



Chapter One ***~Time To Expand~***

My name is Bogart. Although some people refer to me as a dog or golden retriever, I prefer to be thought of as a member of the Clark family. We

have a rather sizeable brood. Our household members consist of Papa Greg, Mama Wendy and the triplets - Cassandra, Savannah and Lilly. In addition, Grandpa Mike and his talking pet parrot Nellie recently moved in with us. Lastly, there is Ginger, our spoiled and pampered cat. Ginger and I haven't always seen eye to eye but we have discovered a way to live somewhat peacefully under the same roof.

Rumor has it that our family is about to expand with some new household members. I overheard Mama Wendy

speaking with her sister on the phone earlier today. Maybe I was eavesdropping, but I wasn't alone.

“Yes, yes Amy, they're coming to live with us for a brief period of time. You remember Little Mike, don't you? Right, he's Greg's younger brother. Actually, he's not so small anymore. Oh my goodness, you should see him now with his impressive muscles and colorful tattoos. Honestly Amy, you would hardly recognize him. He's grown up to be quite handsome. The military

life certainly seems to be agreeing with him.”

“Anyway, his wife Kristy will be living here with us while Little Mike is overseas for a few months. Their daughter, Ashley is slightly younger than the triplets and Kristy’s also expecting another child. She had a difficult pregnancy with Ashley so we all agreed it best if she remains with family while Little Mike is away serving our country.”

Mama Wendy continued her never-ending girlie chattering with her

sister. I had been situated next to Papa Greg while listening in on Mama Wendy's conversation. I'm certain she had no clue that Papa Greg overheard her gossip fest.

Prior to the conclusion of Mama Wendy's lengthy phone call, Papa Greg ventured out to the garage with me following close behind. I was anticipating a walk but was disappointed when Papa Greg began rearranging items in the garage until he located what he was searching for. It was a metal machine covered with cobwebs that he tugged to the

middle of the garage. He proceeded to situate himself on the machine and begin exercising while loudly huffing and puffing. Almost immediately, he had smelly liquid trickling down his skin and onto the exercise contraption. Papa Greg decided he was done exerting his energy before I even had time to get comfortable.

Trailing him back inside and into his bedroom, I watch Papa Greg removing his foul-smelling tee shirt. Standing in front of the bureau mirror, he begins flexing his pasty white arm muscles while striving to

suck in his round extended tummy. Frankly, I can't see any difference his strenuous workout made in his appearance. Judging from the unimpressed reaction on Papa Greg's face, neither does he.

Sinking down on the bed, Papa Greg scratches behind my ears and mutters dejectedly, "I long to resemble Little Mike. It's no use Bogart, I'll always look like a weak old wimp."

It's times like this I yearn more than anything to possess a human voice. If

only I had the ability to speak people words, I could relay to Papa Greg how I truly feel. I'd persuade him that I love him just the way he is. In my opinion, he is splendid. I'm certain Mama Wendy and the rest of our family would wholeheartedly agree that he is perfect. Papa Greg is second to none!