Ambivalent

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Ambivalent

by imessedupmylastone

Summary

You see, most people had a hard time figuring out which picture belonged to their soulmate, and which one belonged to their sworn enemy. Evan's big issue with this wasn't figuring out who was who, it was something else entirely. So, you can imagine the shit that Jared gave Evan when he told him. Evan didn't have two photos that he had to figure out. No, both of Evan's photos were the same photo.
Soulmates were supposed to be something magical and wonderful. Almost everyone that Evan had ever known had a small picture that appeared on their wrist on their eighteenth birthday, indicating the person that you were meant to be with. Unfortunately, there were two major issues with this, two issues that bugged Evan in particular. Firstly, not everyone found their soulmates, or even got a picture. Evan knew this was true because his mom was one of those people, one to never find her soulmate, even when his dad found some waitress in Colorado to be his. The second issue was based around the second photo on people’s wrists. You see, most people had a hard time figuring out which picture belonged to their soulmate, and which one belonged to their sworn enemy. Evan’s big issue with this wasn’t figuring out who was who, it was something else entirely. So, you can imagine the shit that Jared gave Evan when he told him. Evan didn’t have two photos that he had to figure out. No, both of Evan’s photos were the same photo.

Evan had been sitting on Jared’s couch the day of his birthday, both of them occasionally checking his wrist for the marks. Eventually, his skink began to tingle, and Evan thought ‘this is it. I’m going to know something about my soulmate.’ But no. Instead, two identical pictures of an intricate swirl appeared on his wrist. Jared had immediately burst out laughing, even after Evan told him that the same thing could happen in a few months when Jared turned 18. It didn’t. Jared got one of a bird, and another of a snowflake. Evan noticed his friend didn’t stop staring at them for weeks.

Evan decided to move on from his little issue, and he managed to for a few years. In fact, he had almost completely forgotten about the issue entirely, and as the years went on, he rarely thought about his wrist. He’d completely forgotten until a day in the middle of March. He woke up to a loud bang, followed by angry cussing from Jared. Then the boy with tired eyes and messy hair burst into his room, ranting about wanting to murder their new neighbor. Evan told him talking was more civil, and Jared stomped out again as Evan decided to continue to sleep.

When he woke up, he found Jared now fully dressed, playing video games on the couch. He had left out some of Evan’s cereal for him, and soon, Evan joined Jared on the couch and ate his cereal in peace.

“She’s actually pretty nice.” Jared mentioned to Evan as if he wasn’t half distracted by the game in front of him.

“What?”

“Our neighbor, Zoe. She must be the new neighbor at least, as she talked to me in a pretty civilized tone after I went over screaming and banging on her door.”

“You yelled at her?!”

“Well… yeah.”

“Jared!” Evan sat down his cereal and immediately made his way to the kitchen, making Jared pause his game. He groaned, turning to his roommate, who was frantically looking for a bowl in one of the cabinets.

“What the hell are you doing?”

“Stress baking.”

“Why?”
“You yelled at our neighbor. Remember the last apartment? Yeah, you got us kicked out of that one Jared. I can’t have a repeat of that, so I’m baking something for her. What sort of food do you think she likes?”

“I don’t know… lemon bars?”

“I can do lemon bars. Yeah, that seems easy enough. I’ll just leave it with an apology note outside of her door. It’ll be fine.” Jared sighed, but he said nothing to his roommate as he turned back around and continued with his game.

-Connor had a massive fucking hangover when he woke up. He was half off of his bed, and his sister seemed to have already left, so he got up and decided to take a nice warm shower before he grabbed an Gatorade, his go-to hangover breakfast. He was already feeling like shit and thinking of staying at home when he went to grab his mail and saw the desert on the ground. There was a sticky note attached to the top, and in some messy handwriting, an apology to… Zoe?

Connor decided to save her the sticky note, and eat the squares for himself. Unfortunately, they tasted like fucking poison and left Connor bent over his toilet, mentally adding his neighbor next to his second-grade teacher on the list of people he hated. The apology was a decoy apparently, because whatever was in those squares was definitely meant to kill him.

Connor angrily pulled himself up before stomping off to his kitchen, grabbing his own piece of paper and a piece of tape (because seriously, did his sister take his sticky notes too?) and wrote his own message. Then he taped it to the lid, walked into his neighbor’s, knocked on the door, and left the container. Honestly, he was just getting used to the idea of his own apartment, and his neighbor tries to kill him.

- Jared notified Evan that a small note had come back to him, and left the container on the counter. Evan happily walked over, hoping for a sweet note from a girl across the hall, thanking him. It was nice handwriting, but unfortunately, it didn’t seem to be a nice thankful note at all. Written in tiny swirls, was a different note that read. ‘Your lemon shit tried to kill me. Go fuck yourself and your shit cooking. Connor.’ Suddenly, Evan was filled with resentment for his obviously, not female neighbor. Honestly, this guy was a dick.

“How’s our neighbor doing? Has she asked you out yet? Am I best man at your wedding?”

“It’s from a guy.”

“Has he asked you out yet? Am I best man at your wedding?”

“No, he told me to, and I quote, ‘go fuck myself and my shit cooking.’” Evan frowned, handing the small note over to his roommate, who took it and gave a low whistle. He then looked at Evan, with one of his eyebrows raised.
“So, how do we rebuttal?”

“No.”

“Bu-”

“Jared, we are not going to fuck this up by making enemies with our new neighbor, whom we haven’t even met by the way. I can’t do that to someone. I need to figure out what the hell went on with my recipe anyways. Why would he say that it tried to kill him?”

“Oh.” Jared’s eyes slowly widened as he looked at Evan in guilt. “I may have fucked up some of your labels when I was cleaning the other day.”

“What?!” Evan screamed, running to his sugar bowl and looking in it. Just as he suspected, it was in fact filled with salt instead. Slowly, Evan sank down to the floor, his voice cracking as he spoke. “Oh my god, I tried to give food poisoning to our new neighbor.”

“To be fair, I was the one that fucked it up.”

“I tried to apologize and made it worse. Oh god, and the apology wasn’t even made out to him it was to some girl that he must just know.”

“Don’t apologize, you saw the note.”

“So?”

“So, this is war Evan.”
Evan had completely stopped moving as he looked at the boy across from him. He had trotted downstairs to his mail box, looking for a letter from his mom like she usually sent, when he had the breath knocked out of him. Standing before him, was possibly the most attractive person Evan had ever seen in his entire life. He was leaning against his wall, filing through his own mail, humming softly to some random song. He didn’t seem to notice Evan though, who had practically froze in place. He didn’t seem to at least, until he spoke.

“It’s rude to stare, you know,” the guy responded as if he didn’t care that Evan had been watching him for the past five minutes. Evan practically fell over when the guy spoke too, not expecting a response from him. He picked himself upright, moving towards his mail. Maybe if he got his mail he could get out of here without any other awkward conversation. Except, of course it wasn’t going to be that easy. He’d been having problems with his mail container lately anyways, but it chose this specific moment to stick and refuse to open up. He tried wiggling the key, but it wasn’t budging and now the guy was staring at him, and he’d started laughing. And god, Evan had never wanted to curl into a hole as much as he did right now.

“Need help?” The guy smiled, moving close enough so that Evan’s knees went weak, because good lord, he even smelt nice. Evan paused for a good ten seconds before his brain decided to register what was going on and he was finally able to step back and move. And of course, like magic, the guy managed to pop the mail container open and grabbed his mail, and handed it to Evan, trying to get a look at the name.

“Jared?” Connor asked, smirking a little, Evan’s eyes went wide, and he was ready to correct him, because no he was not his roommate, but of course, Connor spoke again. “I’m Connor. I think I live across from you?” This was it, Evan had decided to curl up into a hole. He was indeed going to just stop existing because this was ridiculous. This was his new neighbor that was set on hating him after only living in the building for a few weeks.

“Yep, that’s me. Jared. Kleinman. Jared Kleinman.” Evan wasn’t even slapping himself mentally at this point. No, he was tackling himself, tying him up, and shoving him in the back of a car to be sent far away. Evan Hansen was an idiot.

“It’s nice to meet you Jared,” Connor was smiling, and Evan was going to die. How was he supposed to get out of this? Even if they found a way to make this work, he couldn’t tell Connor the truth about his name. He was going to wind up having to change his name. Oh god, he was going to have to become the second Jared Kleinman. Would he have to adopt Jared’s behavior though? Would he have to wear glasses and everything? They gave him such a back headache, and not to mention his mother would be so disappointed. But then he looked back into Connor’s baby blue eyes, and suddenly, he would be ok with being stupid for this boy.

“It’s nice to meet you too.” He was grinning himself, and Connor smiled as they both turned to the stairs. Normally, Evan wouldn’t have taken the stairs, but this guy was definitely worth the extra effort to get to his apartment.
Connor was trying to tune out the small beeps of his phone as his sister’s messages interrupted his music. He was shuffling through letters from his parents, a postcard from Alana, and some bills as he hummed softly to some random indie song that had started playing on his Spotify. That was when he noticed a small movement out of the corner of his eyes. Someone else had come down the stairs, but of course the person made no effort to move closer. Just the same, he didn’t hear the awful noise of the front of the building opening either. Was this person seriously just standing there?

“It’s rude to stare, you know.” He spoke casually, trying to hide his annoyance. It was actually pretty rude to just stare at him. HE wasn’t that weird looking after all, sure his hair could use a trim but that was none of their business. He didn’t bother looking up even as the person quickly walked to their mail container, trying to get it open. Connor continued to shuffle through his mail for a while longer before he heard a small sigh of frustration. Finally, he looked up, only to have the breath knocked out of him.

The boy desperately trying to avoid Connor’s gaze while he struggled with his mail box was possibly the most adorable person Connor had every laid his eyes upon. His hair looked sun kissed, and his skin held little freckles all over it. He was biting his lip in frustration, and his eyebrows were pulled together as he tried to get his key to move. Connor almost didn’t say anything, wanting to just look at this guy longer, but he wasn’t able to.

“Need help?” He offered, and the guy froze again, making Connor laugh.

He walked forward, watching as the boy stepped away from him just a little so he could grab the key. He pushed on the metal a little, and the container popped open. He reached into the box, trying to grab the mail for the poor boy when he saw a name on the top envelope. Unfortunately, it seemed this boy was one of his neighbors from hell, he was just praying this wasn’t the mysterious Evan that had tried to kill him with lemon.

“Jared?” he asked hopefully. “I’m Connor. I think I live across from you?” The boy looked a little frozen, but thankfully he did speak.

“Yes, that’s me. Jared. Kleinman. Jared Kleinman.” His voice was so soft and quiet, making Connor’s hear flutter just a little.

“It’s nice to meet you, Jared.” He was so thankful thank this wasn’t Evan. He wasn’t even sure how this sweet little angel could wind up with someone that decided to try to kill someone. Either way, it seemed the lord was finally smiling down upon his love life, because he was getting to live across from the most adorable person he’d ever seen.

“It’s nice to meet you too.” The boy smiled, and Connor found himself walking with Jared towards his apartment. He even found himself taking out his earbud and focusing his attention on the mindless ramblings of this boy. Honestly, he wasn’t even paying attention to the conversation until they were outside of the apartments.

“-Anyways that’s why we aren’t allowed pets in the building. Because my roommate lit three rugs on fire and managed to get three seven fish stuck in the vent.” Connor had to blink and try to figure out what the fuck he missed when Jared smiled. “I should go in.”

“Yeah, I have to drop my mail off before I see my sister.” But neither of them moved for a second before Jared turned, opening his door, which must have already been unlocked. He threw a polite wave over his shoulder and ducked into his apartment. And Connor was fumbling for his phone as he opened his own apartment, closing the door behind him.

“Hola, bitch.” The voice on the other side of his phone call answered.
“Zoe.” Connor sighed, sliding down the door as he let out a breath.

Evan immediately fell to the floor the moment he got into the apartment, yearning Jared’s attention. The boy was laying across all of their chairs, eating a waffle, but this was much more interesting to him. Evan was already freaking out though, because Connor was definitely going to hate him if he found out who Evan really was.

“Evan?” Evan looked up, and managed to mutter one phrase, the same phrase that Connor was speaking to his sister in his own apartment.

“I’m fucked.”
In Which Zoe Murphy Assaulats Someone

Jared found the entire ordeal with Connor and Evan to actually be pretty funny, even if he’d never admit it. Ok, he probably didn’t have to admit it. Evan knew that Jared found it funny because he proceeded to fall on the floor and out of his chair crying because he was laughing so hard. Honestly, Evan was too awkward for his own good sometimes, it was kinda sad. It didn’t make Evan feel any better because his friend was laughing so hard though.

“Stop.” Evan groaned, shoving his face into his hands and making a muffled screaming noise.

“I’m sorry,” Jared managed to get out between laughs. “You realize you can’t lie forever though, right? I mean, I’m obviously flattered that you want to be me, but I don’t think I’m cut out to be you. I’m way too handsome to be you. Also, your mom scares me.”

“That’s your own fault.”

“It’s not my fault she chased me with a broom and tried to hit me with it.”

“Jared you literally broke her favorite, and new, lamp. Then proceeded to say, ‘damn, guess I’m going to have to be the light of your lives’. ” Jared shrugged before he sat down by Evan’s side, and laughed a little more.

“You have to go along with this.” Evan finally mumbled, looking up at his friend, who though still smiling, had finally stopped laughing at this entire situation.

“You sure you actually want to lie to this guy? I mean, you said you liked him, right? Why start this out with a lie. Lying won’t get you anywhere Evan, and it could very well blow up in your face. Even the smallest misunderstanding could hurt people.” Jared was speaking softly. In hind sight, Evan probably should have listened to him to avoid his current situation, but in this very moment, he wasn’t thinking properly. Instead, Evan nodded. And with that, Jared decided he would go along with this little lie, which would only wind up spiraling very soon.

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Evan didn’t see Connor in the next few days, but on his way up to his apartment almost a week later, Evan did run into someone. It wasn’t Connor, but this girl was just as beautiful. She was also waiting outside of Connor’s apartment, and she was angrily banging on the door. She didn’t stop until she saw Evan either. When she did she Eden however, her annoyed expression turned to immediate happiness.

“He left hours ago.” Evan said softly, referring to Connor. Her expression dropped from being happy, to more exasperated.

“He better buy me food. I’m going to riot if he leaves me out here and doesn’t buy me food.” She brushed some hair out of her face, turning then to fully look at Evan. “I’m his sister by the way. Zoe.” She reached out a hand, and Evan shook it, repeating in his head that no, his hands are not as sweaty as he thinks they are. Seriously though, was everyone in Connor’s family this attractive? It seemed a little unfair. Then it dawned on him that he should stop thinking about her attractiveness and tell her his name. And then it dawned on him that he fucked up and he can’t tell Connor’s sister his real name, because that would definitely lead to some shit going down.
“Jared.” Evan smiled, and suddenly Zoe’s face was twisting into a weird kind of smile that made him mildly uncomfortable. That wasn’t hard. Evan was usually uncomfortable to be honest.

“So, you’re the infamous Jared.” She mumbled it, but he wasn’t about to ask her. At that moment, Connor walked out of the open elevator, and Evan was scrambling to get inside his apartment as fast as humanly possible, not even saying goodbye to Zoe.

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“He’s adorable!” Zoe screamed the moment they were inside of Connor’s apartment. She was happy to meet this mystery guy, but even happier because yes, Connor did pick up some snacks for her and that was pretty great of him.

“I’m aware.” Connor sighed, “Do you think I did something? Did he say something to you? Why would he run away that fast?”

“I mean the guy was practically radiating uncomfortableness the entire ten seconds we were talking in the hall. Maybe he doesn’t like crowds of people?” She shrugged then proceeded to angrily rip open her chex mix and start eating. If Zoe could choose her soul mate, it would probably be food. It would always be her one and only love.

“I mean, I know the guy is awkward, bu-” he stopped, turning to her with wide eyes. “You didn’t happen to say anything to him, did you?” She paused, then stopped short.

“Oh.”

“Oh?!”

“Oh!”

“Oh what?!”

“I may have said that he was a bit infamous.”

“I’m going to go throw myself into the fucking sun now, thank you.” She reached out and grabbed Connor’s arm, stopping him from dramatically walking over to the window. She held up a single finger and proceeded to then walk towards the door. “I’ll just go apologize and tell him that he means nothing to you.” She was already walking out, and Connor was tripping over the chair, and Zoe was knocking on the door next door.

“Zoe I’m going to murder you s- OH HEY JARED!” Connor screamed the words as the worlds most precious person opened the door. Evan looked slightly confused for a second, then he literally froze. He just stopped moving, almost as if he was completely shutting down.

“Yeah, can we come in?” Zoe asked happily, Evan moved aside wordlessly, his eyes still wide and unspeaking.

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Both of the Murphy siblings were sitting on Evan’s couch. They were in his house. What if they saw pictures that gave away his identity? What if someone that he knew came over? Or worse, what if they didn’t like his plants? No, what sort of absolute monsters didn’t like plants. That’s crazy talk. The bigger issue was definitely his identity being discovered, because if they didn’t hate Evan before they would now. Or maybe his biggest issue was that they were staring at him expectantly.

Almost in a god sent moment, the doorbell rang. Evan was practically jumping from his seat to get the door, praying the old woman down the hall needed him for something. But no, of course the world was just trying to get back at him. Instead, both his mom and Alana stood outside the door.

“Surprise!” they both yelled, and Evan was actually about to cry. This was ridiculous. Connor was definitely going to hate him. “Can we come in?” Alana asked, a wide smile.

“No.”
“What?”

“Nope.” He was trying to slide himself out of the door instead of opening it.

“What are you hiding young man?” Heidi narrowed her eyes, trying to push her son to the side a little to look inside.

“Nothing!” Evan closed the door behind him, earning an odd look from both his childhood friend and his mother.

“We traveled all the way here, and you’re telling us that we can’t come in?” his mom asked, but she stopped when she saw his expression. “Ok, that’s the look you got when you tried to say that it was you that broke my lamp and not Jared. What are you hiding?” Evan sighed, and as quickly as he possibly could, summed up the entire situation with Connor.

“ANDHE’SINSIDEANDI’MFREAKINGOUT!” he managed to get it all out quickly, to be met with confused looks from his mom and friend. “You have to pretend that I’m Jared.” He finally finished.

“You’re and idiot,” Heidi sighed, but opened the door by Evan and walked in anyways. “Hello!” Both of the Murphy siblings turned to her. “I’m so sorry to intrude. I’m Heidi, Evan’s mom, I forgot to tell Jared we were coming over today.”

“Don’t worry about it,” Zoe smiled and stood up to greet her. “I’m Zoe. The neighbor’s sister.”

“Connor.” Connor waved from the couch, not big on actually being close to really anyone in a physical sense.

“I’m Alana.” Alana walked into the room, waving. Zoe turned to greet her too, but that was cut short by the ear-splitting scream that Zoe let out. She threw her bag of food at Connor, then promptly moved to tackle Evan’s friend. Connor was off of the couch then, looking at his sister in shock.

“WHAT THE HELL YOU CAN’T JUST TACKLE PEOPLE ZOE!” He screamed, but his sister was hugging a very confused Alana. Alana was just kind of laying there on the floor, staring at Zoe with immense puzzlement.

“I’m so sorry!” Zoe yelled, sitting up, even though she was still straddling Alana. “I just saw it, and I knew it. I probably should have introduced myself first. My name is Zoe.” She was grinning, and everyone in the room was just staring at her, not sure what to do. Then she lifted up her arm. “I’m your soul-mate?”
Jared picked an odd time to come home, to say the least. He entered his front door, laughing about the stupid sunglasses he bought, and decided to walk in with to model to Evan, and multiple bags from the mall. His glasses quickly became the lamest situation in the room when he walked in though. On the floor sat Zoe and Alana, aggressively hugging. Evan got hit with the door when Jared opened it, so he was in the corner now, with a hurt arm. Mrs. Hansen was leaning against the counter in shock. And some random guy was in their living room, picking up crumbs off his body. Then it clicked, this must be Connor. And Heidi was here, so that left one thing to do.

“Mom!” Jared screamed, running forward to hug her. He could definitely feel the annoyance too, when she tried to shrug him off.

“My son,” she mumbled through gritted teeth before whispering, “Jared detach yourself from me.” He held up his hands and stepped back a little. “The party has arrived.”

“Oh joy,” Connor mumbled, sending Jared rude looks.

“You guys staying for dinner?” Heidi had given up at this point, just trying to get through tonight. That didn’t last long.

“No, I’d rather not put myself through any more of the Hansen cooking. I’m guessing the apple didn’t fall far from the tree,” Connor was uncomfortable, and was angry about the crumbs, and was definitely angry that his little sister found her soulmate before him. He didn’t want to be rude to this lady he didn’t know, but he was projecting and needed to leave before he blew up. All he wanted to do was get out of here. “I’m going home.”

He left Zoe with her soulmate when he left.
Connor Attempts To Flirt?

Hiya! I'm so sorry this took so long to get up, but I was busy with graduating and trying to get ready for college/university. It's been hectic, and I figured as a birthday present to myself I should make time to write. So here ya go guys, I promise i'll be updating more! :)

Evan was up all night racking his brain about the meeting with Zoe and Alana. They had sat together for so long, just smiling and talking, and if Evan was completely honest, he was actually a bit jealous. He had never been in a relationship in general but seeing two soulsmates meet for the first time was something else. It wasn’t unusual for him to be jealous of people in that situation, but normally he told himself ‘one day that’ll be me’. Except, now people his age were finding people, and he was still left out.

It seemed weird too, like something in him was telling him that this person was just around the corner, except… he couldn’t find them. His mother had found her soulmate, but things were weird for her. She’d met his father and he shared her soulmate mark. It was a beautiful little tree, with black lines making tiny branches. She’d known it was him from the moment she met him, as her enemy mark had matched to her old college roommate. But when he went on a business trip to Colorado, he’d met a waitress. And she’d held his other mark. His father was his mom’s soulmate. But his mom was his dad’s worst enemy. Sometimes Evan couldn’t help but worry the same thing would happen to him.

The feeling stayed with him, causing a restlessness that drove him crazy. He pushed off his blankets and slipped out of bed, and over to the living room. It wasn’t unusual for Evan to leave his apartment and head to the roof of the building. It’d been his place for as long as he could remember. And the moment he stepped out onto the roof, he felt a wave of relief. He could see every little light and building for miles. It was almost like he was among the stars.

“Jared?” A voice to his side caused him to jump, and he turned to see Connor, sitting on the ground, his back against a higher part of the building.

“Connor.” He sighed a little, “what are you doing here?”

“Thinking.” He mumbled. Evan took a breath, and moved forward, joining him.

“Would this have anything to do with Zoe and Alana?” Connor grinned, leaning over to bump Evan with his arm, “Did that weirdo
meet his person yet?"

“He met his enemy. It was some kid from middle school. I think they haven’t seen each other since, but that’s probably as hateful as he’d ever get towards anyone.” He laughed. “He promised to never even look at the kid.”

“What’d he do that would bring down the wrath of that nerd?”

“Punched me.” Evan smiled, “me and him grew up together. We were all that the other had for a long time.”

“Shit.” Connor laughed, and Evan was just a little mesmerized by the look of it. It was such a beautiful noise that seemed rare enough that Evan wanted to just soak up the whole of it. “I didn’t think that kid had it in him to actually hurt someone.” He paused and looked at Evan, “Then again, if it was for you I could see it.” And Evan felt his cheeks light up like they had never done before.

“I didn’t think that kid had it in him to actually hurt someone.” Connor smiled at the idea of Evan punching someone. He looked over at Jared and saw the blonde’s cheeks a soft red from the cold. He was staring at Connor with a soft smile. “Then again, if it was for you I could see it.” And the small boy’s cheeks lit with a vibrant red color that made Connor’s stomach do flips. For the first time in a long time he had just complimented someone in an attempt to flirt, and it seemed to have actually worked a bit.

“What about you?” Jared broke off the moment but stuttering out a small question, making Connor smile more. “Have you found your enemy?”

Connor paused, thinking of the swirls on his wrist. A matching pair, an anomaly in the world of soulmates that people used to tease him about. His mother used to say that perhaps he would just take a long time to find someone. His father had doubts he’d ever find someone. Zoe tried to stay optimistic, but a small part of Connor had already stopped trying to find his person. He was content with being one of those people that just never met their person.

“No,” he mumbled, “you?”

“I wish…” Jared sighed, looking off into the distance a little, making Connor look at him oddly. “I just mean… it would get someone out of the way, you know? Make it easy to find my other person I guess.”

“Yeah I guess I understand where you’re coming from.” Connor nodded. “Who knows Jared, maybe you’ll meet them soon.”

Those words let Evan’s stomach sink rapidly, as he remembered once again that Connor didn’t even know the real him. He hated the Evan he thought he knew. Here was this boy trying to flirt with him
only minutes ago, and he was only messing up things the longer he knew this boy.

“You ok?” Connor asked softly, his eyes roaming over Evan’s face in the dark.

“Yeah,” Evan gave a soft smile. Connor frowned a little and sat forward. For a moment, Eva thought he was going to get up and leave him out here alone. Instead, he slowly took off the leather jacket that he was wearing, and flipped it so it was on Evan’s shoulders.

“It’s not much but I won’t let you be sad and cold looking.” Connor mumbled, leaning back against the building. Evan felt his heart speed up a little more as he looked at Connor in the moonlight. The jacket was warm and smelled like cigarettes and cologne, but it smelled like Connor. It was his. And then Connor started humming, a distant song that Evan vaguely recalled to be known as Heaven by Amber Run. And so they sat in silence, arms touching as Connor hummed into the night.

And for the smallest moment, Evan wished that Connor would be his person.
“Hoverboard War Plans

“Evan Hansen,” the sheets were being pulled off of Evan with such little force that it almost made Evan laugh. Instead he groaned, grabbing a pillow from in front of him on his bed and throwing it in Jared’s direction. “Get up we have a war plan to make!”

“I thought we agreed not to make any more of those in the morning after what happened junior year?” Evan mumbled into his pillow.

“Oh, I admit the mountain dew in coffee was a poor idea, but that’s why you’re going to help me this time!” Evan groaned again but sat up this time and looked at his friend. Jared was ceremoniously dressed in his “war robe” which was really a novelty Marvel robe he won at a convention their sophomore year of high school. He was also pacing back and forth across Evan’s floor. Well, he was gliding back and forth on a hoverboard that Evan didn’t even remember them owning.

“Fine,” Evan sighed, “but I want at least an hour warning before you spring war stuff on me next time.” Jared smiled, knowing that Evan went along with his plans far too easily anyways, and turned to exit the room.

“I made you waffles though!” he yelled, hovering away. Evan smiled to himself, sitting up completely. He could still smell hints of Connor’s cologne on him from the jacket that he’d worn for an hour last night. He’d of course given it back as they both went to their own apartments last night. The thought made him smile even more as he slowly got out of bed and went into the living room, where he found Jared had somehow found a whiteboard he’d covered with shitty drawings and a few words that Evan assumed was ‘the plan’.

“What’s this?” He grabbed the plate of waffles and walked to Jared’s scribbles.

“This is the ‘Revenge Against Connor Murphy plan’.” Jared grinned.

“First, how did you learn his last name?” Evan asked in confusion. Jared waved him off.

“Facebook does wonders. Connor Murphy grew up near us. He has one sister, Zoe, and his parents are Cynthia and Larrold. It was actually Larry, but I figured that probably applies to the whole Harry being short for Harrold.”

“You actually scare me sometimes,” Evan mumbled, “but we aren’t going to start war with him. I’ve already forgiven Connor. In fact, I think I may like him.” Jared swiveled around on his hoverboard, almost falling off of it in the process as he looked at Evan with wide eyes.

“My sacrificial offerings worked?” He whispered, looking up at the ceiling in confusion. “God?”


“Nothingjustalittlethingsoyoucouldfindsomeone,” Jared quickly dismissed him, “besides nothing was working otherwise. In other news, this means you told him?”

“Told him what?” You’d think at this point Evan would be used to Jared’s weird ramblings and ways of communication.

“You real name!” Jared threw his hands up in frustration. Evan froze, completely forgetting the fact that he’d been lying to Connor for a few days now. “Oh my god you totally didn’t. You realize how badly this could backfire? I mean what if he was like… your person and you’ve been lying to him? I
mean guy or girl, I’d never lie to my future boo like that.” Jared stepped off of the hoverboard and joined Evan on the couch.

“How do I even come back from this?” Evan sighed. Jared smiled even wider, and stood up once more, walking to his whiteboard. “What are you doing?”

“I always have a backup plan,” Jared winked, flipping the board around. Evan read a few of the words scribbled on it, and nearly choked on his waffles.

“You can’t be serious.”

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Connor stumbled out of his room with a small headache, and nearly ran into someone. When he looked up in surprise, he found it wasn’t even his sister. His sister was here, but was rather in the kitchen, singing softly to herself. Instead, he almost ran into the girl from yesterday, Zoe’s soulmate.

“Oh, sorry!” She jumped herself as he exited his room suddenly. “I was trying not to wake you, Zoe said that I could come over early and we could go to the local art museum together while I work today. I hope I’m not intruding,” she was speaking abnormally fast, and it was only making Connor’s headache worse.

“Nah, you’re fine.” He sighed, walking past her and to his sister. “All day date?” he asked quietly as the other girl went back towards his living room.

“Yeah,” she smiled down at the small stack of sandwiches she was making. “She does articles about local attractions. I thought I’d take her to the art museum and get to know her a little.” When she did look up at him, she was frowning a little.

“What?” he sighed, knowing very well where this was about to go.

“Are you feeling ok? You’re not smoking again, are you?” She had a nasty habit of mothering him, despite him being older than her.

“Other than cigs? No. I did however spend hours in the cold last night, half of it without a jacket. Wouldn’t be surprised if I caught a small cold.” She gave him an odd look and was ready to speak again before he beat her to it. “No, I was not stupid enough to just take it off and not put my jacket back on. I gave it to someone because they were cold,” this changed her look. Now she was giving him one of her dopey smiles that made him want to stab himself.

She didn’t even say anything, she just kept smiling at him.

“Shut up with your face,” he mumbled, grabbing one of her sandwiches and taking a bite.

“Hey!”

“My bread,” he shrugged. “And before you ask, it was Jared from next door. The blonde one? Turns out at least one person in that apartment isn’t completely unbearable.”

“So?” She whispered. “Is he?”

“Is he what?”
“Is he your person?” She whispered. Connor hadn’t even thought about that. He’d had a few conversations with the kid, but he’d never actually thought to ask him what his marks looked like.

“I didn’t even check.” Connor mumbled, the sandwich half way to his mouth again. “I was too busy just being there with him that it didn’t even… oh my god he could be my person.” He’d completely given up on the sandwich as this point. Instead he turned to his sister in shock and in a small voice just said. ‘Help?’
“Ok, let’s think about this logically,” Connor rubbed his eyes, trying to understand the situation. “I’ve known Jared for a little while now, don’t you think he would have checked if he thought it was me? What if he’s straight?”

“You didn’t bring that up when you were talking on the roof?” Zoe whispered, giving Connor an incredulous look.

“Well I don’t tend to ask people about their sexualities when I don’t know them well enough.” He sighed and looked up at her suddenly, his nose wrinkling a little, “Do you?” She smiled, giving a small laugh as she shook her head no.

“I like to call it my bisexual superpower. I don’t need to ask, I just know.” He rolled his eyes and sighed a little. “I’m just saying you should find a way to ask him. It may clear up some of the weird tension and possibly you’ll figure out if he’s your… ‘unique case.’” Connor shot her a look that said shut up, and subconsciously reached down to touch his wrist. He’d looked at the patterns for hours before, studying them. He tried to find any tiny difference he could but didn’t see one. Hell, one really dark year he tried to take one of them off his arm with a thumb tack just to stop his classmates from teasing him, but it didn’t work. The mark grew back right over the small scar on his left arm. Two matching marks, signaling a highly complicated issue.

“He’d probably laugh if he knew Zoe.” Connor mumbled, speaking more to himself though. They all laughed. That’s what happens when you don’t fit in with everyone else.

“Hey,” He felt a soft hand touch his, snapping him out of his trance. “Kids are mean, but we aren’t in grade-school anymore Con. It’s time to try and face the fact that someone will accept you for who you are.” He rolled his eyes, but he did appreciate the sentiment. Connor had always appreciated when his sister was actually there for him.

“Maybe.”

“Just try talking to him first and see what happens ok?”

“Fine, but if this blows up you’re helping me to not feel like shit.” She pulled her hand back, pressing it to her heart and raising her other hand.

“Scouts honor.” She smiled, “I’ll bring over ice cream and we can binge watch Queer Eye for as long as you want. I’ll even keep my comments about how much you totally have a thing for Antoni to myself.” That made Connor laugh as he reached out and pushed her backwards a little.

“Shut up I just like cooking.”

“Connor the man put guac on a plate and you looked ready to strip.” Zoe deadpanned, and Connor took another bite of his sandwich, flipping her off as he walked back to his room. He did not have a thing for Antoni. And he definitely didn’t have a thing for Jared…
“It’s time to face the facts my dear child boy.” Jared was finally finishing up after writing on his whiteboard for the last hour. “You have a thing for the guy across the hall. And at some point very soon, you need to tell him the truth.”

“Or,” Evan frowned, “I could not?”

“Evan.”

“Jared.”

“Evan.”

“Jared.”

“Evan Hansen,” Jared narrowed his eyes.

“Ok, geez mom, I’ll confess. I need time to figure out how to make him… not hate me. I will tell him eventually though. And stop using my full name you know that makes me uncomfortable Jared Leslie Kleinman.” Jared turned with a lightening speed towards Evan, who started giggling like crazy.

“I will end you child!” He threatened.

“Oh nooooo.” Evan laughed, “I’m so scared of the 5’5” boy on a hoverboard! Whatever will I do!” He laughed, but Jared was leaning forwards, speeding towards him. Evan screamed, jumping over the back of the couch and making a run for the door. Jared was still on his trail, and Evan could hide on the roof if need-be. He made it to the entrance, pulled the door open, still laughing, and froze. Connor was standing at their door, his hand raised to knock on it.

“Meep,” Evan let out the tiniest noise, and slammed the door back shut. Jared stopped as Evan slowly turned around, his face turning a bright red color. “He’s outside.”

“Open it!” Jared yelled in a whisper.

“I can’t I think I’m stuck!” Evan whispered back. Jared shook his head, hovering towards the door and pulling it open.

“Hey boo!” He smiled.

“Can I talk to Jared?” Connor asked, obviously not playing along with Jared. The smaller boy slowly leaned back and looked to Evan, who frantically started shaking his head no.

“Mmm, sorry hot-cakes, he’s not feeling well right now and needs to be alone. His… family dog died today. Sad stuff. He’s grieving.” Evan smacked his own face behind the door, and Jared smiled sweetly at Connor.

“He was just laughing?”

“We all deal with stuff in different ways Conrad.” Jared frowned. “How about you come back in a while and maybe he’ll feel up for talking then? Until then it may be best for no one to disturb him. If you feel the need to make sure he’s happy, you can always drop off cookies though and I’ll make sure he gets a good 40% of them.” Evan could practically see Connor rolling his eyes on the other side of the door.

“What ever. Just… tell him I wanna talk?” Jared nodded, and waved as he slowly pulled the door
closed. He then gave Evan a very disapproving look.

“Tell him Evan. Before you mess it all up.”

“-”

“Well?” Zoe and Alana were on Connor the moment he walked through the door. “What happened? Is he the person?”

“He… I think… I think he’s avoiding me?”
“Maybe I’m just overthinking this.” Connor mumbled out loud to himself. It had been two weeks since he last saw Jared, and it was driving him a little crazy. “Maybe, I should just talk to him and get to know him like a normal person. It can’t hurt.”

“You sound a little crazy to me,” a voice spoke. Connor looked up from the mail box he was standing near, and inwardly groaned when he saw it was Evan. His arms were crossed, and he was hiding an annoying smirk under his glasses. “That could probably just be because you’re talking to yourself in the lobby when no one else is around.” Connor looked back down at the mail he was holding in his hands.

“You shouldn’t eavesdrop.”

“I wasn’t. It’s not my fault you’re speaking loudly in a public domain.” Evan smiled. Connor reached up and slammed his mail cubby closed, stuffed the mail under his arm, and went to go upstairs when Evan spoke again. “I want to help you.” That made Connor stop in his tracks.

“With what?” He raised an eyebrow and slowly turned back to Evan, who was walking to get his own mail now.

“Win the man of your dreams. He’s totally into you b-t-dubs. He’s just a little anxious because he had a bad experience with his own parents and soul mates. Tough subject, so the kid is bad with relationships. Scared to meet his soulmate.” Evan shrugged. “If you want my advice, you need to avoid that subject and just get to know him. Hell, ask him out or something.”

“Won’t he just freak out?” Connor frowned. Evan paused, and nodded a little.

“Isn’t it worth a shot?” He fired back, then paused again, turning and looking Connor in the eyes. “Isn’t he worth the shot?”

Jared was an anxious mess. He stumbled over words and couldn’t communicate to save his life. He tended to stare off into space, and he talked about plants way too much for Connor to keep up with. But despite all of that, Connor hadn’t been able to get the freckled face of Jared out of his mind for the past two weeks. Every time he laid down, his mind went back to their night on the roof.

“He is.” Connor finally spoke.

“Exactly.” Evan closed the mail cubby and went to pass Connor.

“How do I ask him out?”

“Buy him flowers. Duh. And he’s free tonight. I should know because he’s always free.” Evan
spoke without pausing, heading straight for the elevator instead of taking the stairs. He stepped inside, and as the doors started to close, Connor heard a ‘You’re welcome by the way!’.

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“Hey bud…” Jared smiled as he walked through the door. Evan looked up from the bowl of brownie mix that he was putting together.

“What did you do?” Evan narrowed his eyes.

“What makes you think I did anything?” Jared asked innocently. He walked to the counter, setting down mail.

“Jared, I have known you my entire life, I know when you do something you probably shouldn’t have. And don’t lie to me because you’re a terrible liar. Also, your normal introduction when you walk in is usually, ‘sup bitches’ not that.” Evan looked back down at his mixing bowl, not wanting to over fold the mixture as he wanted it to be light and fluffy.

“Ok, so you’re not allowed to hate me or scoop out my eyes with a brownie-covered spatula, but I think you may be going on a date with our neighbor soon,” Jared mumbled. The mixing bowl landed with a thump on the counter as Evan turned and looked at Jared in shock. “I may have told him that the way to go is with flowers though, so you probably have some time to look nice before your knight in shining armor shows up.”

Evan looked down at his flower covered hands and flailed a little. “What have you done!”

“Look, I’m just trying to move you two along, so you aren’t stuck in a permanent state of silence and longing stares. I’ll get the brownies in the oven, now go get ready to woe your fucking man Hansen.” Evan nodded, running off towards the bedroom to wash up, and pray that he didn’t do something stupid to mess up his chance with Connor.

- 

“I need your help.” Connor said over the phone. He was pacing the isles of the local flower shop, confused by the masses of color and sizes of the flowers.

“That’s new.” Zoe said sarcastically. “Hold on I’m sticking you on speaker… What’s up?” He could hear sizzling in the background, and figured Zoe was probably cooking dinner for herself.

“I’m going to ask out Jared and I need advice.”

“Who’s Jared?” He heard his dad’s voice over the phone and internally groaned. Of course, Zoe was over at their parent’s house. She tried to make it over once a week to have dinner with them. It just had to be tonight that she decided to go over.

“My neighbor.” Connor said through gritted teeth. “Look, I just need to know what types of flowers to buy him. He’s really into flowers.”
“Oh, your mother loves flowers. Cynthia! Get in here Connor wants help with flowers!” Larry yelled in the background.

“Dad please don-”

“Hi honey!” Cynthia spoke.

“Hey mom,” Connor rubbed his eyes in frustration. “Look, I just want to know what types of flowers are nice to give someone. That’s it. And not roses, that’s too easy.” There was a small pause, and Connor knew what they were all waiting for. “Yes, I’m asking someone out. No, you’re not allowed to meet them. Yes, they’re very cute.”

“That’s great sweetie,” Cynthia spoke happily. “What color are their eyes?”

“Blue. Baby blue with some green.” Connor smiled to himself.

“Orchids.” His mom spoke confidently. When they were growing up, she was always on some new trend, and for a month is was botany. “Buy him orchids.”

“Thanks mom.”

“Good luck kiddo,” Larry spoke kindly.

“Thanks dad.”

“Have fun!” Zoe yelled.

“Get fucked!” and he pressed ‘end call.’ His mom will probably bitch to him later, but at least for now he could have a little revenge for putting him on speaker.
Evan was smoothing out his shirt to the best of his ability when he heard a knock on the door, and his heart fell through his stomach. He heard a loud crash, and he figured that his food was definitely fucked, but he had more pressing matters than dealing with. He had Connor waiting just out side of the door for him. He skidded to the door, took a deep breath, and pulled it open.

There was no one there.

Evan slowly leaned out of the door, and saw Connor walking softly away from his door. He looked a little like Evan’s stomach felt right now.

“Connor?” Evan tried, making the boy pause in his tracks. When he turned, Evan felt a little like someone had punched him in the stomach, because god-damn Connor looked good. His hair was tied back, and he was wearing a dark blue button up, both of which made a little voice in Evan’s head whisper ‘wow I’m so bisexual’. When he finally pulled himself together, he was able to notice that Connor was carrying a beautiful bunch of orchids.

“I um… I… Well Evan told me that I should ask you out?” Connor tried, raising his hands to awkwardly scratch at the back of his neck. Evan couldn’t help feeling a little guilty for still lying to him, but he had to admit that it was pretty cute seeing Connor like this anyways.

“Yes this you doing that?” Evan asked softly, and Connor nodded a little, the tiniest of grins playing on his lips. “Then my answer is yes. I’m free now.” Connor’s smile lit up a little, and he handed Evan the flowers to quickly put on the table in his apartment. Jared had indeed spilt all the brownies, but he did give Evan an encouraging thumbs up as the boy returned to his date. When Evan got back to Connor, Connor held out his hand, and Evan took it.

“So where do you want to go?” Evan asked Connor. Connor grinned, and just led Evan down the stairs and out of the apartment. It was already pretty late, so the fall air was quick to make Evan thankful that his shirt was warm enough.

“We’re going to the best spot in the entire city.”

HOLYSHITHOLYSHITHOLYSHIT. That was basically the only thought going through Connor’s mind as he and Jared drove to Connor’s favorite place in the city. It was a small apple orchard, and he figured that Jared would absolutely love that sort of thing. On the radio, the song Yellow played softly, and lights from the streets were bouncing off of Jared’s face. If he could have picked a moment for time to freeze, it would have been this moment right now. Everything but them felt like it
didn’t even exist. Like everything had just melted away. Even when the drive was over and both of them were at the orchard, the same feeling seemed to linger over the two of them.

“This place is beautiful,” Jared whispered, looking up at the stars through the trees. “This is your favorite place in the city?”

“Yeah, me and my sister used to come here with our parents when we were little. It turned into a tradition, but they closed it down for a while, and by a while I mean that we technically shouldn’t be on this property right now so if the police come we need to run. I thought you might like this place, seeing as you have a thing for plants and all.” He looked over to Jared, whose eyes were shining brighter than any of the starts in the sky.

“It’s absolutely beautiful Connor. I love it.” His baby blue eyes had fallen back onto Connor, who was trying his best to suppress all of the butterflies in is stomach moment.

“I’m sorry,” Connor suddenly blurted.

“Sorry?”

“Yes.”

“Sorry for what exactly…”

“I’m sorry for being such an asshole when I first met you and Evan. I know that you guys aren’t that bad, and I think I was just having a bad day. Neither of you deserved the way that I treated you, and if I could take it back I would. I should probably even apologize to Evan too. I know he’s not as bad of a person as I first made him out to be.” Jared’s eyes had darted to the ground, and he was biting his bottom lip like he was thinking about something important.

“You don’t think that he’s a horrible person?” Jared’s voice was barely even a whisper.

“Well, he’s not my favorite, but that’s because he radiates a weird energy.”

“He likes to call it ‘big dick energy’.”

“Whatever it is, it’s kind of off-putting. I suppose he told me to man the fuck up and ask you out though, so I suppose he’s not entirely horrible. Neither of you are.” There was a small pause, and Jared stopped walking. His eyes were stuck, like he was suddenly noticing how great the ground really was. Connor stopped too, noticing how Jared was playing with the sleeves on his shirt like he was nervous. Maybe it was just a date thing, but Connor had a bad feeling about the look on Jared’s face.

“I have to tell you something,” Jared spoke quietly.

“Ok.”

“You might hate me for it.”

“I don’t think that I would hate you for anything.”

“You might.” His eyes finally looked up as he took a deep breath. “Connor I’ve been lying to you this entire time.”

“What?” Connor asked in surprise. “Don’t tell me you aren’t into guys. That would seriously fuck with my self-esteem.”
“No,” Jared shook his head, “it’s not that. I… I need to tell you the truth and he told me I should have a while ago. Connor, I’m no-“ A bright light shinned from the distance, and both of their heads turned. In the distance, the flash lights of police officers were shinning around, looking for anyone on the private property. Both of them silently decided the conversation would wait as they started to run back to the car.

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Evan jumped into the passenger seat of the car as Connor turned on the vehicle itself. They were speeding out of the small parking lot, and back onto the main road. That was when Connor finally turned back to Evan.

“What was it you were trying to tell me back there?” Evan looked at Connor, and he saw what had to be a little bit of fear. Evan bit his lip, not ready to break any trust that Connor had in him at the moment. Even if Connor wasn’t Evan’s soul mate, they could at least enjoy what they had for a while longer.

“Oh… I’m Jewish.” Evan settled for. After a quiet moment, Connor started laughing, and Evan forgot why he was even worried. Even if it was only for the night.
I have no excuse for not updating. It's just been winter break and after finals I needed a break. But tonight I cut down my acrylic nails purely to update so I guess i'm back ;)

“So?” Jared was on Evan the moment that the door opened, his wide eyes begging for every detail to his and Connor’s little date. He already knew what the biggest question for him was though; did he finally tell Connor who he really was?
“I froze.” Evan confessed. “I was about to tell him and I froze and then security showed up—“
“What?” Jared was already sitting up straighter than he was a moment before. “Do not glaze over this one Evan. Where the fuck did you go to have security chase after you? And how are you of all people I know not freaking out over this?” Evan sighed and walked over to the couch where he collapsed onto it.
“I don’t know. I think I was so focused on him that I didn’t even have the time to stop and think about what was happening.” He froze for a moment and considered the nights actions before he looked back up at Jared and squeaked in a high voice, “oh my god I did something illegal I’m going to jail aren’t I? I’m not fit for jail! Oh, and my mom will be so disappointed in me I’ll never be allowed back to another family game night.”
“It’s fine I’ll just slap on a blond wig and tell them it was me. Now for the love of god tell me why you wouldn’t tell him that you aren’t me!”
“I don’t know!” He threw his hands into the air and picked up a pillow to let out a short scream into.
“Ok Mr. Dramatic calm down, I’m sure it’s not nearly as bad as you’re making it out to be. I still think you have the ability to recover if you would just go ahead and tell him what’s actually going on.” Jared said the words with such an ease than it made Evan want to throw himself out a window.
“I don’t think you realize just how much I cannot do exactly that.”
“I think you’re just pulling an Evan.” Jared shrugged, earning an eyebrow raise from is friend.
“You’re overthinking everything when it isn’t even that bad. And don’t try to tell me you don’t because I’ve seen you watch the British Baking Show and you do the same thing.”
“It’s not my fault that timed cooking stresses me out!” Evan pouted.
“I’m just saying you should tell him how you feel and the truth before you don’t have a chance to say all the stuff you want to. You never know Evan, maybe you wind up with this guy after all.” Evan reached down, his hand falling onto his wrist where little spirals that always brought him more worry and pain than anything sat, taunting him. He’d dreamed his whole life that he would meet the person with those same little spirals and all would be ok, but maybe Jared was right. So many people didn’t wind up with their soulmate and they were perfectly happy with life. He had an opportunity to be perfectly happy sitting right across the hall and he’d been lying to him the whole time. It seemed a little silly, looking back on all of it. He was so focused on trying to find the perfect person that he didn’t appreciate the person who was great in their own way. The boy who would sneak into a park and bring him flowers all to support him. Connor wasn’t a grand gesture person, but it was obvious that he was trying all for the stuttering mess that almost poisoned him with food. The person that had been lying to him the whole time they knew each other.

“Why is it you two are always here? You remember that you don’t live her right?” Connor sighed, unable to really keep any of the annoyance in his voice as he walked into his apartment to find his
sister and her girlfriend on his couch.
“Our cable is out right now, and why are you so happy it’s unnatural.” Zoe looked up from where she was sitting and muted the tv, much to Alana’s disgruntlement.
“I went on my date.” He shrugged, biting his bottom lip to keep his smile from spreading any wider than it already is. With those words, Zoe jumped off the couch and ran over to her brother, almost buzzing in excitement along the way.
“It went that well?!”
He pointed to his wrist, thinking about the random swirls that left a reminder that he was different than everyone else he knew.
“I didn’t even think about it with him.” It was a simple sentence, but Zoe knew exactly what it meant. He was so happy with Jared that the idea of standing out and being judged didn’t even cross his mind like it did for most people. Instead, he was just focused on the boy next to him. And it was true, Connor had only been able to think about Jared’s blue eyes lighting up when they stepped into the orchard all night long. Every single time it was enough to make his stomach start doing flips and his heart to feel like it was going to jump right out of his chest.
“You’re really happy with Jared aren’t you?” Zoe grinned for her brother. Seeing him genuinely happy was something she had hoped for, for so long that it was almost enough to make her tear up a bit.
“You and Jared, really?” Alana had finally perked up from her spot on the couch, listening to the conversation. “Didn’t take you for a glasses kinda guy.” Connor scrunched his eyebrows together in confusion and thought back to every time he’d seen Jared.
“He doesn’t wear glasses.” Connor said slowly.
“Yeah he does,” Alana turned, his eyebrows pulling together as well. “He was wearing them when we were at his apartment. When I met Zoe?”
“Are you sure you’re thinking of Jared?” Zoe rolled her eyes. “I think you’re thinking of his roommate Evan.” Alana huffed, reaching down and typing something into her phone before showing it to Connor and Zoe.
“No, I mean Jared.” In front of them sat a Facebook profile photo of Evan wearing glasses and a rainbow shirt that read “taste my ass”. Except the name on it was very obviously not that of Evan but Jared ‘Cool Guy’ Kleinman. Connor felt his heart that was just so happy drop into his stomach the longer he looked as the profile. It was so obviously Evan, but it wasn’t him at all. Because his name was Jared, and he was an asshole. But it seems the one named Evan was even worse because he had lied to Connor’s face.
“He lied to me?”
The next time that Evan saw Connor was the place they first met. Evan came in, shivering from the cold air of December as Connor was grabbing his mail. In an instant, Evan felt that little feeling that he’d always dreamed of. It was the warm swelling in his stomach that felt like all of his organs were doing flips. It was the feeling of falling for someone so fast you were sure how to stop yourself from hitting the ground and getting injured.

Connor looked up with a small glance, locking eyes with Evan for just a moment before sighing and closing his mail box. Evan smiled, walking towards the boy in hopes of a conversation. It didn’t seem like Connor was in the best mood though, as he barely looked up at Evan as he approached.

“Hey!” The blonde said happily, adjusting bags of Christmas presents in his arms.

“Hi.” Connor was already starting to walk to the elevator, probably so that Evan wouldn’t have to carry his stuff up all of the stairs.

“I was actually meaning to come talk to you,” Evan spoke, and for a second Connor’s eyes flickered up to him with an expression Evan couldn’t quite read, “I had a really nice time on our date. I’ve never been on one before but it was fun to me.” Connor nodded and looked back down, letting out a soft laugh.

“Yeah. I had fun too.” Evan looked down, biting his lip as he felt his face heat up a little.

“Um, I was wondering… Would you, maybe, like to go on another one? This weekend maybe? There’s an art exhibit down town and I thought m-”

“Can’t.” Connor said suddenly, avoiding Evan’s gaze. “I’m busy this weekend. My mom asked me to come take care of something back home and I told her I’d help. I can’t lie to her… that would just be a shitty thing to do to someone… don’t you think?” It was only then that Connor looked up and met Evan’s eyes with an intense stare. Evan felt his entire body go cold with those words. Connor knew. But he couldn’t know. Jared and he never said anything, and Evan’s family hadn’t come to visit at all.

“Um… yeah that would be an awful thing to do to someone.” Evan spoke quietly, and Connor only let out a small and bitter laugh.

“You’re one to talk Jared.” The elevator opened and Connor took a step out. “Or should I say Evan? It’s hard to know who you really are at this point.” Connor took one look at Evan, and those blue eyes had become a field of ice. Evan could feel the chill of them from where he stood frozen. His stomach was doing flips, but not the kind that mean he was falling for someone. They were the kind that meant he hit the ground, and everything around him was collapsing.
“You know.” Was all Evan managed to say as his voice caught in his throat. With those words Connor did turn around to face Evan completely.

“Yeah I do know. What I’m still trying to figure out though, is why the hell you lied to me. I thought we really had something between us Evan. I don’t believe in this whole soulmate bullshit, but you know what? I was kind of hoping that you’d be the one for me until you decided from the very start that you didn’t want to be honest with me. Now I kinda feel like I wasted more time than I ever should have on you.”

Every word that Connor spoke felt like its own knife driving deeper into Evan’s stomach, and making him feel like he was going to be sick. Connor looked like he was waiting for response from the blonde, who just stood frozen inside of the elevator. Evan even watched as the last bit of anger and a shred of hope started to fade from Connor’s eyes as the doors pulled shut once more.

Instead of trying to open the doors and run out to him, Evan felt his body give out, and he backed against the elevator wall. He slowly slid down, sitting on the floor, and felt his breath start to become shallow. He was having a panic attack in the elevator of his apartment building.

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“Now I kinda feel like I wasted more time than I ever should have on you.” Connor felt the weight he’d had on his chest all night finally falls off. He felt sick to his stomach; inside he was begging himself to just be quiet and take it all back. He wanted to forgive Evan, but a larger part of him needed to get the anger he was bottling up out.

He knew that if Evan would make any effort to move and apologize, he would have forgiven him within a heartbeat. He would have taken the small boy into his arms and kissed his forehead, telling him that everything would be ok between them. He was begging for Evan to do something to prove that they weren’t a dead end. But the elevator doors started to close, and all Evan did was continue to look at him with sad eyes.

With a huff, Connor brushed away the tear that had fallen onto his cheek and tuned to walk into his apartment. He’d only known Evan a short time. He wasn’t going to let this break him; he was going to get back up and keep moving.

The moment he closed the door behind him, and looked around his empty apartment, that thought left him. It suddenly all seemed to lonely and too empty. It reminded him of just how alone he was in his own little world. And by letting someone in, all he’d done was give them the ability to hurt him more than anyone had before. He’d been rejected, and he’d fought with people, but Evan was different. Evan had stolen his whole heart before he decided to crush it.

And that was the thought that sent Connor crying on the floor just inside of his apartment door.

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Evan wasn’t sure how long he was even in the elevator before Jared found him on the floor of it, his breathing still uneven. His friend immediately dropped all he was holding and fell to Evan’s side,
telling him to start focusing on things around him. He was reassuring Evan that whatever it was that was wrong, it would get sorted out.

“It won’t,” Evan had managed, looking down at the Christmas present he’d bought for Connor laying just inside the bag to his side. It was a small metal sculpture of the stars over a view of their city. It was supposed to represent the night that Connor and Evan spent on the roof. Now it just felt like something that wasn’t meant to belong to him ever. Connor wasn’t meant to belong to him.

“Don’t say that,” Jared whispered, “Come on, let’s go up to the apartment and I’ll make you tea. Whatever happened is going to be ok.”

“He found out Jared. He hates me.” Realization washed over Jared’s face and he sighed, looking down. He knew that he wasn’t going to be able to tell Evan that it was going to be ok, because it wouldn’t be. Instead, Jared just grabbed the Christmas bags and Evan’s hand.

“Let’s go home.”
“Alright no,” Zoe said angrily, pulling open the blinds to Connor’s room and letting light stream in through the windows. “I refuse to let you stay help up in your room all the time. You need to go out into society and function like a normal human being.” Connor groaned at the sudden flood of light coming into the room and rolled over, pulling his blanket above his head.

“Why did I give you a key to this place?” He mumbled from under his safety-fort. It wasn’t long before he felt the pillow under his head fly out, only to hit him on his back.

“Because you know that even if you don’t like me I’m always going to help you? Also I bring you food.” He heard Zoe mutter, hitting him again with his own pillow. Slowly, his head poked out from under the blanket, looking up at his sister who was beating him with his own property.

“I want my key back,” Connor huffed, pushing himself to sit up so she would stop assaulting him in his own home. With a small smile, she placed the pillow down by his side and reached for a plate next to his bed that was stacked with waffles. It even had a little fruit and whipped-cream smile on it. “Why is even your breakfast food so freaking happy all of the time?”

“Because I am a joy and it shows in my cooking. Also I’m not leaving until you eat.” She handed him the plate as well as a fork, then took a seat next to him on the bed. “I promise it tastes good; it’s mom’s recipe. I knew you needed some cheering up so I called her last night for it. Alana has already eaten like four of them, and she wants more so you better finish it.” Despite how annoyed Connor was towards his sister, he had to admit that it was sweet of her to do that for him.

Begrudgingly, Connor took a bite of the waffle and smiled as he tasted strawberries and Nutella cooked into the center of them. They really did taste like the waffles his mom used to make when he was sad. Oddly enough, the feeling of hopelessness faded a little, and he felt himself smiling at his sister. No matter what happened, she was going to be there by his side through thick and thin.

“Oh, now comes the bad part.” She smiled, making Connor frown.

“Please don’t tell me you used an ingredient that’s gonna kill me. I know I say that I wanna die eating, but I don’t mean it.”

“No,” she bit her lip, “it’s not that. Mom wants you to come home for Christmas this year. She thinks it’ll be good for you to get out of the apartment. I told her I’d talk to you and that it’s your decision, but I don’t wanna die because you don’t want to go back.” Connor slowly placed his fork down, and felt the knot in his stomach return. He was originally planning on asking Jar- Evan if he was busy on Christmas… if he even celebrated it. Now going home to his dysfunctional family didn’t seem so horrible. They’d fought every year on Christmas, but they’d never lied to him the way Evan had.

“I’ll call her and tell her I’ll go later.” He said softly, and Zoe looked almost sad at the statement. “Don’t tell me you’re that upset that you won’t get all of mom’s cooking.”

“I’ve never seen you like this,” she admitted. “I want to help, but I don’t know how. I thought back through high school, but I don’t remember you being in a relationship, so I don’t even know what to do. I mean, yeah you’re a dipshit, but you’re also my brother.”

“I’ll be fine.” Connor smiled. “But if you want to go do anything, go punch both of the assholes across the hall for me.” At that the seriousness on Zoe’s face left and she let out a small laugh. Quickly, she stood up, raising her hand like a military salute, and ran out of the room.
Evan dragged himself off the couch when he heard a knock on the door. He was expecting maybe one of Jared’s amazon packages, but what he didn’t see coming was a punch to the arm from Zoe Murphy. He didn’t say anything, but rather looked to his arm, back to her, back to his arm, then back to her.

“Where’s the other one?” She asked. Evan wordlessly, and in shock, pointed a finger towards Jared’s room, and watched as Zoe marched into their apartment and towards the room. She entered, followed quickly by a high-pitched, almost female sounding scream. As she marched back into their living room, Jared followed, wearing a green face mask and an oversized knock-off Gucci robe.

“Um, excuse me what in the sweet holy fuck? I was having me time!” Zoe paused, send daggers his way as he froze.

“Ok, someone better start explaining themselves. Now.”

“Ok,” Jared spoke, “I’m all for that. And we will, but first I’m gonna need you to sit down and realign your chakras boo. You’re really throwing off my me-day.” Zoe looked hesitant, but slowly walked to the couch and sat down.

“It started the day Jared met you in the hall,” Evan explained, “and he told me we had new neighbors. I, being the person I am, wanted to make something for you guys. I made my famous lemon-squares, but Jared was an idiot and switched my sugar labels with salt labels.”

“Guilty!”

“So I accidentally pissed of Connor to the point where he hated me. I met him a day after that, at the mail boxes. He helped me get it open, and happened to read Jared’s name, a person he wasn’t pissed at, and assumed that I was him. I panicked, because I think Connor is quite attractive and I’m not great with people, and said that was my name. I fully intended to tell him, and tried to before. Every time I did though, something happened. At that point I realized that I had already fallen pretty in love with him, and that wasn’t good because now I’m lying to him and I can’t figure out how to tell him without pissing him off.” Evan was breathing hard by the end of the speech and Zoe was staring hard at him.

“You’re in love with him?” She whispered, her eyes slowly widening. Evan froze, realizing what he’d just said, and suddenly felt sick to his stomach.

“I… I don’t…” he tried.

“You are or you aren’t, come on Evan!”

“Yes!” He yelled back, surprising himself. “Yes I think I am.” It was only then that Zoe finally smiled.

“I’m not sorry for punching either of you.”

“I still don’t understand what I did?” Jared mumbled. Zoe gave him a look and he sighed, “No, you’re right I probably did deserve it. I needed that to keep me humble anyways.”
“Like I was saying,” Zoe returned to looking at Evan, “I’m not sorry, but I don’t think you should give up on Connor. You pissed him off for sure, but he’s not that angry. He’s sadder than anything. I think you should just take some time then be honest with him. It may not fix things, but you can make it right with him.”

Evan nodded as Zoe spoke, taking what she was saying to heart. She was definitely pissed at him still, but if her brother found someone that loved him, he deserved that chance. She smiled, holding out her hand for Evan to shake. He reached out to take her hand in his, and that’s when she saw it. On Evan’s wrist laid two very familiar swirls, and it all started to make a little more sense.
“Evan hurry the hell up. I planned this playlist with only 20 minutes of cushion, and if you mess that up by getting us stuck in traffic I will end you! You can’t disrupt my bops!” Jared yelled from the front seat of his Subaru. They were getting ready to leave for Evan’s house for the holidays, but Evan didn’t really feel up for it. He’d been thinking of what Zoe had said to him about not giving up on Connor. It wasn’t like he wanted to give up on Connor, but he didn’t see another option.

Connor had been avoiding Evan since everything that went down between the two of them. He’d avoided eye contact, and made every effort not to get stuck next to him. That’s why Evan was so confused when he walked out to Jared’s car and found Connor sitting in it. Zoe was in the front passenger seat, and in the back sat Connor and Alana. He froze in place as Jared got out of the car to grab Evan’s duffle bag of clothes to put in the back.

“What the hell is going on?” Evan mumbled, trailing behind Jared to the back of the vehicle. Jared shrugged a little, opening the back.

“Zoe called this morning to say that someone stole Connor’s tires of his car and they needed a ride home for the holidays. I was kind enough to volunteer. I think I’m getting my fill of charity in for the month by doing this so you’re not allowed to complain.” Evan paused as Jared lifted his suitcase and placed it on top of the others.

“You do charity?” Jared looked up, offended, then returned to closing the back of the car. “Also, someone stole his ‘tires’? As in more than one tire from the same car? Did they steal anything else?” In his mind, an image of two large men dressed in black popped up. They were stealing the tires to a car and laughing manically like it was an old Cartoon Network program. Evan quickly shook the thoughts away and cursed his grandma for making him watch so many reruns of The Jetsons growing up.

“Of course I do charity. I’m a good citizen who gives back by singing and dancing at the old folk’s home down the road. And let me tell you, that’s no easy task. Jerry falls asleep every 15 minutes and Denisse has a habit of getting handsie. She says I remind her of her second husband.” Jared smiled fondly, then looked back to Evan. And yes just his tires. I don’t know why, but you need to put up with it until we get home, ok?”

“He’s going to kill me!” Evan whispered.

“No he won’t. I stuck Alana between you two and she has a black belt. He’d have to try to go through her, and then she’d kick his ass. I thought this out already. Now, get in the car and get ready for a fun ride.” Evan pouted, trudging around to the side of the car where he could get in. Connor was already leaning the other way and listening to music loudly with headphones. It sounded like something angry, and Evan didn’t blame him.
Connor inwardly groaned when his phone beeped at him for forgetting to charge it. It was already down to its last five percent, which gave Connor probably only five minutes left of battery before he was going to have to deal with his reality. Looking out the window, he could see they still had at least an hour to go before getting home, and that was a whole hour longer than Connor wanted to spend in the car with Evan… or Jared.

“I’m gonna pop your bubblegum heart!” His phone finally died out, leaving only him and a chorus of poorly sung songs coming from the two in front. Somehow, Alana had managed to read a book in the middle of this, and Evan was just staring out the window. He was already fraying the hem of his nice sweater by pulling at it, and for a split second Connor had the urge to reach over and take Evan’s hand in his.

He quickly pushed the thought out of his head.

“Can’t you play anything other than Marina?” Connor mumbled, catching everyone’s attention. He hadn’t said a word since he got in the car, but Jared and Zoe’s music was enough to make anyone go crazy. He did like Marina, but listening to her on repeat made him want to fly into the sun.

“Fine. Any suggestions?” Jared raised an eyebrow in the review mirror, looking between Connor and Evan. Neither of them spoke up. “Fine. Marina it is.” He smiled, reaching for the volume when both Connor and Evan blurted a band out.

“The Smiths!” Both of them yelled in unison, only to turn and look at each other in surprise. Alana noticed, immediately dropping her head and returning to her book as not to break this. Evan chuckled nervously, and let out the smallest ‘nice choice.’ Connor physically had to take a breath, and force himself to turn away. He wasn’t going to let himself get dragged back into this.

“So,” Zoe beamed, turning in her seat to look at everyone in the back seat. “I heard that cousin Kelly found her soulmate on Monday. Isn’t that sweet?” Connor huffed, pretending not to notice that Evan had gone ridged in the corner. Zoe paused, waiting for someone to speak, but no one did.

“Anyways,” Zoe sighed, “I was just thinking about soulmates, and I started to remember… Evan you haven’t shown us what your soulmate marks look like…” Evan’s eyes had gone wide, and Connor found himself looking up. He certainly didn’t want to watch his sister bully Evan into showing his marks, but that didn’t mean that he wasn’t a little curious. Evan had never worn anything but long sleeves and it did bug him a little that he’d never seen what pictures sat on Evan’s wrists.

“That’s… kind of a personal request…” Evan mumbled, his face slowly draining of color. From the corner of his eyes, Connor could see Jared watching the situation, ready to jump in if Evan needed it.

“Oh come on,” Zoe pouted, “You’ve seen mine!” Zoe pulled up her sleeves to reveal a little tree and a bird in front of a book (that one matched the one on Alana’s arm.

“That’s… kind of a personal request…” Evan mumbled, his face slowly draining of color. From the corner of his eyes, Connor could see Jared watching the situation, ready to jump in if Evan needed it.

“I just don’t like talking about it.” Evan whispered. Zoe huffed, ready to speak again when Connor groaned.

“Just… let him be. If he doesn’t want to talk about it he shouldn’t have to. You don’t have to get so pushy.” Zoe turned, shooting daggers in his direction, but Connor only raised his hand to flip her off. Eventually though, she turned back around and started looking at new music to play over the radio.
Connor leaned back, looking over at Evan, who mouthed a ‘thanks’, and turned his head to look back out of the window.

After that he found his own hand resting on top of where his mark laid, thinking about what it would have been like if Evan’s looked the same way.

Connor pushed that thought out of his head too.

When he looked at the clock, it told him he only had forty five minutes until he could forget about Evan for at least a little while.

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