Every inch of space in my heart is filled with things I'll never start  

Pre-season 3 the Lodge lets one of its victim's go; in the form of Chet Desmond.

Chet doesn't have a lot left to come back to, except his old partner Sam Stanley.

giving those doomed boys the ending they deserve expanded on symphony-in-silver's response on a prompt

Notes

(Everything now!) I need it
(Everything now!) I can't live without
(Everything now!) I can't live
(Everything now!)  
Every inch of space in my heart is filled with something I'll never start

The ashes of everything now  
And then you're black again  
Can't make it back again  
From everything now ~ arcade fire

for the doomed boys who never got a ending! they deserve better  
thanks to symphony-in-silver's response to my prompt, I just expanded their amazing ideas!
If anyone had asked what had happened to Chet Desmond in the 20 odd years he had been missing, he wouldn’t have been able to tell you. He would get this far off look in his eye as if he was desperately trying to remember something. Only to snap in anger if pressed.

Time had quickly lost meaning for Chet Desmond when he went missing that night in Deer Meadow. He was looking for what happened to Teresa Banks, and had been paired with a young fresh faced agent named Sam Stanley. He had been a good kid. Hell, maybe too good to for this fucken mess that Gordon Cole was messing him up in.

But Sam was eager to please, both Gordon and Chet; he wanted to be in their inner circle. Chet for his part had been maybe too harsh with him. Playing jokes on the boy was maybe too much… but besides Sam being a rather skittish agent he was good at his job, it was why Gordon had eyes on him.

Chet sighed.

Sam Stanley. He wondered what happened to that boy, he hoped he was okay. He let out another heavy sigh as he stared at the black and white zig zag pattern of the floor. He was so sick of this shit and the colour red of the curtains that surrounded the room. He needed to get out of here.

Time, no matter how much of it had passed, had not killed the spark of anger within Chet Desmond. It had dimmed and wavered but despite the Lodge’s best effort had not been able to crush him. He had gone through the cycles of grief more time than he could count. It was exhausting frankly. He was sick of seeing his other half in this room, his mirror image in every way except for his cloudy irises.

Seeing Chet pace like a restless tiger made his double grin. Chet hated the smug bastard. There was nothing more that he wanted to do than wipe that grin off his stupid face... but this was their world. No matter how many times Chet went to town on rearranging his doubles face when his patience finally snapped, he would simply grin back at him through bloodied teeth.

“Ti erus si ylevol rehtaew er’ew gnivah.”
Chet grimaced his double always greeted him this way, he had heard enough over his time spent in the room—it was enough to drive a man mad. He fretted his lip in annoyance, some days he could shove his anger and annoyance aside but sometimes his doubles words were like nails on a chalkboard, like an icepick being driven into his skull.

“yhw os mulg muhc? nrut that nworf edispu nwod!”

Why so glum chum turn that frown upside down!

He hated how his double sounded like some shitty “Leave it to Beaver” reject, but it was better than what the Lodge usually decided to show him. He closed his eyes and willed his double away. Of all the things that the Lodge had shown him; Chet had expected co workers, past lovers hell, even his parents. The last thing he was expecting was one of the last people he had seen before disappearing.

Sam Stanley.

With all the time to think Chet admitted to himself he liked the younger agent, despite his initial reaction and treatment of him. He just wasn’t used to people like Sam, people who were kinder, softer.

Chet self identified as a scrapper. He was used to using his fists to get what he wanted. It was part of the reason he believed that Gordon wanted him for his little blue rose group; when Chet wasn’t met with conflict—as was the case with Sam—he usually ended up creating it just to justify his actions.

Of all the spare time he had to think, how he treated Sam came often to his mind, despite everything. Now Chet had not known Sam Stanley long, but from what he had known of the younger man he had not acted like his Lodge double.

This Stanley moved with a combination of the halting steps of the Lodge members and a odd liquid grace. Desmond hated seeing him wear the would be innocent Stanley’s face like this—especially when he slid up next to him; most of the time Chet could force him away but sometimes he was powerless his limbs frozen as this—dare he say it—perverted version of the young FBI agent had his way with him. He would run his hands down his form, his touch like fire leaving Desmond feeling like he wanted to claw his own skin off, as the double whispered all the things he would do to him in his ear.
“Ynnnep rot ruoy sthguohts?”

Penny for your thoughts?

“Go screw yourself” he replied, annoyed he couldn’t think in peace in this hell hole. Chet was more restless than usual. There was something in the air, something was going to change, he could feel. He paced back and forth for what felt like the hundredth time his doubles gaze fixed on him.

“Tahw od ouy ssim eht tsom tuoba eht edistuo dlrow?” the double suddenly piped up

What do you miss the most about the outside world?

Chet froze.

His double had never asked him that before. He had asked him many other trivial things but never that. He was dumbfounded.

“si ti eht ecaps?”

Is it the space?

The FBI agent was used to working undercover in hard locations for years at a time, before Jeffries had plucked him for blue rose, he had spent three years undercover in a Russian money laundering front.

He shook his head “no that’s not it.”

“Si ti eht selicaled?”

Is it the delicacies?

Chet hadn’t felt hungry or needy for anything rather than escape since he got here so it wasn’t that.

“spahrep s’ti…”

Perhaps it’s...

His voice trailed off as the curtains shuffled and Sam Stanley’s double walks through. Despite seeing him numerous times, Desmond’s foolish heart always skips a beat at the possibility that it was the real deal this time.
But he wasn’t that lucky, as Stanley saunter over, his features strained, his clouded eyes gleaming.

“Olleh teh a erusaelp sa syawla”

**Hello Chet a pleasure as alwa ys**

The double moved forward “did uoy ssim em? I deissim uoy ylpeed.” *did you miss me? I missed you deeply*

The doppelganger decided to get cozy, closing the distance to be at chet’s side. Chet squirmed.

“Tahw dluow uoy od ot eb txen ot eht laer gniht?” it hissed in his ear, its hands coling around his waist and tucking him into an embrace.

**What would you do to be next to the real thing?**

Chet surprised, thrashed out the tiger in him drawing taught ready to pounce as he balled his fists and attempted to put distance between them. He snarled and grabbing the double by the lapels and throwing him off him

“You have no idea” and his fist flew Stanley’s double was gone, replaced by his own, but that didn’t stop him as he beat his double to a bloody pulp.His double laughed like a maniac the entire time

“ev’Ouy neeb enog a gnol emit era ouy eurs uoy tnaw ot og kcab? Iti yam ton eb tahw ti mees eh yam ton eb tahw eh mees”

*You’ve been gone a long time are you sure you want to go back? It may not be what it seems, he may not be what he seems*

“Shut up” Chet snarled his hands throbbing as he stared at his bloody doubles face, who proceeded to lick the blood off his hand and lips

“Ev’ew neeb ta siht a gnol emit tehC” his double muttered

*We’ve been at this a long time Chet*

“ev’ uoy reven degdub. Reven nevig su hcum ot og no. Os ecnis uoy tnaw ot teg tuo os yldab ereh.”
You’ve never budged. Never given us much to go on. O Since you want to get out so badly here...

Chet froze. Letting go of his double, he felt more then saw something that he had not seen in years. Fresh air, a breeze..

It was so fresh, it made him slightly nauseous. He looked up and saw that the curtains of the red room, had moved revealing a howling void. Chet stiffened as he looked down at his double to see what he wanted of him but only his twisted grin looked back at him.

“Og no yob fi uoy tnaw it os hcum. Ouy evah tuo devil ruoy esu.”

Go on boy if you want it so much. You have outlived your use.

“mama always said I had the thickest head she’d ever seen” Chet managed but his eyes were glued on the gap in the curtains.

It couldn’t be that easy.

Still he found himself stumbling blindly to his feet towards the gap in the curtains. He could pick up on the earthy tones on the other side. He could hear the distant call of wild life.

Are you sure it’s not a trap? His mind asked are you sure you’re not falling further into his grasp?

But that spark. That spark that had been crushed down and trampled on and almost put out by his time in the Lodge, seemed to jump to life at the idea, as he crept closer and closer to the void, trying to glimpse through it. The curiosity getting the best of him, enough to drop his guard for a second, and in that time he felt it, his double snuck up behind him grabbing him by the scruff of the neck like a disobedient puppy shook him.

Chet grimaced as he tried to free himself, but his double had the upper hand as he whispered into his ear “uoy ssim ti llits tnod uoy tehC? Neve retfa lla eseht s raey”

“Fuck you” Chet managed

“ouy annaw eb eerf t’nod ouy tehC? His double said with a sly smile.

You wanna be free don’t you Chet?

Llew yadot si ruoy ykcul yad .. tub rebnemer, neve nehw ouy evael eht nosirp fo eht ydob ouy nac reven evael eht nosirp fo eht dnim”
Well today is your lucky day… but remember, even when you leave the prison of the body you can never leave the prison of the mind

Even when you leave the prison of the body, you can never leave the prison of the mind … the words rung like a bell in Chet’s mind, but before he had time to consider more, his double had pushed him forward into the void.

For a second, time froze as Chet tried to keep his balance; his eyes locked with his doubles over his shoulder, who was grinning like a maniac and waving goodbye, and then time resumed… Chet was falling forward into a howling void, with no idea where he would turn up.

xxx

Chet came to with a startled gasp.

When Chet opened his eyes he found himself staring at the night sky and not red curtains or a zig zag floor…. he couldn't believe it.

He lay on his back staring blindly up at the sky breathing in the fresh air, feeling the grass he clutched in his fingers, smelling the rain on the wind, of an impending storm.

He couldn't be he couldn't possibly be...

he was free... free from the Lodge, free from the room. free.

Chet felt the beginnings of hysterical laughter bubbling out of his throat.

“ Aw christ it couldn't be that easy he couldn't be-”

he swallowed it down.

Perhaps, this was the room's last laugh, take everything and then give it back all at once and watch them fall. Slowly he made to move; his limbs felt stiff as if he had been asleep for a long time… perhaps he had.

As Chet pulled himself to his feet he wavered, taking in his surroundings and he found he was not far from where he had disappeared. Which meant the Fat Trout trailer park was in walking distance.

The trek was slow and shambling, as the park came into view the heavens opened up and the rain poured down, drenching Chet to the bone - there was a part of him that didn’t mind because it meant he wasn’t in the Lodge- as he made his way back into civilization.

Civilization what a joke.
He needed a phone. He needed to call for help, he needed to call the FBI contact Gordon.

Gordon... The thought alone left a sour taste in his mouth.

Desmond’s road to the FBI had not been an easy one. He knew his temper caught faster than matches. He had gotten into more fights than he could ever recall. When Gordon and Jeffries had hand picked him for Blue Rose task force they had looked past that and given him a place to be. Was it because in reality Gordon was just looking for a sacrificial lamb for his little pet projects?

As he came into Fat Trout, Chet was relieved not a lot had changed, if possible everything looked older and shabbier, but if memory served the ol’ grouch of Carl Rodd would still be here. Crossing his fingers he made his way to the shabby trailer and knocked on the door.

A voice called out “hang on, hang on, i’mma coming”.

The door opened a crack and a face peered through’ what can I do ya for?”

“Do you have a phone I could use I–” the door rattled slightly as a croaky laugh could be heard

“What’s the matter boy you get so piss drunk you don’t remember where home is?”

The old Chet would have probably flown into a rage at this jab, but now Chet couldn’t be bothered he just wanted to be away from here. “I don’t remember where anything is anymore if we’re being honest” he replied, feeling weary and exhausted as if his years away were catching up with him.

The man paused, the door closed and Chet could hear locks being cautiously undone and the door at last opened.

It had been a long time since Chet Desmond had seen Carl Rodd- even then he had been older, his salt and pepper now complete, the lines of his craggy face were even more deep set- still they just simply took in each others presence for a moment before it clicked.

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph” he rasped out “you’re that cop that showed up with the young fellow all those years ago.”

“Yes, Chester Desmond.”

Rodd nodded suddenly going as pale as a sheet “you went missing.”
Chet nodded as he leaned heavily on the door frame

“Boy you’ve been gone for-”

A hand shot up silencing Rodd he wasn’t ready for that yet, especially from Carl. “please don’t” he managed.

Carl simply stared, he didn’t remember the man much but he remembered how brash he was. He had been through some things clearly.

“Well if you don’t mind me asking” he ventured “where the hell have you been all these years?”

Chet was silent “damned if I knew” he managed “far from here.”

Rodd couldn’t help but take in the appearance of the man before him; gone was the tough as nails cop who was more then happy to swing his fist as he was to shake hands with someone.

Even now Chet Desmond was still handsome like a golden age hollywood film star, but there was no doubt about it he had aged. His auburn hair now streaked with grey, his temples were salt and pepper, he had harsher lines around his eyes and mouth but mostly he just looked tired, like he hadn’t slept in years- his eyes were distant lost in some foreign place.

“Maybe you should come in” Carl managed.

Desmond nodded and stumbled over his own feet, his body seeming to reach his limit. Carl all but carried him into a nearby chair. Christ the kid looked like shit.

“Hungry?”

Chet shook his head no.

Carl felt helpless. How do you help someone that you’re not even sure what’s wrong with?

“Coffee never hurt anyone” he muttered more to himself “I’m gonna make you a cup of good morning America while you call your friend alright?”

Chet nodded and gave a small word of thanks. He felt like a flaking painting, bits of him falling away after years of wear and tear. His mind felt like a muddled mess, still as Carl passed him a steaming cup of coffee which he drank from gratefully the older man couldn’t help but think it was a start.

Xxxx

Not long after Chet managed to get through to his FBI superiors- not without a lot of false starts and misbelieving ears, till the call landed on Gordon’s own doorstep. Chet was surprised with the ease his boss believed it was him and soon a long shiny black limo sat outside Carl’s place. He thanked the older man, who pat him on the back and wished him well and lots of rest and peace and soon he was whisked away; hustled around by men in suits as if he was very important. or very
dangerous.

Soon Chet found himself back in front of his old boss Gordon Cole. Like Carl he too had aged significantly, his swooping wild unkempt hair was now silver, his face drawn and tired. Chet got the impression technology had progressed in his absence as Gordon no longer supported the headphone like listening devices but sleek devices behind each ear still controlled by the box he carried on the front of his shirt.

“CHESTER DESMOND” he managed “AS I LIVE AND BREATH”

“Gordon cole” Chet replied with a weak smile “it’s good to be back… alive”

The two fell into an uneasy silence the need to know was worming it’s way up within chet. He needed answers. He need to know.

“How long have I?”

“Gordon seemed to fumble with his listening device, and Chet was mildly surprised when instead of shouting he managed in a level voice “It’s been 22 years Chet… since anyone last saw you.”

There was silence.

Chet sat stunned. He knew it had been long; but this was almost a quarter century, he had lost so much time in that accursed room, playing their games, victim to their toying.

“Christ” he managed taking a shaky breath, his throat dry, his limbs shaking trying to ground himself in the here and now.

22 years…

All the time he had lost, people he had lost, memories good and bad he-

More fumbling with the device.

“CHET I KNOW HOW YOU MUST FEEL-” Gordon began.

At his words something ugly reared up in Chet, What the hell did Gordon know? Did he lose 20 years of his life? Hell, he probably didn’t give a good god damn about him until he walked back through those doors.

Chet’s hands were clenched in fists of rage, all the anger, all the fear and hurt he had faced throughout the years was boiling out of him in a hot instant as he got to his feet shaking.
“CHET?” Gordon’s voice called distant and unclear a hand reached out to ground him but Desmond caught it holding it in a crushing grip.

He wanted to destroy and dismantle the man who did this to him, but as he looked into the perplexed and scared face of his former boss and he saw how time had weather him how sad he looked, how confused. Chet was not the only one who had changed in the 20 odd years who had suffered and become a different man.

Just like him.

Chet released a breath he didn’t know he had been holding and the fight went out of him. He gave a heavy sigh and pulled away from Gordon. Cole was an old man, what good would it do to hurt him? It wouldn’t give him all those years back.

“Desmond?” Cole’s voice came again.

“Just answer me one thing Gordon” the older man nodded

“What happened to the kid you gave me as a partner, Sam Stanley?”

Gordon’s brow furrowed “AGENT STANLEY? WHY THE INTEREST?”

Desmond shrugged “He was my partner”

Cole stared, but he cleared his throat “Agent Stanley is on administrative leave.”

Chet froze. He knew that was a polite way of saying something had happened “What happened to him?”

Gordon looked suddenly uncomfortable as he lowered his device “Agent Stanley had some trouble after your disappearance he took it incredibly hard.”

Chet blinked “he did?”
“His work started to decline and unfortunately his self medication with alcohol followed him to work to say the least.”

Chet winced an uncomfortable shiver running down his spine at what happened

“We’ve been monitoring him but he has all but shut us out. Wants nothing to do with the FBI.”

The more they sat there the more the uneasiness grew, Chet needed to be free of here, he felt like he was being watched, like he was danger, shadows lingered in his periphery.

“You have a location on him?”

Gordon nodded “We do Chet. We tried to help him as much as we could but-”

“Why did he shut you out? Stanley wasn’t the rebel rouser type”

“After your disappearance he was unsatisfied with the results said we could have done more for you. Said we were determined to forget about you.”

“Were you? Chet managed

Gordon looked away “Chet…”

Desmond shook his head “it’s done Gordon just give me sams information,”

His superior nodded as Desmond stood to leave “when I’m done there I’ll tell you everything.”

xxxx

Chet sighed. Here he was outside the location that Gordon had provided.

This is it. This is where Sam Stanley lives. The house he was parked in front of looked like it had seen better days. The weeds had grown through the concrete the grass was dead and patchy tufts
Chet swallowed the growing ball of tension within him, he stared at his reflection in the mirror. While he had not aged like Carl or Gordon, he couldn’t help but see how tired he looked and felt, his reflection looked weary and edgy; he didn’t like to meet his own gaze for long- it was like looking at his other half.

*Here goes everything he* thought with another heavy sigh, Chet opened the door and made his way over to the porch, where he screwed his courage to knock on the door before he could change his mind. He rapped hard on the flaking painted door with his knuckle around him the neighbourhood was quiet, as if waiting for something to happen.

No response.

Chet knocked again.

This time he heard hesitant footsteps, someone was home.

Chet began a steady stream of knocking until a quiet voice answered “alright, whoever it is you sure are persistent.”

Chet paused.

It was the same voice- Sam’s voice, still soft spoken and kind sounding after all these years. Chet heard the latch turn as the door opened and revealed his long missing partner.

Time and alcohol had not been kind to Sam Stanley. Those gentle, innocent features he remembered were haggard, his hair long and unkempt, dark circles hung under his eyes signalling many sleepless nights. He reeked of the best self medicating alcohol money could buy, mostly bourbon and whisky. He had become a shadow of his former self, thin and barely there.

“Sam Stanley? Chet managed

“Yes?” Can I help you?”

Chet had fussed over how best to tell his former partner who he was, and now that he was here; there was still no proper way. At last it just came out in a rush “It’s me. It’s Chet. Chet Desmond.”

The man in front of him was silent; any curiosity he felt at his new guest was gone, he stiffened.

“Chet Desmond went missing years ago. You have the wrong place.” he managed starting to close the door.
Chet’s  hand  shot out  stopping him.

“No you don’t understand, I’m not looking for him, IAM him, I-”

Sam let out a sudden surprised laugh. Desmond  blinked.

“You can’t be him, he never came back. If this is a set up I-”

“Sam it’s me, I-”

The other man let out a burst of hysterical sounding laughter “Is this some kind of sick joke from Gordon? You couldn’t get me to come around so you sent this-!” he gestured in Chet’s direction.

Chet blinked. He had never seen the younger agent so angry. “Sam I-” he reached out for him and the other man recoiled.

“Don’t- please” he managed. He looked skittish, nervous.

Chet frowned “Sam please, it’s not a lie. I don’t know what to tell you that could make you believe me. We didn’t get to know each other all too well … but I do know a few things, I know you like jazz, I know you prefer mints to gum, are an early riser I know you like your breakfast eggs scrambled, that you travel with an iron and that you’ve never touched a cigarette in your life-”

“Almost sir, they trained you almost right except for the last one”

Chet stared, the small tick of panic growing in him “It is me, look the last time we saw each other at that diner I played a stupid trick on you and I regret it, when I made you spill your coffee on yourself. A cruel joke I know… but do you remember?”

Sam was silent. His gaze holding Chet’s. The man before him looked remarkably like the agent he had worked with all those years ago; but in comparison to himself he had remained nearly unchanged. Older, but the same chiseled features and same side smirk.

It couldn’t possibly be- It couldn’t- he disappeared without a trace, for so many years why would he suddenly appear now- it was a fool’s dream it- but he knew little details he just knew! Was it foolish to dream? To believe?
Chet notices Sam’s silence, how deep in thought he looked when- the silence and stillness is broken by Sam’s form beginning to shake, tears running down his face.

“Sam?” Chet asked reaching for him “are you?”

The man before him weeps harder, his cries becoming hysterical as he approaches Chet arms outstretched in longing.

“Chet?” he managed “is it really you? I’ve-”

Chet feels the lump of tension he had been holding back work it’s way up his throat. The bright, handsome, shy man he had known was no more and it made him uneasy that he had hurt this man without knowing it. Seeing the pain in the face of the man he knew was hard to watch.

“I-I’m sorry” Sam choked out “I’m sorry I left you alone that day; I should’ve come with you! Just so you didn’t have to be alone all these years- If I stopped you maybe- maybe you would have never vanished. I’ve been looking for you ever since. I couldn’t sleep at night, I couldn’t work- everyone acted like you never existed, they would tell me I was crazy that I was- was looney case I would talk to anyone meet with anyone willing to listen! Any lead I’d follow-I thought I was losing my mind… maybe I am but I couldn’t let you fade back into history as if you never existed!”

Sam reacted before Chet could move, the younger agent has grabbed the lapels of his jacket and buried his face into Chet’s chest and sobs.

Chet, never one for soft emotions- stands there rigidly as his former partner is racked by harsh sobs. Slowly Chet puts his arms around the man and let’s him cry and that lump in his throat is hard to swallow past. As they stand there in each other’s presence, the reality of where he was and who he was with seems to hit him all at once; he feels wetness on his cheeks and as they simply hold each other that tension and emptiness that had been eating at Chet since he escaped the Lodge, that threatened to consume him and drag him back down eases for the first time since being back; as he holds his partner he feels as though he has somewhere to belong.

Xxxx

Sam Stanley never asked Chet Desmond to move in. It just sort of happened, after Chet showed up on his doorstep, Sam realized the other man had nowhere to go. His home, his life, everything that had marked he was there, was gone…. 22 years had wiped the game board clean and left nothing. Chet Desmond hadn’t a home to come home to, he was a stranger in a strange land. So Sam helped
the best he could. He offered an extra room in his small home. Chet was grateful that he had a place he could be.

Sam hated to admit it but he had gotten used to the loneliness in the years Chet had been missing so much so that for a while he was disbelieving that Chet would still be there on a daily basis; that one day he would wake up and he would be gone again.

It never happened, soon he was waking up to more than just the presence of another person in the house. The first morning he was surprised to awake to something that smelt...good. pancakes.
Imagine Sam’s surprise when he came down the stairs and found Chet in one of his old checkered aprons with a hot skillet going and bacon sizzling on the stove.

Sam could only blink but he quickly learned it was not a fluke, one morning he found the pile of dirty laundry he had procrastinating on washed, dried and folded and placed neatly on the edge of his bed.

Sam quickly learned that Chet Desmond for all intensive purposes was a domestic god, he cooked, cleaned, did handywork and the garden. Slowly he started putting Sam’s life back together, one day he was weeding the garden, another repainting doors and fences, another fixing rusted pipes.

Sam could only stare and help out where he could. Slowly Chet started to ween him off his hard drinking ways and was determined to put meat back on Sam’s bones.

Sam snorted. good luck. He had always been like a scarecrow. He asked one morning over omelettes how Chet became so well rounded in so many fields. Chet chuckled too his mother had told him a good man was self sufficient, and would never have to rely on others. Plus he didn’t mind any of it, to him it was enjoyable.

While Sam and Chet worked slowly to put Sam’s house and their lives back together, whether they were cleaning, cooking, fixing during the day, in the evenings they enjoyed each other’s company, usually stargazing from Sam’s porch. They would talk long into the night, filling in the blanks in each others lives, learning likes and dislikes and creating the bond that they never had the chance to have.

One day Chet suggested that he give Sam a haircut, and the younger man smiled as he was sit in front of the mirror and Chet can only stare in awe that someone trusts him enough and he watches the long unruly tresses fall to the floor. Soon the youthful man he had known looked back at from the mirror and Chet found himself more grateful than ever that he had not lost everything.

Sam for his part was learning to let people into his life again. He had made himself an island, drawing away from everything and everyone. Chet’s return had changed that, the other man with his small smirks and his crooning voice he used when he thought noone was around made Sam a little
weak in the knees. He looked for changes in Chet since his return but he seemed like the man he was before. In fact, Sam began to wonder what he brought to the equation between them, he worried that the man would come to his senses and leave. This thought was bothering Sam when there was a terrible storm one night. Sam couldn’t sleep on nights like this and as he wandered his halls bleary eyed only guided by the flash of lightning through his Windows he heard it.

a scream of terror.

Chet

maybe it was his-

It came again. No he was certain.

Sam paused outside Chet’s room and listened. he didn't want to barge head long into another man's room but if there was something wrong…

As if hearing his thoughts a high noise of distress came through the door. He has never heard Chet make a noise like that… slowly with trembling fingers Sam opened the door, Chet’s room was pitch black. only lit by the flashes of lightning.

Sam found him the way he thought he would, as the lightning illuminated the room. There was Chet, hopelessly tangled in the sheets, lost in the depths of his dream.

Sam hesitated, he wasn’t sure if he was supposed to be here, he-

Chet let out another whimper as if in pain, his body rigid as he becoming more wrapped up in his sheets. Sam came closer as his partner tossed and turned, Sam could see he was sweating profusely, trembling.

“Chet?” he called out weakly “Chet are you-?”

“P-please” came the reply.

Sam froze.

Chet Desmond didn’t beg. Anyone for anything.

Something was wrong, he felt the hairs rise on the back of his neck as the voice called out again “please n-no don’t”.

Sam’s heart ached for the other man, he hated to see him like this, he had suffered so much and even when he should be able to rest, to be at peace, it was denied from him. He took another step closer and could see that Chet’s eyes were open, staring blankly at unseen forces in terror.

“Please no - Sam!” came the next call in a choked off bark of pain.
Sam felt like ice was being poured into his veins something was happening to him. His indecision was dashed as he broke the distance between them, he perched on the edge of Chet’s bed, tentatively reaching out to soothe a gentle hand through his hair.

“Chet, chet you need to wake up, you’re safe. I’ll protect you.”

Sam other’s hands laced with Chet’s as the other man continued to shake

“it’s not real, please come back, please come back…” to me he almost added his words dying in his throat as he carded his hand through sweat soaked hair.

Slowly Desmond seemed to emerge from his deep slumber. At first he seemed to just revel in the positive human contact, soaking it in he seemed to forget where he was till he noticed the fabric under his head was not Sam's paisley sheets but a soft navy blue wool. The pieces seemed to click together all at once, he glanced up into Sam's gentle concerned gaze; he had been lying in Sam Stanley’s lap.

Almost automatically he sat bolt upright. pulling away from Sam.

*This was wrong. he shouldn't be here. he shouldn't be seen like this… Sam couldn't. see him like this. what would he think he-

“Chet” the other man's voice cut through the din of his thoughts clear as a bell. It was everything he needed. everything he wanted, had been missing without knowing. Calloused hands found his, fingers laced together as if they knew each other well and finally found their missing piece.

“It's okay. you're here and so am I, you're not alone.”

Chet nodded unwillingly to meet his gaze, should it all be a grand fucking scheme by the Lodge to finish him, seeing Sam, his earnest too good Sam as anything but would surely be his end. Slowly those calloused fingers found his chin and lifted his gaze to eye level.

*Sam.*

His Sam. The only one who even had an idea of what he may have been through and yet… not at all.

His fingers tightened in Sam's grip as he let out a ragged sigh.
“Chet, what did you see?” the question came after a minute. “I know you may not want to say but it may help to let someone know. even just one part. “

Sam knew too many men like Chet. They were strong supposed to be a rock for everyone around them, nothing broke them-so when they did crumble, no one caught them. They had to learn to fix themselves, or shove it in a well so deep no one would see it again. Showing these emotions to others became unheard of so when it happened they’d often draw more into themselves. No one should see this side of them.

Sam could see Chet’s panic and attempt to draw away from Sam. so that he’d never have to speak of it again, his door was closing.

“What did you see?” he asked again more gently.

Chet shook his head. he didn't he shouldn't-

“Chet” sam’s hands squeezed his gently “please, it's okay you're safe now.” he gave the other agent a small smile.

“I saw you” Chet blurted out I saw you. I- I mean he had you. Alright, I saw you with me and my double and he had you and I couldn't do anything, he was killing you you were bleeding out in front of me and I was useless.”

The words came out in a hot tumble as he clamped his eyes shut trying to will the images away from his mind of being pinned down, useless as Sam through bloody torn lips called out repeatedly for him, his double running a tender hand down his face as he forced his tongue down the younger man’s throat as he whimpered for it to stop, Chet snarled and thrashed trying to free himself- he needed to help- needed to get to Sam “Sam! Sam! “ but as he move to help his partner he felt it - the sharp stabbing pain.

He looked down and saw his hands painted in his own blood, a blade protruding from his stomach he gagged “won won Tehc” a voice called out

Now now Chet

Tiaw ruoy nrut ll’i eb htiw uoy noos.”

Wait your turn, I’ll be with you soon.

He watched in terror as the same blade that had been impaled into him now was held in his doubles hand now cutting into the prone form of Sam’s Stanley’s neck

“NO SAM PLEASE!” the words ripped themselves raw from his throat- Sam’s gaze of pain and confusion was fixed on him as his double drove the blade deeper and blood squirted like a geyser as his partner gagged helplessly, hand reaching for his eyes terrified and accusing
“st'i ila thgir teews yob ti lliw lla eb revo noos.”

It’s all right sweet boy it all be over soon..

Chet had woken to his double stabbing the him in the chest and tenderly kissing his lips. He could taste Sam’s blood on them.

Stanley watched helplessly as the older man seemed to retreat from him and curled in on himself muttering something softly over and over again under his breath. He looked like he wanted to crawl into the deepest hole and never emerge. Sam wouldn’t let him.

As Sam leaned forward he heard what Chet was saying “can’t escape the prison of the mind” over and over again. It made Sam’s skin crawl.

“It’s alright now. They can’t get you. You’re free” with bravery he didn’t know he had, Sam closed the gap between them and climbed onto the bed, he tentatively wrapped an arm around Chet’s shoulders, when he wasn’t pushed away harshly he settled against his side. They sat in silence, listening to each other’s breathing. Till at last Chet moved, he lowered himself to the bed.

Sam assumed that he wanted to be alone, swallowing his disappointment he made to stand when Chet’s hand’s found his, he pulled gently.

“Stay...please” he managed, Sam could see the rosy beginnings of a blush on his cheeks. was that because of him? it couldn’t be.

Sam nodded mouth suddenly dry as he lowered himself to the bed and found himself staring into those deep blue eyes. like oceans.

So lost in them he was he flinched when a hand came to stroke his cheek gently.

“thank you” Chet managed.

Sam wanted to reply to tell him the same but the words got stuck in his throat, he nodded. Sam expected the hand to retreat now that Chet had expressed himself; rather it lingered tracing the contours of his face, a soft fleeting touch. the pad of Chet’s thumb traced Sam's lips.

“Chet-”

but before Sam could continue his words were cut off by Chet putting a chaste kiss on his lips. It was quick, a blink and miss it scenario, his lips were dry and cool and gentle, the kiss was questioning shy even-

Sam froze.

Chet seemed to be watching for his reaction and Sam’s pause brought worry to his face, maybe it was best he forgot it, it was a bad idea to act on this how could he believe that-
So preoccupied in his thoughts he almost missed when Sam’ lips crashed into his, not nearly as hesitant, more wanting his teeth nipping and pulling at his lips needily, leaving Chet stunned. Soon he was eagerly returning the kiss, the word thank you passing from lips to lips like a silent prayer.

When they pulled away they finally settled into each others bodies like two perfect circles entwined. Chet nestled into Sam's chest.

That was the last time Chet Desmond spent in the guest room.

XXXX

Sam and Chet didn't get houseguests often. They hardly had a family between the two of them.

One of the first people to come around was Gordon Cole. He wanted to see how they were and also to finally get that information on the Lodge from Chet. Chet sat with Sam by his side whom he stubbornly refused to send away as he recalled his time in the Lodge; when it became too much his hand found Sam's for comfort under the table.

That night Chet slept buried in the crook of Sam's neck as the other man held him as he shivered through his nightmares. With time they had learned to open up to each other, Chet has learned how to trust again, to rely on others, they knew how to read each other and be the other’s rock.

The other person that showed up on their porch step was Albert Rosenfield. Chet could hardly believe his eyes when the other man gave him a side smirk and embraced him.

Chet was happy to see him, they invited him in and had a lovely dinner. They talked long into the night, shared many drinks and reminisce about years gone by. There were tears of laughter and sadness shed, the wall knocked down between. Sam marvelled at the men’s relationship- they shared a deep bond, were loyal to each other in ways that Sam hardly knew. Sam only knew Albert truly in passing. After failing his test run with Blue Rose he hardly seen the other man. Sam couldn't help but notice how sad Albert looked.

The next time Albert came over he brought a young red haired woman with him. She introduced herself as Tammy. “a friend for your friend” Albert had said. Chet seemed skeptical but Sam and Tammy hit it off almost instantly, she was smart, smarter than Albert; maybe then Sam. She had been scanning Sam's bookcase when she made a comment about one of his books on Egyptian hieroglyphics. Sam had lit up like a light bulb and the two had quickly dove into knowledge of myths and history and science. Albert simply raised his eyebrows as he led Chet outside.

The two shared a smoke. It had been a long time since Chet had a cigarette and he couldn’t help but savour the nicotine. As they stood in silence Chet found himself observing albert through his peripheries.

The man was older, stiffer and he held himself differently; as though he was defeated. Albert had
always walked liked a Caesar, like a king the most important and intelligent man in the room...usually he was that. He hardly showed uncertainty but now Chet wasn't sure..

The hard headed pacifist he knew seemed like he had the weight of the world on his shoulders. Something weighed heavy on his mind and on his heart.

“I may be older Desmond but i still have most of my wits around me.”

Chet froze.

“ why the gawking I know I have less hair since I last saw you but i’m not a lighthouse by any means.”

Chet snorted “just admiring the view my friend.”

Albert let out a bark of laughter “glad your time away hasn’t killed your humour completely you smooth talker. No wonder Stanley looks at you like you hung the moon in the sky.”

Chet shrugged as he took a drag from the cigarette “he’s helped me more then I’ve helped him.”

Albert hummed around his cigarette

As they watched the smoke spiral into the night sky Chet ventured

“How long has he been missing Albert?”

Albert stiffened.

“I may not be as smart as you but it doesn’t take a genius, neither you or Gordon has mentioned Cooper once, it used to be to you couldn’t go half a day without singing his praise in some way. And I doubt the boy left the FBI willingly and went to live his perfect life... without you I lingered on his tongue but he bit it down.

Albert was silent. Was he that obvious? Still.. He knew it didn’t help him to hide anymore

“He’s still missing Chet. He went into the Lodge too and he never came out.” albert managed to meet his gaze. He sounded so defeated.

As much as Chet had suffered, seeing Sam and now Albert; he could see how those on the outside suffered as well, if someone you cared for was missing how long did you hang on for? 10, 20, years? A lifetime? It was a lot to carry such a burden with no answer on the horizon.

Chet pat Albert gently on the shoulder “ I hope he comes home soon, don’t give up. When he does comes back having you will make it better. We just need someone to remind us of what’s important. Give us a reason for being.”

Albert gave him a sad smile “I’m glad you’re back Desmond.”
“I am too.” Chet muttered as he drew the older man in for a hug.

Sam and Chet would never have a normal relationship. It would never be like others nor would they hit the same milestones as others. They had been through too much, they completed each other in a way that went beyond words. They filled in the voids that been left in each other’s lives. As Chet lay there one night with Sam nuzzled into his chest, their heart beats in sync, he felt at peace for the first time he had found someone to make him whole.

End Notes

have an idea? hit me up at tumblr life-on-the-geek-side

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