Why Not by Cindy

Author's Notes: I was wondering why, if someone 'comes out', do people think that suddenly they've changed, that they're not the same person as they were before? And so, the story was born.

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"…fucking asshole…"

"And a warm hello to you too, Sunshine."

Startled, Justin turned sharply, water from the open bottle in his hand sloshing silently over the top, landing with a muffled splat on the hardwood floor. He looked down at the mess then back up again, toward the bedroom. "I didn't know you'd be home already."

Moving into the kitchen Brian grabbed a paper towel and dropped it with precise aim, watching it silently drift downward onto the spill then darken as the water absorbed. Only then did he look up, his eyes meeting Justin's. "Thought I'd surprise you, dear. Even the little woman needs a night off from her chores. How's dinner out sound?"

Justin heard the teasing tone, saw the playful smirk, but after the past hour, he just couldn't embrace the intended humor.

Slamming the water bottle down on the counter, Justin hissed, "Since when am I the fucking little woman? Huh? I don't think, no, I'm sure it wasn't last night, when my cock was rammed so far up your ass and you were begging so fucking loud that I'm surprised you're even able to speak today, was it?"

Taking a step backward, brows furrowed, Brian asked, "What the fuck is going on?"

Closing his eyes, taking in a deep breath then slowly releasing it, Justin shook his head and said, "Nothing, sorry. I didn't mean…" Feeling a warm finger tilt his chin upward, he opened his eyes and smiled slightly at the concern so clear in Brian's eyes.

"What?"

Sighing heavily, Justin wrapped his arms around Brian's waist, resting his cheek against the strong chest. He debated telling the truth. He knew it wasn't gonna bring him much comfort, but figured what the hell, so…"I saw my father today."

Silence, but the increased speed of Brian's heart made Justin certain that he'd been heard.

Scoffing, Justin continued. "You wanna hear pathetic? I wasn't even sure if it was him at first." He huffed a laugh, then said, "I mean, I haven't seen him in what, three years? So at first I was like, nah, that guy just looks like my dad. But then, I don't know, he turned and I saw him full on, and I was shocked. I was fucking shocked that it was him. Pathetic."

Justin's voice faded as he spoke, so by the end, it was almost a whisper, but Brian heard every word. He waited, patiently, knowing that there had to be more. And if his hands moved of their own free will, one sifting possessively through Justin's silken hair, the other rubbing soothing circles on his back, neither man mentioned it.

"So finally, I said, 'Hey, Dad, it's, uh…um…great to see you.'"

Brian snorted.

"Yeah," Justin nodded, his face rubbing against the soft cotton of Brian's t-shirt. "Smooth. But I froze."

"And?" Brian asked.

Justin shrugged. "And he said the usual. 'You too.' Just about as lame as me."

"Well, like father, like son."

"Thanks."

"So what else happened at this little family reunion?" Brian hoped the sarcasm wasn't too strong, but he was reining it in tightly, so fucking tightly he thought he might explode.

Another shrug. Silence. A loud sigh.

"Justin?" Brian prodded, tugging slightly on the longish blond hair.

"He, um, he asked me to sit down." Before Brian could ask Justin looked up, their eyes meeting, and said, "It was at that little coffee shop, you know, the one by my studio."

Brian nodded, and Justin resumed his former position, taking comfort from the strong, steady beat beneath his ear.

"So, I did. I mean, I kinda hesitated for a minute, but then I figured, what the hell." Pausing, Justin let his mind drift back to the meeting and smiled, his voice wistful as he continued. "I really thought that maybe, just fucking maybe it was time, you know, time for it all to be okay."

Brian sighed and gently shook his head.

"He asked about school. And California. I guess my mom told him. And I was like, it's great, it was great, the sun, the sand, the movie. It was all great."

Even though it'd been several months since Justin had been back, Brian couldn't contain the tiny wrenching feeling he got in his gut whenever California was mentioned. He knew, knew, that Justin was always gonna come back, come home, but still, a part of him…

"And he smiled, offering his congratulations. 'So glad your life seems on track, finally,'" Justin mimicked. "But then, I could tell he was getting, I don't know, uncomfortable. So I tried. I fucking tried, Brian. I asked him about work and stuff, I even asked him about his girlfriend. Shit."

"Sounds like you were a fucking saint, Sunshine."

"I was," Justin nodded, "I really was."

Brian chuckled.

But when Justin continued, he sounded lost, full of pain. "And then I guess he just couldn't do it. I mean, three fucking years, and he couldn't just…"

"Justin," Brian breathed, tightening his embrace.

Shaking his head, Justin said, "He asked me where I was living. And I could've lied. Told him I was on campus, still living with Daphne, living on the fucking moon, but I wouldn't. I just wouldn't. So I told him. I said, 'I live with my partner, Brian.'"

Brian smiled, whispering into Justin's hair, "Balls of steel."

Justin couldn't help but smile, always thrilled by Brian's praise. But the smile quickly faded when he said, "And his face, it just, fell. And he looked at me like I'd sucker punched him or something. Like I'd done something to him by sharing my life with him."

"He can't handle it, Justin."

Brian's hands dropped to Justin's waist when he suddenly pulled back, his eyes locking with a searching blue pair.

"Why not?"

Not sure what Justin wanted, Brian's brows furrowed in silence.

"Why, Brian? Why can't he handle it?"

Wishing he had an answer that would make the blueness of Justin's eyes not so glassy… make the sad flush of his cheeks not so obvious…make the pain in his heart not so strong…Brian sighed, 'cause all he had to offer was, "Just because he's your father, Justin, it doesn't stop him from being a homophobic prick."

Justin nodded. He knew that. He just couldn't understand why. Sniffing loudly, Justin said, "But the thing is, it's like I was this person, this son one minute, and the next I was nothing, not his son, not Justin, nothing. What changed? In that split second when he found out I was gay, what changed? I still liked the same things, still wanted the same things out of life, I'm still his son."

Brian felt Justin's longing and wanted so much to rush right out and grab Craig by his fucking lapels and drag him to their home, let him see that Justin was still Justin, and just because he liked cock instead of pussy, he was still his son. But he wasn't naïve.

Laughing bitterly, Justin said, "Fuck, I don't know why I let him get to me. Shit. I'll never fucking learn."

"Justin, that's part of your charm," Brian smiled. "Your ability to always forgive and never give up. It landed you me, after all, so it can't be all that bad," he teased.

Smiling, genuinely, Justin raised up on his toes, brushing his lips softly against Brian's.

Faces close, Brian whispered, "You're still Justin. Maybe not the Justin he imagined you'd be, but you're the Justin you were meant to be."

Eyes flitting downward momentarily, then meeting Brian's again, this time with a hue of determination, Justin asked, "You really think so?"

"I really do."

Nodding, Justin sighed. "I'd still like to be his son."

"You'll always be his son, Justin. Just like he'll always be your father. And maybe, one day…" Brian shrugged.

Biting his lip, Justin realized that maybe Brian was right. Maybe one day his father would come around.

Maybe he'd see him on the street and they'd stop, smile, his father asking how he was, what he was up to, and he'd answer with confidence, telling him work was great, Brian was great…

And Craig's smile wouldn't falter. He wouldn't close his eyes and shake his head. He wouldn't say that the son he knew wouldn't act this way. He wouldn't stand up, throw some bills on the table with unmistakable distain, then look down into a pair of blue eyes that he'd watched grow from infant to man, and silently turn, walk away, leaving his son watching after him, broken inside.

"Now, how 'bout that dinner," Brian offered, desperate to take away Justin's pain.

Deep breath in and out, Justin nodded. "Sounds great."

"Good. I think I know just the place."

"Oh yeah?"

"Mm-hm. Huge servings. You'll be so stuffed you won't be able to eat for a week." Brian grabbed his keys, phone and wallet off the kitchen counter, tugged open the loft door and stepped aside to let Justin pass, watching his ass eagerly as he did.

Justin felt the heaviness of his day slip away as he looked back over his shoulder and caught the admiring look on his partner's face. Smiling, he turned back around, heading down the stairs when he heard Brian lock the door, and said, "Oh, don't worry. I'll make sure to save room for dessert."

Brian laughed and caught up, swatting Justin's ass. "That's my boy."

And Justin realized that maybe he didn't have his father, but he had Brian. And truth be told, if he had to choose between being Craig's son or Brian's partner, well, there really wasn't any competition.

And if Craig came around one day, that would be great, and if not, fuck him.

Fuck 'em all.