

The minivan moved slowly through the neighborhood. Adam was driving and peering out, looking for the address his uncle had given them. The others were looking at the houses, with lawns over grown with grass and junk, rusted cars in their driveways or parked on the street. The people walking by stared at them.

"This can't be right," Aaron said, from the passenger seat.

"Well, this is Caliban street," Adam noted. "And the numbers are going down, so we have to be getting close."

"Maybe there's another Caliban street?" Arthur offered, "Or maybe the numbers restart at some point?"

"Doesn't look like it." Alex raised his phone to show the map.

Adam Brought the minivan to a stop against the curb. "It's that house." He pointed to the small one-story house with faded and peeling blue paint. Unlike the other lawn, this one was mowed, but there was still a lot of weeds on it.

"Uncle Damian must have given us the wrong address," Anakin commented, which got him stared at.

"Uncle Damian wouldn't have given it to us if he wasn't completely certain that was it," Adam replied.

"Look at it," Anakin insisted. "How can he live in that if he's one of us?"

"I wouldn't want to live there," Aiden agreed.

"You have to remember, not everyone is as fortunate as us," Aaron contributed, "That doesn't make them any less good people."

"Would you want to live there?" Aiden challenged him.

Aaron didn't reply. His bedroom was probably larger than the whole house. They probably didn't have a pool in the backyard or workout equipment. Did it even have a backyard?

"How about you Arthur? would you live here?" Aiden asked his brother, only to discover he wasn't there, and the door was open. Arthur was running toward the house.

With curses, everyone left the minivan to run after him. They caught up to him just as he knocked on the door.

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Patrick sat down to eat, his fur was still damp from his shower. He'd made a stew with the cheap meat his mom had bought and some of the vegetables that were getting a bit old. His mom had taught him all the tricks he knew for cooking, like the one about cooking tough meat for a very long time at low heat to tenderize it. He'd set the stew to cook as soon as

he got up at two, and now he was going to enjoy it.

There was a knock at the door.

Patrick looked at the stew, fork in hand. Of course, his first meal in a few days where he can sit down and not have to worry about going to bed right after, and he's getting some door to door salesman. It wasn't like anyone else would knock at his door at seven at night.

He thought about ignoring it, but he stood. It could be a neighbor who needed help with something.

"Yeah?" he asked as he opened the door. A bunch of tigers were standing there, with one who couldn't be more than four feet at the front, gawking at him. They were dress way to good for the neighborhood.

The taller of the group moved forward, standing next to the dwarf. He was wide shoulder and the muscles stretched what had to be a silk shirt. "Hi, I'm Aaron. we're your brothers."

Patrick stared at him. Brothers? These guys were going to claim to be his brothers? He burst out laughing, then slammed the door shut. That would have been a good one, if they didn't look like they were Hollywood stars.

He thought about going back to his food, but instead looked through crocheted curtain over the tall window next to the door. They looked utterly confused. What? had they expected him to go along with it?

They exchanged a few quiet words, and Patrick noticed a few of them had wet eyes. What the Hell (sorry) was going on here? The tall one turned and they left, shoulders hunched, heading to a minivan parked on the opposite side, a little farther up.

Patrick hadn't expected that. They were obviously rich, so why wasn't it a limousine? They entered it and stayed there. Okay, so why weren't they leaving? Well, what ever it was, it wasn't his problem.

He turned and took a step toward the kitchen, only to stop an turn around. Fuck, he couldn't just let them sit there. Obviously, they had some sort of investment in coming here if some of them were crying. He grabbed his jacket off the coat rack

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"I'm sorry," Arthur said, closing the door. "I shouldn't have run there. maybe it would have gone better if I hadn't been the one to knock."

Anakin ruffled his hair. "No, I'm pretty sure we'd still be sitting here, debating what to do, or commenting on his house, but we certainly wouldn't have gone there an knocked on that door. You got the ball rolling, good on you."

"Did we sound that crazy?" Albert asked, drying his eyes.

"He laughed at us."

"I guess it was a shock to him," Alexander offered. "Seven guys he's never seen before show up at his door and announce they're his brothers."

"Maybe uncle Damian can get his phone number?" Aiden offered. "One of us can give him a call and try to explain the situation?"

"And what could we say?" Adam said dryly. "The situation hasn't changed."

"Hey guys?" Anakin nodded toward the tiger that was walking toward them. He'd put on a denim jacket over his wife beater. The jacket had seen better days.

Aaron lowered his window as the tiger got closer. He could see fur through rips in his jeans, and he was pretty sure those rips weren't professionally done, but actual wear.

"Look," the tiger started. "I'm sorry for laughing at you, and slamming the door. But there's no way you guys are my brothers. I don't have brothers. My dad died right after I was born."

Aaron had no idea what to say to that, so he did the introductions. "I'm Aaron, this is Adam, Anakin, Arthur, Alex, Albert and Aiden."

The tiger didn't immediately say anything. "I'm Patrick." Most of the brothers winced to that. "What?"

"We were kind of expecting your name to start with an 'A'," Adam said.

"Why would you expect that?"

"It's a family tradition," Aaron said.

"Look, I already said I wasn't related to you."

Aaron eyed him. "okay, what day were you born? March thirteenth? Fourteenth? or fifteenth?"

Patrick eyed him back. "Fourteenth."

"Us too!" Aiden exclaimed.

Patrick smirked. "Right, all seven of you were born on exactly the same day I was."

Aaron realized it did sound a bit preposterous. "No, we were born between the thirteenth and fifteenth, but instead of having birthdays over three days we always ended up celebrating them on the fourteenth, so we decide to make it easy on everyone and picked that day as our official birthday."

"So what? you guys were born a year apart, but basically on the same day?"

"No, we're all eighteen, just like you."

"Oh, so you guys are tube babies."

"No, we have mothers," Albert said, "but our dads didn't

want—" he didn't get to finish.

"Dads?" Patrick stiffened.

"Yes," Albert tried again. "Our fathers wanted..."

"Look," Patrick interrupted again. "I told you. I'm not your brother. Now leave me alone." Patrick headed back to the house.

"What just happened?" Albert asked.

"I, have no idea." Aaron sighed. "Okay, lets go home. We can ask dads what we should do next.

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Patrick slammed the door shut, but by now the anger was directed at himself. He shouldn't have snapped at them like that, but he'd just been taken by surprised when they said they had two fathers, which meant they were... Well, living in sin.

He should go an apologize.

The minivan was leaving when he opened the door. Oh well, it didn't matter anyway, They obviously had the wrong guy. He closed the door and looked at the picture of his mom with his father. It was one of the few his mom had kept around. She said the others just brought up too many memories.

There was another one of him, on her bed side table, and Patrick had one on his, and he knew she had one in her wallet. As far as he knew they were the only pictures of him she'd kept, but she had so many stories of him Patrick felt he'd known him.

He did wish he'd been around though.