

The house was in a community built on a hill on the outskirts of the Greater San Francisco Area. The people who lived in this community had money, but they didn't display it in an extravagant manner.

The house was large. larger than needed for the nine people it housed, but while it was aesthetically pleasing, It was subdued. Built on three levels climbing the hill, the color was a tan only sufficiently darker than the surrounding stones to prevent the house from getting visually lost against them. The roof had solar panels, as well as water heating panels.

The family of tigers was currently in their large yard. The back of which was occupied by a large in ground pool with an in ground hot-tub next to it. The rest was vibrant green grass and outlined by a tall cedar fence.

The two adults, both male, wore tight speedoes and open shirts. They setup the barbecue, cleaning the grills and the insides, while the teens were bringing out folding tables and chairs, also dressed in speedoes.

"The grills are clean, Danny." One of the men said, balling the towel and lobbing it in to a basket containing other soot covered cloth.

"Good," the other man replied. "Then you can help me with this. It's taking a lot more rubbing than I remembered."

The tiger leaned the grill against the wooden fence before standing with a grin. He moved behind the other and pressed himself against him. "Oh, I'll be happy to do some rubbing." He rubbed his partner's groin.

"Oh Donny, I do like that kind of help."

"Cut it out dads," one of the teen, Aiden, said. "The guests are going to start arriving shortly." He unfolded the table open and set it on the ground.

"Yeah," his brother, Alexander, said. "Keep it for the after party." He handed a chair to Aiden and they set them up around the table while Aaron and Albert placed two other tables.

"I suppose the kids are right," Donald said, grinding against Daniel.

Arthur, the smallest of all of them at three ten, stepped out of the house carrying a tray of plastic cups. He stopped and stared at his fathers. "I swear, you two are the teens in this family and not us."

Donald straightened up and readjusted himself so he wouldn't be poking out of his bathing suit. "We're not the ones who got almost caught with Zack behind the bleachers, are

we?"

Arthur's ears turned red, but he grinned. "It was worth it."

"Yeah," Aaron added, "He's a great lay."

Daniel looked up from his scrubbing. "You slept with him too?"

Aaron nodded.

His father looked around. "Have you all had sex with him?"

The seven teens nodded their heads.

Donald chuckled. "No doubt about it, they are our sons."

"Is uncle Damian going to make it?" Anakin asked.

"Oh, right, I forgot to pass along the message," Adam exclaimed. "He can't make it. He has a conference call with one of his subsidiary in Sidney. He's probably going to be at it all night."

"Good," Aaron said, "I don't want him around."

Arthur looked at his brother, who went in the house, then shook his head.

"It's been over two years," Alex whispered to him, "Has he said anything about what happened?"

"No" Arthur whispered back. "I wonder if uncle Damian did something to him."

"No, he didn't." Their father said.

"Do you know what happened?" Alex asked him.

"No, but I know my brother. Something definitely happened during their trip, and I know Damian had something to do with it, but he didn't lay a finger on Aaron."

"Didn't you ask uncle Damian about it?"

"We did," their other father said, stepping next to his partner, making it impossible to tell which one was which. "But he won't say. If we want to know, we need to ask Aaron, and he won't talk about it. We'll just have to wait until he's ready."

"I do hope he'll start lightening up before that at least. He used to be a lot more fun." Alex went back to setting up the tables.

Not long after that the side gate opened with a creak and a young lioness entered, followed by her parents.

"Samantha!" Adam ran across the yard to hug her friend. "I'm glad you came."

Samantha took a step back and looked at him snobbishly. "I get invited to a birthday party hosted by the Orrs, and you thought I wouldn't show up?" She held the pose for a second longer then bursts out laughing. "Of course I came. I wouldn't be able to give you this otherwise." She took out sheets of

paper and handed them to him.

"Oh my God, these are actually drawn on paper. I didn't know you drew on paper, all you've given me before were printouts."

Someone cleared his throat behind Adam and he looked over his shoulder at his father.

"Are you going to introduce your friend and her family?"

"Oh, yeah." Adam's ears burned. "This is Samantha Ilsing, Sam, this is my father."

"Daniel," he said, extending a hand to her. "It's pleasure to meet you."

"Like wise." she shook it back. "This is my mom, Lianne, and my dad, Archibald."

"Please, call me Archie."

They all shook hands.

"I don't mean to pry, but why didn't Adam give us your name?"

"He didn't know which one I was." Daniel pointed to his brother at the barbecue. "we're twins, no one can ever tell us apart."

"Ah, I see. So both your family are here to celebrate Adam's birthday?"

"no, we all live here."

"Dad?" Adam tried to interject.

"Both your family live in the same house?"

"No, we're only one family."

"Daaad?" Adam whined.

Archibald gave Daniel a confused expression.

"Me and my brother are lovers."

Adam sighed. "Damn it dad, can we keep your sex life out of my birthday party?"

"Sorry Adam."

"No, I'm the one who needs to apologize," Archibald said. "Samantha had warned us Adam had two fathers, but she forgot to mentioned they were brothers."

Samantha shrugged. "I didn't think it mattered."

"You're right, it doesn't, but It would have avoided my making Adam uncomfortable if I'd known."

she made a silent 'oh' and now it was her ears that turned red. "I'm sorry Mister Orr, I didn't mean for things to be uncomfortable."

"Don't worry about it. I'm just glad your parents are comfortable with it. Come on in, we don't have any hot food ready yet, but we have a few vegetable platters, if you like that. as well as beverages, although the strongest things we have are coolers, because of the kids."

Adam and Samantha let the adults move away, then he looked at the papers again. "Wow, this is a Ferrari Lightning."

"Yeah, that's the car we're giving Steve 'smoking tire' McTire in the next series."

Adam winced. "I hate that nick name." He flipped through the pages. "You do know that if you're going to keep having him smoke tires like that, you'll have to give him a blow out, right? Race car rated tires are not meant to be smoked like that?"

"Lets call it creative interpretation."

Adam chuckles "Hey, you asked me to be your technical adviser on the cars, just giving you my input." He handed the pages back to her.

"No, keep them, they are your birthday present. I've already scanned them."

"Really? thanks."

they joined the others, passing by her mother talking with his father.

"Do you think the sun will come out? With the wind it's a bit too chilly for the kids to go in the pool."

"The forecast calls for the sun being out most of the afternoon, but even if it isn't, we're heating the pool today, and we have plenty of thick towels for anyone who gets chilly."

He lead her to one of the lounge chairs Aaron had set out and he went back to the barbecue, where Donald was wiping it down. From there on there was a steady stream of people arriving, friends of the kids with their parents.

"Uncle Dominic!" Arthur yelled and ran out of the pool to hug him, getting his shirt and jeans wet.

Dominic hugged his nephew with one arm, the other one holding a bottle of champagne. "Let me give this to your one of your fathers, then I'll change and join you in the pool."

"Cool." The diminutive tiger ran back to the pool and jumped in it.

"Dom, Glad you could make it."

Dominic placed the bottle on the table and they hugged. "I wouldn't miss this for the world, Bro." He pulled away. "Which one are you?"

"Donald."

"Where's Daniel?"

Donald looked around. "I'm guessing inside. It's getting close to dinner time, I'm guessing he's taking out the patties and hot dogs."

"You can tell him about this when he comes out then." He

handed him the bottle.

Donald looked it over. "How the hell did you manage to score a 2010 Dom Perignon? Wasn't that the most difficult year for them in the last thirty years?"

"It's from Herbert's cellar. He insisted I bring it to you."

"I can't... I don't know what to say." He looked at his brother. "I mean, thank you. Thank him for us. I take it he couldn't make it?"

"No. He'd like to meet the family, but he hasn't been able to justify coming to the west coast yet."

"Does he need a reason that badly?"

"He does since he doesn't want his wife to find out about us. It isn't like the senator from Virginia can just fly off to California and not attract attention."

"I know you're happy with the way things are, But I'm worried you're expecting more than what he can give you."

Dominic smiled. "I know exactly what I'm getting, and I'm okay with it. I don't want him to be my boyfriend, just my master."

Donald nodded, visibly uncomfortable with that statement. "Have you heard anything from Dietrich?" he asked to change the subject.

"No, still nothing. You were there the last time anything about him surfaced."

"Yeah, when those collection agencies started harassing us."

Dominic nodded. "I think Damian bought and dissolved all of them when he found out about it. He mentioned Dietrich was in Nevada then, but when I went there he'd left."

"I'm thinking of asking Damian where he is. It's been over nine years now. I'm worried about him."

"He doesn't know where he is. He stopped keeping track of him. I think he washed his hand of him, too high maintenance."

"Yeah, but he could find him if he really wanted."

"Hey Dom," Daniel greeted him, carrying a large platter of meats.

"Hey Danny." They hugged once the platter was on the table.

Donald showed him the bottle. "Look what Dom's master sent us."

"Champagne?" he commented after looking at the label. "cool. I'll be back with the bread, make sure the heat is going. If we don't have anything to feed them soon, the kids are going to devour us instead." Daniel turned around and headed back inside.

Dominic looked at his brother's disappearing back and then to Donald.

"Don't worry," Donald said. "I'll explain the value of the bottle before we drink it." He handed it to him. "Put it on the counter inside. then change and take a swim. I want you in the pool in case the kids get hungry before the food's ready."

"So I'm to be the sacrificial tiger?"

"You're the oldest, you have duties to uphold."

Dominic laughed and headed in.

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Dominic was able to keep the kids from eating him by playing water polo with them, water tag and get the people seated around the pool wet by making bombs in the water. The sun didn't come out, but the wind died down, making the air comfortable. The food was enjoyed with laughters and stories of the year.

One of the twins stood and raised the raspberry cooler he was holding. "I want to thank you all for coming here to help us celebrate our sons' eighteenth birthday. This is an important one. From now on they can legally drink, and if they manage to stay sober, they'll be able to vote."

laughter answered that.

He looked at his sons. "Aiden, Arthur, Aaron, Alex, Anakin, Albert and Adam, you are the gems in our lives, we will always love you."

"Until the day we all bring guys home at the same time," Alex yelled, and people laughed again.

The other twin and Dominic left the table.

"Even then, although I'm not cleaning up that mess." More laughter. "Now, celebrating seven birthdays at the same time always causes some logistic issues. Those who were here last year will remember the one giant cake with seven times seventeen candles on it, and then almost setting fire to the house." nods and some chuckles. "That's right, you laugh, You weren't the one having to explain the blackened wall to your insurance. They still call back once a month just to get me to tell that story again and get a good laugh." He waited until people stopped laughing. "So this year we're keeping things simple. One cake, eighteen candles and all your names on it."

Their father and Dominic came back, carrying between them a three foot in diameter cake. People moved to makes space for the large cake.

"Alright sons, gather around and blow out the candles."

"Make a wish first!" Samantha yelled.

The seven of them stood at the end of the table, and as one they blew out the candles. Applauses exploded all around.

Arthur climbed on a seat and bowed to everyone.

Everyone had a slice of cake, and half of it disappeared over the rest of the evening as the teens played around the yard or in the pool, and the adult talked.

Hours later, when most of the friends had trouble staying awake. The families left, taking with them more of the cake to enjoy later. Once the last of them had driven away the teen strip out of their speedoes to screams of 'After Party!'. The three adults chuckle at their antics.

Dominic got the bottle of champaign and three glasses. Donald explains to his brother about the grapes almost all going to waste due to rot that year, and how expensive the bottle had to be, before they enjoyed a glass, giving it the reverence it was due.

Afterward they got out of their bathing suits and joined the teens for the after party.