Jackets

by DumpsterDiving101

Summary

Phil Lester, bad boy who wears the same leather jacket to school every day and makes a hobby out of scaring people. Dan Howell, future valedictorian who prefers a varsity jacket, and refuses to be shaken by anyone, bad boy or otherwise. And how they come together through a high school track, an English class, and a failing videography program.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

"Twat."

"Gaylord!"

"Asshole!"

Daniel Howell walked through the hallway, ignoring the insults hurled his way. He just kept walking, his long legs making it much faster. He hiked his blue varsity jacket up so it covered the back of his neck, running a hand through his dark, curly hair.

"Hey faggot, what the fuck?" Before Dan could turn around, he was shoved up against the lockers roughly, two fists gathering up his jacket in their hands and holding him in place. "You know no one
else did the assignment! Thanks to you, I’m failing English now!"

If it was anyone else being shoved up against the locker, they'd be shaking like a Chihuahua. The boy pushing against Dan was just as tall as he, which meant he towered over just about everyone, including the teachers. Stark black hair and a huge leather jacket that he filled out easily, Phil Lester was just short of terrifying, especially when he was pushing you up against the lockers, especially when he was angry. Which he was.

Dan glared up at him, his expression annoyed, but calm. "Yeah, well, if you'd done the homework then maybe you wouldn't be failing."

"No one did the homework! Except you, you fucking twink."

Dan didn't waiver. "Phil, get off me."

They were caught in a staring match, two strong personalities waiting to see who would back down first. "I'm not going to apologize for doing my homework, and I'm definitely not going to apologize for reminding Ms. Sanders to collect it. I worked hard on it, and I wasn't about to give that up just because you are a fucking idiot." His voice was getting louder, but he quickly checked himself, lowering it once more. "Now get off of me before Dr. Young sees us, and I let her know just how great of a student you are."

He gestured to the side, and Phil checked, ready to call his bluff. But he couldn't, because it was clear that the school principal, Dr. Young, was coming up fast.

"I can't get another detention," Phil muttered. His grip in Dan's jacket loosened, and Dan leant forwards, his voice poison.

"I know."

He shoved Phil back, brushing off his jacket pointedly, and sending one more glare at Phil before turning and leaving to get to his next class before the tardy bell rang.

- Phil slinked along the bleachers, his shoulders weighed down by his backpack in one hand, and a heavy camera pack in the other. "Hey Peej."

Pj glanced up nervously, quickly going back to typing on his handheld laptop. "Hey Phil."

Phil slumped next to him, setting the heavy objects on the bleacher beside him. "They're getting rid of video production."

"What?" Pj looked up, for real this time, his eyes wide. His hair was lighter than Dan's, and even curlier. For all Phil cared, that's where the resemblance ended. You could always see Dan's intelligence in his eyes, the way he questioned everything and remained unshaken. In comparison, Pj was a Chihuahua; shaky, nervous, and small.

Phil tried not to laugh at the comparison.

"But there's only one video class!" Pj complained, his voice going higher. "How could they get rid of this one?"

Phil shrugged. "Dunno. Something about there not being enough people who wanted to do it."
Pj's shoulders dropped, his small form slouching forwards so he rested his elbows on his knees, and his head in his hands. "I mean... there are just five of us."

"But video production is important!" Phil complained, looking out at the empty track below. Or, *almost* empty, besides a lone runner circling the track. "What the fuck, it isn't even track season yet."

Pj looked to wearing Phil was frowning, and hummed. "Yeah, Howell runs there most days after school."

"Seriously?"

He shrugged. "Yeah, how else would he be the best in the school?" Pj looked back at his screen, only half paying attention to his words. "I hear he's one of the best in the country. But it's just what I've heard... Yeah, that sucks. I really liked video production."

But Phil wasn't paying any attention anymore. Instead his gaze was trained on the boy circling the track, his normal jeans and varsity jacket stripped away for a simple pair of basketball shorts and a light gray muscle shirt. The same boy who was the cause for Phil's failing grade in English. The same boy who he pushed against the lockers, who despite being made smaller by Phil's actions, couldn't be made weak.

"Huh," Phil muttered. "So that's what the varsity jacket's from."

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"Hey twink," Phil called out as he strode towards Dan, who was just packing up his stuff to leave. "What was that, two laps? Damn, I should sign up for track. If that's what the best of the best is, then I'll just have to jog to place."

Dan gulped from his water bottle, taking his time to respond. Meanwhile, Phil admired how his sweat-stained shirt clung to the boy's body. "It was six laps, actually," Dan replied, still catching his breath. He managed a proud smile. "And I ran a nine minute mile, which in my book is just jogging. You couldn't do one of my miles without going into cardiac arrest."

"I couldn't do one of your miles without falling asleep," Phil corrected, though he wasn't sure if he'd ever ran a nine-minute mile in his life.

Dan walked up to him, so their chests almost touched, waiting expectantly, all traces of a smile gone. He smelt like herbs and sweat.

"What?" Phil asked, defensive.

Dan's voice was low and scratchy. Phil could feel his warm, labored breath on his skin. "You're standing in front of my backpack."

Phil quickly moved to the side, watching as Dan retrieved his full book bag and slung it over his shoulders, grunting. "Now here's the real workout. A mile run home, *with* a backpack heavier than an entire Pygmy family combined."

Phil blinked. "You're running home? Why don't you get a car?"

"Why don't you get a life?" Dan responded as he began to jog away, his tennis shoes pattering lightly against the pavement.

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Chemistry, third block. Dan sat far to Phil's left and a row forwards, but Phil could still see him. When the class was asked about what colleges they were applying for, Dan listed off at least five schools. Phil didn't even have one. The teacher raised his eyebrows, saying "Wow, those are some pretty prestigious schools. But I don't doubt that they'll be fighting over you, Mr. Howell." Then, he asked Dan what he was doing to prepare.

"I've got a ton of extracurriculars lined up for this year, and then some volunteering and track, of course. And I've got a part time job so I can afford sending in more than one application."

The teacher and a few students laughed. Phil just frowned, thinking.

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"Hey, I heard about video production," Dan said quietly, looking a little uncomfortable. "That must suck."

"Oh, um, yeah." Phil mumbled, taken aback. "It’s not very fair that there's room for so many drawing classes and not even one videography one. It's the only class I actually like."

Dan gave him a small smile and a mumble of encouragement before disappearing back into the throngs of students crowding the hallway.

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First period English, and Dan came in late.

"Mr. Howell, I hope you have a good reason for disrupting the class," Ms. Sanders, the teacher, asked pointedly.

Dan's hair was a mess, fluffy curls sticking out every which way. His eye bags were prominent. "I'm sorry, Ms. Sanders. Overslept."

Overslept? Dan looked like he'd hardly slept. And based on the whispers that seemed to float throughout the room, it seemed as though this was the only time this year Dan had been tardy.

He plopped into his desk one row over and three seats in front of Phil. As the teacher handed back papers, Phil could just peer far enough to see the markers on Dan's assignments- all nearly perfect scores. People said Dan might be the valedictorian.

Phil's grades were better than normal, an attempt to bring his grade above failing. But they were nothing in comparison.

"Now, please put your homework in a pile on my desk. You should have your grades back soon. I hope you all printed it out already, remember I do not accept late work. This assignment was for a large part of your homework grade."

Everyone started moving to the front, even Phil, who hadn't been dumb enough to skip out on this assignment. Everyone, that is- except Dan.

Dan sat at his desk, hallow eyes wide in shock. His entire face had gone so pale it was almost green.

"Are you going to throw up?" Phil muttered, half sarcastic, half worried.

"Maybe. I... I forgot about the assignment."

Dan truly looked like he might faint. Phil realized that while he may not care much for grades, Dan
was a completely different story. This one assignment could affect his grade for the whole class- and while 10% wasn't a big deal for Phil, it was astronomical for Dan.

Phil was a large boy, tall and broad shouldered. He was intimidating. He was scary. But he wasn't really mean, not at his core. After all, you can wear a leather jacket and still be a decent human being, right? So when Phil turned his assignment in to the pile, he did the nice thing- and knocked over the teachers open water bottle, drenching the whole stack of papers and *ruining them*.

"I'm sorry!" He hurried to pick up the water bottle and clear up the mess, but the damage had been done. Students scurried away from the spill, giving Phil a wide berth for all to glare at him by.

Dan stood in the back of the crowd, one hand covering his mouth.

After a few minutes of commotion and cleaning, the teacher announced that the papers were ruined, and Phil off claiming it was an accident. "You'll have to print off your papers again, and turn them in next class," she relented.

Phil couldn't see Dan's face. But he could feel his relief.

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Phil leant against the fence, watching the track with mild interest. School had already ended, but Dan hadn't made an appearance yet for his daily run.

"I never thought I'd thank someone for being clumsy," a voice said behind him, causing him to jump. There stood Dan, looking slightly more awake than he had that morning, and much more put together. He wore his usual running clothes, though today he wore a black undershirt, not a grey one.

Phil eyed him. "It's not nice to scare people."

"It's not nice to stalk people either," the boy said with a grin. "So whatcha doin' out here Philly? Just like hangin' by the track, is loitering an extracurricular now?"

His voice was full of teasing, which Phil registered- though he chose to focus on something else. "Philly?"

Dan nodded, clearly pleased. "I'm not an advanced student for nothing. Thought of it on my way over here. I think it suits you."

Phil was somewhere in between wanting to beat Dan up, and wanting to smile. "Huh. Why are you here again?"

The grin plastered across Dan's face was subdued so it resembled more of a gentle, appreciative smile. "Yeah. I wanted to thank you for knocking that water bottle over, it helped me out a lot."

"It was a complete accident," Phil defended. "I was shoved."

Dan smirked. "That's the story you're going with? Seriously? I mean, okay, but...." he shook his head, smirking slightly. Phil could take a nap in his dimple. "Well, I gotta go. But accident or not... thanks."

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A week passed without any contact between the two of them. They saw each other in class, but
didn't talk. Sometimes they caught each other's eye in the hallway, but the sea of people quickly pulled their gaze apart. Dan continued to run after school, and Phil started finding more reasons to go to the track field, whether to talk to Pj about the ending of the video program, or to lean against the fence a few minutes, 'waiting for the roads to clear up', he defended. Or rather, he would have defended, if anyone had questioned him.

Dan and Phil spoke again a whole eight days later, when they were walking to the track at the same time, for Phil to talk to Peej (who liked doing his homework in the bleachers), and for Dan to, well, run. Phil asked why he ran so much.

"It's a major stress reliever." Dan explained, adjusting his backpack straps. "I'm sane when I run."

"You're so weird Howell," Phil said with absolutely no honesty in his tone.

"Maybe." He shrugged. "But at least I'm sane for twenty minutes a day."

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Dan got an A+ on the assignment in English. Phil could feel his pride, radiating all the way back to his own desk.

Throughout the entire English class, Dan kept glancing out the window; not in a bored way, but more expectant. Near the end, he physically jolted when he saw that there was a truck parked just outside the classroom, a big delivery truck. Phil didn't get why he was so excited. The school got deliveries all the time, what was the big deal?

When class ended, Phil packed his stuff and left, his backpack slumped against his back tiredly as he walked to his next class.

"Phil!"

Before he could turn around, there was a hand on his arm, pulling him towards the door. Dan. Stumbling to keep up, Phil ran behind the track star as they wove through the hallway.

"What- Dan, slow down!"

"This is barely a speed walk, keep up!"

They exited the crowds of students and Dan pushed open a door, tugging Phil outside. His grip on Phil's arm loosened, falling until he was holding his hand. Dan didn't seem to notice- but Phil definitely did.

Dan let go of his hand, walking around the truck, reading the labels on the packages scattered around. Phil wasn't staring- but Dan looked really good in that varsity jacket. Like.... really good.

"What are we doing out here?" Phil asked, trying to sound tough.

"I just have to.... yes! Phil, look at this package."

Phil walked over cautiously. "Is it going to explode as soon as I touch it?"

"Just read it."

"You didn't say no." Phil walked over anyways, reading the label anyways. "So what? It's... from Canon. So?"
Dan looked at him like he was the stupidest person in the world. "Phil! It's... video equipment."

Phil felt like he'd been punched. "Wait.... what do you- like, for making videos?"

Dan rolled his eyes. "No toad, it's for drawing. Of course it's for videos! For video production class, a necessary class in this generation of technology."

Touching the box gently, Phil's mind raced. "You.... how?"

A shrug and small smile. "I went to the schools with students considering to come here for school next year, and told the students and parents about our impressive video production program. Then I told Dr.Young about the new wave if students excited for video production class, and they reinstated it as a class." He tapped on the box lightly. "I even got them to get some new equipment."

Phil shook his head, smiling. "I don't even know."

"I think the words you're looking for are 'thank you'."

Dan was smiling so smugly, and Phil found himself staring at the other boy’s lips.

Phil walking forwards. Dan walked back, until his back was pressed against the wall and Phil was leaning over him, one hand on each side of his head.

"Thank you," he whispered.

Dan licked his lips, his eyes flickering down to Phil's lips.

"I want to kiss you," Phil whispered. And he did.

Pushing Dan against the wall, he kissed him, starting out soft and getting more aggressive as the seconds passed. He pushed hard against Dan, squeezing his varsity jacket in his firsts, holding him in place. Dan's hands fluttered around Phil, not quite sure where to land; wrapping around Phil's neck, a hand on his shoulder, feeling his leather jacket, flat hands pressing against his chest.

Dan shoved him back, his eyes wide with fear.

And Phil just... stood there. Not quite sure whether to be angry, or ashamed, or just... sad.

Dan looked so... worried, like he'd just made a horrible mistake.

"Oh God."

"Dan," Phil said, the words getting stuck in his throat. "I'm.... I'm sorry."

"What?" The boys brown eyes snapped up to meet Phil's, still wide in shock. "No, I... shit! My next class is across the building! I'm going to be late!"

Dan grabbed his backpack from where he'd dropped it on the ground, whirling around and running back into the building.

Phil stood perfectly still, not quite sure... about anything.

Except for one thing: *that was so fucking good.*
They didn't talk the rest of the day.

Phil sprinted to his car, his feet splashing through the thick puddles forming on the ground. Practically diving into the driver's seat, he slammed the door closed.

Shivering, Phil turned the car on with no intention to do anything beyond warm up. The parking lot was too crowded to move anyways.

Phil almost jumped at the sound of pounding on the passenger side door. There stood Dan, soaking wet, gesturing frantically.

Phil gestured for him to get in the backseat, and Dan jumped in, sliding into the back middle seat. "Thanks man, I almost drowned out there."

Phil smiled with amusement. "In the rain?"

"'A little rain never hurt anyone, but a lot can kill you,'" Dan quoted. "Why can't I sit in the passenger seat?"

"Because my backpack's there."

"Nice to see where I rank."

Phil rolled his eyes. "You looked like you were in a hurry."

Dan shrugged. His hair was extra curly from the rain, and his clothes and backpack were soaking wet. "Whatever. Do you need my address?"

"Why would I need your address?"

"If you're driving me home."

Phil leaned on the center consul, raising his eyebrows. "And who said I'm driving you home."

"God did. Clearly he made it rain so I wouldn't run home, so you could drive me home." Dan considered. "Also, you invited me into your car."

"You're like a vampire. You have to be invited in."

"Yeah, but I'm not going to bite your neck." Dan leaned forwards, whispering against Phil's ear, "At least, I'm not planning on it."

"I'm not going to make you get out of the car, but I don't uber people. This bus only has one stop, and that's at my house."

Dan shrugged, leaning against the seat. "Sure. Better than running in the rain."

"Is anyone home?" Dan asked, setting his backpack on the kitchen table comfortably.

"Nope, everyone's still at work. And my brother Martyn is in university right now."

"Huh, I didn't know you had a brother. You're a youngest child." Dan stripped off his wet varsity
jacket, putting it over a chair gently. "I'm the oldest."

"Does it matter?"

"Basic psychology suggests that I'd be a high achiever, and you'd be used to getting your way. Is that accurate?" Dan leant against the kitchen table comfortably, eyes flickering around the house.

Phil shrugged, ditching his damp jacket on the chair next to Dan's. "I don't get everything I want."

Dan raised an eyebrow. "You wanted me all alone with you in your house, and you got that."

"Says who?"

"Says me." Dan watched Phil carefully. "And here I am. What happens next?"

Phil snorted. "I make you walk home in the rain."

"Lie."

"I tell you you're making things up."

"Another lie. Oh, where is the truth?"

"Now I really want to make you walk home in the rain."

Dan smiled, letting the subject drop for the moment. "Do you have anything to eat?"

"Nothing you'd be interested in."

Dan bit his lip, considering. "Try me."

Phil laughed, grabbing two apples from the counter and tossing one to Dan. "I was just talking about fruit."

"That's what I was talking about too."

They caught each other's eyes for a moment, exchanging a glance.

"I'm all wet," Dan muttered, his tone making it clear he was aware of the innuendo. "Can I borrow some of your clothes."

"Clothes are overrated."

For a second, it was clear that Dan believed Phil. His expression dropped, replaced with one of nervousness.

"I'm kidding. Come on, you can borrow some of my clothes."

Phil finished his apple as they walked upstairs, tossing it in his room waste basket.

His room was nice, relatively speaking. All the same bland brown furniture, scattered with figurines from different animes and video games. One full wall was covered in band posters.

Dan sat on Phil's bed, looking around quietly as Phil got out some new clothes, tossing them over and grabbing some for himself.

"First time you've had a boy in your bed?" Dan asked awkwardly.
"Nope." Phil muttered. "I mean... I have friends over sometimes. We share a bed."

"Oooh, friends." Dan pulled his shirt over his head, and Phil froze, trying not to stare.

"You like making assumptions, huh?"

"Love it." Dan stood up and shimmied off his jeans carelessly. "Are you gay or bi?"

"Who said I'm either?"

"You did. When you kissed me."

"I don't remember much talking going on."

"Actions speak louder than words."

Phil smiled, pulling a fresh shirt on so he was now wearing only dry clothes- save, of course, for his boxers. "So how should I be taking this? You, not wearing any trousers, in my bedroom? It seems like your actions are speaking pretty loudly."

"Shut up, Lester."

"Aren't you supposed to have a ton of after school stuff or something?"

"Meh. Everything was either canceled or hasn't been done yet."

"Homework?"

"I can do it at home."

"It's seven o'clock."

Dan sat up fast from the bed. They'd played video games for a while, talking and bantering. When they got tired of that, they just flopped on Phil's bed, sometimes talking. Sometimes just... being.

Dan groaned. "I should go. I'm taking four college level classes."

"Ew."

Dan nodded. "Drive me to my house?"

"Legs not working anymore, track star?"

"Nope. They're dead."

"Wonderful." Phil sat up, groaning. The noise made Dan bite his lip, forcing himself to look away. "I'll drive you, but only 'cause it's raining, and you're backpack weighs more than you do."

Dan glanced out the window, scowling. "Seriously? Is it going to flood?"

"Hopefully. No school."

"Yeah, but it'll set the entire schedule back at least a week. And the economic downsides-" his voice trailed off, seeing Phil wasn't paying attention. "What, too smart for you?"
"You're too smart for me." Phil sighed, and forced himself to his feet. "Come on, let's go."

They went downstairs, grabbing their respective jackets as they passed through the kitchen. "Oh Phil, I didn't know you had a friend over."

"Well now you do. I'll be back in a few." Before his mom could ask any further questions, Phil was out the door, Dan right behind him.

"Your mom seems nice."

Phil stiffened. "Yeah."

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"This your place?"

"Yeah." Dan glanced out the window, looking at the significantly smaller house than the Lester's', in no rush to leave.

"Wait." Phil squeezed the steering wheel, forcing himself to collect himself. "You've been messing with me all night. I just need to know, did you like the kiss?"

Dan was tired, it was clear. Seeing his house again clearly wasn't something that made him happy. "Actions speak louder than words, Phil." Collecting himself, Dan grabbed one of the jackets from the back seat and his backpack from the floor of the car, getting out into the thundering rain.

"Yeah, but you pushed me away!" Phil called out, a ring of thunder shaking the Earth.

"After I kissed back!"

The car door was slammed, and the figure disappeared, running through the sheets of water draining from the sky. Phil left after Dan got inside, shivering and cold.

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Phil slept well that night. Dan, with four college level classes worth of homework, did not.

"Hey faggot!"

Dan turned around, scowling at Phil. "Nice slur, asshole. What do you want?"

Phil raised his eyebrows in mock surprise, taking his time to play with Dan. "What? 'Asshole?' Tsk tsk, I hope the college recruiters don't hear you!"

"You know nothing about college recruiters," Dan mumbled, scraping a hand through his hair in annoyance. His hair was so curly it was poufy- a sure sign of an all-nighter. Lowering his voice, Dan allowed himself to be vulnerable, if only for a second. "What do you want?"

"You. Under the bleachers, during third block."

"Hard pass," Dan snapped, turning and walking away.

"Hey twink, I wasn't done talking to you!" Phil ran to catch up, annoyed at the unexpectant exercise. "Chill, I was just joking. Hey Dan... Dan, stop, I'm trying to talk to you!" Phil grabbed his backpack, yanking him back.
Dan whirled around. "What." He spat the word, like it tasted bitter in his mouth.

"You took my jacket home with you last night. I have your varsity jacket in my bag, let me just-"

"Not here," Dan pleaded, looking around uncomfortably. "Not with people watching."

Phil raised an eyebrow, but slung his bag back on his back, the jacket remaining inside. "What? Don't want to let people know you're...." he leaned closer, lowering his voice to a whisper playfully. "A fag?"

The backpack loosely hanging on Phil's shoulder thumped on the ground, thundering as loud as the previous night's rain. Dan slammed Phil against the locker, one elbow against his throat. Dan's eyes were glossy, and he snarled, "I'm not a fucking fag, Phil. I'm not a fucking twink. And I'm not any of your other stupid-fucking-slurs you can come up with. So shut the fuck up." Dan held him there for a moment, staring at him with pure hatred in his eyes. Then he pushed Phil away, storming down the hall.

Dan was tardy to class that day.

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Dan ran around the track over and over, only stopping for water. He reached his daily goal of six laps and kept going, counting mentally each time he passed the starting line. Seven..... eight.... nine....

After nine, he stopped for water once more. Lying next to his water bottle on the cold metal bench, was none other than his jacket.

Phil was nowhere to be seen. Dan got a drink, and kept running.

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Dan and Phil didn't talk again for a week, at least. Maybe it was more. Either way, it didn't matter. Dan was doing more laps on the track each day, and Phil was getting better grades than ever, D's turning to C's, and the occasional B.

There were college applications to fill out.

Homework to do.

Running.

Lots of running.

Every day.... running.

Phil stayed after some days, doing extra work with the video production class. He was made into one of the leaders, learning how to use the new equipment, preparing for next year's influx of freshmen excited about film.

Dan kept getting A's. No surprise there.

Dan still had Phil's leather jacket. Phil didn't know how to ask for it back.

But as much as they delighted in ignoring each other, eventually it was time to at least be civil. They could've gone longer, but apparently God was getting fed up with them, and decided some divine intervention was needed- in the form of rain.
Phil stood under a tree near where his car was parked, waiting. As soon as he caught the other boy's eye, he nodded towards his car, walking over and getting in, following a few seconds later by Dan himself.

"Hey."

"Hey."

They both stared out the windshield at the rain streaming down, forming little puddles on top of the unmoving wipers.

Phil sighed, reaching over and turning the car on, knocking the switch to turn the wipers on medium.

"Video production going good?" Dan asked weakly. He held his backpack in his lap, forming a sort of wall.

"Yeah."

"Cool."

The car remained unmoving.

"And... your, uh, school stuff? College level classes?"

"It's... good. Lots of homework."

"Yeah. That's... yeah."

"Yeah."

Dan huffed. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have shoved you earlier."

"Shoved me?"

"I shouldn't have pushed you," Dan corrected. "I'd barely slept that night and I was upset by your use of derogative terms towards me. But I shouldn't have taken it out on you physically."

Phil hummed, tapping on the steering wheel and watching cars pass by, still not even bothering to start the car. "Hmm. I actually don't just remember you pushing me. I'm pretty sure you actually pushing me against the lockers, and then told me to shut the fuck up."

"God, you are so-"

"Not a good friend?" Phil supplied, anger clear in his voice. "Funny, I was just about to say the same about you."

There was a moment of silence. The two boys didn't look at each other, just staring straight forwards at the cars driving past them. The rain wasn't letting up.

"Since when have you ever been friends," Dan asked, and it was a fair question. They used to hate each other, to some degree at least.

"Don't look at me. You're the one who saved the videography program."

"Yeah, after you destroyed those papers." Dan was silent, thinking. "Why'd you do that anyways?"
Phil huffed. "You act like I'm inherently a bad person."

"Well thanks, but I don't need your charity."

"Ha!" Finally, Phil turned to Dan, having finally found the argument he was looking for. "That's BS. You needed me to ruin those tests if you ever had a shot at being valedictorian. And you needed me to drive you home that day it rained, and you needed me to give you back your jacket because you took the wrong one, and you needed me not to beat the shit out of you when you screamed in my face in the hallway! Face it Dan, if anyone else were to do that, you think I would've just let them leave like that? But I didn't beat you up, because-" his voice caught.

"Because?" Dan's voice was soft, not competitive like it usually was.

"Because if people saw that you got in a fight in school grounds, you'd be in serious trouble," Phil finished, causing Dan's heart to drop.

"Oh."

Phil paused for a moment. "But thanks for... apologizing and stuff."

The lump in Dan's throats only grew. "Um... yeah. No problem."

An uncomfortable silence consumed the car. The parking lot had cleared out enough, so Phil started the engine and shifted the car into drive, pulling out of the parking spot.

They didn't speak again until they pulled up in the driveway of Phil's house, and Phil parked the car. Dan looked out the window, and for the first time realized they weren't in front of his house. "Um, Phil?"

"It's a one stop bus, remember? We're here. Everybody off."

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"Does this count as a hostage negotiation? Kidnapping, perhaps?"

Phil considered, his attention half preoccupied with the video game he was playing- a racing game of some kind, not that Dan cared. By picking up the second controller, he was giving in- something he refused to do.

"Not a hostage negation," Phil decided, eyes trained on the screen. "We're not doing any negotiating. And it's not kidnapping, you willing got in my car."

"If an uber driver says 'get in, I'll take you home' and he brings you to the middle of a corn field to murder you, then is it really kidnapping? I mean, you did get in the car with him, willingly."

"Not paying attention," Phil interjected. "Too busy racing. Come in, just pick up the remote. It's no fun playing on my own."

"Sentences by Phil," Dan muttered. "Is everything you say unintentionally perverted?"

"Not all of them are unintentional," Phil smirked, jerking the game controller to the side abruptly. "I think that genius brain of yours is just filthy."

Dan plopped down on Phil's bed, groaning. Phil tried not to be too distracted by the noise. "Leave my genius brain out of this."
The round ended, and Phil set down his controller, sighing and pushing Dan's unused one to the side. "You're so lame. Why do you even get scholarships?"

"Cause I'm smart, and charming. Just not for you."

"I get the boring Dan. Why does God hate me?"

"Shut up." Dan laughing, shoving Phil gently. He stood, stretching out. "I need to go soon. If I actually want to use those scholarships, I need to do my homework."

Phil stood abruptly, surprising Dan. "Wait. Come on, we have to do something first."

Dan looked hesitant, though he still managed a smile. "Like what?"

Phil leant up against the wall, giving Dan a few feet of space. "That friends thing. How stuck are we with that?"

Dan hummed, considering it. "We're not."

"We're not friends, or we're not stuck with it?"

Dan grinned. "Yes."

Inhaling, Phil took a few slow steps forwards, the other boy's eyes trained on him all the while. "This is me giving you a chance to run away."

"Noted," Dan joked lightly, though he stayed in place.

"Last warning."

"Got it."

Phil stepped closer to Dan, pulling him away from the door and towards the wall, putting one hand on each side of his head. "I'm going to kiss you now."

Dan caught his breath, eyes half closed and lips just parted and Phil leant closer slowly. "N-nice question there Phil. Good w-way to ask for my consent, y-you dog."

"I'm going to kiss you now," Phil repeated. "So if you want me to not, now's a good time to tell me."

Dan licked his lips, stuttering. "Um, y-yeah, I got the message. Nice Phil, real nice, just backing me into a corner like this-"

Phil's lips pressed against Dan's slowly, effectively shutting him up. And for a few seconds they both held perfectly still, lips pressed together, just enjoying the sensation. Just feeling.

Then Phil's hand drifted to Dan's waist, touching gently. And for a bad boy who wore leather jackets and cussed and got bad grades and probably kicked bunnies for fun, his touch was so fucking gentle, oh God.

They started moving slowly, Dan making the first move. Slow, soft kisses turned to sloppy open mouthed ones, hands wandering but never anywhere too dangerous. It was like their first kiss in many ways; how Phil kept Dan pushed against the wall like he might run off, how Dan didn't know where to put his hands so they traveled, up and down Phil's torso and pressing against his chest. But this time, they didn't push him back; this time, they held tightly onto Phil's jacket, gripping it in handfuls.
They had no reason to stop kissing. So they didn't. Time stood still as the two boys melted into the kiss. As soon as it got too heated, they slowed down, returning to the less aggressive ones, softly easing back into a rhythm.

Dan, despite all of his academic prowess, got impatient easily. His hands wandered lower, tugging at Phil's shirt needily, pinching the edge of the boy's jeans. Phil carefully pulled his hands back up to his shoulders, but Dan whined, rocking his entire body against Phil's.

Dan pushed against him, pushing Phil to step backwards as their lips never lost contact. He shoved him onto the bed, quickly climbing on top. Phil was pressed into his sheets, the smaller boy on top of him as they kept kissing, kissing, endlessly.

Phil rolled them over, gripping Dan's uncertain hands and holding them above the boy's head. And they kept going, only stopping when the first moan was let out.

Was it Dan? Or did the low groan of pleasure escape from Phil's mouth? Neither was quite sure, but Phil was the one to pull back, his hands still gripping Dan's wrists softly. "We have to stop."

"Why?" Dan whined, impatient.

They were both breathing deeply, all the many minutes of excursion having stolen away their breath. "Because," Phil said, the words foreign in his mouth. He gasped for breathe, pushing himself into a sitting position. "Just... because."

-------------------

"See you later," Dan waved slightly. "Friends?"

Phil shook his head. "We're not friends."

"Oh yeah? What are we then?"

"What are we?" Phil repeated with a sly smile. "See ya."

"Yeah, whatever. See ya."

-------------------

"Anyone join any clubs yet?"

At least two thirds of the chemistry class raised their hands. Among them were the tall boy with curly hair, and the taller boy with straight black hair.

His hair may have been the straightest thing about him.

"Anyone doing.... student council?"

Three hands stayed up. Among them was Dan's.

"Anyone doing.... any sports? Track? Basketball?"

Dan's hand remained up.

"Honors society? EIA? National Math Society?"

His hand didn't waiver.
"Wow, Daniel, you certainly have a busy schedule. How do you have time for friends?"

Dan laughed. "I don't."

"It's raining again. My place?"

Dan shook his head. "I've got clubs and stuff. I'll be here until five, maybe it'll clear up by then."

Phil's heart sunk. "Oh. You free this weekend?"

Another no. "The math team is going to a competition. It's overnight."

Phil sighed. "You really are busy, huh?"


They didn't kiss for two weeks. Sometimes, they talked in the halls, or before class. Nothing too deep.

Phil like talking to Dan. He was so intelligent, Phil just wanted to soak up his words and keep them, hold them tight to be used on the next written exam.

"Daniel Howell!" Phil called out in an announcer's voice, jogging towards the track, the camera held tightly in his hands. "True or false, you run for track?"

Dan smiled widely, despite the sweat dripping down his forehead. "That's true."

"True or false, you're going to beat the school record for fastest mile?" Phil ran along beside Dan, having to run to keep up with Dan's fast jog.

"True! I can feel it, it's happening this year!"

"Well it better! Because this is your last chance before graduation! Do you feel the pressure?"

"I feel the pressure!" Dan laughed, his smile full of light. His entire body radiated energy, and happiness.

"This clip is going to air on the first edition of our school's new monthly TV show," Phil panted, the heavy camera slowing him down. "What do you have to say to our viewers?"

"Eat my dust!"

"Daaaaaan."

He laughed brightly. "No, work hard to achieve your dreams. Now Phil, I'm going to pass out if I keep running and talking, so can I get back to my workout?"

"Well there you have it audience! Dan Howell, future Olympian!" Phil came to a stop, filming Dan a little longer as he sped off, transitioning into a sprint.

"Howell!"
Dan jumped. "Jeez, Phil. What do you want?"

"You're schedule," Phil announced, not even hesitating. "We're having a sleepover."

"Do I have any say in this?"

Phil held out his open palm. "Phone. And no, you have zero say."

Dan handed Phil however hesitantly, watching as he typed in his number. "About time you get my number. Text me when." He turned, and strode away.

"Don't think this means we're friends!" Dan called back.

"Never," Phil laughed.

-----------------

Dan laughed loudly, the joyous noise filling the dark car with light. "Oh my gosh Phil, who even are you?"

"It wasn't my fault!" Phil defended. "The squirrel just came out of nowhere!"

"Only you, only you."

"Hey, you're the one who fell *up* an escalator," Phil defended, aggressively pointing a French fry his way. "How do you even screw up that badly?"

"I dunno," Dan took a bite out of his burger, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. "I tried taking the steps two at a time. I guess the power just got to my head."

Phil wiped his hands on a wad of already filthy napkins, making sure there was no ketchup left over when he reached for Dan's arm. "Come on, lemme see."

Dan held up his elbow proudly, watching as Phil inspected it, running his thumb over the scarred skin lightly. "See? Now I've got escalator teeth marks permanently etched into my skin!"

"Etched?" Phil raised his eyebrows, smiling dumbly. "Seriously? Oh my God, you're so fucking posh."

"I told you, I was obsessed with Winnie the Pooh! And at least I'm not as Northern as you are, innit?"

Phil shoved him lightly. "Screw off."

Dan grinned. "Come here."

Phil leaned in, though he wasn't quite sure why. "What?"

"I wanna... wanna try something." Dan gripped Phil's jawline sloppily, pulling him close to kiss sloppily. They kissed for a few seconds before Dan shrieked and yanked backwards, spluttering.

"Oh God, that's disgusting! You had pickles in your burger, didn't you?"

Phil shrugged, smiling proudly. "No regrets."

"I'm not kissing you again until you brush your teeth," Dan decided. "And rinse with mouthwash. And floss."
"Who said we're going to kiss again?" The taller boy wondered aloud. "Maybe I won't brush my teeth ever again, so that I can make sure I don't get any more of your awkward groping."

"If you don't brush your teeth ever again, me not wanted to kiss you will be the least of your issues. You won't get anyone to kiss you- ever."

Phil looked at Dan maniacally. Carefully setting his take out bag in the backseat, he crawled over, pushing Dan against the car door and holding him in place. Dan whined, pushing against him without force.

Phil reached over and locked his hand around Dan's chin as the smaller boy wriggled under his grip. "No, Phil!" He laughed, "Don't you dare!"

Phil stopped before their lips touched, his head already starting to tilt. "Tell me if you want me to stop."

Dan pouted, his chin still being held firmly in Phil's hand. "I was just playing the game. You don't have to ask every time." He lowered his voice, shyer. "I like when you are a little rougher. I'll let you know if you need to actually stop."

"Safeword?" Phil suggested.

"Red?"

"This isn't a fanfic, Dan."

"Yeah, but it's easy to remember and it gets the point across."

He rolled his eyes. "Fine. Color?"

"Grassy green. Kiss me already, you're crushing me."

And they kissed. And Dan only was a little bit annoyed at the lingering taste of pickles on Phil's lips.

-------------------

"Deepest fear?"

"Failure. You?"

"You're not a failure," Phil muttered, fingers pinching the blanket over them absently. "And you'll never be one."

"Hey, you said deepest darkest." Dan's eyes were bright, despite the room being do dark. "And that's the darkest," he whispered. "You?"

Phil exhaled slowly, racking his mind. "I dunno. Don't think about it much."

"What drives you?" Dan asked, softly. He was lying on his side, head rested on his hands delicately.

"You've been in my car Dan."

"Stop evading my question."

Phil exhaled again, closing his eyes. He lay on his back, one hand underneath his neck and the other draped across his chest limply. "I dunno. I just kind of... wake up, and keep going."
"Sounds sad. You need something new and exciting in your life."

Phil snorted. "Like what? Maybe I'm just lonely. What do you think, should I try to get someone in my bed? A track star, perhaps?"

"Doesn't count," Dan muttered. "We're still wearing clothes, so I'm not 'in your bed' in that usage. Try again."

"That can be changed," Phil whispered, rolling over Dooley do he and Dan were face to face. His pale fingers stroked the dark hair away from Dan's eyes almost absently. "Parents' room is downstairs. They'll never know."

"I'm not sleeping with you," Dan decided, rolling onto his back.

"Why not?"

"Cause you'll give me crabs. I don't know Phil, cause we're friends? Wasn't that your excuse last night?"

"We're not friends," Phil chuckled darkly.

"Oh yeah?" Dan watched him, staring at Phil intently. As if he could read Phil's mind by watching his hands fiddle about, read his thoughts by assessing his features. "Then what are we?"

"Something dangerous," Phil answered quietly. "And something I don't want to mess with. Not quite yet."

Dan rolled closer to Phil under the covers, their chests facing each other. They were touching, but only barely. Not quite cuddling. Not yet.

"When can we mess with it?"

"I don't know. Sometime."

Dan waited, listening to Phil's steady breathing for a few moments. "Okay. I can do that."

He reached out his hand under the covers slowly, searching until he found Phil's. They slowly intertwined.

Neither boy looked at each other. But both blushed, doing their best not to let on how simple hand holding made them so unsure. Because making out could be written off as lust. But holding hands meant there was something else. Something real.

---------------

They didn't kiss at school. They didn't kiss in front of people. Actually, for the next few days, they didn't kiss at all.

But they wanted to.

It was difficult to see each other what with Dan's busy schedule. Phil had things to do too, with other friends, with videoing, and with his recent attempt to do slightly better in school. He couldn't date someone as smart as Dan and fail school at the same time, that would just be embarrassing. And Phil wanted to date Dan, he did. So he had to get his grades up.

"It looks like we have perfect attendance today," Ms. Sanders noted as she walked over to her desk.
"Everyone in row one, two, three.... oh, I was wrong. It seems Dan isn't here today."

Phil quickly glanced over. Sure enough, Dan was nowhere to be found.

"Is he sick?"

The class was filled with a low murmuring, everyone guessing why the smartest student in their class- and one of the only people in the school who cared about the perfect attendance award- was gone.

"I think he got hurt," someone said. "I heard he hurt his leg in gym. They had to drive him to the hospital."

"Oh, that's horrible," the teacher commented blandly. "Well, I hope he gets better soon. Now class, if you'd open up your books to page 127..."

"Ms. Sanders?" Phil asked, not bothering to raise his hand. "Can I go to the bathroom?"

"I certainly hope so." She glanced at the clock. "But class just started, you should have-"

"Thanks!" Phil interrupted, scooping up his backpack and practically running out the door.

"Don't forget the hall pass!"

Phil grabbed the pass, hurrying out the door. He ditched the pass against the wall, and walked right past the bathroom and out the school doors.

-------------

The first thing Dan said when Phil entered his curtained off corner of the ER was "You're supposed to be in school."

"Yeah, so are you." Phil walked over with his hands in his pockets, observing the boot wrapped around Dan's ankle. "Nice work there Dan. You really screwed yourself over."

Dan rolled his eyes. "What can I say? I go all or nothing. This isn't that bad though, doctors say I can walk normally in about two weeks. Can't run for a month, minimum."

He looked so sad and downtrodden that Phil tried for an encouraging smile. "Hey, if you need pity, I can give you pity. Just let me know."

Two doe eyes looked up at Phil hopefully. "I need pity."

"You poor baby," Phil intoned, attempting at being helpful. "That's horrible. You didn't deserve it."

"I hate your pity."

They stayed in silence then, just allowing themselves to process everything. "I'm never going to get a track scholarship, am I."

"Probably not. And you won't be getting a perfect attendance award either." Dan sent daggers in Phil's direction, and he held up his hands in surrender. "Hey, I thought we were still doing the pity party thing."

Dan sighed. "Go back to school. I'll text you my schedule, and you can pick up my homework and drop it off at my house."
"And why would I do that?"

"Because I'll have crutches soon," Dan threatened, "And I'm not afraid to use them."

"I could take you," Phil retaliated without any merit behind the words. "Any day of the year. Even when you're not injured."

"Yeah, whatever." Dan reached over and grabbed Phil's hand, pulling him over until he could grab his collar, pulling him down and kiss the boy, however briefly. "My mom will be here soon. You'd better get out of here before then."

Phil didn't question it. Instead, he brushed some of Dan's fringe aside, messing it up a bit to annoy him, and then stood. "Send me your class list. See you later."

"You'd better. Otherwise I'll crawl over to your house with my three good limbs and fuck you up."

-------

Dan was laying on his bed when Phil came in, homework in tow. It was the first time Phil had ever been inside Dan's house. It was even smaller than it appeared from outside.

Dan lay on his mattress with a mass of pillows keeping him sitting upright, with his foot propped up slightly, a bag of ice sitting lopsidedly on top of it.

"Are you trying to freeze your foot off?"

"Yes. Papers?"

Phil set them on the bed next to Dan, still looking around. "Nice place."

"Don't lie Phil. Anyways, thanks for bringing them. I'll see you."

"Yeah, okay." Phil leant down to kiss him, causing Dan to hiss.

"Not here. Not with mom right over there."

Phil swallowed the lump in his throat. "Yeah, okay. Yeah. Um.... I'll see you at school."

"See you at school."

--------

From: Dan
Have you finished the assignment yet?

From: Phil
Nah, I'm on twitter

From: Dan
Nm then

From: Phil
what do you want?

From: Dan
You. Under the bleachers
Jk
such joke

From: Phil
omg

From: Dan
Omg? Srlly?
Are you 5?

From: Phil
Omg is cool slang!

From: Dan
Ok grandpa
I'm bored

From: Phil
that’s why your texting me?

From: Dan
HW is dragging me down
Wanna do something stupid

From: Phil
So that's why you're texting me

From: Dan
You said it, not me

From: Phil
What do you want to do?

From: Dan
There's the teacher's bathroom around the corner
All the teachers in this wing have classes rn

From: Phil
Meet you there?

From: Dan
Wait a few minutes. I'll go first.

"Yes Dan?"

"May I use the restroom?"

"You may."

Dan shifted in his seat, standing on one foot and reaching for his crutches on the floor. He clomped out of the room agonizingly slowly. You could hear the crutches clump against the floor with each step, even as he walked down the hallway.
Phil waited.

From: Dan
Go

"Can I go to the bathroom?"

The teacher sighed. "You may, yes."

-----------

"Hey Phil?" Dan muttered in between kisses.

"Yeah?"

"I really like kissing you."

"Good."

-----------

That Friday, there was a school wide assembly. Mostly to let the students know about track signups starting soon, and how there was a new dress code concerning hats. And, of course, the premier of the new videography program with the first episode of the monthly news.

It was pretty decent for a first episode. There were a few more students than in the old program, so there was a mesh of different 'news broadcasters' and announcing styles. The best segment by far was Phil's weather report, where he suggested that in the next month it would be warm and sunny with a small blizzard. Next month, it'd definitely have to be more accurate, but for now the joke made everyone laugh.

The audience quieted down when the camera began getting shaky, and the track came into view. Running on the track was a tall boy with dark, curly hair, already shiny with sweat.

"True or false, you're going to beat the school record for fastest mile?" Phil's voice echoed through the room.

Dan shifted in his seat uncomfortably. The boot on his leg felt twenty pounds heavier.

"True! I can feel it, it's happening this year!" Dan's voice was so full of hope in the clip, mixed with the panting and excursion from running. The real Dan, the one sitting in the audience with his crutches by his side, could feel all the eyes in him.

"Well it better! Because this is your last chance before graduation! Do you feel the pressure?"

"I feel the pressure!" Dan laughed, his smile full of light. His entire body radiated energy, and happiness.

"This clip is going to air on the first edition of our school's new monthly TV show," Phil panted, the heavy camera slowing him down. "What do you have to say to our viewers?"

"Eat my dust!"

"Daaaaan."

He laughed brightly. "No, work hard to achieve your dreams. Now Phil, I'm going to pass out if I
keep running and talking, so can I get back to my workout?"

"Well there you have it audience! Dan Howell, future Olympian!” Phil came to a stop, filming Dan a little longer as he sped off, transitioning into a sprint.

The show transitioned into another segment, something about upcoming dissections. But the damage was done.

Dan stood up shakily, getting his crutches and slowly making his way to the door. No one stopped him, not even the teachers.

--------

From: Phil
Im sorry

From: Dan
You didn't do anything wrong

From: Phil
I'm still sorry
Where r u?

From: Dan
Library
studying

From: Phil
Want company

From: Dan
No

--------

Dan had more free time now.

He was able to do some of his homework in gym class. He didn't stay after school anymore for running, and Phil was driving him home every day so he didn't have to hobble the whole way there on his crutches.

------

"Mum, calm down," Phil complained. "It's only Martyn."

"Only my baby boy!" His mum replied, wringing her hands in a dish towel. "Oh, I miss him so much! I hope he likes the food!"

"How could he not? He's been eating university food for the past few months."

Mother Lester sent him a stern look.

"I mean, how could he not like the food? You're a great cook!"

She nodded, pleased. "Better. Now, go change. You look like a deviant."
"Muuuummm..."

"No buts! Change."

Phil slouched up the stairs to his room, grabbing out some different clothes. He glanced in the mirror. He was hardly deviant- black skinny jeans and a leather jacket just were what looked good on him. It didn't matter, he was fighting a losing battle. His mum had been extra harsh on his appearance ever since he'd dyed his hair black for the first time- nearly 2 years ago.

His mum was wearing more formal clothes, so Phil decided he should do the same. He compromised with a pair of good looking jeans and a button up dark gray shirt- though he didn't button the top buttons.

"Much better," his mum complimented when he came downstairs. "Dinner's just about ready. Your father should be home with Martyn soon."

-----

From: Phil
My brother Martyn is coming home tonight from uni
Moms making her traditional dinner of salmon and mash and I can't wait

From: Dan
Lol nice
My mom made her traditional dinner tonight too
It's called 'there's pizza in the freezer, we'll be home late'

"Oh, are you sure?" Phil could hear his mother's voice from the other room. "Well, I want you to stay safe. Okay, take care. Love you."

From: Phil
Oh no
She was just talking on the phone with someone
I don't know if the miracle child is coming home tonight

"Phil?"

"Yeah mum?" Phil did his best to remain plain faced as his mum explained that traffic was miserable, and Martyn and their dad had decided to just stay at a motel overnight.

"That sucks," Phil said, trying to sound genuine. "Oh well."

His mum still looked concerned. "And I made all that salmon. And the house us so clean..." her eyes trailed to Phil's lap, where he was still typing on his phone. "Who are you texting?"

"Just Dan." Phil didn't bother looking up. "Why?"

"Do you... do you think Dan has dinner plans tonight?"

-----

Dan lowered himself into the car, carefully bringing his crutches in after him. "Hey Phil, how're- oh shit. You look..."

"Thanks," Phil said sarcastically. "Mum made me wear it." He pulled into the street, fidgeting with
his gray button up briefly before putting both hands on the wheel once more.

"I feel underdressed," Dan muttered, buckling in. "Should I change?"

"Too late. I'm already on the road."

---

"Dan, it's nice to meet you!" Phil's mum wrapped her arms around the boy enthusiastically, almost knocking him off his crutches. "Phil didn't tell me you were on crutches!"

"You didn't ask," Phil retorted blandly, tossing his keys on the counter. "Can we eat now?"

But his mum was on a roll. "Phil tells me so little these days. But you look like a nice boy. I can always tell, you know, as soon as I see someone-"

"Mum!" Phil interrupted. "Dinner!"

She sighed, turning towards her son. "I'm just talking to Dan! Why don't you be a good host and show Dan around, while I put the food out?"

"Actually," Dan interjected, "I'd prefer if we could just sit down. The ankle." He gestured at his leg awkwardly. "And I've already seen your house, actually. When I've hung out with Phil. It's lovely, really."

Mrs. Lester beamed. "You're so sweet. Okay, I'll get the food." She rushed off to the kitchen to get the food.

"Suck up," Phil whispered.

"Yeah, well you don't make it on to the honor roll by being an ass." Dan whispered back. "Not that you'd know."

"Your literally a cripple, stop making me want to fight you."

"I could take you."

Phil shoved Dan lightly. He stumbled, almost tripping over his crutch.

Dan huffed. "Rude."

They went over to the dinner table, sitting down. It was set nicely, and the house was cleaner than normal- all in preparation for Martyn's arrival. "Your mum must be pretty disappointed he couldn't come," Dan said, without context.

"She was. You know he's the favorite."

"I know that's why you lash out," Dan mumbled, not looking at Phil. "Why you do the whole 'I don't care' act. It's because you don't think you can live up to the expectations."

"It's not an act."

"Really? So now that you're 'friends' with me, all of a sudden you care about grades?" He made air quotes at the word 'friends'.

"Why would you think that?"
"The English homework."

"What about it?"

"You did it."

"Dinner's ready!" Mrs. Lester announced cheerily. "I hope you like fish, Dan!"

Dan put on a big, happy, parent-pleasing smile. "I love it."

---

"I do student council, EIA, track, math society..." Dan ticked off the list, going through all his different extracurriculars and clubs. "And four college level classes. But those are during school, so they hardly count."

Mrs. Lester smiled in disbelief. "Wow, that's.... certainly a lot."

"Dan's an honors student," Phil added, spearing a piece of salmon with his fork. "People are saying he'll be valedictorian this year."

"Wow, that's impressive."

"And completely unnecessary," Dan argued. "Superlatives like valedictorian were formed just for the sake of bragging rights. They're completely unnecessary, and do little in the way of anything besides giving an individual an inflated sense of self."

Mrs. Lester nodded along, clearly impressed at his humility.

From: Phil
so you don't care if you don't get it?

From: Dan
Please. You'd have to rip that title out of my cold, dead hands.

"You're so humble," Mrs. Lester complimented. "And smart. Phil, you should take notes." She turned to Dan, holding a hand up as if that would keep Phil from hearing her words. "Phil really is smart, but he just doesn't try. I worry for him."

Dan played along, shielding his words from Phil with a hand. "I don't think you have to worry. Phil actually gets pretty good grades."

From: Phil
Liar

"And I think if he tried, he could get into film school." Dan added.

Phil's eyes widened.

"Phil!" His mother announced in shock. "Film school?"

"It was just an idea," Phil tried to defend. "I wouldn't actually-"

"You need to get a degree in business," she reprimanded. "Like your father. And like Martyn."

"Mum, I-"
"Listen to me, because this is important! Business school is the only way to make money in this economy, and you need to."

From: Dan
Sorry

--

"Sorry about that. I didn't mean to... set her off like that. I just thought she knew."

Phil sighed, unbuttoning his shirt. "It's fine. She's just... passionate."

Dan nodded, sitting on Phil's bed. "So. Business school?"

He snorted. "Nope, not on my radar. I want to go to film school, and she'll just have to accept that."

He smiled smally. "This way, she can start getting accustomed to the idea."

Dan nodded again, pulling his own shirt off and tossing it to the side carelessly. "What'll you do with it? Make movies or something?"

Phil shrugged. "I don't know. I've always kinda wanted to be a weather man, but..."

"'Warm and sunny with a small blizzard'" Dan quoted from the school's monthly news. "You had the charisma, that's for sure. Maybe not the math..."

"You don't know," Phil chided playfully. "Maybe we'll wake up tomorrow to two feet of snow!"

"You're crazy," Dan laughed playfully, pulling down his pants, being careful with the boot.

"Maybe." Phil looked out the window at the night sky, as if looking for signs of snow. "I heard of this thing. It's called 'video blogging'."

Dan tossed his pants to the side, climbing into Phil's bed familiarly. "Yeah? Like, blogging about your life... but as a video?"

Phil nodded. "I don't know if I could ever make money from it, but it'd be cool to try. What do you think? Would you try?" He crawled in bed next to Dan, pulling up the covers around his midsection.

Dan just laughed. "Nah, film isn't for me. I'm going to study law. That's where my future is."

Phil nodded in acceptance. "I guess. But who knows? Maybe YouTube will blow up one day."

Dan smiled. "And maybe tomorrow there will be a blizzard. I guess it's possible."

With that, they curled up together, the blankets and their shared body heat keeping them warm. Dan reached out slowly, and clasped Phil's hand.

"I want this," he whispered.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

Neither had the foresight to set an alarm. But it didn't matter. Because when they woke up, they were
greeted with the news that school was closed- due to the two feet of snow that had fallen as they slept.

End Notes

Check out my tumblr dedicated purely to writing phanfiction here. You can also request a phanfic here. Please comment and tell me what you think!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!