dun dun dunnnn!
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Hello my loves! Batten down the hatches ;}

See the end of the chapter for more notes

They’re lead to a black Escalade that’s waiting at the curb, and Steve and Danny move to the back to sit side by side in the third row of seats. The mayor and the soft-spoken stranger sit in two free standing seats, and the tall man crosses his long legs like a spider so he can twist his lean body to face the mated pair in the back row.

At the angle, Danny can see that he has bright purple accent socks with Bulldogs embroidered on them.

The fuck.

Naturally, Danny instantly hates the beta, but it may have more to do with the fact that, because of this man, Danny’s had to leave his two pups alone with a sitter that he barely knows.

He knows Steve is more practical, and relies on logic more than emotion, but he wagers that the alpha is slightly suspicious of the stranger, if not only because he showed up at the front door of his den.

It's like the Governor can hear all of their unsettled instincts grumbling, because he’s quick to make another apology for the circumstances.

Steve nods politely, waving him off, and nudges Danny, trying to get him to do the same, but the omega sullenly refuses.

“What’s all of this about?” Danny asks flatly instead, crossing his arms, and there’s an implied ‘this better be good’ that goes unspoken after it.

The spindly, pale man looks at the governor, and the governor finally shakes his head, sighing.

“We’re almost there, gentlemen.”

There’ turns out to be the Pacific Weather Association; it's a multi-story grey building that isn't very impressive, except for the array of expensive looking equipment and satellites on top of the roof.

“I watch this channel every day,” Danny mutters. “We finally getting to arrest the weatherman? Guy has the only job in history where it's okay to be totally fucking wrong half the time.”

“Danny,” Steve mutters, placing a firm hand on his mate’s shoulders. The alpha can smell the Governor’s stress; if Danny knew the Governor as well as he did, the omega would know that the Governor is usually unnervingly calm and steadfast.

The detective sighs and shuts up, walking quietly with the group as they come to an elevator.

It's then that the Governor decides to start explaining.
“Thirty six hours ago, I was alerted to a meteorological phenomenon off the western coast of Mexico,” the handsome, dark skinned politician begins solemnly. The elevator dings and opens, allowing the group to shuffle out, and the thin stranger takes the lead down a series of halls over dull, grey carpet. “Dr. Carter, here, was the first person to find it. I’ll let him explain.

The thin man, Dr. Carter, turns over his shoulder to glance at the two, and waves quickly to introduce himself. “We're almost there…” he says quietly, and they finally turn a corner to a huge screen of a satellite image of the Pacific Ocean. “Okay,” Dr. Carter begins. “If you look right here, you’ll see that we’ve got two category four hurricanes feeding into each other, merging areas of low pressure systems, that are combining to form one of the largest, strongest hurricanes we’ve ever seen.”

Steve crosses his arms. “So what? Hawaii hasn't been touched by a hurricane in over ten years.”

Carter turns to stare at him; “This one is different. Just -- just the size of it -- and it’s gathering strength. This isn't just a category five, Commander, it’s practically a six. We are talking 175 mile per hour winds, up to 20 inches of rain, and a storm surge of at least 15 feet!”

Steve runs a hand over his mouth, staring at the spiraling satellite images of the storms. It looked like something out of a movie; it didn't even look real. Or at least, it didn't look natural. “How close is it gonna get to Hawaii?”

Carter pauses, licking his lips nervously as he turns back to glance at the screen. “I-I think… I think we’re gonna take a direct hit. If the data my team has been gathering on the storm is correct, we’re talking hundreds of thousands of deaths, and billions of dollars in damages.”

“Jesus,” Danny breathes, placing his hands on his hips. He purses his lips, before bringing up a hand to wave in a gesture. “Okay, well, Dr. Carter, even if you are correct in this -- this mega storm thing comin’ right at us… What does this have to do with us?” He pauses to wave over between his mate and himself. “We’re law enforcement. What are we supposed to do; arrest the hurricane?”

Dr. Carter looks at the governor, tucking his hands in his pockets nervously. “Well, with what we’ve been -- ah -- discussing… Is a statewide evacuation.”

“Evacuation?” Steve repeats, furrowing his brow as he pinches the bridge of his nose. “What -- how would you even--”

Danny puts a hand on his hip. “I'm sure it has’t escaped your attention that this is an island. 'The hell do you think people are gonna go?!”

The Governor raises up a hand, attempting to placate the mouthy omega. “There are 185 cruise ships in the American cruise industry. Each boat can hold up to 6,000 people.”

“I can't believe I’m hearing this,” Danny mutters under his breath, turning to glance up at the ceiling as if he's pleading for patience. “I've gotta be dreaming. This can't be real.”

Steve steps closer to the Governor. “There’s 1.4 million people in Hawaii, sir, even if you get 186 boats to take people to the mainland, or at least out of the path of the storm, it’s not enough boats.”

The Governor squares his shoulders back. “Women, elderly, and children on the first round of ships, and the Navy takes the remainder on aircraft carriers. We also may be able to use a fleet of Boeing A-380's and cargo aircraft flying in and out around the clock to take evacuees to the mainland.”

Steve stares at the man, nodding. “Alright. If you can get that must assistance with the plan, it might work. But you still haven't told us what this has to do with us; the National Guard are gonna be the
ones organizing the evacuation, sir, not Five-O.”

The Governor sighs, looking between the two of them. “I’m telling you this, because Five-O, as well as some select HPD officers, are going to have to stay behind to maintain the law on the islands.”

“Excuse me?” Danny blurts. “You drag me out of my den, away from my pups, at God-fucking-thirty to tell me how this storm is gonna annihilate everything on the islands, and then ’oh, by the way you’re staying to ride it out?!’”

Steve yanks Danny away from the Governor, rounding on him quickly and grabbing his shoulders. “Danny, what’s gotten into you?! Calm down. The Governor’s right. Think of the looting and the chaos that took place after Katrina. We can’t leave the entire island chain and the ports unguarded for a week! We’d have drug and weapon traffickers unloading enough contraband that we’d never get a handle on it ever again!”

“The pups, Steven, what in the fuck are we going to do with the pups!” Danny hisses, trying to wrench his arms off to struggle free.

Steve growls, baring his teeth at the challenge and reaches around to grab the back of Danny’s neck, instantly forcing him to submit and stand still. He never usually has to do this -- but it's almost like something has the small detective even more riled up than usual. “Calm. Down.”

Danny glares at him, clenching his jaw, before looking down in submission. Steve slowly removes his hand, sighing as he looks over at the two men who are trying to look at anything but the arguing couple.

“Okay,” Steve says firmly. “How much time do we have?”

The Governor sighs, looking over at Dr. Carter, and the meteorologist adjusts his glasses nervously. “Uh… About two weeks. Fifteen days.”

“Who else knows about this?” Steve asks, folding his arms across his chest.

“As of right now? No one,” the Governor says grimly. “And it’s going to stay that way until we have a definite plan in place. But there’s more that I need to brief you on gentlemen, if you’ll follow me back at to the car.”

“Great,” Danny mutters under his breath, nodding with a sigh.

“There’s something very important on this island,” he begins, lowering his voice as they walk back toward the elevator. “Something that needs to be guarded in particular. We can’t transport it, but it can’t be left unattended. HPD is going to remain on the island to keep the peace, but I’ve assigned Five-O to guard this project.”

Danny frowns, nodding as he shoves his hands in his pockets. “What exactly is it?”

The governor waits until they’re all back in the SUV.

“A new serum has been developed by a scientist, Dr. Jane Polteraski, that allows betas to shift like alphas. As you can imagine, with most of the world being populated by betas like myself, the serum would fetch a high price on the black market, and -- if it fell into the wrong hands -- could make it very difficult to catch some of the most wanted criminals in the world.”

“It’d be pretty easy to hide from Interpol as a bear or a hyena,” Steve agrees. “Especially if you didn't know what you were even looking for.”
“Or to assassinate someone.” Danny sighs, leaning back into the plush leather of the SUV and fiddling with a small swiveling air conditioning vent near his seat. He feels nauseated just thinking about how they’re going to handle this situation with two year old pups -- especially one that turns into an animal that can't be around other young children. *Fuck.*

“You’re going to have information about your objective printed and allotted to your team members tomorrow, gentlemen,” the Governor sighs. “Thank you, and I’ll see you tomorrow.”

When the black SUV pulls into their driveway, Danny rushes into the house. Natsumi is reading a magazine on the sofa next to the baby monitors and she smiles when she sees him, standing up and smoothing out her skirt. “They didn't make a peep,” she says softly, nodding to the omega and his mate as she walks toward the door.

“Thank you, Natsumi,” Steve says, nodding as he holds the door open. He watches her leave walk out under the still flickering porch light until she climbs into the SUV. The alpha gives a polite wave to the Escalade as it slowly pulls out of the driveway and starts down the street.

When he walks inside, he hears the sound of Danny vomiting in the hall bathroom, and the alpha walks over the stand outside the door, frowning. "You alright in there, buddy?"

He's th knock when the omega walks out, looking fatigued and drained. “Just nerves,” Danny mutters, meaning to walk past him, but Steve reaches out and pulls him into a warm embrace, towering over the short detective with his huge alpha stature.

“Hey. We’ll get through this,” Steve murmurs. “We’ll be okay.”

Danny sighs and leans into him. “Yeah, but what about the pups?”

Steve’s shoulders fall. “Well, we’ve got a week to see if the storm actually starts heading toward us. Dr. Carter could be wrong, storms aren't always predictable.”

The omega starts to pull away, trudging up the stairs. “Guy sounded pretty fucking convinced, Steven.”

Steve starts to follow him up. “Maybe you should evacuate then… Take the kids to the mainland. Fly up to Jersey for the week.”

Danny freezes, whipping around. “I’m not leaving you here. Who’s gonna watch your back? Huh? Who’s gonna be the voice of reason when you get carried away with your crazy, C-4 pyrotechnic stunts, huh?”

Steve snorts under his breath. “Danny, I worked black ops win the seals. A storm is a joke compared to what I’ve been through.”

Danny turns away from him, continuing up the stairs. “Not the way this Carter guy described it. It sounded like the god damned *apocalypse.* I’m not leaving you here, I’m not gonna twiddle my thumbs in Jersey when the storm knocks out all the cellphone towers. I’m not gonna sit there and just *hope* you’re okay without word, for a week, while God-knows-who comes trying to steal that serum.”

Steve rolls his eyes. “Okay, well, we’ll figure something out. But in the mean time, it’s almost one o’clock in the morning, and we have to be in the office at seven, so let’s get some sleep.”

Danny huffs a laugh. “Like I’m gonna be able to sleep after that Carter guy’s end-of-days spiel.” He walks toward the pups’ rooms, standing in the doorway to watch them sleep as they breathe evenly,
peacefully, and Steve joins him, rubbing his shoulders.

“We need to start prepping the den for the storm this week,” Steve whispers. If the storm surge is as bad as they say…” He pauses to put a hand on the back of his neck. “Most of the downstairs rooms are gonna flood. We need to move everything upstairs... Start boarding the Windows... Reinforce the roof.”

“The den’s gonna be destroyed,” Danny whispers, voice cracking as he looks around. His eyes are shining.

“We can rebuild,” Steve insists. “The most important things are the things I can't replace -- you and the pups.”

Danny swallows hard over a lump in the back of his throat. “Well, we have three weeks to think up a plan.”

Steve nods, pulling him toward the bedroom where he knows they’re both going to lay awake, tossing and turning, as the haunting image of the monstrous storm from the satellite image replays over and over in their minds, churning and roaring it's way toward them and their home.

An hour later, Danny finally gives up on sleep, pulling himself to his feet and rubbing at his eyes groggily. He walks to the master bathroom and turns the stubborn faucet handle for the shower. The omega then tugs off his boxers and undershirt, and pauses to look in the mirror; lit only by moonlight, he runs his fingertips along the C-section scar on his lower abdomen.

Danny feels the raised line, a permanent memory on his skin from the nightmare during which his two pups were born at the underground compound, and stares at the scar in the fogging mirror.

Stepping into the shower, Danny bows his head under the warm spray, standing there and sighing under the water. He shuts his eyes as he thinks about what he’s learned today, worrying about his pups.

If his eyes were open, however, Danny would notice that the hair on his stomach and chest -- the hair that male omegas lose during pregnancy -- is slowly starting to fall out, collecting on the shower floor as he rinses soap off his skin.

Chapter End Notes

The drama is gettin' fierce in this plot! I can hardly contain my excitement!

(וצ'וצ') _VERIFY

"EXCITEMENT!" She bellows, flipping a table.
Hey y'all! I'm kind of under the weather right now with a fever, but I conjured up a chapter through the fog of DayQuil.

Danny wakes slowly the next morning and feels around in the darkness to see if -- yup. Steve made a nest again.

“God damnit, Steven,” Danny sighs, starting to tug the sheets back into place around his sleeping mate.

The alpha grumbles something into his pillow as Danny leans over him to grab the rest of the sheet, tugging them out from under his mate. He wipes them out in a great, wilting arc over the bed, making a sort of cavern for a few seconds over Steve’s back before heading into the bathroom.

It's then that the memories of the night before come back to him.

Jesus.

He looks at himself in the mirror and sighs, deciding to start his day as per usual because he doesn't know what else to do. But he’s too tired to shave today.

He’s so tired, in fact, that he’s actually nauseous, and he stands there for a second debating if he should just crawl back in bed. And he ends up dry-heaving into the toilet bowl.

“Danno?” Steve grumbles, raising half off the pillow to squint at him in the morning light. “You okay?”

“M’fine,” he mutters, reaching for his scent blocking deodorant, and follows it up with scent blocking lotion on his neck least Steve pick up on how anxious the storm has him.

And with that, he walks out into the hall toward the kids’ rooms to start their day.

Two hours later, with the kids at home under the watchful eye of Joe White (whom Steve now owes a steak dinner and a six pack), Steve and Danny walk into headquarters.

The team is already assembled in the conference room where Dr. Carter is showing the latest radar images of the twin storms in the Pacific Ocean. It looks like the same spiel they heard last night, and Danny purses his lips grimly, taking in the shocked faces of his team mates.

He follows Steve into the room just as the governor is explaining that Five-O is going to be guarding Dr. Poteralski’s work.
Steve eases himself into the chair at the head of the table where no one else would dare to sit. “She’s coming by tonight to brief us on her life’s work, a serum that allows betas to shift like alphas, and why she thinks someone is apparently going to try to steal it.”

“Other than the obvious bad-ass-ness of potentially being able to change into an animal with this stuff?” Jerry sputters, waving up his hands. “I mean c’mon! I’d kill for that!”

The governor turns to give Steve a look; “I’ll let you take it from here.”

The seal nods, sighing as he leans forward to rest his forearms on the table. “Okay, so, as you heard, we’re gonna be having ourselves a little hurricane party.”

The team huffs a few rye laughs, all looking down at the glossy printouts of information from the Pacific Weather Association.

“Hard to have a party in 180 mile per hour winds,” Danny mutters folding his hands in his lap.

“We’re all going to stay here the night and day of the storm,” Steve sighs, “So get yourselves some sleeping bags.”

“At least there are generators here,” Chin says slowly when everyone blinks in surprise at Steve’s words.

“It’s safer if we stay together,” Steve explains. “Phones and power will probably be out. And it’ll be easier for me to keep an eye on everyone.”

“Such an alpha,” Kono smirks, and Steve rolls his eyes.

“We’ve got two weeks to prep for the storm -- I suggest buying anything you need NOW before any of the evacuation locks up the island.”

“When does everyone find out?” Jerry asks, leaning forward to look at the alpha.

“Morning news tomorrow,” Steve says quietly. “PWA’s gonna do a broadcast and if the storm doesn’t change course in three days, evacuations start.”

“Geeze Louise,” Danny mutters shaking his head. “This is gonna be a shit show.”

“So we just -- sit here on this information until tomorrow?” Kono asks with a frown.

“No,” Steve says, raising up from his chair and looking down at a file in his hand; “We do our jobs like any other day.”

“You got it, boss,” Jerry says, pushing back from the table, and Kono and Chin both nod solemnly.

Danny stays seated for a moment, waiting for a wave of vertigo to pass before realizing that his mate is calling his name. “Huh?”

“I said we’ve gotta go look into a case downtown; HPD just found a body in a dumpster,” Steve repeats, patting his shoulder as he walks past. “Said it’s covered in gang tattoos. Gear up in an hour.”
Steve makes a mistake while they’re questioning people about the murder; a guy takes off on foot and they sprint after him, dodging oncoming traffic as the guy darts over a road and finally into an alleyway. But the alley is blocked by a huge van, so he starts to talk the guy down.

It’s then that he makes the mistake. He looks the man in the eye and doesn't smell the scent of danger on him, misses the scent of gunpowder and pheromone signatures telling him this man is cornered and desperate, and it gets Danny shot.

Well, grazed anyway.

Danny is standing behind him when the guy pulls a gun out of his jacket and fires straight at him; the omega starts to move as soon as he sees the glint of sun on the gun but he isn't fast enough. The bullet tears through the the skin on the outside of his left shoulder, making a mess out of his dress shirt. It was the baby blue one from Brooksbrothers that Steve had given him for Christmas the year before. How the alpha managed to garner an ounce of fashion sense to pick out the present was beyond Danny, but Steve said he’d seen it through a store window and bought it because it was the color of his eyes. Now, as he slumps against the dirty wall of the alley, hissing in pain, it’s torn open on the sleeve and soaking up his blood. It’s ruined.

The assailant hears him hissing from the pain and freezes, realizing that Danny’s an omega. He starts to sputter apologies at the most murderous expression Steve can make at the guy; “Oh, shit, shit, shit -- I didn't know--”

Steve shoots the man in both feet until the beta is howling in pain and even Danny is begging Steve to stop, clutching at his bicep where the bullet grazed his skin.

They end up getting some information out of the guy, when Steve makes the paramedics in the back of the ambulance hold off on the morphine until the guy spills on who he’s working for.

“S-s-santo,” the man sputters as he starts to go into shock.

The murder, according to this guy, was done as an initiation into Santo’s circle of “associates.”

Danny has his shirt off later as he sits on the corner of Steve’s desk, letting the alpha stitch him up.

“Would you quit moving, Danny, I'm almost done,” Steve snaps.

Danny rolls his eyes; “At this rate it's gonna heal up on its own before you stitch it closed.”

Steve grits his jaw and looks up slowly, huffing out warm air through his nose. “If you’d let me take you to an actual Doctor, they’d be a lot better at this than me.”

Danny’s face hardens and he drops his voice low. “You spend a few weeks in a lab getting violated and pin-cushioned by doctors and you tell me if you want to volunteer for it every single time you get scraped up.”

“Alright… Fair enough.” The alpha purses his lips and makes one final loop with the curved needle, rubbing his hand over Danny's back slowly.

“Besides, remember three months ago when I got bit in the leg by that guard dog in the meth raid? It took three hours just to get a Tetanus shot, and another two to get a scrip for antibiotics,” Danny explains. “Joe White’s probably worn out as it is, we can't make him watch the kids all night.”

“True.” Steve doesn't look up as he neatly packages his suturing kit to replace it into his desk drawer.
He’s oddly quiet, and Danny waits, regarding him silently. “This was my fault today,” he finally sighs. “I’m sorry. I should’ve been able to smell the gun on him, and I just -- I missed it.” He reaches up to hold his forehead.

Danny frowns. “I can get you a nightstick from HPD if you really wanna beat yourself up about it, babe. Neither of us has been sleeping well -- you’re just tired.”

The omega leaves off the unspoken half of his explanation, which is ‘because you’ve been making nests in your sleep every night.’ He feels guilty for not bringing it up, but he doesn’t want it to lead to another argument about pups.

Looking up at the ceiling, Steve sighs and starts to toss back the omega his shirt. But he pauses, picking it up, and leans forward to inhale the fabric, frowning.

“What?” Danny snaps, reaching for his shirt.

“Smells different,” Steve mumbles slowly, knitting his brows together as he sniffs the shirt again. “Did we change laundry detergents or something?”

“I dunno; I buy whatever’s on sale,” Danny tries to reach again for the shirt, but Steve pulls away.

“It smells good,” the alpha says softly. “I swear I know that smell from somewhere.”

“Of course you know that smell,” Danny retorts, “It’s probably just me you idiot.” He finally leans far enough to snatch the shirt out of his mate’s hands, snapping him out of whatever daze the mysterious scent had him drifting into.

Steve shakes off the disorienting feeling. “Okay, well… Let’s pull everything we can on Santos. If his gang is doing initiations, there might be more murders in the next few days,” the alpha offers before stepping out of the office.

Danny is most definitely not sleeping in his office when Steve pokes his head in to tell him that Poteralski has arrived.

Except that, well, he totally is.

And the look that Steve gives him when he opens his eyes to the sound the alpha clearing his throat loudly is the look to end all looks.

“Do I need to send you home? What’s going on with you lately?” Steve asks gruffly, crossing his arms in the doorway to Danny’s office.

“I got shot today, you jerk,” Danny sighs, running his palms down over his face before he eases himself out of the chair with a groan. “Let’s go see what we’re sworn to protect during the storm.”

When they round the corner for the lobby between all of their offices, there’s a huge, square, heavy looking machine being plugged into the wall toward the back of the room. It’s whirring gently, and a few lights are blinking on a panel of knobs and screens.

“Please tell me that’s a Cappuccino machine,” Danny mumbles, crossing his arms as he walks closer.
Steve almost wants to reach out to pull Danny back; they have, after all, no idea what the hell this thing is.

“This is SARRA,” a voice quips from behind the machine.

Danny and Steve look at each other in unison. “Sara?”

“Self Automating Regulatory Refrigeration Apparatus,” the voice supplies with a huff of effort. The lights in the ceiling flicker slightly as though there’s been a surge in the system, and the machine starts to whirr a bit louder.

“What does SARRA do?” Kono asks, walking a bit closer. She reaches out to touch the machine when it suddenly makes a gentle hissing noise, creaking open. A ghostly white fog of chilled air clouds out of the machine as it opens and Kono steps back, eyes widening.

“She stores the serum at negative 10 degrees Celsius for me, keeping the samples preserved at optimal humidity and with a convection-like current of air circulation,” the voice says, and finally a tiny woman with owlish eyes steps out from behind the machine. She adjusts her glasses. “Joan Poteralski,” she thrusts a hand toward Danny, looking alarmed suddenly at his arm.

“Sorry about that -- it’s been a long day. I’m Detective Williams,” he nods, shaking her hand, and he realizes when he inhales her nervous scent that she’s an omega. “I’m fine, trust me. You should see the other guy.”

She has frizzy dirty blonde hand and a button nose and a grin that scrunches up her twinkling eyes to nothing more than a crinkle of skin and a flurry of lashes. She looks more like she’d be baking blueberry muffins for an old-folks’ home than cooking up some serum in a lab.

Steve offers his palm out to shake her hand before realizing that she’s an omega and probably doesn’t want his alpha scent on her. Mumbling an apology, he does a slight bow instead. “Nice to meet you, Doctor. I’m Commander McGarrett.”

Joan gives a similar bow, grinning and then turns to shake hands with the two betas.

“This is quite a machine you have here,” Chin raises his brows, peeking into the glow of the lit shelves inside the frosty cooler compartment.

There are dozens of clear vials, each half full with a bright orange, opaque liquid. The substance is so bright, that the only name Steve can conjure up to describe it in his head is ‘danger orange.’ It’s almost glowing.

“This is the stuff? The serum that lets betas shift like alphas?” Steve frowns at the vials of liquid. To him, shifting is a painful and inconvenient instinctual reaction. Why anyone would want that in their lives is beyond him.

“Not quite like an alpha,” Joan tilts her head, steep long her fingertips, “but basically. Yes. This is Serum 684.”

Danny pulls a face. “Six eight four?”

“That’s how many tries it took to get it to work successfully,” Joan raises her brows knowingly and Danny gives a low whistle.

“That’s a lotta’ lab work,” Kono leaning to look at the vials. “How does it work? Do you inject it straight into the bloodstream?” She leans back as SARRA starts to beep loudly and Joan springs
forward to start to close the doors, methodically flipping latches and turning knobs to adjust the cooling system.

“Sorry, it’s very important that SARRA isn’t open for more than two minutes. The alarm is set to go off after two minutes. If the serum is exposed to warmer temperatures, it starts to denature. Once it denatures…” She trails off, grimacing. “It's why it was so hard to make in the lab, and it’s why it’s so hard to move. SARRA has a backup generator that lasts thirty minutes, and that’s how we moved the serum from my lab, but a ship or a plane wouldn't have the kind of power we need. It’s why SARRA has to stay behind when I leave for the storm.”

“You’re telling me the entire NAVY doesn't have a ship that can supply SARRA with power?” Steve blurts before he can stop himself; it just doesn't make sense.

“Well…” Joan starts, pursing her lips.

“The NAVY said it was too hazardous to transport on a ship with the refugees,” the governor explains. “The machine uses a volatile isotope of Radium to keep the enzymes in the serum from denaturing.”

The team is silent for a beat. “Wait…” Kono starts, cocking her head.

Steve steps forward; “Are you telling me this thing is radioactive?”

Joan takes a deep breath. “I’m telling you that parts of it are.”

“Now I really wish it was just a cappuccino machine,” Danny mutters to Steve, taking a few steps back from SARRA.

“Is this thing safe to stand near or should we all be wearing lead aprons?” Chin asks wearily, leaning back a bit.

Joan sighs and fans out her hands; “It's safe. It is. But only when it's stationary and on even ground. That’s why it can't go on a ship or a plane -- it’s just too dangerous.” She steps forward to rub the side of the machine affectionately. “SARRA’s not going to hurt anyone, but we have reason to believe that someone’s going to try to steal her.”

“And why is that?” Steve asks sternly.

Joan looks at the governor and the governor walks to the tech screen, plugging in a flash drive. Three news articles pop up, with varying headlines:

**BREAK IN AT THE HONOLULU ZOO**

**BIG CATS EXHIBIT TARGETED BY CAT BURGLAR**

**AUTHORITIES FEAR EXOTIC ANIMAL TRAFFICKING IS ON THE RISE IN HAWAII**

“Someone’s been stealing animals?” Steve frowns, looking at the governor.

“Stealing their blood according to the video feed in the enclosures,” Joan says, walking over to stand near the tech screen with a frown.

“What does that have to do with the serum?” Danny asks, looking for a chair to sit in. He feels dizzy again, damn it. Maybe he needs to eat something, get his blood sugar going. He settles for leaning
heavily against the wall closest to the group, trying to pay attention as Joan answers the question.

“My serum allows betas to shift, but you need to add animal DNA to catalyze the RNA transcription process,” she explains, and their expressions must convey varying degrees of what the hell does that mean because she pauses, waving her hands. “Think of the animal blood as a blueprint for the shifting process -- it tells your body what to change into and how to build it, so to speak.”

“So you can't change without the blood of the animal you’re trying to change into,” chin nods slowly. “That explains why someone would be breaking into the zoos.”

Kono squints at the screen. “Exactly -- look the animals that were targeted; bears, tigers, wolves, hyenas… Sounds like someone’s storing up quite the collection.”

“Doesn't look like the newspaper or the zoo knows what to make of the break-ins,” Danny sighs, holding his head. "But, obviously, word's gotten out about this serum to someone." 

“We can only assume so,” the governor says flatly, removing the flash drive from the tech screen and turning to the group. “This machine -- and the serum -- are going to stay at headquarters for the next month. Does anyone have any questions?”

The group shakes their heads.

The governor claps his hands together. “Good, then you’re all dismissed for the day. Remember -- the news about the storm breaks tomorrow. We’re expecting more than a little chaos on the island.”

Danny nods grimly as he shuffles into his office to grab his briefcase of files and his keys, actively trying not to vomit again from what he’s convincing himself is his nerves.

The omega tosses his keys to his mate without an argument for once and he settles down into the low seat of the Camarro.

"We should order a pizza for the kids," Steve says suddenly when Danny yawns loudly. "We're both too beat to cook tonight." 

"Mmh," the detective hums in response, shutting his eyes and rubbing at his stomach with a grimace as he realizes how hungry he is.

Steve catches the motion out of the corner of his eyes and frowns. "You okay, babe?" He reaches out to put a hand on Danny's arm.

But it's smooth.

He rubs the skin in confusion, feeling how smooth it is under his fingertips, and the omega opens his eyes slowly to look down at his hand.

"What?"

Steve slows the car to a stop at a red light, taking the opportunity to turn and look his mate in the eye. "Did you shave your arms?"

The omega scoffs at him; "Why would I do that?"

Steve's lips part in surprise. He looks down at his mate's abdomen and stares.

Danny frowns. "Babe, the light's green..." He gestures to the traffic light. "Green means go -- what are you doing?"
Steve flicks his eyes up. "Danny, are you pregnant?"
Chapter Five

Chapter Notes

Lol I couldn't handle leaving that cliffhanger up. Thank you for all of the well wishes! I'm finally getting over the plague.

"Danny, are you pregnant?"

“What?!" Danny looks offended. “No, I’m not -- what, because I’m rubbing my stomach? I can rub my goddamn stomach without there being a fucking pup in it, can't I?”

“No, it’s your arm, Danny,” Steve shakes his head; “Your arm! It’s hairless! You lose your hair when you’re pregnant!”

Danny looks down at his smooth arm. “I am on birth control, Steven! You have watched me take it this morning and every morning for the last year and a half!”

Steve turns back to the road, gripping the steering wheel with both hands, eyes wide with shock. “Oh my god. How did I not see this? The vomiting? The sleeping at your desk?”

“I'm riled up about this stupid storm is all -- I haven't been sleeping, and I have a weak stomach since the pups were born. You know that!” Danny’s face is flushed red with frustration and he seethes through his teeth.

Somebody behind them honks and Steve forcefully jams his foot on the accelerator, pulling a sudden u-turn across the empty road to head in the other direction.

“What the -- where are you going?!"

“To the drugstore,” Steve snaps. “You’re gonna take a pregnancy test.”

Danny yanks his tie knot down as his skin heats up and he clenches his teeth, staring straight ahead. “I. Am not. Pregnant. For the last fucking time.”

“You’re taking a test, Daniel,” Steve growls, raising his voice, and the sound grates on Danny’s omega brain.

The detective refuses to get out of the Camarro for the entire 8.2 minutes that Steve is in the store, and he sits, clenching his teeth together in rage as his mind casts forth an array of other emotions that he refuses to take part in. He knows he should be deeply considering whether Steve’s accusation is true -- he should be weighing the evidence against himself like a good detective, to sort out whether there is a possibility that he’s carrying again.

But so help him, Danny can't make himself do it. He can't let himself even consider the idea because he cannot handle one more thing to deal with.

He has a son that turns into a lion.
He has a serious phobia of hospitals.

He has a home that may be destroyed in a storm.

He has two pups to worry about.

He *refuses* to be pregnant right now.

And so, after a silent ride home, and after relieving Joe White from babysitting duty, and after making it all the way through pizza and bath time with a smile for the kids, Danny kisses his pups goodnight but grabs a yellow Crayola marker off Sophie’s coloring table. He tucks the marker in his pocket just as Steve walks in for story time.

Then Danny goes downstairs to fish the two pregnancy tests out of the drugstore bag on the kitchen table. Locking himself in the guest bathroom as Steve reads to the kids upstairs, Danny takes his pocket knife and the yellow marker out of his pants pocket and uses the point of the blade to pick the felt tip tube out of the marker, tugging the yellow dyed, plastic wrapped tube of ink soaked fibers free. If his partner wasn't Five-O, he wouldn't have to be this careful, but Steve is, so Danny grabs a Dixie cup off the counter and fills it with warm water from the tap.

It only takes a minute for the yellow ink to saturate the water from the submerged tube of fibers, and Danny dips the tips of the absorbent ends of the tests into the water. He then replaces the caps on the tests and pours the yellow water down the sink, tossing the evidence into the trash can and covering it with a layer of toilet paper.

He knows he should feel guilty doing this, but Danny doesn't. Because even if he is actually pregnant, Danny refuses to deal with it right now. Not right now; not with this fucking storm coming. And, most importantly, he can't deal with Steve knowing right now. He and Steve have enough to worry about in the next month.

Ten minutes later, Danny hands the negative tests to Steve right as the alpha is about to walk into the basement to drag the nest bed up two flights of stairs. The alpha stares down at the negative tests in surprise, shoulders falling slightly, and he looks up at Danny. “Okay,” Steve says softly, shutting the door to the basement with a sigh. “False alarm.”

“Yeah,” Danny says flatly, still annoyed with the entire ordeal, and the omega walks over to the fridge, resolutely pouring himself a glass of wine. He sits in an Adirondack chair on the the back lanai, like he usually does every night, and feels the sting of his left bicep where his stitches pull. Adjusting his arm with a wince, Danny lets out a long exhale and brings the wine to his mouth.

But he hesitates.

He lets the pale Pinot Grigio touch his lips, tart flavor bursting in its familiar greeting on his tongue but he pulls back, pursing his mouth instead.

Danny decides to leave the glass untouched that night, thinking better of it. Looking out at the ocean, with its falsely calm waves leisurely falling up and down the beach -- the same waves that, in two weeks, will probably be crashing on his lanai and smashing away his two chairs in a torrent -- Danny pointedly does not let his hand rest on his stomach.

He does however, allow his thumb to casually edge under the hem of his pants, testing the firmness of a mass he is not surprised to find beneath the skin of his lower abdomen. There is indeed a strangely familiar fullness resting in the bowl of his hips that he cannot convince himself isn't there, and he tucks his shaking hand into his pocket, letting out a wavering breath as he watches the ocean.
Steve is moping when Danny makes his way upstairs. He surprises the alpha -- something that’s usually not possible with Steve’s sensitive hearing -- and he turns over his shoulder quickly. He has the two negative tests in his hands and Danny feels the guilt burn into his chest when Steve looks down at them sadly.

“It’s funny,” the alpha begins slowly. “I didn't realize how much I wanted it to be true until I saw these.”

Danny looks up at the ceiling, feeling his gut tighten. “Steve, c’mon, we need to get a full night’s sleep... Whole island’s gonna be a madhouse once the story breaks.”

The seal is silent for a beat before tossing the tests into the trashcan beside the nightstand. “Yeah.” He looks up at Danny and gives his best attempt at a grin, and Danny mirrors it.

In the smile that doesn’t reach his eyes, Danny tries to hide the grim train of thought roaring through his mind about what alpha fury he’ll face when Steve realizes his mate has lied to him.
Chapter Six

Chapter Notes

Last post before final exams ;((

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next morning, something just feels off when Danny wakes, and he lays there -- not opening his eyes -- as he tries to place the source of the feeling. It’s like the world has tilted on its axis, just enough to make anything right feel wrong and anything good feel bad.

Steve’s asleep, but for some reason his hand is over Danny’s stomach. He refuses to think about that and what it may mean. “Babe, I need to check the news.”

Steve’s hand slowly retreats and the Alpha yawns. “Lemme know how bad things are out there. Maybe we should take the truck into work early if people are speeding around like maniacs for bread and milk.”

“It's our day off,” Danny frowns. “I will never know why people would ever want to buy perishable foods in an emergency. If the power goes out, your milk’s the first thing to go bad.”

“Exactly. Which is why we’re going to Walmart to buy canned foods,” Steve says groggily. “And my mother and Joe White are comin’ in two days to pick up the pups. Navy base is taking military families to the mainland on a cargo aircraft.”

“A cargo aircraft? That will be one long, uncomfortable flight,” Danny mutters.

“Yeah, well it’ll be a free long, uncomfortable flight,” Steve sighs. “I don’t think we have an extra eight grand for four round trip flights from Honolulu to LAX before the evacuation officially starts.”

Danny purses his lips. “Fair enough.” He grimaces, feeling a wave of nausea overtake him and Danny walks quickly out of the room toward the guest bathroom. He locks the door behind him before vomiting up nothing but bile. His abdomen wrenches tightly as he heaves, leaving him red faced and sore and he leans over the toilet for a few minutes panting.

*This isn’t nerves -- it’s probably morning sickness*, he thinks to himself with a defeated sigh. But still he refuses to think about the ‘p’ word that ends with ‘ups.’
Nope. Not today.

Danny rinses his mouth at the sink, looking down because he can’t look his reflection in the eyes for how ridiculous he’s being. For christ’s sake, he’s trying to ignore something that’s happening inside his own body.

He shakes the thoughts away, taking a deep breath and walks out of the bathroom to flick on the flat screen television, switching to the local news.

The first thing he sees is a radar image of the storm. The two systems have joined into one hurricane now, and the projected path is making a beeline for Hawaii, just as Dr. Carter predicted.

Then the Governor appears, telling residents about the evacuation, and behind him is a color coded map of the streets of of the major cities.

“-- and I’ve been told to relay that locals are encouraged to call the hotline at the bottom of the screen for more information about the evacuation. To encourage the population to recognize the seriousness of the situation, the national guard will be visiting residences across the islands for the next four days. Evacuations begin in five days, and will be organized by the street you reside on. It is essential that we remain calm for the next --”

“How do you think people are gonna react to this?” Steve asks gruffly behind him, voice hoarse from sleep.

Danny turns and crosses his arms, lifting up a hand from his elbow to wave slightly at the TV. “I mean… Not well, obviously. It’d be against human nature to see this while you’re drinkin’ your coffee and say ‘oh hmm, I can’t wait to pack up everything of value to me into one suitcase.’”

“Some people won't leave,” Steve sighs.

Danny snorts. “Yeah… us.”

Shaking his head, alpha walks past him to start fixing coffee in the French press. “No, I meant some people are going to be convinced they can just ride this thing out. Like the old man that was on the news for ignoring the evacuation of Mt. Saint Helens…”

Danny furrows his brows. “What happened to him?”

Steve’s mouth tightens into a grim line. “I'll let you guess, Danny, he was living on a volcano that was about to erupt, and it did erupt -- as violently as they had warned him it would be. They didn’t even find a body.”
“Christ,” the omega mutters, feeling his stomach start to churn uneasily with anxiety. What if this storm is as bad as the PWA is predicting?

They’re both going to be as bad off as the old man on Mt. Saint Helens.

“This is a shitshow,” Danny mutters, standing with his hands on his hips beside Steve at the front of the store.

The place is packed, and hives of shoppers are swarming the aisles, collecting supplies to either ride out the storm or prep their houses for evacuation. A low hum of anxiety is the thrumming undertone to the busy masses of people fighting over things on the shelves and it feels contagious.

They both have one of the pups in the child seat of two shopping carts, and Danny tries to ignore the barrage of instincts urging him to get himself and his pups the hell out of this place. A man with a loaded shopping cart nearly barrels into Danny and Sophie, and Steve steps in quickly to thrust the man’s cart away at the last moment.

Steve growls threateningly when the total stranger shouts a few swear words at Danny and Sophie. The deep resonating sound of the growl makes Sophie whimper, but it sends the rude man scuttling off to another side of the store. The alpha turns to Danny and sighs, watching the omega try to comfort their little girl. “Let’s hurry up and get what we need, so we can get out of here.”

The omega nods, trying to ignore the fact that his own claws are popped. After a moment, Sophie’s whimpers threaten to turn into tiny howls, and Danny quickly picks her up so she can bury her face in his neck where his scent is the strongest. The pups always do this when they're upset -- they start grabbing for Dannyy specifically, and the Omega guesses that makes sense. He is the one that carried them, so he ends up playing the mom role some of the time. Luckily, the detective loves his pups enough not to think too much into how this affects his gender identity.

“She’s okay, Cooper, we’re both fine,” Danny says pointedly, and Steve blinks realizing that Cooper is starting to sniffle too in confusion. Steve bites his lip, rubbing Coop's back comfortingly, because, christ, if they're not careful, they’re gonna end up chasing a lion cub through a crowded store.

A cashier breaks into nervous tears behind them somewhere, and Steve’s sensitive nose is almost overwhelmed by the stress hormones. His fangs unsheath in his mouth. “Come on,” he says sternly, pushing forward through a mass of irritable shoppers.

When Steve asks the omega to pick up a box of gel fuel cans, Danny hesitates. It weighs forty
pounds. Steve, holding a similar box, shoots him a look that plainly says ‘what are you waiting for?’

It's not a big deal to lift something once or twice, Danny tells himself. At least, he hopes.

He stoops over to pick up the box, clenching his jaw as he tries to force the swelling wave of anxiety crashing on his thoughts. It's not a big deal because admitting it's a big deal, as he turns to corner into the cereal aisle, would require him to process the fact that he’s…

No.

Just no. Not now.

The Omega tries to distract himself, staring at cereals.

Luckily, or unluckily, Cooper blindsides them both with a question, staring down the aisle at a woman holding a baby as she piles powdered rice cereal and baby formula into a cart. The father appears from around a corner, holding what looks like six flashlights and a box of candles. He’s sporting a serious expression while his wife starts to bounces their young baby gently, patting it's back. It’s then that Cooper asks the question they've been dreading for two years.

"Why don't we have a mommy?" Their toddler son asks loudly, and the entire other family looks up to stare at him and Steve. Yes, even the baby tries to turn its head -- like it knows the gravity of the question.

"Sophie, well, every family is different," Danny begins, awkwardly trying to explain familial dynamics while picking out a breakfast cereal. They need something that is neither completely made of sugary cardboard nor as healthy as the always disappointing, cat litter gravel known as 'Grape Nuts.' Furthermore, what the fuck even is a grape nut? "Some families have one Mommy and one Daddy, other families, like Sasha and Taylor, have two Mommies. You have two Daddies."

Sophie pipes in now. "But Jeffwey says it takes a Mommy and a Daddy to have a baby."

Well, Jeffrey is an ignorant little snot then, isn't he, Danny quips silently in his head as he tries to think of an adequate response.

Steve clenches his jaw, because he can probably feel Danny stiffen next to him as the family awkwardly passes by them, hurrying out of sympathetic politeness.

Somewhere, in their vicinity, another cashier bursts into tears, wailing out a slow and low Beta sob.

They need to get out of here, but they can't just leave the question hanging in the air.

Steve steps up to answer instead. "Well, honey bunny, that's usually right but --" Suddenly, Danny puts a hand on his shoulder and the Alpha looks up to the detective shaking his head. "What?"

The Omega leers a glance toward the nearest end of the now empty aisle, and the two men walk a few feet away, just out of earshot of the two pups. With a glance toward Sophie and Cooper first,
Danny then rounds on his taller mate. "Steven, don't tell them about male Omegas yet, the kids are only two! You're gonna confuse the hell out of them."

The Alpha frowns, holding up his hands to placate his mate, and drops his voice to a low whisper. "Danny, we have to tell them or they're gonna think they're adopted."

"They're gonna ask me ten thousand questions, and tell everyone within a five mile radius what I am!" Danny snaps, crossing his arms. "They know you're their Dad, and they know I'm their Daddy. They don't need to know that I carried them, or that I can even get pregnant."

"What if you do get pregnant?" Steve retorts, lowering his voice. "If we don't tell them now, it's gonna confuse the hell out of them when we decide to have another pup!"

Danny blinks at him. "Excuse me? Woah. No. This is not the place to talk about that!"

Steve crosses his arms, eyes hard. "There's never gonna be a good place, Danny, or a good time to talk about this -- not with you!"

Danny raises his brows, clenching his teeth together to hiss out in frustration. "Anywhere but here would be a good place, Steven, hell we could talk about this during our next meth lab raid and it would STILL be a better place to talk about it than a crowded fucking grocery store full of angry fucking people before the largest scale evacuation that the country has ever mandated!"

Steve leans in closer to Danny's face, and fuck their height difference is so excruciatingly apparent when they argue, especially when Steve uses his height to assert dominance over him. "Then you agree that we need to talk about this."

Danny runs his tongue over his lower lip, looking away awkwardly in submission. "Yes. Okay? I get it. But I just need -- like -- one more day. Just one more. To think about all of this."

Steve shakes his head, growling under his breath and turns his back on the Omega, shoulders tense, to grab one of the carts. "Danny, I have always wanted a big family," Steve sighs.

Danny runs his tongue over his lower lip, looking away awkwardly in submission. "Yes. Okay? I get it. But I just need -- like -- one more day. Just one more. To think about all of this."

Steve shakes his head, growling under his breath and turns his back on the Omega, shoulders tense, to grab one of the carts. "Danny, I have always wanted a big family," Steve sighs.

Danny runs a hand back over his hair, feeling hot guilt flushing his face with a blush. "I get that, Steven. I do. And part of me does, too," he mutters. "But it's different for me. It's a lot to get used to when you have to actually make the pup yourself and carry it around in your own stomach like a defenseless little seahorse!" He hisses the last part under his breath and Steve exhales, rolling his eyes up slowly toward the ceiling.

After a long afternoon of inspecting the foundation of their home for weaknesses, and compiling all of their tools and supplies and plywood that they're going to need to board up the windows, Danny and Steve start to go through the fridge, throwing out leftovers and perishable items.

Steve then spends most of the evening on the phone with his mother, Doris, going over their plan for her and Joe White to take the pups to the mainland in two days, and Danny spends his evening compiling canned food into boxes to take to headquarters.

Later that night, after laying in bed mulling over their argument at the store, and wishing that Steve
were curled around him instead of turned away from him, Danny has a dream that night that he is actually a seahorse.

**He’s going over a case with Steve when suddenly he shrinks down in his chair, and he’s alarmed to discover that he can't breathe.**

**Danny tries to raise his arms up to grab at his own neck, only to find that he has no arms.**

**When he screams, all that comes out is a rush of air -- from his neck.**

**He looks down at his legs and sees one long scaly curve under a huge distended pouch.**

**He's a seahorse.**

**Looking up at Steve’s stunned expression with panicked eyes, he's grateful but a little frightened when Steve lunges forward to grab at him, gently carrying him with two hands.**

**Cradled in his giant mate’s palms, Danny gasps and starts to go light headed until Steve splashes him into a clear vase of water. He takes a few huge breaths of water, which, Christ almighty, is a weird sensation but at least he's no longer choking.**

**Steve’s hand reaches in curiously, poking gently at his belly which, now that he can breathe, Danny can tell is full with thousands of baby sea horses fighting for room in his pouch.**

**He feels bloated an uncomfortable, and as Danny looks down at the two-by-four sized finger rubbing at his swollen pouch, he feels himself starting to panic. In a rush of bubbles, he jets closer to Steve’s hand, trying to hide in the curve of his palm, and tucks his chin anxiously against Steve’s knuckle.**

**Steve is saying something -- has been saying something -- but Danny can't understand it. When the Alpha tries to pull back his hand, Danny wraps his little tail around it one of his fingers, tightening his grip.**

**Danny’s scared.**

**Steve makes a heartbroken face and leaves his hand in the water, sighing, and carries the vase with him to go talk to Chin.**

**The look that the Asian man gives Steve is enough to make it clear that he thinks Steve has finally gone completely nuts.**

**Steve talks to him for a minute, voice deep and tense and rushed, and the Seal points to Danny a few**
times. Chin walks closer, gawking incredulously, and Danny hides behind Steve’s hand again.

He starts to pant in distress and Steve starts to rub his back with the pad of his thumb, trying to calm him down.

He then feels an intense, excruciating bolt of pain in his abdomen. Danny lets go of Steve and folds over his belly, frantically darting around the vase until he smacks his snout into the glass.

His mouth gives a small trickle of blood, staining the water red in a wispy curl around his face.

Steve looks like he’s panicking again as Danny writhes in pain. Kono and Jerry run into the room excitedly and suddenly the two of them have pulled out their camera phones to video him presumably going into labor.

Danny shakes his head in distress, not wanting an audience, and he tries to stop pushing but he can’t.

Chin is smiling down at him, pulling out his own camera and the lights of the flash on their phones are blinding him. He can’t see Steve anymore.

The first few babies are expelled from his pouch and Danny screams, pushing as hard as he can and he would be crying from the pain if it were possible.

Around him the camera’s flash, receding every so often to reveal a happy grin of one of his excited co-workers staring down at him like he’s adorable.

Danny wakes in a cold sweat, reaching down with both hands toward his stomach where he swears he feels a slight twinge of the pain from his dream.

“’S wrong?” Steve slurs groggily, reaching out to grab his mate’s shoulder.

“Nightmare,” Danny huffs, reaching up to run hands down his face with a silent prayer to the universe to cut him some slack. He’s covered in rivulets of sweat.

“What about?” Steve says, eyes glinting in the darkness like a cat. It's all Danny can see of his mate in the dark room.

“I turned into a fuckin' seahorse,” Danny mutters, flopping back to the pillow.

Steve gives one faint snort of laughter and muffles it, clearing his throat. “I guess all the talk about the serum is getting to you then.”
“Guess so.” Danny scoots in closer to nuzzle into Steve’s warm chest, and the Alpha wraps strong arms around him, pulling him tight and exhaling warm breath over the top of Danny’s head.

A beat of silence passes. “Were you pregnant? In the dream? You were a seahorse, after all…” A hand moves down to rub at his belly, and fuck Danny should have known Steve would use that as a segway into the talk.

Danny doesn’t answer, pretending to be asleep, but Steve still trails gentle fingertips over his smooth stomach affectionately. He doesn’t want to admit how good it feels when the action sends a strange calmness over him. It’s soothing, as if it's filling subtle cracks in his subconscious omega brain -- all the cracks split into him by instinctively adverse things like having to send his children away, or having his den under threat from the storm.

But still he doesn’t answer the question, letting it hang in the air above them like a ghost as he slowly falls back asleep.

Danny shuts the blinds to his office the next morning, taking a quick glance out of the room to be sure his alpha isn't lurking around the common area between all of the team’s offices.

Satisfied, he eases the door closed. Somehow Danny has evaded the talk all morning, and, so help him God, he needs to know exactly where he stands in this situation and what he's dealing with.

Once he’s back at his computer, he looks up the number for Dr. Alexei Taylor’s office at the new Omega Institute.

He gets a secretary, who tells him in a tone that reveals how boring the woman considers her job, that Dr. Alexei is preoccupied and that she must take a message.

When she hears his name, however, she exclaims a loud “Oh!” And he hears her chair squeak as she must be lurching forward. “Detective Williams, hold on, hold on. He said he's always available to talk to you -- I mean,” she giggles, “You're the one that got him this job after all…”

“Ah, technically,” Danny laughs warmly, trying to hide how nervous he is about what he has to ask.

“Just a moment sir,” she says cheerfully, and in a moment, Dr. Alexei’s devastatingly smooth voice answers the call.

They exchange pleasantries for moment, and it feels good to Danny that Dr. Alexei remembers him
so well and genuinely seems happy to hear from him. But the small talk inevitably circles around to the fact that he wasn't expecting Danny's call, and he's asking if everything's alright.

Danny hesitates, folding a paper clip in half with both hands, and he stares down at it, punishing it with his worried fingertips as he twists it over and over. "I ah… I was wondering if it's possible to get pregnant while taking birth control."

Dr. Alexei gives a slow "Hmmm," and the sound twists Danny's stomach uncomfortably. "The odds of that would be infinitesimally low, Detective. If that were to happen, I would be extremely surprised."

Danny nearly slides out of his chair in easy, liquid relief, feeling tension radiate instantly out of his shoulders.

But then the doctor continues.

"There is, however, the old classic issue with birth control and anti-biotics but everybody knows that," Dr. Alexei chuckles.

What? Danny freezes. He had been on antibiotics -- almost four months ago -- when he was bit by an attack dog during the meth lab raid. Steve had gently but thoroughly made it up to him in their shower that night for not smelling the dog when they had first arrived at the scene.

"So unless you were on antibiotics, which of course negate the effects of birth control, and you and your mate were intimate during that time, you have nothing to worry about, Detective."

Danny’s throat is closing -- it has to be. He can barely breathe, and he croaks out a 'thank you' in a hoarse voice, inventing a work related excuse, and ends the call. For a long minute that rests heavy on his shoulders, Danny looks around his office with new eyes, looking for any distraction to draw his thoughts away from what he's just figured out. But it's futile, and he places his face in his hands.

He can't deny it any longer.

There's a glaring possibility that he is for sure carrying again, and has been for the last four months.

Steve knocks on his door -- Danny can smell him -- and the omega quickly ducks his head, pretending to search through the filing cabinet by his left knee so Steve can't see how distressed he looks.

But the alpha still freezes in the doorway. "You alright, Danno? This office is full of distress."
Danny doesn’t look up. “What? I’m fine. Totally fine. Just looking for a file.” He can feel his mate’s eyes on him. “I’m distressed because I can’t find this damn file, that’s all, babe really.”

“You know, I was thinking, buddy... that it might be best,” Steve begins taking a deep breath as if he’s bracing himself, “If you go with the pups to the mainland.”

Danny whips his head up. “What?”

Steve looks away evasively, putting his hands in his pockets. “I’m just saying, Danny, the kids aren't exactly used to being away from us this long.”

Biting down hard on the inside of his lower lip, Danny realizes that he physically can't be away from Steve for three weeks, or he could miscarry again -- if he is actually carrying again.

“I'm not leaving you alone on this island, Steven,” Danny snaps and he sees the alpha roll his eyes. “God knows what kind of stupid shenanigans you would get into without my voice of reason--”


“Voice of REASON you schmuck,” Danny raises his voice just enough, “In your non-appreciative ears. The kids are going to have to get used to being apart from us some day anyway.” He waves up a hand like that should be obvious, but honestly, it’s going to upset Danny equally as much as the pups to send them off with their grandmother in the morning.

Steve is firing up the large, mainframe computer display in the conference room for the team when his mate walks in, drenched in sweat and distress.

Steve grits his jaw. His mate has been sporting the undertone of anxiety so long as Steve has known him, but this is different. There’s something brewing beneath Danny’s expressionless demeanor, like he’s a pot that’s slowly boiling over beneath the lid -- ready to erupt in a hiss of crackling steam the moment Steve looks away. Is it the storm that’s sending him over the edge? The fact that the pups are leaving? Or the fact that he wants Danny to carry at least one more pup?

Or all of the above?

Watching the rest of the team settle in around the conference table, the alpha decides not to bring it up; not here. But it makes his stomach clench uneasily to consider that something is hurting his omega -- at least mentally -- and he won't open up to Steve to let him fix it. The thought is toxic to his alpha brain and it jars his thrumming undertone confidence off it’s beat.
His mate barely looks up during the first half of the meeting as they discuss the evacuation procedures.

A buzz on his hip startles Steve, and when he see who’s calling, the alpha looks up at his team. “I've got to take this -- excuse me.”

He pauses on a screen, walking out of the room as a black silhouette against the blue grey glow of the mainframe screen.

His mate’s eyes finally flick up, and Steve can see his mate’s gaze lingering on him as he steps just outside the door.

“McGarrett,” he says sternly into his phone.

“There’s been another break in at the zoo,” the Governor explains gruffly.

“What animal this time?” Steve says with a frown. His mate has gingerly walked out of the room to eavesdrop, and the omega looks worried.

“I'm not sure. They didn't say. But I need you and your partner down there to check it out -- HPD has the scene. I just want you to keep abreast of this thing as it unfolds because I think, as I said earlier, that it’s related to the shifting serum.”

Steve catches himself nodding and realizes the Governor can't see him. Danny is standing beside him, and rubs a hand up his back slowly, rubbing in a patient, affectionate circle. The alpha is ashamed to admit how good it feels to be touched by him and he leans back against Danny’s warm hand. It feels like at least something is right and normal finally; Danny’s been so distant for the last two weeks. Hell, the last time they had attempted to be intimate, Steve had blurted out the wrong thing during sex and had gotten two black eyes from an elbow to the nose.

Omegas were supposed to be the ones that got touch starved -- not alphas. Right? Is it wrong that Steve wants to slowly curl around Danny and hold him -- be held -- for just a minute or two?

“McGarrett,” the Governor barks in his ear.

Steve stiffens, frowning as Danny’s hand edges away from his back. “Yes Sir?”

The man on the line sighs because it's obvious that Steve has missed everything thing in the last two minutes of the conversation. “Just go check out the zoo thing, Commander.”
"Yes sir, on our way in t-minus two minutes."

"Thank you. Report back this afternoon," the Governor replies, hanging up. The alpha shoves his phone back into his pocket and glances back at Danny; "Gear up."

"Hey hey -- if it isn’t Papa Bear and Mama Bear,” a loud voice calls out to Steve and his mate in the zoo parking lot. Steve breaks out into a large grin.

“They let you two fools work together?” Steve calls back with a wry grin. It’s the Bosco brothers. “I oughta’ arrest whoever made that decision.”

He glances down at his mate, expecting to see the omega at least cracking a smile, but the omega is in a weird mood again. The small blonde lets out an annoyed huff beside him as the two huge alphas start to walk over to meet them and, presumably, brief them about the break-in.

The Bosco brothers were two twin alphas. Fresh out of the academy, the brothers hadn’t excelled academically, but had made top marks in their execution of field tactics -- and they had made quite an impression on the governor during an EOS ring raid while Danny and Steve had been on paternity leave. The two brothers, Brandon and Landon, were both broad and tan, of mixed race, and had wide, perfect smiles. They also had the gorgeous golden brown shade of wildly curly hair that only bi-racial people were blessed enough to have, and they filled out their uniforms with pride and an excess of testosterone.

“Christ, not again,” Danny mutters, freezing as he tries to hold up his hands as if he’s going to delineate the invisible boundaries of his own personal space. The brothers, however, are already swooping in to give the omega a tag teamed bear hug.

“How’s our favorite detective?” They croon jokingly and Danny hisses in response from between them.

Steve laughs, walking ahead as Danny starts to swear shamelessly. He always claims that the Bosco brothers bother him to no end, insisting that they were two bulls in the China shop of life. ‘They could break something in a padded, empty room if you gave them the chance -- I don't know how, but they would find a way!’ Danny used to yell, hands waving wildly. But Danny was always secretly paternal to the two young and oversized rookies, putting up with them like one would tolerate two massive and less than mentally acute Saint Bernard puppies. He also constantly tried to get them to sleep regularly or eat actual meals whenever he caught them in the bullpen at midnight.
with Taco Bell. ‘At least eat Chipotle instead -- you’ve gotta know with at least some confidence what kind of animal the meat comes from.’

“Put me down you belligerent idiots,” Danny protested behind him, voice flat and unamused. Steve wasn't worried. Though they were both about 6’6,” the two alphas were so young -- about nineteen or twenty -- and they were hardly a threat to Steve’s rank and dominance. Besides, they were always careful with their favorite omega.

“Boys, tell me what I’m walking into,” he says loudly, walking toward the gate to the zoo entrance. There’s a web of crime tape zig zagging across the parking lot and tied off to the trees like overzealous party crepe streamers flailing in the wind. “And I see someone got a little trigger happy with the tape.”

“Landon, I told you it was too much,” Brandon muttered under his breath. They had to know Steve would hear it, however, as a fellow alpha with heightened senses.

“Sorry about that Commander McGarrett,” Landon bounded forward, landing next to him all adrenaline and sinewy, toned muscle. It wasn't often that Steve had to look up at anyone. “The assailants targeted the elephants this time.”

Danny appeared next to Steve, a bit disheveled as he frustratedly smoothed back his wavy blonde hair with so much force that one would believe it had tried to escape his scalp. “Elephants. Great. If someone changes into one of those, how are we supposed to fight that off?”

“And the zoo has been shut down all morning?”

“The security system is tripped to slam the gates shut at all perimeter exits,” Brandon explains. “Some kinda last resort if anyone tries to actually ‘free all of the animals from the zoo.’”

“And you two Neanderthals have been guarding the main gates since the alarm tipped off the police?” Danny asks, having to take long strides beside him to keep up with them.

“Yes sir, two officers at every gate -- there’s three,” Brandon nods.

Steve frowns. “So do we think the culprit is still on the premises?”

Landon tilts his head, sighing. “We thought so -- no scent for the dogs to trail through the land outside the gates and no camera footage of any kind of get away car. But we’ve searched the entire zoo -- it’s like whoever it was just vanished.”

“How does a thief disappear?” Danny mutters, hovering his hand over his gun as they enter the park.
“He doesn't,” Steve says lowly, voice edging on wary.

In from of them, a giant sun faded, plastic sloth is leaning from a lamp post, holding an equally faded bunch of plastic balloons on wired stems. His bandana says “Slothy the Sloth” but the ensemble as a whole says “cannot compete with x-box and iPhones.”

“Huh,” Steve frowns, looking around. It has the stale aura of a ghost town.

“Looks like this place isn't too financially secure -- I can see three benches that need repair and I just walked in,” Danny surmises, sharing a glance with Steve.

“Sure isn't what it used to be, that’s for sure. They brought in some Black rhinos to try and up the tourism angle, and it’s been helping a bit, I heard…” Landon trails off and frowns at Slothy sadly before turning back to his brother. They share a glance.

“Alright, guys, we’re gonna get back to the lot. Turn left at the Lemurs and you’ll run into the rest of the crew at the elephant enclosure,” Brandon says, reaching out one last time to flick Danny in the arm but the Detective flicks his claws out, swiping toward the young Alpha -- and probably misses on purpose.

“Don't make me shoot one of you,” Danny mutters with a deadpan expression, pointing a claw at both of them as they grin and part ways. “Idiots,” Danny whispers, but the edges of his lips are turned up in a fond smile.

“They love you,” Steve chuckles.

“I'm an omega. All alphas love me,” Danny mumbles. “They're just too young to know that that’s all it is.”

Steve shrugs, glancing around at the deserted Zoo. He knew that zoos were becoming less and less popular with animal activism on the rise. Danny always says that he sees these things as more of a prison for animals, but, to Steve, the Honolulu Zoo is a chance for some of the locals to see wildlife that isn’t indigenous to the islands. It teaches environmental activism and animal advocacy; it’s disheartening to see that opportunity fading away like Slothy the Sloth and his muted balloons.

A few lemurs start a choir of warning ‘whoops,’ gliding effortlessly through the trees. When Steve nears the exhibit grinning curiously, however, the animals crouch back from the fence in fear.

Danny blinks. “Well you certainly do not have a way with lemurs…” The animals are shrieking in fear, baring their teeth at Steve but, oddly, ignore Danny.
The alpha frowns and starts to walk away quickly, turning left at the wide fork in the brick path toward the elephant enclosure. “What the hell do you think got into them?” Danny asks, trying to keep up with him.

“I’m an alpha,” Steve says, just loud enough for Danny to hear him over the still panicked lemurs. “I smell like a predator or maybe even a lion to them, I guess.”

His mate frowns at how solemn Steve’s expression has become and sighs, patting him on the back. “What do they know, huh? Bunch of dumb lemurs. They probably eat their own feces when they’re bored.”

Steve huffs a faint laugh. “Probably.”

Danny is silent for a beat. “The Bosco brothers probably do the same thing actually.”

When they arrive at the Elephant enclosure, Steve is careful to stay back and avoid making eye contact with the animals. The zookeepers are crowded around the large bull of the group, trying to lure him into a containment cell. One of his husks, Steve notices, is bloodied.

“You think the thief spilled some of the blood they were stealing?” Danny raises his brows, leaning back a bit to glance up at Steve’s face.

The alpha purses his lips. “That blood smells human. I’m thinking the elephant must have injured the thief.”

“If that’s true,” Danny places his hands in his pockets and sighs, “Then maybe the thief grabbed the bloody tusk as it injured him. There might be a print drying in the blood.”

Steve raises his brow. “Yeah well good luck trying to get a print off of three tons of pissed off elephant; maybe they can tranquilizer it. I’m gonna go call Kono and ask her to check every ER on the island for a puncture injury that might have come in last night.”

“Alright,” Danny nods, crossing his arms as he watches the crew try to wrangle the huge animal.

Steve has barely walked more than four feet away when he stops. He hears something that sounds like thunder, but, looking up towards the expanse of blue above him, Steve realizes that there isn’t a single cloud casting shade over the island today.

“Danny,” he says lowly, voice becoming a hushed growl. Something is happening.

The omega is edging toward him, reaching for his gun. “What is that?” The ground is starting to
shake. “Is that a fucking earthquake?”

The Elephant rears up suddenly, backing away and thrashing his huge head back and forth.

The Bosco brothers suddenly come sprinting around the corner of the path; “RUN!”

Steve reaches to pull out his gun, but quickly realizes that even if he could shoot at what’s hurtling toward them -- it wouldn't help.

It’s three full grown, rhinoceroses, loose from their cages and charging toward the crew -- heads lowered and horns jutting out purposefully. “Holy--” he turns to face his mate, fangs popped and roars at him; “Run!”

Danny looks up at him with panicked eyes and they both bolt, running in separate directions when the path forks to at least try to split the group. He hears the forensics table of evidence splintering under the weight of the beasts as he sprints. He spies an old broken bench and jumps up onto it, using his alpha strength to propel him upwards to swing on a side post and then suddenly -- like a cat -- he’s on his feet on the roof of a souvenir shop and the rhinos are thundering past him below.

But there’s still one left -- one that would have followed Danny and the crew down the other path. Steve leaps down, breaking the old bench with his weight as he lands and he takes off at a run. He feels the lion under his skin snarling in a furious urge to change. But a lion is a natural predator to a rhino, and if these things were captured in the wild, it may only set the beast off more to see a lion running after it.

His mate lets out a howl that grates painfully over his Alpha brain as he runs, following a trail of destruction and shattered cement statues to a resin baobab tree near the entrance to the Ecosystems of Africa exhibit.

There, on the lowest branch of the tree, about ten feet off the ground, is Danny, panting with one clawed hand over his chest. They share a glance and Steve cracks a smile. In response, Danny flips him off.

“Was anybody injured?” Steve says, seeing Landon and Brandon jogging toward them.

They both shake their heads. “No,” Brandon pants, placing his hands on his knees to catch his breath. “Zookeepers went around toward the front gate with trans darts. Said the enclosure doors were busted in. Holy f--”

“No one’s hurt,” Landon repeats, wiping sweat off his brow, “But look.” Steve follows one tan, almost too long arm to Landon’s hand that’s pointing toward the elephant enclosure.
Steve rolls his eyes, growling for a second in anger. “The elephant ran into the water, Danny; the blood’s gonna be all gone.”

“That couldn't have been an accident,” Brandon says between huffs.

“I don't think the thief ever left Danny is silent and his distress starts to catch up with him, permeating from the life size Baobob tree.

Landon and Brandon wince, growling in pain and taper off into two twin whines. “God -- what is that -- my brain feels like it's being dissolved in acid Christ almighty!”

Steve bites his lip; the distress is a bit worse than he remembers, but the twins still clearly need to go through some sub-gender etiquette training. “Guys just give him some space, he needs a minute. We both had a pretty close call.”

“Close call?” Danny snaps. “The call came close and then chased me up a damned tree. If I wanted to get trampled by huge smelly animals I could just go Black Friday shopping at Walmart.”

“Danny, just -- just breathe or something.” He ushers the young rookies back toward the crew that's trying to regather the equipment at the elephant exhibit. And yeah, as Steve catches another whiff of Danny’s distress pheromones, he has to grit his teeth to keep from twisting up in pain himself. It hasn't been this bad since Danny was carrying pups, and, had the omega not taken two tests already, Steve would be convinced his mate was pregnant again.

“You and your mate alright?” Pamela Logan asks, she’s just gotten to the scene. “I passed two tranquilizer rhinos on the way in. Looks like I missed the party…”

Steve’s brows shoot up in a brief acknowledgment as he nods, hands on his hips. “It was a blast.”

“Oodles of fun,” Danny mutters in the tree behind him, but only the alpha can hear it.

Pam looks around at the damage silently, grimacing. He hasn't worked with Pam since before Danny arrived on scene, but she was always a level headed beta with good instincts for investigating. She has sun bleached blonde hair tried back in a rough ponytail a red pen behind one ear from the office. Steve thinks to himself for a moment that she probably doesn't even remember that it’s there, and then another thought catches his attention.

“Wait, wait. You said there were two rhinos?” Steve asks, narrowing his eyes in confusion. He hears Danny shuffling in the tree behind him, finally calming down. “Danny, stay in the tree.”

“Because there’s another rhino still loose apparently—”

“Steve,” Pam points to a poster on the side of the souvenir shop. “There are only two rhinos in the zoo -- a male and a female. Everyone knows that -- they’re a big attraction here.”

Steve looks over at the poster, and, just as Pam had explained, there are only two rhinos on the poster.

COME SEE FARAJI AND MIREMBE, THE BLACK RHINOCEROSSES OF HONOLULU ZOO! ONLY TEN LIVING IN CAPTIVITY IN THE WORLD.

“So I’m guessing there aren’t any of those unaccounted for in Hawaii,” Danny grumbles, looking at the sign. “Which means one of the thieves can already shift.”

Steve nods, crossing his arms. “And it means there was probably a second thief. One that could shift into something that could fly in over the gate to unlock the doors for the other.”

Pam purses her lips together, huffing a breath out across her lower lip after a long moment. “Looks like we’ve got some kind of organized group working this job, and, potentially working together to go after the serum too.”

Danny slides down the wide trunk of the tree next to him, disheveled and annoyed. “Well, at least we know they’re coming for it. It’s not going to catch us off guard.”

“Yeah well, it’s gonna be hard to be on guard during the storm of the century.” Steve grits his jaw, looking up at the clear sky and noticing finally a few grey clouds in the distance. The first tendrils of the storm would reach them soon, and it wasn't the only troubling thing on the horizon anymore.

Danny knows he’s being suspiciously quiet on the way home from HQ. Steve is trying to explain what new security protocols the zoo is going implement, but Danny is only half listening.

Because he did something dangerous today.

Not just, ‘ill-advised,’ or ‘not preferable’ for an omega to do while carrying, but something dangerous and borderline deadly. And even if the rhinos hadn't been let loose -- or been busted out and instigated into a stampede by a shifting alpha -- would Danny have actually tried to get closer to a pissed off elephant to catch a print off it’s tusk with a piece of print-lift tape? While carrying a pup? What kind of omega would that make him? Endangering a pup goes against the grain of his
biological identity. What excuse could he have possibly given for shying away from his usual agenda of stunts as Steve McGarrett’s partner and mate?

This is becoming a serious liability, Danny realizes with a sigh.

The timing of the trip to the ER for the dog bite and the antibiotics that followed puts him at about four months along. The last of his chest hair is falling out slowly, drifting down to circle around the shower drain that Danny blocks with a wet washcloth lest the drain clog. He’s craving things -- venison of all things -- and his mouth waters just thinking about the summer sausage he used to buy from a German deli a few blocks from his home in Jersey. The spicy sweet taste. The soft give of the meat as his fangs popped the flexible casing.

Steve looks over at him, leaning in to inhale near his neck and Danny tries to swat him away. “Jesus, Danno, if you’re that hungry we can stop somewhere. I mean -- you gonna make it or are you gonna start eating the leather dashboard?”

“I am getting sort of hungry,” Danny shifts uncomfortably in his seat.

Steve scoffs, “Sort of hungry. I can smell you from here, you’re starving. I’m stopping at Fat Sal’s.”

Steve pulls a u-turn, veering the car around and lurching him uncomfortably against his seatbelt from centripetal force of the turn. He grimaces, tugging at his waistband; Danny’s pants are too tight, but if he breaks out the paternity clothing Steve might notice. The dress pants and jeans with a slightly elastic, soft band, and a few Henley tees and button downs with more fabric in the abdominal area had been silently hung in Danny’s side of the closet when the omega was last carrying (and nothing was said about it; nothing had to be said). Now the paternity clothes were in the basement, boxed up in a corner near the nest bed. He could go salvage a few pairs of slacks while Steve was in the shower tonight.

Fuck fuck fuck.

He frowns, setting his jaw as he stares at the blur of green on the side of the highway. The speed of the Camaro gives him tunnel vision, blurring everything around him and leaving Danny instead at the mercy of thoughts he can't shake.

On the way home, after ordering way too much food, they pass two people on different street corners holding signs that say “the ocean will cleanse Hawaii of sinners” and the ever popular “Repent! The end is nigh!”

Steve shovels three French fries into his mouth with salty fingertips, all at awkward angles so that it looks like he’s eaten some kind of fried-potato-legged spider with its legs all hanging out, and the alpha just huffs a laugh, shaking his head. “You think they’d come up with something new, like ‘the end is significantly closer than usual’ or ‘the end cometh and so doth thy mom.’”
Danny gives a faint, half-enthused chuckle and a forced grin. He just wants to go home and cuddle his two pups for the last night he’ll see them for three weeks. He makes it all the way upstairs to take off his belt and tie before sliding down the outside of their closet door. Danny slumps into a heap on the carpet, wiping furiously at his watering eyes, and Steve has to sit with him for twenty minutes, licking his neck quietly before Danny feels composed enough to go read the pups a bedtime story. Steve is kind enough not to force him into having the talk that night, and so, for his own nerves sake, when he wakes in the middle of the early morning, around four AM, he lies and tells his mate that he forgot to buy Pull Ups -- for the pups’ long plane ride, just in case -- and heads to the twenty-four hour convenience store. If he is pregnant, he needs to tell Steve soon. Which means he needs to know, now.

He buys a pregnancy test and two more brands of scent blocking deodorant, extra strength.

At five AM, when Steve hops into the shower, Danny uses the guest bathroom to take the test, peeing into a ziplock bag of all things, to dip the three digital tests into his urine, because Christ the things just weren't made for males.

He hears the water in their master bathroom overhead stop running, and, after all three tests clearly say “PREGNANT” Danny tries not to look like he wants to vomit as he passes Steve on the stairs.

“Doris is arriving tonight for the pups,” Steve explains, yawning on his way down to start breakfast.

Danny nods dumbly. “Yeah.”

He showers mechanically, dulling his sharp mind into the soothing familiarity of his bathing routine.

Soap.

Water.

Shampoo.

Water.

Conditioner.

Water.

Cry.
Water.

Towel off.

Chapter End Notes

Give me a shout out if you like this installment, y'all! It'll brighten my day -- which will undoubtedly be a cold, grey abyss of legal vernacular and statutes.
Chapter Seven

Chapter Notes

Excuse me for the typos y'all! I'll be proof reading tomorrow morning. And I think I said the last chapter was the last before exams, but I just had to get this scene written!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Danny is trying to remain calm as he says goodbye to the pups on Friday night, politely smiling while Doris and Joe greet Sophie and Cooper. Sophie is hugging one of his legs shyly, holding her stuffed elephant (Mr. Peanut) as she stares up at Doris.

He knows that Doris's scent isn't new to Sophie, but it isn't as familiar as Joe's. Cooper has flung himself at Joe, knocking over his small red, yellow, and blue suitcase and Danny's pretty sure he hasn't fully grasped the concept that Joe isn't just here to babysit. Sophie's suitcase has Anna and Elsa on it from Frozen, but she's never had to use it before, and -- unfortunately -- she seems to slightly understand what's going on.

"It's okay sweetheart," Danny whispers softly, but his own voice seems a little unsure about the situation. Worse, though, is his distress scent that Sophie is starting to mirror.

"I see Dad and Daddy tomorrow?" Sophie mumbles, clenching her hands onto the fabric of his jeans and staring up at him.

"Soph, baby," Steve starts as he kneels down, "You and your brother are going on a super fun vacation with Gramma Doris and Uncle Joe for a while. Doesn't that sound cool?"

Eyes watering, Sophie turns to stare up at Danny again. "Daddy come with me?"

Danny feels his own eyes starting to steam up. He knows his hormones are a little bit off because he's carrying again, but no one else knows that, so he's got to keep it together.

"Baby girl, Dad and I are staying here while you go on your fun trip," he says softly. But dammit he's never spent this long away from his babies before and the thought of not being able to inhale their soft, sweet scent while he hugs and kisses them good night is starting to cause physical discomfort in his chest.

Sophie sees a tear roll down his cheek, and that is it.

She lets loose a tiny howl and all three of the alphas gasp in pain, covering their ears. Steve actually growls involuntarily, and the sound only scares Sophie, making her cry and howl again, clutching Danny's legs. By this time, Cooper has started to reflect his sister's distress and he starts to whimper and whine, running to Danny too.
And then they start shrieking; it's the terrible-twos tantrum shriek that can induce a migraine instantly with its volume and intensity.

Danny gives a low whine, clenching his eyes shut as the pups clutch onto his legs. "Just take them; I can't do this -- it's only going to get worse. They'll settle down in a few minutes once we're out of sight!"

They cry harder as Joe and Doris scoop them up, and then the pups let loose the most pitiful baby whines and howls that they haven't made in almost two years. It's a sound of pure terror and desperation, mean to appeal to their parents for protection in dangerous situations.

It's the worst sound they can make.

Steve covers his ears, hissing in pain, and Danny slams back against the wall at the rush of vicious instincts he suddenly feels coursing through him and the movement, rattles a framed shadow box of Steve’s Navy Seal medals. “Aargh!” Danny grunts in distress, instantly popping his claws and fangs.

Steve finally manages to stand up straight and rushes to open the door, gesturing for them to move quickly.

At the scent and sound of Danny's distress, both Joe White and Doris have bristled visibly, trying to hurry out of the front door with the two pups and their small suitcases before Danny starts to howl. The two toddlers only start to sob harder, crying out specifically for their male mother now.

“God, that sound,” Danny hisses. “They haven't done this since the compound!” He tries to say something else but can only whine in a while ago but he can only whine in pain.

“What’s wrong with him?” Joe yells over the howling pups, standing between Danny and the kids.

"Danny!” Steve leans to place a hand on his shoulder in concern, but the omega turns and snaps viciously at his hand, eyes blown black.

“Oh holy hell, he’s going feral!” Joe growls; “Doris, take the kids and get in the car -- I’ll hold him off.”

The omega hisses low at Doris and Joe, baring his teeth, and starts to make a lunge for the two strange alphas holding his babies.

Steve slams into him and pins him against the wall. “Danny, no!” Steve yells, struggling to hold his mate back.

Danny starts snarling furiously, snapping his teeth at anything he can reach as he tries to claw toward the pups.
Doris shuffles them into the car.

At the sound of the car doors shutting, the omega desperately shoves Steve back and springs for the open front door. Joe manages to grab him from behind, putting him in a headlock. Danny howls for Steve, broken and panicked sounding, and the noise sends a bolt of pain through Steve's alpha half.

"Knock him out, McGarrett!" Joe yells desperately as Danny starts to claw at his arm, mangling his blue dress shirt to bloody shreds.

"Joe, he’s my mate," Steve hisses in reply, looking up to glare at the senior officer.

"Then knock him out and catch him before he hits the ground," Joe snaps, trying to pull away, and Steve snarls at him involuntarily at the suggestion.

"No, Joe...I’ve almost-- almost --" Steve grits his teeth, wrenching his arms into the twisted bloody briar that is Joe and Danny’s arms. He starts to twist his hand up, reaching for the back of Danny’s neck and trying to grip him. Finally, finally, the alpha gets his hand onto the back of Danny’s neck. "There," he sighs.

The omega goes limp, panting in distress.

Joe frowns, exhaling in relief. “God damn he’s a feisty little son of a bitch. Best take him up to his nest then, son, y’all are in for a rough night.”

Steve nods, exhaling a long breath as he looks down at Joe’s scratched up arm. “Do you need me to wrap that?”

Waving him off, the older alpha shakes his head. “He needs you. I’ll be fine -- I’ve survived worse.” He looks down at Danny. “Well I’m sorry, Danno. If I’d known the kids could do that to you, I’d a’ done this differently, that’s for sure.”

Danny bares his teeth, hissing at the alpha.

Steve frowns and gives him a rough shake at the back of his neck. “Danny, stop.”

Joe nods and meets Steve’s eyes. “You stay safe, then. Don’t go being a hero -- hurricanes don’t care if you’ve got a badge or not. They are indiscriminately dangerous all around.”

“Well, so am I,” Steve gives a faint chuckle. “Take good care of my pups, Joe. Call when you land.”
“Will do,” Joe nods again, stepping out of the door toward the car. Doris looks disheveled, holding a squirming lion cub that’s gnawing at her seat belt shoulder strap as Sophie gives tiny omega howls in the back seat. “Would you look at that,” Joe laughs. “This should be an interesting flight.”

Steve smirks as he shuts the door, but blinks in surprise as Danny’s scent signature instantly changes to the sour scent of devastation and heartbreak. The alpha purses his lips, starting to march the omega up the stairs, letting go of his neck and rubbing his back. “It’s okay, babe. They’re safer on the mainland…”

Danny only lets out a low whine under his breath, and his eyes stay black for the next hour as Steve holds him against his bare chest in the nest. As the heartbroken omega clutches him back, he digs his nails into Steve’s back, making lonesome vocalisations of distress under his breath that the alpha can barely hear. The claws sting, but Steve can’t bear to disturb his mate as he finally starts to calm down. He reaches instead to rub a palm over Danny’s back, sliding his thumb back and forth over the skin as an affectionate and soothing gesture. After a few minutes, the omega looks up sleepily from Steve’s chest, like the night is coming back to him. He glances at the clock, checking to see how long he was feral.

“Well that was... embarrassing,” Danny sighs, rubbing at his eyes.

The alpha cocks his head. “I think any father in your position would have reacted the same way.”

Danny’s eyes a hard as he looks down. “You mean any Omega male mother in my position?”

Steve glances away, fighting the urge to roll his eyes, and tours his gaze around the room before looking back at Danny. “Danny, we’ve talked about this -- you’re their father. Same as me.”

Danny flicks his eyes up, shooting Steve a look like he knows that alpha is only saying that to placate him. But he appreciates it all the same.

“You okay to help me make sandbags on the beach today?” Steve murmurs, frowning.

Nodding slowly, the omega moves to stand up. “I have to wash all of this blood off my fingernails first. But yeah, I’d rather just keep busy this weekend, if you know what I mean.”

“I get that,” Steve says, watching his mate wiping at his eyes with the back of his wrists. They knew it would be hard for Danny when Doris and Joe showed up to take the kids, but neither of them knew it would be this bad.
He texts everyone at work the following Monday.

“From: Steve McGarrett
To: Group text >> Kono K, Jerry, Chin Ho, Max

No one mention the pups today, please.
My mother and Joe left with them for the mainland on Friday,
and it’s been especially rough on Danny.”

As Danny dresses for work, the alpha waits for replies to roll in.

FROM Kono K:
Awwww, nooo! Poor guy :(

FROM Chin Ho:
Sorry to hear that, brah. Of course.

FROM Jerry:
Not a peep from me about the you-know-whats

FROM Max:
That is unfortunate, Commander. My best wishes to his emotional wellbeing.
“Hey, brah, we sent you up with a seat cushion and a thermos of Starbucks coffee -- that's practically a five star tree,” Chin’s voice retorts playfully.

“Yeah well this tree better not have Yelp or it’s getting ripped a new one,” Danny sets the radio down, trying to adjust the old seat cushion in the bowl of the tree. It is futile, and he knows it.

At least he was able to sneak a pair of the paternity pants up from the basement, he thinks, tugging on the slightly stretchy waist band. He could have been stuck up in a fake tree all night in tight pants, which is infinitely worse on the sliding scale of “spending the night in a fake tree while your mate is the bait for a bunch of animal blood thieves.”

It was Steve’s idea, this plan. Steve is currently in the lion enclosure (without any other lions), shifted, and waiting to see if anyone comes to try and steal his blood.

At which point, Danny can imagine, the thief will be very surprised to see Steve telling them to ‘FREEZE!’ in place of a lion.

Kono and Chin are in a surveillance van parked in the back of the zoo parking lot, with a fake logo on the side for a made up plumbing service. Danny bites his lip, fighting the urge to say again that this is a stupid idea.

The real reason he detests this plan, he concedes, might have less to do with the tree and more to do with his omega instincts starting to overcome him. He told himself after he took the pregnancy tests that he would abstain for doing more dangerous shit.

Yet, here he is.

In the Baobob.

Again.

xxxxxxxxxx

At three in the morning, Danny is fighting the urge to sleep by trying to come up with baby names. He has a list of boy names and a list of girl names, and he’s trying to avoid drinking the coffee because it has caffeine in it.

Steve, however, is lounging in a soft patch of grass. Danny watches him for a second and grumbles a few choice words angrily under his breath. “Of course he gets to sleep all night.”
“How are ya holdin’ up, Danny?” Chin’s voice startles him so badly that he pops his claws involuntarily.

“Jeeze, chin,” Danny exhales, a hand on his chest. “I just lost at least three years off my life.”

“Sorry, brah,” he laughs over the com unit. “Kono and I have played six games of Words with Friends in here. We’re starting to get cabin fever.”

Kono interrupts. “Plumbing service van fever.”

“Could be worse,” Danny mumbles. “You guys could be actual plumbers.”

“Very funny,” Kono’s voice says flatly.

Danny is about to quip something playful back in response when he catches the scent of an alpha. “Initiating radio silence, I’ve caught a scent,” Danny whispers, lifting his night vision binoculars.

Steve is awake now, meaning he’s heard something too. The alpha is pacing around, flicking his tail uneasily. Seeing a flash of movement, Danny straights up, feeling his heart start to race as he looks around.

He suddenly sees the glint of alpha eyes in the moonlight as something runs below the tree and a few of the animals start to sound out warnings in their enclosures.

“Oh fuck,” Danny thinks to himself, because they’re running toward Steve.

Lifting the binoculars again, Danny feels his breath stop in his throat when he sees two figures approaching the enclosure that Steve is in, lifting a tranquilizer gun.

“STEVE!” Danny screams, realizing that they might actually be trying to take a lion out of the zoo instead of just its blood. The lion hears his voice echoing over the concrete edge of the enclosure and leaps into a cave in the rock formation as a dart flies by.

Danny has a few seconds to catch his breath, thankful that Steve won’t be darted with God knows what, when the two alphas turn straight toward him. To his horror, one of them lifts an automatic weapon straight toward the tree and pulls the trigger.

Bullets haze over and around him as he scrambles backwards, trying to reach his radio, but he misjudges where the branches are behind him and starts to fall out of the tree.

He howls out in distress, swiping out frantically and manages to claw onto a small branch -- but it's
too small, and it snaps, sending him plummeting to the ground where he lands flat on his back.

---

Kono hears the shots ring out and kicks the unlatched door of the van open, springing out onto the asphalt and sprinting to the zoo gates.

Chin is close behind, calling for backup from HPD.

As she turns the corner, she’s met by a tall man in a hoodie carrying an automatic weapon, and a hawk that screeches, going straight for her face with its talons.

She yells out, waving her weapon in the air to try and beat the bird away as Chin engages in hand to hand combat with the tall man. She fires off a shot toward the hawk and grazes its wing with a bullet.

It lets out a pained shriek and starts to shift on the ground, writhing in pain.

Kono is about to step in to help Chin fend off the taller man, when the hawk shifts completely -- into a little girl. She can't be more than ten years old. “What in the --”

The tall man uses Chin’s shock against him, ramming him with the butt of his automatic weapon and sprinting away into the woods.

“CHIN!” she yells, immediately crouching at his side. He’s knocked out.

She turns, eyes wide, to the little girl next to her. The girl is clutching at her bleeding arm, crying in pain.

Turning to pick up her cell phone, Kono calls for an ambulance.

---

Danny is in some kind of state of shock when Steve finds him. He's breathing too quickly, almost hyperventilating, staring straight up at him with his hands over his stomach.

“Danny! Danny, did you get shot?!” He pries Danny’s hands off of his stomach, but there isn’t a bullet wound. The small detective looks around suddenly, as if remembering where he is.
“I fell out of that God damned tree,” Danny groans.

The alpha frowns, watching as the omega pulls himself up into a sitting position, rubbing the back of his head where there are a few pieces of mulch from the flower bed he landed in. He doesn't look injured.

“Are you alright?” Steve asks, placing a hand on his mate’s shoulder.

Danny nods slowly, blinking up at him and giving him a curt nod. “I just got the wind knocked out of me is all,” he croaks, feeling his ribs to presumably check if they're broken.

Steve helps Danny to his feet, brushing mulch off his back and guiding him toward the front of the gates. “Thank God you landed in a bunch of flowers and dirt instead of cement,” Steve says softly, and Danny nods.

“Never thought a bunch of pansies would save my life,” the omega mutters, and he walks a bit slower than usual -- like his whole body is stiff -- toward Kono and Chin and what appears to be a crying native girl. Steve can smell her blood, she's an alpha, a young one, and she's afraid.

By the end of the night, at sunrise on Tuesday, Steve is alone in the office. Kono and Chin are at the pediatric hospital downtown, waiting for the girl to be released by the hospital staff into their custody so she can be questioned about her involvement in the Zoo burglaries.

He’s sent Danny home -- the omega has been acting weird since they returned to the office to write reports on the Zoo incident. However, Steve figures it’s a combination of missing their pups and the shell shock of having fallen ten feet out of a fake tree only a few hours before.

The omega had been walking around okay, and he still didn't seem injured, but he had been flooding the office with distress, even as he sat quietly with Steve to watch the twenty four hour news coverage of the storm. Which is another thing -- when the hell has Danny ever been quiet? When the distress scent became too much for Steve to bear, Steve had sent his mate home.

Checking the news periodically as the morning proceeds, the alpha tries to keep a mental note of how the last of the evacuations are going -- and how many people are staying behind. The storm is a week away, the last flight has left, and, within the next hour and a half, the last boat will pull anchor. The finality of the situation is sinking in across the island, and fights are already breaking out at Walmart and Home Depot, warranting HPD to station a few officers at the stores to try and keep the peace.
The national guard are continuously rolling past headquarters on South Beretania, the street Steve can see from the office window, and it feels weird to see military vehicles on the civilian streets instead of cars.

For a second, Steve leans to pick up the phone to update Dr. Poteralski and the Governor on the investigation, but the alpha stops when he sees Jerry walk in, yawning and holding a hot coffee.

Putting the phone down, Steve decides that he needs Jerry to run an errand for him instead, and presses the intercom, calling the large beta into his office.

An hour later, Steve is in the conference room just off of the Five-0 lobby with the Bosco brothers, holding a box of matcha macadamia cream puffs from the famous Leonard’s Bakery downtown, thanks to Jerry. The beta was apparently able to flash his badge to get the shop owners to sell him the very last batch of pastries before the old man and his wife left for the last ship in harbor.

“Because Danny isn't here today, I'm going to take this opportunity to teach you a few things about omegas,” Steve says sternly, setting the box down in front of him on the glass table. He has sat the Bosco brothers down with the promise of cream puffs if they can actually sit still and focus for half an hour.

“Like what things?” Brandon blurts, eyes shamelessly staring at the box of pastries on the table behind the older officer. They're all alphas here, and even Steve has to admit that the smell is overpoweringly delicious.

“Things to know when you’re working with omegas, because times are changing, and there will probably be a few more of them on the force soon,” Steve waves a hand up to gesture before he crosses his arms again.

“But, dude, we like... love omegas!” Landon sputters in protest.

“Yeah they smell so good,” Brandon leans forward and shoots Steve a look like he's trying to convince the older alpha. “We would never be mean to an omega!”

Steve raises up his hands to show them his palms in a placating motion; “Guys! Guys I know that. That isn't what this is about.”

“Then what?” Landon asks, frowning as he leans back in his chair.

Steve hesitates. “Okay, here’s one. You can't swing Danny around like you guys usually do. You can't ever roughhouse with a male omega like that.”
Brandon knits his brows together. “Why not? We’re just messing around with him…”

“Yeah, guys I know, it's all in good fun,” Steve sighs, lowering his voice. “But a male omega could be pregnant. They carry small, so it’s hard to tell until they're at least five months along... You wouldn’t swing a pregnant woman around like that would you?”

The brother’s eyes are huge and round as they look at each other. “Ohhhhh shit. I never -- I mean, we would never…”

Steve purses his lips. “That's what I mean. Little things that are hard to remember, because omegas are so rare. Like when an omega gets scared, their scent is unbearable to an alpha.”

“Like when Danny was stuck in the tree the night the rhinos got loose?”

“Exactly,” Steve says softly. “He was scared, and even though that scent practically burns our sinuses, he can’t help it. So you’re gonna have to keep that in mind next time an omega co-worker gets spooked around you, and then try to be considerate. Give them space, because the last thing they’ll want is to be crowded by strange alphas.”

“How do you deal with that at home? That fear scent?” Brandon blurts, and Landon elbows him, hissing his name.

Steve’s lips curl gently; “Well, if I’m doing my job as an Alpha correctly -- keeping my mate and pups safe and well cared for -- then Danny isn’t ever afraid around me. Having an omega as a mate is amazing and fulfilling, but they will instinctively look at you for protection.” He pauses. “Being chased by rhinos, though… That’s a different situation entirely.”

The twins both laugh and nod at each other, remembering the fiasco at the Honolulu zoo. “Yup.”

Steve considers mentioning that Danny had just fallen out of that same fake Baobob tree a few hours earlier, but thinks better of it, not wanting to get HPD involved in questioning the little girl just yet. It's a particularly sensitive situation, and they need to be careful about how they proceed.

He blinks, trying to regain his line of thoughts.

“Ah...Another thing, is that Omegas get spooked,” Steve explains. “And they have claws. Sharp claws.”

“We’ve seen Danny’s,” the twins say in unison.

Steve nods. “Yeah well, he’s never used them on you. They’re curved like a cat’s, so they can tear
flesh. So don't ever piss an omega off or you're gonna get clipped on the cheek.”

“Good to know,” mutters Landon. “Don't they also hiss and purr like a cat?”

Steve nods. “Yes, but not very often.”

“Do they like water?” Brandon blurts.

His brother elbows him. “They’re not actually cats, you idiot.”

Steve hides a laugh under his hand, because, no, actually, Danny hates swimming.

“What about when they’re pregnant?” Brandon asks curiously. “What was Danny like when he was pregnant?”

“Danny?” Steve tilts his head. “Well, he prefers the word ‘carrying,’ for one thing. And all of the hair on his chest and arms and stomach falls out. And he craves things. He gets kind of emotional at stuff, can go feral more than usual, and his distress scent is absolutely lethal, I mean, holy hell, when he’s carrying, if he gets spooked, it’s…” He pauses, thinking back on how bad Danny’s distress scent had been before the alpha had been forced to send him home to rest, and how bad Danny’s distress scent had been that day with the rhinos, and how hungry Danny has been lately, and how emotional he had been on Friday when Joe and his mother had to pick up the pups for their flight…

Steve freezes.

Brandon and Landon are able to wait an entire four seconds before they start muttering a quick staccato of questions at him. “What is it? What's wrong? Did we -- did we do something? Something wrong? I mean we're sorry, we didn't mean to--”

Steve waves up a hand to calm the young alphas down. His stomach is tensing up and twisting up toward his throat. “You’re fine…” the alpha trails off because holyfuckinghell his omega is showing every single symptom of his last pregnancy despite the negative tests.

Is it possible that two tests could have given a false negative?

“Commander McGarrett,” one of the twins begins, and he's not focusing enough to notice who. “You look like someone just told you your house is on fire…”

The other one pipes in. “Yeah, man, are you alright?”
He finally flicks his eyes up, raising his brows. “Lesson’s over, boys,” Steve says quickly under his breath and darts out toward the parking lot, yanking his keys out of his back pocket.

“Can we eat the cream puffs??” He hears over his back shoulder and he yells out a ‘sure’ as he walks briskly down the hall.

He wants -- he needs -- Danny to submit a blood sample to the lab. He needs a confirmation that he’s wrong.

Or right.

Steve walks into the bathroom and squints through the steam. Danny is sitting on the bottom of the large, walk-in shower, with one leg folded up close to his chest and one stretched out along the warm white tiles.

"Danno?" He asks wearily, sliding the glass shower door open. He feels the warm steam condensing on his face until rivulets of warm water start to bead and drip along his temple. He looks smaller than usual, but it might just be the way he’s sitting. “I have to talk to you about som--"

"I need you to take me to a hospital," the omega says hoarsely, interrupting him. It sounds like his bottom lip might be wavering when he says it, but Steve can't see through the mist to be sure.

"Wait, what -- your stitches open up? Do they look infected?" Steve mutters, immediately forgetting to ask about the blood sample as the hair on his neck starts to bristle. His omega is hurt, the alpha half of his brain growls. Steve stares down at his mate as the steam rushes out behind him, fogging up the bathroom mirror.

The omega has his forehead resting on his forearms, leaning over to rest on his raised knee. "I lied."

The alpha frowns, pausing for a beat as an unsettling discomfort tightens his throat. "About what?"

Danny doesn't lift his face, refusing to look at him. "I lied."

Steve reaches in to paw at the faucet, trying not to get too wet as he turns off the water with a high pitched squeak. The cascade of water from the shower head slows to a trickle and eventually, large fat droplets plunking down onto the tile floor of the shower in a hollow rhythm.

"You gonna tell me what you lied about?" Steve asks slowly, tilting his head as he squints at his omega.

Drip.
Danny sighs against his knee and finally raises his head. His face is flushed red from the heat and his dewy wet skin sheens in the pale light that sifts through the steam over Steve's shoulders. Steve smells something familiar, some kind of soap or shampoo maybe, but he can't place it. Then again, this is the first time Steve has smelled his omega without his usual scent blocking deodorant. Could that sweet smell actually be Danny?

When Danny's eyes meet his, they look greyer than usual -- like their brilliance has dulled under the weight of whatever it is that his mate has been hiding from him.

The omega slowly lowers his knee, stretching out his leg to lay flat with the other as the rich echo of the plunking droplets continues at a steady beat like a metronome. Steven tenses, unsure about the whole situation and that’s never a feeling that rolls over his nerves easily. He likes to be in control.

But standing there in the door to the shower, with steam dampening his dark polo shirt and slicking his hair to his forehead as he stares down at his mate, he's not in control.

Finally Danny's legs are flat out in front of him and his hands come to rest on his stomach... Which Steve notices, now, has a curve to it.

And not just a too-much-pizza-and-wings curve. No, that’s a pup belly, and Steve is sure of it. He knows What Danny’s body looks like when the omega is carrying.

“I knew it.” His breath hitches in his throat. "You’re..." He mutters, lips parting in surprise.

“I’m four and a half months along,” Danny nods, refusing to look up at him.

Steve rears back. “Jesus, Danny. Four and a half months?! Were you even going to tell me before you just went into labor one night?!”

“Did you hurt it last night?” Steve stomps into the shower, kneeling down quickly on the wet tile to place a palm over the omega’s rounding stomach. “At the zoo. You fell and you just… got up, and said you were fine, and I believed you! Danny, why didn't you tell me? You fucking you said were fine, knowing you have at least one pup in you and knowing that you could've hurt it in the fall! Did you just not care?!"

“I do care, Steven, I just -- I panicked.” Danny buries his face in his hands. “I know I should've said something earlier, but I'm telling you now, aren't I? I need you to take me to a hospital!"

"Alright." Steve yanks Danny up by his arm. "Get up," he snaps, and pulls him forcibly out into the master bathroom. Danny's shivering now in the air conditioning, and crosses his arms over his chest.
as water droplets roll down his skin to soak into the plush carpet. Steve kneels down and presses his ear against Danny’s wet belly, and Danny holds his breath as the alpha’s warm face rests against him.

“I hear a heartbeat,” Steve says gruffly, pinching his brow. “Let’s pray there was only one pup to start with…” He bites his lip, standing, and walks across the room, pausing to hold up his hands. "And, Danny, look. I'm happy you're carrying again," he sighs slowly. He starts to rummage in a drawer of clothes. "I'm happy; I am. I would never be upset about that. I'm just stressed about the circumstances. Evacuations have already ended," he seethes. "Danny, do you even know what that means? You’re stuck here, on an island, in the path of a fucking natural disaster, while pregnant! We’ll be lucky if there’s even an obstetrician at the National Guard base!”

Danny buries his face in his hands, dragging his palms down over his eyes for a moment. "Steven, what was I supposed to do -- go to the mainland without you? I spent my last pregnancy alone, I'm not doing that again! You can't ask me to! I almost died from bond sickness while Sophie and Cooper leached off my adrenal system like parasites!"

“Don't talk about our pups like that,” Steven mutters lowly.

"I'm sorry I just..." Danny purses his lips and shakes his head, holding himself because he's still soaking wet. "Steve, you don't know what it's like to have someone just... Flip a switch inside you, and suddenly you're supposed to be someone else -- be this person that sits on the sidelines and buries his head in the ground while everything burns down around him. That's not me."

Steve grits his jaw in frustration, finally throwing some sweatpants and a tee shirt at Danny from the drawer. "It's not forever, Danny! It's just for a few months... Just a few months, when it's not just your life you're risking."

Danny sighs, pulling on the clothes. "I didn't ask for this, Steven. And honestly, I didn't... I don't know if I wanted this."

Steve lets out a low growl and rounds on him, staring hard. "Well that's too bad, because it's happening, and you're going to do whatever it is that they tell us you need to do to keep this pup safe."

Danny bites down hard on the inside of his cheek, and Steve can smell the blood on his breath as he steers the omega down the hall, down the stairs, into the garage and sits him in the passenger seat of the Camaro.

A few minutes later, the siren and lights are on, even though the evacuated streets are mostly empty, and Steven is silent for a few minutes until his temper boils up to the surface again, flushing his skin red.

“I cannot believe you did this to me.” He lifts up a shaking hand from the wheel, but keeps his eyes on the road. “I’m your alpha, Danny, and it’s my job to keep you safe. But I can’t do that when you lie to me. I'm not saying I would have sent you to the mainland for sure, if I knew, but I wouldn't have let you lift sandbags or do stake outs all night, or get chased by a damn rhino. I would've shot that thing in the head if I had known it was chasing my pregnant mate!”
Danny doesn't look at him, but raises his head with a sigh; “Steven, there are ten of those things left in the world.”

Steve doesn't lift his eyes from the road. “Then hopefully the other nine won't chase you, and maybe they won't get shot in the head too.”

Danny rolls his eyes, leaning back against his headrest and folding his palms over his stomach.

“The baby's still moving, right?” Steve asks after a second.

“A little bit,” Danny replies quietly. Then he swallows nervously, and twists his seatbelt strap uneasily. “But ah… not as much tonight, which is why I’m kind of …worried.”

"God damnit, Daniel," Steve mutters, flooring the accelerator.

Chapter End Notes

Stay tuned! I'll update as soon as I can!! :D I hope everyone had a lovely Turkey Day (slash Thanksgiving slash whatever people are calling it these days) with family and friends.
Chapter Eight

Chapter Notes

There's snow on the ground and hot chocolate in my mug! I'm on winter break, so hopefully I'll be able to churn out some more chapters soon :D Merry Whatever y'all!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lee Davies was having a bad day.

Maybe not bad, but long.

The hospital was understaffed and more and more people were being rushed in through the doors on stretchers. His fiancé had to evacuate with his mother and he knows he’ll be lucky if the wedding is still on when his future wife gets back from dealing with his mom on a boat for two weeks. Here, Lee has three patients waiting for stitches and one with a concussion awaiting an MRI. Sadly, all four of the patients were injured fighting over supplies at a Wal-Mart.

“Bludgeoned by a can of beans?” Lee sighs, reading a chart on the back of a door. He directs a nurse to walk in to take vitals and moves to the next door. There’s a circular red sticker at the top of the chart, and it catches his eye.

He knows what the red dot means.

“Can somebody tell me why there is a nesting pair still on the island after evacuations?” Lee asks loudly, hoping for an answer from one of the stressed nurses behind him.

“Said they had to stay behind. They’re cops or something,” his youngest nurse answers obediently.

Lee pulls a face. “Is the alpha armed?” He turns over his shoulder and the young Asian man is shaking his head as he looks for a chart on the wall of files.
“I don't think so,” the young nurse answers.

Lee hesitates. He’s seen enough nesting pair aggression to know exactly why the directors make them put red stickers on the chart. “You don't think so or you don't know?” He says slowly, meeting the nurse’s gaze.

The nurse is on top of a ladder now, reaching for a file on the highest shelf. “I mean -- well, I didn't see any weapons on him. I did look when I saw the name.”

“Name?” the doctor repeats softly, glancing down.

Oh fuck. Oh no no no.

"McGarrett."

You have got to be kidding me. “Prep two sedatives just in case,” he says quietly.

Lee can hear the hesitation of the nurse staring at the back of his head and he turns around.

“But if the omega’s carrying… We can't dart him with normal sedatives too, can we?”

“They’re both for McGarrett,” he mutters reaching out toward the door handle like one would reach out to test if a stove is hot, half expecting it to blister his skin off.

Clearing his throat, Lee eases open the door.

A piercing glare of blue green eyes meets his. “Mr. McGarrett,” the doctor says gently. “Always good to see you when you aren't bleeding or full of bullets.”

The alpha smiles half heartedly, but his fangs are popped. Lee swallows nervously. He knows the alpha can smell his fear and he tries to simply tell himself not to be afraid, obviously to no avail.
And he turns, wondering what woman in her right mind would -- oh.

Oh.

He quells a fleeting swell of surprise.

McGarrett’s mate is a male.

McGarrett’s mate, a small blonde man -- an omega -- is sitting on the exam bench, twisting claws into the easy-to-sterilize vinyl surface of the cushion and his wide blue eyes are watching Lee’s every move.

This omega is already half spooked.

“And how are you feeling,” he pauses to look down at the chart again for the name, “Daniel?” the doctor asks softly, slowly lifting up his pen to the chart.

No sudden moves.

The omega’s eyes flick over toward the alpha. “I… Well…”

Lee takes a step closer and the omega bares his teeth for a moment, hissing on reflex; the doctor holds up his hands, willing himself to stay calm and even toned. “I apologize, Daniel. Do you need a minute?”

“He’s pregnant,” the alpha blurts behind him.

Yes. That much is obvious from the red dot the nurse put at the top of the chart. It’s how they warn the doctors not to burst open the door too quickly, and make sure none of the alpha staff come into the room. Strange alpha pheromones, if someone’s scent blocking deodorant isn’t working well in the late hours of the shift, can upset either of the mated pair into a feral episode.

“I see,” the doctor says slowly, trying not to engage the omega in to too much eye contact as not to
startle him.

“I just don’t like doctors very much,” the omega sighs, “Or hospitals. I’ve uh… Had some bad experiences.” He puts his hand on his stomach and looks nervously to his alpha.

McGarrett stands up to walk closer, lowering his voice. “Danny, babe, you’re fine.” It’s strange to see the brazen alpha being so sweet and concerned.

“I know that.” The omega nods, “I keep telling myself that -- but the smells with the alcohol, and the cotton swabs and the needles and the bleach and --” he trails off, clearing his throat.

“I can get you a sedative that’s safe for the baby,” Lee suggests, wearily taking a step closer and he can see Daniel straining with the effort of not hissing.

“He’ll be okay,” the alpha mumbles, looking up to lock eyes with him. The look says *hurry up and get this over with before he wigs out.*

Lee nods. “Your chart says you’ve had a fall?” The doctor asks, approaching the bench as the omega nods, lowering his gaze in submission. “Lie back.”

He nearly jumps when the omega’s claws raise up quickly out of nowhere and Lee watches the glinting, curved, glass-like hooks wearily out of the corner of his eye, but the omega is just pulling his shirt up to expose his gently rounded stomach. This is the third pregnant male omega he’s ever seen in person, and the first he’ll have gotten this close to. Lee tries to rely on the training protocols put in place after the release of hundreds of captive omegas following the THRESH scandal in the media.

Rule one: a spooked omega is a dangerous omega.

Rule two: no loud noises, harsh smells, bright lights, or strange alphas.

Rule three: the alpha is twice as dangerous and volatile when the omega is pregnant.

Okay. He’s got this.

Calm, Lee thinks. *Calm and composed.* He takes a deep breath, pulling gloves out of his pocket.

“I’m just going to touch your abdomen briefly, Daniel,” he says softly. “I’ll wear gloves -- I’m not going to get any of my beta scent on you.” Under McGarrett’s intense stare, the pregnant omega nods and Lee takes a moment to palpate Daniel’s gently, pausing every so often to ask if he feels any
“Ow,” the omega groans, twisting away and curling in on himself in pain.

The alpha whines behind him, and Lee bites his lip. “This hurts?” He murmurs softly, pressing gently on the tender area just to the lower right of the navel.

“Yeah,” he croaks, twisting uncomfortably. The alpha stands up suddenly, lurching forward, and Lee resists the urge to edge toward the panic button on the wall. He risks a glance back -- just to check -- and McGarrett's only moving to stand by his mate. The alpha’s not baring his teeth yet.

The doctor nods to himself and turns back to the pregnant patient. “And is the baby moving much?”

“Not as much as usual,” the omega concedes, and Lee frowns. When he looks down again, the alpha is holding his mate’s hand on the edge of the bench.

Lee knows his unease over the situation is evident in his pheromones, betraying his bedside manner, because the alpha whines again, low in the back of his throat and tries to cover it with a cough. He’s waiting for Lee to say that ‘everything’s just fine.’

*But it’s not.*

He turns around slowly, avoiding eye contact but looking toward McGarrett. “We’re going to have to do an ultrasound, and run some tests,” the doctor explains and, as predicted, the alpha doesn't like the thought of that. At the sound of the growl, the doctor decides to give them some space and slowly moves toward the door.

*Nice and easy.*

“I’ll be right back, gentlemen.”

*That ultrasound tech with the nose piercing better not have evacuated.*
What the hell was her name? And, God, this day needs to cut him some slack.

Terri.

Tammy.

Beth.

No.

Tabitha? Yes. Tabitha.

He slowly walks out of the room, waiting until the heavy door swings shut before he grabs the nearest nurse he can find. “Get Tabitha down here now,” he whispers as low as he can. “Prep room 305 for an ultrasound and prep a surgery kit just in case. No alphas.”

The nurses look at him skeptically, “No alphas?”

Lee holds up the chart in his hand and points at the red dot. “Last thing we need is one of the staff getting bitten by a feral patient or his mate.”

They're all looking at each other nervously now, which, at least they understand now, how dangerous it is to have a nesting pair in a crowded hospital.

Twenty minutes later, Lee is standing over Tabitha’s shoulder as the young technician moves the ultrasound wand over the omega’s stomach. Twice the omega’s eyes start to go black, and his lip curls up over his teeth, but McGarrett has a grip on the back of Daniel’s neck. Still, he doesn't blame her when Tabitha slowly scoots a bit further away in her rolling chair.

“I’m sorry,” the alpha says awkwardly to her; “He’s just… He just really doesn't like hospitals.”

As the alpha struggles to keep his mate under control, Lee finally sees it on the screen.
Fuck.

“Alright. He needs to be on bedrest,” the doctor sighs slowly.

McGarrett’s head whips up in surprise. “Wait -- what?”

“What’s wrong?” The omega blurs, squirming anxiously, gripping his mate’s hand suddenly.

“Pause the screen right here, Tabitha,” he says quickly, lifting his pen to point to a dark mass on the screen. “This is the lining of the uterine wall.”

He looks to make sure the pair is following along.

“This is, well, obviously, the pup,” Lee says, “but this, this is the edge of the placenta. Do you see this gap here -- this dark area?”

McGarrett and his mate both nod. “Yeah...”

Lee turns to lock eyes with McGarrett; “That’s all blood -- internal hemorrhaging -- where the placenta is starting to separate from the womb.” As the alpha stares at the screen, he raises up a hand to rub over his mouth as the omega’s face pales.

“Oh my God,” the omega clasps a hand over his mouth, starting to breathe raggedly into his hand as his eyes water.

Giving the small man a sympathetic look, the doctor continues. “This is called placental detachment.”

“Is my baby alright?” Daniel breathes, and claws from his free hand dig into the vinyl of the cushion. The whole screen flickers as the omega’s abdomen tenses.

“Right now, yes,” Lee says quickly, holding up his hands. The omega whines off key at him and the
Alpha grits his teeth at the noise. “Right now, she’s fine. But not if--” Lee can hear Daniel’s heartbeat on the monitor starting to soar, and he eyes the panic button again. “Not if the placenta continues to detach itself from the womb. Daniel, you need to be on bedrest for at least a month for the gap to close.”

“Steven,” the omega whispers, breathing shallowly as he tugs on his mate’s hand, practically wringing it. The alpha is staring in shock at the screen.

“She?” McGarrett says quickly, before realizing that his small mate is apparently starting to have a panic attack beside him. “Danny, hey, woah -- calm down… Danny, you have to breathe!”

McGarrett’s mate snarls suddenly, fangs bared as he holds his stomach protectively. “I’m trying you prick, the -- this guy just told me my f-fucking baby is gonna’ be --- with the d-detaching, and it’s my fault, and I can’t… I can’t breathe--” The omega gasps out like he’s choking and Lee rears back, leaning into the open doorway to lock eyes with a nurse in the hall.

“Get me an acepromazine syringe now; a mild dose for a 160 pound pregnant omega,” Lee directs quickly, stepping back so the alpha can try to comfort his mate. Tabitha is pressing back against the wall, looking up at him with wide eyes.

The omega howls and everything outside of the room goes deafeningly quiet.

He hears someone asking ‘what the FUCK was that?’

And someone answers in a hushed voice, ‘that’s the omega in 305.’

“Tabitha,” he says slowly; “See where they are on that dart, alright?” The girl nods vigorously at him and stiffly walks toward the door before bolting down the hall.

Daniel howls again and McGarrett actually clamps a hand over his mouth. The omega, gasping raggedly into his hand, hisses and swipes at him.

McGarrett yells out, fangs bared, when his mate catches the skin of his forearm with the claws.
Lee feels his eyes widening as he stands, watching this play out before him and wondering if this day can possibly get worse.

“Dr. Davies,” Tabitha sputters, and she’s holding the dart out.

“Mr. McGarrett, step back,” Lee says sternly. “Daniel, this is a sedative -- we need to get your heartbeat lowered.” With that he leans in and jabs the omega in the neck with the syringe.

The reaction is almost instantaneous; the omega’s voice slurs and his hands drop to his sides. His breath starts to even out and he whines in confusion.

When Lee looks up at the alpha, his eyes have changed from green to black and back again. “Do I need to dart you too?” He snaps.

McGarrett shakes his head quickly, reaching out tentatively to hold his mate down. “Fucking Christ, Daniel,” he pleads, desperate until the omega starts clutching at him.

The doctor exhales slowly, before straightening his scrubs and white coat. “Okay. So…” He begins, glancing at his chart; “Bedrest. And I'm gonna ask that Daniel stays the night.”

Wiping his brow with the back of his wrist, McGarrett nods.

“I would refer you to a specialist, but… Well… They’ve left the island. Any questions?” Lee sighs, standing slowly.

“No.” McGarrett is holding his mate’s hands, leaning to lay arms over the smaller man’s shoulders.

Lee nods, slowly opening the door from the exam room. Every nurse in the building is staring at him expectantly.

“Everything’s fine,” he sighs. “Back to work, everyone.”

“You’re going to have him stay the night?” Tabitha asks uneasily, handing him printouts of the ultrasound for Daniel’s file.
“I can't in good faith discharge them,” Lee sighs, taking the pictures for the file. “Someone needs to make a sign for the door -- no alpha staff allowed in there with the pregnant omega.”

Steve has a strong suspicion that most of the staff has never seen a male omega -- much less a pregnant one -- because four or five different nurses open the door, under various guises, to ‘check on them.’ Each time, the nurses all lean into the room, pausing just out of reach and staring at the unconscious, pregnant omega like one would regard a new neighbor's exotic and dangerous pet.

Steve growls at the last one, sitting veiled in the dim lighting in an uncomfortable chair by Danny’s bed with his arms crossed, and it doesn’t happen again. His mate is sedated into a deep sleep until six in the morning, when Steve wakes to a low whine in the darkness.

“We’re in the hospital at the base,” Steve says quickly, blinking groggily and voice rusty with sleep.

“Why?” his mate asks, and Steve sees him looking around in the darkness.

Leaning forward in his chair, Steve clears his throat. “They ah… Well, they wanted to make sure that the baby’s placenta doesn't fully detach.”

His mate exhales a deep breath in response as the night comes back to him. “Oh.”

A beat passes.

Reaching out slowly, Steve brushes up Danny’s hospital gown to lay a hand on his stomach, and the omega looks down to lay his hands over Steve’s.

“Are you mad?” The blonde asks quietly.

The alpha frowns. “No, I'm not mad.” He rubs the skin with his thumb before leaning back in his chair with a sigh. “I'm upset that I didn't find out about her until now, but I’m not mad.”
The omega is quiet for a second. “So it’s a girl?”

Nodding, Steve glances up at him. “Yeah. Just the one this time.”

“Sophie’s gonna be thrilled,” Danny murmurs softly. “Little sister to boss around.”

Giving him a faint smile, Steve nods. “Yeah. Gonna be a lot more pink around the house, now.”

Danny huffs a laugh and ducks his eyes. “You think we have to tell the team or can we sit on this for a while?”

The alpha purses his lips. “Dunno how we’re gonna hide anything with you on bedrest, buddy.”

Sighing, the omega leans his head back to look at the ceiling. “Good point.”

“I’ve already got two missed calls from Chin wondering why I’m not in the office,” Steve says pointedly, and the unspoken question that lingers in the air is do you want me to tell them or do you want to do it yourself?

“You can tell them, I guess,” Danny mutters, turning onto his side. “No point in hiding it.”

Steve smirks, flipping on the lights as he stands up with his iPhone pointed at Danny in his hospital gown.

“What are you doing?” Danny mutters, raising up his hands in confusion before he hears the click of a camera.

“Taking a SnapChat,” the alpha smiles, and he takes in a second to write in a caption.
“Really? A SnapChat -- to share this kind of news? You are such a dick,” Danny snaps as Steve hits send.

“What? It’s the most efficient way, Danny, you can’t argue that,” Steve mutters, shoving the phone in his pocket. “Now. Do you wanna go home, or you wanna stay here?”

Danny grimaces. “I’d rather go home.”

Steve walks over to lean down and kiss him on the forehead. “Then we’ll go home. I’ll go get the doctor.”

Danny nods, inhaling Steve’s powerful scent, and it’s a nice reprieve from the overpowering stench of bleach and rubbing alcohol.

Beside him, his phone, on 5% battery, starts to buzz rapidly. Text after Text roll in from his friends on a spectrum from “HOLY SHIT” to “OMG CONGRATS BRAH,” and one "WAIT WHY AM I
Danny sighs. “Fucking *snapchat*. The nerve.”

Chapter End Notes

Bahaha I don't know how y'all feel about little extras like the *snapchat* pic. Lemme know if it's distracting OR amusing :D
Chapter Nine

Chapter Notes

Merry Christmas and Happy Hannukah and Happy Holidays my lovelies! I will never be able to express in words the joy I have found in bringing a bunch of strangers into this crazy world I've made up in my head. It was a place I retreated to alone for so long!

Danny wakes with a crick in his neck and groans, reaching up to hold it. He goes to roll over to the other side of the bed and suddenly everything is tipping over.

“What the--”


Danny blinks, eyes slowly focusing under the glare of a lamp. He's on a cot. “Alpha,” he mutters before he can catch himself, then he pauses, clearing his throat; “Steve.”

“Doc said you’d be a little groggy from the sedative. You okay?” Steve moves to sit on the end of the couch near his head.

Danny pulls a face. “I haven't felt this hungover since college. Why aren't we at the den?”

“We wanted to get you settled here, remember?” His mate says slowly, steepling his fingertips.

Slowly, slowly, it starts to come back to him. They had been on the way to the house when Steve had pulled to a stop, hesitating. “I don't want you to be so close to the coast,” the alpha had said. “Storms do weird things to the sea level… Headquarters is on higher ground.”

Danny had pursed his lips, knowing that Steve was right. He was also considering the fact that, from the office at least Danny wouldn't be completely on the sidelines. “Maybe we should start sleeping at headquarters… That's where we’ll have to be when the storm gets here in a few days, anyway…”

“Chin said the national guard was bringing by some cots, supplies, and a generator today,” Steve had explained. “I guess we can go ahead and set up camp…”

Danny nodded. “It’ll be like camping.”

“I remember,” Danny says softly, looking around the office. The windows have plywood boards bolted over them from the outside, and a nest of wires in the corner of the room has a few emergency lights tangled in it. Steve must have been unpacking boxes of supplies when Danny was startled awake by almost falling off the cot.

“Hey -- he’s awake!” A familiar voice says cheerfully.

Danny looks up to see Jerry smiling down at him. “Hey Jerr.”

“Congrats, buddy,” he grins. “Pup number three, huh?”

Danny raises his brows, ducking his eyes. “Yeah. You got the uh… Snapchat then.”

“We all did,” he nods. “There was audible shrieking from Kono’s corner of the department. At least seventy decibels.”

“Well, thanks for the congrats,” Danny flicks his eyes up to meet Jerry’s before glancing over at Steve. “The timing could be better.”

Jerry winces. “You two have a knack for that. By the way, Danny, you look different without the tie and the suit getup,” Jerry comments, gesturing at the old Navy Seals tee-shirt Danny had borrowed from his mate.

“I guess I’m not exactly dressed for work,” he says awkwardly, pulling the covers tighter. Danny gives Steve a side eyed glance.

“I’m about to grab stuff from the house,” Steve explains, standing up with his hands on his hips. “I’ll grab some of your work stuff. Will you guys keep an eye on him?”

“What for? I’m fine,” Danny snaps, moving to stand up.

“Danny, hey, no. You stay in that bed -- what are you doing?!” Steve rushes to place a hand on his shoulder.

“Steve,” he says tersely; “Bedrest doesn't actually mean you are confined to a bed. You just can't be up and around much.”

The alpha pulls an exasperated expression. “Oh, excuse me, Dr. Williams, and when exactly did you graduate from med school?”
Jerry awkwardly backs out of the room.

“Steve,” Danny sighs. “I have to be able to shower, and I obviously have to be able to go to the bathroom. I’m gonna give this bedrest thing my best shot, but I can’t do one hundred percent bedridden…”

Steve sighs, rubbing the back of his neck. “Fine. But I want you to be sitting down ninety five percent of your day or I will handcuff you to that bed.”

Danny walks toward his office to grab his laptop. “Sadly, I know you’re not joking.”

Watching him intently, Steve is tense until Danny returns to the cot in his office, carrying his laptop. The omega props up a few pillows so he can sit up in bed, and eases back down to the thin mattress.


Steve nods. “You better be in that bed when I get back.”

Steve gives Danny a purposeful look because he means it, before stalking out of the room toward Chin’s office.

The Asian officer looks up genially; “I'll keep an eye on Danny, of course, if that’s what you’re about to ask.”

“Actually,” Steve leans his head toward his own office where Danny is laying on the cot, trying to gauge whether or not his mate will be able to overhear this; “I was wondering if you made that call I asked you to make…”

"I did,” Chin says, but his expression starts to fall. “And, unfortunately, it looks like the only outbound ship that's leaving for the mainland is reserved for the prisoners in the Supermax prison on the island.”

The Alpha exhales loudly, letting his eyes roll up words toward the ceiling panels and fluorescent lights. “Well that's not gonna work. I can't put Danny on a ship with a bunch of Alpha thugs if he’s the one that put half of them behind bars.”

Chin grimaces. “I figured.”
Steve leans forward, resting his hands on Chin’s mahogany desk as he lets his head fall in a moment of exasperation, like he's trying to regain composure. “Danny’s stuck then. On the island.”

“Boss, if Danny can survive being your partner, I think he can survive a little bad weather,” Chin says, cracking a smile as he tries to lighten the heavy mood in the room. “Besides, we’re all here looking out for him.”

Steve sniffs and straightens up, straightening his shirt. He nods. “Right. You’re right. I’m just…” He throws his hands out in front of him. “I’m just overreacting.”

Chin frowns sympathetically. “Is there anyone else you want me to call?”

Steve shakes his head with a sigh; “No. Thank you. Maybe see if that little alpha girl from the zoo has been discharged from the pediatric hospital yet. She needs to be questioned.”

“Will do,” his lead beta nods, reaching for the mouse of his laptop to search for the number as Steve leaves for the elevator.

Danny is walking back from the bathroom, an hour later, when he passes a little girl sitting in the lobby between the Five-O offices.

He’s about to approach her, when he hears the soft staccato of wedged boots on the granite tiles of the floor; Kono is walking toward the girl.

“Hey -- what are you doing? I'm supposed to make sure you’re in bed,” she says flatly.

“Who is she?” Danny asks quietly, ignoring the comment, because frankly he’s bored as hell in Steve’s office.

“She’s one of the Alphas that we accosted during the zoo break in,” Kono replies, putting a hand on her hip. Then, after Danny’s look of confusion, she drops her voice even lower to add “She was a hawk at the time.”

The omega’s brows raise up to his hairline. “Has she said anything? I mean how does a girl that young get mixed up in something like this? She can't be more than eleven.”

“She’s ten, and her name is Vanessa,” Kono sighs. “But that's pretty much all I could get out of her.
Pamela Logan just brought her from the hospital at the base.”

Danny purses his lips, raising up a hand to tell Kono to wait, and he slowly walks toward the girl to sit down next to her.

“Hi Vanessa. My name is Danny and I’m one of the detectives that work here. I know you’re wondering what’s going on, and we’re going to help you figure that out.”

Vanessa stiffens at first, not looking at him, and then, after a minute, she stares at him in confusion.

“Why do you smell like that?” Vanessa blurts after a second, and Danny attempts to project calm and safe with his scent signatures.

He knits his brows in mock confusion, because he knows what it is. “Like what?”

“You smell really good -- it’s weird,” she tilts her head, then returns to nervously pulling at a hem on the jeans.

“Well, I’m an omega,” Danny explains, which is sort of a lie, because it’s the new pup that’s changing his scent, really, but Danny doesn’t need the fact that he’s pregnant getting back to whomever this girl is mixed up with. “I usually smell like something sweet to an Alpha like you. Like a cupcake or something, I don’t really do it on purpose.”

Vanessa won’t look up at him, but she continues; “You smell like when my mom used to bake chocolate chip cookies. The whole house smelled good.”

“Well that’s good,” Danny huffs a laugh; “I’d rather smell like a cookie than like broccoli or a yucky old Brussel sprout.”

The girl giggles softly, looking up beforeducking her head again shyly, and Danny waits a beat before turning to ask her a question.

“But, Vanessa, where’s your Mom now, sweetheart? She’s probably worried about you… Do you know her phone number by heart? I can call her for you.”

The girl’s face falls; “My Mom and Dad died when I was really little.”

Danny frowns. “Who takes care of you?”

“I take care of myself,” she protests bluntly, then glances down. “But, well, Manny gave me and my brothers and sisters a house, and he brings us food every day.”
“Who is Manny, Vanessa?” The omega presses, trying his best to keep up his projections of calm and safe.

“They call him Manny the Goodfather,” she mumbles. “He’s really nice.”

Pausing, Danny looks up at Kono -- who has been silently standing off to the side, listening -- and she nods, walking toward the tech screen. “And he takes care of your brothers and sisters?”

Vanessa tightens one side of her mouth, in a sort of skewed expression. “Well, they’re not really my brothers and sisters. But they sort of are. We’re all the alphas. Manny says we’re special.”

Furrowing his brow, Danny struggles to remain nonchalant about the whole thing. “You know my son, Cooper, he’s an alpha, and he can turn into a lion. And I heard you can turn into --”

“A red tailed hawk!” She bursts excitedly. “Manny is teaching me to turn when I want to. We have classes -- it’s like a school.”

“That sounds so cool, I bet it's fun, right?”

She nods excitedly.

“Can all of the other alphas in the class -- your brothers and sisters -- can they change too?” Danny asks, feeling his stomach tighten uneasily at the thought, but he isn't sure why.

“All of us can. That’s why we’re special, Manny says,” she explains with a smile, and Danny forces one in return.

“That’s enough questions for now, Vanessa. How about we see if there’s any Oreos left in Jerry’s secret stash in the break room, huh?”

Her face brightens and Danny motions for her to follow him as he stands and walks toward the break room. He sits her down at the table with a plate of Oreos and a glass of milk (meant for the coffee), and tells her he’s going to be back soon.

Kono is researching “Manny the Goodfather” on the tech screen, browsing multiple files at once.

“Anything come up?” He asks, trying to ignore a wave of vertigo, but his face must be pale, because Kono is giving him a concerned once over.

“You really need to take it easy, Danny-- if Steve comes back and sees you walking around…” She
trails off, then pulls out the rolling office chair from the tech table desk. “Here.”

Danny sighs and concedes, collapsing into the chair with a groan. “Okay, fine. Now what’d you find?”

“Manuel Santos, aka The Goodfather, is more like the Godfather from what I can find. He’s the head of a ring of criminals, and a sort of local …hero.”

“Hero?” The omega pulls a face. “How can he be a criminal and a hero?”

Kono tightens the corners of her mouth, pulling up a slew of online news articles from local papers. “Apparently he has a commune where he provides basic necessities for the homeless population.”

The omega crosses his arms. “What like a Robin Hood type thief?”

“Mmmm,” Kono hesitates; “Maybe a bit more… Nefarious. You see, we know he’s a huge figurehead in the black market, so it makes sense that he would be after Serum 628…”

Danny exhales a deep breath. “But?”

Kono glances back at the screen; “But he gets random people involved in his crimes, like children or church going old ladies, because they’re so grateful for the support he provides to their community, and these transactions happen in broad daylight -- but no one suspects a thing. No one looks at a grandma and thinks she’s toting a kilo of coke and a glock in her handbag.”

“So he does nice things for people down and out on the streets, and they become his minions out of gratitude?”

Danny waves a hand up broadly. “That’s genius. Nothing ever gets traced back to him.”

“Obviously, we’ve been trying to get him on conspiracy charges for years, but he keeps his hands clean and he’s careful about it,” Kono mutters, rolling her eyes.

“And no one’s going to rat on someone that’s paying their mortgage,” Danny adds flatly. “Damn.”

“So, in the meantime, he’s roping girls like Vanessa into a life outside of the law,” Kono says, lowering her voice as her eyes linger in the direction of the break room.

Danny runs a hand back over his hair, sighing as he leans back in the chair. “She says all of the kids he’s rounded up can change. They’re alphas. It sounds almost like…”

Kono glances up. “Like what?”
He clenches his jaw for a second. “Like he's building an army.”

“A child army of shifting alphas?” Kono repeats skeptically.

The thought physically makes Danny’s stomach hurt, and he rubs the side of it gently. “I know that’s pretty out there, but that’s what my gut’s telling me. Well. The part of my gut that isn’t full of McGarrett pup. That part’s telling me to go eat a sandwich with nothing on it but pickles and mayonnaise. Obviously, I’m ignoring that part.”

“Ugh, a pickle sandwich? That’s disgusting, brah,” Kono bursts out laughing, and Danny grins honestly for the first time in a long time.

“Keep up the research so we can brief Steve, and I’m going to get Jerry to take Vanessa to one of the hurricane shelters. Social Services has evacuated, unfortunately, so Jerry Services is going to have to do.”

“Got it,” Kono raises her brows. “I’ll keep digging for anything recent on Manny.”

“Did you stay in bed today?” Steve’s deep voice murmurs in the warmly lit office when Danny’s eyes peer open. He’s got one emergency candle on his desk lit, casting the room in a warm glow, and he’s sitting, half kneeling, next to Danny’s cot.

“Most of the time,” Danny yawns, letting his heavy eyelids drift closed again. The omega had spent most of the rest of the afternoon researching Manuel Santos, and had apparently dozed off. He imagines that it must be dark outside, but with the windows boarded up and the blinds to Steve’s office drawn, it’s hard to tell.

“Everyone’s starting to wind down for the night,” Steve says, suddenly pulling down the covers. He then pulls up Danny’s shirt, and the omega grumbles a protest for a second until he realizes what Steve’s doing.

The alpha begins to nuzzle the rounding swell on his abdomen, marking the growing pup with the scent glands under his jawline, before licking over the skin with his warm, wet tongue. This is the most intimate way that Steve can say ‘this pup is mine,’ and Danny purrs in approval.

The omega reaches out to rub gentle fingertips over Steve’s temple and ear with featherlight touches. Making broad flat stripes over the pup with his tongue, Steve lets the pheromones from his saliva soak into the skin until he’s satisfied that any other alpha will be able to immediately catch his own
scent on Danny.

"I heard we have some sort of lead," Steve whispers with a sigh, leaning back to reach for his old army sleeping bag. The thing is a tattered mess of green canvas, weathered straps, and patches, and Danny has tried to throw it out on three separate occasions, but Steve loves it.

"I'll tell you all about it in the morning," Danny mumbles, curling tight around a pillow.

Thirty minutes later, Steve has laid his sleeping bag out on the couch, and he's quietly reading emails on his laptop. The wind starts to pick up -- ever so slightly -- in the night air beyond the plywood over the office windows, and, every so often, a particularly strong gale moans a low howl against the building.

In the moments just before Danny starts to slip into the void between dreams and consciousness, something moves low in his belly. It's a quick *pop* almost like bubbles shifting around, and Danny opens his eyes in surprise.

He's feeling their new baby girl pup.

Grinning in the darkness, Danny debates telling Steve, but decides to share this quiet moment with his little pup. Being less than five months along, Danny knows he's the only one that can feel her anyway, and for some reason, the thought warms him. Sighing happily, the detective moves his hand to rest over the gentle swell of his belly, also content with the fact that no one will ever find out how much of a stereotypical omega he's being right now.

*Hello, baby girl,* he thinks. *I love you.*

The bubbles flutter under his hand.
Chapter Ten

Chapter Notes

Just a short update; it's been a while! Sorry about that. I'll try to get around to the next update faster!

Jerry stares down at the dark green can in his hands. “Bear spray?” He pulls a face. “What in the heck is bear spray?”

“It’s for bears, Jerry,” Danny mutters from his cot in Steve’s office. Jerry is sitting cross legged on the floor, going through a dusty cardboard box from Steve’s garage labeled ’supplies.’


Danny rolls his eyes, looking up from his laptop. “Listen to you -- bear freshener, Christ. It’s like pepper spray for bears. For hiking or hunting or whatever, I don't know.”

“Steve, what is all of this? You know we’re not actually camping, right?” The beta yells with an edge of uncertainty. “I mean, I highly doubt a bear is gonna swipe a keycard and ride the elevator up here.”

“I didn't have time to go through the box, Jerry,” Steve’s annoyed voice says in a huff from the lobby near the tech table. “I just grabbed whatever I could fit in the truck. Just use whatever you can, and keep the rest in the box. There should at least be some more duct tape in there.”

Danny flips the laptop closed, feeling a wave of nausea swell up from his stomach and he whines softly under his breath. Jerry’s eyes flick up. “You alright big mama?”

“Call me that one more time, and I swear to god, Jerry, I will spray you in the face with that shit,” he grumbles flatly, pinching his brow.

“Loud and clear,” Jerry mutters quietly, “Sheesh.”

When Danny looks up again, Steve’s head is poking into the office, giving him a scrutinizing look. “You alright? I heard you whine.”

“I’m an omega. Sometimes I whine,” Danny purses his lips, but Steve doesn't buy it. The blonde sighs. “Morning sickness. This pup wants me to starve, clearly.”

Steve frowns. “There might be a saltine cracker in one of those MRE’s in that box.”

“I’m not eating a six year old cracker,” Danny snaps, turning on his side away from his mate.

“Danny, I told you, MRE’s have a shelf life of almost ten years,” Steve waves a hand at him. “I lived off of MRE’s for months in Kosovo.”

“And look how you turned out,” the omega grumbles.
Jerry’s face breaks into a boyish grin as he turns his attention back to the box. “Aha! Found the duct tape, boss,” Jerry says triumphantly. Steve nods.

“Just leave it on my desk,” the alpha turns to walk back to the tech table. “And put some on his mouth if he doesn't lighten up.”

“You lighten up,” the detective retorts, “You’ve basically incapacitated me for the entire duration of this storm.”

But the alpha is walking toward the lobby exit now. “I’ll be back in an hour. Chin’s in charge.” He pauses just before he leaves, calling out to anyone who’s listening. “Guys, make sure the generator’s exhaust gets vented to open air. I don’t want carbon monoxide filling this place up.”

“Got it, boss,” calls Chin’s voice.

“Where are you going?” Danny yells.

Steve mutters something in reply as the door shuts, and the omega, with his more sensitive hearing, frowns in confusion.

“What’d he say?” Jerry asks curiously.

“Said he has to go to the prison,” the omega explains uneasily. “Something about how he has to see a man with a limp.”

“You gonna shoot me in the other foot?” The prisoner asks dryly, giving Steve a scathing expression.

“I could,” the alpha considers, glancing at the darkening sky through the window before meeting his gaze. “I’m the only law left on the island at this point.” A beat passes. “Or I could just tell your fellow prisoners that you shot at an omega. I don’t think that would go over very well.”

The man’s eyes widen. “That was an accident!”

“Then tell me what I need to know. Tell me what Santos -- the Goodfather, who you said you were working for -- tell me what he assigned you to that day.”

The prisoner sighs begrudgingly. “I don’t know man, he never tells nobody the whole plan, you know? Says it’s safer that way. I was just supposed to deliver a package.”

Steve’s eyes harden. “To who?”

“And why would I tell you that, huh? You know what they do to rats in prison,” the prisoner leans back in his chair, and Steve leans forward over the edge of the table, letting his fangs pop.

“You’re talking to Five-0 right now; there’s not much you can do to keep the rest of the guys from thinking you’re a rat. If you cooperate, at least you get the benefit of being a rat,” Steve mutters flatly. “I’ll get your sentence shortened.”
The guy mulls this over for a moment before conceding. “Look, all I know, was that I was supposed to drop a package at the conference center downtown that weekend. Locker number eighty three,” the guy huffs. “It was a big deal, whatever was goin’ on at that place. Lotta science shit. I dropped the package, then my plates tags are expired and the pigs find out I’ve violated my parole, so I made a run for it.”

“Whereupon you thought it’d be a great idea to shoot at Five-0,” Steve shakes his head, standing up. “Yeah. Good plan.”

“Hey!” the guy protests. “Heat of the moment or whatever, man, I didn’t wanna go back to jail!”

“And how did that work out for you?” Steve asks flatly. The guy is silent. “I’m done here,” the alpha says to the guard in the corner of the room. “I’ll talk to the judge.”

He calls Danny and asks him to look online at every conference center’s website to see who had an event going on during the weekend, and to cross reference that list with whichever of the centers provide lockers for guests.

“Any specific locker number?” Danny asks, and he sounds tired, even though Steve knows he’s been lying down all day.

“Locker number eighty three,” Steve explains, getting into the truck.

“Are you uh… coming back now?” Danny asks softly, lowering his voice, and the alpha grins.

“You worried about me, Danno?” he chuckles into the phone playfully, and he hears the omega sigh.

“I’m not worried, I’m rationally concerned. Father of my pups, love of my life, and you pick today to go cavorting around town. The wind’s picking up, I can hear it over the phone,” the detective points out.

“I had to question one of the prisoners,” Steve sighs.

“And that couldn't wait?”

“It couldn't, actually,” Steve quips matter of factly. “All of the prisoners are getting relocated tonight. The supermax prison is on low ground.”

“It would be the first thing to flood, yeah, I know. Storm surge and all that, makes sense,” Danny sighs. “Just hurry back.”

“Don't stress yourself out babe, I’m fine.” And yeah, Steve can hear that that suggestion is falling flat on the other end of the call. “Really. It’s just a little wind.”

“Do I have to pull the ‘I’m-pregnant-and-I-just-fucking-need-you-here-because-I’m-in-a-strange-place-away-from-my-nest’ card?”

Steve frowns. “I think you just did.”

“Yeah, well,” Danny mutters, “That’s my prerogative, then, isn't it? So get back here, or I’m putting an APU out on you.”

The alpha smirks; “On my way.”
Danny glances across the lobby as he pads slowly back from the bathroom. Normally at about this time, Danny would be packing up files and making the last slew of phone calls to follow up on leads. It's weird to not have to go home from work.

When Steve walks through the door, Danny feels the omega half of his brain relaxing into a shamelessly pathetic sense of satisfaction and relief that his tall, muscular mate is back in their temporary ‘den.’ The detective ignores the overwhelming urge to go anoint his forehead with the scent glands under the alpha’s jaw, settling instead for clearing his throat and flashing a forced grin like he hasn't been anxious for the last two hours.

This pup isn't going to rob me of my last shreds of dignity, Danny declares to himself sullenly.

“Alfred Hitchcock movies in the conference room in ten!” Jerry yells, carrying a few boxes of popcorn and a large bowl to the breakroom. “And -- hey -- who ate all of my Oreos? Not cool!”

Danny winces, realizing that leaving an eleven year old alone in a room with an open package of Oreos may have been poor planning.

“Movie night?” Steve asks, then laughs when Kono appears in a hoodie, sweatpants, and UGG boots. “I see you don't waste any time getting off the clock.”

“Any time spent not wearing sweatpants after work is just negative sweatpants time, Boss,” Kono says with a knowing glance as she heads into the conference room.

“You aren't in bed,” Steve says softly, turning to him.

“Bathroom,” Danny murmurs with a sigh.

“He’s been pretty good about staying in bed today, actually,” Chin says approvingly as he follows after Kono. He’s wearing blue jeans and a hoodie.

“Seeing everyone at work in casual clothes is like seeing a bunch of dogs walking around on their hind legs,” Danny snorts under his breath, glancing up to meet Steve’s eyes.

The alpha glances around, reaching out to pull Danny closer to his side affectionately, and murmurs something in agreement as he discreetly inhales near Danny’s neck.

“Let’s go claim some seats in the conference room,” Steve says finally, steering the omega toward the rest of the team.

Jerry has his iPhone connected to some sort of projector gadget, and Danny is skeptical until the lights go out and the resolution of the screen isn’t half bad.

“Which one is this?” Steve asks, settled into a rolling chair behind Danny and reaching for the bowl of popcorn.


For 120 minutes, they aren't officers isolated in a storm, they’re just friends hanging out, and it reminds Danny of how lucky he is to work with the team. On screen, Tippi Hedren shrieks and bats away a few stuffed birds and Steve smirks to himself at the fact that the wires are visible in a few
Still, the spooky scene framed through the school windows of the birds ominously collecting on the playground has everyone sincerely creeped out; a low hum of ‘ooooh’ reverberates around the conference room.

Jerry startles the nesting pair when he bursts out suddenly with flecks of popcorn spraying from his mouth that ‘this film is a fucking masterpiece’ and then apologizes, remembering that Danny and Steve have very powerful hearing.

When Danny reaches for the popcorn after that, his claws are popped, but no one mentions it.

“You alright?” Steve whispers gently behind him, and Danny nods quickly, turning back to the movie, but Steve sees him fidgeting nervously until the credits start to roll.

Twenty minutes into the after movie discussion, however, Danny stands up, silently walking toward the tech table. He leans on it gingerly with a sigh as Steve follows him out.

“You didn't like the movie buddy?” The alpha asks, concerned.

Danny looks up almost like he's confused. “What? Oh. No, I love Hitchcock movies -- you know that -- I just...”

Steve walks closer when the detective pauses to type something on the tech table, and the alpha glances up when traffic cam footage fills the screen.

The haunting black and white images of the deserted intersections and highways are sobering evidence of just how alone they are on the island. There are a few other cops, some medical personnel, and a few stubborn islanders, but all in all, the islands are empty.

“You can see the wind starting to pick up,” Danny says uneasily, gesturing to the swaying and thrashing palm trees. “All afternoon, I was watching the national guard carting the homeless people up the mountain to the shelter at the base. I heard they even took some of the zoo animals up there so they wouldn't drown in the flood water.”

Steve sighs. “The prisoners at the supermax security prison are being relocated to a ship tonight.”

“You told me,” Danny mumbles, before lifting his tired cobalt eyes. “I know we’ve got the generator, and I know we’re on high ground, and we’re prepared -- beyond prepared -- but…”

Steve leans forward as a few of the camera screens start to flicker and sway; he tries adjusting the camera angle settings, but a few of the screens still continue to flicker and eventually turn to black static. He frowns. It's getting rough outside. “But?”

But I haven't talked to my pups in three days

But we're not sure when we'll get to see them again

But our house is probably going to be destroyed

“I just can’t relax enough to watch a movie right now, I mean, good for them -- they deserve a break -- I just… that’s not me, I don't know,” Danny admits, glancing down as he raises a hand up to rub over his abdomen. “Maybe I’m just a stir crazy from laying down all day with this one.”

“Speaking of which…” Steve whispers, raising his brows, but they’re both startled by the sound of
the stairwell door bursting open down the hall from the offices. The alpha growls, ears piqued to
attention, and his hand drifts toward his gun as they both stare expectantly at the lobby doors.

It’s Dr. Carter, wearing a dark raincoat marked with the Pacific Weather Association logo. “Th-
there’s been an explosion!”
Chapter Eleven

Chapter Notes

Hello readers! Enjoy :) 

Danny is left back at headquarters trying to talk to Dr. Carter -- trying to listen, rather. He’s been trying for the last four minutes or so, to listen to how Carter had been trying to film footage of the storm rolling in down in the marina when the explosion happened -- some kind of ship apparently. He had known as soon as Dr. Carter had informed everyone about the explosion that he was going to have to sit this one out, and when Steve had turned to him and given him a long look the omega had sighed and waved up a hand in dismissal. ‘Go check it out -- I’ll stay here with Carter.’ Even Jerry had had to leave, something about kids in the hospital needing transport to the shelter up the mountain, and, with all of HPD heading to the scene of the explosion -- there was no one left to transport the kids.

So Danny is left trying to feign interest in Carter’s explanation of why hurricanes spin and it has something to do with high pressure and low pressure and less to do with anything Danny has ever cared to know in his life.

What’s making everything worse is that the new pup is nudging and fluttering away in a tiny frenzy in the pit of his abdomen, and, while Danny is happy that she’s more active today, he can’t focus on a damn word the meteorologist is saying. He nods politely, trying not to wince, as he shoves his hands awkwardly in his pockets lest he place them over his rambunctious stowaway.

Because he really doesn’t want this stranger to know he’s carrying.

It’s none of the guy’s business.

He’s texted the team as much, asking them to keep his ‘condition’ on the DL, and everyone seemed okay with it.

Finally, he can’t take it anymore, and he exasperatedly decides to bail on this conversation and apologizes before walking as steadily as he can back to his cot in Steve’s office.

Which is where I should be, anyway, he thinks with a sigh of resignation.

Behind closed doors, Danny relaxes a bit and lets his hand drift down to his abdomen; he rubs his hand up under his tee shirt and palms his belly in a slow circle, remembering back to when he had adamantly not wanted to carry another pup. That was, of course, only up until he had been faced with the terrifying possibility of losing this one, whereupon he realized how attached he already was to the little thing.

Letting his shirt fall back over his slight belly, he gingerly sits on the cot and -- slowly, gently -- turns onto his side, and he feels the baby re-adjust too. For a few minutes, the omega lays quietly and tries to distinguish between the kicks and punches, until he shuts his eyes, refusing to admit to himself that he might not totally hate being pregnant again, after all.
When Steve has to leave his mate behind at headquarters, Kono can see the pain in the alphas eyes -- it's not something she's used to seeing and she hopes she never does get used to seeing it.

Steve acts so differently when he's nesting, but she guesses that, with the hormones, he can't help it. His instincts are telling him not to leave Danny's side, telling him he needs to be with the Omega to protect him not only because he's carrying, and not only because they had a health scare with the pup, but also because of the torrential storm bearing down on the horizon.

The problem is that nobody outside of Five-0 knows that Steve is on edge from nesting right now, so when one of the rookies with HPD gets in the Alpha’s face about why he took so long getting down to the docks, Kono springs forward to place a hand on Steve’s shoulder.

“Hey -- Boss? Boss, it’s okay, I’ll deal with him, just go find the Captain,” Kono says quickly with a forced smile. Steve sighs through his fangs and nods, stalking off toward the captain.

She then turns to the rookie, giving him one of her world class cold stares; “Are you trying to get punched in the face? Because I could do it, to save you the trouble.”

The rookie looks at her dumbly, “Well, I --”

“You fucked up, and that’s where this story ends, you little prick,” she snaps, narrowing her eyes, and the younger beta rookie clamps his mouth shut and gulps nervously before Kono follows toward the end of the docks with her boss.

The water looks alive. It’s roaring up in towering waves, crashing down against the dock with so much force that she's almost nervous to be standing on it; the wooden planks are already slick from the cold rain that's been blowing sideways for the last six hours.

Through the misty, stinging spray of the rain, Kono pulls her Five-0 issue windbreaker tighter and walks up to where Chin and Steve are standing stolidly with their arms crossed. Captain Duke Lukela is shouting up at Steve in an ancient looking raincoat, pointing at the large boat that’s just off the docks with her boss.

Kono gasps.

The entire middle of the boat is a charred fray of jagged metal, broken glass, and the twisted, burned out skeleton of the boat.

“What caused the explosion?” Her cousin Chin asks loudly.

Duke tightens one side of his mouth skeptically “The crew said they think it was the Gas Main but the whole thing looks suspicious to the pyrotechnics forensics crew -- not that they had long to look at it before the waves got too high…”

“There’s no way to do an investigation into right now, we’re just going to have to deal with it after the storm if the boat isn't smashed to bits,” Steve waves up a hand to gesture to the water. “Storm surge is coming in heavy.”

“The prisoners have no where to go, now!” Duke nods yells up at the alpha over the roar of the surf. “This was the last outbound ship and the prison is already flooding -- the whole place will be five feet deep in the water by morning!”
Steve glances back at the row of white school busses of prisoners; the engines are running and their headlights are casting an eerie glow through the misty sheets of rain in the wind.

“The holding cells at headquarters aren't going to be able to hold everyone,” Kono says, and the alpha turns to glance back at her.

“Kono’s right,” Steve says gruffly. “Some of them -- the least dangerous ones -- are going to have to go to the shelters at the base on the mountain.”

“The ones convicted of non-violent crimes,” Chin nods. “The murderers and anyone charged with rape, assault, or battery are going to have to go to the holding cells. We can't expose the rest of the people in the shelter to that kind of risk.”

Steve nods, silently, and Kono can see the same pained look in his green-blue eyes at the thought of his vulnerable, pregnant mate sharing a building with a bunch of dangerous felons. “Start figuring out who the worst of the prisoners are,” he says, then pauses, glancing down at the wet boards of the docks. “I need to get back to HQ to attend to a personal matter, Duke.”

“I understand. I’ll see you there,” Duke nods, and Steve starts to walk briskly back toward his huge blue truck.

Kono jogs to keep up with him and she and her cousin both hoist themselves up into the truck. Steve has started the car but he’s hunched forward anxiously with the radio unit in his large hand.

“Detective Williams -- Come in, Detective Williams, do you read me?”

There’s a pause of silence and then the detective’s voice is groggily coming in over the radio.

<<Detective Williams speaking.>>

Steve sighs in relief.

<<Please tell me you are not using the police radio to check on me.>>

Steve smiles silently.

<<That’s exactly what you’re doing, isn’t it.>>

Kono and Chin chuckle in the passenger and back seats, looking at the blush on Steve’s face. “He knows you, boss,” Kono giggles.

“We’re on our way back. You can't blame me for worrying,” Steve says softly into the radio, and Danny snorts into the receiver.

<<We’re fine -- we’re both fine. Dr. Carter tried to bore me to death talking about the storm cells or some science shit but I escaped.>>

“Be nice,” Steve mutters into the receiver, then he pulls the car into reverse.

<<Yeah yeah, drive safe, >> Danny mumbles. << And get back here. >>

The alpha picks up the receiver one last time. “See you soon. And you better be in bed,” Steve warns. “You hear me? IN BED, Danny.”

<<You get in bed>>
As soon as Steve returns, he tries not to rush up to his office too obviously but -- with his superior hearing -- he hears Kono whisper to Chin in the stairwell below him that 'he’s so adorable when he’s nesting.’

Steve rolls his eyes at this, trying to convince himself that it’s not abnormal to be concerned about being away from his mate even though he was relatively fine with it earlier that day. He bursts into the office and nearly startles Danny, who must have been dozing off again.

“Jesus,” Danny breathes, looking up at him curiously. “Are you alright?”

Steve nods quickly -- too quickly -- and rushes forward to scoop Danny up from the cot using his alpha strength.

“Woah! What the -- Steve!” Danny protests, clutching onto him as he’s hoisted up into the air. The alpha sits down on the couch with the omega in his arms; he then leans to bury his face in the small blonde’s neck, inhaling his comforting scent and darting out his tongue to lap at his scent gland.

Kono pokes her head in the door and yells out in surprise, covering her eyes; “Oh my God sorry -- sorry -- But uh, boss I have the roster and the files of the prisoners downstairs. The ones you uh… said you wanted,” she blurts, still covering her eyes.

Danny is frozen awkwardly staring up at her and then looks to Steve, and then back to Kono, and back to Steve. “Steve,” Danny squirms, but the alpha growls and holds him tighter.

“You're mine,” he snarls in a low rumble and Danny purses his lips, glancing back at Kono.

“I’m sorry, Kono, he’s kinda going through a thing right now, apparently. Jesus Christ,” he hisses in embarrassment, trying to wrench his neck away from the licking because it’s dangerously close to making him purr in front of Kono. “We’re gonna be here a while, can you just -- just -- please lock the door, please?”

Kono nods quickly and Danny can smell the blush on her skin even though her eyes are covered. She tosses the files down on Danny’s cot and the omega exhales a long breath, laying back.

He does start purring. He can’t help it. God this is humiliating.

But it feels so good.

And he's getting drunk off of the Alpha’s pheromones.

One of Steve’s hands ghosts down to his belly to flatten protectively over his belly and Danny sighs, letting his head fall against Steve’s shoulder as the purring rumbles low in his own chest. He feels safe, like an itch he didn't know he had even had has finally been scratched with warm loving fingertips and the comforting sensation is pulling him to sleep. Even their pup has finally calmed down, like she too knows that the alpha is watching them with loving, attentive, steadfast dedication.

Danny falls asleep in his alpha’s arms.
Danny wakes a few hours later to the sound of the building shaking. He's on the floor of Steve’s office on an air mattress under a few old ratty blankets that Steve was supposed to have thrown out years ago, and the Alpha is wrapped around him like an octopus.

It's after Danny takes a long groaning breath during a stretch that he feels an odd sensation that he hasn't felt in a long time. It's faint, but he can still feel it.

He’s *synching* with someone.

The first times this had ever happened, he was standing near Michelle Northamer, in her homemade and the court room. It only happens when he’s near another pregnant person and he knows there is zero possibility that he’s synching with Steve so he turns over to glance around -- half to make sure that they’re alone in the room.

“Where the fuck is that coming from?” He mutters, before leaning curiously toward the air vent on a hunch.

The feeling is stronger now.

He pauses, laying back, and frowns. Someone else in the building is pregnant, and the hormones are coming through the vents.

His first alarming thought is that it may be Kono, but he had been next to her in the tight quarters of the conference room the night before for a few hours… and he hadn't registered so much as a feeble blip on his synching ‘radar,’ as Steve had once called it.

Besides, he thinks, Kono is still mated to Cath, and I’m pretty sure they would've told their best friends if they were planning on using a sperm donor.

*So who is it?*

The building gives another violent shiver in the howling wind and the roar of the rain against the plywood is a consistent rush in the silence between the gales.

“Storm’s here,” Steve murmurs suddenly; his eyes are still closed when Danny rolls to face him.

“Just the edge of it,” the omega whispers. “They always get worse the closer you are to the eye of the storm.”

“Dr. Carter teach you that?” Steve smirks.

Danny swats at him. “He taught me how to slowly torture someone to death with scientific knowledge. And we used to get hurricanes in Jersey, for your information.”

“Speaking of Jersey, we need to bring the pups up to see your parents,” Steve says, then lets the question hang in the air. Danny grimaces.

“Steve, my father and brother never really… embraced my omega side. I carried the pups myself, so Sophie and Cooper are reminders of my subgender,” the omega sighs. “I think that’s why my dad’s never wanted to fly down here to meet the pups, and I think that’s why he never talks to you on the phone like Mom does.”

“Didn't he know it was possible as an alpha marrying an omega that there was a chance one of his kids would be an omega?” Steve huffs in frustration. “I mean, that's the only way omegas are born
besides two omegas getting together.”

“He comes from a long line of alphas,” Danny says quietly. “And my brother and sister are alphas.” The omega looks up at the ceiling, suddenly looking fatigued even though he has just slept for a few hours.

Steve reaches over to pull him close when the vaguely sour scent of sadness furls off of his mate. “Hey, forget him, okay? I love that you’re an omega, and I love that you’ve given me the most beautiful two children in the world.”

A smile plays at the corners of Danny’s mouth. “Two and a half.”

Steve mirrors his expression in a goofy grin and reaches out to rub over Danny’s stomach affectionately. “You’re right. Two and a half. How’s the pup?”

“She's getting to be a feisty little thing.” Danny explains, pulling a face of bewilderment as he glances down at his stomach. “Surprises me how strong she is.”

“Good,” Steve says smugly, leaning over to kiss his stomach.

“Which reminds me,” Danny pauses. “Is there someone new in the building… as of last night?”

Steve tightens one side of his mouth. “Well there's a lot of new someones in the building as of last night; about a third of the island’s prisoners are downstairs in the holding cells.”

“What?”

Steve sits up. “We didn't have a choice -- the boat that was gonna transport the prisoners offshore blew up.”

The detective frowns. “That's a little too convenient.”

“Danny how could someone have planned for a hurricane to flood the prison to even necessitate the boat?” The alpha retorts flatly.

“I'm just saying,” Danny mutters. “Boats don't just blow up.”

“Maybe they do in eight foot waves. They think a gas pipe got knocked loose when the boat was trying to dock,” Steve shrugs.

“Yeah, right before someone knocked loose a lighter,” the omega snorts. Steve shakes his head.

“I'm gonna go start the coffee,” he says, giving up on trying to convince Danny not to jump to conclusions.

Danny blinks. “How are you even going to power the thing?”

“Chin rigged up some kind of car battery to it,” Steve chuckles, flicking on a few of the emergency lights that are plugged into the generator. “Desperate times, desperate measures and all that.”

“Good old Chin,” Danny mutters, slightly disgruntled that he can't actually drink any of the coffee.
By mid morning, Steve has gathered up the roster of prisoners and is going down the list of names with Chin. Danny is next to them, cupping his hands around some mint tea and grimacing when the pup starts to wake up with her usual routine of acrobatics inside him.

“Danny, all these guys are betas and alphas,” Chin explains, raising his brows as he looks up from the list.

“Well, one of them is an omega, and that omega is pregnant, I swear to God,” Danny waves up his hands and shrugs.

“It’s not like whoever it is is gonna own up to it either,” Steve says flatly. “If I was an omega in a prison with a bunch of murderer alphas, I sure as hell would not let anyone find out what I was, at any cost.”

“I just think it’s weird,” Danny sighs. “I kind of want to go down there and, I dunno, see who the guy is.”

“You are not going down there,” Steve mutters gruffly, flicking his eyes over at Danny. “You smell too appealing to alphas right now.”

Chin has the decency to pretend to be occupied with the list as Danny and Steve frustrate each other on the issue, until he finally resolves to change the subject entirely. Pulling out the case file on the Goodfather, Chin slides the folder toward the nesting pair, hoping to bait their attention with it.

Danny leans over to reach for it. “So, Steve, what exactly was the deal with the prisoner doing the package drop?”

Steve leans back, pursing his lips. “Guy didn't know the purpose behind the mission. All he knew was to put whatever it was in locker number eighty three.”

Chin looks up at Danny. “And you said you had narrowed it down to one conference center, right?”

The omega is idly holding a palm over his stomach, rubbing one area slowly where the pup must be bothering him. “We ah… we think it's the Hoku Hele conference center downtown -- they were the only place that rents lockers to conference guests that also had a major event going on that weekend.”

Bringing up a hand to his jaw as he tries to place the Conference center in his mind, Chin is almost startled when Kono appears behind him yawning with a cup of coffee.

She’s still wearing her pajamas and ugg boots as she looks around and smiles at the team. “I was gonna try to make pancakes with the hot plate if anyone wants in.”

“I would make you Godmother of this pup if you make me pancakes right now,” Danny blurts, giving her a serious expression with raised brows.

“What else do we have in the food supply -- any protein? He needs protein,” Steve says as he gestures to Danny with his thumb before frowning and deciding to check himself.

The burning urges to provide for his mate are probably overpowering him, Chin thinks with a sigh. He had wanted to make some progress on this case before the governor checks in for a briefing as soon as the storm passes.

“What event was at the Hoku Hele that weekend?” Chin asks, and Danny gets up to
grab notes off of his desk. He returns a few minutes later and hands Chin a black and white brochure print out.

“Twenty third annual Technology and Engineering Expo,” the Asian man reads slowly. And then something catches his eye.

“What?” Danny mutters, frowning as he hears Chin’s heart beat quicker.

Chin looks up from the brochure and hands it back to the detective. “In the small print in the very bottom -- it looks like it's slightly cut off by the printer, but I'm pretty sure one of the featured guests was --”

“Dr. Joan Poteralski,” Danny reads with widened eyes. “You don't think she could've been involved with the Goodfather do you?”

“I don't know, Danny -- she brought the shifting serum here to keep the stuff from being stolen so it doesn’t wind up in the wrong hands,” Chin counters. “I’m pretty sure the Goodfather’s hands are the wrong hands.”

Danny darts his eyes across the room in thought, tightening one side of his mouth in a skeptical expression. “But a drug lord and crime boss could afford to pay a pretty steep price for this stuff; maybe it’s the most Dr. Poteralski could get for it. And maybe she wants to look like she has clean hands when criminals start using this stuff to evade police,” the detective muses, before a steaming bowl of oatmeal is put down in front of him.

“Eat it,” Steve demands, moving to collapse into the chair beside his mate.

Staring at the oatmeal like even the sight of it is offensive, Danny opens his mouth to protest. “But the pancakes--”

“I don't care, Danny, eat both,” Steve splays out his hands emphatically. “All we have is non-perishable goods, and you can't eat the canned tuna because of the mercury. So unless you want a can of beans, you're going to eat that damn oatmeal.”

“I just don't like the texture of oatmeal, babe, you know that. It's like a sloppy mess in a bowl,” the detective mumbles, pushing a spoon around in the oatmeal with a distinct lack of enthusiasm.

“You are making another person right now, Danny -- I think you need some protein!” Steve says loudly, then pauses. “Please just do it for the pup,” he adds.

The omega finally sighs in defeat, picking up the spoon. “You are a manipulative bastard, you know that?”

“I am a caring alpha,” Steve retorts, before turning to Chin. “Anything new on the case?”

The Asian man nods, sliding over the brochure and pointing the name at the bottom of the page. “We think Poteralski may have been secretly taking bids for her serum on the black market, but that she also wants it to look like her hands are clean.”

Steve frowns, “And you think she may have been the owner of locker number eighty three?”

“It’s poffibul,” Danny says over a mouth full of oatmeal.

The alpha purses his lips and stares down at the brochure before slowly starting to shake his head. “Then why would she have brought the serum HERE if she wanted it stolen? That makes no sense.
She could have left it in some lab unattended and would have been able to come back after the storm and claim that someone had broken in to steal it.”

Danny suddenly makes an audible gagging sound as he tries to eat the oatmeal and Steve turns to him to mutter something about being dramatic. It's too early for Chin to endure another round of bickering so he rattles the paper on the desk, trying to pique the interest of Steve’s alpha senses, and, as predicted, the alpha’s head snaps around curiously to find the source of the noise.

Chin will never tell Steve, but he’s pretty sure that a dangling feather on a piece of string would appeal to his chase instinct. He’s obviously never tried it.

But he's tempted.

Danny dreams that night about way back when the pups were tiny -- when they had first brought them home, and when the case was finally settled. They were no longer at war with what had seemed to be the entire world; Danny was no longer ‘patient 0100’ or ‘that omega from the news,’ and Steve was no longer the ‘volatile nesting Alpha.’

They were just new fathers, then, trying to adjust to their pups and readjust to each other. Danny dreams that he's back in that nervous but excited transition, curled up on his side around the pups. The two tiny babies are only a month old, snuggled close to his bare chest as Steve breathes warm breath on the back of his neck.

He dreams that they cry for him in the middle of the night -- pitiful little mews -- and his chest starts to leak in response.

“Is it 2:00 AM already?” Steve murmurs sleepily.

“On the dot,” Danny whispers, rubbing the pups’ tiny backs. “Shhhh, I know, I know -- you’re just starving aren’t you?”

Danny moves Sophie closer and she latches onto him eagerly. Steve takes Cooper, settling the tiny pup against him, where tiny hands grab a fist of his chest hair. The alpha is sitting up against the headboard, glancing down over Danny’s shoulder to watch the omega feed Sophie.

When he had first started to feed the pups, the fact that his body could do this had both overwhelmed him and made him uncomfortable. But now, it's not so bad; Steve watches as Danny falls into a contented, sleepy eyed haze in response to the gentle tugging at his sensitive chest, breathing even and trailing his fingertips over Sophie’s back. When she’s done, Danny yawns and hands her to his mate for a trade-off, gingerly grabbing their hungry little alpha pup to bring him up to his chest.

Danny dreams about their awkward acclimation to returning to work after three months of paternity leave. He's interrogating a young female thief when two wet spots appear in his dress shirt in response to her crying. She gapes at him in surprise but has the decency to clear her throat and gesture to his chest. “My brother’s an omega too…” she says softly through her tears. Danny lets her off easy after that.

The next familiar scene in his dream is waking up to Sophie and Cooper climbing into his bed, clambering over his stomach and knocking the wind out of him so they can hide from the lightning and thunder of the storm that had rolled through that night. Steve wraps a strong arm over both of
the pups and they finally stop shivering, safe under the alpha’s protective embrace. This happens so often that they haven’t been able to sleep naked for six months.

He then dreams about reliving the first time he went feral in front of the pups. It's a painful memory. There had been a creepy older man standing just outside of the chainlink fence surrounding the public pool -- just watching the kids running around in their bathing suits. When Danny smells arousal coming off of this man -- and then turns to see the guy's hand down the front of his pants -- he scales the fence and springs on to him, snarling, as the creep tries to run away. He manages to handcuff the guy, read him his rights, and call Steve at the office. Then, as the kids stare in shock, Danny drags his claws over the man’s face to leave an identifying scar and hisses in his face. Chin darts out of the Camaro’s passenger side and yells his name.

Steve pulls the feral omega off of the perp to allow Chin to take the creep to the station, and carries the thrashing Omega back to the pool. The alpha finally has to grab the back of Danny’s neck discreetly until the feral detective calms down. Steve explains to the kids about how alphas and omegas can have feral blackouts, and tells them that their Daddy may not remember doing any of this at all. The scared pups run up to him and clutch onto Danny’s legs; the Omega scoops them up, purring as he nuzzles their foreheads...

Danny wakes up on the floor of the office, purring, and he clears his throat, trying to stop. He checks his watch, with no other way to sense the passage of time with the windows boarded up; it's almost 7:00 AM.

“Good dream?” Steve whispers, and Danny groans.

“I don't know. Just memories, really. About the pups -- when they were young, I mean,” he trails off, glancing up to look behind them at the plywood over the window. The rain is getting worse, and the plywood is rattling.

“I miss them too,” Steve says quietly, reaching out to rub his bicep. “Pregnancy’s probably dragging a lot of those memories up.”

Danny frowns because, while he doesn't like the word ‘pregnant,’ he definitely cannot stand the word ‘pregnancy.’ He sighs, rubbing tiredly at his eyes; “Yeah.”

He pauses to look over at Steve in the dim glow of the emergency lights outside of the office. The alpha locks his iridescent eyes on his and reaches out to run fingertips along the side of his face. “Only a few more days -- a week maybe -- and our pups will be back with us.”

Danny pinches the bridge of his nose, willing himself not to fucking shed tears over how much he misses his little ones. Steve props himself up on an elbow and leans in to tip up his chin, pressing his lips against Danny’s in a slow kiss. He gently darts out his tongue to smooth along the omega’s lower lip and slides the tip in between those soft wet lips. Danny kisses him back fiercely, leaning back with a wavering breath as a single tear escapes each eye. The glistening moisture rolls down his temples as he stares, slightly unhinged, up at the alpha. Danny’s also clenching his mouth shut to keep his lower lip from trembling.

“Would you believe me if I said ‘everything's gonna be okay?’” Steve wipes one of the tears away with his thumb, cupping his face.

“I think I need you to …” he trails off, mumbling under his breath. Steve frowns.
“What?”

Danny sighs. “I think I need you to… make me a nest.” A blush steals over his face, one that Steve can’t see so much as smell on his skin.

Steve nods silently, giving a soft smile. “Let me get the coffee started and then brief the team on today’s agenda, and after that, I’ll go look for extra blankets. We may have given them all to the prisoners.”

The omega nods, turning onto his side and deciding that he may need to take a break from the case today -- a sort of personal day to get his head straight with this fucking mess of hormones.

But three hours later, Danny wakes from dozing off again to an odd sound.

The rain outside is battering the building mercilessly, which isn't new, but he can only hear the rain. Thinking that the team may have left him behind, Danny pulls himself up to his feet, leaving Steve’s office in only his sweat pants.

The place is deserted.

“Guys?” Danny calls out, and he checks Kono and Chin’s office. He then checks the Tech screen for any kind of note on the console but there isn't one. “Where the fuck…” he spins around anxiously, relying on his sense of smell.

He smells the cedar ocean scent of his mate, and briskly walks toward the source -- the break room…

...Where he finds Kono, Chin, and Steve all slumped on the floor, not moving.
Chapter Twelve

Chapter Notes

Just a teeny update ;) but yay for double update weekends! The law school has been hit with a blizzard and we might get another one tomorrow -___-

“Alpha!” Danny’s breath hitches around a lump in his throat as he lurches forward, kneeling down to try to place his fingers on Steve’s neck to feel his pulse. The pulse under his fingertips is strong; Steve’s skin is warm, he’s breathing, and the alpha’s heart is beating slow and even. He checks Chin and Kono and nods to himself shakily, running a hand over his mouth.

They’re alive.
It’s okay.
They’re alive.

The omega then glances around for blood, but there isn't any.

No blunt force trauma. Good.

Their fingernails are clear and not tinged purple from lack of oxygen. No carbon monoxide poisoning.

Danny reaches out to dig his clawed fingers into Seve’s muscular shoulder, trying to jar his mate awake with a shake or two. “Steve -- c’mon… Steve!” The alpha slumps toward him, completely unresponsive. The radio from his mate’s hip is also gone, and the omega swears under his breath.

Glancing around as his heart rate starts to pick up, Danny finally notices that there are three mugs tipped over onto the floor next to each of his team mates. A few dark stains in the carpet, near the dropped mugs, are slowly making the whole room smell like coffee.

They’re asleep. They’ve been drugged, a voice says in the back of his mind, slow and cold, like he’s on a crime scene -- but he’s not.

These are his friends.

He finds himself gravitating towards Steve again, unable to fight the instinct, and he struggles to move the huge alpha’s torso into his arms. “Steven,” Danny says in a low whine, holding him tight, until he hears the door to the office suite creak open.

The omega half of his brain is spooked, sending needle-like sensations down the center of his back as his fangs unsheath under his upper lip. He knows the culprit is coming back to check that the team is incapacitated, and he automatically reaches for his gun, finding the soft sweatpants material instead.

For four seconds, Danny is planning on springing onto whoever it is from behind and hooking them into a sleeper hold, until he looks down at his stomach wearily, remembering that he would be risking more than his own life.

Danny reaches his hands up to run them back over the top of his head as he looks around, biting his
lip. *Fuck!*

He has sprang across the hall to a supply closet to hide when a figure in a dark, hooded windbreaker briskly crosses the lobby of the offices, dripping water in rivulets on the polished granite as he walks toward the break room.

Trying not to breathe, the detective peers silently through a sliver of light in the door frame as he watches the hooded figure pull zip ties out of his coat and start to bind the ankles and wrists of Kono, Chin, and his mate.

Danny can't see the person’s face, and even in trying to adjust his vantage point, he almost knocks over a mop in the closet.

The baby nudges him, suddenly, reacting to the adrenaline in his blood. He reaches down tentatively to rub the spot, reminding himself why he has to stay hidden, though he’s fighting the urge to attack this person as soon as he gets the chance.

Danny flattens his palm over the swell of his lower abdomen protectively. He can't risk it.

It’s actually because of the pup that he's not knocked out on the floor right now, he thinks, pursing his lips. If he wasn't carrying, he would've been drinking the coffee too.

Holding his breath, the omega watches as the hooded figure walks out of the room and passes quickly by the closet. The figure smells familiar, but all Danny can really pick up with his heightened senses in the closet is the acrid sting of bleach tablets and ammonia based window cleaner. It's actually making him dizzy.

He fights to stay focused.

*Gun. I need a gun.*

As soon as he hears the door to the stairwell open and close, signaling that the culprit has left to venture down toward the holding cells on the first floor, Danny throws open the closet door. The omega darts into Steve’s office to grab Steve’s keys and pocket knife from the coat hanging on the back of the Alpha’s desk chair.

He cuts the zip ties binding his unconscious team members’ hands, one by one, and leaves the pocket knife next to Steve. After leaving the room, Danny locks the door with Steve’s utility keys, and takes the key off the ring, sliding it back under the locked break room door.

*There.*

*They’ll be safe in there until they wake up,* Danny thinks with a sigh. Not knowing how much time he’ll have before the hooded figure returns, he quickly returns to Steve’s office to throw on a Henley shirt and his athletic shoes. This way, he’s not running around barefoot and shirtless.

*And it'll hide that he's pregnant,* the same voice in the back of his mind whispers. Danny grits his teeth. He’s not supposed to be running around at all.

But he can't just hide with his head in the sand.

Grabbing his gun from under the pillow on his cot, Danny removes the safety and creeps toward the back stairs. He needs to get to the security footage room to see how many assailants have infiltrated the building.
Danny has to force himself to scale the stairs gently; he grips the worn metal of the handrail, breathing slow and even through his nose as he clenches his jaw. His omega side is raging in his head, hissing and spitting and clawing at the edge of his thoughts with a consuming urge to run back up to his unconscious Alpha.

But he needs to keep the upper hand.

Danny doesn't allow his thoughts to stray toward what will happen if he were to get kicked or punched in the stomach, and he uneasily draws a line in the sand of his mind. He can't think about that.

Both he and his pup will be safer if he can just get to the security cam room; Danny will be able to watch the assailant through the screens and hopefully find a spare radio.

It only takes forty five seconds to edge silently from the stairwell to the grey cold door of the security office, but there's someone inside the small office. He can hear their heartbeat, and he bares his teeth.

Deciding to bank on the advantage of surprise, Danny shoulders the door open and enters with his gun raised -- half expecting to shoot.

Instead, the omega nearly trips over someone that’s tied up on the floor.

It’s Dr. Carter. The meteorologist is laying on his side, writhing at the sight of the detective holding a gun. His mouth is duct taped, and his wrists and ankles are bound.

Danny crouches down; “Hey! Hey, woah, woah -- it's okay!” He reaches slowly toward the duct tape over the man’s mouth, noticing a nasty green and blue bruise on the man’s brow with a bit of blood. “I’m going to pull this off, now, okay?”

The man locks his frightened eyes on Danny’s, nodding, and the detective rips the tape off, wincing out of sympathy.

“Thank God you found me,” the man sputters. “I was just walking down the hall when someone knocked me out from around a corner. I w-woke up in here…”

Danny nods, flicking his claws out to cut the zip ties. Carter stares.

“You’re an omega?” He says suddenly.

Danny nods silently, edging the tip of his tongue out of the corner of his mouth as he slices through the other zip ties with his thumb nail.

“I didn't know that…” Carter says, looking down like it saddens him. “Does that mean that your children -- yours and the Commander’s -- you…?”

The Detective feels himself bristle at the question; it's not exactly polite to ask a male omega if he gave birth to his own pups. “Yes,” he says gruffly, slowly rising to his feet to search the security cams. But the histories have all been erased. Damn it!

“M-my uh… my wife and I adopted a little girl omega pup from China,” Carter babbles to himself holding the sides of his head as he brings his knees up to his chest. “W-We named her Hayley.”

Danny glances down at him, wondering if the guy’s going to start hyperventilating. “Tell me about Hayley,” he says. “Just breathe and tell me about Hayley.”
Dr. Carter gives a shaky sigh. “She uh… she’s five. She loves soccer. She has this little hot pink jersey she wears to all the games -- her team is called ‘The Raspberries,’ so they’re not exactly intimidating, but they love it,” he laughs sadly under his breath, and Danny can scent despair radiating off of this man as the omega searches frantically for a radio in the office. “I have a picture of her -- here…” Carter wipes at his eyes, holding out a plastic framed, two inch tall key-chain photo.

Pausing in his desperate search for a radio, the detective turns to reach out to hold the key chain. Carter silently presses it into his palm and Danny leans in close, unable to hide a smile. The little girl in the photo is in a hot pink soccer jersey has one of the biggest smiles he’s ever seen on a child. He wonders if Hayley is somehow related to Steven Tyler of Aerosmith.

“She's adorable. What a smile,” he grins, noticing that she has matching hot pink hair bows on both of her pigtails. This little girl looks loved. It’s sweet.

“Thank you,” Dr. Carter says softly.

It’s when Danny's handing the keys back, however, that the omega notices a bright orange, plastic and metal key that's much too small to be a door key.

In stark black numbers on the orange plastic, it says ‘83’ on the top of it.

Danny freezes.

_Locker number eighty three._
Chapter Thirteen

Chapter Notes

Ummmmm yeah last night's episode was amazing. Steve is *so* definitely Danny's husband.

Danny slowly raises his eyes to meet Carter’s under the flickering light of the security office, letting the keys drop into the meteorologist’s palm.

A beat passes, agonizingly slow, and Danny’s hand slowly twitches for the gun in the back of his pants.

“Don’t!” Carter shrieks, pulling a gun on him suddenly.

“Woah! Alright -- alright -- Carter,” Danny gasps. And God damnit he almost blurts out that he's pregnant, but he refuses, even though his hand automatically moves to grab his stomach. “Carter don’t do this…”

“I’m sorry,” the meteorologist says in a shaky voice. “They have her! They have my Hayley!”

“Carter, we can help you -- we can help you get Hayley back,” Danny says slowly. Backing toward the exit. Carter still has his gun raised at Danny. “You don't have to do this… you don't have to work for Santos!”

“Yes I do… This is the only way I can get her back! It's a trade,” Carter hisses, adjusting his fingers nervously on the gun to hold it with both hands. “I’m sorry.”

Danny clenches his eyes shut, expecting the sound of a gunshot. Instead, the single light in the ceiling, which has been feebly flickering with the surges of the generator in the storm, finally burns out, showering a few sparks down on the two men. The room is cast into darkness and Danny pulls his gun, using his keener Omega night vision to blast a single shot into a fire extinguisher just behind Carter’s shoulder. As predicted, the fire extinguisher explodes in a violent expulsion of white powder that knocks Carter onto his knees.

Sprinting toward the stairs, Danny says a silent prayer that the pup will be okay and realizes grimly that he has to hide now, unable to risk any more physical exertion. He can't even move anything heavy enough to barricade himself in anywhere. The explosion of the fire extinguisher has given him a moment’s lead on Carter, luckily, so he bolts straight for the Five-O offices, red faced and ashamed that he is hiding, but not knowing what else to do to avoid a physical altercation.

As soon as he wrenches open the lobby doors, Danny starts to yank the emergency lights out of the power strips attached to the generator, leaving the department a cold pitch black except for a few displays and buttons glowing on the steadily humming SARRA. The thing has its own generator, powered by radioactive isotopes, which is why Danny has been avoiding standing near it since he found out about the new pup -- regardless of what Poteralski had said about SARRA being harmless.

Throwing open the door to Steve’s office, Danny draws the blinds and locks the door.

Please do not make me leave little Hayley without a father, he thinks, pinching the bridge of his nose.
Normally, he would shoot the guy in the leg… but that would effectively be a kill shot unless he was able to get Carter immediate medical attention afterward. In this storm, any kind of deep wound would probably kill the man.

Damn it.

I either need to knock him out or to dart him with a tranquilizer, the omega realizes with a sigh. He props a chair under the doorknob, silently deciding that if it comes down to either getting shot or shooting Carter, he’ll fire his gun -- but only as a last resort. The guy’s only trying to get his pup back, after all.

In the darkness of the room, Danny pulls a few dusty boxes of files out of the closet and crouches down to hide inside it, leaving the door cracked. He sighs quietly in the darkness and tries to force himself to breathe slowly.

“I don't want to hurt you, Detective Williams,” Carter’s voice yells from the darkened lobby. Danny can see the strobing glare of a flashlight beam flashing around the room. “I don't know why you didn't drink the coffee like the rest of them -- would have made this a lot easier!”

Danny grits his teeth, edging toward the window to peer through the blinds at the beta standing in the deserted lobby. With his enhanced night vision, Danny can't see as well as an Alpha could, but he can still see more than a beta.

The meteorologist is walking toward the SARRA.

Fuck.

“And I know you think this stuff was going to be sold on the black market,” he yells out cavalierly, sounding like he's completely at the edge of his own sanity. “I know the governor was so convinced it was gonna be stolen, but -- surprise! It was never gonna leave the building in the first place!”

Danny narrows his eyes. What in the HELL is this guy--

“Everyone that I have to give it to,” Carter laughs, removing the vials of the serum, “is already here!”

Danny’s eyes widen as he rocks back on his knees. Oh no. The prisoners.

“It was never even about the serum,” Carter laughs Sadly to himself. “Would you believe that? Wherever you are? I know you’re listening…”

Running his hands back over his hair in frustration, the detective mentally sorts through his options. He can keep hiding, and risk Carter cornering him, or he can try to overcome Carter.

Somehow.

Without actually fighting.

Preferably before all of the beta prisoners turn into dangerous animals.

“Jesus Christ,” the omega hisses under his breath. He can hear Carter still gathering bottles of the serum.

The serum is useless without animal blood, Danny considers, worrying his lower lip between his teeth. His fangs start to prickle into his skin as he realizes that Carter probably has animal blood hidden somewhere to give to the prisoners with the serum.
Animal blood -- that's probably what was in the package drop that The Goodfather organized for locker number eighty three.

When Danny turns to steal a glance through the blinds at Carter after another few minutes, the meteorologist has got a syringe full of the serum and he's injecting himself in the arm with it.

The omega’s jaw clenches, and he bites back a groan of frustration at the fact that, in a few minutes, he’ll have an entirely new tangle of bullshit to deal with. His odds of surviving the day unscathed are completely contingent upon whatever the hell kind of blood sample The Goodfather has supplied for Carter.

He knows that the process for shifting, however, takes about a minute and involves a violent seizure -- or at least Steve’s first shift into a lion did. It may be the only chance to try to get to the weapons room for a tranquilizer gun, and, *god fucking dammit*, this is not stuff he wanted to do while pregnant.

Danny counts the seconds as they pass slowly, watching through the blinds as Carter starts to stagger and grunt in pain, gripping his arm at the injection site. The omega moves into a crouching position on his feet, readying himself.

When the tall, spindly meteorologist falls to his knees, starting to shiver with his face twisted in agony, Danny throws open the door and sprints along the wall into a nearby hallway. At the end of the hall, the weapons room is an array of artillery that Danny can't use unless he wants to kill the man. That isn't what Danny wants, however easy it would be to do. Sighing in frustration, the omega grabs the tranquilizer dart gun. It's pre-loaded with three darts.

Danny cocks the gun and removes the safety as he sprints back to the marble and granite tiled lobby, raising his gun to aim at the dark furry shape in the middle of the floor.

He pulls the trigger.

Three times, because, in the dark, this thing looks big, even though its hunched over and curled up on the floor.

The darts pierce the dark furry flesh of the creature that is Carter, and Danny waits. After another minute passes, the thing doesn't move, but Danny can hear it breathing.

The detective bites the inside of his lower lip and plugs in an emergency light that's hanging limply next to him, trying to see if the beast is actually *out*.

The creature -- Danny still can't make out what it is -- starts to move in an awkward, uncoordinated fashion, like it isn't used to its own arms and legs.

A deep guttural vocalisation echoes out across the tiles of the lobby and Danny feels the hair on the back of his neck raise in response. What the hell kind of blood did Carter use?

The animal -- despite the three darts -- starts to raise up to its feet slowly, and Danny’s question is answered with hideous clarity.

In the harsh glow of the single emergency light, a huge, black and grey silverback gorilla stands up to its hind legs.

The beast has to be at least eight hundred pounds -- which explains why the darts, sticking out of the thing’s shoulder, are doing nothing. Danny throws the dart gun to the floor, baring his fangs as his entire body bristles, and he hisses involuntarily.
The gorilla roars at him.
The silverback charges at him, shaking the floor as it barrels across the lobby. Danny reaches for his gun and realizes with a dreadful sense of foreboding that it must have fallen out of the back of his pants when he was crouched down in the closet of Steve’s office. Trying to outrun this thing is futile -- and Danny knows it, but his omega brain has him trying to anyway.

When the gorilla catches up to him, it reaches a baseball glove sized hand out and grabs the back of his tee shirt, temporarily strangling the omega as the collar of the shirt pulls against his front of his neck. The omega is wrenched backwards and thrown to the marble floor, and he yelps inhumanly in distress over the thought of what this could do to his unborn pup. His omega brain is searing his entire body with the electric current of his protective instincts, telling him that he needs his alpha.

Hissing and spitting, Danny tries to claw himself away, digging his hooked nails into the marble floor tiles. But Carter suddenly starts dragging the pregnant omega out of the lobby with one huge hand on his ankle as Danny thrashes and snarls.

The gorilla pulls Danny toward the stairwell, throwing open the heavy metal door with one hand, and then, to Danny’s horror, the beast starts to lift him. The omega snarls, clawing at the thing’s face and arms until he realizes he isn’t going to be carried down the stairs -- he's about to be shoved down the stairs.

Danny panics and clenches his eyes shut, “WAIT, WAIT, STOP, STOP -- I’M PREGNANT!”

The beast hesitates, rearing his head back in surprise.

Danny stares up at the sentient gorilla, panting heavy, ragged breaths.

It stares back, giving him a rough shake as if to say ‘explain!’

The detective’s thoughts are rambling through his mind so fast that his mouth struggles to keep up. “Carter, I’ve already told you I’m an omega and I swear on my life, I’m carrying -- I’ll do whatever you want! Tie me up, duct tape my mouth; I don't care, just please, please, don’t hurt her. You have a daughter and -- and you love her, and I know that you're scared. So you know how I feel, right now, so PLEASE…” He places his trembling hands over his stomach.

The beast stands stiffly for a moment and slowly takes a step back… letting the steel door to the stairwell creak shut again. Carter then sets him down on the floor. Gently.

Danny scrambles backwards until he’s on his feet, pressed against the wall behind him. The gorilla reaches out toward his stomach and the omega hisses on reflex, making the beast roar in his face. Danny submits, baring his neck involuntarily as his body will not allow him to challenge the animal in his condition.

So the next time the gorilla reaches out a leathery, black hand to pull up his baggy tee shirt, Danny just swallows thickly and presses tensely against the wall, letting Carter look at his swollen belly with what looks like the ape version of a deep frown.
The gorilla sighs in what must be frustration. This is obviously ruining whatever plan Carter had for getting Danny out of the way.

Danny nervously places a protective hand on the side of his rounding stomach. Apparently convinced that the detective is telling the truth, the gorilla drops the shirt.

Carter then reaches out and wraps a tight hand around Danny's wrist, leading him roughly toward the conference room. He gives a deep and pointed grunt, shoving Danny into the room with a rough push against his upper back.

Danny takes the hint, walking into the conference room.

The door slams shut, and Danny watches through the small window in the door as the beast walks over to a large soda vending machine, the one stocked mostly with energy drinks to fuel late investigation research. As if the vending machine were only a few pounds, the gorilla picks it up and drops it loudly in front of the door to the conference room, barricading him in.

The detective sighs, bringing up a hand to smooth over his brow. He's effectively locked in now; Danny isn't supposed to lift or move anything heavy while he's carrying, especially not with the increased threat of placental detachment and definitely not after the scuffle he just went through. And Carter knows that.

His pup kicks out suddenly inside him, and Danny is left just feeling grateful that she's okay after what they've both endured today. “I know sweetheart. No more running around for us.”

And with that, the omega sinks into a conference room chair, leaning his head back against a large whiteboard on the wall behind him with a sigh. They won't be going anywhere until his alpha wakes up.

Twenty minutes later, Danny blinks in confusion at a screeching noise. The window in the door to the conference room is small, but the detective can see a wide span of the dimly lit Five-0 department.

The gorilla that is Carter is moving the SARRA, pushing it toward the back wall of the building.

Danny frowns. What in the hell…

As the detective watches in horror, Carter then starts to beat on the back of the machine. “Hey!” Danny yells, banging on the window as he tries to get Carter’s attention. “That thing has a radioactive generator -- you can't just screw around with it!! Are you trying to kill everyone?!”

Over the raging storm outside, and the constant whirr of the generator inside the SARRA, the gorilla doesn't hear Danny -- or perhaps just ignores him -- and Carter continues to slam his beastly fists into the machine until the metal panel warps up off the back. The gorilla then rips the entire back panel off, beginning to yank out wires by the handful until Danny’s sensitive hearing picks up the sound of the generator whirring to a stop. The glowing lights on the control panel go dead.

And then the beast runs, bearing down on its knuckles as it lopes away from the SARRA.

Danny backs away from the window in the door, biting his lip uneasily.
Steve wakes as the explosion happens
Steve goes to Danny and finds him feral

Steve wakes to what can only be an explosion. The building tremors under him, and his eyes bolt open at the smell of smoke and fire coming through the air vents.

Along with a potent dose of pregnant omega distress.

Kono and Chin are groggily sitting up next to him, groaning and trying to figure out what has happened and why they are on the floor.

“We were drugged,” Steve mutters in a low voice as he slowly pulls himself to his feet.

“Jesus -- by who?” Kono exclaims, eyes widening.

“I think there’s a list of people who would love to drug Five-O,” Chin pulls a face. “But what kind of criminal would drug us and then just… leave us here -- unharmed?”

“The kind that’s not used to being a criminal,” Steve answers gruffly. “Stay here. I need to find my mate.”

Chin and Kono nod, helping each other stand as Steve wrenches open the door, keeping his gun at eye level.

The entire lobby is a scorched, windy mess. Rain is splattering on the singed marble floor through a huge hole where the floor and two walls would have met in a corner, and the is howling it's way into the building from its dark mass of clouds and debris. However, the assailant, whomever that is, is nowhere in sight.

Steve turns to yell over his shoulder at the group. “It’s clear, but the south corner of the building has been knocked out!”

“What?!” Kono yells, leaning out to look. She has her hands clasped over her mouth as Steve follows the scent of Danny’s distress. It leads him quickly to the door of the conference room where a battered looking vending machine is laying on the floor, barricading the door shut.

Using his alpha strength, Steve shoves the vending machine across the floor; the metal gives a protesting screech along the tiles.

Steve quickly throws open the door -- a little too quickly -- and that's his first mistake.

The omega is feral, hissing at him in the farthest corner of the dark room. When wind starts to curl into the room with a hollow moan from across the lobby, Steve steps into the room and shuts the door behind him.

_Mistake number two._

The omega lets out a low whine, sinking to the floor.

“Danny…” Steve says in confusion, trying to step closer without spooking him. “Was it the explosion that got you this riled up? Or did someone hurt you…” he can't help but lower his voice into a growl at the thought, and the omega falls silent, panting in distress. “Danny it’s me!” Steve tentatively moves closer and his mate hisses at him again, holding his stomach.

Steve takes a moment to rub his own wrists together, activating the scent markers near the base of his
palms, and sighs, holding out his wrist for Danny to sniff at curiously.

0.037 seconds later, a heavy weight shoves up against his chest as the panicked omega scrambles into his arms. Not knowing what else to do, Steve pulls Danny tight against his body, rubbing down the back of his neck as he makes gentle noises like he would to one of his kids. The detective relaxes slightly, but won’t take his hands off his belly and he lets out another inhuman sounded whine.

“C’mon Danno,” Steve whispers, rubbing his back; “Talk to me. Are you in pain? Is our baby girl okay?”

Danny hugs him tighter. “Alpha… not safe here.”

Steve exhales a long breath, looking toward the quivering, boarded up window. He can hear the glass creaking between the howling wind and he can still smell fire and smoke.

“I’m not sure a safe place exists right now, he thinks, leaning in to kiss Danny’s temple; not that I can't tell him that.

“I’ll keep you safe,” Steve whispers, praying that he actually can.

Chin eases open the door to the conference room, leaning his head in. Steve is settled on the floor in the dark room, with Danny against his chest, and his eyes are reflecting light back up at Chin like a cat’s.

“Hey,” the alpha says quietly.

Danny lets out a hiss and bares his fangs up at the beta, but Steve abruptly turns the omega’s face to look at his own, holding the omega’s chin. “No. Stop it.”

Chin frowns as Danny whines into Steve’s neck in submission. “Is he… is he feral?”

Sighing, Steve nods and gently rubs Danny’s back. “He was like this when I found him. I think the explosion spooked him.”

Chin stares down at the detective, realizing that he’s never seen the omega go feral besides that one time briefly by the pool the year before. Even then, Danny was fierce and dangerous, about to kill the creep he was attacking. But now… Watching the usually brazen, independent detective cling to Steve, Chin tries not to let his facial expression betray how shocked he is at the sight.

Danny lets out another unnerving noise and buries his face into Steve’s chest, digging sharp claws into his mate’s upper back. More shocking to Chin, actually, is how tender and patient Steve is being with Danny as the alpha holds him close and rubs his back.

“Did he say anything about what happened?” Chin asks, tilting his head to glimpse at Danny’s frightened blue eyes as they flick up to him suspiciously. The eyes look wild and unseeing.

“He can't really talk when he’s like this,” the alpha explains softly, still glancing down at Danny. “Sometimes he strings together a few words, but all that’s there are his base emotions…and his instincts.”

“I’m surprised it took this long for him to have an episode,” Chin says quietly, edging further into the room so Kono can join them. “I mean, he's not in a nest, we’re completely cut off from everything
and everyone he knows, the pups are on the mainland, and he’s pregnant.”

Kono has her arms crossed as she leans in against the doorway. “Is he alright?”

“He’s feral,” Chin whispers.

“Oh wow…” Kono’s eyes widen and she edges closer, inciting a snarling noise from the omega. Chin purses his lips, gently tugging Kono back a few feet, before her curiosity gets her a gash on the leg.

“He’s being pretty aggressive right now because of the pup. I think he just needs to catch your scent to realize that he knows you,” Steve warns as he glances up from the omega in his arms. “And I need to take him somewhere where the fucking storm’s not blowing in.”

“This can’t be from another gas main explosion,” Chin says flatly, glancing through the conference room window at the disaster zone that is the back corner of the building.

“It wasn't,” Kono says grimly. “I just checked. It was the SARRA.”

“What?” Steve whips his head up so fast that Danny jumps, startled. Steve quickly smoothes a hand across his back soothingly.

Kono raises her brows, cocking her head. “All that’s left of that thing is the shell. There are wires all over the place. Needless to say, the serum’s gone.”

“You’re telling me that whoever stole the serum knew enough about that thing to turn its power source into a bomb?” Steve asks in disbelief.

“Yeah,” Kono retorts, “And I think I know who.”

Chin turns to his cousin with a skeptical expression and she pulls a small flashlight out of her back pocket, nodding her head toward the whiteboard above Steve and Danny on the conference room wall.

On the whiteboard, scrawled in Danny’s tightly rushed handwriting, is a message in black marker.

\[
\text{going feral} \\
\text{pup is okay} \\
\text{Dr. Carter = mole}
\]

“Well that was some quick thinking on Danny’s part,” Chin mutters, raising his brows.

“If that's true then we need to find Carter… if he's even still in the building. But we need weapons first,” Steve says sternly, trying to push Danny off of himself. The omega protests, trying to clutch at Steve’s torso again.

Chin and his cousin frown sadly, watching the alpha grit his teeth in frustration as he reaches for the back of the omega’s neck. Danny goes limp against Steve, and the alpha slowly pushes him off, awkwardly trying to keep a grip on the back of his mate’s neck.
“What are we going to do with him if he doesn't snap out of it?” Kono asks softly, brows knitting in concern as she watches her boss pull Danny up to his feet.

“The hospital has to have something that can bring him down from this,” Chin remarks, crossing his arms.

“Yeah but we’d have to get him there. If I take him out into the storm like this he’ll freak.” The omega tucks himself under one of Steve’s arms, looking nervously toward Kono and Chin. “I know, buddy, I know. But they’re not going to hurt you or our pup,” the alpha says gently before turning to Chin and his cousin. “Kono, I need you to stay here with him while Chin and I nail a tarp over the hole in the wall and salvage what we can as far as supplies and weapons.”

“You want to leave Kono alone with Danny?” Chin raises his brows. “Brah, you might as well lock her in here with a tiger…”

Steve purses his lips, raising up the hand that isn't wrapped around Danny’s shoulders. “Someone needs to stay with him while we gather up whatever ammunition is left in the weapons room. And if there aren’t any weapons… at least I can shift if we run into trouble.”

“Makes sense,” Kono nods wearily, glancing down at Danny’s claws.

"Like I said, he just needs to catch your scent and he’ll be fine with you,” Steve explains as he directs Danny over to a spot on the floor.

Chin gives his cousin a look. "Be careful,” the beta says quietly.

She raises her brows with a sigh. “All day, everyday.”

Kono understands that Steve has to dart out the door suddenly after Chin to try and get out without Danny following them. What she doesn't understand, is how a pregnant person can move so fast. Danny is a blur of motion in the dim room as he throws himself against the door, howling for Steve.

“Shit shit shit--!” When he gets his hand on the door handle, Kono is finally out of her still-cold, leather conference chair and grabs the back of Danny’s neck like Steve had done.

The detective freezes, dropping his hands, and Kono sighs in relief. “There we go…” she says softly. “Lets sit down on the floor together, okay?”

As soon as they are seated, she takes her hand off the omega’s neck. The look of panic he gives Kono is a lead weight of guilt in her chest as he scrambles backwards to get away from her.

“Danny, I’m not gonna hurt you,” she says softly, reaching out to him. He bares his teeth at her, swiping out with those hooked claws on his fingertips.

This explains all of the scars on McGarrett’s forearms, Kono muses to herself, trying to imagine how many times her boss has had to try and calm a feral omega down. Deciding finally to approach Danny like she would approach an angry cat, Kono holds out her hand for the omega to smell.

Danny tenses suddenly and lets out an unnerved sound, but, after Kono sits motionless, he slowly leans forward and inhales her scent.
Finally, the feral omega relaxes a bit, scooting closer, and Kono grins. “See? I'm part of your pack…”

The detective surprises her by shifting until his head is in her lap. As he stares up at her curiously, she drags her fingertips through the omega’s hair, lazily trailing gentle circles over Danny’s scalp. There’s a lightness in his eyes -- a blissful shine of complete trust and adoration that Kono has never seen in Danny through the cynical and sarcastic front he puts up.

When the feral omega closes his eyes and starts making a low rumbling noise, Kono hesitates. It takes her almost two minutes to realize that he's not growling... he’s purring. Like a cat. “Awww, Danny,” Kono coos softly under her breath.

The beta is finally starting to get used to this hidden side of Danny when the omega -- still purring -- reaches down to pull up his tee shirt. He guides one of Kono’s hands to his stomach, and she pauses nervously before flattening her hand against the tight, rounded swell of his bump.

“You trying to show me your baby?” She whispers, grinning as she rubs over the bump. The omega smiles contentedly back up at her before nuzzling happily into her thigh, wrapping his arm around her back as they sit entangled on the floor.

She can see why Alphas would like this -- it feels good to be needed like this. Picturing Steve curled around Danny in their nest, she imagines that the alpha’s guilty pleasure might be shamelessly doting on ‘affectionate feral Danny’ without getting shoved away.

Kono lets her fingertips trail absentely over Danny’s belly for a few minutes, until something under the skin moves. She gasps excitedly, feeling her eyes water -- it’s the first time she's ever felt or seen Danny’s stomach while he's pregnant. He’s always so shy about having pup belly, and she knows she’ll probably never get this opportunity again.

She leans back against the wall, grinning as she flattens her palm to rub over the soft skin of Danny’s pup belly, feeling little kicks and nudges. Kono then thinks to herself, while the feral omega purrs and nuzzles the side of his face against her thigh, that this entire storm debacle may have been worth it just for the chance to see the side of Danny that he tries so hard to hide.

When Steve returns, he slowly opens the conference room door and his eyes widen. The omega has his legs and arms wrapped around the slim beta and he’s nuzzling into her neck. There’s, of course, an initial stab of jealousy that Steve has to suppress quickly, but he knows that Kono probably didn't instigate this.

Kono looks up at the alpha, mirroring Steve’s expression of surprise, and Steve can smell panic reeling off of her under Danny’s intoxicating scent of bliss and affection.

“Boss, I didn't -- I mean, he--”

Steve holds up a hand, shutting his eyes patiently and nods. “I know. Feral omegas can be, uh... very affectionate with pack members.”

“I dunno if that’s it, boss, it seems like he... hasn't been getting enough physical contact or
something,” Kono mutters, trying to gently push the omega off of her. “I think he needs you.”

Steve furrows his brow at the comment, and it hurts because he knows it’s true. But it’s not completely his fault… right? Ever since they started sleeping in the office, and taking three minute showers in the tepid water of the locker room, there hasn’t been any privacy for physically reaffirming his bond with his mate. The alpha clenches his jaw, not wanting to explain to his team that it's hard to find the time to fuck your mate during a natural disaster.

And because of this, Danny is apparently touch starved. The omega won’t let Kono go, and she awkwardly resigns to just holding the detective again before looking up at Steve. “So what’d you find?”

“We didn't find much in the way of ammo, but we at least got a tarp nailed over the damaged corner of the building to keep the wind and rain out -- for now,” Steve says slowly.

“There's no way that's gonna hold for long,” Kono says, obliged to state the obvious.

“You're right. But I need Danny to snap out of this so he can tell us what he knows before we walk in on whatever's really going on here,” Steve sighs. His thumb is scratching at one of his brows gently as he stares down at his feral little mate that's smiling up at him with fangs. “So this has got to stop.”

"How do you usually bring him down from this?” Kono asks softly.

Steve raises his brows. "I don't know. Usually I just hold him for a while, let him calm down, and he snaps out of it after a few minutes. But I tried that, and as you can see, it didn't work."

Chin stares down in thought for a moment, eyes narrowing with speculation. “What if he fell asleep?”

Kono tightens one side of her mouth. “Cuz, he's not a computer,” she pats Danny's thigh for emphasis. "I don't think turning him off and on again is going to guarantee anything.”

Steve crosses his arms. “That actually might work, but he won't fall asleep until he feels calm... and I don't see that happening any time soon.”

Cocking her head curiously, Kono looks up to meet his eyes. “You could make him a nest…”

“What blankets we did have are soaking wet from the rain and scorched from the blast,” Chin says, raising a brow with a sigh.

Steve purses his lips and flicks his eyes over to the lead beta, almost hesitating. “I have one idea,” he starts, then looks down at Danny and Kono again, just as the omega starts licking her neck. She deserves a raise for this. “If we can't build a nest, then we're gonna do the next best thing. But it's gotta be a group effort.”

Chin is silent for a second, frowning. “What exactly did you have in mind?”

---

Danny blinks his eyes into focus, fighting the disorienting veil of primal stupor, and startles when he sees Kono, Chin and Steve all leaning close over his face. He's got his head in Steve’s lap, and the
two betas each have one hand on his arms and one hand on his stomach.

It's like being cradled and hugged by three people at once. “Woah, woah -- What the--” He waves his arms up in protest; it's then he notices that his head feels strangely heavy. And his motor functions are a bit off, sluggish to respond to the intensifying torrent of panic and confusion in his head.

“You back with us, brah?” Kono asks in surprise, eyes widening.

Danny goes to pull himself backwards and feels Steve’s warm, muscular torso behind him. “Steve, what -- what is this? Did I faint?” The omega blurts, looking between Kono and Chin’s surprised expressions.

His only clue is that the room is drenched in his own nesting pheromones as well as the annoyingly sweet scent of ‘happy, bred omega.’

Strong, huge hands begin to rub down his shoulders and upper arms. “You're fine, buddy. You were just... feral for a while.”

Kono raises her brows ominously; “A long while.”

That's right.

He was feral.

Danny starts to have a few vague flashbacks.

*His Alpha’s tongue is warm and wet on his neck, lapping at his scent gland, while the two betas soothe him with gentle hands moving up and down his torso and bare arms.*

Danny brings a hand up to hold his forehead. Oh Jesus.

The hot rush of embarrassment is sweltering on his face as he remembers what an intimate experience the past half an hour has been.

*He's purring, completely content, and grabs Chin’s and Kono’s wrists to lick them affectionately. His shirt is pulled up, allowing the two betas to intermittently rub over his baby with warm hands; Danny moans in satisfaction, arching his back blissfully under their attention and shamelessly leans into their touch with more purring. In contrast to the last few days, the omega feels safe, protected, and elated to bask in the affection of his pack.*

Pulling himself to his feet, Danny wavers briefly, but his alpha is rising up dutifully behind him to steady him just in case.

The detective waves him off, gesturing with one hand dismissively over his shoulder as he claws open the conference room door and quickly steps out. With hands on the side of his head, the omega paces a few steps. Danny is -- for once -- at a loss of words.

When Steve follows him out, calling his name softly like they need to talk about this, the omega turns and swings a fist up to deck him in the face.
The alpha’s fangs unsheath in his mouth as he stumbles backwards, holding his jaw. “Ow!” He roars. “What the FUCK, Danny?!”

If Danny weren't carrying a pup, Steve would probably be tackling him to the ground, and the detective knows it. The omega snarls at him, holding his sore fist. He feels like he's punched a cement wall. “Why the hell did you do that, Steven?”

Steve’s eyes widen furiously. “Do what? What's the matter with you?!”

Danny steps closer to yank on the collar of Steve’s black tee-shirt, pulling him down a few inches as Danny stands up on his toes to be eye level with him. “You let them see me like that?!”

“Feral?” Steve darts his eyes away and back in confusion.

“No,” the omega hisses, eyes glistening because holy Jesus fuck one of his worst nightmares has actually happened. “You let me -- purr? And lick them? You let me lay there like some kind of pansy that needs to be pampered and coddled?!”

“That's what you're upset about?” Steve rears his head back before leaning to bear over him; “Daniel, you were feral and I couldn't bring you out of it! And why are you worried about Chin and Kono -- they're practically family, Danny, they're not going to judge you! They know you're an omega!”

Danny storms away a few steps and rounds on him, throwing his hands out toward the floor exasperatedly; “Yeah, but not THAT kind of omega!”

“I wasn't making you act submissive, Danny,” Steven says with a growl. “That was all you. You did it on your own, because -- obviously -- deep down, you wanted to. And you know what? You were happy. For once in your life. God forbid.”

“Fuck you, Steven,” Danny mutters as his face reddens to a deep scarlet, and, to make things worse, Chin and Kono are staring at the omega sadly from inside the conference room door.

Kono tilts her head; “Danny…” She looks like she wants to hold him again, like she’s seen behind the curtain.

“No. You don't get to give me that look,” Danny snaps, glaring at them. “I'm not some kind of house cat omega; I'm a detective. I’ve been shot at, stabbed, kidnapped, and I’ve killed people with my bare hands. You were never supposed to see any of that.” His voice breaks. “He had no right.”

Chin purses his lips and looks at Steve while Kono just lets out a long exhale, raising up her hands in surrender.

“Now, let’s just -- please -- forget that that ever happened and just…” Danny clears his throat, not looking any of them in the eye. “Let’s just make our way downstairs to gauge the damage.”

Steve is pinching the bridge of his nose, gritting his teeth, and it looks like he's about to say something. However, the alpha freezes, glancing back toward the damaged corner of the building. “I hear someone groaning.”
“I can’t hear anything over the storm,” Kono frowns.

“It could be Carter,” Chin suggests.

“Hopefully it’s human Carter,” Danny mutters flatly, realizing that he has a lot to explain to get the team caught up on the situation.
As soon as Steve opens the steel door to the lower level, the draft from the storm nearly knocks him off his feet and he carefully holds the door -- straining against the howling wind -- so that his team can get through. Steve gives Danny a long look and the omega knows that the former seal doesn't want him down anywhere near a bunch of escaped alpha cons, but the bruise is still swollen on Steve’s jaw and he probably doesn't feel like arguing. When the stairwell door shuts, the noise of the storm is still awful, but it's not deafening.

The prisoners are gone. Long gone.

To know that they would've escaped after the explosion busted out part of the building is one thing, but to actually see the empty cells is another. The team doesn't say anything, but the sinking realization of how serious the situation has just become is a sensation that is visible on their faces as they all lock eyes with grim expressions.

The hole in the corner of the building is much more severe on this level, and debris and flood water have surged in where the prisoners made their escape after the explosion. The floor is littered with leaves and what looks like pieces of peoples’ houses, but it's hard to tell in the dim shine of the flickering emergency lights.

This isn't even the center of the storm, and it's already blacked out the sun, making it look like the middle of the night. Over the train-like roar of the storm outside, with sideways rain and tree limbs and sand and shingles blurring past the opening in the wall, Steve yells for the team to stay back. He’s spotted something in the rubble.

When Steve pulls Carter out of the mess of shattered cement and plaster on the first floor, the meteorologist is human. The alpha quickly makes a signal with his hand to direct the team forward down the hall toward the interrogation room as he throws the unconscious man over his shoulder.

Once inside, Steve shoves the door closed behind him with his foot and the roar of the storm is gone, leaving a tense silence instead. The alpha manhandles the lanky meteorologist into the single chair in the center of the room. Kono and Chin quickly restrain the man, looping a few zip ties around Carter’s neck like a collar so that he will strangle himself if he tries to shift, even though he's knocked out.

“That's a nasty head wound,” Chin remarks, looking closer at the gash on the man’s forehead. “He may be concussed.”

“He will be when I’m through with him,” Steve mutters darkly, pacing in front of the man.

“Steve, as much as I know you would rather punch anything than talk to it first, the Goodfather has Carter’s daughter held captive. This guy is not a criminal mastermind,” Danny remarks, crossing his
arms as he leans against the wall, watching.

“I’m not here to split hairs between criminal intent and criminal actions, Danny, the guy set loose a bunch of cons -- for a noble cause or not, this guy’s in deep shit and so are we thanks to him. Okay?”

Steve gives the omega a stern look. “He’s pretty much made it clear that he wanted to further the conspiracy instead of coming to us for help.”

“He could've killed us,” Danny retorts, raising his voice. “I’m not sayin’ the guy’s a regular Mother Teresa but I -- I’m just sayin… he had the opportunity to do a lot worse and clearly didn't want to.”

“Maybe Danny’s right,” Chin says suddenly. “He could've done us all in when we were up there lying on the break room floor, but he didn't.”

Danny is about to speak up again when the pup sends a swift kick to his kidneys, agitated from his stress. The omega winces and reaches back to massage the spot, low on his back, and Steve’s instantly looking over at him. Danny glares at him; the alpha hasn't been forgiven yet for shattering the carefully constructed persona of a serious, independent, capable officer that Danny has strived to maintain for almost fifteen years on the beat.

God knows what his teammates think of him now.

Though the tension in the air is tangible, Danny knows he will pass out trying to hold his breath for an apology from Steve; that's just not how his mate operates. Whenever Steve makes a judgement call, he’ll spend his last breath defending it as the most logical thing anyone in his position could have done.

What's also disconcerting about what happened upstairs is how Steve knew that physical comfort from his pack could fulfill the same primal need an omega has for a nest while carrying. Danny never told Steve that. Danny's not even sure he knew that.

What else does Steve know about omegas? And where is he getting this information?

Without looking once at his mate, Danny soon manages to explain to the team everything that took place after Carter drugged the coffee this morning. He leaves out almost getting thrown down a flight of stairs, mindfully shoving his cold hands into his pockets lest he place one of his palms over the pup resting low in his abdomen.

“So the serum was for the prisoners,” Steve says with a sigh, putting his hands on his hips as he impatiently waits for Carter to wake up. “And we can only assume he gave it to them. Great. Just fucking great.”

“I guess we know who blew up the boat down at the docks then,” Kono mutters.

The meteorologist is starting to come to, mumbling incoherently in confusion and lolling his head from side to side.

As the team converses quietly about trying to find a way to contact the national guard, Danny tries to stand up straight, tries to force his shoulders back and up, so he can at least pretend he's not still humiliated with his tail between his legs. It doesn't work.

Every time Danny’s mind wanders, it circles back around to fragmented memories of being rubbed, and touched, and pet. Worse though, are the emotions of satisfaction and relief that accompany the memories -- reminding him how good it felt -- and it leaves his mouth dry and his blood rushing to his face. He’s afraid to admit it to himself, but Danny can feel an itch now, in the back of his mind, a sort of shameful longing for more of what he experienced today.
The omega rests his head backwards against the cool cement wall of the interrogation room, trying to decipher what this confusing development means. What does it say about him that he enjoyed being vulnerable, subject to the whims of his pack? That he liked letting them take control? That he liked their dominance over him? That he liked knowing they could do anything they wanted to him, could force him to do anything in return...

_Do I like being submissive?_

He’s hinted that he likes when Steve is rough with him during sex, but his alpha respects him too much to go too far with ‘commanding’ or ‘forcing’ Danny to do anything.

_But what if he did?_

He feels his a blush heating his face again, and doesn't understand why the idea is alluring to him. The omega swallows hard, trying to shake away the tentatively excited ideas of what his alpha could do to him to explore this guilty pleasure.

But the thoughts won’t leave him.

What if Steve came home from work and completely took control of him? Forced Danny to call him ‘Alpha’ and bent him over the kitchen table with a grip on his neck and held a hand over his mouth and --

“Danny,” Chin asks, and from the tone it sounds like it’s at least the second or third attempt to get the detective’s attention.

The omega blinks, running a hand nervously over his hair as he turns to the beta. “Yeah?”

Steve is looking at the gash on Dr. Carter’s forehead again when he smells the familiar, sweet scent of omega arousal. The alpha turns to glance back at Danny in confusion.

The omega is blushing, standing against the wall behind Steve with his eyes cast downward, his arms crossed, and is being oddly quiet. Steve dismisses it as something related to hormones with the growing pup, and has to try to breathe through his mouth to focus on Carter. The smell is, embarrassingly enough, actually making his mouth water.

He knows his omega is still pissed off at him, which is completely irrational; obviously Steve had no choice but to ask Kono and Chin for help.

When Danny and he had first started living together, Steve had asked Joe White for a few books about omegas. They had been smuggled in from The UK, brought into Hawaii low-key as not to flag any of Thresh’s internal controls on the internet. The books were a bit outdated, but a couple of the chapters explained a lot about why omegas have certain urges and how to understand them on a primal level.

He had never heard Danny talk about any of that stuff before, and Steve couldn't help but wonder if Danny’s Father’s disfavor toward male omegas had lead the entire family just trying to avoid talking about Danny’s subgender altogether… resulting in not only a family that doesn't know anything
about male omegas, but also a male omega that doesn't know about his own kind.

The thought crosses the alpha’s mind, as Steve starts to shake Carter’s shoulder, that maybe he should send those old books to Danny’s father up in Jersey. But it’s not his place.

The meteorologist lets out a low groan, finally seeming to realize that someone is standing in front of him. He looks up at Steve with an expression of dread.

“Nervous?” Steve says slowly in a low voice. “You should be. I have a half a mind to drown you in the floodwater out there and call it an accident.”

Carter’s face contorts into one of grief. “They have my daughter! What was I supposed to do?!?”

“You should have come to us from the beginning!” Steve snaps. “Instead,” he waves a hand up, “We’ve got thirty some odd of the most dangerous criminals of Hawaii running loose, and, and let's not forget that you gave them the shifting serum, as if our job wasn't hard enough already.”

Carter is silent as tears begin to fall down his face. He shakes his head and stares at his feet. “My wife and I... W-we couldn't have children, we waited years to adopt Hayley,” he sobs. “She’s our whole world! They’ve been sending me pictures of her tied up and crying...They said if I got the police or Five-0 involved then they would kill her!”

Steve’s eyes harden into a frown. “So tell me, Carter, how does a weatherman get mixed up with a mafia? Huh? Were you dealing on the side? Or using?"

The crying man shakes his head vigorously. “No, nothing like that -- I swear.”

“Then how?” Danny interrupts impatiently behind Steve.

Carter’s eyes flick from Danny to Steve and back again. “The adoption agency had to do a full inquiry into our lives before we could adopt. But they were adopting the children out to the families with the most surplus cash and we had to turn in our bank statements. We had just put in a down payment on a house, so it looked like we weren’t as well off as the other families... they weren't going to adopt to us, so I... I went to Santos and he helped me. He gave me money to pad the accounts with.”

Steve sighs and pinches his brow.

“And you thought this was just a random act of kindness?” Kono raises a brow. “You honestly didn’t think this would come back to bite you?”

“My wife was heartbroken, okay?! She was so depressed I didn’t know what to do! She had already become attached to Hayley at the adoption center…” Carter sniffs.”I just--"

“Okay. Okay, okay,” Steve interrupts him, waving up one hand to shut the guy up. “We get it. So this favor from the past comes back to haunt you. Then what? The Goodfather tells gives you some kind of bad-guy to do list? Blow up the last boat off the island and give the prisoners the serum?”

Carter nods.

“How did you even know enough about the SARRA to make a bomb out of it?” The alpha narrows his eyes.

“I went to the science and technology conference…” The meteorologist explains. “The pacific weather association had a booth there, and I met Dr. Poteralski. She was telling everyone about the
“And these prisoners,” Danny asks in a fatigued voice behind the alpha. “They were -- what -- henchmen of his?”

Steve turns and gives Danny a look for butting in on his interrogation. The omega glares at him.

“Some of them,” Carter says in a wavering voice. “But one of them was his mate.”

Steve freezes. “What?”

Carter looks around at their stunned faces. “He said it was a trade off. Hayley for his mate. The serum was for whichever prisoners would escort his mate back to the compound through the storm…”

“Escorts…” The alpha turns to face away from Carter, rubbing a hand over his mouth. Why would Santos want escorts for a convicted felon?

“That doesn't make sense. Couldn’t you have just given the guy’s mate the serum instead?” Kono pulls a face. “And saved the rest for the black market?”

Carter sputters to come up with a response; “I don't know, okay? He just said to give it to the ones helping his mate get back to the compound…”

“His mate was pregnant,” Danny says suddenly behind Steve. They all whip around to stare at him. “I knew there was one in the building. Steve, you remember when I said I was synching with another pregnant person? I was picking up the hormones through the vents. It started when the prisoners were brought in -- one of them was an omega.”

“So one of the prisoners was a carrying omega, and that omega is the Goodfather’s mate,” Steve says slowly in thought. “It makes sense. That was why the Goodfather wanted his mate to be escorted back safely… to make sure any opposing inmates couldn’t kill the omega to get at Santos.”

“And it explains why his mate couldn't take the serum,” Kono says, raising her brows. “The serum doesn't work on omegas.”

“So Santos gets his mate and pup out of jail, then he gets all of his goons out too, with their new upgrade of being able to turn into God-knows-what type of animal,” Danny adds.

Silence falls over the group for a beat until Chin steps closer to Carter. “Wait, wait, wait. How would a drug lord even know enough about hurricanes and the state’s plans to move the prisoners to a boat anyway?”

“The Goodfather has a contact in the Governor’s office -- some Asian lady, I don't remember her name,” Carter explains. “But she works with him every day… goes to all of his meetings.”

Steve hears Danny’s heart beat starting to race suddenly and he turns to see the omega’s eyes widening. “Natsumi.”

Frowning, the alpha tries to place the name to a face. Why does that sound so fam--

Holy.

Fuck.

Steve grits his jaw, bringing up a hand to drag down over his face. The woman that babysat his pups
the night the governor came to the house.

He had left his kids alone with that woman.

Danny lets out a low, uneasy and involuntary whine, trying to stifle it by clearing his throat. “So yeah, great. The mafia’s mole was in our den. Maybe it’s a good thing the whole place is probably blasted apart by the storm; she probably bugged the place while we were gone,” Danny sighs.

Steve can smell the undertones of distress in Danny’s scent.

“So can I leave now -- to get my daughter?” Carter says in a timid voice. “Please?”

“Sure, because there's no reason a crime lord wouldn't go back on his word and kill you to silence you,” Chin says dryly, glancing up toward the ceiling.

Carter lurches forward against his restraints. “B-but Hayley--”

“You're going to remain in our custody, until we can fix some of the damage you've done,” Steve says firmly, before pausing to meet Carter’s gaze. “And Chin’s right -- if you go walking into the Goodfather’s compound, you're dead. You’re worth nothing to him alive, now, because you've already done everything he needed, and we won't have you in court to testify against him.”

Carter puts his face in his hands.
Chapter Sixteen

Chapter Notes

Bleh! It's finals time again :( I haven't been able to respond to comments lately as some recent happenings have made life a bit more stressful than usual. Hopefully smoother sailing is ahead!

“We need to leave,” Steve says in a low, resigned voice. The room has been silent -- well, relatively silent, with the storm still raging over the island -- for the last ten minutes as the team sat and waited for direction.

The alpha has been pacing back and forth, wet clothes dripping along the cement floor, and slow rivulets of water are reaching toward the drain in the sloped floor like long crooked fingers.

Danny has been standing silently in the doorway with one hand idly rubbing at the underside of his stomach, watching the water curl toward the drain. After he announces that they need to leave, Steve can smell that his omega is hungry and exhausted, and now slightly distressed, too.

“For once, I agree with you,” Danny admits in a fatigued voice; “But it’s pretty much Stormageddon out there and the whole island is probably flooding. You got a couple kayaks in your back pocket that I don’t know about?”

“I made some modifications to the truck before the storm hit,” he sighs, placing his hands on his hips as he looks up to lock eyes with his team. “Maybe it’s enough to get us mobile.”

“Maybe?” Danny repeats, narrowing his steely blue eyes as his brows reach up toward his hairline. “Yeah, I don’t like ‘maybe.’”

“If you have a better idea, Daniel, then by all means, enlighten us.” The alpha gives him a stern sideways glance that quiets the omega into a frustrated sigh.

“Where are we headed?” Chin’s brows raise upward in concern, wisely trying to stave off an argument between the mated pair.

“We need to get Hayley back to her father before we settle in anywhere,” the alpha murmurs, glancing over at his lead beta. He then takes a second to look down at the meteorologist who’s still sitting in the metal chair in the middle of the room. Carter is slowly recovering from some kind of hyperventilating breakdown, muttering to himself under his breath as Kono awkwardly pats his shoulder. “Hayley has served her purpose as leverage and I don’t feel too comfortable with trusting the mafia to keep their end of the bargain…”

“I with you on that one, but how are we gonna find the guy?” Chin sighs.

“Carter,” Kono asks suddenly, stepping around to look down at the man’s face. “Do you know where The Goodfather’s compound is?”

The meteorologist shakes his head, darting his reddened teary eyes around at the group. “They put a hood over my head the first time they grabbed me in the parking lot outside of my job. I know it was
high up away from the ocean, but I -- I don't know.” He puts his head in his hands; “I’m sorry.”

A beat passes, and Steve pinches his brow.

Great.

“I think I might know someone who would know,” Danny says suddenly. The room turns to stare at him. “The little alpha girl -- Vanessa. She said she lived at the compound in a house next to Santos, with a bunch of other alpha kids.”

“We’re gonna have to go to the base to talk to her then, up the mountain,” Kono says wearily, looking up at Steve for his input. “She’s up there with the rest of the kids from social services.”

“We can leave Carter at the base at least,” Danny mutters under his breath, so low that only Steve can hear it.

“Sounds like we know where we have to go, then,” Steve nods, looking around the empty room in thought. His alpha instincts start to grate on his consciousness like sandpaper at the thought of having to take his pregnant mate out into the storm.

This isn't nesting, Steve groans internally.

This is the opposite of nesting.

“So, Boss, exactly what kind of modifications did you make to your truck?” Kono asks, in an almost worried tone.

“Hopefully the right ones,” Steve retorts under his breath as he walks toward the door. “Let’s gather whatever supplies we have left that aren't burned or soaked.”

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Danny’s body physically seizes as he tries to step off of the stairwell and into the cold flood water; his instincts are giving a last ditch effort to try and make the omega retreat back to his mate’s territory -- the Five-O offices. The barrage of panic inducing urges make it difficult to let go of the building until his mate grabs the strap on the back of his tack vest and pulls him out of the door frame.

The tall, muscular alpha is guiding him with a firm hold on his vest and Danny can't tell if it's because Steve knows his omega instincts are giving him trouble or if it's because the alpha is experiencing his own urges not to let his mate out of his sight. Danny tries to pull away from him and the alpha compromises by placing a hand on the detective’s lower back to spot him as he wades through rushing torrent of knee high water. The wind is shoving him backwards and he has to lean forward, squinting in the sand and debris filled gales to slowly stagger toward the truck.

Danny yells out loudly as a torn piece of vinyl siding thwacks suddenly against his upper body; he flails his arms about, wrestling with the thing as he finally gets a grip on the material with one black gloved hand and flings it down into the flood water. Steve is yelling over the roar of the wind and water to ask if he’s okay and Danny nods quickly, anxious to just get into the damn truck already.

Steve holds the door to the truck open for Kono and Carter, muscles straining as he fights to keep the
door from slamming back on them in the wind as she climbs into the back seat. It isn't until Danny tries to step up into the truck after Carter that he realizes Steve has somehow raised the suspension on the thing.

It's sitting a lot taller than Danny ever remembers, and it's actually difficult for him to climb into backseat against the wind. Steve ends up lifting him again with the strap on the back of his vest, but luckily no one witnesses it and Danny slams the door shut. Chin is already climbing into the passenger seat, and after a few more seconds of deafening wind all of the doors are shut.

For a moment, no one speaks. Everyone is panting, staring through the windows at the damage. The sky is a murky grey haze in every direction, and it's impossible to see where the storm ends and the ocean begins on the horizon. Every tall and gorgeous palm tree that once lined the side of the road is now a splintered, twisted stub of broken wood jutting out from the flood water.

"Are you sure this thing can get us up the mountain to the shelter, boss?" Kono asks breathlessly, looking out at the debris filled floodwater.

"I jacked the suspension, added an exhaust hose, sealed off and raised the air intake system, sealed the cylinders and moved all of the lower circuit panels to the inside of the dash," Steve lists off curtly, pulling his keys out of his pocket.

"Was that Joe White's idea?" Chin turns to him with raised brows.

Steve pulls a face, turning the key in the ignition; "My Mom's actually." The truck roars to life.

"Yeah, well I’ll wait to thank her until we know it works in deep water," Danny mutters. The water -- right now -- is only up to half of the height of the tires, but they’re on high ground.

"So far so good," Steve says, raising his brows as he peers down his nose at the gauges on the dash.

Every time the truck starts to lurch sideways, Danny’s claws dig deeper into the leather of the back seat as he thinks that the water has finally lifted the truck off the road. Two streets down -- not that anyone would know where the streets are, because the road signs have all been ripped off by the wind -- the water up to the top of the tires. Danny has seen at least four dead chickens floating by. Steve’s tired green eyes keep flicking up to meet his gaze in the rear view mirror and the omega can almost hear Steve telling him that ‘you’re okay, you’re okay, we’re fine’ just from the look in his eyes.

A large thud startles everyone in the car and Danny jumps, hissing in surprise. A young palm, stripped palm tree is bumping against the passenger door next to Danny as it floats aimlessly down the Main Street.

It’s weird to see every single glass window boarded up along the rows of shops and restaurants. Many of the letters fixed to the fronts of buildings have been torn off and the effect is eerie, like every semblance of human culture is gone besides the buildings themselves. With the moaning wails of the wind against the truck, the street is a perfect ghost town.

Something clenches low in Danny’s stomach at the coldly vacant buildings until he realizes that it's his pup curling tightly in the bowl of his hips. She doesn't like it when his heart rate rises, and that fucking palm tree had scared the hell out of him. He tries to calm her down with one hand, twisting uncomfortably in his seat.

Steve leans forward suddenly, pulling at some levers by the steering wheel. “Are my high beams not on -- did they --"
“I think the headlights are underwater, brah,” Chin says in a hesitant tone.

There’s another thud against the body of the truck. Danny swallows thickly. It’s just debris, he tells himself.

Steve starts to press the accelerator more, hoping to get to higher ground at the end of the street when -- again -- something slams against the truck. This time, the entire team lurches in the cab from the force of the impact.

Chin leans in his seat, glancing around. “What the --”

“God Jesus fuck almighty,” Danny swears, whipping around as he looks for the source of the noise. “Steve what is that?”

“Could be anything, Danny, it could be a submerged park bench or a steel trashcan, I don’t know,” the alpha snaps impatiently.

Feeling moisture on his ankles suddenly, Danny looks down and sees water pooling on the rubber floor mats from the door frame. “Shit, guys, we’re ah -- we’re takin’ on some water here!”

Steve tightens his hands on the wheel, “Look the engine’s still running here, we’re just gonna push on through --”

**BAM!**

The truck lurches sideways again, this time with more force and Danny bites back against the urge to whine, snarling instead as he's thrown sideways against Carter. He’s holding his stomach protectively with one hand and holding the ceiling handle with the other. Kono is grabbing at his bicep out of panic as she looks around desperately for the source of the noise.

The truck stalls, engine sputtering for a second as the water starts to soak into and submerge Danny’s shoes. Outside of the truck, the water is up to the door handles.

Danny doesn’t remember most of the Holy Rosary prayer that his Grandmother taught him as a child and he finds himself suddenly muttering the first line of it again and again under his breath.

“Wait, Steve -- did you see that brah? I swear I just saw--”

**Hail Mary full of grace**

The entire truck is saturated in distress. Carter is practically shaking next to him.

“See what?” Steve grunts, frustratedly pulling gear levers and shifting the truck. Part of his tongue is sticking out of his mouth as he stares down at the gauges. “Don’t do this to me, no, no, no --”

**Hail Mary full of grace**

The engine makes a noise as if it's protesting against whatever Steve’s trying to do, a few whirring creaks and a loud metal clunk sounding from under the hood and Kono is flat out gripping his hand now.

**Hail Mary full of grace**

“There! There, do you see that? Right there,” Chin urges, pointing fiercely at something. Steve rubs at the condensation on the inside of the windshield and then suddenly it's viable.
“Oh you have got to be kidding me,” Kono gasp, pressing back against her seat tensely.

"What is it? What?!!" Carter sputters, frantically trying to lean to look out of the window on Kono's side of the truck. Then he freezes, turning his head slowly as he follows something with his eyes toward the flood water in the street before them.

In the water in front of the truck is a tall, blackish grey, triangular-ish fin sticking up out of the flood water.

A huge shark fin.
Steve is the first to move, trained from his years as a Navy seal to act in the grip of shock and fear that would paralyze the average person.

Knowing that the electronic system of the truck is dead, the alpha punches the sunroof of the truck cab until the shatter proof glass starts to bend and warp like a crackling glass net around his fist. He punches at the edges of it and finally the whole thing pops from it's casing. “Everybody on the roof of the truck!”

“Don’t have to tell me twice, brah,” Chin grunts, raising up out of his seat.

Steve casts a concerned glance back at his mate, who’s struggling with his seatbelt. “Danny…”

“I’ve got it,” the omega says in a forced calm voice. The small detective finally grits his fanged teeth and slashes the seatbelt with a claw.

“We’re gonna be fine Danny, just don’t panic,” Steve reassures him in a stern voice as Chin hoists himself up through the sunroof.

“Oh sure, totally fine,” Danny retorts flatly as Chin reaches a hand back toward him to help the omega up onto the roof. “Because it's not like I'm pregnant in a flood surrounded by sharks during a natural disaster.”

“At this point, brah, I’m convinced that you two nesting is a bad omen for the state of Hawaii,” Kono jokes wryly, giving him a smirk.

“Yeah well blame Steve for this particular shitstorm,” Danny snaps. The flood water is up to his thighs in the truck as the omega lunges forward.

“And how is this my fault Danny? I didn't summon this hurricane,” Steve grunts as he lifts him up with both hands until Chin helps him up onto the roof.

“Yeah, well, you summoned this, didn't you?” Danny yells, pointing at his stomach.

“Uh-uh. No. It takes two to tango, buddy -- I'm only half to blame for that,” the alpha retorts, helping Carter and then Kono up through the sunroof.

Danny is livid. “Yeah well, I couldn't leave the island because of it, and besides, it was your idea to leave headquarters!”

“Do they always argue like this?!” Carter yells uncertainly as he pulls Kono up behind him.

Kono slicks her wet hair out of her face as she stands, nodding. “They love each other, but yeah, they're always like this.”
Now that his team and Carter are out, Steve grabs his backpack of random leftover supplies out from the passenger floorboard. Unfortunately, Jerry had only carried the more obscure items back to the truck after rummaging through the boxes for him, but Steve’s pretty sure there’s at least some rope and water safe matches in the bag. As for the rest, he's not sure when a snake bite kit and God-knows-what-else might come in handy, but it's all they have after the explosion.

As soon as Steve pulls himself up onto the small, slick roof of the cab, another loud slam into the truck body shakes all of them.

The sharks are ramming against the truck.

“Holy fuck Steven, I hate you right now, do you know that? Please tell me you have some kind of elaborate plan to get out of this!” Danny shouts, taking a hand back through his hair as he starts to pant in distress.

The alpha wraps a firm hand around the strap on the back of Danny’s tac vest, holding him away from the edge of the cab. The omega is whining under his breath at the sight of the grey fins in the water, fangs elongating in his mouth.

Steve’s stomach tightens uneasy. His mate is quickly edging toward feral, which is going to make this mission more difficult. Whereas the alpha's own feral episodes can be triggered by aggression, his omega is mostly triggered by fear. “Danny, just keep calm. I’ve got you, I’m not going to let anything happen -- focus. Stay with me.”

After giving Danny a nervous once over, Steve wipes the rivulets of rain from his eyes. It's then that he notices something strange -- the shark is watching him. It is literally following him with its glassy black eye as it swims past, floating up on its side in the flood water.

It looks distinctly unnatural.

It looks like it's waiting to see what they do next.

“Carter,” Steve barks suddenly, pulling Danny in close against him. “Those blood samples that the Goodfather supplied you with... Were some of them shark blood?”

“None of the samples were labeled.” Carter hesitates, leaning to stare down at the sharks. They stare back. “But it’s possible.” The alpha nods grimly, his fears confirmed.

Kono gasps and Steve can hear Chin sighing ‘oh boy’ under his breath.

“So you think these things are some of the escaped prisoners. Is that what you're getting at?” Danny raises a hand to his head as he tries to pace on the roof of the truck.

Steve jerks him by the back of his vest to make him stop; “Everybody stop moving! The flood could float the truck and carry it down the street at any second. It might be stuck on some kind of debris under there, and we don't want to unloge it.” He turns to the glistening grey fins sticking out of the water. “And as for these things, there’s only one way to find out.”

“What are you gonna do, insult their mothers?” Danny retorts.

“Chin, hold him,” Steve barks quickly, and the beta dutifully reaches out to grasp a firm hand on Danny’s tac vest.

Steve reaches into the backpack quickly, concealing something that he tucks into his belt as he steps down to the submerged hood of the truck, closer to the waiting sharks.
The omega twists in protest; “Steven, wait, what the hell are you doing?!!”

The sharks make a beeline for the hood of the truck, surfacing almost instantly as they try to lock their jaws on his legs. The alpha quickly yanks the concealed object off of his hip, raising it up in his right fist like a knife.

It's a long, heavy duty screw driver.

The sharks scramble to dive off of the hood of the truck, thrashing in the torrents of water to hang back a few feet away. They swim back and forth tersely, like they're frustrated.

“Well, I’d say that’s shark speak for ‘oh shit, a shiv,’” Kono yells out in disbelief.

Chin’s brows are raised as he nods; “They must have used the serum then. I don't think a regular shark would've reacted like that to something in your hand.”

“Exactly.” Steve turns to Danny and smirks; “You like that?"

Danny refuses to look at him. “No, I didn't like that you dick, I don't want to explain to our pups that their idiot father was murdered by a prison shark!” He turns to jab his fingers at Steve’s chest, glaring at him and Steve rolls his eyes, looking instead into the backpack again.

“They probably haven't figured out how to turn back yet. Otherwise they'd be climbing up here to attack us,” Steve explains. The alpha then pulls a thick coil of rope from the pack, glancing up toward the roof of the building nearest to them, like he's eyeing the distance.

“Any ideas, boss?” Kono yells, watching the sharks nervously.

One of the sharks thrusts up above the surf to snap its jaws near Carter's leg. The meteorologist yells out in surprise and Danny kicks the heel of his shoe at the thing’s nose, sending it flopping back into the torrent of flood water.

“Next one of you sons of bitches that decides to get cute gets his eyes clawed out,” Danny snarls furiously at the transformed prisoners.

“I don't think they're gonna have to try to jump up here for much longer -- it looks like the storm surge is rising,” Chin points out grimly.

“Which is why we need to get to high ground until we’re further inland,” Steve yells, studying the neatly coiled rope in his hands and feeling for weaknesses.

“What exactly did you have in mind?” Danny shouts over the rush of the water. The truck is slowly starting to sway in a teetering, back and forth motion; the flood water is starting to lift it.

“The tops of the buildings are close enough that we can to leapfrog our way to higher ground,” Steve turns to explain to his team. They all frown in confusion, and his small omega is the first to cast doubt on his plan.

“That'd be a good plan if we could actually get up there, but really, ‘A’ for effort, babe, I mean it,” Danny exclaims.

Steve rounds on him, frustrated. “Danny, would you just trust me? I can get up there first and start pulling you guys up.”

“No, absolutely not! You might as well start seasoning yourself for the sharks -- you can not make
that jump,” Danny protests, fanning his hands out emphatically.

Steve starts tugging his shirt off. “Not as a human I can’t.”

Danny runs his hand back over his forehead, exhaling a low breath that no one but Steve with his alpha hearing can pick up. Danny doesn't know that Steve is having to fight with his alpha instincts with every passing moment as the scent of pregnant omega distress gets stronger.

His alpha self is urging him to only protect Danny and their unborn pup, to maximize his mate’s chance of getting to a safe place quickly. It wants him to save his omega and only his omega -- to leave the rest to fend for themselves. Steve hates his instincts in moments like this, for making him even entertain the idea of abandoning his team. How could he ever leave his betas stranded? How could he let Carter -- at fault only for being dedicated to his wife and daughter -- get swept away in the flood and carried out to sea to drown?

Steve thanks god that Chin and Kono will never know about the shameful urges of a nesting alpha. His mate has them all looking the other way as the Seal strips down to his bare skin and he's pretty sure that even the sharks are giving him some kind of wtf expression from the water.

The rain on his skin feels like buckshot at this point, and when his flesh thickens as he shifts it's a blessing. As a big cat, of course, Steve isn't crazy about his mane getting wet and soggy, but it beats being a soft, defenseless human.

The jump is only one story high, and technically they aren't at ground level on top of the truck, but the alpha is going to be coming at it from a difficult angle. He turns to give Danny one long look and the omega nods at him sadly, and it's in this way that they make it clear that they love each other, just in case this plan goes south. Danny tucks the rope into the backpack, zipping it securely, and holds it out for Steve to grab gently with his huge jaws. When he's sure that no one can see, the lion licks over the back of Danny's hand softly.

The omega grins sadly down at him. “Be careful, kitty cat.”

Steve almost doesn't make it; his huge dinner plate sized paws hook over the ledge of the roof and the claws on his back paws scrape desperately up the front of the stucco building. It's a cabinetry and tile store, and Steve can only imagine what the owners are going to think upon returning when they see such huge, violent claw marks dug into the shop exterior. Grunting in low, huffing vocalizations that escape his powerful and broad chest, the alpha heaves himself up over the ledge, tumbling less than gracefully onto the roof. The black backpack -- containing his clothes -- is hanging from his mouth and he spits it out, rough tongue recoiling from the unpleasant taste. With nothing to block the howling wind and stinging rain up here as he shifts, this is going to fucking hurt.

When the alpha’s mass lessens to its human state, the wind nearly blows Steve off his feet. He turns his back to the oppressive force of wind, yanking open the backpack to pull on his boots, pants, and black shirt. It’s not much, but it helps.

He ties the backpack to the end of the rope to use it as a guiding weight against the wind, wrapping the other end of the rope around a thick pipe that he knows is bolted down into the foundation of the building.

After Steve tosses the backpack down to his team, he sees them looking between each other to decide who to send first. Ultimately, they choose Chin, which is smart because the muscular beta can help Steve pull up the rest of the group. Steve’s alpha side whines out in protest internally over the fact that his pregnant mate isn't first to come up, but the seal knows that Danny can't lift anything heavy right now. This makes more sense.
Danny is next, but the omega tries to shove the rope to Kono for a minute or two until she gestures to his middle and forcefully puts the rope back in his hands.

Carter is last to pull up, but, with his two betas pulling with Steve, the process is much quicker the last time around. Danny is leaning to look over the edge of the building, watching uneasily as the floodwater finally overcomes the truck and submerges it, carrying it out to sea.

Luckily, the first few buildings’ rooftops have only a few feet of space between them. Steve has Hawaii’s outrageous property prices to thank for that.

It's the last jump -- the jump to the top of a walk-in clinic that is connected to a parking garage -- that poses a problem. The ledge is just over six feet away, making it problematic for the only member of their group that has short legs.

Danny shakes his head a few times, walking back and forth with his hands on his hips as Chin and Carter jump across to the other building. Kono not only jumps, she leaps through the air as gracefully as a gazelle and even lands on her feet.

“Ten out of Ten, Kono,” Steve yells, and his beta grins.

Danny is glaring up at him when the alpha looks back down at him.

“Danny, I’ll even hold your hand -- come on,” Steve pleads loudly, reaching out for Danny’s palm.

The omega yanks his hand back; “Not unless your hand sprouts wings and a propulsion jet engine because that is what it's going to take to get me across that fucking canyon!”

Steve flashes his teeth. “It is pouring down rain, Danny, we’re too exposed to the elements up here! We need to move! The National guard is stationed right on the other side of the garage.”

“You can spout facts at me all day long, Steven, it isn't going to make my legs longer!” Danny screams, gesturing down at his feet.

Steve hesitates, sputtering to come up with anything. “Then get on my back. I'll carry you across on my back!”

“Like what? Like in a papoose? Do I look like I want to be papoosed right now?!” Danny drags a hand down over his face in frustration.

Steve is about to roar him into submission in front of the entire team when an enormous black furry blur slams down down next to them on the roof with enough force to shake the building.

Danny hisses, bristling like a spooked cat, and nearly trips over his own feet trying to scramble behind Steve. The alpha blinks at the sight of the gorilla, fanning his arms out protectively in front of his mate until he realizes the thing is trying communicate with him through hand gestures.

“Carter?” Steve says in disbelief, glancing over to Chin and Kono.

“He said he can carry Danny over the gap like this,” Kono yells over the raging storm.

Danny hears her and tries to bolt for the opposite side of the building, but Steve lunges to wrap his arms around the omega from behind, dragging him back toward the gorilla.

The omega snarls at him, clawing and snapping at his arms desperately. “Steven, no! Not the monkey, not the fucking monkey, don't you dare --”
Steve smirks in amusement, lifting up the omega and shoves his small mate into the huge beast’s arms. “Careful, he bites.”

Carter appears to grin and takes a running leap. When the gorilla lands on the other building, it gently sets down the omega.

“I hate you BOTH,” Danny yells as Steve finally leaps across the gap to join his team.

It takes twenty minutes for Carter to figure out how to shift back, and Steve coaches him through it in a quiet corner of the garage. It takes twenty minutes and the entire ride up the mountain in a National Guard issue Hummer for Danny to even acknowledge Steve’s presence again.

The shelter turns out to be a public high school, with its windows boarded up securely and a few stations of guards just inside the doors. They are directed toward what appears to be the gymnasium, and from the sound of it, the focal point of the shelter is the gym itself.

Steve doesn’t wait for the man at the gym entrance to address him. “Yeah, hi. Lieutenant Commander Steve McGarrett, Five-O. Thanks for keeping everything under control around here,” the alpha barks quickly. “I’m gonna need medical attention, food, and water for my crew.”

“Yes sir, right away,” the young officer sputters, scurrying off.

The alpha half of himself sighs in relief in the corners of his mind, finally feeling that he has at least a slim portion of control over the situation again.

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Dragging his exhausted body step by weary step, Danny ventures into the stark lighting of the gymnasium. He hears his wet shoes screeching a familiar chirp against the polished wood and it reminds him of the basketball games the team would sometimes attend at the high school whenever there was a fundraising event.

Only the high pitched squeak of his shoes on the shining floor is out of place and barely audible over the commotion of the crowd within.

Rows and rows of dark green cots are lined up, each sporting a haggard looking local that stares up at him dismally as Danny starts to make his way through the rows of beds. There are a few of the social services babies crying, stressed out adults yelling at toddlers and a few national guards calling names off of a clipboard. Danny realizes a moment too late that he's been staring at one woman unintentionally and she's giving him a look. He looks away right as his alpha claps a hand onto his shoulder -- less out of support and more out of a tendency to start grabbing at Danny when there are a lot of other alphas around.

“You need to sleep,” Steve commands softly, steering him to a few cots that are being set up in a corner. “We’ll all be right here next to you.”

And with that, Danny collapses onto what has to be the most uncomfortable and unforgiving cot he's ever been on, but right now it will do just fine.
Three hours later, Steve, Chin, and Kono are seated on a cluster of cots as Danny sleeps and Carter discusses the storm with the National Guard meteorology team.

The alpha and his two betas are still amped up after spending half of the day in a drug induced sleep on the break room floor, and so, for now they trying to entertain themselves with a pack of cards bummed off the kitchen staff of the national guard. They are two rounds deep into a game of poker, complete with ‘chips’ that are really just plastic and fabric leaves that Kono has ripped off of a dusty fake ficus tree she found near the bathrooms. The leaves are actually supposed to stand for Saturday on-call shifts that the team is waging their bets and bluffs against. So-far, Kono and Chin have enough leaves between them that Steve is positive he will be working every Saturday until the day he dies and then some.

His poker face isn't what it used to be -- isn't anywhere as enigmatic as Chin and the infinite source of zen the guy can apparently draw upon at will during a card game. Steve used to be so good at hiding his emotions as a Seal… And then a small, smart-mouthed omega came into his life and, somewhere along the years, coaxed an emotional awareness into Steve, unraveling his stoic facade. Steve is seated at the edge of Danny’s cot, poring intently over his cards. Danny’s head is resting on his thigh, using him as a pillow as the alpha starts to gently brush his fingertips through his mate’s hair.

“Do you think we should try to get him some earplugs?” Chin asks suddenly, looking up from his hoard of leaves to watch Steve affectionately brushing back Danny’s hair. Danny and Steve have generally avoided making any sort of overt displays of affection around the team, but the mated pair has always had a subtle code of physical intimacy that the betas are used to -- a hand on the arm or back, leaning into one another on the couch, straightening each others ties, and folding into each other's space when they laugh or have a private conversation.

“Nah, he’s completely out,” Steve says quietly, drifting his hand lower to rest on the omega’s swollen abdomen. “He’s learned to sleep through the pup’s kicking; a little noise won't bother him.”

Danny wakes to the feeling of tiny fingers poking his face. He scrunches up his nose and pulls his head back slightly, thinking for a moment that one of his pups has had a nightmare and has crawled into bed to snuggle.

But then he hears giggling, from a lot more than two pups. He opens his eyes in confusion, squinting in the bright light at completely unfamiliar surroundings. There are at least six small children smiling semi-toothless grins at him, giggling to each other.

“Miss Kono says you need to wake up and eat something,” a little blonde boy recites to him proudly.

He blinks at the little boy, wondering where this kid’s parents are. And where is Danny, for that matter?

Oh.
The storm. That’s right.

He’s at the shelter.

“Good afternoon, sunshine,” Kono says sweetly, and when he looks over at her, she has a smiling Vanessa on her lap.

“Hey,” he says groggily, voice hoarse with sleep. His throat is so dry that it almost hurts to talk. “Afternoon?”

Jesus, he thinks. What time is it?

Hell, what YEAR is it?

“Mmhmm,” Kono nods down at him. “Looks like you needed to get caught up on sleep -- it’s almost two.”

2:00 pm. Which means, good god, he’s been asleep for almost nineteen hours. “Steve?” He murmurs, glancing around as he rubs his eyes.

“He’s off fighting the kitchen guards over saving some food for you from the lunch rations,” Kono says with a smirk. “I think the ‘foraging for his mate’ instinct might be taking over; he tried to rip a granola bar out of Chin’s hand.”

“He did, did he?” Danny says softly, pushing himself up into a sitting position. His pup wakes in a rush of movement and the omega puts a hand over her to calm her down.

The kids all giggle at Kono as Vanessa nods knowingly.

“Why do you smell so good Mister?” A little boy blurts, leaning in toward Danny’s neck and the omega rears back in surprise before remembering that this kid is only about five. He patiently lets the kid sniff his neck for a second before gently moving him back a step or two.

The little boy is an alpha.

Actually, all of them are little alphas.

“Yeah,” says a girl with fiercely red hair. “You smell like strawberry ice cream.”

“Yeah! And birthday cake,” a native girl chimes in, hopping up to sit on the cot with him.

“Do you have a birthday cake with you right now? Is that why you smell so good?” The little blond boy asks.

“I don't smell anything,” Kono says in confusion. “Are you sure you guys aren't just hungry?”

“My ah...deodorant washed off in the flood water,” Danny says quietly, leaning closer to Kono. “These kids are all alphas.”

Kono widens her eyes in surprise. “Oh.”

“He smells good because he’s an oh-MEG-uh,” Vanessa says knowingly with raised brows, as if it's obvious, even though some of these kids are probably just beginning to understand the concept of subgenders.

“OhhhHHHHHHhh,” the kids all say, staring up at him in awe.
He smiles awkwardly, waving up his fingertips to gesture. “She's right. Omegas do smell very good, but I dunno, I kinda wish I had a birthday cake right now, too.”

The kids all giggle until the red head pipes up, face contorted into a serious expression. “But Mister Danny, how can you be an omega? You're a boy.”

Kono leans from her cot to look at all of the children with an expression full of mystery. “That’s because the world has sooo many different kinds of people in it, that there are girl omegas and boy omegas. Just like how there are girl alphas and boy alphas.”

The native girl frowns sadly. “But why have I never saw a boy omega before?”

Danny tilts his head, “There just aren't that many of us, but we do exist.”

“Can you roar like a boy alpha?” The little blonde boy says, doing his best imitation of a roar, raising up his hands like claws.

“I uh -- no.” Danny tries not to laugh as Vanessa. “That's very ferocious, did you know that? I think you do know that, don't you?”

The little boy beams, grinning as he nods.

“Do you have fangs like a alpha?” A shy boy calls out from behind the red head.

“I do,” Danny smiles, showing his fangs for a few seconds. Then he lifts up his hands to show the children his hooked glass-like claws. “I also have these!”

“WOAH!” The kids all say in unison, jumping up to try to touch them.

He smirks, lowering his hands to let the children all poke and tug at his claws. “Careful, though, they're pretty sharp.”

“Do girl omegas have claws, too?” The native girl asks, leaning against his knee as she looks up at him with wide eyes.

“Oh…” Danny draws a blank, realizing sheepishly that he doesn't even know. His mother is an omega, but he's never seen her get into any kind of fight. Or even a strong argument with his alpha father.

“They do,” Steve’s voice barks suddenly. He and Chin are walking toward him, each carrying food.

“Look who’s finally awake,” Chin says warmly. “You were sleeping so deep for a while there that the guards kept coming over to try to feel for a pulse on your neck. Then Steve tried to bite the last two and they finally left you alone.”

Steve ignores Chin’s comment and starts to unload the food onto a few paper plates, directing the beta to do the same. “I got you lunch, buddy, and I need you to eat all of this.”

Danny widens his eyes. Spread among the paper plates are two apples, an orange, a slice of garlic bread and what has to be more than a pound of sliced roast beef.

“What -- all of that? Are you insane?” The omega protests. “I just woke up, Steven, I'm not gonna eat two pounds of… meat toast!”

The kids all burst into giggles, all echoing a chorus of ‘eewwww’ in front of Danny’s cot.
Steve glances down at the children suddenly, a primal flicker in his eyes; “These are all alphas.”

The kids all cower closer to Danny and Kono when Steve looks down at all of them like he’s considering growling to get them out of what he feels is his territory. Danny almost forgets that Steve is nesting until ridiculous shit like this happens.

“Steve, they're just babies.” Danny says quietly, reaching out to put a hand protectively across the little native girl and the blonde toddler to pull them closer. “They don't know what they're doing babe, my blocking spray washed off in the flood and they’re just curious about what I am.”

“Yeah, well,” Steve mutters as he looks around with a grim expression; “If they can smell you enough to find you through all this alphadren, then so can every other alpha in here. Now eat that food, Danny, it's not just you that needs it.” He turns to lock eyes with the omega, giving him a pointed look. “And don't you leave this cot, you hear me?”

“Yes I hear you. How could I not? You're barking orders at me like I'm a prisoner of war, Steven,” Danny retorts, trying to pile a few pieces of roast beef onto the cold Texas toast. “And look I’m eating. Everything’s okay.”

Steve nods with a sigh, scanning the area quickly before looking at his team again. “I’ve gotta go talk to the top brass in the Guard about the storm.”

“Godspeed you grump,” Danny says, shaking his head as he chews on a corner of the bread.

The kids all giggle. The redhead then cocks her head and stares up at him quizzically. “So do boy omegas sit down when they pee?”

Danny choking on the bread, coughing loudly as the betas beside him try to hide their snickering laughter.

Kono then decides to spare Danny the invasive questions and gathers up all of the kids in a circle away from the omega to play ‘Duck Duck Goose.’

After finally getting some protein, Danny slowly feels himself become more aware. He can think straight now, and he realizes that he had been starving. It makes Danny thankful that Steve pretty much commanded him to eat. After downing the apple and half of the orange, the omega chugs a water bottle.

The omega then realizes he has an urgent need to use the facilities. After sleeping for almost nineteen hours, and the fact that he's carrying a now restless pup right over his bladder, Danny’s not surprised. As soon as Danny rises to his feet, Chin looks up at him in question.

“Bathroom,” the omega explains, gesturing toward the exit of the gym.

“I'll go with you,” Chin replies, standing beside him, and Danny is about to wave him off but realizes it's pointless.

So the omega nods, leading the way with a resigned sigh. They've barely made it past the gym doors, however, when a guard in a white lab coat stops Chin.

“Sir, have you gotten this wound checked out since you arrived?” The woman barks at him. She reaches out to grab the beta’s wrist to lift his forearm, and Chin winces slightly.

The gash Chin got on top of the building is bleeding again, soaking into the gauze and dripping
down toward his elbow. “Ah…”

“So no, you haven’t,” the woman mutters, clicking her tongue against her front teeth with a tsk. “Did you know that when a city floods this badly, raw sewage from the sewers can contaminate the floodwater out there? You’ve basically exposed this wound to a cocktail of bacteria and we need to get you a shot of Rocephin, stat unless you’re willing to part with that arm.” She then walks toward a small office that has a few bandaged up guards in it, motioning for Chin to follow.

Chin turns to give Danny a bewildered expression. “I can wait until you --”

Danny interrupts him. “Nah. Chin, just go, I appreciate it but I'm fine.”

The beta hesitates. “You’re sure?”

Snorting with laughter, Danny raises one of his palms. “Chin, I really don't need your help holding my junk at the urinal. I mean, it’s pretty big -- I’m not gonna lie -- but it's not THAT big.”

“And with that, Chin hurries to follow the doctor into the small office.

Danny can smell them before he sees them.

Alphas.

A group of them is filing into the men's room behind him as he washes his hands.

He glances into the mirror, and they're all fixated on him.

Huge alpha males, ranging from twenty-five to an age Danny can't discern from looks alone because the sun and the saltwater ages the blonde surfers. The one thing he can most-definitely discern is that they’re all looking at him like he's some kind of new toy -- half curious and half longingly. The jovial grin that he's been sporting since wisecracking with Chin is gone, and in its place, an ominous weight seems to settle in the air around him.

Danny has always thought that his pregnancy pheromones smell like vanilla buttercream frosting, but Steve says he smells more like honey. These guys smell like -- to a mated omega at least -- a mix between ammonia and some kind of incredibly spicy food. It hurts Danny to even breathe in their scents at close range.

He hides his discomfort despite the omega half of him that is screeching into a panic. Keeps washing his hands calmly.

“Can I help you?” Danny says in a fatigued voice, discreetly crossing his arms over his stomach as he wishes Steve weren't still in a meeting with the National Guard higher ups. The guys are looking at him like they've never even seen a male omega up close, so they may not know the difference between an omega’s scent and the scent of a carrying omega. He hopes so, at least.

“Brah, are you an omega? ‘Cause we have a bet going,” he blurs with a smirk, gesturing between
himself and one of the other alphas. “You’re either an omega or some kind of runt beta.”

“Or maybe a toy breed beta?” One mutters from the back and the guys all start hooting in laughter, making Danny’s face burn red in his reflection as he dries his hands on a paper towel.

“I have my own bet going,” Danny replies as he whips around, “that at least half of you have escaped from the planet of the apes. Why don’t you get out of my face, now.”

“I’ll take that as a yes,” the largest alpha chuckles. The guys around them all laugh with more of the typical deep voices that accompany such large alpha males. It is a reminder of how much bigger they are than Danny.

“God, he smells so good,” one alpha whispers.

“Is his skin soft? I’ve heard they have soft skin like a girl,” one calls out, and someone reaches for the side of his face.

Danny hisses, baring his fangs on an impulse as he leans back out of reach just in time.

The guys all jerk back in surprise, a few cooing a laugh with a leering grin. “Uh oh -- look at him, he’s like a cat!”

“Next one that tries to touch me gets arrested for assault,” Danny snaps, walking slowly backwards toward the exit.

One of them moves to block his path. “Hey, man, we’re just a little curious ‘is all. We’ve been cooped up in that gym for almost a week now.”

“He really is tiny,” one of them whispers.

“Yeah but he looks like he's got some muscle on him,” another replies, reaching out to feel his biceps.

“Does he have tits?” One blurts, laughing, and another reaches out to yank his shirt collar away from his neck, peering inside at his chest.

“No, but he's hairless! It’s so weird!”

Danny headbutts the younger man, slamming his forehead forward into his nose and the omega hears a sickening crack as the alpha roars out at him. “Jesus Christ, you little bitch!” The man holds his bleeding nose with one hand and thrusts a huge hand into the center of his chest, shoving him back into the tight grip of another one of the guys. It feels like he's been hit with a two-by-four, and it knocks the wind out of him. He clutches his stomach nervously.

“Hey, hey! Don’t hurt him, Eric, he’s like half our size!” The one holding him folds around Danny protectively from behind and turns him away, partially shielding him from the one called ‘Eric.’

“He broke my fuckin’ nose, Marco,” Erik snarls in a nasally voice, holding his bleeding nose.

Danny is panting in distress, taking great heaving breaths that he can't suppress, wondering what the fuck these guys are going to do to him. He feels slightly comforted that at least the alpha behind him doesn’t want anyone to physically harm him.

“Yeah, you have to be gentle with an omega, Erik,” a tall blonde surfer type says. “Hold him still, Marco, I just want to see if he’s hairless everywhere.”
The omega starts to struggle fiercely as the blonde alpha lifts the hem of Danny’s tee, and the detective snarls when the alpha yanks the front of his elastic athletic shorts and black boxer briefs low enough to see his trail of pubic hair. The guys all laugh.

“Looks like omegas aren't completely hairless,” someone coos in a low voice.

Danny stiffly struggles against the alpha behind him. His upper body hair is gone because he’s carrying a pup, but Danny would rather cut off one of his own fingers than reveal that to these guys.

“God he’s got a little beer belly, doesn’t he,” Erik mutters quietly, reaching out to poke Danny’s swollen pup-belly and the omega flinches. “Woah, it’s hard.”

A whine escapes the back of the omega’s throat as the guy pushes a deeper with two of his fingertips. “Don’t!” Danny grimaces and tries to thrash out of their grip.

“Dude, why is he so tweaked about his stomach?” One of them says quietly.

The guy is still shoving his finger tips into Danny’s swollen abdomen when the baby moves away from the guy’s touch, kicking at the intruding pressure. The alpha jerks his hands back in surprise.

Danny feels the baby move and hangs his head, gritting his teeth and groaning in frustration.

“You guys, something’s moving in there!” Erik gasps incredulously. “I think he's got a pup in him!”

“What? No way!” One of the native looking guys from the back exclaims, reaching out to press a palm to his belly.

Danny tries to howl out suddenly but Marco behind him immediately claps a hand over his mouth. “Shhh -- it’s okay! You’re okay, little guy, we’re not going to hurt you!”

“Dude, he just howled like an animal,” an alpha laughs incredulously. “What the hell was that about?”

“He’s a nervous little thing, isn't he,” says the native guy in the front, still holding his belly. “Awww, wow! He is pregnant!”

Danny tries to bite the hand over his mouth until he hears one of them ask if they can have a turn holding him. He looks up in horror, eyes wide as the group closes in around him.

When Jerry Ortega takes a break from helping the national guards cooking dinner for the shelter, he decides to rinse his face with water in the bathroom. He's been standing over a hot stove for an hour, making some spaghetti sauce like his mom used to make. One whiff of whatever the Guards had been attempting to make earlier was all it took for Jerry to volunteer. To their credit, the sauce had at least been red.

But under Jerry’s supervision, tonight's dinner -- complete with cheesy garlic bread that should put a smile on everyone’s face for the first time in a week -- would be a success.
As he pushes open the mens’ room door, the beta is removing his hairnet (and beard net) when he locks eyes with one of the last people he would expect to be in the hurricane shelter bathroom.

It's Danny.

He’s panting, pressed back into a corner of the bathroom with his claws out, surrounded by five alphas that are all either clutching their groin in pain, holding a bleeding nose, or trying to put pressure on an actively bleeding wound.

The relief that Danny feels when he sees him is physically visible to Jerry. The omega slumps back against the wall, trying to catch his breath as he pants a few words in the beta’s direction. “Hey… man.”

“Uh -- hey,” Jerry blinks. “I feel like I just walked into the OK Corral a few minutes after the finale.”

A beat passes as Danny looks around at all of the bleeding and groaning alphas on the tiled floor.

“I’m assuming they deserved what they got?” Jerry asks quietly. “The alternative is that you’re in some kind of fight club or perhaps turning into an aggressive omega with an insatiable appetite for violence or --”

“Jerry,” Danny puts a shaking hand up to stop him. The knuckles are bruised and bloody. “They deserved it. Trust me.”

Jerry pauses. “Were you even feral when you did this?”

“No. Just pissed off,” Danny shakes his head blankly, wiping sweat off his forehead with the back of his forearm. “I need to find my mate.” With that the omega starts to walk slowly to the exit.

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Steve is attempting to reach the governor on the satellite phone when he catches a familiar scent. He turns quickly, scanning the area.

“Jerry?!” Steve says happily, lowering the phone. He decides to attempt calling again later. “Good to see you man! I've been looking for you everywhere--”

“BOSS,” Jerry sputters, waving his palms up to stop the alpha. “Boss you’ve got to see this.”

Steve frowns. “Jerry, what’s goin’ on?”

The beta motions for him to follow him. “It's -- well -- you just have to see this!”

Steve feels his hackles raising as he uneasily sets down the satellite phone on the Guards' folding table. “Alright.”

Jerry leads him down a maze of hallways toward one of the lesser used mens’ restrooms on the far side of the building.

As soon as Steve smells the blood he starts to walk quicker… because he’s also picking up Danny’s distress scent mixed in with it.
Steve throws open the door, searching for any sign of his mate, but the only people in the room are alphas. Bruised and bloody alphas.

With big scratches on their skin from what had to be claws.

“Oh my god,” Steve breathes, dragging a hand down over his mouth. “Is he --” he turns to Jerry with panicked, shining eyes.

“He’s fine!” Jerry blurts quickly, realizing that he could have been more tactful to avoid giving his alpha a heart attack.

Steve lets the door shut and leans his face into his hand, pinching the bridge of his nose as he sighs in relief.

The beta fidgets awkwardly. “I just thought you should see what happened before anyone comes looking for Danny for revenge or something like that,” he says quietly, looking down at the floor.

“Yeah. This is… this is something I need to go deal with. Right now. Thanks Jerr,” Steve nods quickly, reaching out to clap a hand on the beta’s shoulder as he starts to walk furiously toward the gym.

xxxxxxxxxx (warning: this next section contains a reference to miscarriage in general, a reference to past miscarriage and related dark themes, and mentions rape. However, no rape or miscarriage actually occurs) xxxxxxxxxx

Danny is hiding under the bleachers in the gymnasium, sitting against a wall quietly. He’s tugging a blanket around himself that he’s been using to hide the alpha blood on his shirt as he struggles to process exactly what just happened. His eyes are stinging and red rimmed but so help him God he is not going to cry over this.

He won't allow himself that pathetic indulgence.

A part of himself feels proud for putting five dangerously ignorant alphas in their place, but another part of himself feels ashamed. Embarrassed, maybe. But why? Isn't Danny entitled to the same right of privacy as any other individual? And shouldn't he be able to defend himself against someone belligerently invading on his bodily autonomy? He could have easily sued any of them for common law battery, as the only action required is an unwanted touch.

Which he certainly fucking experienced today.

So why does he feel so conflicted?

When Steve suddenly swoops under the bleachers with cat-like grace, Danny is so startled that he bangs the back of his head against the wall he's leaning back on.

“Jesus Christ Steven, I still think you need a bell,” Danny mutters, rubbing the back of his head.

“Daniel, what the fuck just happened in the bathroom?” Steve is standing there with his arms crossed as he seethes in boiling anger. The alpha’s scent is bearing down on him to submit and Danny honestly doesn't have any strength left to resist.
Slumping down the wall, Danny shifts until he's on his back, letting out a low whine. “The alphas were basically trying to pass me around. They had never seen a male omega before.”

“So you started a fist fight with five alphas? In a tiny enclosed space?!” Steve growls down at him, standing over him oppressively to physically assert his dominance over Danny.

Danny twists his neck uncomfortably at the sensation of his omega brain spiraling into primal agony in the back of his mind over having upset his alpha. “They were touching my stomach. They found out about our pup...”

“Were they trying to try to hurt it?” Steve asks in a low growl.

Danny blinks in confusion. “What? No, I just -- they were handling me like I was some kind of pet!”

“So you just wanted to prove how strong you are? Huh? Wanted to show them that you’re just as much of a man as they are -- is that it?” Steve gives him a particularly accusatory look.

Looking away nervously, Danny sputters to come up with an explanation so that Steve gets it. “Steve, I --”

“You what, Danny?” The alpha snaps, interrupting him and waving his hands up furiously. “What went through your head to convince you that your sense of pride was worth endangering our pup like that?! Can’t you hear her tiny heartbeat? Does it not sound fragile to you?”

The omega fights his instincts to sit up against the wall, panting with the effort. “Would you rather I had been raped?” He snarls.

“Were they trying to rape you?” Steve asks pointedly in a low voice.

Danny hesitates, looking at the light filtering in through the darkness of the bleachers. “Well, no, but they were holding me, touching my stomach -- humiliating me! They put a hand over my mouth. I couldn't even howl for you, Steven! I was scared.”

The alpha’s eyes harden. “I’m scared too, Danny. I am fucking scared that you don't even want this pup to live!”

Danny’s spine goes ice cold as the words evoke the painful darkness locked away in his heart over the memory of losing the third pup at THRESH. He relives the helplessness of having a child taken from him, and the shame of having been designed to create life and having harbored a death instead. “How dare you even say that to me,” the omega whispers in a low voice, eyes shining furiously.

“Is that so wild of an assumption?” Steve counters bitterly. “I have to force you to eat, beg you to stay off your feet, and now -- what -- follow you around to make sure you don't start any fights?! It is my fucking purpose and privilege to protect you and our pup and I can't do that when you’re actively choosing to endanger her!” Steve’s eyes are glistening now as he looks down at Danny desperately. “You saw the ultrasound, Danny, you were right there with me. At this point I’ll be lucky if she can hold on in there for another four months, but I wouldn't bet on it because I'm pretty sure you never wanted her and you still don't.”

“Take it back!” Danny swings up an arm to punch Steve across the jaw before the omega even realizes he's doing it. But Steve catches his fist, tightening his grip around it for a second before growling at him and forcing his hand down to his side.

“Did you not hear any of what I just said?! Stop trying to fight!” Steve snarls, leaning into Danny's face.
“Yes, I heard you -- why do you think I just tried to punch you?! Why would you say those things to me, Steven?! What is the matter with you?” Danny shouts, face reddening in anger.

“You wanna know, Danny?! I’m hurt! Okay? It hurts me that you don’t seem like this pup is your number one priority right now! I know you have a huge family, but I don’t, okay?” He rages at Danny with glistening eyes and finally lowers his voice. “I have a dead father, a flake sister that I never see, and a mom that has just barely come back into my life after walking out on me when I was just a kid.”

Danny sighs, bringing up a hand through his hair as he tries to cool down from his explosive moment of fury a few seconds ago. He knows where this is going.

“Our family is all I have. You are my life, Danny. Our pups are my life. And you’re carrying what’s going to be another part of my life,” Steve wipes at his eyes with the back of his hand, not allowing the tears to fall. The alpha looks first down at Danny’s stomach and then away evasively.

“I get that, babe,” Danny says softly. “But I was a strong, independent man way before I was ever a mother. Sometimes, it’s just hard to balance those two sides of myself; I’m sorry.” He waits for the alpha to look back down at him, eyes filled with pain. “And I know the pup is fragile, but it’s making me feel fragile now, Steven. I’m just get sick of being afraid.”

“Afraid of what?” Steve asks quietly, frowning in concern as he steps closer to put his hands on Danny’s biceps.

Danny hesitates, biting the inside of his cheek and swallowing thickly as he tries to get his nerve up to be completely honest about this. “I just -- it’s….”

“You get that, babe,” Danny says softly. “But I was a strong, independent man way before I was ever a mother. Sometimes, it’s just hard to balance those two sides of myself; I’m sorry.” He waits for the alpha to look back down at him, eyes filled with pain. “And I know the pup is fragile, but it’s making me feel fragile now, Steven. I’m just get sick of being afraid.”

“Afraid of what?” Steve asks quietly, frowning in concern as he steps closer to put his hands on Danny’s biceps.

Danny hesitates, biting the inside of his cheek and swallowing thickly as he tries to get his nerve up to be completely honest about this. “I just -- it’s….”

“Danny, tell me,” Steve whispers, gently rubbing one of Danny’s upper arm.

The omega twists awkwardly and looks away. “Of other alphas. The ones in here, the ones on the street, the ones I don’t even know and haven’t even met. Under the smart mouth, and the muscles, and the badge, I’m still just an omega. Yeah, I trained in hand to hand combat at the police academy, but I’m lucky those punks in bathroom were sleep deprived and more ignorant than violent. You know damn well that anyone in here could paralyze me just by grabbing the back of my neck and do whatever they wanted to me. I’m exhausted from trying to pretend that I don’t feel completely vulnerable!”

Pulling Danny in closer to his strong chest, Steve embraces his mate, slowly rubbing his back. “I know buddy,” he whispers. “I just need to try to remember that no matter how hard this is for me, it’s even harder for you. And I’m sorry for being so overbearing lately, it turns out that nesting during a natural disaster is a horrible idea.”

Danny inhales his scent, feeling safe for the first time in a long time, and nods against his chest silently.

Steve holds him for a while before pulling back with a hesitant expression. “There is one thing we could try.”

Frowning in confusion, Danny resists for a second until Steve reaches back to put a gentle hand on his back. “Trust me.”
Chapter End Notes

Man, final exams this spring were especially rough -__- Forgive me for the long gap for exams and recovery! The good news is that I've got some time off before fall semester!
Hey y'all!! This is about twelve hours late, but here ya go! I'll be backpacking around Ireland with my pal, a fellow author, for a week and a half and definitely wanted to update before I go! She's writing a fantasy novel, so we're going to do some "research" by staying in a castle built in the 1500s for at least a night to try and get a feel for castle life ;)

If I don't get to bellow loudly for MEADE at least once while banging a heavy goblet on a huge oak table I will be slightly disappointed.

Steve hasn't wanted a cigarette this badly since he left the Seals. Sure, he's felt the old urge flare up a few times after his most harrowing escapes or particularly dangerous extraction missions, but not like this -- not this badly.

There's a tall, scraggly looking guy smoking by the closed door of the loading dock in the back of the shelter, maybe it's what gave him the idea. Or maybe he just wants something to distract himself from the terrible things he had to say to Danny to shock some sense into him. Steve receives some kind of bro nod as he walks past the young man to stare out of the small, inch thick window in the door

“Man, you look like you just got worked,” the smoker chuckle, and puffs of smoke wisp out of the sides of his crooked teeth like a dragon.

“Bit of a rough afternoon,” Steve mutters vaguely, not sure what in hell this man is talking about. It’s surfer slang.

“Yeah dude, I hear ya,” the guy mumbles glancing out of another window at the storm outside. “My crew and I, we stayed behind to catch the storm waves. We are talking the phattest waves -- like Nerrabean, grade-A total party waves -- then comes the fuckin’ national guard. Said they’d handcuff us and crack our sticks in half with their truck if we didn't come in.” The man gives a groaning sigh, obviously annoyed that the guardsmen wouldn't let a bunch of idiots die surfing. “Fuckin’ military, ya’ know, brah?”

Steve has to restrain himself from rolling his eyes. “Yeah. How dare they try to save your life.”

“I know right? I’ve surfed plenty of storms. They treated me like some little paddlepuss,” he sighs as he shakes his head in disbelief. Then he’s looking over at Steve for a reaction.

“Awful,” Steve mutters, glancing over, and that's apparently enough to satisfy the smoker. The seal still has no idea what the hell this guy is saying beyond the fact that he surfs and he's mad.

“So your day, brah, you just totally perled it or what?”
“My ah… kids’ mother isn't thinking things through enough lately,” Steve mumbles vaguely. “It's probably just these close quarters getting to everyone.”

“Or the boredom, right? What kind of hurricane shelter doesn't have booze?”

“All of them. I'm pretty sure on that.” Steve frowns, wondering if this guy is high somehow, but the Seal doesn't smell drugs. In fact, all Steve has been able to smell since he walked into this shelter is alphadren from all of the tense civilians.

“It's a shame then, ya know man? My whole crew is so bored. Only half interesting thing that's happened in a week is that my buddy Erik found an omega. A male one! Can you believe that?” He takes a puff on his cigarette, shaking his head incredulously.

Steve’s muscles just stop working; they stop contracting, they stop flexing, stop tensing on his bones until he's rigid and inorganic like brittle steel. As he forces his neck to turn enough to look at the younger man, his fangs are already popping in his mouth.

“Wow,” he says tersely, voice scraping his out over his tongue like sandpaper. He needs to hear what this alpha has to say. “What happened?”

“God, he smelled so good. Eric said he was walking out of the medic station when he passed by right next to the guy, and man this guy was tiny. I mean PUH-TEET, fun-sized happy meal size,” the guy laughs loudly at his own joke when a flash of lightning illuminates his profile. It's just then that Steve notices that his face is scratched up.

He notices Steve staring in rage which he mistakes for shock. “Yeah, little bitch got me good. We were kinda passing him around -- just lookin’ at him -- and dude I kid you not, I’m pretty sure he was knocked up. So my friend was holding him still, and then we pulled up his shirt and like,” he pauses waving up a hand to gesture precisely. “He didn't have, like, tits but you could tell there was something weird about his nipples, you know? We pinched them a few times and that's when he just kind went berserk, the little fucker. He was good, ya know, had been trained to fight or something, and he just kinda’, I dunno.” He pauses to look down at his shoes sheepishly. “He caught us off guard. So we’re gonna wait until after they shut the lights off to go find that little bitch again and --”

Steve springs onto the man, roaring deafeningly loud with nails that are already stretching into glistening black lion claws.

“What the--!” The guy sputters, whining out as the stronger alpha tackles him to the ground. He tries to scramble away but the enraged alpha reaches down to grab the collar of his hoodie. “Get off me, man!”

“No. Guess what, man,” Steve snarls sarcastically slamming the guy’s shoulders down hard against the cement floor, “That ‘little bitch’ you're talking about is my mate. And that pup he's carrying is mine.”

“What?! Dude, I didn't know! I didn't know, I’m sorry!” The surfer’s eyes widen in shock and he starts to tear up, raising his palms in submission because Steve has at least sixty pounds on the lanky surfer. “We were just curious!”

“So am I,” He snarls. “I'm curious as to how you think it's alright to touch anyone like that, nonetheless my mate, you little shit!” Steve only means to punch the guy once but the older alpha just keeps hitting him, keeps kicking him until the younger man is whining. “You’re going to listen to me, now, because I’m only going to explain this once,” the seal hisses into his face in a terrifying, low voice. “Nod your head if you're listening.”
The guy, with tears running down his face, nods quickly.

“Good,” Steve grunts as he slams the surfer back against the floor. “You’re not going to go looking for him. And if any of your ‘crew’ even runs into him by accident, I’m gonna find you, and I’m going to kill you.”

The surfer squeals under him, turning away.

Steve roars again, grabbing the guy’s face harshly to yank his chin toward him as he leans in close. “Just so we’re clear. This isn’t a threat, this is a lesson in cause and effect. If one of you guys touches my mate again, I will take a tactical knife off one of the guards and cut all of the tendons in your ankles, wrists, elbows and knees until you are flopping like a fish. Then I’ll dislocate both of your shoulders and throw you into the flood water to drown.”

The younger alpha bursts into louder sobs, but Steve doesn't let up. Instead he leans into the guy’s face again to show that he means it. “And I want you to picture that in your fucking mind the next time you’re curious about an omega.”

He slams the man back against the cement one last time and stalks off toward the main hallway, leaving the surfer trembling and whimpering. Steve swallows thickly, willing his black claws to recede; he isn’t used to having them and they're cutting his palms when the alpha clenches his hands into fists. How could he have gotten this so wrong?

The alpha tries to physically shake the thoughts away as he storms down the hall. He had been planning to lick over Danny’s neck and shoulders in hopes that his alpha saliva pheromones would deter any more attention. But from what Danny had told him about the altercation, what the younger guys had done had sounded more tame than it had actually been. He reaches up to grab the sides of his head, threading tense fingers through his short black hair. When Danny had said they were touching him, Steve had thought...

What had he thought?

That it was okay for someone to restrain his mate as long as the pup was safe?

_Christ._

Steve swallows thickly in guilt, back toward the gym.

---

Danny is laying on a pile of blankets with his head resting in Kono’s lap like he has for the past thirty minutes. Chin is sitting cross legged at his side, intently reading an old magazine with one hand as the other hand rests on Danny’s shoulder reassuringly. The omega feels safe between them, comforted by their touch, but he's still visibly unsettled.

The detective doesn't have to say anything about what just happened. Being close enough to the bleachers, Kono and Chin could hear everything that Steve said -- and everything that he shouldn't have said, too. The omega half of himself is cowering in a corner of his mind, tucking its tail between its legs and whining softly. But then there’s the Jersey-hardened detective side of himself.

That side wants to take another swing at Steve.
Laying back under the harsh glare of the gym lights, Danny tries to pretend that he doesn't feel the feverish blush of shame is heating his face. He has no reason to be ashamed. There had been no right way to deal with the situation that unfolded today in the bathroom -- Danny had just done what he had to do to prevent things from getting worse.

Steve honestly can't expect him to roll over and submit to anyone that comes his way with malicious intent.

*Can he?*

Danny’s thoughts start to drift toward the dark insecurity surrounding the possibility that his alpha only sees him as an incubator now.

A walking, talking incubator.

An incubator that is clearly expected not to compromise its simple purpose with notions of self preservation or dignity, judging by Steve’s reaction today. Clenching his jaw, Danny huffs a sigh and starts to dig his sharp thumbnail into the polished wood floor. He had left out the most embarrassing detail, but come on… Danny would’ve had to forfeit the last scrap of dignity that’s hanging by a thread in his chest to explain to Steve that the young alphas basically tried to milk him. He runs a palm over his face to hide a heated blush.

*Fuck.*

“Brah, please stop stressing yourself out,” Kono whispers, reaching down to brush a hand back over Danny’s hair. “The boss is nesting right now, too. It’s easy to forget, because he isn't outwardly changing like you, but he's been acting strange ever since we got here. He’s barely even slept or eaten.”

“I guess,” Danny sighs, but he's having to hide his unease over a new oppressing thought: If Steve doesn't trust Danny’s judgement, is their life going to become some kind of archaic ‘alpha knows best’ bullshit from now on? And what if this dynamic continues on after the pregnancy? Would I even stay with him if it did?

It’s funny that his mind can go completely blank trying to fill out a birthday card to his mom, then suddenly becomes a well oiled, panic driven engine of godgoddjesusfuck when it comes to churning out worst possible outcomes.

Even the pup starts to squirm like she's agitated, shoving out what feels like little feet against the inside skin of his belly. The omega reaches down to put a comforting palm over her, rubbing gently as he lets his eyes wander up to stare blankly at the lights above the gym again.

Thank god she doesn't know what he's thinking about.

“Danny,” Chin jars his shoulder, looking down at him in concern. Maybe the omega isn't as adept at hiding his anxiety as he thinks he is. “Please stop working yourself up over it -- he was out of line. We all know that.”

Danny frowns and pushes himself into a standing position to start to walk back behind the bleachers when a heavy force slams into him. Panic seizes his thoughts at first as a huge hand clenches onto Danny’s arm,because he thinks it's one of the surfers again, leading him forcibly toward the door. He
inhales a sharp breath to howl until he realizes that it's his mate.

The omega tries to pull back; “Steven, Jesus Christ! What are you --”

“I need you to come with me, right now,” Steve says in a low voice. His eyes look wild.

Danny is yanked out of the gym and into the hallway leading to the old locker room showers. “Well I need you to tell me what the hell is going on!”

The alpha huffs out a sigh, and Danny finally notices that the alpha’s lower lip is trembling.

“Steve?” He says suddenly, reaching for his mate’s face to turn the alpha’s chin toward him, but Steve quickly swats his hand away, shaking his head profusely. Even through the steam coming from a few of the shower stalls, Danny can see that the alpha’s eyes are glistening with unshed tears. Actual tears. The omega doesn't protest anymore as Steve leads him toward the largest shower stall at the end of the locker room.

With his tennis shoes splashing through the inch of water that has collected on the tile floor, Danny bites his lip; Steve has reached for a few towels and has thrown aside the dripping white plastic curtain, silently gesturing for Danny to step inside. Danny looks briefly over his shoulder to make sure that the only people in the locker room are actually in the showers and not watching, and the omega quietly slips into the shower with Steve.

“What’s wrong?” Danny asks immediately, ignoring the fact that Steve is actively pulling the omega’s tee shirt up and over his head.

“I was wrong,” Steve says tersely, voice unsteady as he quickly starts to unbuckle his own belt before reaching out to grab at Danny’s athletic shorts. “Take these off.”

The omega blinks. “I thought we were just gonna do the licking thing.”

Steve shakes his head quickly, ducking his face. “It's not enough.” The omega frowns in confusion until Steve reaches out to get Danny to sit on a tile shower bench in the back of the stall, which Danny now realizes is the handicapped stall. “Sit.”

The omega still doesn't catch on until the alpha has stripped naked and is standing in front of Danny, with his broad muscular shoulders, defined chest, well cut abs and impressive alpha cock in his hand. Danny swallows thickly, moving to stand back up. “Wait, are you --”

“Sit down,” the alpha grunts, reaching out to gently push Danny back down to the tile bench. “You need this.”

“Steve…” The omega whines softly in protest, knowing it's true but hating it all the same. Steve is going to stroke himself off right in this stall and come on him.

“Stay still,” Steve whispers, looking down to lock eyes with him; his expression is difficult to read, but Danny deciphers it as half sadness and half dominance. A kind of sorrowful duty.

Danny wants to be mad -- has a right to be mad -- because all of this means that Steve is just trying to own him completely. So when Steve is breathing heavier and pumping himself firmly with one hand in front of Danny, supporting himself with one strong arm up to lean against the tiles behind the omega, the detective tries to ignore the familiar pull in his lower abdomen. Just below the pup, something in him is pulsing just a bit quicker hearing his powerful mate breathing heavy over gently parted lips. Steve's eyes are half lidded and focused on Danny in the dim light when the omega looks up. He's starting to thrust automatically, and the sight of his golden trim body gyrating his pelvis as if
he were sinking deep into Danny, hot and slick against his o-gland on each pass has the omega’s pulse starting to quicken.

He lowers his suddenly heavy eyes to Steve’s stiff alpha cock. Slick begins to dribble out of him and the tile seat is suddenly slippery as Danny squirms awkwardly in arousal. Part of him wants this, wants to be owned and even wants the world to know that he’s owned.

But he looks away stubbornly, refusing to forget that Steve was completely out of line today.

“Look at me,” Steve breathes in a husky low voice, starting to quicken the pace of his stroking and damn it if Danny’s head doesn’t just start to turn on its own.

Danny’s mouth is almost watering and his blinks in a daze, trying to look away but the smell is intoxicating. Pure alpha arousal.

Steve gasps, trembling tensely as he thrusts harshly, coming ropes of his seed across Danny’s neck, chest, and belly. He weaves his free hand through Danny’s hair to hold Danny’s head back forcibly as he towers over the omega. The detective lets Steve have control, watching as the alpha continues to pant softly with his eyes clenched shut. There are still tears falling silently on Steve’s cheeks and Danny exhales slowly at this. He can count on one hand how many times he has ever seen Steve cry, and, still, most of those instances had been from joy or relief.

Nothing like this.

“Steve,” Danny says gently, reaching up to pull him closer. He's careful not to wipe off any of the alpha’s seed that is soaking Steve’s scent into his sensitive omega skin. “Talk to me.”

Steve leans forward to press his forehead against Danny’s, cradling the sides of his face with huge palms.“I’m sorry, Danny, I’m so fucking sorry.” A tear glistens on Steve’s cheeks as he kneels down, and the huge alpha reaches out to start to rub the expelled ejaculate across his mate’s sensitive chest. There are bruises near the omegas nipples. “I understand now,” Steve whispers again and again in a cracked and broken voice. “I know what they did to you, now, and I get it. When you told me, I just -- I don't know, I just wasn't there. I thought you had been reading the situation wrong, maybe -- I didn't get it, Danny, I’m sorry. I fucking said all of those things. I-I was an idiot and I just didn't get it.”

Danny feels his own eyes watering as he clenches his jaw shut to keep it from trembling. Relief is sweeping over him, warming him, but it may be the steam, or maybe it’s Steve’s large hands smoothing over his skin. All he can do is nod, because he doesn't want to mention that he would have left Steve if that behavior had continued; the alpha doesn't need to know that right now. Thank God, Danny thinks to himself as his primal side starts to untense.

“And I know you complain but I do know that you love our pups more than anything,” Steve continues, voice cracking. “Because I still see your eyes water when you touch the miscarriage scar when you think I’m not looking,” he says softly, leaning to bury his face into Danny’s neck near his ear. “Even though it's been two years.”

Danny does finally shed a tear at this, and god, look at them now. Hawaii’s finest, fucking crying against each other in a locker room shower. Danny swallows thickly. “It's okay.”

“No. It's not okay,” Steve sniffs, wiping at his eyes with the back of his wrist. “It's not okay, because I wasn't there for you when it happened, and I wasn't there for you after. I should have trusted you instead of letting my instincts get the best of me.”
“Babe, look,” Danny says finally, reaching out to grab his hand, determined not to cry any more. “I love you. Not because you never make mistakes, but because of how you handle your mistakes. You hear that, you putz? You could never fool me into thinking you're perfect, there's not a chance.”

Steve gives a weak chuckle, ducking his face.

Swallowing thickly, Danny shifts awkwardly in his seat, realizing that he’s still all slicked up and aching to be filled. “Now stop crying and fuck me.”

Steve stands up with a purposeful smirk and turns on the hot water as Danny watches him expectantly. “I can definitely do that.”

With the anticipation of something about to fill him, the throbbing of his swollen hole intensifies enough to make Danny have to struggle to focus suddenly. There's also an overpowering urge to turn and present for his mate but Danny has no intention of kneeling over on hard tile with his bad knees.

Steve is already half hard when he pulls Danny to his feet in the spray of warm water, and it starts to wash off the come on his torso, leaving Steve’s potent alpha scent behind.

Danny’s head swims as the steam carries the overpowering scent until it's thick in the air of the small stall. His fangs pop automatically and his mouth his watering. He can't tell if it's slick or hot water running down between his thighs but from the way Steve has to shake his head to concentrate, Danny’s pretty confident it's slick.

The alpha drops low and grabs Danny’s toned thighs, lifting him effortlessly to hike him up against the wall, maneuvering his legs until they’re straddling Steve's hips. He can feel Steve’s burgeoning length hard against the cleft of his ass and Danny almost whines out in frustration when Steve starts to delve his cock deeper between his cheeks to slickly rub over his hole, teasing him purposefully. The alpha likes to do this every so often when they fuck. He likes to remind Danny that he's in control, and wants the omega to remember that, when it comes down to it, he's at Steve’s mercy.

“Ungh Fuck -- stop playing with me, McGarrett,” Danny pleads in a low voice, clenching his eyes shut as the long forgotten feeling of arousal starts to tighten his lower belly wantonly.

Steve smirks up at him like a big confident cat, starting to press into him but pulling away at the last second as he watches Danny get flustered and start to blush feverishly from need. Danny’s arms are clutching Steve’s powerful shoulders with sharp claws as he’s pressed back against the cool tile. Each one of his legs is hooked over one of Steve’s arms, leaving him splayed open from gravity as Steve’s dick continues to rub over and over his swollen, slippery rim.

Danny’s thoughts are hazy and fogged with desire and he mumbles a string of broken nonsense, finally casting his pride aside as he begs his alpha to fuck him.

Steve looks pleased with himself when Danny involuntarily lets out an embarrassingly high pitched whine and thank god the other men in here can’t recognize the sound over the rush of the shower water.

“You have to be quiet, Daniel,” Steve purrs softly, looking at him with an innocent, bewildered expression like he doesn't know exactly what he's doing, the bastard.

Danny bares teeth at him in response, sinking the tips of his claws into Steve’s golden shoulders. Steve puts a stop to that when he suddenly picks Danny up a bit higher and drops him harshly down onto his cock. The omega gasps out, about to moan helplessly at the sweet relief of the satisfying
sensation when Steve maneuvers him to clasp a hand over his mouth. Danny’s eyes are locked onto his, electric and wide, and they mated pair stays like that for a moment, reading each other’s gazes.

Slowly, silently, Steve starts to move, leaning his warm chest closer to Danny’s to pump his hips back and then forward and up, burying himself to the hilt in Danny’s slick hot channel. The tip of his cock is already hitting against Danny’s sensitive cervix, making the omega see stars as Steve’s length slips in further, pressing harder along the sensitive entrance to his full womb.

The action must remind Steve of the result of their enjoyment of each other’s body because the alpha raises Danny up enough to kiss the apex of his rounding stomach. He slides his tongue into Danny’s navel, practically French kissing the small sensitive orifice on the omega’s pregnant belly as their pup shoves around gently beneath the skin.

“Hey there, little one,” Steve whispers, licking the skin affectionately and Danny swears the alpha’s tongue is the slightest bit rougher since he started shifting into a lion.

Danny grips Steve's shoulders pointedly as he grits his teeth in frustration because this is sweet, painfully sweet, but he needs more.

Steve gets the idea, lowering him onto his stick alpha cock and continues to lift him, slamming him down roughly until Danny is shivering and moaning into Steve’s hand again, feeling the thick length bumping his o-gland on each pass. When Steve starts to quicken the pace, Danny is completely at his mercy, being manhandled by the huge alpha and whimpering softly at each deep thrust as his thoughts are consumed by that warm twist in his lower belly. His own fingertips come up to drag sensuously over his pregnant belly, knowing that it will drive Steve mad. Sure enough the alpha falters, having to pause for a second to focus until Danny torturously tightens his hole around Steve’s cock, forcing him over the edge.

Grunting and growling a bit too loudly, Steve thrusts involuntarily as he comes for the second time that day, coming down from his orgasm slowly before leaning in to pant against Danny’s chest.

Without saying a word, Steve lowers Danny to the tile floor, turning so that Danny can start to rinse the slick and come off of his ass with the shower spray. But after a moment, Steve grabs him by the hips and shoves Danny’s front against the opposite side of the shower.

The omega twists in confusion. “Babe, what--”

“Let me help you with that,” Steve replies in a husky low voice as he drops to his knees behind him and then goodgoddamn he's spreading Danny’s cheeks, nuzzling his face into the omega’s ass to lick at his sensitive, swollen hole. Danny moans so loud that he has to bite into his own forearm to stop, and, standing there with his trembling legs spread wide, Danny shoves wantonly back against his alpha, grinding back on Steve’s face to get more of that Seal’s blessed tongue against his hole.

Steve eats him out in earnest for twenty minutes, sucking away the come and lapping at his fresh slick and Danny honestly thinks it's addictive and relaxing for the alpha. While the omega moans in satisfaction with his eyes shut, Steve hums voraciously against his hole as he licks at the sensitive area, delving his tongue deeper and deeper to fucking his hole with the twisting muscle until Danny is a whining mess. Gasping out into his own hand to stay quiet, the omega comes and more hot, sweet slick drools from his wet sex directly into Steve's waiting mouth. The alpha slurps up the slippery fluid appreciatively, moaning in quiet ecstasy at the taste before he moves, exhausted, to rest on the tile shower bench. He pulls the still trembling omega into his lap, wrapping strong arms around him as they both lean their heads back against the cool tile.

Completely blissed out and high from each other’s pheromones, they rest for a quiet moment,
listening to the comforting rush of the water as it splashes on the floor and dances around the drain in the dimly lit stall.

They know that this peace won't last, because the eye of the storm will be passing over them soon, and it will be their only chance to try to rescue Carter’s daughter and retrieve the stolen serum, but for now, it’s nice.

It's warm.

They're safe.

And they're in each other's arms.
Chapter Nineteen

Wooo! Ireland was awesome you guys! I had beans on toast every day, and I've never seen so much *green!* I also got chased by some very aggressive cows trying to tresspass on a farmer's land to sneak into an abandoned castle. This update took forever, and honestly, it was going to be another three weeks to get a good sized chapter. I've started back at school unfortunately.

Figured I'd rather post something short than nothing at all!

When Steve leaves the shower that night, he doesn't have to pointedly place a hand Danny's lower back to ensure that the omega stays safe by his side. He doesn't have to, because Danny is practically pressed against his side. It's an odd feeling to not have to be reigning the headstrong omega in constantly, and Steve knows that it's the rush of nesting hormones that are coursing through Danny’s blood after absorbing so much alpha pheromones.

Steve’s chest is puffed out proudly, confident that his mate smells so strongly of himself. Any other alpha will barely be able to stand by Danny for more than half a minute, and the thought is refreshing against the sting of Steve’s constant concern over Danny’s safety.

“Can you at least try not to look so smug?” Danny sighs.

Steve only smirks. He can't help it.

He makes sure his betas are settled in for the night, before returning to the makeshift nest he's made Danny under the bleachers. Obviously, it's not ideal; the pile of blankets and towels that they've pilfered away are a bit rough for sensitive omega skin, but his mate doesn't complain. The bleachers feel more open, and are consequently less secure than the safe haven Steve had built for Danny on the second level of his house, but his home has probably been destroyed by now.

Steve tries not to let his grim mood show on his face as he imagines sand blown through all the busted windows of the upstairs nest, and debris floating through his living room and kitchen on ocean water. The former Seal can almost hear the waves crashing against the walls in the darkened hallways, carrying things like wooden kitchen chairs, end tables, and the kids’ toys out to sea or smashing them against what's left of his neighbors' houses. He thinks of the little things too, and, oddly, they're the most disturbing: ballpoint pens and movie ticket stubs from in the floating upwards from the submerged sofa, the cabinets swinging open underwater to let loose a torrent of toddler-sized sippy cups. Everything irreplaceable – a few of his medals from the Seals, photo albums of the kids, passports, financial documents, social security cards, and birth certificates – had all been packed into locked storage tubs that went on one of the last ships out with the Mayor. But still.

That home had been his den.

He notices suddenly that the omega is watching him quietly, and Steve flashes him a fake grin, trying to hide how unsettled his alpha side is over the situation with their den.

"What?" Danny asks quietly.
Steve shrugs, and Danny shoots him a look as the alpha delicately steps around the nest in his sock feet, careful not to disturb the meticulously arranged towels and fleece.

"You're making that 'I'm upset and I don't want Danny to know it' face," the omega explains, turning to him as Steve lays down, frowning.

"I don't have a face like that."

The omega rolls his eyes. "You do, babe, and you're making it right now, so don't tell me you don't do it when I'm over here frickin' lookin' at you doin' it."

Steve looks up at the dim light filtering through the bleachers and how it's casting striped shadows over everything around them. He knows he's not going to win this. "Okay, fine. You wanna be stressed out too? I'll share with the class: I'm concerned about the house," he explains, flicking his eyes back to his mate's. "We both know we'll be lucky if the bare bones of it are still standing after this, Danny. I have no idea where we're going to stay when this is over. The island won't even have running water for months."

The omega pulls a face like he's overwhelmed by even the thought and rolls onto his back to stare straight up, and Steve wonders if the omega regrets pushing the issue. "Well... assuming it's gone, the insurance money will hopefully cover the cost to build a new house, and I don't even want to think about how long that claim is going to take to battle out. And it's not like there's a motel or something to stay in the meantime while we rebuild."

Steve frowns. "What do you mean we? You're insane if you think I'm going to let you do heavy construction work while you're seven months pregnant."

"Good point," Danny mutters after a beat, raising up a hand to pinch at the bridge of his nose. "Then what am I supposed to do for the next three months?"

"Be on bedrest like you're supposed to be."

Danny turns with a deadpan expression. "Where? In what bed?"

Silent for a beat, the seal says his next suggestion slowly and quietly, like he’s expecting a reaction. "Maybe you could go stay with your mom and dad for a bit."

The omega bristles next to him, and his pheromone signatures turn sour in the air with apprehension. "I ah… I don’t think my old man wants to see me like this." He moves a hand to hold the swell on his abdomen pointedly.

"Danny, we don't really have a choice," Steve urges. "Everyone I know besides my sister lives on this island, and I’m pretty sure she lives in an apartment the size of a closet. And he’s your dad, Danny, it’s not like he’s going to bar you from his den in an emergency situation just because you’ve got a pup under your shirt." The alpha searches his mate’s face for a reaction, some vague semblance of agreement, but doesn’t find it. Instead, the omega is curling in on himself, tucking his chin closer to his chest in response. Steve rolls his eyes up toward the stripes of light between the bleachers, because, really, they have no choice. He knows Danny isn’t going to be able to tolerate staying with one of his alpha siblings, because they’re both in relationships with other alphas. A pregnant omega can’t endure the prolonged stress on his system caused by strange alphas in the later stages of carrying. It’s been bad enough for Danny being in the shelter for two days, and that’s even with Steve and the pack betas around him.

A beat passes, creeping by slowly as the air around Danny becomes more and more sour with
distress. Steve pinches the bridge of his nose, shutting his eyes for a second in silent frustration.

“Look, it’s alright. We have time. We’ll figure it out, babe,” the alpha huffs finally, reaching out to pull the smaller detective closer against him.

The omega nods against his chest, and Steve hears Danny inhaling his alpha scent, apparently feeling unsure of himself after even the mention of seeing his father again and what in the actual fuck -- is he crying? Steve blinks in bewilderment and looks down at his mate. He had known it was bad, but he hadn’t known it was this bad, and the alpha side of Steve feels a cold, dredge of guilt settle into his chest.

Does this mean that there’s a strong possibility that Danny’s father would turn him away because he’s carrying? Steve swallows thickly, trying to convince himself that there isn’t a lump forming in the back of his throat at the thought.

He doesn’t say anything about the tears, not wanting to embarrass Danny, and just settles for rubbing a hand over his back for a few minutes.

Eventually, the omega pulls back, silently wiping the moisture from his eyes with the back of his hand. “Sorry.”

“It’s okay,” Steve says softly, holding Danny’s arm. His thumb rubs gently over the soft skin of the omega’s bicep.

“My Dad… he always made a point to never get involved in anything relating to my—ah—my biology,” Danny explains, keeping his face ducked out of view. “When I was sixteen, my mom was visiting one of her sisters in Seattle for two weeks, and it was just my dad and me at the house. I think my siblings were at my grandma’s house or something. Anyway, I was on the rugby team at my high school, because I hadn’t presented my subgender; they hadn’t banned me from playing, yet. One time, when my omega pheromones were just starting up and I didn’t know it—I mean, I always thought I was a beta because I was such a late bloomer—I was starting to go into my first heat cycle.”

Steve frowns knowing where this story is heading.

“And there was this alpha kid on my team, who had at least a foot and fifty pounds on me,” Danny continues. “He followed me out toward my car one night after practice and started grabbing at me. He was half feral and I’m not even sure if he knew was he was doing, but he was manhandling me so he could lick the scent glands in my neck. After that, he threw me down in the backseat of my car and tried to climb on top of me. But I popped my claws for the first time and starting going for his face, for his eyes.”

The alpha grits his jaw, feeling his stomach turn uneasily.

“The guy kind of snapped out of it and just ran off after that, but I was a fucking wreck. His saliva had started seeping into my skin and had triggered my first heat. But the first time is always a nightmare, because your body hasn’t really sorted all of the new chemistry out, and it just ends up making you an emotional, half feral, dizzy and nauseated mess for a week.” Danny pauses, sighing quietly. “I had called my Dad on a payphone to come pick me up, because I was having such a bad reaction to the heat hormones that I couldn’t drive. And when he got there…”

Danny trails off, taking a wavering sigh, and Steve shakes his arm gently. “Babe, tell me.”

“When he got there, I was sobbing, and he saw the claws and he could smell the cycle starting up
and he just... left.”

Steve rears his head back; “What?”

The omega nods, laughing with the grimly resigned sort of humor that can only stem from years of numbness and compartmentalization. “He left. One of the beta janitors in the morning found me and called an ambulance.”

Steve's eyes are fiercely wide, enraged that someone could abandon their own son in a time of need like that. Did Danny’s father even care about him? The alpha has so many words that he wants to string together, but none of them will settle onto his tongue, leaving Steve with his eyes hard and his lips parted in furious stupor.

“I was in the hospital for a week,” Danny continues quietly, voice flat with long suffered acceptance. "They kept calling my house four or five times a day so they could discharge me from the omega unit but he wouldn't come pick me up, and just stopped answering after the third day. I didn't have a number to reach my mom in Seattle, so I had to stay in the hospital until my sister Bridget got home, heard the voicemails, and came to get me."

At this point, the Seal's jaw is clenched so hard that he's amazed that he hasn't cracked any of his teeth. "What did he say when you got home?"

Danny raises his eyebrows in a grim expression. "Nothing. We didn't talk for two years, and I left home at eighteen when I got accepted to NYU, got my bachelor's degree, and then went straight into the police academy. Mom made all kinds of apologies, said Dad just didn't know anything about male omegas and had maybe thought the hospital could take better care of me."

Shaking his head, Steve struggles to keep himself from making any kind of furious outburst about how that's a bullshit excuse for abandoning your own son. Danny already knows that, and doesn't need Steve to say it out loud. The entire conversation is dragging up old ghosts from his own past, reminding him of how he felt when his mother had walked out on he and his sister when they were young. The president had apparently told her to go 'dark,' for whatever classified reason, and learning that years later still didn't remove the sting of what she'd done, even if it was for a good cause. Danny's father has no excuse for what he did.

"Danny, why didn't you tell me any of this?" Steve urges, gently tipping up his mate's chin to lock eyes with him.

Danny looks away with a wry smile that doesn’t reach his eyes. “I just did.”
Chapter Twenty

Chapter Notes

Lord have mercy, I cannot TELL you how hard school is right now. Multiple term papers, midterms, weird graduation requirements to get done last minute that everyone hates, bar-prep, and a huge issue with financial aid that I had to sort out (all because the school told the IRS I was married, and I'm most definitely not married).

Anyways. Onwards! To read!

x x x x x x x x x x x x x

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Kono knows it’s a terrible idea to disturb a nesting alpha and omega pair, but what she has to say is fucking urgent -- like stage five, sound the klaxons, 90’s-submarine-movie urgent.

So, here’s hoping she doesn’t get her thigh bitten by her boss, if not only because Five-0 would be the laughing stock of the Department of Law Enforcement. Again.

“Maybe I should do it?” Chin suggests as he hesitates, hands on his hips, while Kono starts to creep toward the bleachers.

“I dunno, cuz. You’re bigger than me; they might see you as more of a threat,” Kono whispers.

Chin ducks his head with a sigh and nods. “Just be careful, then. I’m going to go tell the National Guard what happened, and hopefully we can get going.”

“Got it,” Kono affirms, turning back toward the bleachers.

She walks heel-to-toe, silently stepping across the floor and edging cautiously around the corner of the bleachers. Kono can see some kind of movement, but Danny’s face is closest to her and he’s asleep, peacefully resting on his back. Squinting in the dim light, she waits for her eyes to adjust; the emergency lights glowing faintly in the ceiling above the main gym don’t reach behind the bleachers. She can see the glint of McGarrett’s eyes glowing eerily in the darkness, shining iridescent like a cat’s eyes, but they aren’t looking at her. Still, the effect is disconcerting.

As her eyes finally adjust to the darkness, Kono realizes she’s stepped in on a very intimate moment. Danny is sleeping with his tee shirt pulled up over his chest, exposing his pup belly, and her boss is slowly licking broad stripes over his sleeping mate’s stomach. The alpha pauses every so often to nuzzle the flesh and tilt his head to run the scent glands under his jaw over their baby.

Kono gasps at how tender the gesture is, and McGarrett instantly pauses at the noise. The green yellow eyes turn to focus directly on her, and he growls low at her, laying protectively over Danny.

Oh fuck.

“Boss, it’s me,” Kono explains in a hissed whisper, hoping that her scent might reach Steve before he decides to sink his teeth into her arm.
But the alpha starts to manhandle Danny like a rag doll, dragging Danny away from Kono by his legs.

Danny stirs awake in confusion at the movement. “What the —” He tilts his head back in question, looking at her upside down for a moment. “Kono?”

Steve moves to spring up toward her, but Danny grabs his alpha’s belt, groaning from the strain with one hand on his stomach. “No, no, no -- stop! Steven, it’s Kono!”

Kono scrambles backwards, hitting her head loudly on one of the metal supports for the bleachers and she swears loudly, holding the spot as her head swims for a moment. Steve bares his fangs at her, trying to shake Danny off of him to get closer to her. “Alpha, stop!”

“Just let him go, Danny, don’t hurt yourself!” Kono protests. Danny grimaces, holding his stomach and releases Steve’s ankle, apparently realizing that Kono has a point. The beta holds out her wrists and tries not to make eye contact.

Steve moves so fast that all Kono can see is a blur before strong arms have her twisted in some kind of headlock. She stands awkwardly in his grip as the alpha leans in to smell her neck.

“Kono,” the former Seal mutters finally, gently uncurling his hold on her.

Sighing in relief, Kono makes a mental note to never ever startle Steve when he’s nesting and she rubs her neck pointedly, staring at her boss.

Steve clears his throat. “Sorry,” he says quietly, and even in the dark she can see a blush on his face.

“I’m sorry. Obviously, I wouldn’t have come back here unless I had to, so – well -- I have some bad news,” Kono explains. “Carter’s gone.”

“What do you mean, gone?” Danny huffs from the nest, still holding a hand over his stomach as he sits up.

Kono raises up her hands as if to say I’m telling you like it is. “I mean, gone. The eye of the storm is about to pass over us, according to what Carter told me yesterday, and I think he’s trying to get to the compound.”

Steve tilts his head; “What -- did he leave a note?”

Kono huffs a sigh. “No, but the map Chin and I drew up after talking to Vanessa is missing.”

Danny rolls his eyes so hard that his internal groan of frustration is almost audible. “This guy, I swear to god. We should just let him get clipped by the Goodfather.”

“I told you, Danny, we need him alive to confess and testify,” Steve retorts flatly. “Otherwise we’re left grasping at straws.”

Kono pulls a grim expression. “What charges are we gonna get him on?”

“With solicitation and merger, we can charge the Goodfather larceny in soliciting Carter to steal a serum worth millions of dollars, multiple felonies in soliciting Carter to break the inmates out of prison, and even the destruction of government property if it was the Goodfather’s plan for Carter to use the serum coolant machine as a bomb. Then, if any of his thugs start to crack under the pressure, we can potentially get all of them from a confession from just one of his hired hands.”
"Unless it's a hub-and-spoke conspiracy and none of them knew the whole plan – which is exactly what it sounded like from what the guy that made the package drop at the conference center said. Unless every one of his thugs working was aware of and working toward the end game -- instead of just blindly carrying out whatever small, independent assignment the Goodfather gave them every day -- then one thug's confession isn't gonna get everyone on conspiracy. Also, good luck trying to prove the fair market value of a serum for which there is no market," Danny snorts.

"Excuse me, Danny," Steve growls lowly. "Whose side are you on?"

"The side of reality, Steven. We have to be smart on this!"

Kono purses her lips, "Lets just bag the guy first, then you guys can argue all you want. Chin said he was going to explain to the guard about --"

"Are you guys leaving?" A small voice says suddenly behind Danny. The omega startles, fangs popping as he turns in surprise toward the voice. It's Vanessa. "If you are, can I come with you? This place is so boring!" She scoots closer, giving the group the most pitiful expression. "Please?"

"Vanessa, honey, we have to go get the bad guys today," Kono says softly, but the little alpha’s attention is on Danny. She’s grabbing onto his arm and scooting slowly into his lap.

Kono smirks at the way McGarrett’s eye twitches visibly at the sight of another alpha in his nest, even though it’s a small, harmless one.

xxxxx

Danny patiently readjusts himself, realizing he has no hope of shoving the little girl off just yet, and lets Vanessa clamber into his lap to curl up against him. She starts inhaling his scent, unknowingly magnetized to the omega.

The omega frowns.

His scent, despite the pregnancy, should be repulsive to another alpha after Steve marked Danny the night before. The only other alphas who should be able to tolerate this are Char and Cooper, because they’re part of Danny’s pack. Obviously both Char and Cooper are on the mainland.

But here she is, curling up against his stomach and clutching onto him, like a pack member.

_Huh._

"But I can show you where the houses are," Vanessa whines, shifting, and one of her knees bumps Danny’s belly.

"Careful, sweetheart," he grunts, holding the spot wearily, and he casts Steve a side-eye when the omega can almost feel the flinch of panic from the former Seal. Vanessa settles down a bit but she’s still staring imploringly up at the group like an adorable manifestation of a guilt-trip.

Danny purses his lips; he wants no part of this conversation. His own kids have already figured out that he’s no match for that look, and they always go to him now when they want something. Steve’s still having some kind of moment dealing with his instincts and the guy seriously looks like a dog that’s trying not to bark. Thankfully, Kono steps in.
“What we’re going to do is very dangerous, Vanessa – we don’t want you to get hurt,” Kono says softly, kneeling down to eye level with the young alpha. “Chin and I can work out another map from all of the helpful information you gave us.”

Vanessa turns her face against Danny’s chest, pouting, and twists her fingers into his tee-shirt with a plaintive noise. Danny feels his omega instincts getting the best of him and he sighs patiently, grabbing a blanket to bundle around her. *Keep her safe.* He has to consciously make an effort not to start purring in an instinctual urge to comfort her. *She’s vulnerable. She’s just a pup.*

The omega’s head is starting to get hazy with pack instincts. If they were all still running around in loin cloths and trying to club each other over territory disputes, the omegas would be responsible for looking after other pack member’s children. Steve used the word “den-mother” once during his attempt to explain all of this to Danny and that was the fucking end of that. The omega had stormed out of the living room, popped open a beer, and started tenderizing a raw steak with a hammer, trying to confirm to himself that he’s most definitely a manly man and not some glorified babysitter. Now he kind of wishes he’d heard the end of that explanation, because, really, he’s starting to feel weird. Vanessa isn’t helping, she’s still nuzzling into his neck and clutching onto him.

Chin makes him jump when he leans in from around the edge of the bleachers, brows raised. “Guys, the guards said they’ve got something that we can drive up the mountain, but they need to go over its operational protocol with whoever’s going to be driving it.”

“Operational protocol? Just press the gas and steer, how hard can it be?” Danny mutters.

Raising his hands in hesitation, the lead beta pulls a face. “Not exactly.”

“What kind of truck is this thing, Chin?” Steve grunts.

“It’s more of a hummer mixed with a tank from what I could gather.”

Kono’s eyes bug. *Jesus.*

“Are we all going to fit in it?” Steve frowns in confusion.

“It’s supposed to be pretty roomy,” the beta replies with a half shrug. “It even has radio units and surveillance gear mounted to the top of it.”

“This thing sounds awesome,” Kono chuckles.

“This thing sounds expensive,” Danny clarifies. “They’re just gonna... let us use it? They must not know you well, Steve.”

“Danny, even I couldn’t destroy a tank.” The alpha gives him a side-eyed glance.

The omega huffs a laugh. “Yeah, well, let’s hope this thing’s insurance policy defines ‘forces of nature’ very loosely because then it might actually cover Steven McGarrett.”

“Are you done? Because we – the adults – are trying to have a conversation,” he says flatly, gesturing between himself and the two betas. Danny shoots him a withering look. “Alright. I’m going to go get the run-down on this thing. Chin and Kono? Go see what weapons they can lend us and try to figure out how much time we’re gonna have to move in on the compound while the eye is over us.” He pauses and turns to Danny. “Just... stay here, buddy.”

“Well... you need a weapon too?” Danny asks pointedly.
Steve literally laughs, shaking his head as he walks around the edge of the bleachers.

Danny rolls his eyes, bitterly biting down on the inside of his cheek and he’s about to call out a smart-ass response when Vanessa straight up licks the scent gland on his neck.

“Woah, woah, woah, no,” Danny startles, holding the small alpha back by her shoulders, but she’s staring at him in shock. She knows.

“That’s why you smell so good…” Vanessa gasps in shock. “You’re -- you’re gonna have a baby.” She twists away to reach out with both hands toward his stomach, but he covers his bump protectively with one arm. “Wait, just – yes,” he replies, flustered. “But you can’t tell anyone.”

“Does Kono know?” She blurts quickly.

“Yes.”

“Does Chin know?”

“Yes.”

She narrows her eyes. “Does STEVE know?”

“Yes,” Danny replies exasperatedly. “But –”

“Then who can’t I tell?” Vanessa asks, throwing her hands up.

“Everyone else!” Danny bursts out in frustration, gesturing toward the crowd on the other side of the bleachers. He feels his face heating in a blush.

Vanessa makes an ‘O’ shape with her lips as she tilts her head back in an exaggerated nod. “I’ve gotcha. Okay. Super-secret.”

Danny nods too, running a hand back over his hair with a sigh. “Yes.”

“Your scent’s changing – are you stressed?” She wrinkles her nose. “You smell like the time I accidentally got Kool-Aid powder up my nose. It burned.”

“That’s because you’re an alpha, and alphas don’t like it when omegas get upset,” Danny explains patiently. “But remember, it’s not very nice to point out someone’s pheromone signals in a conversation.”

The little girl’s shoulders fall and she looks up at him sheepishly. “Oh…Sorry.”

Danny gives a faint smile; “It’s okay.”

She hesitates, eyes falling to the omega’s stomach. “So, can I feel the baby?”

The detective knows her feelings will be hurt further if he says no, so he nods, leaning back slightly on one arm. Vanessa’s face lights up in a grin and she reaches out one palm toward his tee shirt covered bump, brows knitted in concentration.

“It’s still sort of early so she’s not very big,” he explains softly. “But she’s been kicking over here, this morning.” Danny moves his fingertips lightly in a circle over the area to the lower right of his belly button. He feels bad because Vanessa’s probably not going to feel anything, realistically, but the baby gives a particularly hard nudge when she moves her hands to the right spot.
“I felt it!” She gasps happily, grinning up at him. “That’s so cool!” She gets so excited that — so quick that he almost doesn’t see it — a pattern of brown and white feathers glimmer across her dark golden skin.

He blinks in surprise, tensing as she clenches her eyes shut in front of him with a grimace. “Vanessa? Are you alright?” What he really wants to know is whether or not he’ll be responsible for caring for a red-tailed hawk for the next thirty minutes if she can’t keep her ability to shift under control.

“Sorry! I’m okay. It’s just my head,” she exhales with a huff. “My head gets all buzzy before I start to change. I just got a little too excited.”

Danny doesn’t know what to say, because — as an omega — the whole experience of shifting is completely foreign to him, even though three people close to him can do it. He just gives a sympathetic half smile. The thought vaguely crosses his mind that it may not be easy for social services to find this little girl a home if she can’t completely control her ability to shift.

He tries not to show his grim realization through his eyes as she smiles back sheepishly at him.

Xxxxx

Steve makes a mental list of the vehicle’s operational mechanisms. They’ve told him that this model has been affectionately nicknamed the “Prancer Panzer,” a nominal homage to both the vehicles’ German engineering and the fact that they were released to the military on Christmas Day, but Steve knows he won’t be able to call it that with a straight face.

The tank hummer takes four steps to turn on; a series of switches, a key turn, two buttons, and lever near his right thigh. Then the Guard runs through how to engage the GPS and how to switch into reverse, low gear, dual axle power, surveillance mode, and electric stealth mode (which instantly cuts off the Diesel engine). He looks around at the roomy interior of the vehicle. It has an aisle to walk from the surveillance tech area in the back to the driver and passengers’ seats. There are a lot of handles, but no seatbelts, and Steve frowns, trying to decide where he should make Danny sit.

The thought makes him tense uncomfortably.

There is no safe place for Danny in this thing.

Not where they're going.

Fuck.

Despite his best efforts to quell his nerve with the familiar compartmentalization he perfected in the Seals, his thoughts start to slowly stray toward the worst what-ifs he can imagine. He raises up a hand, cutting off the guard as the younger man tries to explain something called an ‘ocular refraction enhancement extension,’ which sounds suspiciously like a periscope.

“I appreciate the brief run-through, Soldier. I think I can take it from here,” he says slowly, trying to hide his unease. “I just need to get up the mountain, so I’m not really expecting any counter measures.” He convinces himself that he isn’t purposefully cutting this short just because of his nerves.

“I understand, Commander,” the soldier replies with a nod, moving toward the back door of the
vehicle. The tank-hummer is so tall that there’s a short, telescoping ladder from the back to the ground, but Steve jumps the four-foot drop instead, trying to expend restless energy.

Steve nods and mutters a curt ‘thank you, soldier’ before walking briskly across the huge enclosed garage. He can’t even think straight, suddenly.

An uncomfortable prickling in the back of Steve’s mind started the moment he actually what it's going to be like with Danny in this equation, and the prickling is a now a painful, searing migraine.

Every single one of the alpha’s base instincts is urging Steve, snarling at him furiously from the depths of his primal self, that he needs to stop this.

All of this.

It’s telling Steve that he needs to forget this mission and stay at the shelter and protect Danny. He wants to lay over the omega in the nest behind the bleachers and lick his neck until Danny is purring and almost passed out from the alphadren, unable to argue or defy him. And yeah, that's a terrible thing to think, but at least their pup would be safe.

He has no idea what’s going to happen. It then occurs to him as he pauses to glance back at the tank-hummer that he’s never used one of these things and he doesn’t even know how it handles on a good day, none the less on a washed-out mountain road.

What if it rolls?

Danny would probably survive – but would the baby?

Is he being reckless? Is he a terrible father, like Logan Landsfort had said that one time in his news interview?

More importantly, what other choice does he have?

“Damn it,” Steve hisses, rubbing over his short hair with both hands as he then heads toward a dark corner of the garage. His sharp fangs are sliding down from his gums and Steve ducks his head, trying not to alarm the Guards. He makes it behind a shelf of engine maintenance supplies before his heart starts racing, making him pant like he’s been running.

“Steve?” Says a voice.

Steve turns and stares with wild, borderline feral eyes. It’s Chin, holding the alpha’s old black backpack.

The beta's brow furrows in concern. “I was going to start moving supplies into the truck. What’s wrong?”

Steve shakes his head, grunting with the effort it’s taking him not to change. He holds up his fingers to show Chin how his hand is stuck as a disturbing mix between a lion’s paw and a man’s hand.

“Jesus, brah,” Chun mutters, dropping the backpack to the floor and stepping closer. He puts a hand on Steve’s shoulder, giving him a quick squeeze of support. "I’m guessing this is an instinctual thing? Huh?”

Steve nods silently, baring his teeth as his black hair starts to turn reddish-brown like a mane.
“Steve, hey, calm down. It’s okay,” Chin blurts quickly. “I know you’re supposed to be nesting, and I know that’s really not possible right now -- so you’re a little riled up -- but Danny is going to be okay.”

Steve ducks his head, holding the sides of his head as he tries to gain control of his alpha side. “We don’t know that,” the alpha says between his clenched teeth. ”And I can’t leave him here, Chin. He doesn’t have blocking spray. As soon as my scent wears off, the fucking alphas could corner him and…” Steve trails off, swallowing thickly as his eyes shine for a moment. "He'd fight, but they'd tire him out, and you know what they'd do to him then, Chin."

"And most of the Guard are alphas too, even if we asked them to guard him," Chin sighs and rubs Steve’s shoulder, clenching his jaw uneasily at the thought as he looks down and considers the grim truth. Chin then brings up his hands to make a suggestion; “Look, if we leave Danny in the hummer, the compound isn’t even going to know you brought him. We’ll slap a vest on him and he can run surveillance while we go in. Besides, the guard’s giving us enough fire-power to take out an entire army."

Steve nods, trying to force himself to breathe slower. "Maybe," he says softly until his hands slowly shift back to normal. "Do we know anything about this place?"

Chin reaches into his pocket to pull out a crude drawing he was able to put together when Vanessa described the compound. Thankfully, he had slept with it in his pocket and Carter hadn't been able to take it. "It looks like a square enclosure of an acre or so of land, with one entrance into the compound. Inside there are residences all around the perimeter, and one main, large building in the middle. Vanessa said the big building used to be an old stone church, and it still has the steeple, so it'll be easy to spot – assuming the storm hasn't ripped it off."

"What side of the mountain is this place on?" Steve asks gruffly, straightening his shirt and trying to look remotely presentable after almost turning into a five-hundred-pound lion.

"It's just over the ridge, on the other side of the mountain from where the storm originally made landfall," Chin says, pointing to a sort of spiral sign on the farthest of the paper."

"We better get going then, we only have a few hours until the eye of the storm completely passes over us and our window closes." Steve sighs, clearing his throat as he pauses to look at his beta. "Thanks."

Chin nods, smiling faintly as they both walk back toward the gym to find Danny and Kono.

Chapter End Notes

It occurred to me while writing that Steve would be going against some pretty fierce nesting instincts taking Danny out of a place that has beds, food, water, generators, and working plumbing. That whole spiral into anxiety took longer to figure out and write than I thought it would! Consequently, I had to stop this chapter a liiiittle bit sooner in the plot than I had originally wanted. Alas!
Steve takes an extra moment to make sure Danny’s tac vest is big enough to cover his stomach. With the Kevlar and steel plating, the larger size vest feels heavy and cumbersome for the omega, but Danny isn’t going to complain about wearing it. Forcing himself out of the makeshift nest behind the bleachers to change into utility pants and tac gear in the bathroom had been like ripping off a band-aid, and embarrassingly enough, the omega had had to psych himself up to do it.

As soon as Steve tightens the vest over his middle, the pup protests her shrinking real estate and she shoves out against his bladder.

“Too tight,” he winces, pulling a face, and he tries to swat the alpha away as Steve continues to pull the Velcro straps on his sides of the vest. “Steve.”

“It has to cover the pup, Danny,” Steve counters.

“Yes, Steven, cover it. Not flatten it into a pancake.”

Steve sighs through popped fangs, straightening up to his full height and leaning in on the small detective’s personal space. The dominant gesture makes Danny’s skin prickle like needles. “Just do me a favor and do exactly what I say when we get up there, for once in your life.”

“Because that’s never steered me wrong,” Danny quips under his breath, shooting Steve a look as the omega pointedly ignores the urge to submit. Danny then reaches down toward his empty holsters. “And where’s my gun? Do I get a gun or should I start finding some rocks to throw?”

“Do not change the subject,” the alpha says gruffly as he forcefully steers Danny toward the rear of the hummer by his bicep. “When we go into the compound, you do not leave this vehicle. You understand that? I want you to be a ghost on this one, Danny. That’s the only way I’m letting you do this.”

The phrase instantly irks the detective, making his face harden, and he digs his heels into the ground before turning over his shoulder to glare at Steve. “Oh, I see. I should be thanking you then, for being gracious enough to let me do my job.”

Steve clenches his jaw, reaching around Danny’s shoulder to grip him hard on the back of the neck.
Danny instantly goes stiff, letting out a low and off key noise that sounds a lot like an annoyed cat. Chin and Kono look away awkwardly, not wanting to intrude on whatever complicated dynamics clearly go on between two bullheaded men with a mate bond.

The omega swallows thickly and looks down in submission, but Steve isn’t letting go of him.

“I am not fucking around.” The alpha leans in to whisper furiously into Danny’s ear. “I can smell how terrified you are and it has me about to lion out every other minute. You’re scared of leaving this place, and your pheromones are telling me that you feel anxious and vulnerable. It gets worse with every step you take closer to the tank; your scent signature is screaming that you want me to hide you in a somewhere safe and protect you. And believe me…” He leans back, towering over the small detective. “If I had a choice, that’s exactly what I would be doing. So spare me the chest-puffing act. I won’t let anything happen to you, but I need you to do what I say.”

With that, the alpha leans in and pointedly marks his scent over the stunned detective’s forehead with the corner of his jaw, releasing the omega roughly when he finishes scenting him. Danny’s skin blushes a deep, burning pink, and he climbs into the back of the Hummer, muttering under his breath.

As he straps himself into one of the cushioned leather seats, the omega sighs, leaning forward to drag his clawed hands over his face. He hates that he already feels calmer after being scented by his mate. Adding insult to injury, his pup starts to protest in his belly by stretching out against the confines of the tight vest. Danny grimaces -- he knew she wouldn’t like this. He’s pretty sure she then starts head-butting his kidney, and even though she’s small enough that Steve could hold her in one hand, it hurts. Gritting his teeth to suppress a groan of annoyance, he tries to fold in on himself; however, the vest is too long, and the low edge of the armor plate digs into his groin. Danny settles for twisting awkwardly, but his baby girl isn’t happy about it and acts up again.

“Would you please stop torturing the one that’s keeping you alive, you brat?” Danny mumbles softly, trying to tighten his stomach muscles to get her to knock it off. He doesn’t realize he’s said it out loud until Kono chuckles behind him.

“Is the keiki misbehaving?” Kono asks softly as she hoists herself up into the vehicle with a soft smile.

Danny clears his throat with a nod, glancing out one of the bullet proof, tinted port-holes on the side of the vehicle at the rest of the hangar. “Vest is a little snug.”

Kono chuffs a sympathetic laugh, giving him a once over as she walks past him to grab a seat in the middle of the hummer. “It’s funny – when you’ve got a longer vest on, no one would ever guess that you’re carrying.”

“It’s basically a Kevlar girdle, is what she’s saying,” Chin calls out from the passenger seat while Steve settles into the driver’s seat.

“Are you saying I need a girdle, Chin?” Danny retorts flatly.

Flustered, Chin turns to look at the omega, opening his mouth to speak, but Steve holds up a palm to stop him.

The alpha is casually flipping a few switches on the panel behind the steering wheel, not bothering to look up. “Don’t let him lead you down that road, Chin. I have been down that road. There are never survivors.”
Danny rolls his eyes but there’s a smile playing at the corners of his mouth – until he remembers what they’re doing.

*Right. The compound. Rescue Hayley. Try to keep Carter alive so he can testify at trial later.*

He frowns, because they’re going to be outnumbered. The only thing going for them is the fact that they might be able to catch the Goodfather’s thugs off guard. His stomach clenches at the fact that Steve’s scent is slowly fading from his skin the more that Danny sweats under the hot vest.

After grimly considering the issue for a minute, the omega finally realizes why Steve was so insistent about the longer vest. He’s not worried so much about protecting the pup as he is about hiding it. With Danny’s scent as sweet as it is, the omega doesn’t need to attract any more attention to himself with a pup-belly.

“So ah... what’s the deal here,” Danny asks, looking up toward his mate as the omega tries to compartmentalize the fuck out of the panic induced by his realization about the vest. “Is this gonna be an in-and-out back door raid type thing or one of your sneak-into-a-house-through-the-sprinkler-system type things?”

Steve rifles through his torn-up backpack, grabbing out a pair of aviator sunglasses. “I’ll have to decide that when we get there. But this plan should be pretty easy for you, Danny, because you’re going to stay in this van like I said, right?” He turns to look back over his shoulder, giving Danny a look so pointed and severe that the omega is actually surprised laser beams aren’t shooting out of Steve’s eyes.

“Yes. Jesus, I get it.” Danny sighs, averting his eyes in submission because, really, he’s about as eager to have round two of conversation as he is to have his thumbs pulled off.

Probably trying to ease the tension after Steve’s remark, Chin turns to the alpha. “So the eye of the storm is just now passing over us?”

“As of thirty minutes ago.” Steve nods as he slides on the aviator sunglasses. “We’ve got six hours and twenty minutes of calm weather before the eye passes completely over us.”

“What happens if we can’t get out before the storm starts up again?” Kono asks, frowning as she loads a spare magazine.

“What happens is we don’t let that happen,” Steve says quietly looking up to glance in the rear view mirror with his tired green-blue eyes.

Danny snorts. “Typical McGarrett reasoning. This is a terrible idea -- we’re going to end up having a slumber party with a crime syndicate.”

“If that’s how it plays out, I’ll take my chances with the storm,” Kono counters.

Chin smirks as the vehicle’s engine roars to life, and turns to tease his cousin. “You mean you don’t want to paint nails and gossip about boys with convicted felons, Kono?”

Kono is loading another magazine, not granting Chin’s comment enough acknowledgment to bother looking up. “Only if we can make cootie-catchers and play M.A.S.H..”

“What the hell is a cootie-catcher?” Steve mutters, one hand on the wheel as the hangar door slides...
upwards with a creak of protest. Chin and Kono turn to stare at the alpha, and, behind them, Danny smiles genuinely for the first time that day.

“Steve, were you ever actually a child?” Kono blurts. “How do you not know what that is?”

“Forgive him, the only crafts he knows how to make involve fuses and kill people,” Danny explains wryly. “He’s still learning how to ‘civilian’ in general.”

“Well, what the hell is it?” Steve asks again, turning to his group.

Chin laughs, shaking his head. “It’s a piece of paper folded into a way to ruin your day.”

“Oh, it is not, it’s a fortune teller! Steve -- don’t listen to him,” Kono scoffs.

“Yours were always rigged when we were kids,” Chin counters. “All of the fortunes were either like ‘today you’ll step in dog poop’ or ‘a clown will bite you on Thursday.’ Infinite promises of misery.”

Kono starts snickering to herself, leaning back. “Those were the best, weren’t they?”

“Jesus, Kono,” Danny ducks his head with a laugh, shaking his head.

As the group laughs sincerely for the first time in a long time, sunlight suddenly starts to filters into the garage, casting a warm, golden glow over everything in the the hangar.

“That thing looks familiar – that big blazing yellow orb, I think it had a name once,” Danny mutters flatly, leaning to squint at the illuminated windshield.

“Yeah, well, take a break from your jokes and soak it in; it’s not gonna be around much for the next two weeks,” Steve mutters.

Seeing the sun for the first time in three weeks is unexpectedly hard for the alpha. He had imagined that the familiar warmth on his face would feel comforting or relieving, but it doesn’t.

It feels foreign and blindingly bright to his sensitive alpha eyes as Steve taps his thumb gently on the steering wheel. He watches the guards with predatory focus. They’re all stepping away from the hangar door, and Steve finally realizes that other National Guard vehicles have lined up behind them too.

“Probably going out to search for survivors,” Chin muses quietly, glancing in the passenger-side mirror.

_or bodies_, says a voice in the back of Steve’s mind; if one photo of a body floating in floodwater gets out to a newspaper on the mainland, Hawaii’s reputation as paradise is gone.

Steve guesses that they’re all thinking it now, because his team has sobered up quickly, no longer lighthearted or tossing banter around behind him. Chin is frowning now and Kono kind of does this long sighing thing.

His pregnant mate, however, is staring straight at the surveillance equipment in front of him in the very back of the passenger compartment. Danny’s doing a good job of looking calm, but Steve can hear his heart rate rising by the minute.

Twisting his neck uncomfortably as his alpha half gives him one last instinctual pang of guilt, Steve clears his suddenly dry throat.
His omega is fine.

Danny’s fine.

The omega looks up to meet his eyes, giving him a long, unreadable look – somewhere between ‘I trust you’ and ‘We’re going to die, you asshole’ -- and Steve looks back down at the steering wheel.

Stop staring at him or you’re going to make him even more anxious.

Finally, a young guard with a low bun waves him on, and a more salient silence befalls the team.

“Here we go.” Steve says lowly as he presses the gas pedal and the Hummer lurches forward.

“Jesus!” Danny snarls through his fangs, clutching anything he can reach to keep himself from lurching against his seatbelt straps. “I don’t know why I expected your driving to be any less ridiculous than usual in this thing!”

“Daniel, I told you -- it’s not me, it’s the road,” Steve grunts, gritting his teeth as he fights with the steering wheel to stay on the path.

“What road?!” Kono calls out over the pummeling of the engine, rocking back and forth as she grabs the leather handles hanging from the roof. She turns to give Danny a concerned look. “You feeling okay, brah?”

“I’m feeling like even if we manage to find Carter alive, I’m still gonna murder him!” Danny snaps bitterly, but in reality, the detective is fighting the urge to howl out in distress.

He shouldn’t be doing this, not while pregnant, and not with whatever fucking medical issue he has going on with his womb. The alphas in the bathroom were untrained and sluggish from his enticing pheromones. This is different. Danny can’t use his claws against a rolling vehicle if they lose traction and slide back down the mountain.

The blonde has his claws digging into the seat cushion and his entire body is stiff and tense. The detective’s omega side is clawing frustratedly at the door to his consciousness, wanting to assume control over him – to make him do something, anything, to get out of this situation. After one particularly jarring throw of the hummer, Danny yelps in distress involuntarily, immediately trying to stifle it.

“Danny?” Steve’s eyes flick instantly to the rear view mirror and he slams on the brakes.

“Just drive,” the omega snaps, but his voice sounds strained because he’s starting to pant. The knowledge that the baby’s wellbeing is completely dependent on him avoiding an injury in this ridiculous situation is making his stomach clench painfully and his palms slick with sweat. His collar feels tight. “I’m fine.”

“Your heart rate is out of control, Buddy, I need you to breathe,” Steve says quickly. “Calm down.” The alpha’s own scent is starting to get erratic, too.

Danny nods, swallowing thickly, and he starts pawing at his vest because he can’t breathe suddenly.
I shouldn’t be doing this.

I’m in danger.

My pup is in danger.

“Brah, is he going feral?” Chin whispers up in the passenger seat.

“He’s borderline,” Steve says quickly. Then the alpha is unbuckling his seatbelt, turning to look over his shoulder to reassure him. “Danny, hold on, I’m coming back there.”

“Boss, his eyes are going black,” Kono says suddenly.

“I’m fine,” the omega snaps through his fangs, but he can feel that he’s only half there at best and his mate is looking back at him with a heartbreaking expression.

“STEVE!” Chin yells suddenly.

Through the blur of being borderline feral, Danny sees a rush of movement in the front of the vehicle as Chin leans sideways toward the driver’s floorboard. The hummer’s engine guns forward roughly and everything starts to shake with a roaring, low rumble.

It’s a landslide.

“I’m driving,” Chin says in a low voice when the mountain stops rumbling across the washed out road behind them. By the grace of some unknown but attentive deity, the beta had been able to jam his fingertips down on the gas pedal hard enough to move the hummer forward out of harm’s way.

Steve’s eyes are red and glistening as the alpha stares in the mirrors at the chaotic torrent of fallen trees, mud, and boulders rushing down into the road behind them. Steve had been fixated on his mate and hadn’t heard the rumble of the landslide on the mountainside above them, and if Chin hadn’t intervened, they would be under the boulders in the road behind them.

And Steve knows it.

“Steve,” Chin says calmly, walking around to slowly open the driver’s side door. “Come on, brah.”

The alpha nods, clenching his jaw and swallowing thickly. Chin gives his shoulder a squeeze as Steve resignedly turns off the engine and steps out of the vehicle.

“I’m sorry,” he says simply, not looking the beta in the eye. It’s a huge gesture for the alpha to relinquish control, and even more so for Steve to listen to his commands, but Chin knows that their team leader isn’t an idiot. They both know that this happened because Steve’s nesting. The instincts and hormones are giving the alpha tunnel vision, and the only thing he can truly focus on right now is his mate, which is fine – but Chin can’t let him jeopardize all of their safety because of it.

“The two left levers and the silver switch by the steering column puts it in gear,” Steve explains with a sigh, walking toward the back of the vehicle. He hears the alpha making some kind of soothing, gentle noise to the feral omega, and when he looks up, Steve is kneeling beside Danny in the aisle,
scenting him.

Danny’s hands stop shaking.

“He okay?” Chin asks softly, re-starting the vehicle.

Steve nods, glancing up at the beta briefly as he pulls Danny into his lap in the last row of seats. He wraps his arms around his small mate protectively and lets the omega bury his face in his neck.

Danny wakes to the feeling of Steve licking his neck and he opens his eyes slowly, expecting to see the metal paneled ceiling and fluorescent lights of the gym.

But that’s not where they are.

They’re in the hummer, in the last row of leather seats. Danny’s laying on his back and Steve is straddling his thighs, leaning forward to suck gently on his scent gland. The omega is in a scent drunk haze from the alphadren in Steve’s saliva that’s soaking into his skin. He can smell Chin and Kono but he can’t see them, and the vehicle is no longer moving.

“St-steve…” he says, but he’s sluggish. The warm, spiced scent of his strong alpha’s sculpted, muscular body is all he can smell. He raises up to starts kissing at Steve’s jawline, desperate for more of his touch, but the alpha gently holds his head back down, smiling sadly at him before returning to lick more alphadren into his bond bite. “Ungh… babe… I need…”

“Shhh,” Steve whispers, pausing to kiss his sensitive ear. Danny purrs contentedly, floating higher into this hazy atmosphere of love and trust and he starts to pump his hips automatically. He’s no longer wearing the tac vest, so Steve starts to lick down his neck, tonguing his nipples delicately before licking lightly over the scent glands in his wrists. Danny fades in and out of lucidity, grinding up against his mate’s huge, powerful body. He feels his nipples leaking slightly, piqued from the rush of nesting hormones and his mate attentively behinds to lick at them. Sucking the little pink buds into his warm, wet lips, Steve hums appreciatively as Danny’s body releases another wave of pacifying nesting hormones before returning to the bond bite on his neck. It feels so much more swollen than Danny can ever remember.

“Babe, I’m going to go inside the compound now,” Steve whispers, and Danny opens his eyes sleepily, like he’s looking at Steve through a few soft, fluffy clouds. “Stay in this Hummer, okay?”

Danny purrs, shutting his eyes as he nods obediently. He would do anything for his alpha.

Steve brushes hair back from his face, trying to capture his attention again, but Danny feels like he’s floating again. “And you’re not going to leave, right? You’re going to be a good omega, right? And stay in here and take care of our baby girl?”

Danny feels a hand on his swollen pup belly and he beams happily. His eyes water from the fucking joy of his alpha’s intoxicating presence and he nods, reaching down to place a hand over his mate’s. God he loves them – both of them – so much. His nipples are leaking again. But that’s okay. Nothing is bad right now. Everything is perfect.
“I love you,” Steve murmurs, leaning down to kiss him on the lips.

His smiling face – and worried eyes – are the last thing that Danny sees before giving in to the blissful haze.

When Steve comes back out of the rear of the Hummer, Chin and Kono are staring in concern.

“He’s out.”

“Out?” Kono repeats in disbelief, approaching the vehicle. “What do you mean, out? He’s asleep?”

Steve pulls a face; “More or less.”

She steps up the first rung of the ladder to glance quickly around the last row of seats before her eyes widen, taking in the appearance of the previously agitated omega. The blonde is curled on his side, purring. There are tears near his eyes and wet spots on his tee shirt.

“Boss, what did you just do to him?” Kono blurts, turning over her shoulder with an alarmed expression. They’re in the middle of the woods just outside the high walls of the compound.

“Look, I had to make sure he would actually stay here,” Steve sighs, removing the safety from each of his guns. “So I… got him scent drunk, and overloaded him with hormones from my saliva. He’ll be out for a few hours.”

Chin raises his brows at the alpha. “Brah, I don’t see this going well when he wakes up.”

“It’s for his own safety,” Steve urges defensively. “You think of a better idea, short of hog-tying him with zip ties and I’ll do it.”

“I’m surprised you didn’t just go for that in the first place,” Kono says wryly.

“The guard didn’t give me zip-ties,” Steve mutters under his breath before turning to Chin. “So the old stone church, right? That’s HQ?”

“What’s left of it,” Chin sighs, reaching for the crudely drawn map of the compound in his back pocket. He unfolds the map and hands it off to Steve.

With one last hesitating glance at the dirt covered Hummer, Steve ignores the uneasy knot in his stomach and turns toward the compound. Perhaps due to his nerves, or the fact that getting Danny scent drunk ended up with Steve getting a slight, disorienting buzz himself, Steve doesn’t see the red-tailed hawk watching them from the trees.

And, as they make their way silently toward the compound, he doesn’t see that it’s following them.
*le gasp!* Stay tuned, my loves!

Also, I have a new blog! I'm really not sure what I'll post on there, but if you're ever curious about why it's taken me so long to update one chapter, lol, give it a look. Come say hey!

https://dorisnancygrey.svbtle.com/
In the old, stone church in the center of his mountain-top compound, Manuel "The Goodfather" Santos rises slowly from the old wooden chair in his office – the chapel – holding a glass of cool lemonade in his hand.

The compound has always been powered by generators, so this is not unlike any other day where he might have ice in his drinks as he runs numbers at his desk, but today is different. His omega, Eduardo, is back in his den. After three agonizing months of separation, Eduardo has escaped the prison. Not a moment too soon, either, Manuel muses with a sigh, glancing down at the swell on his mate’s abdomen. This is their first litter. Manuel has never told anyone of his mate’s pregnancy, as no one – not even the prison that confined his mate or the other prisoners confined with him – has ever realized that Eduardo isn’t a beta. The young man is twenty-eight years old and tall for an omega. Also, scar tissue from a knife fight had damaged his scent glands as a teen, making it even more difficult to decipher Eduardo’s true subgender if you didn’t know him intimately.

That and the fact that Eduardo obscures his pretty face with a beard, Manuel thinks with a smile.

The Goodfather walks toward the mattress on the floor, standing over his exhausted young mate as he sleeps, and watches him fondly. It took five betas from the prison to escort him here safely through the storm, and the taking of the little girl Hayley and her meteorologist father to orchestrate all of this, but it was finally done.

The plan, of course, was only half over, but having his mate and unborn pups under his protection… it was something in itself to celebrate. He bends over to pull the covers up over the omega as he sleeps on his back, pausing to rub a hand over Eduardo’s growing belly. “Rest well, mis queridos cachorros,” Manuel whispers.

A knock at the door draws his attention from his mate and the alpha turns slowly to step open the door a few inches, letting a sliver of light filter into the room. "Sí?"

“Manny,” says his lead beta, Pablo Souza. “I have reports on the damaged property in the compound.” The man hands him a clip-board. Always a clip-board with Souza, Manuel has never questioned it, but here it is, in his hands again, and the Goodfather lets his eyes scan the page.

“You did full rounds on the property?” Manuel asks softly, frowning as he notes that the building that have been using as a school has been pretty much demolished, according to Souza. He will have to have lumber delivered by a helicopter to fix it, and it will not be cheap. “And the children, they are okay?” He looks up from the page.

Souza nods, “Sí. They are in the basement of the kitchen house. But Selena did say the kids want to go out and play in the sun while they can.”

Manuel frowns. “This I cannot allow. The Five-0 team should be here any minute to try and recover the meteorologist and the little omega girl, Hayley. I cannot have one of the alpha children injured in
the cross-fire.”

Souza looks down, clearing his throat as if he’s hesitating.

“Tell me – dime,” Manuel presses, exiting his office gingerly and shutting the door behind him as quietly as possible.

Souza looks away for a minute. “One of the prisoners that escorted Eduardo here broke down the door where the omega girl is being kept… he tried to… he tried to take her somewhere, out of the house, I think he was planning to—”

“Cut his throat,” Manuel interrupts coolly. “Do the thing – what is it called, the thing with the tongue. It is truly disgusting…”

Souza frowns. “A Columbian neck-tie, señor?”

Manuel nods. “Si. Make an example of him to the other men. No one is going to behave like a depraved scoundrel in my compound, Pablo. Better yet… maybe kill all of the prisoners – I do not know what kind of men they are.”

“Manny,” his beta presses, “Should we not wait until after we have killed the Five-0? The prisoners we could send out first – perhaps they get shot in the crossfire.”

Manuel takes a sip of his lemonade, tilting his head side to side as he considers the idea. “Eh… I guess this is okay. Keep them separated from Selena and the school children. Is Hayley alright?”

Souza nods. “She is fine, now, señor. I have been guarding her myself. We are watching the DVDs of the…” Souza pauses in thought. “Doctor McStuffins I think is her name. It is cartoon. Hayley likes it. It is not so bad actually. Es lindo.”

Manny nods, “Muy bien. And the meteorologist?”

“El gorila?” Souza deadpans, face falling in frustration. “He is sedated in the old choir room.”

Manny nods, “Good, then. You have the zip-ties and the chairs ready in the basement? There are four members of Five-0.”

“Si, señor. We have their personal files pulled from the police database, as well.”

Manuel grins, reaching out to pat his lead beta on the shoulder. “Then we are ready, my friend.”
Chapter Twenty-three

Chapter Notes

LOL I don’t even know anymore you guys, clearly my brain can’t handle research papers and it lashes out by writing fiction.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Danny fully regrets waking up. His head is pounding, and a bout of nausea overcomes him as soon as he sits up. Pawing frantically at the door as he gags, the omega is able to wait until he’s at least leaning over the muddy, wet shreds of palm trees and debris before he vomits.

He feels hungover.

Like kill-me-now hungover, and he hasn’t woken up in a state this bad since Steve – like an idiot – had nearly killed him by putting pups in him then disappearing for three months.

After he finishes vomiting, he stares at the ground next to the tank treads, exhausted and heaving a few ragged breaths.

His first thought, the instinctual response that’s always his first conscious thought after sleep that no one will ever know, is that he wants his mate. But Steve isn’t there. He can’t smell Chin or Kono either. It’s then that Danny realizes, with confusion that gradually boils into frustration, that his shirt has been ripped open from his collar to just above his stomach. He doesn’t know how it happened, but he knows it was Steve’s fault.

“What the – you animal,” Danny groans, huffing out a long breath as he reaches down to hold the two jagged flaps of his shirt hanging from the huge open V over his chest. “What the hell am I supposed to do with this?”

And he’s… sticky.

Danny rears his head back in confusion, because if whatever this is drying across his skin and is what he thinks it is… it is way too early for that to be happening. He brings a finger-tip up to one of his exposed nipples, frowning because — ow — he’s extremely sensitive right now. A drop of pearly, sweet smelling white liquid beads up on the tip of it.

“No, no, no, no….” Danny sighs, throwing his head back in exasperation. Steve must have…what? Gotten him scent-drunk on a hormone rush?

Why in the hell would Steve…

Danny freezes, because, suddenly now, it’s all coming back to him.

The licking.

The sucking.
The leaking.

The sensation of being high and drunk.

The purring.

The crying.

The overwhelming adoration for his alpha.

The joy.

The overwhelming sleepiness.

Oh no. No.

He didn’t.

Danny brings hands up to steeple over his mouth and nose, internally shrieking but determined not to let it manifest on his lips.

Steve had purposefully done this. Steve had gotten him scent drunk intentionally to incapacitate him.

“You son of a –” Danny shakes his head, swearing a string of curses to himself. “You’re lucky there’s a ten foot wall between us right now, Steven.” He then tentatively reaches his fingers up to touch his scent gland and then to reach around to his bond bite.

They’re both swollen.

He has vague glimpses of memories, where Steve was saying something.

“And you’re going to stay in this Hummer, right?”

The omega remembers the jackass saying it as he had the nerve to straddle Danny and cage him in with his arms, dominating the small detective on a physical level – which explains why things are sort of slippery between his thighs, the omega realizes with a grimace.

Then Steve had hovered his face a few inches above his own, stroking Danny’s hair and reaching down to hold his belly protectively with one huge hand. And of course his scent-drunk omega side had basked in the attention and petting like a little house cat.

Oh boy.

Yeah.

It had been bad.
Danny rolls his eyes, groaning under his breath as he starts to flush pink with embarrassment. He wants to vomit again, and it has nothing to do with the nausea. The baby adjusts herself low in the bowl of his hips, kicking out lazily like she’s curious about all of the motion, and Danny sighs, reaching down to run a palm over her, rubbing gently in a circle. “Your father is incorrigible,” he mutters.

He then grabs one of the water bottles, throwing open the rear door again to step outside of the hummer. Danny carefully spills a trickle of water across his sticky chest, leaning as not to get his clothes completely soaked, and crinkles his nose and mouth in resigned distaste.

It’s bringing back memories. Some that he’d really rather forget...

Whenever he wasn’t actively feeding Sophie and Cooper for those first few months, the whole process of dealing with the milk—especially after returning to work—was foreign, messy, and difficult to keep private. Having wet spots form on his dress shirts whenever anyone cried around him had easily been the most annoying thing to deal with. It turns out that there’s actually a good amount of crying that goes on in a law enforcement office between the victim interviews and overworked staff.

He hadn’t even decided, yet, whether or not he wanted to just use formula with this one.

Danny huffs a sigh bitterly, drying himself off with the bottom of his tee shirt. He walks back around to the rear door to the hummer and climbs back in, slamming the door.

It isn’t long before he finds himself glancing down at his watch.
3:40 pm.

The omega’s brows furrow. Was I really asleep for that long? With a frown, Danny turns to peer out of one of the portholes again, glancing up at the sky.

It’s no longer that brilliant, peaceful blue that it was this morning. It’s a somber, cold color, and there are dark clouds moving in quickly on the horizon.

Danny reaches down to hold his belly nervously, swearing under his breath. “Shit.”

He cautiously edges toward the back of the Hummer again, gently opening the door to climb out again. Then he slowly sniffs the air, inhaling deeply through his nose, hoping that he might catch Steve’s scent if he’s nearby.

He’s not.

All Danny can smell now is overturned earth, wet jungle, and exhaust from what is probably a few generators.

The sky is getting darker by the minute, and he knows that he’ll soon be able to hear the first tentative drops of rain on the metal roof of the Hummer.

The wind feels cold on his exposed chest and he settles for trying to tie the shirt closed again near his neck. It somehow looks even worse, and Danny just sighs in defeat, reaching for the stupid, too-big vest again.

He can see the wall from here, and he bites his lip, looking around carefully. He hasn’t gotten more than a few steps away when a small voice startles him.
“What are you doing?”

Chapter End Notes

I hope you guys are still enjoying the story! I feel like I'm scrambling. I dunno!

Also, please start reminding me if it's time to make another update, because I swear time just gets away from me in school, and I don't even realize it!
Chapter Twenty-Four

Chapter Notes

Oh god guys, seriously drowning in real-life cases and school work. Yay for being a student attorney! Boo for everything that comes with it

"___-

Also, the blog is on the fritz, forgive me. I'm switching platforms! Any suggestions? I ain't the most tech savvy... :c

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“*What are you doing?*”

Danny nearly jumps out of his own skin. His fangs unsheathe under his lip and his claws are out within seconds. His omega brain has already conjured up the best way to slash open someone’s jugular artery by the time he turns around with a loud snarl.

But it’s Vanessa.

She whines out, waving her arms up defensively, and trips backwards over a tree root. Danny’s hands automatically reach out to catch her before she falls, but – in a disorienting blur of brown feathers – she turns into a hawk before she even hits the ground.

Grazing Danny’s face on the way up, Vanessa rockets upwards into the safety of a tree.

“*Jesus christ almighty,*” Danny huffs as he places one hand over his racing heart and leans with his other hand against the hummer. As his palm pressed against the sun-warmed metal of the passenger side door, Danny looks up at the hawk in the tree that is ruffling its feathers and pacing along a branch.

“*Vanessa, get down here.*”

A pink sundress falls to the muddy floor of the jungle, drifting like a dandelion seed, and the hawk just stares at him, trying to make itself smaller.

It gives the omega one pitiful ‘*squawk.*’

Danny shakes his head in exasperation and finally starts to catch his breath. The baby is retaliating against his jarring movements by kicking and shoving restlessly. When she doesn’t let up, the omega sighs and unbuckles his tac vest, fed up with the thing covering his entire torso. Danny quickly pulls it off over his head and flings it onto the hood of the hummer. Finally free to put a hand over the swell of his abdomen, Danny tries to calm his pup down by rubbing a gentle circle over her, wincing in pain.
It takes her a full two minutes to stop.

Finally, when the circus in his abdomen calms the fuck down, Danny calls out to the hawk.
“Vanessa, I’m not going to ask you again.”

The joints of the hawk’s wings move up over its face in shame, and, really, it’s cute, but Danny doesn’t even have a teaspoon of patience left. He bends over, grumbling under his breath, and picks up the muddy dress. When he tosses the stained dress toward the hawk, she swoops down and picks it up, flying behind the fronds of a fallen palm tree.

By the time Vanessa walks into the clearing, Danny’s Jersey-Street-cop glare has softened into a smolder of paternalistic disapproval.

“You followed us,” he says in a low voice.

“But Mr. Danny, I jus—”

“This is extremely dangerous!” He hisses, still trying to keep his voice low. “Any minute, there are gonna be bullets flying everywhere, and now, I—”

“But there already were,” Vanessa blurts quickly, throwing her arms up. “I heard gunshots! Right after Steve, and Kono, and Chin went inside Manny’s house, so I came back to find —”

Danny holds up his palms, clenching his eyes shut. “Wait – what?”

Vanessa’s eyes are big. “I heard gunshots! From that way,” she points emphatically at the direction of the compound wall. “So I flew over to look but some guys I’ve never seen before were running around Manny’s house with big guns and I heard Mr. Steve yelling!”

Danny’s chest clenches. “How long ago was this?”

“It was like a couple of hours, but I couldn’t wake you up, and I kept pecking on the window but you kept sleeping… and then I flew back and you were walking toward them but I don’t want you to get hurt too! Manny will be mad at me for getting caught at the zoo if he sees me!”

She’s grabbing onto his legs, and Danny feels the weird urge to scoop her up into his arms and comfort her like a good omega would, but the effort of lifting her would put too much strain on his abdomen. Instead, the detective kneels down, soaking the knees of his borrowed cargo pants in wet, red-brown mud. “I won’t let Manny find you, okay? But there’s something I need you to do, and you’re gonna have to be a big girl…”

She nods, eyes watering as she wrings her hands.

“I need you to fly back down to the shelter and tell Jerry that we need backup, and we need it fast. Find out how far away the big ships are. Does that sound like something you can do for me, Vanessa?”

“But what about Miss Kono, is she okay?”

“Miss Kono is a very smart, strong lady, sweetie, and she’s been through a lot worse than this and been perfectly fine,” Danny assure her but fuck his scent is starting to turn sour from distress at the thought of his mate and teammates getting hurt. Or worse.
“And the baby?” She whispers, looking down. “What if IT gets hurt?”

Danny purses his lips and follows her gaze downward because, yeah, that’s a genuine concern. He knows, however, that the anxiety is stemming from Vanessa’s fledgling alpha instincts. “She’s pretty safe in here,” the omega hints as he places a hand on his abdomen with a faint smile. “All you need to worry about is getting back down to the shelter and finding Jerry. Find Jerry, say we need backup, ask about the big ships, alright? Jerry, back up, big ships. Can you repeat that back to me?”

She nods again. “Jerry, back up, big ships.”

“Okay, perfect -- good job. Now give me a hug,” he says softly, praying that she can’t decipher his scent enough to know how distressed he’s becoming by the minute. She leans forward, wrapping her small arms around Danny’s neck. The omega rubs his palm over her back. “It’s going to be okay.”

Steve wakes to the feeling of being tasered.

There’s the smell of the wet jungle, the smothering blanket of beta panic, the coppery tang of blood, sweat, his own erratic nesting hormones, the ozone in the air that hangs thick like the ocean all around him and where is his mate is he safe and then –

Pain.

The alpha roars out, baring his fangs as he jolts in a rusted folding chair. His feet scrape on damp cement.

Lights. Corrugated metal walls.

He’s in the center of a large, open warehouse with blinding emergency lights hanging from extension cords a few feet above him. He can hear a generator humming in the distance.

Before his eyes reel back into his head from the electrical current surging through him, he’s able to catch a glimpse of his surroundings. There are stacks of plastic-wrapped palettes, each sporting a heavy load of cardboard boxes. Looking at their labels, he expects weapons and bullets, but it’s home goods and school supplies.

He doesn’t trust what he’s seeing, so Steve looks again -- before they taser him a second time. It’s true. Laundry detergent, paper towe—

Pain.

He roars again, feeling short golden fur start to sprout out of his skin as he starts to ‘lion out’ in response.

“Enough,” a smooth, deep voice chuckles. “I said ‘wake him,’ my friend, not ‘wake him and kill’
Steve pants shallowly, trying to regain control of his senses and focus. He swallows thickly. There’s something around his neck — his own belt, maybe — and he’ll choke if he changes. The alpha tenses his muscles. Hands and ankles: bound.

“Santos,” Steve says in a hoarse voice; and his lips still feel numb and difficult to move from being drugged. Fuck.

Steve had led the team right into an ambush. Only a quarter of an hour after leaving Danny in the hummer, the alpha had leaped up to grab the top of the cracked cement wall around the compound, and heaved himself up to glance around. The coast had been clear.

No sooner had he swung himself over the wall and dropped a few ropes for Chin and Kono that something suddenly stung him in the neck. There had been no noise. No gun cocking, no trigger — just a silent wisp of air and he was suddenly losing feeling on that side of his body.

Chin and Kono had had the sense to bolt for cover as soon as they hit the ground and fired off a few rounds, but apparently, they hadn’t gotten much farther than him. His betas are now tied up in similar chairs beside him, heads bowed forward in blank expressions of unconsciousness. They almost look like they’re praying.

Steve had only tried to run as far from the compound wall as possible — trying to draw whatever fight there was away from his mate on the other side of the wall.

Danny isn’t here with them now. Thank God.

“Hello, Commander McGarrett,” says the smooth voice finally. “Thank you for visiting my compound. In case you are wondering, the darts are dipped in the poison of a certain frog from my village in Colombia. I raise them here.” He pauses and paces slightly, crossing his arms as his beta stands by with the taser. “The frogs are finicky little creatures to care for, but it is worth it for the poison. It packs quite a punch, as they say.”

The lights are too bright to see anything more than a silhouette at this point; Steve can only squint in the light.

“That is how I operate, my friend,” Santos continues slowly, voice darkening. “I like to cultivate my strategies – tend to them patiently. By the time you smell smoke, you are already on fire.”

Steve flicks his eyes around the room. Check for weaknesses in the structure. Stall for time by talking. “If I’m not dead, then you need something from me. So get on with it.”

Structural weaknesses: cracked window frame, one door, two skylights.

“Not from you, actually,” the Goodfather retorts dryly. “I have gotten everything I need from all of
you. But, if you notice… there is an empty chair next to you.”

*Oh, fuck.* Steve’s Navy Seal escape protocol assessment derails all at once in his head. In its place, protective instincts surge to the surface of his thoughts. *No, no, no, no.*

“Your little sidekick – Daniel Williams,” the man begins. “Where is he?”

Steve feels his own heart rate rising, and he knows that The Godfather – also an alpha – can hear it, too. He tries to force himself to remain calm.

The lights are pulled away, leaving sunspots dancing in his vision, and Santos is just standing there holding a folder. It looks like a personal file, exactly like the ones the governor keeps locked in his bureau. Same dark red Five-O stamp on the outside of the folder.

Steve’s pretty sure that is, in fact, the governor’s file.

“He evacuated with the governor,” Steve lies. “I have no way of contacting him, so it’s pointless to try to extort him for anything.”

“Your mouth tells me one thing, but your scent tells me another.” Santos leans in and inhales pointedly, locking his deep brown eyes with Steve.

Bristling visibly, Steve clenches his jaw.

“I can smell a male omega’s pheromones lingering on you,” Santos reveals quietly, placing his hands on his hips and turning to pace again. “In fact, I can smell his scent on your breath – your face, from marking him. There is no point trying to lie, Commander, I have your entire lives printed onto neat white paper in this file. I have a mole in the governor’s office – Natsumi,” he pauses. "A pretty Asian girl who needed help to pay her mother's medical bills. Now she repays me in favors far more valuable than money – like stealing this for me, and telling me about the storm before the Governor even showed up at your house."

Steve bares his teeth.

Ignoring the Seal, Santos raises up the file and starts to flip through it. "Your life insurance policy lists Detective Daniel Williams as your beneficiary, as well as two pups, and although you are not married, this policy lists you as bond-mates."

“You’re right. He's my mate. So I made him stay behind at the shelter – to protect him,” Steve tries again, glaring at the other alpha that paces around him slowly. “I smell like him because I scented him before I left.”

Santos shakes his head. “You really have no idea how jodido your own hormones are right now, Commander. You are nesting.”

The words come out like an accusation.

Steve’s skin flushes bright red; he looks away.

“Which means, Commander, that your mate is probably somewhere close by. So I wonder, then, if you already have a new litter, or if your little detective is about to have one, which will make all of
this a little more interesting.” Santos pauses, tucking Danny’s file under his arm and glancing toward the entrance of the warehouse. Wind is starting to howl through the open door again. “In which case, I would hope that my men find him. If they do not find him, you see, the storm will.”

"What the fuck do you want with him?" Steve snarls through his fangs.

Santos looks at him quizzically. "Nothing, actually. I just need his blood."

As the gears finally start to turn in Steve's drug and instinct riddled mind, the Goodfather reaches into his pocket and pulls out three vials of blood.

Steve's eyes widen in horror.

"You see, like the poison frogs, I have been cultivating this plan from the start," Santos muses. "You thought I was after the serum, and – yes – in a way, I was."

As his thoughts erupt in a deafening rage of panic, cold chills echo down his spine in response. Jesus Christ this cannot be happening to him. This isn't him, this isn't how this happens. Steve is always in control. He's the heroic alpha.

The Goodfather continues in his pleasant, smooth voice. "Giving my four most trusted betas the ability to turn into animals won't really help my cartel. Not really. I don't want them to turn into big, conspicuous beasts." Santos slowly lowers his gaze from the expanses of the warehouse to lock eyes with Steve. "I have some other animals in mind... Humans."

He holds out the vials, letting Steve confirm this terrible, nightmarish notion.

The three vials of blood each have a label:

Kono Kalakaua

Chin Ho Kelly

Steven McGarrett

"You will never get away with this," Steve rages instantly, and, beside him, one of his betas starts to wake. "There is no way you could possibly pass for any of us, even if you looked exactly like us."

"Oh, but I will. All of your photo albums, your important documents, checkbooks, passports, social security cards, car titles… You thought they were all safe with the Governor's personal belongings," Santos whispers lowly. "But guess who the Governor trusts to coordinate mundane affairs such as this? My young friend, Natsumi. All I ever have to do is threaten to intercept her dear old mother as she walks ever so slowly to get the paper every Sunday, and Natsumi is very eager to do whatever I ask. I would of course never do such a thing, but she does not know that, Commander. Delivering your plastic storage bins to the wrong boat was easy for her to do. And honestly, even if you were to act completely different to everyone you know -- who would be so ready to suggest that someone has stolen your DNA? It sounds like the one type of books -- what are they called? Science fiction."
Feeling his stomach tighten into a knot, Steve fights the urge to whine.

"All I need, now, is Detective Williams, and I will have the full set," the Goodfather says. "I could kill you all now, of course, as I have your blood. But as soon as he catches his beloved mate's scent, he's going to come running, isn't he. This is the easiest kind of hunting, you know? The prey comes right to me."

Steve roars again, managing to bust the rope around his wrists as black, hooked claws unsheathe on his fingertips. He reaches up, meaning to claw at the Goodfather's face, but the high voltage shriek of the Taser is the last thing he notices before enough electricity to kill a grown beta is coursing through his body.

Chapter End Notes

Ugh I wanted this to be longer, but *damn* y'all, life is cray cray right now.

If you want more stuff to read, I've rewritten the beginning to the very first installment of this series, When Office Plants Die. I'm way happier with it, now! Let me know what ya think!
They have my mate.

In the brutal humidity of the Hawaiian jungle, Danny is trying to quell the suffocating sensation of an oncoming panic attack.

They have my mate. I’m alone. I need my pups. I need my nest.

Stop it, he thinks, shaking his head roughly. You’re a homicide detective, not some defenseless house-cat omega.

You can do this. You’ve faced worse odds before, he tells himself. Keep running.

Just keep fucking running and try not to think about how bad this is for your baby.

Focus.

If his thoughts stray too far from what he’s doing, the detective starts to lose the strained, tenuous grasp he has left on his ravaged emotions. He’s running through the bent and broken trees; jumping over a log, and now crouching low to avoid one, two, three low-hanging tree limbs.

The omega reaches the compound wall just as he runs out of breath and his skin has turned sticky from the muggy humidity. The twenty pound Kevlar vest is not making things easier. For the next minute or so, his eyes tiredly scale up the tall, cement wall in front of him.

Now what?

With his short arms and legs, Danny would be a slow moving target trying to hoist himself up over the top, even if he could climb up there. That, and, well, he’s not supposed to be hoisting anything with this pup in his belly.

He rolls his eyes upward where dark stretches of storm clouds are reaching across the sky overhead, about to burst with hail and rain.

Whether or not he’s ready to break into the Goodfather’s HQ to find his team, the storm is going to force him to act quickly.

The omega’s hand worriedly drifts to his stomach. Omega babies — if that’s what she is — are still
worth a lot of money on the black market, and he doesn’t want anyone to know about her.

She’s safer that way.

The thought dredges up a chilling memory of his stay at THRESH. His baby girl nudges at him when his stomach tightens uneasily, causing her home to squeeze in around her. “We’re okay. We’re fine.”

A crack of thunder jars him from his moment with the pup, and the detective takes a deep breath before methodically counting his ammo. Twenty-four bullets — plus whatever few rounds are still in the clip. Not great for a one-man raid. He turns, swiveling his borrowed boot in the mud-splashed terrain, and starts to lope along the wall.

Danny has affixed four walkie talkies to the loops on his vest, and they rattle awkwardly as he runs. The walkie talkies had clattered to the floor of the Hummer as Danny had searched the cargo compartments for back-up ammunition and guns. Though he hadn’t found anything useful other than a small, tactical knife, the small radio units had at least given him the bare-bones formulation of this plan. The knife is holstered on his shin, under his pants.

On the other side of the compound, the air is thick with the scent of alpha sweat and frustration when Danny arrives. A strong breeze that whistles through the wind-scarred mountain top carries the scent of the bulky, sweaty cartel members trying to find him. The smell is making his omega instincts buzz like a live-wire.

Looking up from his hiding spot in the fronds of a downed palm tree, Danny can see the main gates to the compound. There isn’t a guard, but the gates stretch at least fifteen feet in the air and there’s a formidable-looking chain on it secured by a padlock.

Which means the Goodfather’s alpha thugs out here all have keys. Danny had figured as much.

Suddenly, the hair on the back of his neck is bristling. Someone is walking in the jungle about fifty yards behind him, breathing noisily through their mouth as they stomp through the underbrush.

Let’s get this shit-show rolling, he thinks wryly. Silently, Danny unhooks one of the radio units from his vest and sets it into a near-by wedge of tree branches. He switches it on, turns up the volume, and sets it to radio channel thirteen.

He crouches low and sprints across the muck and debris until he is about a hundred feet away, and removes another walkie talkie from his vest.

This really is a stupid plan. This is some trademark McGarrett-level-stupid shit.

“And here’s one for you,” Danny mumbles to himself, setting the radio unit under a large plantain tree leaf draped over a tree stump. He repeats the process, first switching the thing on, then jacking up the volume, and finally changing the channel to thirteen.

One last time, Danny repeats the steps, leaving another walkie-talkie in the underbrush. Finally, hiding between two trees near the last radio unit, Danny takes a deep breath.

He lifts the last walkie talkie to his face, making sure the thing is also on channel thirteen, and howls into the receiver.

Three identical howls echo through the steaming jungle around him. He hears the men shouting to each other.
“THE OMEGA’S OVER HERE!”

“NO — HE’S EAST OF THE GATE! I JUST HEARD HIM!”

“THEN GRAB HIM AND LET’S GO — STORM’S GONNA RIP THE SKY OPEN!”

Danny stiffens, hearing one of the guys running close by. He fakes a stifled whine — imitating the sound of a hurt omega — and feels the vibrations of movement through the sturdy wet tree trunk he’s hiding behind. Danny waits until he can smell the guy’s cheap aftershave before leaning to look at the thug.

It’s a 6’2” beta male with a sweat stained, button-down shirt, whipping his head around frantically as he looks for the source of the sounds.

Danny clicks the receiver on the walkie talkie, sending a slight humming buzz out to all of the radio units.

Predictably, when Danny looks up, the beta male has discovered the hidden walkie talkie, and is staring at it curiously.

Danny uses this moment to spring out from behind the tree, getting the guy in a sleeper hold before he knows what’s happening.

He man tries to groan. “Nope, nope, go to sleep, time to sleep,” Danny mutters through gritted teeth. He’s clinging to this guy’s back like a monkey, and Danny is sorely feeling the height difference, but it’s working. Jumping off before the guy hits the ground, Danny stumbles a bit and rights himself awkwardly. “Sleep tight.”

He brushes his vest off with a huff and then starts to move as quietly and quickly as possible toward the location of the next walkie talkie. Faking another low omega whine, Danny hears the inhuman sound of his own voice echoing from the radio units around him. He waits, this time, under the fronds of another downed palm tree. When another thug comes, gun raised, into the clearing, Danny stiffens and silently watches the guy.

“I thought I heard him over here! This guy’s like a ghost!”

“He’s one little fuckin’ omega; I think you can handle it!”

Danny purses his lips. Wrong.

X

Steve is aware that his haywire nesting pheromones are filling the air around him. He’s sweating, his heart is beating too fast and too hard in his ears, and his finger nails are digging into the hard wood of the chair he’s tied to. Chin and Kono are still sedated next to him, heads bowed.

The alpha’s stomach is a twisted knot. When the Goodfather walks out of his office again, he starts to speak lowly to another associate before pausing, sniffing the air.

He turns to stare at McGarrett with a barely interested expression. “Will someone sedate that nesting alpha again, please? It keeps wearing off. He is so anxious about his mate that it is all I can smell in
this entire room. I cannot stand this scent of fear everywhere I go.”

The thugs all turn to look at Steve, giving him a look like he’s pathetic, and the alpha does his best to snarl threateningly. But his heart’s not in it. All he can think about is how fucking stubborn his omega is. Danny is going to come looking for him.

What would be worse — getting tied up in here or getting caught in the jungle during a storm?

The Goodfather is still chuckling about it across the room. “I mean, Jesus Christo, maybe spray cologne on him or something.” The crime lord pauses, turning to his right-hand man; “Use one of mine. But, Souza, please — nothing too expensive.”

“All your colognes, Sir, they are expensive,” Souza mumbles.

“Fine, fine.” The Goodfather waves him off, interrupting; “They are done with the serum?”

“Almost,” Souza says. “I still have to get McGarrett’s blood sample from you.”

Steve’s heart skips a beat as he stares at this man. This guy is going to change into him. Nauseated suddenly, Steve leans forward and vomits on the floor.

He hears someone reprimanding him and someone else yelling for a mop.

The lights begin to flicker as the wind picks up.

Steve can’t focus. What are his children going to think if this Souza guy looks exactly like him and steals his identity? They guy surely wouldn’t take care of someone else’s pups, or at least, not long term. Will the guy kill Sophie and Cooper just to make things easier — drop them off at social services and abandon them? Will they kill his mother and Joe — the only people besides his pack that would know this look-a-like would be an imposter?

“Dios mio — where are Ramirez and Henando?” The Goodfather asks loudly as the wind begins to howl. “I would hope that some of my best men are smart enough not to die in a hurricane. At least give me my guns back first.”

“The omega is right outside the gates — sounds like he’s wounded. They said they’re going to trap him.”

Steve roars — tries to roar — but his chest collapses in on itself halfway and he feels like he’s drowning. His strong roar tapers off into a whine and he thrashes in his chair. He knocks himself onto his side, making the chair creak and splinter at the joints. The guy walking toward him with a mop rushes to keep him restrained as the chair busts apart.

“Just throw him in the cage in the corner, his anxiety is too strong to keep him over here, anyway. He’s going to upset Eduardo.” With that, betas rush toward him.

Danny fully expects the glass to break when he punches the glass window out with his fist.

He also expects to cut up his hand (which he does) and he even expects to have to flick away little shards of glistening glass covered in his own blood (which he does).
It hurts, of course, but that’s why Danny uses his left hand. When he pull
himself into the small empty room in the back of the old church, it isn’t ex-
actly quiet. The wind comes roaring in like a wild animal with him, and he
knows someone is going to come in to board up the open window. He
pulls his gun off his hip in the dimly lit room; the fact that they have power
at all means there are at least a few generators somewhere nearby.

He glances around briefly, trying to steal a look at his surroundings as he readies himself to jump whomever the hell is going to walk in. This looks like an old boiler room.

What throws him off guard, however, is who walks in.

Danny’s eyes bug in surprise and he instantly lowers his gun. “Steve.”

It’s all he manages before the taller man locks his steely green eyes onto
Danny and storms toward him.

It’s then that Danny notices that Steve doesn’t smell like his mate.

And he has changed clothes.

And he has a weird gold chain necklace around his neck.

And he’s wearing aftershave, and cologne, and it doesn’t smell familiar, and there’s this look in Steve’s eyes as the alpha stomps toward him like he’s never seen Danny before and —

“He’s in here,” Steve yells, and Danny wants to protest. Why are you giving away my position?

The temperature of the air around Danny drops a few degrees as Santos appears in the doorway.

“You are very late to the party, Detective Williams.”

Danny reaches for the gun on his hip, but Steve is faster, drawing his own gun.

It’s not Steve’s gun.

The last thing Danny thinks to do is to look at the side of Steve’s neck, searching for the faint mate-

bond bite scar.

There isn’t one.

That isn’t Steve.

“The serum…” Danny mutters in shock, recoiling tensely as he realizes what’s happening. “You’re
not him.”

“No shit,” the imposter-Steve sneers.

Danny is so stunned that he doesn’t even move to block the punch thrown at his jaw.

X

They drag his unconscious, pregnant mate up against the bars of his cage a few hours later, when
Steve is sedated and fighting to stave off drug-induced sleep. They do it, the alpha is convinced, just
to rile him up.

It fucking works.

As Steve glances up, blinking at the bright generator lights, he tries to decipher what he’s looking at until awareness burns through his thoughts like a live wire.

Instantly, he’s awake and enraged.

The familiar scent of panic and sour distress are radiating off of Danny’s soft omega skin and the alpha in him starts to scream with white-hot rage. He pulls himself to his feet, staggering through the haze of sedation as primal anger flushes the drugs from his brain.

His small mate’s head is bowed forward limply as two large betas hold him up by his arms. Danny’s pretty face is serene except for the bruise on his jaw where someone managed to catch him off guard and clocked him. Steve wants to kill, rip, tear that person’s arteries with his teeth and spit their own blood back in their faces.

Steve’s black, deadly lion claws are out and he reaches through the bars of the cage. He wants to threaten the men holding his mate, but he can’t talk, can’t form the words with his mouth. Steve realizes he’s roaring with his lion voice instead.

He throws himself against the bars of the cage, bloodying his face on the iron as he swipes out at them. He’s only an inch too far away to reach the betas’ arms but, Christ, Steve would dislocate his shoulder on these bars if he meant he could spill a drop of their blood.

“Put him down. Gently. Do not drop him,” a cool voice instructs as Santos walks up. The thugs set Danny on the floor carefully and leave the room.

The Goodfather’s hands are poised behind his back as he looks at the alpha, down at Danny, and back again.

“This omega smells very sweet, doesn’t he,” he murmurs knowingly. “In fact, he smells delicious. I think I know why.”

He reaches down to unbuckle the omega’s vest and folds it open to each side before tearing open Danny’s tee shirt. He takes in the sight of Danny’s creamy soft golden skin. Reaching out to stroke over Danny’s chest, Santos hums approvingly to himself and drags a fingertip in a circle around one of Danny’s pecs. “I do not think these are just for decoration. He is nesting, too.”

Steve throws himself against the bars of the cage, the collar around his neck the only thing keeping him from turning. “Get your fucking hands off him!”

“So protective. That’s good,” Santos whispers. “Male omegas are still rare — still worth a fair price on the black market,” Santos says softly. “And they are worth even more…” He reaches out to prod gently at the swell on the unconscious omega’s abdomen; “If they are pregnant. Proves they can still be bred.”

“I swear on my life, Santos, I will rip your throat out with my teeth,” Steve snarls.

Santos only grins at him knowingly before glancing back down and rubbing his palm over Danny’s bare stomach. “I am sure that this is a pup — am I right?” He pauses, chuffing a laugh as he nods; “Yes. I can feel it moving, now. This little one is yours.”

The breath leaves Steve’s body as he stares, afraid to move and afraid even to look away from the
hand laying over his unborn pup.

“I have your attention now,” the Goodfather says lowly, straightening up to his full height. “There is still information that I need from you, McGarrett. Information that Souza will need for this plan to work as time passes. I have almost everything I need to know about you, except for the little things. The things that only family and friends know. And — as time goes on — you are going to give that information to me.”

“Why would I help you destroy my own life?” Steve snarls, tightening his grip on the bars until his knuckles are white.

“I can think of at least one very small, but very important reason.” The good father lifts his leg until the heel of his boot is hovering just above Danny’s rounded, smooth belly.

“No — NO!” The fire leaves Steve’s spirit instantly and he pulls back in horror. The alpha paces the cage for a panicked moment as his heart drops to the pit of his stomach. He then turns to rattle the bars again, because it’s been a few seconds or maybe a whole minute — he doesn’t know — but the Goodfather is just holding his foot in the air, taunting him. “Santos, don’t do this, I am begging you — there’s no need for this. You don’t need to do this!”

The Goodfather tilts his head, not moving his boot. “Why is that, Commander McGarrett?”

Steve reaches up to grip the sides of his head with shaking hands. “Because I’ll do it. Whatever you need, okay? I’ll tell you. Just— Just don’t—”

The man raises up his knee, as if preparing to stomp down with his heel.

The alpha’s knees buckle and he somehow doesn’t notice that he’s dropping to the floor of the cage until he realizes he’s looking up at Manuel. Kneeling here, helpless, the alpha would be humiliated if it didn’t feel like someone was carving his chest open with a knife.

“I am pleased that you have decided to cooperate,” Santos mutters quietly, swiveling to return his boot to the floor as he glares down at the broken alpha.

Steve’s eyes are still fixated on the boot when Danny murmurs an inhuman noise of distress, starting to stir gently but still unconscious. Steve whines low in his throat before he can stop himself.

The alpha swears that the Goodfather rolls his eyes as he turns away.

“Diaz, come move this one into the cage with the alpha. Be gentle. Put blankets, food, water bottles, and a bucket in there, too.”

When the cage opens, Steve grabs Danny from the guards’ haphazard grip. The alpha carries his unconscious mate to the far side of the cage, holding him tight and inhaling into his neck.

He marks his scent over Danny’s forehead possessively, not wanting his little mate to wake up with the thugs’ scent on him. Steve then shamelessly leans forward to lick over Danny’s stomach until the skin is pink. Two of the guards are jeering at him, wolf-whistling.
The sun is warm on Danny’s face when it rises over the lush palms and banana trees that grow beside the house. The light creeps over the dew scented leaves and filters through the blinds of the master bedroom. The morning rays creep across his pillow. The detective is already awake, because he can smell the bacon his mate is cooking downstairs.

He’s starving.

Steve explained to him once — in a nauseating amount of detail — that his body is burning twice as many calories a day until the pups are weaned.

They’re six months old. ‘Old enough’ according to some of the guys in the male omega support group he had met. Danny has been putting it off, because, yeah, as taxing as the whole feeding process is on him — and he’s always hungry — Danny doesn’t want their routine to change.

Because of moments like this one. This fantastic, gorgeous moment.

He hears the breeze in the palm trees outside, and feels the shy morning sun sparkling timidly on his face. The sheets — god bless Pottery Barn’s nest collection — are omega-approved for his and Sophie’s sensitive skin. His babies are safe and warm against him, taking their after-feeding nap with full little bellies. He feels safe, too. His strong, protective alpha is right downstairs.

In this gorgeous moment, the omega is so perfectly content that he can’t keep himself from purring.

The babies are starting to purr in response to his own soothing rumble, nuzzling against his warm skin. He shuts his eyes, rubbing the pups’ tiny backs with his fingertips as he hums something low and comforting in his chest.

Steve walks in suddenly, walking quietly on his predatory-silent bare-feet, and Danny only notices his presence from his scent.

“It’s an all out purr-fest in here; I can hear it all the way downstairs,” Steve says softly, a smile in his voice. Danny opens his eyes, and Steve is holding a plate of bacon.

What a man.

“Thank you. My stomach is eating itself,” the omega replies.

Steve sits gently on the edge of the nest and leans to bring a strip of bacon to Danny’s lips. “You know if you wean them, you wouldn’t have to eat 3,000 calories a day.”

The sleepy detective bites down on the bacon; bits of it fall onto his lips and chin, and he shrugs. “I know.”

Steve leans in to kiss his mate’s temple slowly. “Take all the time you need, babe. Seeing you and the pups like this is the highlight of my morning.”

Unable to keep from smiling, Danny turns his head to stare up at him with a playful expression. “Commander McGarrett. You big kevlar covered softie.”

The alpha huffs a laugh and smirks. “I’m your Kevlar covered softie.” Steve then leans over to mark each of their purring babies’ heads with the scent glands under his jaw, finishing with a gentle kiss for each.

“I love you,” Danny mumbles softly, watching him.
Steve glances up, giving him that look that makes Danny’s soul warm. “You too, babe. I wish this was real.”

Danny frowns. “Wait… what?”

Steve is standing suddenly, his arms crossed.

Danny starts to clutch his babies tighter but they’re gone now, having vanished in his arms.

“It’s not real, Danny,” Steve says slowly. “None of this is real. You know that.”

Danny wakes from the dream feeling cold, damp, and bruised.

Someone is holding him.

He sees the silhouette of thick metal bars, and the omega suddenly realizes he’s in a cage.
Danny wakes from the dream feeling cold, damp, and bruised.

Someone is holding him.

He sees the silhouette of thick metal bars, and the omega suddenly realizes he’s in a cage.

Memories of THRESH flood his mind in a terrible and unstoppable torrent. Fear—the same fear that he had locked away in his chest for so long since his nightmarish stay in that facility—is instantly rising up to the surface. Godjesusfuck no, not this place! I can’t!

The familiar dread grips his soul with icy claws, and his instincts are hissing in the back of his mind: Are they after my pup?

Intoxicated by the primal adrenaline burning through his blood, Danny is dragged back into the panicked simplicity of his omega brain.

Threat!

Disoriented, the detective claws at the strong arms trying to restrain him, and he snaps his jaws viciously until a large hand clenches onto the back of his neck. The omega grip. Instantly, Danny goes limp. He howls out, broken and off-key until someone claps a hand over his mouth.

“Shhhh! Danny! Danny, you’re okay — it’s me! We’re in the compound remember? The storm?” His mate’s voice barks in his ear, and the struggling detective finally realizes that the hand over his mouth smells like his alpha.

A beat passes, and Danny is gasping at the air like he’s drowning, and he tries to shove Steve away with shaking hands. “Jesus,” Danny mutters, backing himself up against the bars behind him and sliding to the floor. Steve sits down beside him silently.

The cage is about ten feet tall and ten feet wide, and the bars are welded together. Even with Steve’s alpha-strength, they aren’t going to get out of this one very easily. But at least he’s not at THRESH.

He swipes away a bit of moisture at the inner corners of his eyes subtly with his middle finger and thumb, but he knows Steve can probably already smell his tears.

The alpha places a hand on his knee, not saying anything but saying enough with the gesture. His alpha knows that he has had some deeply veined issues with being confined since he was rescued from THRESH.

“Danny?” Steve breathes reaching to place a hand on his shoulder. “You okay?”

The omega can’t help but flinch at the touch.

He gives the alpha a long look, because he’s sure it’s Steve, but, at the same time, he isn’t.
Steve’s eyes are searching his before glancing down at Danny’s claws that haven’t retracted yet.

The detective doesn’t want to explain. After all, he’s pretty certain the story would freak the shit out of Steve, and there’s nothing that either of them can do about the situation while they’re in a damn cage. The omega doesn’t relax until he sees the bond bite on his mate’s neck.

Sighing in relief that he doesn’t have to fight Steve’s look-a-like in an enclosed space, Danny nods. Then he pauses; “Actually, ah, no. I’m not okay, thank you for asking, because I just woke up in a cage and had a very fun PTSD panic attack, and please tell me that bucket in the corner is not for pissing in.” The omega’s fangs are popped when he looks back at his mate with wide eyes.

“Yeah, well, you should just be happy we even have a bucket. In a Somalian prison, you wouldn’t,” Steve whispers, giving him a fatigued look.

Danny clenches his fangs together, biting back a sarcastic remark, because whatthefuck his shirt is ripped open. The omega stares down at himself and nervously grips the tattered remains of his shirt, holding it shut over his chest and belly. He realizes then that he smells like Steve’s pheromones, like the alpha has been licking him.

“What is this — did you lick my stomach in front of all of them?” Danny hisses.

He glances up, then, unnerved with furious eyes, because all of Santos’s men are playing cards across the huge room, speaking lowly to each other in Spanish. It’s not like they’re not close enough to have seen everything.

“That’s a pretty big tip-off, don’t you think? There’s only one reason an alpha would lick an omega on the stomach!” Danny hisses and shoves him roughly with the heel of his hand. Steve surprises him by snatching up one of his wrists in a death grip so fast that Danny doesn’t see him move.

Steve purses his lips, locking eyes with him. “Santos knows.”

Danny frowns; “Wait, what?”

Steve shakes his head as he ducks his eyes again. “He knows, Danny. About the pup.”

The omega looks around uneasily, suddenly wanting the comfort of his pack but not seeing Chin or Kono anywhere near the cage. He folds his knees against his chest, feeling his face heat up with a blush at the thought that his pregnancy is common knowledge. It’s an added threat, but also, frankly, it’s embarrassing.

Exhaling a long sigh, Steve tilts his head back against the bars to stare at the ceiling. “He knows everything about us. He has this insane plan you’re not going to believe, and honestly neither did I until —”

“They’re turning into us,” Danny interrupts flatly. “Probably gonna steal our identities and use our jobs to guarantee his operation continues and expands without the threat of law enforcement.”

Steve lowers his gaze to stare at him. “How did you—”

“Call it a hunch,” Danny mutters evasively as he rubs his sore jaw. The omega then feels a small nudge from the inside of his abdomen. Oh thank God, my sweet precious darling, you’re alive.

He goes to rub the spot but hesitates, pulling his hand back; he shouldn’t call attention to her. Shaking his head, he tries to focus. “So I — ah — I’m guessing that we’re not dead because he needs us alive to keep up the charade?”
Nodding silently, Steve starts to take off his own shirt. He then holds it out to his mate. “Put this on; it’s dry, and it’s not ripped.”

The omega makes Steve hold up the blanket for privacy while he puts on the alpha’s shirt. Even if the thugs across the room know about the pup, he doesn’t want any of those goons getting curious.

“How is she doing?” Steve asks tersely as Danny pulls the black tee shirt over his head.

Tightening his lips as he adjusts the oversized shirt, Danny doesn’t look up to meet his intense gaze but he can feel it all over his body, studying him intently. The omega looks everywhere but at Steve’s eyes, and he waits just a bit too long to reply. “She’s moving, at least. But . . . .”

The alpha tenses. “But?”

“But I don’t know. I just, ah,” he starts, but pauses like he’s trying to talk over a lump in his throat. He doesn’t want to have to say this out loud. “I’ve kinda put my body through a lot, today.”

Steve stiffens. “Like what?”

“Steven. Just — a lot.” The omega’s voice cracks as he raises his voice just enough to make a point. If he lists it all out all once, he’s gonna cry right here in this stupid cage, and no fucking thank you to that. He shakes his head. “I can’t talk about this right now — not while I’m locked in a goddamn cage.”

Steve’s shoulders fall, and while he doesn’t voice the sinking feeling of dread that sweeps over him, the alpha knows that his pheromone signatures are turning sour with anxiety. He wants to say something comforting — anything — but the words wither in his throat. He also wants to grab hold of Danny’s shoulders and shake him. Bite his neck until he rolls over and submits just to keep him safe for the rest of this mission, but that’s the stress talking.

The omega must see the look in his eyes, because he’s rambling to explain, raising up a hand to gesture broadly. “What was I supposed to do? I couldn’t just leave with you in here!”

The alpha flicks up his green eyes darkly with an expression that clearly says ‘I wish you had,’ but this is an argument they’ve had too many times. Danny sure as hell doesn’t want to broach the subject again and he can tell Steve shares the sentiment, or they’d be getting into it already. Again.

So Danny just clenches his jaw, guiltily, watching in silence as Steve then paces across the length of the cage. The alpha sighs, bringing a hand up to rub the back of his neck. “What’s done is done. Can’t undo everything you did, today, so we’ll just deal deal with whatever . . . happens.”

Danny frowns, not knowing what to say to that, and he leans back against the cold metal bars, shutting his eyes.

It isn’t comfortable.

In fact, it feels like a vice after a couple minutes.

He doesn’t move, choosing to concentrate on the dull throbbing at the back of his skull instead of the barrage of painful memories the conversation calls forth.

Sliding down the bars to sit next to his mate, the shirtless alpha wraps an arm around Danny. “Santos needs us alive to pull this thing off, so we’ve at least got time to figure out how to get out of here.”

“I sent for back up,” Danny whispers.
Steve tenses. “How?”

“Vanessa.”

The alpha’s brows furrow in confusion.

“Apparently a hawk followed us up the mountain.”

Steve crosses his arms. “So our lives are in the hands of a ten year old girl?”

“Feathers. Or wings, technically — not hands,” Danny grumbles dryly as he looks up to lock eyes with Steve. “But yeah.”
I’ve been up since 3:45 AM polishing this nugget of a chapter.

The hours crawl by.

Steve knows it’s been five hours, because, every hour on the hour, a guard walks past their cage. Every single time, the guard stares at Danny like he’s looking at a piece of meat.

Steve has thrown a protective arm around his mate as the small detective sleeps against him. When the guard passes by again, the alpha growls low in his throat.

“Stop it,” Danny mutters.

Tucking his chin to his chest, Steve glances down in surprise. “You’re awake.”

“You say that like an accusation,” Danny mumbles quietly, not opening his eyes. “Of course I’m friggin’ awake, I’ve been locked in a cage by a psycho drug lord that’s trying to steal my identity, and I haven’t seen my pack-mates since I got in here.”

Steve clenches his jaw, looking around. He had been so concerned about Danny and the pup that he hadn’t seen what room Chin and Kono were taken into. Fuck.

When he looks back down, Danny is staring up at him, expression flat. “You have no idea where they are.”

The statement feels like a punch in the chest. “I’ve been preoccupied,” he says tersely, remembering the way the Goodfather had looked down at him while hovering a boot over their unborn pup. Steve shudders. Danny can never know about that. “We’ll find them,” the alpha offers finally, trying to shake off the thought.

Danny sits up, turning to him. “Do you have a plan yet? Are we gonna make explosive devices out of dirt and spit?”

“Yes, well,” Steve mutters, scanning the room, “We’re together, and we have food, water, and blankets. Say I did come up with a plan, Danny. I bust this cage open — we’re still trapped in a church with a bunch of armed thugs because of the storm, and what then? Huh? More dirt and spit? And they would separate us after an escape attempt.”

The omega rolls his eyes. “Separation from you would be a blessing.” Still, as he says it, the omega is scooting on the floor with a groan to lay his head in Steve’s lap.

Steve tries to get comfortable against the bars and rests a hand over Danny’s torso. The alpha’s calloused fingers roam gently under his mate’s shirt right at the hem, and he makes sure the action is hidden from the guards’ view. *Hang in there, baby girl,* Steve thinks, just barely rubbing the edge of the bump with his fingertips. He knows Danny can feel it, but the omega doesn’t let on, probably indulging in Steve’s desire to steal a little moment with the baby.
The little living thing nestled in the warm bump under his trailing fingertips needs a once over by a specialist. It’s fucking critical that they get off of this mountain. He mentally sifts through everything he’s learned from Joe White, the Seals, and Five-0, wracking his brain for an escape plan. Unfortunately, Steve knows in his gut that there’s pretty much one way they’re going to be able to get out of this alive.

He’s just not saying anything about it, yet, because Danny’s not going to like the plan.

In fact, Danny’s going to hate it.

xxx

Jerry knows that the ‘Bigfoot doesn’t believe in you either’ shirt he’s wearing isn’t helping his case with the National Guard, but he knows he’s right.

“I’m telling you — something went wrong up there. There is no way Commander McGarrett would let his pack stay up on the mountain during the storm!”

The guy he’s talking to, a tall blonde Guardsman with freckled skin, has his hands up, trying to placate Jerry. The nameplate says ‘Riley.’ “Sir, I told you — I can’t allow you to step foot in the hangar without authorization from my unit captain.”

“Then get me to someone who can get me authorization,” Jerry bursts, throwing his arms out in front of him exasperatedly. “Take me to your leader!”

I’ve always wanted to say that, Jerry thinks to himself sheepishly. The freckle-faced guardsman is motioning for him to follow, and the young man leads Jerry down a hallway to a closed office door.

The guardsman knocks loudly on the paneling of the door and then tersely turns on his heel to walk hastily away.

“Wait!” Jerry tells. “Wait — where are you—“

The door opens and a stern looking red headed woman in a tight bun appears in the door frame. She’s wearing the same camouflage fatigues that the other guardsmen have on, but there are more pins and colors on her left upper jacket. Her eyebrows raise imploringly at him. “Yes?”

“Jerry Ortega. I’m with Five-0, and I was told you could help me.” He makes a please don’t shut your door in my face expression when she glances curiously down at his Bigfoot shirt.

She then clears her throat and takes a step out of her office and then tersely turns on his heel to walk hastily away.

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She then clears her throat and takes a step out of her office, shutting the door. “Captain Brickman. What’s this about?”

“My team is in trouble,” Jerry blurs. “Commander McGarrett left with the Five-0 task force at one o’clock for an extraction at the top of the mountain. Something went wrong.”

She frowns. “He told you this over radio?”

Jerry’s mouth opens to say ‘No,’ but he snaps his jaw shut, glancing away briefly. “Uh . . . well —”

Just as Jerry is about to reply, two guards approach from around the corner, a little girl between them. It’s Vanessa. Red faced and upset, she sees Jerry and her eyes widen. She flings herself forward and grabs onto his hand with surprising strength for a little girl.
“Jerry! Jerryjerryjerry,” she shrieks, shaking his hand emphatically. “Danny said to get you! Steve and Kono and Chin didn’t come back like they were supposed to, and there were gunshots — lots and lots of them! Only Danny didn’t hear it because he was asleep, but I told him and he told me to tell you to tell everyone and get help!”

She takes one huge gasping breath, having been yelling in her shrill voice too quickly to breathe.

Jerry blinks his widened eyes at her owlishly before swiveling his head to look at Brickman again. “I need to get up that mountain, and I need to reach the governor on one of the satellite phones.”

“The sat phone, I can do, but getting you up the mountain — in the middle of a hurricane? I have an obligation to avoid putting my guards’ lives at risk when it isn’t warranted. McGarrett and his team knew what they were getting themselves into and they took that risk.” She leans forward, giving him a pointed look as they lock eyes. Waving a hand toward a Guardsman near the door, she exhales quietly. “Lieutenant Riley can take you to the Sat phones.”

“Ma’am, any risk that Five-0 assumed in going up that mountain was to help innocent civilians. And I’m just letting you know, when I call the Governor, he’s probably going to tell you to send back up because Hawaii needs Five-0.”

Captain Brickman studies him carefully for a moment, lips pursed tight as the gears start to turn behind her eyes. “We’re done here, Mr. Ortega.” She nods to the Guardsman to show Jerry to the phone and turns to walk back into the office.

Jerry decides to push his luck. “One is the Five-0 team members is pregnant! And — and it’s high-risk!” He says the line like he’s setting the scene for a horror movie.

She pauses, body stiffening, and her head swivels toward him with steel-grey, narrowed eyes. “What?”

Lieutenant Riley looks surprised too.

Vanessa catches on quick. “Yeah, what if the baby gets hurt?”

“My question is why she would go up there if —”

“He. He’s an omega. Obviously. And he didn’t have a choice — the alpha civilians were getting all up in his grill because he’s pretty much blueberry-muffin scented, but that’s not the point. The point is that they need help, and I don’t have time to explain more about it.”

She clenches her jaw and stares at him for a moment. Finally she exhales. “Wait here, Mr. Ortega. I’ll talk to the governor and see what I can do.”

xxx

“I cannot believe you would even ask me to do that,” Danny snaps at Steve.

“We don’t really have a choice.”

The alpha glares at him with his so-help-me-God-I-will-roar-at-you-until-you-roll-on-your-back-and-submit expression and Danny feels like the skin of his face is going to melt off from the force of Steve’s gaze.

The omega lets out an unnerved noise and grabs the sides of his head. “Babe, I’m nauseated, anxious, and bloated. My ankles are swollen like sausages. Also, your baby is doing some kind of
gymnastics floor routine between my stomach and bladder. And you want me to try to act all sexy and seduce the guard?"

“Daniel,” Steve mutters between clenched teeth.

“No,” Danny hisses at him. “You are out of your goddamned mind if you think someone would go for this dumpster fire right now.”

“This is our best shot,” Steve seethes murderously. “I can smell the lust on the guy every time he walks past. Either we plan it this way, and we try to use it to our advantage, or he darts me and you wake up at three a.m. with him standing over you.”

Danny deadpans. “Thank you, that’s very comforting. I’ll be sure to think of that when I’m not able to sleep for the next two days.” His voice is bitter and low. Aa

Rolling his eyes, Steve is about to yell back that they need to get out to make sure that Kono and Chin are still alive, but a loud bang gets their attention.

xxx

Kono stares at a leak in the old church roof. The entire building is groaning, stubborn under the force of the wind, and it sounds like the roof could get ripped off at any moment. But, for now, there’s just a steady trickle of water running down the worn stone wall.

She and Chin had both heard the distinct yelp of an omega in distress hours earlier as the storm had just started to pass over them again.

They had locked eyes, knowing it was Danny. They had both sat, continuing to stare into each other’s ink dark eyes, as they listened to see if the yelps would continue. After a moment of anxious listening, Kono had been the one to break the silence with a grim thought. She had asked if he thought Danny would survive losing another pup.

Chin had shrugged next to her, as much as possible with the ropes around his chest. He had lifted his head with a deep sigh and looked around the room aimlessly. “I don’t know. I don’t know if… any of us will survive this.”

And now they sit, in silence again, and Kono watches the leak in the wall.

She’s thinking about Cath, now. Their first date — that’s what they called it now, but it was just ‘a girls night’ at the time — was just a night out at a new restaurant. The place had been so packed that the only table left was in a no-show reserved VIP booth. They had pretended to be wealthy diplomats with obscure titles and had been laughing too loud most of the dinner. Cath had taken her for a ride on her new motorcycle after dinner at Kono’s insistence, and Kono had directed her through the downtown area to a specialty chocolate shop. Something had changed when Cath bought her a box of champagne truffles with red ribbon tied neatly around the box. Then again, the gesture hadn’t done anything but fan the flames of a spark that had already been there…

A tear rolls down Kono’s cheek.

Chin sighs again, next to her, and she thinks he’s about to say something when a loud noise makes both of them jump. It had come from the main room of the building, just beyond the locked door behind them.

“What the hell was that?” Chin mutters, turning his head to glance wearily at the door.
Kono frowns. “Probably nothing good.”

The Goodfather’s booming voice cuts the air through the large church, echoing off the vaulted ceiling with an uncharacteristically hysterical edge. “Go get the blonde one out of the cage! Bring him into my office right now — I will get the doctor! Malditos — darse prisa!”
Chapter Twenty-Eight

Chapter Notes

Ahhh! Surprisingly quick update that should have been part of yesterday’s update 😊

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

As soon as Danny hears The Goodfather yelling out, the omega instinctively clenches onto to his mate. “Steven! Do you have a different plan? I need a fucking plan!”

The alpha grabs his wrist in a death grip, yanking him closer to hiss a low whisper in his ear. “Babe, he needs us alive. Remember? Don’t do anything stupid! Don’t fight unless I can get out of this thing later and come find you!”

The detective swallows thickly, nodding.

A large and sweaty red faced man that Danny recognizes as one of the prisoners barrels toward them so fast that the man has to skid to a stop on the floor.

He throws open the cage door with a key in his meaty hand and a gun in the other. Danny hisses on reflex, backing up to press his body against the bars with one hand over his stomach, and Steve jumps up to his feet. The alpha moves to stand in front of his mate, fanning out his arms protectively. “Let me go with him! You — you have my word; I won’t try anything. Just let me go with my mate, please! He’s—.”

“You! Get out NOW!” the man barks and points at Danny, ignoring Steve’s protests. Steve snaps his fangs near the guy’s hand as he reaches in to grab at the omega, but the man quickly flicks his wrist up to cock the loaded gun, pointing it straight at Steve’s forehead.

“You! Get out right fucking now, or I will blast his brains out the back of his head,” the man growls. The Goodfather is yelling in Spanish and pacing the floor near the back office door now, looking at them. Danny looks from the crime lord, to the red-faced beast of a man, to the gun pointed at his mate’s forehead. The omega raises his clawed hands up; “Alright, alright, hey, put the fucking gun down — don’t point it at him like that!”

The man turns the gun on Danny next, giving Steve a steely expression. “Don’t try anything or your little bitch is dead, you hear me?”

“He needs us alive for information, so kill us and get killed yourself,” Steve seethes through clenched teeth.

“He doesn’t need both his feet to talk, though, does he?” The man lowers his gun to point at the detective’s foot pointedly. Steve clenches his jaw, looking up to lock eyes with Danny as the door creaks closed and the padlock snaps shut. “That’s what I thought. Hands behind your back. Go. I said Go!”

As the Goodfather waves them closer, cursing and pacing more furiously, the man rushes Danny
toward the back office. The omega feels the gun barrel jabbing him in his back and a sweaty hand on his neck as he stumbles to keep up. “I’m going, I’m fucking going — you’re gonna make me fall on my face,” Danny snarls, shoving backwards against the man pushing him. The barrel of the gun digs into his back. The Goodfather knows exactly where to pinch him on the back of his neck as they zip-tie Danny’s wrists together behind his back. He keeps quiet, partially stunned by the alpha stress filling the air that makes him want to double over and vomit, until he sees a man with a medical bag and a stethoscope approaching.

“No, no, no,” Danny protests, his chest clenching tight at the thought of a forced medical examination like at THRESH. “You get away from me!” He hisses, struggling against the guards, but the prisoner and another thug manhandle him onto on a cot, face down. “Hold still, you little bitch!” He howls in distress, praying what’s coming isn’t what he thinks, and Danny can hear Steve roaring and half-choking on the steel rebar collar that was wrapped around the alpha’s neck. Elbowing one of the men in the face, Danny scrambles to get off the cot, and he catches a glimpse of something unexpected. On the other side of the room, behind the crowd of men, there’s someone else on another cot. It’s a young man, maybe mid-twenties, and he has a scruffy beard. He’s pale and unconscious. The thug uses his brief surprise to catch Danny off guard, throwing a fist across the detective’s jaw. Dark spots dance across the omega’s vision as the men shove him back down again. When Danny is forced down hard against the canvas of the cot, the baby protests in his lower belly, and he remembers finally... She’s still in there, and she’s fragile. He stops fighting, gritting his teeth as he yells out in frustration against the cot, and the tips of his claws cut into his own fists.

The crowd of men is speaking Spanish around him in a torrent of voices all fighting to be heard over the others. It sounds like a riot. His body is slowly being bound to the cot with a bright yellow rope. “What are you doing to me!?” Danny desperately tries to crane his neck to look back at the doctor. No one is looking at him, except for the thug tying him down. Everyone is looking at the other young man, and the Goodfather is pacing, a hand over his mouth.

*It’s his mate. The young man is the Goodfather’s omega, the one that Dr. Carter was blackmailed into busting out of the prison cells...*

When the alpha stress starts to dissipate, Danny finally smells it.

Blood.

*He’s hurt?*

Danny is struggling against the rope, trying to see where the other omega is injured, but a large hand holds his head down forcefully. His skull is being ground into the cot with enough force to make him dizzy, and Danny can only stare at the wall next to him. Overhead, a generator light on an orange extension cord swings as it is moved to hang over the other omega. The prisoner is breathing hot and heavy over him, pressing him harder, and harder in the cot with that vice grip on his skull. The other giant hand is holding his back down, crushing him. He lets out a growl of frustration that tapers into a whine.

Bones in his back are popping, and it’s hard to breathe.

“Stop! He is stop crushing that omega — stop it! His pheromones and hormones, they are in his blood,” the Goodfather’s voice says in a rush, cutting above the others. “If you stress him out more, that will pass to Eduardo during the transfusion.”

Danny’s eyes widen at that. It’s his *blood they’re after, then.*
He remembers learning about blood types as a kid. Alphas have A, betas have type B, and omegas have type O. They can’t be intermixed. It means that Danny is probably this guy’s last hope if he’s injured badly enough to need an emergency transfusion. Danny barely has a moment to process the thought before something sharp stabs into the inside of his forearm. “Arwghh!” He howls out, baring his fangs as he instinctively tries to jerk away. He can’t. The sound of duct tape ripping is the next thing he hears before the sharp thing in his arm, a rudimentary IV catheter, is taped to his skin.

“I need to give him a sedative or he’ll struggle and burst the port in his arm,” a voice says. “These syringes here — what is this?”

“No, no, that is the scientist’s serum. Make sure Eduardo is not injected with that; it is not for omegas. I will move them just in case, give them here! Those — the amarillo — sí. That is the sedative.”

Danny’s heart is racing as he looks frantically around the room for whoever is about to inject him. His claws are digging into the cot, tearing the canvas-like fabric as Danny struggles desperately and godjesusfuck his eyes are watering now because fuck there’s only one of him and so many of these strangers and he can’t see them and how much of my blood are they going to take?! Is that sedative going to hurt my pup? The room is spinning. He sees flashes of the bright white ceiling of THRESH as nightmarish memories come back to him

“Señor, I need to inject him now — he’s hyperventilating,” the doctor says quickly.

Danny hisses, feeling the edges of his self-control fading as the room continues to spin. Someone holds him still as they shout in Spanish. A shallow needle jabs into the skin of his neck.
Chapter Twenty-Nine

Once, a lifetime ago, Danny made a fatal mistake on a case.

It was in Jersey. In the stinking, always-wet-but-it-hasn’t-rained-in-days back alleys of Jersey.

He had walked into a bar on a call just in time to see some kid — matching the description of a guy who was supposedly starting brawls with everyone in arms reach — sneak out the back door.

Fights over beer tabs, fights over pool games, and fights over cigarettes, even. And he couldn’t have been more than nineteen. As Danny had followed the guy out, he had been able to smell that the kid’s pheromones were all over the place, like the guy was a young alpha in rut, but drugs could do that — could make even a beta smell like that—and Danny should’ve known. Danny had thought he had had the guy figured out, and he had missed that crazed and wild, pinprick-irises gaze that meant the guy was tweaking, and, therefore, unpredictable.

So there Danny was, trying to see if the guy was in the manic phase of his first rut out of high school and maybe just needed to be dropped off at home when the kid turned and screamed some absolute nonsense at him.

High out of his mind.

He then stabbed Danny in the gut, right at the edge of his Kevlar vest. He had pulled the knife back in less than a second and stabbed Danny again in the shoulder.

Danny unholsters his gun and shoots the kid in the chest before he could pull back to stab him again.

The omega had had enough sense at the time to radio for an ambulance and give his location before passing out in the alley from blood loss. It wasn’t that he had felt the blood leaving him so much as an overwhelming ‘faintness’ overtaking him. The fire escapes had stretched taller into the darkness above him and the floor had dropped lower, leaving him in a damp, dark limbo, toeing the line between life and death. He hadn’t even felt that he was falling — couldn’t swing his arms out to stop himself — until he hit the ground, and, ironically, he hadn’t felt that either.

The smell of his own blood had saturated the air as he laid there in the nasty, damp alley, staring up at the glow of a personal injury law firm billboard against the night sky.

The last conscious thought that had entered his head was that the lawyers never smile on the billboards. Because kindness doesn’t look strong.

That same ‘faintness’ is creeping over him, now.

It’s like he’s back in that alley, slowly losing consciousness while the smell of his blood hangs thick in the air around him.

He wants to sleep.

But there are so many reasons not to. One of those reasons is nestled low in his belly; she’s not moving much, kicking him weakly every several minutes because his blood sugar is dropping low.

The other reason is that there’s a growing threat in the room. He can smell the young man through
the cloying scent of omega blood — both his own and this other person’s — but he can’t smell anything about the other young man. No omega distress.

No pheromones.

How is that possible? Surely the Goodfather’s omega didn’t have access to pheromone blockers in prison.

Danny lifts his head weakly to stare across the room at the guy receiving his transfusion of blood when he sees it.

Deep scars twist over the skin at the base of the guy’s neck, exactly where his scent gland would be. A damaged scent gland, maybe?

As his view of the ceiling wavers above him in an unsettling way, Danny’s head falls back to the terse fabric of the cot. All the while, his blood is pouring out of his veins into the warm red-black tube that snakes down his arm and loops over the few feet separating him from this stranger stealing his blood. His pup’s blood.

The blonde whines out and tapers into a snarl as he tenses against his restraints.

Another snarl answers him from across the room, and the low rumble makes Danny freeze in surprise. It’s coming from Eduardo.

The omega frowns, knitting his brows deeply as he tilts his head to listen to the other omega’s heart rate. Before, the guy’s heart rate had been a barely-there pulse…now it’s a racing staccato.

He’s waking up.

The thought makes the hair on the back of his neck bristle. Barely a minute later, the other omega is writhing on the cot across the room.

Danny’s eyes flick to the closed door, wondering if he should yell for someone but his thoughts about whether that’s a bad idea are untenable in the loose confusion that is his brain experiencing blood loss. He remains quiet by default.

The other omega hisses, baring his teeth, and Danny has to concentrate between the dancing black spots in his vision to realize that the guy is staring right at him.

Something is off.

Something is really off.

The guy’s claws are popped and he begins to snarl, turning to claw at the walls. He’s jerking his head as he searches the room in an enraged panic, not looking like he sees where he is.

As Danny is watching he guy yanks the transfusion needle out of his own arm, and the scent of Danny’s blood saturates the small room. The needle is still attached to his own arm, and now the blood is just spilling on the floor.

The sight and smell of his own blood is paralyzing until the other omega stumbles closer, baring his teeth and hissing.
"Hey! Snap out of it!" Danny yells, his own heart racing.

The feral omega hisses again, feeling threatened by Danny’s presence, and he lurches closer to slash out at Danny’s face with his claws.

Danny dodges the claws, twisting on the cot and leaning out of the way, but the omega catches him on the shoulder instead, giving him four deep slashes.

It cuts one of the bands of rope and frays two others.

“Arrraagghh! Get back! Get the fuck away from me or so help me God, I'll —!” Danny snarls out, struggling as hard as he can against the restraints. He can feel the give in the rope holding him down and he wriggles on the cot.

The guy shoves his cot, lurching toward him in a feral rage, and it sends Danny suddenly falling sideways to the floor as the cot tips over.

The already-frayed straps of rope on his upper body snap from the rough shift of weight.

“Finally, Jesus fucking—” Danny grits his teeth furiously, tearing at the restraints with his own claws before he can roll out from under the cot. He finds his way to his feet, waving his hands out for balance from the blood loss. “Look. I’m not a threat to you! We’re the same. But if you start this shit with me, I’ll end it, buddy.”

The other omega bares his teeth in response, tensing his muscles as he prepares to charge forward. Danny sighs through his fangs as he lunges haphazardly for the syringes on the desk. “Fine. You wanna fight? We’re gonna fight, you dumb fuck.”

xxx

Steve sits on the floor of the cage, huddled into the corner against the cool metal bars. He has his hands wrapped tight — too tight — around himself, tucked under his arms. He’s doing this because he doesn’t actually have fingers right now.

His hands are stuck as lion paws.

The botched shifting had happened a half hour ago when Danny howled for him from that room, and, unless Steve magically becomes un-stressed, the paws are here to stay.

The paws haven’t gone unnoticed, either.

“Wooo-eee…You are all kinds of fucked up, kitty cat,” one of the guards snorts as he walks past, shaking his head in disbelief. “Maybe I’ll find you a ball of yarn, later — or a dish of milk.”

The alpha doesn’t grace that comment with a response or a reaction, and the guy seems a bit disappointed, walking away and shuffling his boots on the worn stone floor.

Steve tells himself that it isn’t productive to spend time imagining all the ways they could be hurting or violating his mate. He tells himself to think of a plan, instead, to make use of the fact that the Goodfather is clearly preoccupied with whatever is happening.

He tries to go over Navy Seal protocol for being captured in combat, tries to recite old mnemonic devices to jog his tired mind. His brain won’t listen; it instead shows him the face Danny makes
when he’s terrified, when his claws are out and he’s trembling.

When his omega had first desperately yelled out in that room, Steve almost choked himself to death on the rebar wrapped around his neck, unable to stop shifting. After warring with his instincts for a few minutes on the edge of passing out, his primal self had apparently become satisfied with maintaining the half-formed state of monstrosity he was now stuck in.

Not quite a lion and not quite a man.

His face and torso are at least still human looking. But his extremities...

Seeing his knees bend backwards is not a pleasant experience. With lion legs, though, he’s pretty sure that what he’s thinking of as his knees are actually his ankles. Looking closely at his lion knees, ankles, and feet when his hips and thighs are still human is nauseating.

There’s also a tail twisting uncomfortably down the leg of his cargo pants. Steve has been sitting on the thing for twenty minutes; it’s finally going numb.

Like the rest of him.

Danny is quiet now, or at least not loud enough for Steve to hear, and he doesn’t know what that means. He doesn’t know how much time passes. There’s still a deafening barrage of rain on the roof and the wind’s lonesome wail twisting though the church. People slowly filter out of the room Danny was taken into. Steve tries to listen through the cacophony of the storm for clues. He still can’t hear Danny snarling or whining.

But the smell of Danny’s blood is unmistakeable.

Lion paws aren’t deft enough to wipe away the moisture gathering at the inner corners of his eyes, so he resorts to hiding his face.

His only comfort is the fact that he knows Danny has to be alive and coherent for the Goodfather’s plan to work.

What if Santos changes his mind — what if he’s decided that Danny is expendable? Was that the last time I’ll ever see my mate?

The thoughts vanish like a ghost because, suddenly, it’s hard to breathe again; the band of iron is tight around his neck, digging into the skin.

Focus.

Don’t shift.

Focus.

Steve is now going through significant dates in his head to occupy his mind — the day Danny and he chose to celebrate as the pup’s birthday, the day he first kissed Danny, the day he graduated from the Naval academy in Annapolis, the day Cooper shifted for the first time, the day his father died, the day he found out Danny was pregnant with the twins, the day he —

A gut-wrenching howl makes him jump, freezing the blood in his veins.

“Danny!” Steve breathes in confusion, and he tries to pull himself to his feet — just to be ready — but dammit these digitigrade legs! The alpha stumbles backwards, trying to hold himself up on the
bars, fumbling with these oven-mitt sized paws and he roars in frustration at himself.

The Goodfather and his thugs are trotting toward the door to investigate the sound when two figures tumble out, entangled in a mass of limbs and claws and fangs.

“What the—“ Steve narrows his eyes, straining in the dim light. The thugs shout and yell, trying to pull the two snarling men apart.

One of them is Danny.

Steve roars again, throwing himself at the bars of the cage.

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Kono winces as she hears Danny howling and snarling again. “Cuz, what the hell is going on out there? We need to help him!”

“I’m working on it,” Chin says through a grimace. “But my wrists are bleeding from twisting the zip ties. The Goodfather isn’t an amateur — there’s like four zip-ties on my wrists, and then those —“

“Are zip-tied to the chair. Yeah, same. I don’t even have room to twist my wrists,” Kono interrupts with a sigh. “This is usually when Steve bursts through the roof or pops out of a vent to save the day.”

Chin deflates slightly, staring down at the floor. Danny’s howling is louder and more desperate. “Steve’s barely got control of his shifting lately. I don’t think he’s really at the top of his game.”

Staring at her cousin, Kono waits for an explanation.

“He’s been doing this half-shifted thing, I don’t know,” Chin says slowly. “Where he’s still sort of human…but not. I saw him once at the shelter — he was trying to hide it, it wasn’t pretty.”

“Must be the nesting,” Kono offers. “He reacts to Danny’s stress hormones. I mean hell, we all do, on a subconscious level. I know I can’t pick up pheromone signatures, but all I want to do lately is hold him in my lap and pet his head.”

Chin is silent for a moment before laughing Sadly against his restraints. “Is that what that is? I thought it was just me!”

“Nope, it’s from sharing the same living space during the storm, brah,” Kono chuckles. Reality crowds in around her, an ice cold reminder of how completely fucked they both are. She tries to hold onto the hopeful playfulness, desperately like it’s keeping her afloat in a current.

“Maybe you can set up some kind of deal with him after all of this is over. Free babysitting if he lays limp in your arms for an hour every Tuesday.”

“Hah. Not sure McGarrett would be thrilled with that.”

Kono raises her brows. “Or would he. It’s weird that we have so much more of a pack vibe going on now, right? It means there’s part of Steve that wants us to share Danny. Not sexually, I mean, but —“

Chin has been chewing on the inside of his cheek in thought but interrupts. “Yeah. Not sexually but
physically. I know what you mean. I feel that, too.” He’s quiet. “I can’t say I’ve ever wanted to — to hold a man in my arms ever before, but, yeah. Having a pack. It is nice. Omegas in general....” he trails off. “I see the appeal.”

Kono is quiet for a moment. “You know you could date a female omega. There are dating sites… You pick what you want. Male Beta seeking Female Omega — you know what I’m talking about, brah, that stuff is out there.”

“Yeah,” Chin says simply, ducking his head. “I’ve looked into it. There still aren’t that many, and a lot of them want alphas. I don’t know. Our pack is still growing; I don’t really feel lonely anymore like I used to.”

And who knows, maybe we’ll try to do more pack stuff after this. Maybe we’ll all live in the same apartment complex when our houses are getting built,” she suggests, and Chin cocks his head, considering the idea in earnest.

“Have to get out of here alive first,” he says finally. “And you’re right — we could really use one of Steve’s trademark rescues right now.”

No more than three seconds pass when the generator lights flicker off overhead.

“That can’t be good,” Kono mutters, shaking her hair out of her face as she looks up at the now dark ceiling. The room is cast into complete darkness.

The door opens behind them and Chin is the first to hear it over the rushing whitenoise of the wind. “Who’s there?! What do you want?” He says it mostly to get Kono’s attention, and less so for an answer, but still, there’s no response.

A huge black shape crosses the room in the darkness; it sounds heavy, and Chin hears heavy huffs of wet breath.

A lighter clicks once, spraying a few starbursts of sparks that cast a warm glow over a face in the shadows of the pitch black room.

It isn’t a human face.

Chin’s eyes widen. The lighter clicks again, illuminating the face.

It’s a gorilla.

“Dr. C-carter?” Kono whispers, pressing stiffly back into her chair like she’s trying to get as far away from this thing as possible.

The gorilla nods, making some kind of lowing noise and a crooked smile with his black lips and huge fangs. If it’s supposed to be comforting, it isn’t. Chin sees the glint of a piece of metal.

Carter has a knife.

“Can you cut the zip-ties? Let me hold the lighter,” Chin says quickly, and the gorilla shoves past him clumsily to kneel on the floor, pressing the warm lighter into his palm. When Chin flicks the top of the lighter, Carter makes a noise, probably because there’s a lot of blood all over his hands from twisting in the zip-ties. But then he’s free, and — a moment later — so is Kono.

“Thank you. It’s not a trademark McGarrett rescue, but I’ll take it,” Kono whispers, rubbing her sore wrists. “I have to find Danny. You two find Steve!”

With that, he begins creeping along the cold, stone wall toward where he thinks the door is. The darkness is still rich like black velvet around them. There are men yelling in the main body of the church, and Chin can hear the clatter of metal lanterns and glass clinking. He can smell kerosene. “They’re getting lanterns. It won’t be dark for long — come on!”

Xxxx

The three of them creep out into the main body of the church, shrouded in the dark. Chin reaches out blindly for Carter, feeling with his fingertips in the air until he makes contact with the coarse fur of Carter’s shoulder. He tugs on the fur, trying to get the huge gorilla to follow him along the wall. As the Goodfather’s men struggle in the middle of the room with the lanterns, Chin feels along the damp, cold stone, one foot in front of the other, and edges toward the sound of half-man, half-lion snarls. He hopes it’s Steve, and not some other monster waiting for him in the dark.

They are actually making pretty decent progress. Lamps are still clattering. He hears liquid pouring. Probably didn’t occur to a bunch of idiots to pre-fill the emergency lanterns with kerosene.

The thought crosses his mind absently that Carter might be able to see better in the dark as a gorilla.

Carter trips on a box.

The thought is immediately struck down.

A whole lot of flailing, none of which Chin can actually see, erupts behind him, followed by a very large thud. The room goes dead quiet for only a few seconds until --

“YOU! AND YOU! GO CHECK THE MAN AND THE WOMAN!”

Light floods the old church, driving out the shadows that Chin has been clinging to so desperately, and he turns wide-eyed to glance behind him. Carter is a mass of flailing, furry black limbs as the gorilla tries to right himself in the cluster of spilled boxes, but beyond that, a pair of eyes stares at him desperately.

It’s Danny, kneeling on the floor near the Goodfather, his wrists and ankles zip-tied. He looks like he’s wavering slightly on his knees, like he’s unable to keep himself upright. One of the thugs is holding his shoulders.

Two of the other thugs are holding back a young man -- who looks feral -- and then, there, in the dim lantern light, the furious face of the Goodfather himself. Staring straight at Chin.

Fuck.

“Get him,” the Goodfather barks.

Chin’s chest tightens as he glances behind him. He’s only a few feet from the corner, and there’s not really anywhere to hide. In front of him, Carter bares his fangs at the thugs and fans his hands out,
finally on his feet as he tries to keep Chin shielded.

The Goodfather is dealing with a threat of his own. “Eduardo, mi amor — calm down! Cálmese!” He’s dodging the confused, feral omega’s claws. “Why doesn’t he recognize me?”

“Eduardo has a damaged scent gland, Senor, the other omega’s blood most likely has a substantial dose of omegadren in it — it’s probably a shock to his system,” the doctor sputters, straightening his fogging glasses.

“Senor, what about the gorilla?” Two of the thugs yell, hesitating as they approach the huge animal standing between them and Chin. Dr. Carter has probably been off-limits to the gunmen since this operation started.

“Come here, get Eduardo to be still — I need a sedative, Doctor, anything!” The goodfather’s shoes manage to make a clapping sound on the stone floor louder than the rush of the storm as he crosses the room impatiently. “What about the gorilla?” He lifts his gun and aims straight at Carter. He pulls the trigger.

“No!” Danny yells out in protest as the shot echos through the stone room.

Carter drops to the floor.

Danny snarls. “You son of a—”

The man holding the omega’s shoulder gives Danny a swift kick in the thigh to silence him, then yanks him up straight when he starts to curl to his side in pain.

Chin sees them kick Danny out of the corner of his eye and it floods his mind with a disorienting amount of rage, but he’s paralyzed, staring down at Carter’s limp body. He had fallen to the floor in a heap right beside Chin, and now every thought is about Hayley growing up without a father.

The Godfather turns to glance back at his betas. “What about the gorilla, then? Do you not see that I am busy?”

The Goodfather is looking at him now, and the warm lantern light glints off the barrel of the gun in his hand when it turns toward him. “And you, beta. Chin Ho Kelly. Age 35. No immediate family. No wife. No children. No significant other. I do not need you alive for this plan to work, do I? There’s no one to have to fool…”

Chin feels his heart racing in his ears as his eyes wander from the loaded gun pointed at him to a flash of movement behind the Goodfather. It’s Eduardo, dropping to the floor, clutching his chest.

“Señor!” The man holding Danny’s shoulders yells. The Goodfather turns his head just enough to see the body seizing on the floor next to him and he turns to crouch down beside Eduardo in a panic.

Chin seizes the opportunity, reaching out in a blur of hands to snatch the gun out of the Goodfather’s hands. Instantly, Danny catches on to his plan and leans forward before slamming he back of his head back against the groin of the man holding his shoulders. The man groans out in pain, sinking to his knees. With both hands zip-tied together, Danny swings his forearms into the guy’s jaw to knock the guy out. He then reaches down for the knife on his captor’s hip holster and cuts his zip ties off. So much for not letting him fight, Chin thinks wryly, keeping the gun trained on the two men.

The Doctor is hovering over Eduardo, The Goodfather is glaring at Chin with his attention half on his omega, and the thugs each have their hands hovering over their own guns.
“Kill him!” The Goodfather snaps, finally tearing himself away from the situation to tend to Eduardo. “Doctor — What’s happening? What’s wrong with him, now?!”

Chin doesn’t hear the answer. Danny has his claws out, now, and he’s half stumbling and half running for the huge cage in the back of the room.

The two thugs both reach for their guns. Chin shoots one in the shoulder and ducks at the same time. The bullet from the other man’s gun actually ricochets off the stone and hits the guy in the arm. He gasps out in pain, clutching his bicep.

“You might want to write that off as bad luck,” Chin hurts as he puts another bullet in the guy’s leg. “Pretty sure it was stupidity. Or karma.”

“Chin!” Danny hisses, but the beta is already running toward the cage. He shoots the lock off, and Steve bolts out, straight to his omega to check him.

Chin watches as Steve nuzzles into the crook of Danny’s neck, inhaling slowly and breathing up his skin toward his jawline. “Danny…”

“I’m fine. They wanted to do a transfusion for his omega,” Danny mutters swatting him off as they crouch behind a couple dozen wooden crates. “Just a little dizzy. Baby’s okay — she’s feeling my blood loss too, but she almost jumped through my skin when that gun went off. So she’s still alert.”

The alpha immediately tries to reach out for Danny’s stomach.

“Steve, babe, later — This isn’t the time —“

“Yeah. We’re not out of the jungle yet, brah,” Chin adds. Steve’s eyes, which reflect the soft glow of the lantern light, flick to Chin and back to Danny.

“You’re going to make me justify trying to checking you and pup? I thought they were killing you in that room, Daniel,” Steve mutters darkly. His voice has a sharp edge in it that isn’t usually there, even during there share of botched extraction missions. “You should have heard yourself howling... I wasn’t even fully human until two minutes ago. This whole building still smells like your blood for Christ’s sake!”

Danny sighs, reaching out to reach for Steve’s hand to put it on his stomach. “Okay. Fine. You’re right, and I’m sorry. It was rough — I was scared. But I’m okay. We’re both okay, but not if we die in here.” Danny pauses, face falling at noticing the piece of metal twisted around Steve’s neck in a crude loose collar shape. “So can you get that thing off your neck?”

The alpha raises up to touch the heavy ring of metal, warm from his skin. “No. Can’t bend it. It’s a half inch thick piece of iron re-bar. Where’s carter? He could probably g—“

“He’s dead,” Chin and Danny say in unison.

“Fuck.” Steve exhales and rolls his eyes up the ceiling. “I’m sorry to hear that. Where is Kono?” Steve asks.

Chin pauses, looking around. “She was right behind me when Carter got us out of that room.”

“You think she escaped in all the commotion?” Danny says, peeking around the box to glance back toward the huge metal door to the church. “I don’t see any guards on the door. And the Goodfather is still freaking out over his mate.”
“Yeah, his omega didn’t look so good. He was having some kind of episode,” Chin explains.

A sympathetic expression crosses Steve’s face like a ghost, vanishing as quickly as it comes on. “We need to either take control of this building or get out, but we’re at the mercy of the storm out there.”

“We have one gun, a knife, and my claws, so unless you can shift, the odds are kind of against us here, babe. I admire your optimism, though, it’s refreshing.” Danny runs a hand over his brow. “I’ll take my chances with the storm.”

“Yeah, until a tree falls on you,” Steve says lowly.

“Good thing it’s easier to dodge a tree than one of the Goodfather’s goons’ bullets,” Danny mutters with a withering expression.

Chin is about to ask them to focus when the most horrific wounded wail sounds out in the church.

“Eduardo… No! Dios mio, no… please no… Mi amor!”

Chin’s eyes widen. “Oh, my God. Did that omega just die? What the —”

Straightening up slightly to peer over the boxes, Steve surveys the dimly lit tragedy unfolding in the back of the room. “Fuck...” When he sits back down, his face is pale and he’s silent.

“What’d you see?” Danny breathes uneasily. His hands are folding lower to rest over his abdomen protectively.

“I’m pretty sure Hell is about to break loose in this church.”

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