White Days

by Pellaeaearien

Summary

Chloe Decker has a pretty good life: daughter, job, partner (and love of her life). But the mystery of Lucifer’s kidnapping remains unsolved, the Lieutenant is making work difficult, and no one thought fitting the Devil himself into their family would be easy. Still, Chloe and Lucifer are a team, and that means they’re ready to take on whatever life throws at them... including each other.

Notes

I’m so excited to continue with this journey! Thank you everyone for your continued support! Most of all, thank you to wollfgang, Ariaadagio, and psychicninja90 for being the best betas!
See the end of the work for more notes.
Devil's in the Details

“Aw, hell!”

“Trixie!”

“But Mom, I lost Wonder Woman’s lasso!”

“No excuses. You know the rules.” Chloe held out the swear jar as Trixie rolled her eyes. Chloe barely kept from rolling her own. Sometimes she wished Lucifer’s Father wasn’t a manipulative dick; it’d be nice to have someone to pray to for strength, especially these days. Trixie was in a phase where she swore every chance she got because she thought it made her sound cool. Fighting against it felt like the definition of a losing battle. Behind her came the sound of the door opening.

“Ah, good morning, Det- Chloe. Child.” Lucifer breezed in as usual, and Chloe smiled at him as he came in for a kiss.

“Good morning, Lucifer,” she said. She’d noticed Lucifer making an effort to use her name more often when they were alone, and it never failed to warm her heart.

The happiness she felt at seeing him nearly eclipsed her realization that Trixie didn’t even greet him, much less engage in her usual enthusiastic hug. She seemed to be trying with great determination to act grown up, and it worried her. Her daughter had been totally on board with her mom and Lucifer starting to date but Chloe was wondering if the reality was starting to set in for Trixie. Her little monkey loved Dan so much, and Chloe knew from experience how hard it could be to see a parent moving on. Her mom had never remarried after her dad had died, but the few times her mother had gone on dates Chloe remembered harbouring a great deal of resentment. She bit her lip. She couldn’t let herself get so caught up in Lucifer that she neglected Trixie’s feelings.

But, as so often happened in her life, she would have to put the issue aside for the time being.

“Pierce called from the hospital - because apparently he never stops working - and we have a case,” she told Lucifer, watching his expression harden at the reminder of the shooting at the ranch.


“No, an actual case,” she corrected him, “so let’s get moving.” She put the swear jar down on the counter to pack up her stuff.

“Well, hello,” he purred, and Chloe braced herself. “Swear jar?”

“Oh, yeah, it’s Trixie’s,” Chloe explained.

“Well then, I’m even more impressed.” Chloe straightened a bit in her chair, surprised by how pleased Lucifer’s unexpected praise made her feel. “Really? Thank you, Lucifer.”
“Impressed that you extort money from your offspring.” Lucifer chuckled, and Chloe started to get a sinking feeling in the pit of her stomach. “I mean, what a ridiculous idea. ‘Bad’ words? Determined by an arbitrary set of rules, just like my Father’s?” He pulled out what Chloe was sure was more money than Trixie had ever seen in her life. “Here, child. This should buy you plenty of juicy words. You swear away.”

Chloe pounced, snatching the money from Lucifer’s hand before Trixie could take it.

“Lucifer!” she hissed. “I am trying to get her to stop swearing and teach her accountability. Ever heard of it?”

She tried to reign in her temper, but the realization that she’d been blind to this aspect of their relationship changing put her instantly on damage control.

“I have, actually,” Lucifer shot back. “I invented it.”

Chloe opened her mouth to argue and then abruptly remembered who she was talking to, though her frustration kept her from getting sidetracked.

“Great, so you should get what I’m trying to do.”

“On the contrary.” Lucifer’s expression was mulish. “This is not accountability. This is servitude. Unquestioning obedience. Why do you think I rebelled in the first place?”

It was too much for Chloe. Trixie was watching wide eyed, and Chloe had a very bad feeling. She was already concerned about what her daughter had been picking up from the hellions in her life; Trixie didn’t need to see the two of them fighting over Original Sin.

“Lucifer, can I talk to you? Over here?” She kept a tight lid on her anger as Lucifer sighed and followed her. Once they were out of Trixie’s earshot, she rounded on him.

“Okay. This can’t happen,” she began.

“I couldn’t agree more,” Lucifer interjected, but Chloe cut him off sharply.

“No. I can’t have you undermining my parental authority in front of Trixie.” Lucifer opened his mouth to argue but she barrelled on. “Whatever hangups you might have, you keep your opinions to yourself until there is an appropriate time to address them.” Chloe spoke over Lucifer’s protests. He stopped and blinked, surprised, and Chloe took the moment to calm herself down, to push past the knee jerk reaction and approach the issue more rationally. She took a deep breath.

“Look. Lucifer,” she said more quietly. “I get it. You’re the product of the most dysfunctional family in the universe, and sometimes there’s going to be friction. I’m not expecting you to be a father to Trixie.” Just the mention of it was enough to send Lucifer halfway to deer-in-headlights mode, and she would have found it adorable if it wasn’t also slightly concerning. Trixie was always going to be a part of her life, after all. “Dan is Trixie’s dad, and that’s never going to change. But I’m also never going to stop being Trixie’s mom.” She swallowed, aware that if they weren’t careful this could end up being a deal breaker. “If we’re going to be together now, I need you to understand that.”

Lucifer nodded tightly, jaw tense. Chloe took his hand, feeling him relax, just a little, into the touch, at the reassurance that she wasn’t angry at him.

“When I moved in with Maze, there was a bit of an adjustment period,” Chloe said, rubbing soothing circles into his hand with her thumb. “She had to get used to living with a child. The same thing applies here. I trust you with Trixie, completely. And in the past I’ve let things slide because you
spending time together was a more occasional thing. But now we have to think about how things like this affect her. If you have an issue with how I handle Trixie, you can take it up with me in private,” she emphasized. “I’d actually appreciate your input.” Lucifer blinked again, and Chloe smiled. “We can discuss the swear jar later, okay? Right now, we have a case, and we have to get going.”

Lucifer grimaced before agreeing. “Very well, Detective,” he said, and Chloe wished they had more time. She hesitated only slightly before kissing his cheek and going back into the other room.

“Trixie? Sorry about that, honey,” she said. “Money in the jar, and then off to school; you’re gonna miss the bus!”

She headed into her room to grab her coat. When she came out, both Lucifer and Trixie wore almost identical expressions of delight. Chloe briefly considered investigating what they were up to but decided against it - it was a welcome change from the moody pre-teen who had greeted her that morning.

“Have a good day at school, monkey. I love you!” Chloe said as Trixie ran to meet the bus.

“Bye, Mom! Bye, Lucifer!” Trixie called over her shoulder, and Chloe was briefly blindsided by the thought of having every morning like this.

She shook her head. Domestics with Lucifer. Now that really was a pipe dream.

Lucifer held her car door for her, smiling brightly. It was one of the falsest expressions she’d seen on his face in a long time and it lodged like a cold shard in her chest.

“What have I mentioned how lovely you look today, Detective?” he said, and while Chloe didn’t doubt that the compliment was genuine she also recognized the signs of Lucifer trying to deflect. She clenched her fists as he got in the passenger seat before starting the car. She didn’t want to fight.

“Lucifer, we’re good, okay? I just reacted, back there. I’ve been worried about Trixie, what with all the changes and everything… I’m sorry I lost my temper.”

Lucifer’s smile faded. Chloe surveyed him covertly as she drove, concerned now for a different reason. She wondered if her earlier assessment about domestics had been completely accurate. It couldn’t be more clear that Lucifer longed for that sort of connection, even if he wouldn’t admit it - it fairly screamed from every line of his body how nervous he was, afraid of losing it all. And yet this had been important enough to him that he’d stood his ground. Chloe wondered if this was a sign that her reassurances had started to get through to him, that he felt more secure, safe to disagree without fear of rejection. She hoped so, for both their peace of mind - or that at the very least Linda might be able to curb his propensity for jumping to the worst possible conclusion.

At least, Chloe thought as they returned to the precinct after their inspection of the pudding factory, this case didn’t seem to be pushing any of Lucifer’s buttons. He’d made the expected jokes when presented with the white goo and hadn’t passed up a single opportunity to rag on Dan. His Dad was on his mind perhaps a bit more than usual, but that was nothing new, and all in all, despite the bizarre circumstances under which the death had occurred, Chloe was anticipating a smooth investigation. They’d contacted the “big man upstairs,” Adrien Yates, and he’d agreed to bring a copy of the security footage from the night in question into the precinct.

Lucifer grinned when she informed him the man had arrived. “Who says solving murders can’t be easy?” he joked, and Chloe smirked at him as she led the way to the conference room.

“Mr. Yates,” Chloe greeted the CEO as she opened the door. “Thank you for coming. Your security
footage will be incredibly helpful. Did you bring the tapes?"

Yates turned. “I’m sorry, but no.”

Chloe frowned. The only reason he’d come was to bring the tapes. “What? Why not?”

“Because I told him not to,” came a disturbingly familiar voice from behind them. A shiver travelled up Chloe’s spine, and she turned to see Charlotte Richards striding in, all confidence. “I’m Mr. Yates’ attorney and the LAPD isn’t laying a finger on those tapes.”

If Chloe was surprised to see Charlotte it was nothing compared to Lucifer’s reaction. He stiffened beside her, and Chloe waved goodbye to her nice, normal case.

“Mum?” he whispered, for Chloe’s ears alone, and she glanced up at him, swearing inwardly. She’d waited too long to ask him what had really gone down with his Mother, and now it was blowing up in their faces.

“You look surprised to see me,” Charlotte observed, walking past them around the table to sit next to Yates.

Chloe resisted the urge to look at Lucifer again. He’d said he’d sealed Goddess away; was this the real Charlotte, or had his Mother found her way back somehow? From her brief glance at Lucifer’s face it seemed he didn’t know the answer either. All she could think of to do was play along for now, until she figured out what was going on.

“Charlotte.” Chloe tried not to put any special emphasis on the name and failed. “We just didn’t expect to see you so soon.” She sat down across from the pair, scrutinizing Charlotte for any clue as to her real identity. Lucifer remained standing, tension vibrating in his limbs. “Thought your brush with death might have changed you.” That was as delicately as Chloe could bring herself to put it.

“It has.” Lucifer had no such compunction. “Hasn’t it?” Charlotte gave him a look as she popped her briefcase. “Back to being Charlotte Richards? Right?”

Chloe shot Lucifer a frantic cease-and-desist look as Charlotte removed a file from her briefcase and gave them a small smile that Chloe didn’t know how to interpret.

“Why are you here?” Lucifer pressed.

For her part, Charlotte appeared unfazed. “Apparently, someone was trying to speak to my client without counsel. I am here to inform you that a stunt like that won’t stand, nor will your request for any security footage.”

Chloe quickly tried to take control of the conversation. “We just wanted Mr. Yates’ help - a friendly conversation - but this makes it seem like you’re hiding something.”

“Yes, an ulterior motive for being here, perhaps?” Lucifer chimed in blatantly, and Chloe gritted her teeth to keep from reacting, wishing she hadn’t sat down so she could have stomped on his foot.

“Excuse me?” Charlotte sounded skeptical, as well she should. Chloe was frustrated by how Lucifer seemed to have thrown subtlety out the window, but she supposed she could hardly blame him.

“It’s awfully curious timing, you back in my life with everything that’s happened,” Lucifer said.

Chloe schooled her face to impassivity. *His wings. His face.* Could Charlotte somehow be involved?
Charlotte’s expression didn’t remain nearly so neutral, and Lucifer chuckled knowingly. “This is about me, isn’t it?”

“If this was a social visit,” Charlotte replied, all business once again, “you would most certainly know.”

Lucifer’s eyes narrowed, and Charlotte turned to Chloe. “And what we’re hiding is Pudding Plus’ proprietary recipe. Releasing those tapes would reveal how the pudding is made, committing their secret formula to public record, which could cost the company millions.”

Charlotte seemed slightly different than the Goddess Chloe remembered interacting with, but she couldn’t quite put her finger on why, which made her suspicious. Before she could respond, Yates himself spoke up.

“Besides, the killer’s not on any of the footage anyway,” he said. Chloe’s eyebrows shot up.

“Mr. Yates, it’s best if I do the talking,” Charlotte warned. Yates kept going.

“But all you can see is that there’s some sort of scuffle out of frame. The killer’s not visible from any of the angles.”

Charlotte put a hand on her client’s arm to get him to stop talking, which he unfortunately did; Chloe pounced.

“Okay, so see, that there, that’s a clue. That means the killer knew how to avoid the cameras.” It brought back memories of Lucifer’s kidnappers, who’d known to do the same thing. “This could be an inside job. Who has access to the lab? I’m assuming you’re at the top of that list.”

Charlotte snapped her briefcase shut. “All right, Detective, you can stop right there. Mr. Yates, not a word; we’re done here.”

“But I’m not finished with you,” Lucifer said, and Chloe knew she’d have a hard time getting his focus back on the case. Charlotte rose imperiously.

“What part of my briefcase closing did you not understand?” She left without another word, Yates following her out looking both cowed and impressed.

Chloe stared at Lucifer as the door closed. “Okay, what was that?” she asked. She’d assumed that it was impossible for Goddess to come back; Lucifer’s reaction seemed to indicate that there was at least some room for doubt.


“You’re saying you don’t know whether or not that was your Mom?” She tried to keep the sharpness from her voice, but it was difficult - the last thing she needed today was complications. Their “easy” case had just gotten a lot harder.

“Well aside from sticking her with a pin and seeing if she explodes, unless she reveals herself there’s no way to tell,” Lucifer shot back, but Chloe paused.

“Well, that’s just it,” she said slowly.

“What?”

“If that really was your Mom she’d have no reason not to reveal herself to us, right? She knows I’m
in on the secret, and she certainly didn’t seem shy about her identity before.”

Lucifer’s mouth twisted. “Yes, but that was before I sent her to another universe,” he said. “She could be playing her own angle.”

“So it really could be your Mom.” Chloe was still trying to wrap her head around it. “You seemed to think she was gone for good.”

“Yes, well I’ve never exactly done this before. It’s not like there’s an instruction manual for… space vaginas,” Lucifer snapped.

Chloe winced at the imagery and then tried to work on a plan. “Okay,” she said in a calming tone. “Well, for now, Charlotte doesn’t seem interested in talking with us. She’s certainly not going to do anything while Yates is with her. We’ll keep an eye on her, but in the meantime, she’s gotten personally involved in this case, so getting to the bottom of it might give us a clue as to what she’s planning.”

Lucifer hesitated, but nodded.

Chloe touched his arm. “I know you want to go haring after Charlotte, but if she really is your Mom, our one advantage is to keep her from guessing that we’re onto her. All right?”

Lucifer nodded again. “Yes. Yes, all right.”

Chloe smiled at him. “Come on, partner. We’ve got work to do.”
Unfortunately, said work was tedious and ultimately fruitless, and she could sense Lucifer’s attention wavering as they worked through the list of seven employees who had keycard access to the lab. All seven - including Adrien Yates - had solid alibis.

“Look!” Chloe exclaimed, pointing at her screen, and Lucifer dragged his attention from his phone after a moment. “Grace Foley. Adrien’s former business partner. She left two years ago to start her own rival pudding company - Heavenly Pudding - and from the looks of things she never turned in her keycard. Looks like means and motive to me.”

“Yes, fine,” Lucifer said, distracted. Chloe was aware that she had half of his attention at most, but he was making the effort, and that’s what mattered.

Chloe called Heavenly Pudding’s head office and was informed that Grace Foley was currently filming a commercial. She dragged Lucifer out to the sound stage, choosing not to comment on the way he was constantly tapping away on his phone. She didn’t think Charlotte, whoever she was currently, would suddenly change her mind and allow herself to be contacted, but Chloe could also sympathize with the need to be doing something. It wasn’t until they arrived that she decided to have some fun with it.

“So Grace is shooting her ad campaign here on stage 69,” she said casually as they got out of the car. She caught sight of a man lurking around, looking very out of place in a trenchcoat. “It should be right past the creepy flasher.”

Lucifer didn’t even look up. “That’s nice.”

Chloe sighed. “Lucifer, I know you’re not listening to me. Creepy flasher? Stage 69?”

“69? What? Where?”

“I reversed the numbers to get your attention.” They dodged the bustle and stepped into the stairwell of the soundstage.

Lucifer had the grace to look abashed. “I apologize, Detective. I don’t want to leave Charlotte to her own devices; not until I’ve gotten to the bottom of why she’s returned. It’s highly convenient that she should show up now that I’m dealing with...” He gestured to his back. “She may even be involved, somehow.”

“Maybe you just need a... distraction.” Before she could think better of it she was on her toes, pressing a kiss to Lucifer’s lips. “Pay attention to me instead.”

She dropped back down, feeling as surprised as Lucifer looked. She didn’t know what had come over her.

“...The case,” Chloe quickly corrected, “I meant the case.”

Lucifer nodded, swallowing.

“We should probably...” Chloe cleared her throat, gesturing toward the open door, where a model
(dressed in a skimpy angel outfit, because of course she was) was just entering. Lucifer nodded again, and they followed the model inside, where the stage was set up with puffy clouds in shades of pink and blue. Various scantily dressed models were lounging about, wearing wings and eating pudding.

“What the-?” Whatever Chloe had been expecting, it hadn’t been this (though with a name like *Heavenly Pudding*, it probably should have been.)

“Not at all accurate,” Lucifer was saying, as he stared in rapture at the stage, “but I approve!”

Chloe, still trying to make sense of what she was seeing (as well as parse the fact that the fairly stereotypical version of Heaven was apparently incorrect) didn’t respond.

“Unless Dad has something to do with this as well.” Lucifer made a noise of disgust. “So conflicted, but… can’t look away.”

He started to walk forward, but the suspension of disbelief was shattered by an acerbic voice calling out for more pudding. “I don’t care if she can’t breathe!”

The bell rang to cut, and Chloe interrupted the woman’s tirade. “Grace Foley?”

Grace whirled, eyes narrowing as she caught sight of Chloe. “Why are your clothes still on?”

“I ask myself that all the time,” Lucifer quipped, and Chloe shot him a look.

“LAPD; we have some questions for you.” The models all began to drift apart while on break. Chloe expected Lucifer to be like a kid in a candy store but he remained focused on Grace.

“How well did you know Mr. Fisher?” Chloe continued the line of questioning.

“Simon? I’ve been trying to poach that genius ever since I started my own company,” Grace answered.

“Then what?” Lucifer asked, hardly even blinking as a statuesque brunette in a bikini walked by licking pudding off her wrist. “You got tired of him rejecting you, so you snuck into his lab-”

“You think I killed him?” Grace’s voice dripped skepticism.

“Vengeance, corporate sabotage, all in one fell swoop? It makes sense,” Chloe said.

Grace just laughed. “Even if I did kill him - which I did not - you really think I’m dumb enough to admit it? Especially without my lawyer present? Speaking of, let’s get her down here, shall we?”

Chloe nudged Lucifer, who was once more staring at the stage and the tacky angel stereotypes milling around it, his expression caught between horror and fascination. He looked down at her.

“Yes, Detective?”

“She wants her lawyer here,” Chloe hissed. Lucifer frowned.

“So?”

Chloe resisted the urge to roll her eyes. How could a being who was literally older than time be so dense, sometimes? “So, maybe you should find out what she *desires* more?”

Lucifer blinked. “Oh, you want me to-?”
“Yes,” Chloe said, trying to keep the annoyance from her tone.

“Okay, then, why didn’t you just ask?” Lucifer said, and Chloe shook her head. She wasn’t sure why she was even having to ask. He stepped forward. “Ms. Foley.”

Because Chloe was listening for it now, she thought she could hear the undertone in his voice; subtle harmonics urging compliance. But even then she thought she might just be imagining it. She wondered what it felt like to Grace; the woman looked up from her phone with a sharp comment.

“Personal space. Ever heard of it?”

Lucifer was undeterred. “You don’t want to call your lawyer, do you?”

Chloe bit back a laugh. These are not the droids you’re looking for.

“What are you doing?” Grace intoned. Despite her initial resistance, she was instantly caught in his thrall.

“Come on, tell me what you really want,” Lucifer urged. “What’s your greatest desire?”

“My greatest desire,” Grace repeated, “is to stop shooting this exploitative garbage!”

Lucifer blinked, and the moment passed. “Garbage? What are you talking about?” He made an expansive gesture. “What you’re doing is art!”

“Is it, though?” Chloe couldn’t help commenting.

“Well, despite the reminder of my Dad and my wings, I’ve never wanted pudding so much in my life!” Lucifer replied.

“Exactly!” Grace exclaimed. “Because we’re selling sex - which has absolutely nothing to do with pudding - to distract people from the fact that my pudding tastes like crap.”

“That’s an odd choice of flavours,” Lucifer commented.

Chloe did roll her eyes then. “Even more motive for you to sneak into the lab, steal the secret recipe,” she said. “What? Did Simon just get in your way?”

“I didn’t need to steal their recipe,” Grace insisted. “Simon offered to sell it to me three days ago.”

“What?” That made no sense at all.

“But then, before I could agree to his terms, he was murdered - and not by me. More than anyone, I needed Simon alive.” With that, she excused herself to attend to other matters regarding the commercial, and Chloe let her go since she no longer seemed to have motive; at least until they investigated further.

“If Simon was selling the secret recipe, then this may not be about corporate sabotage so much as corporate espionage,” Chloe theorized, Lucifer nodding along as he listened. “If Adrien found out, he’d want to stop Simon and…”

“Hello.” A gorgeous, half-naked blonde stepped right up to them, simpering as she drew a finger down Lucifer’s arm. Astonished by her boldness, Chloe didn’t respond at first. Lucifer caught the woman’s hand.

“Hello, darling; sorry, I’m busy just now…”
But Chloe had caught sight of the man in the trenchcoat she’d noticed before, and she started hatch ing a plan. There was no time to second-guess; she turned to Lucifer.

“Lucifer.” He looked over at her. “Why don’t you take your new friend and escort her back to her trailer?” She was banking on the trenchcoat man following them, and she’d be able to corner him.

However, she hadn’t counted on Lucifer staring at her with absolute bafflement, like he had no idea what she was talking about. “Her trailer?” Chloe nodded, and Lucifer’s brow furrowed further. “Are you suggesting…?” Chloe raised her eyebrows, wondering if she’d actually have to spell it out for him, as the model looked between the two of them in confusion. Lucifer’s expression settled on something vaguely suspicious. “Who are you, and what have you done with the Detective?”

Chloe shrugged out of her jacket. “Put this on her. She looks cold.” Maybe it would be enough to fool trenchcoat man into following them.

Tentative hope crept into Lucifer’s face. “Does… this mean you’re going to join us?” he asked; but Chloe didn’t have time for this. The one time she might have wished for Lucifer to be a bit more distractible...

“I’m going to ask Grace a follow-up. I’ll catch you up, okay?” Lucifer still hesitated, and Chloe sensed their chance slipping away. “Just do it, Lucifer, please?” She tried to convey with her eyes what she was really saying, but she apparently wasn’t very successful. Lucifer’s lips thinned into a line, his back ramrod-straight as though he were receiving orders.

“Very well,” he bit out. Chloe’s heart plummeted, feeling like she’d just made a big mistake. “Darling, would you like to take five in the trailers?” Lucifer’s voice changed completely when he addressed the model, syrupy-sweet.

At least everything went exactly as she’d planned. The strange man followed Lucifer and his companion out and Chloe was able to trail him.

“LAPD. Don’t move,” she called out, once they were in the open. The man halted. “Let me guess; you work for Adrien Yates.”

“I think you’ve got me confused with somebody else, lady,” the man drawled, and Chloe’s hackles went immediately up - anyone who continued referring to her so casually once she’d already identified herself as police rubbed her the wrong way.

“I don’t think I do,” she replied. “Saw you watching us earlier.”

Lucifer spun on his heel, abandoning the model and advancing on them. “Detective, what’s going on?”

“Sometimes, big corporations, they have fixers on their payroll to prevent corporate espionage.”

“Or clever detectives from learning about said espionage,” Lucifer commented, and Chloe bit the inside of her cheek, feeling caught out without really knowing why.

“I’m not saying anything more without my lawyer,” the man said mulishly.

“Ah, wonderful,” Lucifer said. “If he works for Adrien Yates, then his lawyer is Charlotte Richards, right?” He levelled a hard look at Chloe, who nodded, a conciliatory gesture.

After the fixer left to contact his attorney, Chloe was left staring at Lucifer. The model had left in a
huff; Chloe went to retrieve her coat in lieu of speaking, the unnatural tension between them leaving a knot in her stomach. She felt like she needed to apologize but wasn’t sure what she should be apologizing for. She’d crossed one of Lucifer’s lines without realizing it and didn’t know how to bring it up.

“I… didn’t like that,” Lucifer said, his back still to her, slowly, like he was trying the words on for size. Chloe’s heart thudded in her chest. He turned to look at her, and she felt small under his gaze like she never had before. “You can’t just use me like a pawn, love.”

Chloe’s eyes shot wide. “Lucifer, I…” She swallowed past the lump in her throat. “You know I don’t think of you that way?” The denial came hard and fast to her lips. Lucifer just arched an eyebrow.

“Don’t you?” There was resignation and something else in his voice, a hurt so deep and ancient that Chloe shied away. She looked back on the events of the past few minutes, seeing her actions in a different light; how she’d prompted him to use his mojo and then not bothered to explain her gambit with the model, too used to the old Lucifer who wouldn’t have needed so much persuasion. She could see exactly how it looked to him and felt even worse.

“No!” Chloe gasped, watching as Lucifer’s expression shuttered further and she reached out instinctively, wanting to hug him but unsure if he would allow her to. “Lucifer, I’m sorry.”

He paused; she could see her words register, and her heart fractured at the healthy amount of suspicion that accompanied the faint hope in his eyes. She clung to the latter, keeping her arm outstretched.

“What?” Lucifer’s tone had too many emotions rushing beneath the surface for Chloe to parse, but the disbelief was the worst of all.

“I should have explained myself better. I let the case blind me and ignored your feelings. You’re my partner; we do things together, and I’m sorry for ever losing sight of that.”

Lucifer’s eyes were very wide. He seemed incapable of speech; Chloe, however, couldn’t stop.

“I never wanted you to do anything with her, I just wanted to draw the fixer out, and I thought if I told you that, we’d lose our chance. I should have realized… I’m so sorry.” She wanted to look away but forced herself to hold his eyes, willing him to see her sincerity.

“I…” Lucifer paused, looking like he was searching for words. “I accept your apology,” he said formally, like he was reading from a textbook. Chloe let out a relieved breath, and Lucifer blinked, looking at her like he was seeing her for the first time. “Thank you,” he said, meaning it. Chloe found herself wondering if anyone had ever properly apologized for wronging him before.

She couldn’t stop herself from hugging him after that, and when she felt him hold her in return the tension began to drain from her body.

“Of course,” she said, tears stealing her voice. “Lucifer, thank you, for talking about this.” She was fully aware that the old Lucifer wouldn’t have been so forward; his walls would have shot right back up, and he would have gone away to brood. She didn’t need Linda to tell her how big of a step this was for him, and she was fiercely proud of her partner for making his voice heard. “I want you to tell me when something’s bothering you.”

They stood entwined for a moment longer.

“Do you really feel like I use you?” Chloe asked his chest.
Lucifer smirked down at her. “I like it when you’re a bit bossy,” he confessed, tucking strands of hair behind her ear. Chloe blushed faintly. “I am content to lend my skills when required - but I would like to be consulted beforehand.” His voice was wry but Chloe bit her lip.

“I know, and I’m sorry…”

Lucifer bent down to kiss her cheek. “You have apologized, and I have accepted your apology. Don’t dwell on it.” He paused. “That is the correct response, yes?”

Chloe laughed. “Yes.” She pulled him into a deeper kiss. “You’re a fast learner.”

Suddenly remembering that they were on a backlot with various passerby milling around, she pulled back slightly, taking Lucifer’s hand instead. “Come on, let’s get lunch before heading back to the precinct. I’m starved.”

Lucifer walked beside her, their shoulders knocking together companionably. “And of course, any time you’d like to invite a gorgeous specimen to join us, I’ll gladly consider it.”

Chloe snorted, leaning into him. “Unlikely, but I’ll keep it in mind.”

Lucifer waggled his eyebrows at her and the moment passed.

It wasn’t until they were back in the cruiser that Chloe noticed Lucifer looking at her pensively.

“What are you thinking about?” she asked, resolving to use that question more often going forward.

“You know, we could use this,” he said, gesturing to himself.

Chloe arched an eyebrow. “Oh, so now you want me to use you,” she said, tone carefully skirting the fresh wound.

Lucifer shrugged. “You can’t deny my sex appeal has its benefits,” Lucifer purred, and Chloe rolled her eyes to hide the fact that she wasn’t in disagreement.

“Actually I’ve been meaning to ask you about that,” Chloe said, and Lucifer grinned.

“My sex appeal? Darling, if you have to ask me about that, clearly I haven’t been doing my job properly.”

Chloe just shook her head. “I mean, I’ve mostly been thinking in terms of your desire mojo solving cases, back when I thought it was some kind of hypnosis or something.” Lucifer scoffed. “But there’s more, isn’t there?” Chloe asked. Lucifer looked back at her with eyes that were suddenly serious, though there was still faint mischief dancing in them.

“Of course there is,” he answered. Chloe wordlessly prompted him to go on, but Lucifer just leaned back against the seat, his tongue darting out teasingly to touch his teeth. “As much as I love talking about myself, I’m rather curious to see what you’ve put together on your own. Go on,” he challenged. “I’ll fill in whatever’s left.”

Chloe turned her attention back to the road, thinking about the list she’d started writing back when she’d first discovered the truth about Lucifer. She understood his desire power a bit more now, but they were still no closer to figuring out why it didn’t affect her. Did Lucifer’s powers not work on miracles? Had there been any other ones for him to try it on? If that was the reason, why was it only Lucifer? Amenadiel’s powers had worked on her just fine, but was that because he’d been responsible for her creation in the first place?
She shook her head, trying to change her focus.

Lucifer watched her in apparent amusement. “I’m waiting.”


“What makes you say that?” Lucifer sounded intrigued. “I mean, you’re right, of course, I just thought I’d been more discreet in that area.”

“The case with the cheater therapist,” Chloe answered. “You were on top of that building with that jumper when you’d been right next to me a second earlier.”

“Ah, yes,” Lucifer exclaimed, pleased. “I’d assumed you would be too distracted with your phone call. It’s true, I can move much faster than humans when the situation calls for it, though I prefer to stalk my prey.” His smile showed all of his teeth, and Chloe shivered. It was probably a sign that there was something wrong with her that the expression didn’t unnerve her, instead inspiring a very different thrill. “And now with my wings, that makes it even easier. Since they don’t operate on earthly laws, theoretically there’s no upper limit to how fast I can go.”

Chloe burned to ask him about flying, but she sensed his wings were still a touchy subject for him, so she made herself ask instead, “And, non-theoretically?”

Lucifer shrugged. “Never really experimented with flying on this plane.” She could tell she’d aroused his curiosity, though, so she backed off and let it simmer for now.

“Okay. So: speed, strength… What about handcuffs?” She thought of their early encounter at the rapper’s mansion. “Is that a power, or did you pick up some tricks from Houdini, or something?” She suspected that there would never come a point that being with Lucifer didn’t cause her to question her own sanity when certain sentences left her mouth, and this was one of those times.

“Harry was a lovely man,” Lucifer replied. “Almost as intent on proving I was a fake as you were - you’re actually alike in many ways.”

Chloe gripped the steering wheel, reminding herself that Houdini had lived only a hundred years ago. She found herself wondering how many times Lucifer had come to Earth and resolved to ask him later.

“But in answer to your question, no,” Lucifer said. “Most locks cease to remain locked if you apply the right amount of force. If anything, I taught Houdini tricks.” Chloe just shook her head, smiling.

“Do you have super senses, too?” Chloe asked. “I’ve noticed sometimes you seem to be able to hear better, or smell better. You knew the pig blood from the Paula Cortez case wasn’t human just by tasting it.”

Now, Lucifer looked impressed. “Very good, Detective, yes. I can see farther, hear better, and my olfactory senses are much more advanced.”

“Whoa.” It was an extensive list. Lucifer looked duly pleased with himself.

“You’re very observant, Chloe,” Lucifer said. “You’ll have to explain to me later how you managed to convince yourself I was human. Regardless-” he turned to look at her “-all these abilities are now at your disposal.”

“You’ve been holding out on me,” she accused, to keep the sensation of awe from overwhelming her.
“I never would have allowed a killer to escape,” Lucifer assured her. “And it was amusing to me how determined you were to disbelieve any and all evidence you were presented. I was merely… judicious in my application.”

“Well, you can feel free to solve all the crimes from now on,” Chloe joked. “Don’t let me slow you down.” The words masked her real insecurity. Lucifer frowned.

“There would be no point, without you,” he said seriously. “Better together and all that?”

Chloe smiled softly at him.

“Besides, I need you to stop me,” Lucifer admitted. Chloe just put her hand on his leg, saying nothing. After a moment, Lucifer’s hand covered hers.

Chapter End Notes

This is my working headcanon as regards Lucifer's abilities - what he's been shown doing. I thought it was important to show that Chloe's not perfect either, but that tension in the relationship doesn't spell disaster. Remember that for the next chapter as well :) Thanks for reading!
They enjoyed a delightful lunch - Lucifer, of course, knew all the best spots in the city, and could tailor his suggestions to fit any occasion - but their flirty afternoon came to an abrupt halt once they arrived back at the precinct and Chloe’s phone rang with a call from Trixie’s school.

“Yes, I-I completely understand, and I will definitely talk to Trixie. This won’t happen again. Thanks,” Chloe said as she hung up.

“That was Trixie’s school calling,” she said, as she and Lucifer descended the stairs into the bullpen. “Apparently, she’s been using some very creative language today.” She levelled a hard look at Lucifer, who smiled blandly.

“Oh? Do tell.”

Chloe led the way to interrogation, fuming. “Well, she called her math homework a ‘cluster duck’ and her teacher a ‘mother flunker.’”

“Did she not call anyone a ‘sock sucker’?” Lucifer inquired innocently, and Chloe halted, staring at him. “What? It’s just someone who sucks socks.” He chuckled, slipping his hands into his pockets, clearly seeing nothing wrong with his actions.

Chloe ran an angry hand through her hair. “I can’t believe you’re teaching my daughter loophole swear words!” She’d known they were up to something back at the house, but had trusted Lucifer. Now that was revealed to have been a mistake, and that stung. She thought she’d impressed upon him the significance of his actions when it came to Trixie.

“In my defense, ‘mother flunker’ was entirely the little deviant’s creation. And very clever of her, I might add.” The pride in Lucifer’s voice would have been endearing in any other circumstance.

“That’s not the point!” Chloe exclaimed. “I’m trying to teach my daughter a lesson, and you just made my job that much more difficult!” If it turned out Lucifer wasn’t going to be good for Trixie, long-term, her choice was clear. There was only so much she could do to keep the two sides of her life separate. Trixie had to come first.

Lucifer scoffed. “You parents, always with your lessons. Or as I like to call them, mind games.” He had a look on his face like he’d just made an unassailable point, and Chloe felt her heart drop somewhere to the vicinity of her navel. If his issues were going to lead to him sabotaging her efforts with Trixie…

“Well, I’m about to get to the bottom of my Mother’s latest,” Lucifer said, dismissing the issue. “It’s Charlotte time!” He threw open the doors to interrogation, where the fixer sat next to a slight balding man who was most definitely not Charlotte.

Lucifer’s face fell. “You’re not Charlotte.”

The lawyer, to his credit, took it in stride. “And yet people get us confused, like all the time.” He chuckled and waved. “Hi, Larry.” He introduced himself. “Charlotte is busy, so Richards and Wheeler sent me.”
Lucifer sighed. “Mother flunker.” He turned to go.

Despite her frustration with him, Chloe spoke to stop him. “Where are you going?”

Lucifer turned to face her. “I only came to see Charlotte,” he said, with a look on his face that told her he knew exactly how she felt as he renounced their partnership. “Besides, having me here would only make your job that much harder, wouldn’t it?” He sneered as he stormed off.

She bit her lip as he left, wanting to call him back but not wanting to show weakness in front of the lawyer. They really needed to get past this part where he assumed any criticism was a personal attack. Maybe she should have a word with Linda.

Shaking herself inwardly, and trying not to show how much his sudden departure had hurt her, she faced the occupants of the room with a bright, false smile.

“Can I get you anything? Coffee, water? I’m so sorry for the wait.” She decided she’d let them stew a while longer before she talked to them, since it appeared she’d be doing this solo.

* *

“Ah! Detective! Look who I found!”

When an officer had pulled her out of her conversation with Larry and the fixer, telling her she was needed in the conference room, she’d only half expected Lucifer, beaming with no evidence of their prior argument on his face. She already wasn’t sure how she felt about that; and then he’d also brought Charlotte.

“And she comes bearing gifts!” Lucifer continued as Charlotte held out a USB.

“The security footage you requested,” the lawyer supplied. Chloe’s eyes narrowed as she took the offering.

She looked over at Lucifer, seeking confirmation as to whether or not this was the real Charlotte. Lucifer just shook his head slightly which could have been interpreted either way. Dammit, Lucifer, just text next time. She decided to proceed as though this was still Charlotte in lieu of the alternative. “Why are you handing this over now? You seemed so opposed to it earlier.”

“Well, it’s recently come to my attention that I need to make a change,” Charlotte replied. “So I’m trying to do what’s right. If I can prove my client is innocent and help you find your killer… clean conscience, here I come.”

Chloe studied the other woman for a moment. It didn’t seem like something Lucifer’s Mother would have said, but she could also be putting on a show for Lucifer’s benefit. For the moment, the case would have to take precedence.

They watched the footage, and Ella came to a shocking realization.

“Poisonous pudding? Are you kidding me?” Dan’s voice was scandalized.

Chloe had to say, she was grateful for the information the case had brought to light, given the rate at which Dan had been putting pudding away. Probably, the arrival of Lucifer and Maze, who both regularly stole his snacks from the fridge, had been the best thing that could have happened.

“But wouldn’t people eventually realize it was poisonous?” Chloe asked, seeing a vision of a future where Dan got sick from his constant exposure before shoving the images aside. “I mean, the
company would lose everything.”

“Not necessarily,” Charlotte spoke up suddenly and everyone turned to look at her. “If you have hundreds of millions of dollars and get sued for a couple million, you still have hundreds of millions of dollars.”

“But people die.” Chloe had never liked Charlotte, but in a different way than she hadn’t liked Lucifer’s Mother. She’d interacted with the real Charlotte before, however briefly, and this woman struck her more as the Charlotte she remembered rather than Goddess - though the deity couldn’t have chosen a more suitable host.

“Yeah, well, it’s the same calculation the car manufacturers make when they find out they have faulty airbags,” Charlotte explained, still sounding more matter-of-fact than cynical. “Which costs them less: recalling the car, or enduring the lawsuits?”

“Yeah, but why would Simon try to sell the formula to Grace if it was killing him?” Luckily, Ella kept them moving on.

“Unless he didn’t,” Dan suggested. “Maybe when he found out what he created, he was just trying to stop it.”

*By trying to spread the secret? It made as much sense as any other motive.*

“And who better to expose *Pudding Plus*’ dirty secret than their biggest competitor?” Lucifer said, echoing Chloe’s thoughts. She was grateful to have his focus back on the case.

“But Simon didn’t know the two companies were merging,” Charlotte said. “Soon they won’t be in competition.”

“Suddenly everyone has motive to keep Simon quiet,” Dan said. “Adrien, Grace, and the fixer. Three potential killers.”

Chloe frowned. Ella had filled her in on the toxicology report - Simon would have been dead in days from renal failure if he hadn’t fallen into the vat. And though none of their suspects would have necessarily been aware of that information, the timing seemed suspicious. Maybe someone hadn’t wanted him to have those days to spread his message.

“And as the merged company’s counsel,” Lucifer said slowly, focussing back on Charlotte, “you represent all of them.”

Stark terror washed over Charlotte’s face and she practically fled the conference room. Lucifer went after her, and they had an impassioned discussion as Charlotte strode to the elevator. Ella trailed after them with a backward glance at Chloe and Dan.

“I’m gonna go look into the company’s financials to see who had the most to lose if the merger failed,” Chloe said, wrenching her gaze away from Lucifer to look at Dan, who was still in shock. “Maybe… get rid of your snacks, yeah?” she suggested.

Dan nodded fervently and Chloe went back to her desk. Lucifer had vanished, and she tried not to read too much into that fact. She forced herself to focus on work, scanning the dense transaction reports to find the information she needed.

She had no idea how much time passed before Lucifer was back in front of her desk. Seeing him, Chloe half rose. “There you are,” she said, trying to keep the accusation from her tone. Lucifer’s face was already uncertain enough.
“Just had to clear my head,” Lucifer said, patting his breast pocket by way of explanation. He looked at her solemnly. “Might I have a word?”

She nodded mutely, laying claim to one of the smaller conference rooms. Lucifer spoke first.

“Well, to start with, Detective, I can assure you that the woman defending our suspects is indeed the real Charlotte, as evidenced by the fact that she tried to kiss me.” His face and voice displayed his disgust and Chloe involuntarily looked in the direction where Charlotte had vacated the precinct.

“What?” Chloe exclaimed, her frustration with Lucifer’s behaviour momentarily forgotten.

“Oh yes,” Lucifer said, in a tone like they were swapping war stories. “She was waiting for me at Lux and attempted to corner me. I had to climb over the piano to get away from her!”

Chloe stifled her laughter at the amusing image - this was no laughing matter, especially for Lucifer.

“Are you okay?” she asked, touching his sleeve. Lucifer looked down at her, surprised, straightening his jacket.

“Of course,” he said. “She got the message… eventually. She was in Hell.” The non-sequitur made Chloe draw back a little in shock.

“The real Charlotte?” she clarified unnecessarily. Lucifer nodded.

“She died, and her soul went to Hell while Mum was on Earth. When Mum… left, she must have sent it back.” He looked like he didn’t know what to make of that fact. Chloe was having trouble processing it herself.

“Charlotte told you this?” she asked. Lucifer shrugged.

“In so many words. She doesn’t understand what happened to her. Do you think she’ll be all right?” he asked her with genuine curiosity, the way one might inquire after an insect, and Chloe was suddenly forcibly reminded just how alien he truly was.

“I doubt it, Lucifer,” she said honestly, her voice a little sharp. “That sounds horrible. What did you tell her?”

“I told her so long as she keeps her ledger clean there’s a chance she’ll be able to avoid going back,” Lucifer answered, like it was the most rational response to give a possibly hysterical woman.

“Lucifer…” Chloe sighed, putting her head in her hand. “Did you tell her the truth?”

“It is the truth,” Lucifer replied, stung. “Her coming back gives her a chance to absolve her own guilt; if she doesn’t commit any further punishable offences…”

“I mean about who you are,” she pressed, and Lucifer looked baffled.

“Of course I did, the same way I tell everyone.”

“And did she believe you?” Chloe asked, dreading the answer.

Lucifer’s expression shifted to one of discomfort. “Well, not as such…”

She resisted the urge to roll her eyes; if Charlotte was as troubled as Lucifer made her out to be, Chloe was hardly the expert on whether or not proof of the supernatural would help more than harm. The one person it occurred to her to ask for advice, Linda, was off the table. The last thing Chloe
wanted to do was remind her friend of her trauma.

“Okay,” she said. “Well until we figure out what to do about her, we’ve still got a case to solve. I’ve identified Lalo Vasquez as the employee who had the most to lose from the merger, they’re bringing him to interrogation…” She started to move past him, but a touch on her arm halted her. She turned back to look at Lucifer.

“I, er, also wanted to apologize,” he said stiltedly, and Chloe reminded herself that this was all so new to him.

That didn’t mean she was going to let him get away with anything, however. Especially when it came to her daughter. “What are you apologizing for?”

A look of vague consternation crossed Lucifer’s face. “For upsetting you?” he said, with even less certainty.

Chloe was already shaking her head. “That’s not the issue, Lucifer. I’d just told you I’d appreciate your input on how I raise Trixie at the appropriate time, and the first thing you did is go behind my back and subvert my authority. Again.” She ran a hand through her hair in frustration as Lucifer’s eyes took on a stubborn glint.

“I thought you understood why we need to present a unified front,” she continued, trying to keep her voice down. “Trixie’s smart. She knows she can play us off each other and that’s no good for anyone, especially for her. That won’t help her grow or mature.”

Lucifer still looked mutinous, and Chloe remembered what he’d said that morning at the house. She hadn’t paid much attention at the time, distracted by her concern over Trixie. A set of arbitrary rules, just like my Father’s… Unquestioning obedience. Why do you think I rebelled? She understood now that something had stirred within Lucifer, and the realization caused her anger and frustration to subside. Rather than attempt to address that ancient hurt, she took his hand.

“Remember when I told you that what’s best for your child doesn’t always make them happy?” Lucifer blinked. Chloe sighed. “Do you at least believe that I have Trixie’s best interests at heart? That I would never harm her?”

He nodded jerkily. “You always put her first.” Chloe smiled a little at the memory the words evoked. “And I always will.” She took his other hand and squeezed both between her own. “Even before you.” Lucifer’s eyes widened, and she held his gaze. “That’s why I need you to understand this, okay? If it’s going to be too much for you, it’s better if you tell me now. We can limit your time around Trixie.” And around me, she didn’t say, but it was implied.

Lucifer swallowed. Chloe stood her ground.

Finally, he acquiesced with an odd little bow. Chloe’s chest grew tighter, wondering what part he was agreeing to.

“I understand,” he said. “Though I admit I… am uncertain of my ability to provide.”

Relief flooded through Chloe and she stepped closer to him. “Don’t worry about that part,” she said. “I told you, I’m not expecting you to take on full parental duties. Just have a bit more responsibility around Trixie.” She patted his hands. “Remember, I always try to do what’s best for her. I wouldn’t suggest this if I didn’t think you could handle it. All I ask is that you be willing to try.”

As Lucifer nodded slowly, Chloe leaned in. “I love you,” she said, her heart swelling to bursting
with how he was making an effort. “And if we weren’t at work right now I’d kiss the stuffing out of you.”

Lucifer smirked. “Rain check?” His voice was rough, belying his nonchalant exterior. Chloe didn’t call him on it.

“You bet,” she murmured, before stepping back. “But for now, we have a suspect headed to interrogation. Come on, partner.” She clapped him on the arm. “Let’s solve crime.”

As all leads in their investigation began to point overwhelmingly to Simon’s death being a suicide, Lucifer stepped aside to call Charlotte.

“Charlotte? Good news - it was a suicide.” Chloe smacked his arm and he raised an eyebrow, mouthing “What?” He turned back to the phone. “So, no need to worry; you won’t be representing any murderers.” His face fell as he listened to whatever was being said on the other end of the line. “Why do I get the feeling Charlotte is about to do something incredibly stupid?”

“She’s gone to meet them, hasn’t she?” Chloe asked, as Lucifer hung up.

“Yes, and I need to find her -” Lucifer began, already heading for the stairs.

“We need to find her,” Chloe corrected, stopping him with a hand. “Here’s what we do...”

Lucifer stood still under Chloe’s fussing as she needlessly adjusted his lapels. He wasn’t sure why - he wasn’t even wearing a wire, just using his phone to leave a call open to the police. He enjoyed the attention though, each subtle brush of her fingers further thawing the ice that had frozen around his heart at the thought that Chloe might withdraw from him.

“I agreed to let you go in first because Charlotte might listen to you,” she said. “But the team will be right behind you if anything happens.”

She’d said that before already; she was nervous, and Lucifer caught her hand, unwilling to see her in distress. “Everything will be fine, Detective,” he reassured her.

Chloe subsided, but there was still worry in her eyes as she looked up at him. “I just wish we’d actually done those experiments about how far away I have to be to keep you safe,” she said more quietly.

Lucifer’s heart flipped. He didn’t think he’d ever get used to Chloe’s regard for his well-being.

“Outside the building should suffice,” he said. The distance was all guesswork anyway. “Besides, no one is going to be shooting anyone today.”

Chloe’s answering smile was forced. “I hope not. Be careful, Lucifer.”

Lucifer nodded, but time was of the essence. Pulling away, he ripped down the police tape and entered the building.

A shot echoed.

“That can’t be good,” he muttered. Were they too late?
He followed the sound of voices to a back room. “Charlotte?” he called, warning of his presence before pushing through the curtain - he’d given his word that he’d be safe, after all. “Wait.”

Charlotte looked up, lowering the gun slightly in her shock. “Lucifer?”

“They’re telling the truth,” Lucifer informed her, keeping very still. “None of these scoundrels killed Simon. He killed himself. A dying man’s plan to expose the company and its crimes.” He wondered idly if the balance of Simon’s soul had sent him to Heaven or Hell.

Charlotte scoffed, still holding the gun. “That doesn’t make any sense.”

“Charlotte,” he said, looking between them significantly, “they’re innocent.” Don’t harm innocents. Sort of rule number one.

For a moment Charlotte looked like she was going to listen. She lowered the gun, taking a step back. But Lucifer hadn’t had a chance to relax before she raised it again, taking several steps forward. “No,” she said, an edge of madness in her tone that was entirely too familiar, “no they’re not.”

Lucifer approached her, regardless of the danger, intent on making sure she didn’t do something she’d regret. “Did you not hear what I just said?”

“Oh, I heard,” Charlotte replied forcefully. “So they didn’t kill Simon. What about everyone else who eats their stupid pudding? They all knew their product was poisonous. Innocent people are going to die because of them.” Her voice grew more strident as she brandished the gun and Lucifer awaited his chance.

“I’ve lived my life finding loopholes; ways of evading responsibility for my clients… Myself.” She whispered the word, the terrible admission, and Lucifer looked down briefly, thinking of the loophole he’d taught Trixie to exploit. In his zeal for rebellion he’d taught her that responsibility was a burden to be shirked rather than respected. Suddenly, he could see why the Detective was so upset. The fact that Trixie would be swearing with impunity within a short time frame even in human reckoning didn’t matter as much as the lesson on how to discern the difference.

“Turns out there are no loopholes,” Charlotte continued. “If you’re guilty, you’re guilty.”

Lucifer swallowed. He recognized her words. It was the same way he’d broken down after centuries of enduring the constant deluge of damned souls in Hell, and grown to fully embrace his role as a torturer. He hadn’t been required to do it - he’d wanted to, in the end.

But these souls weren’t in Hell yet, and it was not her place to pass judgement.

“I understand that you want to clear the red from your ledger,” he said, moving slowly closer. “But believe me, Charlotte, this is not the way to do it.”

“Then what am I supposed to do?” Charlotte asked, and Lucifer was once again blindsided by the irony, the same way he’d been at the penthouse when she’d told him she was crazy for believing in Hell. Throughout all of human history, humanity had looked to the divine for answers as to how to escape damnation. No one had ever thought to ask the Devil.

“I can’t go back there,” Charlotte stammered, and that, Lucifer definitely understood.

“Then here’s what you need to do, Charlotte,” he said, holding out his hand. “Trust me.”

After a tense moment of hesitation, Charlotte put the gun in his hand and Lucifer breathed a sigh of relief. “Thank you.”
“What about them?” Charlotte inquired, correctly assuming he wasn’t about to let them off easy.

“Well, whilst I was lurking in the shadows, they said quite a few incriminating things.” He pulled out his phone. “Detective, was that enough for a proper perp walk of shame?”

“Yes, plenty.” Chloe’s voice on the other end was fiercely proud, but Lucifer could hear the underlying relief. That, and the way Chloe smiled at him when she burst in with backup was enough to break him out of the past. He was here now, with her.

“FBI’s gonna have a field day with these recorded confessions,” she said, coldly righteous. “You may not have pushed Simon to his death but you’ll pay for your role in poisoning him.” She made her way over to Lucifer. He watched her come, trying to conceal how his heart still gave a leap at the sight of her, as she subtly checked him over to make sure he was truly unharmed.

“Nice win, partner,” she said, with deceptive casualness.

“Thank you very much,” Lucifer replied, matching her tone despite the knowledge she’d established of what she really meant now when she said “partner.” He clenched his hands in his pockets to keep from reaching for her.

“I’ve offered to give Charlotte a ride home,” he said, in lieu of anything more overtly demonstrative. Chloe’s eyes sharpened, and she nodded.

“That’s a good idea. The things she said…” The corners of her mouth turned down. “I honestly don’t know what learning the full truth would do to her.” She met his eyes. “Just… be gentle with her, Lucifer?” She gave him a look of deep compassion that he couldn’t parse at first because it didn’t seem to be for Charlotte. He nodded, unsure why there was suddenly a lump in his throat.

“Come over afterwards?” she asked, more quietly.

His heart swelled again, recognizing the olive branch for what it was. “Couldn’t keep me away,” he joked lightly, to cover how very true it was. He could tell Chloe wasn’t fooled and wondered why he even bothered, anymore, except as a distraction from the overbearing fear that he would always be steps away from losing everything. To escape the way Chloe was still looking at him significantly, he stepped over to Charlotte, who was currently talking to Daniel.

“Hope I’m not interrupting anything, Daniel,” he said, though looked like he was sparing Dan an awkward conversation. “Charlotte, ready for that ride home?”

Chapter End Notes

Some Lucifer POV! Haven’t had that in a while! I’m trying to show a balance between the troubles Deckerstar face and the effort they’re making to work through them. Next week, prepare yourself for tooth-rotting levels of WAFF - Warm and Fuzzy Feelings.
Chloe was contemplating the swear jar when she heard the door open and Lucifer entered. One look at his face was enough for her to guess that he’d come to an emotional revelation while he’d been with Charlotte. Her heart went out to him.

“Hey, Lucifer,” she said, going to wrap him in an embrace. He lowered his head to her shoulder, burying his face in her hair, and Chloe’s suspicion was confirmed. She knew better than to ask him how he was doing, however; merely carded her hands into the hair at the nape of his neck and held him to her. It had been an emotionally tumultuous day for both of them, and Chloe gave herself the moment to allow her soul to settle, as the quiet pervaded her bones, Lucifer’s warmth soothing her.

“Chloe,” Lucifer murmured at last, his voice rough, and Chloe turned her head to press a kiss to his cheek before seeking his lips.

“Grab yourself a drink,” she said. “It’s time I had a word with Trixie and I’d like it if you were there. Is that okay?”

Lucifer nodded once. “If you think it best.” He hid his nervousness very well. Chloe reassured him with a caress to his cheek.

“I do. Thank you, Lucifer.” She sat on the couch, waiting for Lucifer to situate himself before summoning Trixie.

“Trixie, can you come out here?” Chloe called. Lucifer watched, uncharacteristically solemn. Trixie came around the corner a few moments later.

“Hi, Mommy,” she said, but her eyes kept flicking to Lucifer, her co-conspirator. Chloe took her hand.

“Monkey, I want to talk to you about what happened today at school.” Trixie quickly looked from Lucifer back to her. “Did you tell Miss Morgan to ‘go to shell’?”

“I didn't technically break any rules,” Trixie protested. Out of the corner of her eye, Chloe could see Lucifer suppressing a smile. Refusing to be baited, she gave her daughter a look, until Trixie began to reach for her pocket with a hangdog expression. She could feel Lucifer’s eyes on her as she put out a hand to stop Trixie from putting the money in the jar.

“You know what?” she said. “Lucifer was right.” She looked over at him, as he hastily closed his mouth from where it had fallen open in surprise. “The swear jar. It's it's a dumb idea.” Trixie and Lucifer both blinked at her with identical expressions of incomprehension and Chloe sighed. “Mommy gave you a bunch of rules without explaining things.” Lucifer shifted in his seat. Chloe
laid her hand on Trixie’s knee.

“The real reason that we shouldn't swear is that bad words make people feel bad,” she told her daughter. “And I know you don't want to make people feel bad, right?” Trixie shook her head. Expecting some sort of comment from Lucifer, Chloe was surprised when he remained silent, but she didn’t look away from her daughter’s eyes. “Cause the truth is if you go looking for loopholes, you'll always find them. And I can't force you to do the right thing.” She sighed. “You'll just have to learn that on your own. So no more swear jar. Okay?” She stroked Trixie’s cheek.

Her daughter thought for a moment. “So... does that mean I get my money back?” she asked.

Chloe bit back a laugh. At least she knew that hadn’t come from Maze or Lucifer; both treated money like it was meaningless. “Nice try,” she said, pulling Trixie in for a hug. “Mommy was wrong, but you still knew the rule when you broke it. That was your decision.” Trixie nodded reluctantly against her shoulder. “So I want you to do some research on a charity you think it would be good to donate to. Understood?”

“Okay, Mommy,” Trixie said quietly, and Chloe placed a kiss on the top of her head, reassuring her that she wasn’t angry.

“You don’t have to decide right now, but let me know by the end of the week, okay? Then we can go together.”

After Trixie was gone, Chloe turned her attention to Lucifer, whose silence was beginning to worry her. She switched sides to sit next to him.

“Okay, I’m glad you kept it to yourself in front of Trixie but I’m sure you must have an opinion,” she said, keeping her tone light. Lucifer looked at her, pulled out of some deep thought.

“It was... just,” he said at last, and Chloe’s heart went out to him. She took his hand.

“Are you ready to talk about what happened with your Mom?” she asked gently. Lucifer frowned.

“Charlotte Richards is not my Mother,” he said.

Chloe squeezed his hand. “I know. But we never really talked about what happened at the pier before other things got in the way. It makes sense that Charlotte turning up again would make you think about it.”

Lucifer didn’t answer right away. Chloe leaned back against his shoulder.

“Can I ask you something?” She felt Lucifer nod and twisted her neck to look up at him. “When your Mom first showed up, way back when I didn’t believe in any of this, why were you so convinced she was going to try to kill you?”

It was a question that had been bothering her all day, ever since Charlotte had walked into the conference room.
Lucifer sighed.

“I thought she wanted revenge for her stint in Hell,” he said. “I’m still not quite sure she didn’t get it.”

Chloe blinked. “So your Mom was telling the truth about being in Hell?”

“She certainly was; about that much, at least.” His words still carried bitterness. “When I was cast out, she chose to stand aside and do nothing. So when Dad kicked her out a few thousand years later, I did the same for her.”

Chloe bit the inside of her lip. The more she heard about Heaven and Lucifer’s Father, the less she wanted to spend any amount of time there, to say nothing of eternity. Out loud, she said, “I remember. At the meeting, you wondered what she would say in her defense. Did you ever find out?”

Lucifer nodded once. “Oh yes. Apparently dear old Dad wanted to smite me out of existence, but she convinced Him to send me to Hell instead.”

Chloe felt a knot lodge itself in her throat at his forced casual tone as the bottom dropped out of her stomach at the thought. She threw her arms around his shoulders, burying her face in his neck suddenly enough that Lucifer exhaled slightly.

“I’m so glad,” she whispered. “I mean, I’m sorry, for what you had to go through. But it means I got to meet you.”

His arms came around her as he kissed the top of her head. “And I, you.” His voice still betrayed his wonder, and Chloe held him tight.

“She came around, you know,” he said, after a moment. “Mum. Just before she left. Said she wanted me to be happy. With you.”

Chloe swallowed past the lump in her throat. “And, are you?” She had to ask.

There were stars in his eyes when he pulled back to look at her, stroking through her hair with gentle fingers as she leaned into his caress. “More than you will ever know,” he replied, and then she was kissing him as he fell back against the couch.

Chloe was content with this state of affairs for a while but she couldn’t ignore another question that had been bothering her.

“Lucifer?” she murmured.

“Hmm?” He opened his eyes to look at her, glaze-eyed and kiss drunk, and Chloe’s heart ached with how adorable he looked and with the need for him to know that he was loved.

She pressed one more kiss to his lips before proceeding with her question. “Back at the soundstage, you said what they had for the commercial wasn’t accurate.”

Lucifer made a derisive sound. “You know, I’ll never understand where you humans came up with all that nonsense. Fluffy clouds and harps and my Dad as Morgan Freeman?” His expression turned contemplative. “Though I can honestly say I’d prefer the latter.”

Chloe stroked a hand through his hair. “So then… what is accurate?” she asked.
Lucifer paused, but not like he didn’t want to answer - like he was considering his words.

“It’s a different plane of existence,” he said, with a hint of annoyance. “It’s impossible to describe in earthly terms. But it’s… beautiful,” he admitted. “Objectively - that’s just a fact. Beautiful, and cold. I don’t mean the temperature, though it is cooler than Hell. The best comparison I can come up with is… you know the way the light is in hospitals? The way it permeates everything, but lacks any… I don’t know, depth?” Chloe nodded, and he sighed. “That’s Heaven in a nutshell. No character. Very peaceful and luxuriant - in an austere, sanitary way.”

For some reason, Chloe envisioned pictures she’d seen of the palace at Versailles. Beautiful by any metric, but ostentatious. The way the designers had apparently rejected the notion that one crystal chandelier was beautiful but ten was just noise - the decor ceased to become special and nothing stood out, flatlining rather than being enhanced.

It also served to further reinforce her opinion that she didn’t want to spend any time in Heaven.

“Says the Devil,” Chloe said teasingly, poking his chest, and Lucifer grinned.

“Of course, I have my biases. Your experience will probably be very different.”

“Because you make it sound so appealing,” she retorted, and Lucifer’s grip tightened around her.

“You get your own private paradise, tailored to you,” he said, a note of sternness creeping into his voice. “What could you find objectionable about that?”

“You won’t be there.”

“Chloe.” There was something desperate in his eyes as he looked at her, but Chloe refused to be swayed.

“It won’t be paradise if you’re not there,” she repeated quietly, but there was steel beneath.

“Chloe…” This time her name was a breath of air, something tentative, delicate and trembling, and Chloe held Lucifer’s eyes resolutely even though her own were filling with tears. She meant every word.

Lucifer swallowed visibly, his mouth opening once, twice, before speaking. Shaking his head, he pulled her into a tight embrace, his cheek pressed against hers. She could feel a slight tremor in his limbs.

“How can you…” he whispered, sounding like he’d swallowed glass. He cut himself off with an impatient movement and Chloe stroked his back soothingly. Lucifer shivered and pulled back to look at her again.

“Why do you love me?” he asked. His voice sounded nothing other than plaintive to Chloe, the how he’d stopped himself from saying clearly implied. She bit her lip to stop the tears from flowing down her cheeks.

With anyone else she’d have given a flippant answer or chided them for the question, but this was Lucifer, and she knew only honesty would suffice.

“Because you always support me and have my back no matter what,” she said immediately. “You always tell me the truth. You’re generous and considerate when you forget to think about it or don’t think anyone’s looking. You make me a better detective, a fuller version of myself.” Lucifer was staring at her and she thought she’d better move on before she said more ridiculous things. “What
about you?” she asked. Her curiosity was genuine, as was the slight insecurity behind the question. He was the Devil, after all. “Why do you love me?”

“Because,” he said simply, running a hand through her hair and looking at her like she was an emerging star, like she was the sunrise, like she was everything. “You let me.”

“Lucifer…” This time it was Chloe’s turn to whisper his name and she buried her face in his shoulder. “Always,” she promised, as Lucifer’s arms tightened around her. “I will always let you love me. So please…” She twisted to press a kiss to Lucifer’s throat. “Let me love you, too.”

Before Lucifer could respond, Chloe heard the door to Trixie’s room open and she quickly pulled away so she was less in Lucifer’s lap. Lucifer cleared his throat, running a hand through his hair and taking a shaky sip of his forgotten drink before Trixie padded around the corner. She took one look at the two of them and shook her head.

“You guys are funny.” She opened the fridge and started to root around for a drink.

“No soda, Trix,” Chloe reminded her, hoping her voice was actually much more casual than it sounded to her. “It’s bedtime.”

“I know, Mom.” Trixie closed the door, emerging with some milk.

Chloe smiled. “Let me know when you have a story picked out and I’ll come tuck you in.”

“Actually…” Trixie’s voice turned uncertain. “Could Lucifer tuck me in?”

Chloe blinked, turning to look at Lucifer, who was already in full on deer in headlights mode. She shook her head - they’d have to break Satan in slowly - patting his leg in reassurance.

“Maybe next time, babe? He doesn’t know how yet - let’s show him how it’s done?”

Trixie nodded and went back to her room. Chloe nudged Lucifer with her shoulder.

“C’mon, scaredy cat,” she said. “Unless, you don’t want to?”

Lucifer shook his head, downing the rest of his glass like a man headed towards the gallows. Chloe watched him skeptically, but declined to comment, instead pressing one last kiss to his cheek and rising from the couch, feeling like a year had passed since she’d sat beside him. She stretched, sensing Lucifer’s eyes on her as her shirt rode up, and smiled to herself.

“Why can’t the child have carbonated beverages before bed?” he asked from behind her, sounding like he couldn’t believe the words were coming out of his mouth.

She turned to face him, eyebrows raising in surprise. “The caffeine and sugar isn’t good for humans before bed, especially small humans,” she explained, feeling like she’d stepped sideways into some kind of bizarro universe as Lucifer nodded his understanding, an adorable frown on his face like he was committing the fact to memory.

Chloe demonstrated the whole process: choosing and reading a story, being browbeaten into reading said story more than the intended once, culminating with the proper method of tucking in and the collection of the empty milk glass. All the while, Lucifer lurked tentatively in the doorway like an oversized cat.

She kissed her daughter’s forehead, smoothing back her hair, feeling her heart swell to aching, like it couldn’t contain the amount of love she felt for the both of them, for this family that they were maybe
trying to form.

“Goodnight, monkey,” she said quietly, to cover the way emotion stole her voice.

“’Night, Mommy,” came the angelic response from the pillows. There was a pause as both of them turned to look at Lucifer expectantly.

He cleared his throat, looking like he wasn’t sure what to do with his hands. “Yes… goodnight, child.”

Trixie beamed. “G’night, Lucifer!”

Chloe squeezed Trixie’s hand, patting the blankets unnecessarily before turning off the lamp. “Sleep tight, baby.”

Lucifer actually waited for Chloe to close the door behind her before making a beeline for the patio and lighting up. Chloe followed more slowly, putting Trixie’s glass in the dishwasher before joining him. *Baby steps*, she reminded herself.

“So,” she said softly from behind him as Lucifer blew smoke out into the night. “Think you’ll be able to manage all that for next time?”

Lucifer took another long drag, then sighed, before responding.

“How can I possibly have a place here?” he asked, almost to himself. “Chloe, how can you—” He gripped the railing with both hands, still not looking at her. “-Trust me with your offspring, knowing who I am?”

Chloe stepped up to him, putting a hand on his shoulder. “Because you have never proven yourself unworthy of that trust,” she said. “Because you’re the Devil, but I know that doesn’t mean what most other people think it does.”

She expected that to appease him, but he shot a dark look over his shoulder. “You don’t know what I’ve done.”

Chloe went very still. “You’re right; I don’t. And I don’t need to know. You don’t have to tell me if you don’t want to.”

Lucifer’s head dipped slightly in acknowledgement, shoulders hunching. “I understand.”

“I don’t think you do,” Chloe murmured, worming her way under his arm - regardless of how conflicted he was feeling, Lucifer automatically pulled her closer into his side. “Lucifer. I love you. No matter what you’ve done, that will still be true.”

Lucifer’s grip on her was nearly painful. “You can’t know that.” She strained to hear his voice in the quiet night.

“I can,” she disagreed, boosting herself to sit on the railing facing him, cupping his face in her hands. “Because I know you. Nothing you could have done could possibly be worth what’s been done to you. Wanna know how I know? Because I’m a mother. I’m a parent. And there is nothing - *nothing* - Trixie could do that would make me abandon her, or kick her out. If you want to tell me what happened, I’m here for you.” In fact she was burning with curiosity, and might have insisted were it not for a much deeper truth. “But the reason I’d rather you didn’t, is because it would just confirm what I already know: that you don’t deserve how you’ve been treated. And I don’t know what I would do then. I really don’t.”
“Chloe.” This time her name broke around a sob, and suddenly she was in Lucifer’s arms, being cradled to his chest, which was shaking. He was… crying, Chloe realized, with a pang that turned to overwhelming emotion that would have bowled her over if Lucifer wasn’t holding her practically off the ground. She wondered if Lucifer had ever let himself cry before. She doubted anyone had held him through it if he had.

She linked her arms around his neck and held him tightly to her. She didn’t try to halt his tears, just repeated whispered assurances interspersed with kisses: “Lucifer, it’s okay. I love you.”

Gradually, his sobs slowed and quieted, his grip on her loosening enough that she was able to pull back slightly to rub soothing circles on his back. She was only partially surprised when his wings erupted into being, falling gently to encircle them in fluffy warmth. After a slight hesitation, Chloe carded her fingers into his feathers, the way she had before, and he let out a shuddering moan, pressing his forehead to hers.

“Lucifer…” Chloe nuzzled deeper into his embrace, feeling peace settle over her like a blanket. Lucifer chuckled wetly.

“You know, I’m finding it hard to believe my Father made you for me after all,” he admitted. “He’d never do something that would make me this happy.”

“You deserve happiness, Lucifer,” Chloe said fiercely. “And I intend to give it to you - whether your Dad likes it or not.”

Lucifer kissed her. “I believe you.”

Growing bolder, Chloe quested with her fingers, dragging them through down to find skin. Lucifer’s hips stuttered against her. Chloe grinned. That was a neat trick.

“So,” she murmured. “About that rain check…”

Lucifer made a humming sound in the back of his throat, folding away his wings and smirking against her cheek as he let her lead him to the bedroom.

Chloe sat back against the pillows, working on catching her breath. She kept waiting for the sex to get less mind blowing, only it never did. She turned to look down at Lucifer, who was lying on his side facing away from her - he’d never admit it, but he’d taken to being the little spoon with undeniable enthusiasm. She was about to shimmy down to join him, but it seemed she wasn’t finished having difficult conversations today.

“Would you still be happy with me if I never… asked anyone to join us?” Chloe found herself asking, remembering their conversation about potential other partners from earlier that day.

Lucifer twisted to look up at her, and Chloe couldn’t resist planting a kiss on his face. When Lucifer caught her to return it enthusiastically, it was almost enough to make her give up on her line of questioning. But not quite.

“I mean sex, Lucifer,” she said, knowing that ought to get his attention. “I’m not judging. But it’s a matter of police record that you had 92 sexual partners in eight weeks. That’s a different person every single night; sometimes more. And Dan told me afterward you said that constituted a dry spell for you.”

Lucifer sat up, sheets falling to his waist. Chloe shook her head.
“That’s what you’re used to. I know you said no one else holds any interest for you now, and I believe you. I know you love me.” She took his hand and squeezed, and Lucifer looked relieved. “But when that first rush fades - and it will, eventually - I'm just one person. One person with a kid, and despite my apparently miraculous origins, nothing special.” She placed a gentle kiss on Lucifer’s lips to prevent him from protesting, giving him a small smile. “I know. Give me a minute.” Lucifer nodded.

“I’m not saying I'll never be open to… experimenting,” Chloe continued, “but it's not something that will ever come naturally to me. Definitely an exception to the norm. I’m a mortal woman, and you’re… well, you.” She gestured to the six dark feet of sex lounging in her bed. Lucifer’s brow creased. Chloe bit her lip before admitting, “I just don’t understand how I could ever be enough for you.”

Chloe wasn’t an insecure woman by nature. She knew exactly what she had to offer anyone who wasn’t an immortal sex god. She knew exactly what she was, and what she wasn’t, and what she wasn’t was 92 supermodels.

“May I speak now?” Lucifer asked, and Chloe nodded ruefully. She was already feeling breathless under his singular focus. “First: Chloe,” he said, running the hand that she wasn’t holding through her hair, somehow turning her name into a full sentence. “You are everything I never dared to want. What you mean to me I cannot put into words. The idea that I could ever tire of you would be offensive were it not so ludicrous. As for the rest of it…” He frowned and paused as he sought for words and Chloe was glad as it gave her a chance to breathe.

“It’s apples to oranges, love,” Lucifer said at last, looking pleased with himself. “The dichotomy you suggest doesn’t exist. It’s like asking if I want an endless supply of chocolate, or to be brought back to life. I’ve experienced both, and let me assure you: absolutely nothing compares to the sweetness of that first breath of air when you’re back in the world.” His eyes were as dark and warm as the night sky in summer as they held hers. “I feel the same way every time I remember I am yours.”

Mine. Chloe’s breath caught. She thought about how she’d whispered it in his ear at Lux, how she hadn’t hesitated to stake her claim. She placed her hand over Lucifer’s. Which of any of his countless partners had ever bothered to try? Finally, she thought she might understand.

Lucifer lingered in the moment a little longer before grinning. “Besides, this breath of life comes with some of the best chocolate I’ve ever had, so really it’s not a choice at all…”

Chloe tackled him at that, bearing him down to the pillows, and his laughter was a low rumble in his chest.

“Well, just in case,” she teased, “whenever we’re alone, you can have as much chocolate as you want.” She’d started out lightly but her voice became deeper towards the end.

Lucifer arched an eyebrow, running his tongue along his teeth as his eyes took on a sultry cast. He rolled on top of her and Chloe’s toes curled in anticipation.

“Does that mean you’d be amenable to another round?” he murmured in her ear. Chloe responded by pulling him down to her. They didn’t speak much more for the rest of the night.
Hope you don't need too much dental work after that tooth-rotting fluff! What did you think of the domestic Deckerstar? I always wondered what Lucifer’s reaction would have been if he'd been party to Chloe and Trixie's conversation. Next up: Off the Record, with a twist! Thanks for reading!
Chapter Notes

So this is the start of Off the Record, with a little bit of Mr. and Mrs. Mazikeen Smith thrown in. Hope you like it!

Chloe drifted awake, feeling safe and secure, and wondered what had woken her. She became aware of the presence of a solid body behind her, radiating such heat that it could only be one person.

She sighed, smiling sleepily, twisting to seek him. “Lucifer.”

“Morning, love,” he murmured, his voice warm. The scent of coffee hit her nose and roused her further. She blinked her eyes open and his face swam before her. Her belly swooped at the sight of his untamed hair.

“I like it when you call me that,” she said, still half asleep, and watched his eyes darken.

“Then I shall continue. I brought you coffee.” He indicated the mug on the bedside table.

Her expression was probably ridiculous but she couldn’t make herself care when he was looking at her like that. “…Are you wearing that “Kiss the Cook” apron?” she asked. Lucifer made an affirmative noise. Chloe reached for him, her fingers itching to sink into his curls. “Guess I’d better do what it says.”

His lips met hers with a hum of pleasure. The kiss was hot and soft and sweet and tasted of coffee.

“Hmm… I could get used to this,” she said. “How long have you been up?”

“A few hours,” he replied. “I don’t need as much sleep as you humans so I took the time to get started on brekkie.”

“I love you,” she said, happiness a bright flame in her chest.

Lucifer’s smile left her breathless. “I love you, too,” he said, kissing her again. It was a minute before Chloe could bring herself to sit up, taking a sip from the mug he handed her. Yes, she could definitely get used to this.

Unfortunately, she couldn’t indulge further in her lazy awakening - Lucifer went to tend to breakfast and Chloe dressed for the day, coming downstairs to wake Trixie up just as Lucifer was putting out the food.

She smiled at Lucifer as she dug in. “Thanks for doing breakfast, Lucifer. This is amazing.”

Lucifer waved away her thanks as usual. “Of course.” He looked around as if just noticing something. “Is Maze still off bounty hunting?”

Chloe quickly eyed Trixie’s door, but she had yet to emerge. Her little monkey was growing more and more upset by Maze’s continued absence. “Yeah, the last time I saw her was when we came up after Lux.” Chloe felt a blush rise to her cheeks and quickly buried her face in her coffee mug in an
attempt to hide it. She may as well not have bothered - Lucifer smirked.

“Well, I’m sure she’ll turn up,” he said. “She did promise to hunt down the Sinnerman.”

“I hope so,” Chloe said. “Trixie misses her.” It also made her realize how much she’d grown to rely on the free babysitting, and she resolved to make her appreciation known more often once Maze got back.

“So what’ve we got?” Chloe asked, as she walked into the morning’s crime scene. A female victim, tied to her chair with white ropes, was positioned in such a way as to make it look like she was working at her computer in a sick parody of life.

The state of the corpse wasn’t the only chilling thing about the scene - the computer was still on, open to a document with the word FRAUD repeated over and over, filling the screen. Chloe was uncomfortably reminded of The Shining. The killer had been busy; printed sheets were strewn all over the floor and stapled to the walls.

“Rosalie Nuñez, 35,” Ella answered, stepping carefully over papers. “She was a big-time correspondent for La Opinión.”

Chloe raised her eyebrows - Ella had just named the biggest Spanish language paper in the United States.

“Well, the killer certainly seemed to have a dubious opinion of her credibility,” Chloe said, looking around. “Maybe an angry reader? Do we know of any allegations against her?”

Ella was just starting to shake her head when Lucifer’s voice came from behind Chloe. “You won’t find any, Detective.”

She turned to look at him. He sounded solemn, almost shaken, which was a marked departure from his usual demeanour at a crime scene.

“What makes you say that, Lucifer?” she asked. He’d paled slightly, which worried her further.

“Because,” he said slowly, meeting Chloe’s eyes, “I did this woman a favour.”

When Chloe finished reeling from that revelation, she started thinking hard.

“What was the cause of death?” she asked Ella. The way the scene was set up tugged at a thread in her memory. “Strangulation?”

“You’d think so, cuz of the ropes, right?” Ella replied. “But there are no ligature marks on her neck. Still waiting on the initial report but it looks like she was poisoned.”

Chloe just nodded as her hunch was confirmed. “Hey, remember that serial killer case from a year ago?” she asked Lucifer. “The one who was exposing frauds?”

“But Rosalie wasn’t a fraud, Detective. You can have my word on that,” Lucifer said, distressed.

“Okay,” Chloe said, accepting it, “but the killer also wasn’t so blatant before he went dormant - maybe this was an accident and he’s trying to make it fit his pattern, or maybe it’s something else.” She shook her head. “It could also be totally unrelated. Anything on forensics, Ella?”

Ella made an expansive gesture. “That’s just it - there are none.”
“What?”

Ella nodded, looking vaguely impressed. “No prints, no blood that isn't the victim’s…” She shrugged.

Chloe frowned. “Who called it in?”

“A neighbour.” Officer Ramirez spoke up. “Came home early this morning and saw the evidence of a break in. The other neighbour isn't home - away in the Maldives.”

“So no witnesses.” Chloe glanced at Lucifer. This case was shaping up to be very slippery indeed. She shoved her hands into her pockets.

“Okay, so we need to confirm the neighbour’s alibi,” she said, starting to work through the information she’d been given. “Ella, I want to know if you get anything at all from forensics,” she said. The tech nodded. “I’m going to take a look at the articles the victim wrote, see if there’s anything that sticks out - you can help me with the Spanish, right?” She directed the question at Lucifer, whose expression lightened marginally at her acknowledgement of his facility with languages. He nodded.

“Okay, Ella, I’m headed back to the office. Keep me posted?”

Ella chirped agreement from the corner where she was taking photos.

Back in the car, Lucifer was quiet. Chloe gave him his space, wondering how well he’d known the victim. It wasn’t until they were almost back at the precinct before he spoke up.

“I think it’s the Sinnerman.”

Chloe bit down on her first instinct, which was still to dismiss his crazy ideas out of hand. “Why?” she asked instead. “I admit the circumstances are odd, but we don’t have anything other than Pierce’s word confirming that he’s even active in LA.”

“That’s… not entirely accurate, Detective,” Lucifer said, and Chloe’s eyes narrowed. “He’s been quiet, yes, but that just means the time is ripe for him to surface again. And I know that he is active here in LA, because whether or not he had anything to do with my face or my wings, I found out recently that he’s stolen my schtick as well. He gives out favours for a price to be named later. Now one of the individuals I did a favour for ends up dead - it can’t be coincidence.”

“Well, it can,” Chloe began, and Lucifer’s face darkened. “Just like the connection I made to the serial killer case might be a coincidence. Right now all we have is speculation, and a lot of it considering we don’t have any actual evidence yet. But I’ll keep it in mind, okay?”

Lucifer nodded, mollified, and Chloe pulled into the parking lot.

At her desk, she’d barely had a chance to turn her computer on before Lucifer was plunking a cup of coffee in front of her. She looked up with a smile. She thought she knew why Lucifer was being so solicitous today and the thought made her feel warm inside.

“Thanks, Lucifer,” she said, taking a sip.

Lucifer hesitated, holding up his phone. “I’m… going to try to contact Maze,” he said. “If she’s on the Sinnerman’s trail she’ll at least know where he’s been.”

“Okay,” Chloe agreed easily, and Lucifer claimed a quiet corner, unable to hide his look of surprise.
at her acquiescence. Chloe bit her lip as she opened her browser. Was he really that used to her shooting him down? She felt uncomfortable at the thought of how he’d wanted to continue working with her despite her lack of support. That would change, she told herself, now that she knew the truth.

She quickly discovered that Rosalie Nuñez had been very prolific in the years she’d worked for the paper. Chloe found her most popular article and started working through the comment section. It was slow going with her rudimentary Spanish and she hoped Lucifer would be able to help her soon.

No sooner had she thought that, than Lucifer’s voice rang through the precinct.

“What? Canada?”

The precinct slowed to a halt, those in the vicinity of the bullpen turning to look at Lucifer. Whatever remained of the conversation was brief, and then Lucifer looked at his phone like he wanted to throw it at a wall.

“What was that?” Chloe asked when Lucifer made his way back, tossing his phone on her desk.

“Possible Sinnerman activity and my loyal demon is in Canada, tracking some human stain.”

Chloe blinked. “Maze is in Canada?”

“Apparently she grew bored of having no leads and so decided to hunt the most dangerous human she could find, for fun. Nor will she agree to return south until the deed is done so it’s unlikely she will get any.” He pouted. “I’m starting to think she doesn’t want to find the Sinnerman.”

Chloe privately thought it more likely Maze wanted to prove she wasn’t marching to Lucifer’s drum, and while Chloe applauded the effort, the timing could definitely have been better.

“Listen, we don’t know for sure we’re onto the Sinnerman,” she told Lucifer soothingly. “And if the guy she’s going after is that dangerous, maybe it’s good that she brings him in. What’s his name?”

“Rivers, something.”

“Ben Rivers?” Chloe had heard the name; he was infamous in certain circles. She knew it was ridiculous to worry about a demon’s well-being but she’d heard stories. “He’s dangerous. He’s been on the run for two years. No one can catch him.”

“Well, Maze is more dangerous, and his time on the lam is about to come to an end,” Lucifer said irritably. “What’s more important is we no longer have a trace on the Sinnerman - he could be anywhere.”

“Unless the Sinnerman makes a habit of reading Spanish language papers, he may not be connected to this case after all,” Chloe said. “I’ve noticed there are a lot of redacted comments on these articles, mostly from the same usernames, so I compared them to a list of comments we took from the other serial killer case to see if any of them matched. None of them did, but the same name kept popping up on the Telegraph articles: TruthDog21 - almost all their comments are redacted. Now, I’m wondering if the paper keeps track of these redacted comments…”

“Ooh, let’s go pay a visit to old Reesey.” Lucifer grinned, his sour mood vanishing, and Chloe shook her head inwardly.

“First, we’re heading to La Opinión’s offices to ask them the same thing, because this is our active case,” she reminded him. “Can you help me out with the Spanish?”
“Sería un placer,” Lucifer replied, and Chloe felt her cheeks warm at his salacious tone.

“Hey, hey, hey!” Dan arrived at her desk, wearing a boisterous Hawaiian shirt.

“Someone looks like they’re ready for their vacation,” she said warmly. She was really happy for Dan. He deserved a break.

“Ah, so ready,” Dan said with a grin. He handed Chloe a folded sheet of paper. “This is my itinerary. I will be available by phone at all times. If anything happens to Trixie, I will be on the first flight back.”

Chloe smiled at him. Even though things hadn’t ended up working out between them - and her heart was now entirely Lucifer’s - there was a reason why she’d elected to have a child with Dan in the first place. He’d lost sight of what was important for a while, but now he’d really turned a corner in terms of his place in Trixie’s life. It was adorable to see him fussing.

“Where are you off to, Daniel?” Lucifer spoke up, and Chloe realized she’d forgotten to tell him about Dan’s trip. “The 80s?”

Dan laughed. “Nice one. Hawaii.”

“I want you to enjoy Hawaii, okay?” Chloe interjected, before things could get too heated. “You deserve it.”

“Thank you,” Dan said. “No crime scenes, no paperwork. I’m gonna surf, do a little hiking, and I’m gonna read a book.”

“Good!” she said. It sounded wonderful. Chloe’s mind was suddenly assaulted by visions of a tropical getaway with Lucifer. She kept her eyes from flicking over to him by sheer force of will; if Lucifer got the slightest hint of what was on her mind he’d insist on whisking her away on a super exclusive, super expensive vacation before she could blink.

“Self help, I presume,” Lucifer commented, examining the itinerary. “Any man who chooses three layovers is clearly torturing himself.”

Chloe frowned, but Dan spoke up before she could. “I had to use travel points, man. Not everyone has cash to burn,” he said, good-naturedly enough, but the enthusiasm was gone from his voice.

“Well, you should,” Lucifer said, as though it were a personal failing on Dan’s part. “I mean, sometimes I just light it on fire and throw it up in the air to see who…” He trailed off as he saw how they were both staring at him. “That was a turn of phrase, wasn’t it?”

Chloe nodded emphatically, and Dan shook his head in disbelief. “Yeah,” Dan said.

He looked over at her briefly before looking away, and Chloe knew what he was thinking. *My ex-wife’s new lover is loaded.* His eyes darkened slightly at the reminder, though he did a good job of hiding it. Chloe didn’t blame him.

“Well, I’m gonna catch you guys in a couple weeks,” Dan said abruptly. “I’m out.”

“Have fun!” Chloe called after him. Dan waved. Chloe turned to Lucifer.

“That was rude,” she told him. Usually Lucifer didn’t make an issue of his enormous wealth so it was easy to ignore, despite the amount of visual evidence. “Do you actually just *burn money*?”
Lucifer blinked. “Sure, as the occasional party trick. What’s the problem?” he asked, as Chloe put her head in her hand. “It’s just money.” The little laugh in his voice both indicated his incomprehension and increased Chloe’s frustration.

“Lucifer. How much money do you even have?” She felt like she would regret asking the question, a suspicion that was immediately confirmed when he merely shrugged, not even bothering to consider the answer.

“Enough,” he said. At Chloe’s involuntary sound, his brow furrowed in confusion. “Darling, you must realize by now I’ve been here for a very, very long time. Of course, my brother would inevitably chase me back Below, but I’ve been collecting things for as long as there have been things to collect. I’ve been accumulating interest in accounts all over the world for as long as there have been banks, just as a place to put it all. It’s just… an abstract.”

Chloe closed her mouth, which had fallen open. “Well, it’s not for the rest of us,” she snapped, and Lucifer’s frown deepened.

“Surely, you must know you will want for nothing?”

Chloe snatched up her coffee cup. “Come on,” she said. “We’d better get going.”

Lucifer trailed her to the break room as she dumped her cup in the sink. “I’ve upset you,” he said. Chloe leaned against the counter, running a hand through her hair. “Remember when we first met, and you said that we humans really like our money? Well, there’s a reason for that. None of us have as much as you do. We’re constantly worrying about it, whether there’s going to be enough to eat, to make rent. We don’t work for fun, you know. It’s not some choice. We don’t have the benefit of an immortal lifespan to build up on, okay?”

“Right. I understand,” Lucifer said, still looking slightly puzzled.

Chloe frowned. “So why make fun of Dan for not having enough money?”

“Oh, I just meant it’s occasionally therapeutic. The amount doesn’t matter,” Lucifer replied. “No, I mean there are other ways to get around a lack of funds, connections and such.”

Chloe sighed, exasperated. “You’re the one with all the connections, Lucifer.”

“Exactly!” Lucifer sounded pleased that they were on the same page. “Daniel should have come to me, rather than torturing himself!”

Chloe narrowed her eyes. “What, and made a deal for his vacation?”

“Goodness, no!” Lucifer was scandalized. “I’d have been happy to call in a few favours on his behalf. But that’s all right. I’ll just foot the bill.”

Chloe was already shaking her head. “No, absolutely not, you can’t do that,” she said firmly.

Lucifer went back to looking flummoxed. “Why not?” he asked. “You just pointed out I’m in a unique position to do so.”

“You can’t just give people handouts!” Chloe exclaimed. “Then he feels like he owes you.”

“But… we didn’t make a deal.”

Chloe let her arms fall against her hips with a loud sound. “Well, I don’t know if I can explain it to
you,” she said. “Ask Linda if you’re still confused. But he *earned* that vacation, and you’d be taking that away from him.”

Lucifer subsided, looking thoughtful.

Chloe seized the opportunity to change the subject. “Come on, we’ve got a case to solve.”

Lucifer didn’t speak again until they were in the car. “Of course I’ll gladly shoulder your financial burdens from now on,” he said breezily, like it was a foregone conclusion. Chloe bristled.

“I appreciate the thought, Lucifer, but no,” she told him, a bit sharply. “I’m not going to be your kept woman. People are already going to think I’m dating you for your money.” It was a comfort that Dan, at least, knew her better than that.

Lucifer’s eyebrows knitted in consternation.

“Nothing has to change,” Chloe said, softer. “Just maybe be a bit more considerate in the future, okay?”

Lucifer nodded slowly, and Chloe let the matter drop.

After a moment, Lucifer looked over at her. “Am I to assume that with Maze in Canada and Daniel on vacation that you will be on spawn-rearing duty for the foreseeable future?” he asked. Chloe blinked. His tone was neutral enough, but she was just surprised he’d thought that far ahead - it wasn’t something that would have even occurred to the old Lucifer.

“Yeah,” she said. He didn’t sound upset, but she slid a hand onto his leg anyway. “But after we close this case, we should find some time to do something, just the two of us. Okay?”

A small smile spread across Lucifer’s face, and he put his hand over hers. “I look forward to it.”
Devils Head Down

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After their visit to La Opinión, files in hand, Chloe checked a Canadian news feed on her phone as a distraction from the way hearing fluent Spanish dripping from Lucifer’s lips like honey had affected her. Lucifer eyed her with interest, his expression making it clear she needn’t have bothered with the act.

“Have you managed to locate Maze, Detective?”

Chloe started to shake her head, then paused. “Ah. Taxi theft-slash-bear attack in Vancouver? Sounds like her. So does the brawl with a curling team in Banff.”

Lucifer agreed. “Sounds like she’s having a splendid time,” he said, with a touch of resentment. “She’ll find this Rivers soon; then she can come back. I need her here.”

“I think Maze needs our help before she does any more damage,” Chloe said, thinking of how the demon had been at Lux. She’d been living with Maze (and Lucifer for that matter) long enough to recognize the signs of someone trying to ignore their feelings.

A slow smile spread across Lucifer’s face. “This isn’t about help. This is about you being an overprotective mother,” he said. Chloe rolled her eyes; she admitted worrying about a demon seemed a touch extreme, which then begged the question - did anyone ever worry about Maze? Maybe someone should. She pulled up an article on Ben Rivers, skimming it quickly.

Seeing she wasn’t convinced, Lucifer sighed, putting a hand on her arm. “Look, trust me, Chloe. I’ve known Maze for eons. She’s got this all under control.”

Making a split second decision, Chloe shot off a quick text to Ella asking for phone records, and then started driving. “Before we go to the Telegraph we’re going to make a pit stop at Athena Burns’ office. She’s Ben Rivers’ attorney.”

Lucifer’s eyebrows lifted in surprise. “You’re putting off working on an active case? Who are you, and what have you done to the Detective?”

Chloe shook her head. “Maze may not need our help, but she’s helped me plenty of times, to say nothing of you.” She remembered Maze’s dramatic rescue of Lucifer from the crossfire of a gang war early in their acquaintance, Lucifer’s word eons echoing in her head. Did anyone ever tell Maze how much she was appreciated? “It’s time we returned the favour.”

“It’s hardly a favour if that’s what she was created to do,” Lucifer grumbled, but he lodged no further protest as Chloe drove to Burns’ practice.

They were let in to see the lawyer with a minimum of fuss, Chloe’s badge and Lucifer’s charm opening doors the way they usually did. Athena Burns looked every inch the part of a woman in a powerful profession, in much the same way Charlotte did. Chloe also didn’t fail to note the way Burns’ eyes sized up Lucifer approvingly, and she cleared her throat, trying to match the other woman’s authoritative front.

“Ms. Burns, thank you for seeing us on such short notice. I’m Detective Decker.” She didn’t introduce Lucifer, who remained by the door as Chloe sat, and Burns’ interest visibly sharpened.
“You’re Ben Rivers’ attorney, correct?”

Burns leaned back in her expensive leather chair. “I was, but I haven’t heard from him in two years, since he disappeared, so I’m not quite sure how much help I’ll be.” A pause. “You are trying to locate him again?”

Chloe almost smiled. Gotcha. “That’s interesting, ‘cause we know you’ve been communicating with him over the phone.”

Burns’ hands clenched slightly on the armrests of her chair. “I don’t know what you’re talking about. And if you’ve been illegally wiretapping me, this’ll be a fun lawsuit.”

Chloe shook her head. “Nope, no wiretapping. We’ve been tracking him through a friend.”

“More stalking, if you ask me,” Lucifer piped up.

Chloe cleared her throat. “I noticed that wherever he’s been, there’s a corresponding phone call to your office,” she said. Burns just stared at her, tight-lipped. Chloe sighed. “Look, I want to bring him in safely, and as his attorney, you should know that’s in his best interest.”

Burns pushed back from her desk. “This conversation is over.”

“Oh good!” Lucifer moved off the wall, approaching the desk. Both women looked at him.

“Good?” Burns inquired.

“Yes,” Lucifer replied carelessly. Chloe raised an eyebrow at him. “Well, the longer it takes, the angrier Maze is going to get,” he elaborated. Chloe thought she could see where he was going and nodded slowly, playing along.

Burns leaned forward. “Who or what is Maze?” she asked, putting on a brave face.

“Maze is the bounty hunter who’s about to catch Rivers,” Chloe told her as Lucifer claimed a chair.

“Yes, and when she finally catches up with the poor fellow, she’s going to tear him limb from bloody limb. It’ll be fantastic!” Lucifer said, sounding gleeful.

“She can’t do that,” Burns retorted, though her eyelids fluttered when she realized her slip.

“Oh, no, she definitely has the strength for it, doesn’t she?” Lucifer said, deliberately misinterpreting her words.

Chloe nodded. “Mm-hmm.”

“Actually, do you have to bring a bounty back alive?” Lucifer asked Chloe. “Would just the head suffice? Because that is her thing,” Chloe wasn’t sure if Lucifer was being serious or not. And this was the woman she trusted with her daughter. She shook her head inwardly.

“Maybe we could just superglue him back together on delivery,” Lucifer continued, and Chloe was certain they’d overplayed their hand, but Burns had turned a delicate shade of puce.

“You can’t hurt him,” she said.

“You seem to care about him quite a bit,” Chloe said softly.

Burns attempted to rally. “Of course. He is my client.”
Chloe turned to Lucifer and found him looking back at her, a question in his eyes. She nodded. Fluttering her eyelashes might have been laying it on a bit thick, but his delighted grin made it worth it.

“So tell me, Ms. Burns, why is his safety so important to you?” Coming around Burns’ desk, he leaned over her chair as she looked up at him, her expression of outrage turning to one of curiosity. “Hmm?”

“I - I don’t…” Burns stammered. Lucifer’s grin widened and he settled on the edge of her desk.

“Oooh, you’re as formidable as your power suit suggests, aren’t you? But don’t worry, you can tell me. I know you want to.” His tone turned conspiratorial, friends gossiping around the office water cooler. Chloe watched him work in fascination. Burns seemed unable to look away.

“I love him,” she blurted out.

“Oh?” Lucifer prompted.

The lawyer spoke like it was a struggle. “I helped him elude the police, and I have been sending him money ever since.”

Lucifer rocked back slightly. “Have you, now?” He released whatever aura he’d been projecting and Burns slumped, blinking like she was emerging from a trance. Lucifer barked a laugh, turning back to look at Chloe as if to say over to you.

Chloe leaned forward. “He’s a cold-blooded murderer,” she said matter-of-factly. “How could he get you to do all this?”

“Obviously you’ve never met him,” Burns replied, voice rough. “He’s not what you’d expect. He’s charming and handsome.” She settled back into her chair, attempting to recover some of her aplomb. “And when he looks you in the eyes, I don’t care who you are. You’re defenseless against him.” She glared up at Lucifer as she finished.

After the lawyer had given them the address of the safehouse where Rivers was staying, Chloe cleared her throat. “Thank you for your time, Ms. Burns. You’ve been very helpful.” The attorney still seemed to be in a daze as they left. Chloe looked over at Lucifer.

“What?” he asked.

“Nothing, just… Sometimes I wonder what it feels like, y’know?” she said. “Your mojo thing.” She made a vague gesture with her hands as she slid into the driver’s seat. Lucifer looked startled.

“I’ve never asked anyone about it,” he said. “Do you want my power to work on you?”

Chloe shrugged. “I don’t know,” she replied. “I always heard that it only works if you want it to, so at first I assumed that’s how yours worked, too.” Lucifer scoffed.

“You keep making that sound,” Chloe said. “What’s the matter? You’re the one who mentioned hypnosis.”
Lucifer made a face. “Only as a point of comparison. I’m not some charlatan playing at mind control! My power is the ultimate expression of free will. I allow everyone to reveal their truest desire - except you, of course.”

Chloe shrugged again. “I wonder if whatever Rivers does would work on me.” Lucifer gave her a faintly scandalized look and Chloe pressed her lips together to hide a smile.

“Well, regardless, it won’t work on Maze,” Lucifer grumbled.

Chloe had to admit that was probably true. She pulled out her phone and dialed Maze’s number.

Maze picked up after several rings. “I don’t know who punched a hole in the bathroom wall,” she said without preamble.

Chloe smiled in spite of herself. “That’s not why I’m calling, but good to know.”

“What, you’re checking up on me?” Maze’s skeptical tone was the same as Lucifer’s.

“Uh, I was just calling to see how you’re doing, that’s all,” Chloe said. Lucifer looked at her incredulously.

“Mm.” Maze was unimpressed. “I’m fine, okay? In fact, I’m great. This Rivers guy is a lot harder to catch than I thought.”

“Ah, so you haven’t found him yet?” Chloe had to admit to surprise. Rivers was only human.

“Oh, I found him,” Maze said laconically. “And he got away.” She didn’t sound displeased in the slightest.

Chloe blinked. “And that’s a good thing?” she asked, raising her eyebrows significantly at Lucifer. “What if he comes after you now?”

“You think he would?” Maze sounded excited. Lucifer just stared at Chloe like he couldn’t believe what he was hearing.

“Maze…” Chloe’s sigh was intended for both hellions. “Rivers is dangerous in ways I don’t think you’re prepared for. He’s emotionally dangerous.” That much was clear from what Burns had told them.

“I don’t even know what that means,” Maze drawled.

“I know, and that’s the problem,” Chloe said. “If…” Lucifer held out his hand for the phone. Chloe gave it over, thinking he was going to help her convince Maze, only for him to hang up without a word.

Chloe was outraged. “What the hell are you doing?” she demanded.

Lucifer was still holding her phone. “Reminding you that you are not Maze’s mother,” he said. “She’s got her big girl pants on. She’s fine.”

Chloe accepted her phone back with a glare.

“Really? Because she caught Rivers, and he got away.”

Lucifer laughed. “Oh, I doubt that,” he said, tweaking her nose.
Chloe was so surprised she almost forgot to respond. “It’s true, you heard what she said,” she protested, knowing his hearing would have picked up the other end. “What was that for? If he’s already gotten in her head…”

“He hasn’t,” he said with surety. “You don’t know Maze like I do - she probably let him go to further the chase.” He leaned back in his seat. “Maybe he came at her with a flamethrower or something, which’ll just piss her off even more. I thought you were going to tell her where Rivers is staying.”

“I don’t know if I’m going to,” Chloe said. “I’m worried about her.” Lucifer was already tapping away on his phone. “Clearly you’re not.”

“No, I’m not,” Lucifer said blithely. “I just sent her the address.”

“Lucifer -”

“We need her back here. This case might be our best chance for a lead on the Sinnerman’s whereabouts and she’s dallying in Canada. I assure you, whatever Rivers is, he’s nothing she can’t handle. Now where to?”

Chloe let it go. It was true, Maze could take care of herself, and even if she couldn’t, Chloe’s options for dealing with it from LA were limited.

“I’m still waiting on forensics from Ella and the Telegraph isn’t far from here,” Chloe replied. “Let’s go see Reese before heading back to the precinct.” She was going to have a lot of comments to sift through.

The moment Chloe saw Lt. Herrera, she knew something was up. Herrera was the officer in charge of the Rivers case and never showed his face around Homicide. Any method she could think of for him finding out she’d become involved in the case elicited at least a small amount of suspicion. Chloe had just pulled the Rivers files - Reese’s office had said it might take a day or two for them to pull the redacted comments together, and the comments on Nuñez’s articles had been a bust. This was turning into one of the stranger cases she’d ever worked. “Lieutenant Herrera?”

“And you must be Chloe Decker.” Herrera was all smiles, holding out his hand to shake. “Pleasure.” “Pleasure,” Chloe echoed. She figured it would be better to head things off at the pass. “I know what this is about, and I didn’t mean to stick my nose in another cop’s case…”

“Wait, wait. You think I’m mad?” Herrera chuckled. “Are you kidding me? You got me a new lead. I’m here to thank you.”

“Oh,” Chloe said, sighing as though relieved.

“Uh, you know, but now that you’ve cracked it open…”

“Mmhmm?”

“If you don’t mind, I’d like to carry this one over the finish line.” Herrera’s tone was still affable but Chloe’s instincts were immediately flagged.

“Are you sure?” she asked, one cop to another. “I’m happy to help.”

“Don’t worry; I’ll give you all the credit,” Herrera said easily. “It’s just that this one means a lot to
me. The one that got away, you know?”

“Right, yeah, of course,” Chloe said, mind already whirring. “Absolutely.”

“Thanks, Detective,” Herrera said, with a smile that didn’t quite reach his eyes. There was an awkward moment as it became clear that he was expecting her to hand over the files that pertained to the case - she’d just been taking them out to look over as a break from the comment trawling. She handed them over without protest, caught off guard, and Herrera raised them in salute before leaving.

Chloe waited until he was out of sight before looking for a secluded corner in which to dial Maze. When the demon didn’t pick up, Chloe left a voicemail.

“Hey, it’s me again. Before you write me off as just being a worrier, I want you to know I think something’s off with this case and Lieutenant Herrera. There might be more going on than we thought. Call me back ASAP.”

After she hung up, she paused, biting her lip before deciding to call Dan. If something was wrong, she’d feel better if she knew she’d done everything she could. Maze might not need a babysitter, but she did need friends.

Linda listened with half an ear as Lucifer regaled her with the details of his current case. He’d been late for his appointment again, and they’d quickly settled into their usual routine. Lucifer would recount case developments, not because they were necessarily relevant (though they sometimes were) but because it helped him warm up to other topics of discussion. This case about a murdered reporter caught her attention more strongly now that Reese was trying to force himself back into her life, but it also raised questions about Lucifer’s identity since the victim was someone Lucifer had done a favour for.

Once Lucifer’s recitation had made it to the present - he’d parted company with Chloe at a newspaper office to investigate redacted comments - he sat back, glass of water in hand, as Linda considered the information he’d presented.

“And how is it going between you and Chloe?” Linda asked. Lucifer rubbed his hands on his thighs as he put his glass down. “Good! It’s good.” His body language was open, and Linda didn’t doubt his assessment, but dammit, she wanted details!

“I’m glad to hear that, Lucifer. Have there been any difficulties adjusting for either of you?” It was a bit of a leading question - she knew there had to have been, and Lucifer’s expression confirmed it. It was just a question of what he chose to divulge.

“I’m glad to hear that, Lucifer. Have there been any difficulties adjusting for either of you?” It was a bit of a leading question - she knew there had to have been, and Lucifer’s expression confirmed it. It was just a question of what he chose to divulge.

“There was… a spot of bother, the other day, concerning the child,” Lucifer admitted, and Linda raised her eyebrows. That was a major deal; she knew how protective Chloe was of Trixie. And yet, there had been no meltdown, no emergency session. She felt stirrings of pride. Chloe and Lucifer were both putting forth their best effort, trying to make this work. They were so good for each other.

As Lucifer launched into the story, Linda was even more impressed - that had not been a minor difference of opinion, and yet they’d managed to handle it between them in a mature fashion. When Lucifer mentioned what Chloe had said about always putting Trixie first, she saw an opportunity to try to help Lucifer find a different perspective on what he perceived as his Father’s plan.

“And how did that make you feel?”

Lucifer looked stymied. She tried again. “Did it make you angry that she would put Trixie before
“No!” Lucifer exclaimed. “Why?”

“Well, some people feel as though they should be the most important person in their significant other’s life.”

Lucifer’s brow furrowed. “I’ve always known how much the Detective treasures her offspring.”

“Good!” Linda said. “Then how do you interpret her motivations now?” She’d learned early on that Lucifer needed things spelled out for him. “Do you still think her feelings are a manipulation?”

Lucifer thought about it. Linda waited patiently.

“She told me…” Lucifer began, and Linda’s heart grew two sizes watching his eyes mist. “She told me she didn’t care what I did to get tossed out of Heaven. She told me I didn’t deserve what-what happened.” He took a hasty sip of water to cover his voice breaking. Linda forced herself to sit quietly even though she wanted to stand and applaud. “To hear those words from her…” Lucifer cleared his throat again. “I want to believe it’s real,” he said, and Linda understood how dangerous an admission that was for him. “I find it hard to believe that my Dad would do something to make me this happy, even if He plans to snatch it away.” His fists clenched and unclenched, and Linda readied herself to run damage control. His fear of losing it all was unfortunately well founded and would likely dog him throughout the relationship.

To her surprise, he brought himself back, sighing. “Though I admit I’m not sure I see the connection, doctor.”

“Chloe telling you that she would prioritize Trixie was a decision that could have very easily driven a wedge between you, perhaps more.” Linda was still being more forward than perhaps she ought to have been, but Lucifer had already taken a huge leap of faith getting involved with Chloe in the first place and she wanted to see that faith rewarded. “Yet she was willing to take that risk. Might that not be an indication that she is simply a woman who cares for you both very much and is willing to put in the effort to make your relationship work?”

Lucifer frowned, mulling it over, and Linda knew to back away. “Just... think about it, Lucifer,” she said. She hoped he would. Having her motives constantly questioned had to be hard on Chloe, but she drew the line at suggesting such to Lucifer. She could only point him in the right direction.

“Has there been anything else that’s happened?” she asked after some time had passed. The session was only half over, and she got the impression there was more. Lucifer confirmed it by leaning forward, a glint in his eye.

“Yes, actually. Chloe told me to ask you about this money thing.” He pronounced the words with disdain.

Oh boy. Here we go. The fact that they were already at this rather mundane point in the development of their relationship could only be a good sign, though that didn’t make the problem any less thorny.

“We were discussing Daniel’s ghastly vacation itinerary, and I told her I would have been more than willing to assist with the details. She said that was a ridiculous idea-”

The door burst open unexpectedly and Reese, of all people, rushed in. “Linda!”

Linda recoiled in her chair, completely at a loss. She hadn’t spoken to or heard from her ex-husband for almost a year. She’d thought she’d seen the last of him but apparently his absence had been too
good to be true.

“Reese!” she exclaimed before realizing that Lucifer had just said the same thing.

Lucifer turned to her. “What, you know him as well?”

“My ex-husband, Reese…” Instinctively, Linda raised her hand in an effort to keep him at bay. It had no effect, as Reese came and lifted her bodily from her chair, placing himself between her and Lucifer.

“Linda, stay back,” Reese said.

“Your ex-husband?” Lucifer rose from the couch, sounding delighted. “So we’re tunnel buddies!”

Everything was happening so fast; Linda was trying to find words to protest and Lucifer was beaming… It wasn’t until his expression suddenly changed that she even noticed the gun Reese had pulled. A shot rang out. Lucifer fell back against the couch and Linda’s first irrational thought was how she would ever be able to explain this to Chloe.

In the space of a breath, however, Lucifer was sitting back up, eyes hard and intent on Reese, and Linda let out a sigh of relief that he was unharmed before it occurred to her to worry about her ex-husband.

“No, you realize what you just did?” Lucifer said. His voice was low and menacing as he rose, towering over Reese, and Linda was reminded that he was really the Devil, even more so than by the fact he’d just shrugged off a bullet.

“You just ruined a perfectly good Burberry. What sort of monster are you?” Lucifer complained, as he held open his suit jacket with a horrified expression and stuck his finger through the bullet hole.

“Are you…” Linda made a belated attempt to ask if he was all right but Reese spoke over her.

“See? He’s the Devil! I told you.” He sounded exultant, brandishing the gun with a manic grin on his face.

“You - you tried to kill him!” Linda said, still trying to sort out what was happening.

“Yeah, but I didn’t. He’s invincible because he’s the Devil. See? There’s your proof.” He pointed with the gun at Lucifer, who was still mourning his Burberry, before turning to look at her. His eyes were wild. He looked like he’d been sleeping under a bridge.

“Reese -” Linda began again.

“You’re lucky the Detective isn’t here,” Lucifer interjected. “You’d be cleaning my blood out of the couch!”

Reese was laughing soundlessly, still waving the gun around, and Linda was honestly afraid of what he’d do next.

“Put the gun down, Reese,” she begged, her voice shaking even as she tried to make it firm.

“Right, I don’t need it anymore.” Reese put it down without protest as Lucifer sat heavily back down on the couch. “Look, I know it’s a lot to process, but you’ve got to believe me.”

“Reese, I know he’s the Devil,” Linda burst out, and she found herself thinking it would have been nice to have even this level of support - or any support at all - back when she had discovered the
truth.

That halted Reese in his tracks. “What? You... you do?”

There were times when Linda knew her ex-husband too well and this was one of those times. She could see all too clearly what must have happened. “Is this what you were trying to tell me all those months ago?” she asked.

Reese looked from Lucifer back to her and drew in a deep breath. “I saw his real face,” he said, in lieu of answering. “If you see it, then you’ll know.” Lucifer rolled his eyes and settled back against the couch but Linda didn’t have time to worry about his feelings surrounding losing his Devil face right now. It was clear that the sight of it had sent Reese into a spiral. Linda could sympathize. However misplaced Reese’s intentions had been, his first thought had still been to try to protect her. He’d shot the Devil just to prove a point. She couldn’t decide whether that was courageous or simply madness. Perhaps both.

“I have seen it,” she said, trying to talk him down as calmly as possible. “And I know.” Aside from anything else, it was such a relief to be able to talk to someone else who’d had a similar reaction to the truth, even if that person was her half-deranged ex-husband. “I know how unsettling it can be.”

Lucifer chose this moment to speak up. “Yes. And if you’re this unsettled by me, I’d hate to see what you’re going to do to the scoundrel who’s been sleeping with your wife.”

Somewhere her therapist’s brain was analyzing his interjection as displacement, a way to soften the negative feelings brought up by the vulnerability of having them discussing his true self in his presence, but she knew turning her attention from Reese now could be disastrous. “I’m so sorry,” she said. Even after all this time, the words fell so easily from her lips. “I didn’t realize what you were going through. I didn’t know the truth, and I didn’t think you did either.”

Reese’s face scrunched in confusion. “But you know now,” he said slowly. “And you’re still seeing him?” His tone wasn’t judgemental only by virtue of being too confused.

“Only professionally, Reese.” Lucifer stepped in again, but Linda knew that he couldn’t be helpful in this situation. Not yet.

“When I first learned who he really was, it turned my world upside down.” Linda sighed. She didn’t like to think about it, especially that first night. She had no idea how long she’d sat in her chair after Lucifer left her office. Hours, probably. She didn’t know how she even made it home - it was a miracle she hadn’t killed anyone, driving on autopilot. She’d hardly paid attention to the road, eyes flickering to everything else, convinced that danger lurked in every shadow. She’d barred the door, moving something heavy in front of it, and then sat in the centre of her bed wrapped in every blanket she owned, spending the remainder of the night sleepless, jumping at the slightest noise. When she’d finally passed out due to exhaustion, that face had haunted her dreams. It had taken days for her to even begin to process the implications of what she’d seen.

She shook her head. They were past that now. “But he’s not what you think.”

“He’s the Devil!” Reese cried, the same way her mind had shrieked at her in the beginning.

“It’s not like I’ve hidden that fact,” Lucifer said as he munched on a candy.

“He’s evil incarnate!”

“No,” Linda said. Whatever Lucifer was, he was not that. “No, he’s a good man.”
Behind Reese, Lucifer stopped chewing. It would have been comical were it not for the heavy emotion in his eyes. She realized this was something she should have told him more often, especially once she knew the truth. *I'm sorry, Lucifer, that you had to hear it from me this way, she thought. I hope Chloe tells you every day how wonderful you are. “He’s my friend.”*

Lucifer tilted his head quizzically, like he wasn’t quite sure how to interpret what was being said. The patient-friend line was a hard one to walk, especially in this case, and Linda realized now that she’d allowed it to hold her back from saying what was really important. Everyone could use positive reinforcement from time to time.

“All this time…” Linda turned her attention to Reese again, who was staring vacantly at her, abruptly losing his manic animation, like a puppet whose strings had been cut. “I’ve been trying to prove to you who he really is. And not only did you already know… you didn’t care.”

Linda recognized his words, knew them from when things had started going bad between them, and she knew instinctively that letting Reese leave, even though the last thing she wanted was for him to stay, would be a mistake.

“Sit down, Reese, let’s talk this through,” she began, her heart still pulled by the thought of him suffering with this knowledge, alone, for a whole year. But Reese was already shaking his head.

“No, no,” he repeated, already on his way out, not looking at either of them. Linda reached after him.

“Please, Reese!” But he was gone.

After Reese fled, Linda and Lucifer sat in silence for a while, stunned for different reasons. A ringing notification on her computer broke the tension. They looked at each other and then she went to answer it. Seeing it was from Maze, she quickly accepted the call.

“Maze!” she exclaimed. As always, her heart gave an odd little flutter at the sight of the demon. The little rings Maze had woven into her hair were distracting enough that she almost didn’t notice how well her deep red lip colour suited her, setting off the tone of her skin and the whiteness of her teeth. “I’m with a patient.”

“Yeah, well, so am I,” Maze said, adjusting the camera to show a man lying groaning on the couch.

Linda might as well not have bothered with the feeble attempt at professionalism. Lucifer had come around the desk as soon as she’d said the demon’s name.

“Mazikeen!” he said briskly. “Did you shoot the fellow? Well done. Now you can get back here and-”

“Shut up, Lucifer. I didn’t shoot him. Some psycho from room service did,” Maze snapped.

“So much for Canadian hospitality.” Lucifer’s tone was light, but he was clearly taken aback. Maze rolled her eyes.

“Look, I don’t have time to explain, okay? How do I stop this human from dying?” she demanded.

That was how Linda found herself giving medical advice to a demon, with the Devil looking over her shoulder. If she’d had less of a rattling day, she wouldn’t have attempted it, but at the moment it seemed like the most reasonable response.
After Maze hung up, Lucifer and Linda returned to silence. Too much had happened - Linda felt hollow, her insides upended. She wanted nothing more than to retreat to her bed with a large glass of wine.

Lucifer spoke up, sounding the same way she felt. “Is it me, or did the most skilled torturer Hell’s ever known just fluff that man’s pillow?”

“It’s not you,” Linda confirmed.

“Right. Then it’s true. He broke my Maze.”

Something inside Linda stirred at the words, though she couldn’t have said what part she was objecting to. It was the first time she’d laid eyes on Maze since Lux and she suddenly realized she missed her friend, in a way she’d never missed the demon before when she was away on a hunt. Had never allowed herself to miss her.

“I… have to go,” Lucifer said, striding out without another word. Linda let him leave, aware she’d reached a limit with regards to what she was prepared to deal with today. Between Reese unexpectedly showing up again and whatever was going on with Maze, Linda would be no use to anyone else until she figured out her own feelings. She sank down in front of her computer and set about cancelling the rest of her appointments for the day.

Chapter End Notes

A very eventful chapter! I enjoyed getting to use some Linda POV in this, and also read a little more into Chloe’s confrontation with Herrera. What did you think of mixing the two episodes together? Thanks for reading!
“Ah! There you are!” Lucifer found Chloe as she was headed for the break room, a new sheaf of printed comments in her hand. Staring at the computer screen so much had been giving her eyestrain. Chloe took down a coffee mug, turning to face him, a smile already pulling at her lips. They’d only been apart for the space of a few hours and yet Chloe still felt like it had been ages.

“Hey, Lucifer. How’d it go with-?” The expression on Lucifer’s face stopped her in her tracks.

Lucifer dispensed with the pleasantries. “You were right,” he said bluntly. “It seems this Rivers fellow may have hoodwinked Maze.”

“Oh, maybe I was wrong,” Chloe said. “Want one?” She offered to pour him a cup.

He shook his head, an impatient gesture. “Who are you, and what have you done with the Detective?” he asked again, eyes narrowing. She shrugged, putting the carafe back and leading the way through to her desk, Lucifer trailing behind her.

“Lucifer, Maze spoke to Rivers,” she said, as she sat down. “He claims the security guard was lying, that he was forced to pin the murder on him. That’s why Rivers is on the run.”

“And you believe that preposterous story?” Lucifer asked. “An innocent man wrongfully accused? I mean, where did he escape from, Shawshank? Did he crawl through a mile of sh-?”

“Hey.” Chloe’s voice came out sharper than she intended and Lucifer cut himself off with a snap, dark eyes widening slightly. “Hey,” she said again, more gently, touching his hand with a small smile of apology. She’d wanted to head off one of his rants but she realized now how rattled he looked. “It’s not like Maze to reach out with a lead. What’s gotten you so worked up?”

“I know,” Lucifer exclaimed, pointedly ignoring her question. “This is much worse than I thought. First she fluffs the man’s pillow, and now she’s trying to clear his name?” Chloe blinked, but before she could ask for clarification, Lucifer was hurrying on. “Do you know, I never thought I’d say this, Detective, but we need to go to Canada. Now.”

He grasped her wrist and would have headed straight off. For a brief second, Chloe allowed herself to imagine it, letting Lucifer drag her into a whirlwind northern adventure, but real life very quickly made itself known and she dug in her heels, pulling her wrist back. “Wait. Hold on. Hold on!” Even with how gentle Lucifer was being she felt like a leaf trying to stop itself dead in a river’s current, but he released her as soon as he registered her reluctance. He looked back at her, expectant.

“I can tell you’re worried,” Chloe said, clasping her hands in front of her. “And that’s actually really endearing.” It was, in a slightly troubling way that she didn’t have time to think too much about. “But Dan’s there.”

“That’s worse!”

Chloe let the comment about Dan slide, knowing how Lucifer got ruder under stress. She stepped closer to him, wanting to take his hand but keenly aware of their position in the middle of the bullpen.
“Look, right now, Maze needs a different kind of help,” she told him, though she could tell from his look of incomprehension that he didn’t understand, an assumption confirmed when he opened his mouth.

“What, some strong drugs? Maybe a knock on the head?”

“What she needs is for us to trust her,” Chloe said, only to be stopped short by Lucifer’s harsh laugh.

“You’re actually serious, aren’t you?” he asked, after she failed to “get” the joke.

Chloe’s lips pursed. She wasn’t any better equipped to unravel the complex relationship between Lucifer and Maze now than she had been before she’d learned the truth. What she did know was that with her better grasp of the situation, she needed to have her roommate’s back. The same way Maze would have hers.

“You’re the one who said Maze could handle herself,” she reminded him, “and I think you’re right. She trusts us enough to ask for help - we owe it to her to follow her lead.”

Lucifer still looked unconvinced, his mouth twisting, and Chloe was once again given cause to wish she understood more about the relationship between him and Maze. “Unless this is about you being the overprotective mother.” She couldn’t resist the dig, given how things were progressing at home with Trixie, and the way he’d taunted her about the same thing earlier. Lucifer’s displeasure shifted.

“Oh. Low blow, Detective,” he said, sounding almost impressed.

Chloe shrugged. “Well, if the shoe fits…”

Lucifer took a deep breath. “Fine,” he said at last. “Fine, we do it your way,” he said, and Chloe was surprised, as she always was, by his concession. “At least tell me you have something on the Nuñez case so we’re not just sitting on our hands.”

Chloe could definitely understand that sentiment. “Well, we’re still waiting on Reese to deliver the comments from the Telegraph, and I’m starting to think the comments on Nuñez’s articles are a dead end. But,” she said, before Lucifer could look too discouraged, “we might still be able to help Maze from this end. I had an encounter with Lieutenant Herrera earlier, and I got a gut feeling, so I called in the security guard who testified in the original case, to see if he can clear up some things for us.”

“Very well.” Lucifer sighed, raising his hands in a gesture of acceptance, though he clearly wasn’t happy about it. “If only to prove that this Rivers is indeed a con man so I can freely punch him in his smug, mildly handsome face.”

He stalked toward interrogation, Chloe following behind. And to think, she’d looked forward to conversations with Lucifer making more sense.

Their interview with the guard, however, revealed just the opposite of what Lucifer expected, and more than that, confirmed Chloe’s suspicions about Herrera. They stood outside interrogation, having left the guard inside to sweat. Chloe looked over at Lucifer, whose face had settled into cold, hard lines. She shivered, a little, at the thought of what that face meant for its intended target.

“How do we take him down, Detective?” Lucifer asked calmly. Even his voice sounded different, ice cracking on a frozen lake, holding death beneath, and Chloe had to swallow once before answering. She reached out and put her hands on his forearms - his body was coiled tight like a spring, ready to explode. She was fully aware of what it was costing him not to go immediately after
Herrera himself, instead waiting for her, for a plan.

“We have the interrogation tapes implicating Herrera,” she said, keeping the words quiet and succinct. “And the guard knows we have them. Let him stew in there for a while longer and he’ll be begging to give us the dirt.” She couldn’t keep the edge of anger from her own voice and saw the faint spark of approval in Lucifer’s pitch-black gaze, like speaking to like. He nodded.

Just before they were about to go in and talk to the guard again, Chloe got a call from Dan. It was easy - perhaps insidiously so - to let Lucifer talk to the guard alone while she took the call. Lucifer’s face was still set in intent, cold-burning lines, but she thought she saw a flicker of a smile cross his face at the gesture of trust. He and Chloe both knew the guard would need little in the way of persuasion, much less Lucifer’s particular brand.

Chloe got off the phone just as Lucifer emerged from interrogation, looking grimly satisfied.

“Dan,” she placed slight emphasis on the name, “just gave us another piece.” She lifted her phone as Lucifer adjusted his cuffs, brisk and businesslike. “We got Herrera dead to rights.”

“Is this the part where we beat the lieutenant to death with our bare hands?” Lucifer inquired, and Chloe shook her head fondly.

“Not exactly,” Chloe said, feeling her lips curl in an involuntary smirk. “Here’s what we’re going to do…”

Herrera’s arrest lit a fire under Chloe that dispelled some of the frustrations of dealing with their active case, which stubbornly refused to produce any leads. She looked over at Lucifer, who at first glance was sitting uncharacteristically still in the chair across from her until she noticed the tension still vibrating in his muscles. She was so proud of him for following her lead in the Rivers case. She needed to help him deal with… whatever this was. She wondered what he did usually - she doubted screaming into a pillow would help and they didn’t make punching bags strong enough for him to use normally, much less let loose on.

“Hey,” she said, and Lucifer’s eyes, so powerful that they made Chloe feel small, snapped to hers. Who was she to think she had anything to offer this eternal being? But she took a deep breath and tried anyway. “Lucifer, we did a good thing today,” she reminded him, even as his mouth twisted. “We took that bastard down, and he’s going to rot for a very long time.” And considering I know where you’re eventually going to go, that’s fine by me. Lucifer’s words echoed in her head and at the moment they filled her with nothing but vindication. “I’ve got you,” she said, more quietly - it was the only way she could think of to express how she was feeling. “What… what do you need?”

The look in Lucifer’s eyes turned startled. “I…” He looked down, breaking the eye contact that had held her so enthralled. His jaw clenched. “What I need,” he said, “is to beat the bloody daylights out of someone.” He shook his hand out of the fist it had curled into before meeting her eyes again, furtive, like he hadn’t meant to say so much. Not finding whatever judgement he expected to see in her face, however, his eyes widened slightly.

“It’s okay,” Chloe said, not touching him, just in case, even though she badly wanted to. It was easier since they were at work. “I get it. I feel the same way,” she said, earning another startled look. It didn’t happen often, getting that crawling, itching feeling under her skin, usually after a case gone wrong. It happened less now, after working with Lucifer, but she still got it sometimes. When she did, she liked to go to the police shooting range, firing round after round into the targets, narrowing
her focus to a single point until she didn’t feel like screaming at everyone and everything. But she didn’t think that was what Lucifer needed either. “What do you usually do, when you get like this?”

An arched eyebrow. “And what is this?” he asked, razor sharp. Chloe just folded her arms.

“Give me more credit than that, Lucifer. I’m trying to help, here.”

It was the wrong thing to say. “I don’t need your help,” Lucifer snarled, half rising. The words smacked Chloe but she forced herself to sit quietly, and Lucifer folded quickly to the lack of opposition, an apology in his eyes that never made it past his lips.

Chloe didn’t care about that. She rose too, looking hard at him.

“Never said you did,” she said, keeping her voice even. “But you do want to pick a fight, and I know you better than to think you go around just punching people out, so…” She shrugged. “What do you usually do?”


It was all the answer Chloe needed. She could too easily imagine him sequestering himself away in his penthouse, burying the sensation in alcohol (and drugs, most likely) until it inevitably exploded out of him at the most inopportune moment. The realization that Lucifer was actually quite well adjusted for the lack of outlets available to him stunned Chloe for a moment before she started working on a plan. She checked the time.

“I have to go pick Trixie up from school,” she said, and Lucifer blinked at the non-sequitur. “You’re welcome to come along but I thought you might… want some space?”

There was no denial in Lucifer’s eyes. Chloe nodded. “Please keep your phone on?” she requested. “I’ll text you in a bit. I might have an idea for something that might help.”

Lucifer considered her for a moment, then nodded. “Very well.”

He left the precinct briskly without another word.

Chloe let out a breath she hadn’t known she was holding.

She drove to Trixie’s school, her thoughts on Lucifer rather than on any of her cases. It had shaken her, the realization that as often as she said she was there for him, she really had no idea about what he went through.

Trixie piled into the car, already chatting away about her day, and Chloe smiled as she watched her daughter in the rearview mirror.

“What do you think about going to the beach today?” she asked once she could get a word in edgewise - as if there could be any question. Trixie voiced her enthusiastic approval for the plan and Chloe texted Lucifer. <Meet at Point Dume?>

Then they were on their way as Chloe tried to decide how best to explain what she wanted to do.

“Lucifer’s had a very bad day today, monkey,” she began.

“So we’re gonna take him to the beach to cheer him up?” Trixie asked.

Chloe nodded. “Sort of, yeah. He needs to not be around people for a while, so we’re going to take
him to a rocky beach to work off some steam, okay?"

Her words might as well have been air - beach and Lucifer were the magic words, and putting them in the same sentence had Trixie over the moon.

While waiting at a stoplight, Chloe received a baffled but agreeable text from Lucifer and she began to hope that her plan would work, after going to all this trouble.

Lucifer beat them to the beach, of course, and stood leaning against the hood of his car smoking a cigarette, which he stubbed out as they pulled up.

“Now, remember what I said about Lucifer’s bad days,” Chloe warned Trixie, remembering the coiled tension that had been in Lucifer’s muscles. She didn’t believe Lucifer would hurt Trixie, not for a second, but she didn’t want to exacerbate the situation. Trixie nodded seriously and clambered out of the car.

“Hi, Lucifer!” she said brightly, while keeping a healthy distance. Lucifer’s gaze cut over to Chloe as she approached.

“You brought the child?” His tone was almost scandalized. “I told you I’m not…”

“Just trust me, okay?” Chloe interjected, not wanting Lucifer’s self-loathing to send Trixie conflicting messages.

Lucifer’s jaw clenched, but he didn’t object. “Why are we here?” he asked stiffly.

“When I was a kid, and I was frustrated about something,” Chloe said, “my dad used to take me outside to throw ice cubes at trees.” Lucifer stared at her, blank incomprehension written on his face. “Obviously, that’s not going to work in this instance, so I thought we could try something similar.” Picking up a rock, she tossed it as far as she could into the ocean. It landed with a small splash that was quickly drowned out by the waves. She turned to Lucifer. “Now you try.”

Lucifer’s incomprehension turned to flat disbelief. “Throwing rocks.”

“Just try it,” Chloe wheedled, nudging him gently with her elbow. “Come on. How much can you beat mine by?” She held out another rock.

Still incredulous, Lucifer took the rock, tossing it casually underhand and outstripping Chloe’s attempt by several feet. Behind them, Trixie laughed, and Chloe shook her head.

“I don’t want you to hold back,” she told Lucifer. “I want you to throw as hard as you can, okay? There’s no one around. Just… have at it.”

Lucifer still looked skeptical, but he blinked as Chloe helped him out of his suit jacket. He bent down slowly to grab a rock, standing and throwing in one fluid motion. There was a sharp whistling noise as the rock flew, too fast to be seen, a sizeable splash the only sign of its passing.

Trixie whooped, and Chloe grinned as she folded his jacket over her arm.

“Come on, Lucifer,” she said. “I know you can do better than that.”

Lucifer just arched an eyebrow at her challenge, hefting a small boulder and throwing it in a blur of motion. The resulting splash looked like a minor eruption. Trixie jumped up and down, applauding. Lucifer was already rolling up his shirtsleeves, looking for more rocks.
They ended up making a game of it, Trixie scampering up and down the beach to find rocks with the most interesting shapes to hand to Lucifer, Chloe occasionally calling out requests for specific throws. It took a little while for Lucifer to really warm up, further bringing home to Chloe just how much he usually held back in daily life. Eventually, they couldn’t even see the rocks, the only sign that Lucifer had made a throw the fact that his hand returned empty to his side. Both of them continued straining their eyes in vain, until a loud boom caused Trixie to falter in her tracks. Chloe startled, nearly dropping the jacket. The sound echoed off the surrounding cliffs, eventually dying away to reveal the gentle sounds of the waves again.

Trixie’s eyes were as round as saucers. “What was that?” she asked. She didn’t sound scared, at least. Chloe blinked, her brain supplying the information even as she struggled to process it.

“Uh, that was… That was the sound barrier, baby,” she finally managed. Lucifer turned to look at her over his shoulder, smirking. “It means Lucifer threw the rock so fast it went supersonic, like a fighter jet.”

“So cool!” was Trixie’s verdict. “Do it again!”

Lucifer obliged, tossing and catching a boulder the size of his head single-handed, several feet in the air. The only sign that he’d thrown it was another crash of sound, drowning out Trixie’s cheers. Chloe stuck her fingers in her ears, grinning.

Lucifer tossed a few more, making it sound like they were getting their own localized thunderstorm. Regretfully, he stepped back with a sigh.

“I think that’s enough of a show for now,” he said, sounding a little more like his old self.

“Aww, come on, Lucifer, just one more?” Trixie called. Lucifer was barely even winded, just his slightly deeper breathing giving evidence of his exertion. He raised his eyebrows at her in question. Chloe made an exaggerated gesture.

“All right.” Lucifer relented easily. “Just one more.”

He smiled, threw the rock. The sound rang out like a shot and he stood still until the last echoes died away. He didn’t look at Chloe immediately, his fists clenching and unclenching at his sides, and she got the sense he was reacclimating himself. She gave him his moment, possessed of a new appreciation for how restrained he usually was - that wasn’t a word she’d ever have considered applying to Lucifer before.

Then, to her surprise, he turned and folded her into his arms, holding her with all the delicacy of a soap bubble; the same arms that had just been hurling boulders at supersonic speeds. Chloe lost her breath at the juxtaposition, wrapping her arms around him.

“Thank you,” Lucifer murmured into her ear. It hadn’t been nearly enough, Chloe could tell, but it was better, and that was something. He laughed a little. Chloe pulled back to look at him.

“What?”

Lucifer shook his head. “It’s just… I tell you I’m a monster, that I’m not safe to be around. And you bring your daughter and make it a game.”

Chloe swallowed. “Lucifer…” It shouldn’t have surprised her, that Lucifer would have no concept of families being there for each other, but she suspected it would never cease breaking her heart.
“You’re not a monster,” she said fiercely, running a hand through his hair as he held her eyes, so desperate to believe in his own worth. “A monster is someone like Herrera, who used his position, which should have been to protect people, to…” Her voice cut off under the weight of her fury, which was probably a good thing - she didn’t have any desire to undo Lucifer’s change in mood. “Not you,” she said instead, pulling him closer again. “Never you.”

Lucifer’s arms tightened around her. Trixie appeared to think she’d refrained long enough and joined their hug, squeezing herself between them. Lucifer gave a weary sigh, but Chloe thought it was most likely pretense. He certainly took his time in letting go, and Chloe treasured the stolen moment: the three of them together. A family.

Then Lucifer pulled away, looking flustered, and Trixie was chattering about ice cream, and Chloe got a text from Reese Getty.

She handed Lucifer back his jacket. “Reese says he’s got the comments and he wants to meet at Lux, of all places.”

“Is that so surprising?” Lucifer asked, in that fake-wounded tone he played so well. “It’s where we first met, after all. Perhaps he just likes it?”

“Hmm.” Chloe wasn’t convinced, but she thought she could see a way to get Lucifer to relax a little more. “Well, I don’t see any reason why not, and I bet you could use a night to unwind.” The surprised gratitude in Lucifer’s eyes made her cheeks warm, and Chloe resolved to insist he pay more attention to his night job, in light of what she’d just learned about his lack of outlets. “I’ll call a sitter for Trix, but first - ice cream?”

Trixie cheered, and Lucifer grinned. “How could I refuse an offer like that?”

Chapter End Notes

A/N 1: Beginning next week, something a little different is happening. The chapter will be posted at the same time, for ME, but due to the effect of me moving back home and switching time zones the chapter will be switched for you too. I hope this won’t upset anyone too much. I anticipate no further changes.

A/N 2: Fun fact, this chapter can be interpreted as leading into chapter 3 of 100 Ways!
When Chloe descended into Lux, Lucifer was already there, wearing a new suit and holding court. He looked up at her arrival, and they shared a private smile, but Reese had arrived too. Chloe had told Lucifer to let her handle the business side of things, to which he’d happily obliged.

“Hi!” She sat down across from Reese, who for some reason looked startled to see her.

“Thanks for coming,” he said, a stiff expression of welcome flitting across his face.

Chloe thought his behaviour was a little odd, but she’d put up with it if it meant getting her hands on the comments. “Hey, you’re helping me, so thanks,” she said, resisting the urge to twist to look back at Lucifer. “Although I have no idea why we had to meet here.” Reese seemed a little distracted, so she thought it was best to hurry things along. “Those them?” She indicated the file folder in front of him.

Reese blinked as though he’d forgotten. “Yeah, uh, all the redacted comments.” He slid them across the table to her, then appeared to think better of it and pulled them back.

Chloe frowned.

“Uh, but first, I never did get to interview you,” Reese said.

Chloe sighed, resting her elbows on the table. “You know, you really had me fooled,” she told him. “Thought you were different.” It was too late now - they needed those comments. She’d made this bed, and she needed to lie in it, despite her hatred of journalists. “Fine. Ask away.”

“What do you think Lucifer gets out of your partnership?” Reese asked immediately.

Chloe paused. She couldn’t see what was so significant about the question that he’d waited a full year just to ask it again.

“You already asked me that,” she reminded him, wondering if this was some sort of trick.

“Ah, but you never answered,” Reese replied, and Chloe pursed her lips, wondering what to say. She knew exactly what it was Lucifer got out of their partnership, and it wasn’t something she was about to tell a scheming reporter.

“Uhh, I think a long time ago someone wronged Lucifer. I think he avoided dealing with it, and he hides behind the partying, and the drinking, and who knows what else.” She settled for a summary of what she’d thought, before she’d learned the truth - it was accurate in a sense, after all. “And with the LAPD, working on each case, it gives him an opportunity to right those wrongs, to fight back.”

Reese chuckled, and Chloe felt a stab of anger, offended that he didn’t even seem to be listening. He kept looking over her shoulder. I swear, if he insisted on Lux because he’s looking for a hookup…
“You think that’s funny?”

Reese quickly directed his gaze to the table. “Uh, no, no. I’m sorry. I just think you give him more credit than he deserves.”

Chloe thought about the man she’d stood next to hours ago on the beach. The man throwing rocks at supersonic speeds because he felt like a monster for wanting to punish a corrupt cop who was guilty of child murder. Her stomach churned - the man in front of her wasn’t entitled to any of the truth about Lucifer, even the watered down version she’d given him.

“Maybe you don’t give him enough,” she retorted.

To her surprise, Reese folded quickly - or maybe that was just another tactic. “You may be right. Thanks, Detective.” He slid the comments towards her again, and she opened the folder, expecting at any moment for him to stop her and ask her more questions, but he didn’t, slumping back in his seat as she began to read. The comments were disturbing, as expected, but she didn’t see any mention of TruthDog21 despite it being what she’d specifically asked for. She looked up at Reese.

“These look… incomplete…”

A scream shattered the club’s ambience and Chloe whirled long before Lucifer called out.

“Chloe!”

He never used her name in public. She shot into motion, galvanized by the urgency in his tone, and was across the club and at his side in seconds, pushing through the crowd heedlessly. A glance at Lucifer showed that he wasn’t the one harmed, and she turned her attention to the woman at his feet, touching Lucifer’s arm briefly in support before checking the woman for vitals.

“She’s dead,” Chloe pronounced. There were assorted sounds of horror from the partygoers but Chloe’s focus was on Lucifer, whose face was in shadow, eyes as dark as she’d ever seen them.

“You okay?” she asked, for his ears alone, and he stared at her for a long moment, like he couldn’t comprehend why she would be asking, before nodding once, curtly. Chloe backed off, leaving him be as she cleared the scene, identifying witnesses and preparing for the arrival of emergency services. The woman’s friend was in hysterics, and out of the corner of her eye Chloe saw Lucifer offer his jacket wordlessly, draping it over her shoulders.

Ella arrived with the team and she immediately set to work analyzing the drinks at the table. The EMTs took the dead woman away and started treating her friend for shock while officers took witness statements. Lucifer’s face was still thunderous. Attempting to comfort him now would be a lost cause. She joined Ella instead.

“Yeah, you were right,” Ella confirmed as Chloe approached. “Looks like the same poison used by the serial killer you guys were after.”

“They did this under my own roof,” Lucifer spoke up unexpectedly. “My home.”

Chloe turned to look at him, her heart heavy. Lux was Lucifer’s sanctuary. He’d worked hard to make it a safe haven for LA’s masses. To have someone violate that…

Without meeting any of their eyes, Lucifer retreated to the elevator. Chloe let him go, silently promising she’d wrap up the casework as soon as she could so that she could follow him.

“How could the killer be here the exact same time we were?” Chloe asked, her voice faltering a bit.
She’d been sitting with her back to the room, off guard, because she’d considered Lux a safe space as well. She hadn’t been observing anything that was going on and the realization gutted her. “Must be something…” she mused. It couldn’t be a coincidence that a dormant serial killer would happen to strike Lux the same night she’d arranged a meeting with… “It must be you,” she said suddenly, looking at Reese.

The man froze. “What? What do you mean?” he asked, too quickly, and Chloe’s suspicions were piqued, though she reminded herself that he might still be in shock.

“He was here for you,” Chloe explained. “He must have figured out that you were gonna pass over information about him.” Though how the killer had figured it out was a more pertinent question. “I’m so sorry. I didn’t realize - I put you in danger. I put everyone in danger.”

Reese hastened to reassure her. “No, no, this is not your fault. There’s only one person who’s to blame for all this.”

Chloe nodded at the reminder - it was the killer who was responsible, no one else. She turned away to check on the collection of the witness statements and when she looked back Reese was gone.

She frowned. What was the hurry? She eyed the elevator - maybe he’d gone to talk to Lucifer? She hadn’t gotten the impression the two men were that close, and Lucifer had been giving off intense stay away vibes, but she wanted to check on Lucifer regardless so she headed up to the penthouse.

She heard raised voices as the elevator neared the top.

“No. You’re to blame.” That was Reese’s voice, and her fists clenched involuntarily. Those were absolutely the wrong words to say to Lucifer at any time, but especially now. She didn’t need some reporter up there exacerbating the situation.

“I am responsible for a lot of things, Reese, but not your soul, not your actions, and not whoever killed that poor girl downstairs.” Lucifer’s tone was measured, but anger simmered under the surface and Chloe knew this was dangerous. They were talking about souls, and Reese’s actions? What was going on?

“You have to be,” Reese stammered, as Chloe pushed her way through the opening doors. “Otherwise…”

“Reese, drop the knife!” Chloe ordered, drawing her gun as she surveyed the scene in front of her, fighting down a wave of sick fury at the sight of the reporter holding Lucifer at knifepoint.

Both men turned to face her but Lucifer was the first to recover, turning the full weight of his gaze on Reese.

“Hurting me isn’t really what you want to do, is it?” he intoned, anger abandoned in favour of silky, singular focus as he called on his power. Chloe held her gun steady, ready for anything. She hadn’t forgotten what had happened with Malcolm.

Reese cringed back against the bar, his grip on the knife faltering, but the point still held steady. “What are you doing to me?” he asked, still unable to look away from Lucifer’s eyes.

“Oh, you’re a complicated one, aren’t you, Reese?” Lucifer purred, sounding almost pleased. “Strong.” He stepped forward and Chloe wanted to call out, to stop him from moving closer to the weapon, but she didn’t dare break the spell. “Tell me; what do you truly desire?”

The hair on the back of Chloe’s neck stood up as she could practically feel him ramp up his mojo -
now that she knew what was really going on it was impossible not to be aware of it, even if it was just unease at the thought of something she would never experience yet could clearly see in action.

“I…” Reese stammered. “I just want Linda to love me.” Panting, he dropped the knife with a clatter on top of the bar, his resolve broken the way always seemed to happen when Lucifer released his power. Chloe lowered her gun slightly in surprise. Linda? Where had that come from?

Lucifer, however, was surprised for a different reason. “You’re still in love with your ex?” he asked disdainfully. “What about your wife?”

“She is my wife,” Reese replied. “She’ll always be my wife.”

“So, hold on,” Lucifer said. “That sleazy piece of garbage… That was me?” He chuckled as Reese nodded and Chloe was even more confused than before. “That was me!” Lucifer repeated, but his laughter held a sinister edge and Chloe didn’t like it at all.

“Hang on,” Chloe said sharply, and both men turned as though they’d forgotten she was there. “Why were you holding a knife on him, Reese? What’s going on?” She still didn’t holster her gun, not convinced the threat had passed.

“Oh, Reese and I were just having a bit of a misunderstanding, Detective. Not to worry,” Lucifer said, still with an edge underlying his pleasant tone. That and the use of her title failed to reassure Chloe in the slightest.

“The way she looks at you,” Reese said helplessly, and for a moment Chloe wasn’t sure if he was referring to her or to Linda.

“Mm?” Lucifer was clearly still trying to contain his humour.

“She cares for you,” Reese said. “How’d you do that?” The embers of anger in Chloe’s belly stoked back into a blaze at his disbelief, at the implication that it had been some trick. “How did you convince her that the Devil, of all people, was good?”

This was too much like the conversation with Amenadiel; the assumption that somehow Lucifer ought to be the last person to ever receive love and attention, just because people thought they knew who he was.

“Maybe he didn’t break into her house and threaten her with a knife, for one thing,” Chloe snapped. Her ire almost distracted her from the fact that apparently Reese somehow knew the truth about Lucifer. Reese had the grace to look abashed. But Lucifer answered slowly, as though he hadn’t heard.

“I don’t know,” he said, pondering. “I just showed her my true self.” He huffed a much more genuine laugh.

“But how could she accept you after that?” Reese still sounded baffled.

Chloe lowered her gun and deliberately stepped closer to Lucifer, loosely twining her fingers with his.

Lucifer looked down at their joined hands and then back to Reese, smiling. “Maybe she did, because of that,” he said, with a sort of pleased satisfaction, like he’d just figured it out for himself, and Chloe’s heart swelled with love and pride.

Reese looked more pensive than dubious, and Chloe hoped they’d maybe gotten through to him. If it
were up to her, she’d press charges, but she knew better than to think Lucifer would.

Reese blinked, looking around suddenly as if he hadn’t registered where he was before that moment. “I… should go,” he said, sounding uncertain.

“Yes, you should,” Lucifer agreed pleasantly, and Chloe let go of his hand as he escorted Reese to the elevator.

It all happened so fast. Chloe noticed that the knife was no longer on the bar and she spun, a warning on her lips, but it was too late. Lucifer let out a choked gasp that was like a death knell to her heart, and then he stumbled back, clutching his side. Chloe raised her gun, but the elevator doors were already closing.

“That was for Linda, you freak!” Reese cackled before his face was hidden from view, and Chloe realized he was truly insane.

Lucifer grunted, leaning against the bar and panting, and Chloe rushed over to him. She felt sick at the sight of bright red blood peeking through Lucifer’s fingers, knowing she was the cause, but luckily her training kicked in before she could freeze.

“Pressure on the wound,” she hissed, stripping off her jacket and balling it against his side. “Hold it there!” She didn’t look at his face because she knew she would lose it if she did. “I’m gonna go after Reese. Don’t move! You’ll be fine once I’m far enough away.” And oh, how that stung. It was the first time he’d gotten seriously hurt around her since she’d learned the truth and her instincts were screaming at her to stay and take care of him.

She made the mistake of meeting his eyes, which gazed back at her with a mixture of fondness and strain from his injury. “Chloe,” he said. The use of her name calmed her, grounded her slightly. “I’m fine, love. It’s just a flesh wound.”

Chloe rolled her eyes. “Are you seriously quoting Monty Python at me right now?”

“Never miss an opportunity,” he quipped, smiling slightly. “Besides, it’ll take a lot more than this to keep the Devil down, even in your delightful presence.”

“That’s great,” Chloe said, pressing both of his hands down with a significant look. “I’ll do you one better and fix it. I have to go after Reese.”

“We can go together, Detective. I’m fine,” Lucifer said, actually attempting to push himself up. Chloe leaned as much of her weight as she dared against the point of his wound and he inhaled sharply, sinking down again.

“Don’t be an idiot,” Chloe exclaimed. She didn’t have time for this. “I’m not letting you run around bleeding everywhere. Heal up and then you can come after me - trust me, you’re lucky I know how this works now and I’m not calling the EMTs up here.”

Lucifer gave her a long-suffering look, but he didn’t attempt to get up again. “Ah yes, your quaint fixation on getting me medical attention. I look forward to no longer being a drain on LA’s emergency services.”

Chloe just narrowed her eyes. “Well if you didn’t insist on sticking around…”

Unexpectedly, Lucifer’s eyes softened. “Nowhere else I’d rather be.”

Chloe’s heart flipped and she shook her head impatiently. He had no business being so romantic at a
“Idiot,” she repeated, more gently this time, pressing a kiss to his brow before she could catch herself. He was smirking as she pulled away. “Stay,” she instructed as she got in the elevator, pointing at him sternly. A memory struck her and she added, “good Devil,” just before the doors closed, trying to ignore the way his bark of laughter cut off in a groan.

Chloe used the ride down to drag her focus back to the case, tamping the urge that was still telling her she was going in the wrong direction. It killed her to leave him up there alone even though she knew it was the best thing to do. Once she got to the bottom she strode up to the officer in charge.

“Has anyone seen Reese Getty?”

The officer blinked, clearly thrown by her tone. “We let him go,” he said, and Chloe’s heart sank. “He’d already given his statement.”

“He just assaulted Lucifer with a knife,” she informed him shortly, watching his eyebrows shoot up. “Superficial wound, but I want a BOLO on him - I think he’s having an episode. He may be a danger to himself or others.”

“Right away, Detective.”

Chloe looked around for Ella but she’d already departed for her lab, so Chloe headed out the front doors, pulling out her phone and dialling Lucifer’s number. He picked up after a minute.

“Detective!” He sounded like his normal, chipper self; she’d never have known he was up in his penthouse with a knife wound. “Miss me already?”

Chloe smiled in spite of herself, keeping her tone businesslike. “Reese escaped, but I put out a BOLO. He won’t get far.”

“Fair enough, though I imagine you didn’t call just to tell me that,” Lucifer correctly surmised.

Chloe nodded. “You’re right - I thought we could finally do those tests.”

Lucifer hummed. “About how far away you have to be?” He sounded intrigued rather than dismissive.

“Yeah,” Chloe said. “I’m just leaving Lux now. Tell me when something changes.”

She walked, unable to get Reese's crazed face out of her mind's eye.

No, you're to blame. You have to be. Otherwise…

She still wasn't sure what the two had been referring to, but she didn't really need to be. Lucifer had said it himself.

To be blamed for every morsel of evil humanity's endured, every atrocity committed in my name?

The Devil had to be at fault, otherwise everyone would have to start taking responsibility for their own actions. Admit that they were to blame for their own wrongdoing. Convenient, then, to have a ready-made scapegoat.

Fury burned within her chest at the thought. How Lucifer lived with the knowledge that at any given time, someone, somewhere, was blaming him for something he had nothing to do with. Using him to avoid the consequences of their own free will. And only three humans in the whole world, to her
knowledge, who knew the truth.

No wonder he'd been so afraid of losing them.

They discovered that Lucifer stopped bleeding when Chloe was exactly forty-two yards away. Lucifer’s laugh had a bitter tinge.

“How very Douglas Adams,” he said. “Never let it be said dear old Dad doesn’t have a sense of humour.”

But Chloe had bigger concerns. “How long do you think it’ll take the wound to actually close?”

She could practically hear Lucifer’s shrug. “That, I don’t know,” he said. “It really was a minor cut, love.”

Chloe felt stranded, halfway down the block. “If I come back to get my car are you going to start bleeding again?” she asked.

“Well, if you wouldn’t mind staying put for just a moment… That’s if I’m allowed to move now?” he asked pointedly and Chloe huffed.

“Yes, that’s fine.”

The sounds of Lucifer rummaging around came down the line. “Now, if only I could remember where Linda stashed that… first aid kit…”

“Wash the wound first!” Chloe jumped in, feeling even more helpless stuck out here giving medical advice without being able to see what was going on. She was forced to assume that Lucifer didn’t know the first thing about first aid.

“Yes, all right.”

Chloe sighed at the fond irritation in his tone. He hung up and Chloe waited, biting her lip.

A short while later, her phone buzzed with a text. <Meet you downstairs.> She headed back to Lux, trying to shake the feeling that every step she took increased Lucifer’s pain.

Lucifer was waiting by her car when she got to the garage - he’d changed into a T-shirt and leather jacket. She hadn’t seen him wearing leather since the Players case and heat flooded through her at the unexpected sight. He smirked as though he knew what she was thinking despite the darkness hiding her reaction. Chloe folded her arms.

“Let me see, mister,” she said, keeping her voice firm. Without waiting for a response she lifted his shirt to inspect the wound. He’d actually done a decent job: the site was clean and she couldn’t see anything wrong with the bandage he’d applied, which didn’t stop her from running her fingers gently over it several times. After a moment Lucifer caught her hands.

“Chloe,” he said.

Chloe clenched her jaw, lowering her head to rest it against his shoulder. “I hate this,” she said fervently. Lucifer pulled back to meet her eyes.

“What, the leather? I just didn’t think another suit would be worth the effort…”

“Jerk,” she said, sniffing as she hit his shoulder. “I shouldn’t be something that can hurt you.”
“She says, hitting me,” Lucifer joked, and Chloe threw her arms around him, blinking back tears she knew were irrational. She knew he’d been hurt much worse than this. *She’d* hurt him worse than this. The thought didn’t make her feel any better.

“Chloe…” Lucifer’s arms came around her as he said her name again, his voice a low rumble in his chest. “I’m all right, love,” he reminded her. “I swear it.” Chloe nodded into his shoulder, trying to get her emotions under control. She wasn’t sure how she was supposed to deal with the fact that she made the Devil - this ancient, powerful being - mortal. That he was putting himself in danger every day just by being near her. That he thought it worth the price.

“Your Dad’s an asshole,” she grumbled.

Lucifer tilted her chin up gently, giving her a smile that was almost proud before pressing a firm kiss to her lips. He didn’t say the words, but Chloe heard them loud and clear. When they broke the kiss they were both breathing heavily.

“By the way? I dig the leather,” Chloe said, nudging him with her shoulder. Lucifer preened and she allowed him his moment before pulling back. “Come on, I want to head to the precinct so we can monitor the BOLO.” She went to get into the car, looking at him sternly over the hood. “And don’t think that we won’t be talking later about how Reese apparently figured out the truth about you.”

Lucifer made a moue of distaste as he slid in beside her. “Actually that part might be fairly simple to explain,” he said. “I may have inadvertently shown him my face, last year.”

“What?”

Lucifer was still frowning. “I didn’t know he’d seen it until recently. I suppose it must have been when I was in interrogation with the suspect. I didn’t realize Reese was still on the other side of the mirror.”

And then, a year later, she’d pulled Lucifer back into Reese’s orbit. Chloe bit the inside of her cheek. No wonder Reese had gone off the deep end.

They pulled out of the parking garage, and Chloe’s phone rang almost immediately, robbing her of the opportunity to pursue the conversation further.

“It’s Linda,” she said in surprise. “Would you mind getting that?”

He did; since Chloe wasn’t possessed of Lucifer’s supernatural hearing she had to make do with his half of the conversation.

“Doctor? It’s Lucifer…” He broke off and his expression turned sharp. “Where are you? Are you hurt?” His face grew more stony as he listened. “Go home, doctor. We’re on our way.”

“What happened?” Chloe asked as soon as he hung up.

“Reese showed up at her office,” Lucifer explained. “There was an… altercation.”

Chloe gaped. “Is she okay?”

“She says she’s fine. Reese told her to tell us he was going to his office. He wants to turn himself in.”

Chloe nodded curtly and threw them into a turn, changing direction toward the Telegraph, already radioing for backup.
When they arrived, the building was dark and deserted, but the front entrance was open.

“Reese was telling the truth,” Lucifer murmured, as he nudged the door wider. Chloe drew her gun and entered ahead of him. Reese might still be armed and he was definitely unstable.

They heard raised voices down the hall and Chloe walked faster. She caught sight of a man fleeing the scene and tackled him to the ground.

“Stay down!” she ordered, pressing her knee into the man’s back as he continued to struggle. As she tightened the cuffs behind him, she recognized him as having been at Lux that night. She’d seen him in the crowd as she entered. He’d stuck out because he was very much the opposite of Lux’s usual clientele.

Backup arrived while Chloe was reading the man his rights, and she let them take over, looking around for Lucifer. He was crouching over a prone figure. As Chloe drew nearer she saw it was Reese. She opened her mouth, about to call out, when she realized she’d seen Lucifer doing that before, at other crime scenes. He’d done it with Malcolm. It never failed to give her a chill. She couldn’t shake the image of a giant raven, looming like an omen. It only took a glance to confirm that Reese was dead.

“Is he… going to Hell?” Chloe found that asking Lucifer’s back was much easier; she could have never said it to his face.

Lucifer rose gracefully, turning to face her. “What?”

“He’s dead.” Chloe holstered her gun. Lucifer nodded.

“Yes. He drank poison.” Lucifer indicated a mug that smelled like it was full of vodka. His voice was deeper, with a matter of fact quality that made Chloe suppress a shiver. “Why would you ask me where he was going?”

Chloe didn’t know why the question made her apprehensive. “You were doing… that thing,” she said awkwardly.

Lucifer inclined his head, still looking more avian than human. “What thing?” He sounded mildly curious but Chloe was embarrassed now and wished she’d never said anything.

“Crouching,” she said at last. “You don’t do it all the time and I suddenly wondered if it was for… special occasions.”

Lucifer’s brow furrowed. “Huh. I didn’t realize.” At least he didn’t sound bothered by her observation. “I’d imagine he’s going to Hell. He has a lot to feel guilty for.”

Chloe surprised herself by feeling sorry for Reese. She’d barely known the man, and from the looks of things, he’d been a lot more involved than she’d realized. In fact…

“What’s all this?” she asked, looking at the whiteboards taking up three walls of Reese’s office. The words **DEVIL = VULNERABLE** were prominently legible under the title PROOF. The office was a disaster with papers strewn everywhere, but there were some still stuck to the boards. With a jolt, she recognized herself in a picture that had been taken without her knowledge. Closer inspection revealed many more pictures of everyone connected to Lucifer. Her stomach gave a sick lurch when she saw Trixie’s name.

“What did he get all this?” she asked again, with growing horror. It was uncomfortably similar to something she herself would have done, if she’d been serious about uncovering the truth about
“Quite impressive indeed,” Lucifer commented, sounding sincere. “I didn’t know Reese had it in him.”

Chloe stilled, having caught sight of something else. “Your… your marriage license,” she said quietly, pointing. It was ridiculous, she told herself; she was over it, she’d seen the ring with her own eyes, she’d known it was real. But somehow seeing both their names on the dotted line - *Lucifer Morningstar and Candace Fletcher* - brought it home to her in a way she hadn’t expected.

She felt Lucifer come up behind her. Calmly, he plucked the page from the wall and tore it in two, tossing both pieces to the floor. Chloe stared at him.

“Lucifer!” she exclaimed. “You can’t do that; that’s evidence!”

But Lucifer ignored her, as usual. He hummed as he surveyed the room. “Incredible. Even after seeing my face, he spent all his time doing this, only to end up shooting me.” He sounded distasteful.

Chloe whirled to face him, distracted from his mistreatment of a crime scene. “What?”

Lucifer waved vaguely in the air as though to dismiss the subject. “Oh, he showed up at my session ranting about how he was going to prove to Linda that I was the Devil. Then he shot me before either of us could explain.”

Chloe’s heart dropped out of her chest. “Lucifer.” She gripped his arms, forcing him to face her. “When were you going to tell me about this?”

“When it came up,” Lucifer replied. “So…” He indicated the situation in general.

“Ohh, no.” Chloe shook her head. “No, you don’t get to decide what I know, remember?”

“Detective…” Lucifer sighed. “You were nowhere nearby. I wasn’t in danger. Maze phoned immediately afterwards and it slipped my mind. Truly. I wasn’t intending to keep it from you.”

Chloe exhaled heavily through her nose. Something clicked in her mind. She remembered how distracted Reese had been at the meetup, how he’d kept looking over her shoulder. At Lucifer, she now realized.

“Wait.” She looked at the board again. *DEVIL = VULNERABLE*, it read. “He knew,” she said faintly. Lucifer blinked. “He knew that I make you vulnerable. *That’s* why he wanted to meet at Lux. He wanted to kill you. The poison that killed that girl. It was intended for you!” It felt like a cold fist was clenching around her chest, making it impossible to breathe. The poison had acted so fast; they would have had no time for her to get out of range. The plan had nearly succeeded.

She didn’t notice she’d been backing away until her head hit the wall. She clenched her fists. Lucifer was looking after her in concern.

“Detective…” he began, but Chloe shook her head again.

She realized she didn’t want to hear anything he had to say.

“Soon,” she said. “We’re going to talk about this and what was going on because there’s clearly a lot that I didn’t know about. But right now… I need to be away from you.” Lucifer’s face shuttered, and she cringed inwardly, but stood her ground. “Just for a little while. It’s just… too much. I’m sorry.” She fled the room before she could reconsider, too afraid to look back and see the expression on
Lucifer’s face.
Resolution to the angst, as promised! Title of this chapter comes from Linkin Park, specifically the Reanimation version.

They brought in the man she’d tackled, Kipinski, who willingly confessed. He gave them everything: how he’d committed the string of murders the previous year and stopped when he’d gone back on his meds, until Reese had approached him with the goal of killing Lucifer. How he’d slipped the poison into Lucifer’s drink, but changed his mind when Lucifer had introduced him to his two friends. Lucifer’s honesty and kindness had made him realize Reese had lied. He’d switched their drinks, but he’d never intended anyone else to get hurt. He seemed genuinely remorseful about the young woman’s death.

“Lucifer wasn’t a fraud,” Kipinski repeated. “She wasn’t a fraud. He was the fraud.”

He’d snuck into Reese’s office, slipped the poison into his drink. He was intending to disappear again, to stay on his meds, only he’d gotten caught. “It’s for the best,” he said. “I don’t want to hurt anyone ever again.”

“And what about Reese?” Chloe asked. Her voice was rough from the long night. “How did he get all that intel on Lucifer?”

Kipinski shook his head, his eyes wide and guileless. “Oh, I don’t know anything about that,” he said, sounding disappointed that he didn’t know the answer. “He only contacted me afterwards.”

Chloe rubbed at her eyes. “And what about Rosalie Nuñez?” she asked. “You left her out of your statement.”

Kipinski blinked. “I’m sorry, Detective, I’ve never heard that name before.”

“She was found dead in her apartment with the word fraud pinned up all around her. You hate frauds, don’t you?”

He nodded. “More than anything. But I didn’t harm that woman, Detective. Like I said, I’m back on my meds now.”

Chloe sighed. “Can you account for your whereabouts between seven and nine this morning?”

“I had an early appointment with my psychiatrist. I was at the office all morning.”

Chloe flipped the case file shut. “No further questions.”

After Kipinski was led away, Chloe leaned back in her chair. They’d have to confirm his alibi but her gut told her he was telling the truth. He wasn’t responsible for Nuñez’s death. Maybe Lucifer was right, maybe it was the Sinnerman after all.

She winced when she thought of Lucifer. He’d let her go and hadn’t tried to contact her, and she
wasn’t sure if that was better or worse than if he’d attempted to protest her verdict. She didn’t know what words would break the ice. She just couldn’t stand the thought of being near him right now - it made her heart pound with anxiety. They’d been too damn close. As much as she wanted to tease Lucifer that his kindness - which he claimed didn’t exist - had ended up saving his life, it could just as easily not have. Lucifer might not have noticed Kipinski or decided to befriend him. Kipinski might not have changed his mind.

Chloe shivered, even though the room was sweltering. They’d closed two cases today: the Rivers case and Kipinski’s, put away a corrupt lieutenant and a serial killer, but Chloe just felt empty. They were still no closer to a lead on the Nuñez case. And Chloe didn’t know how she would be able to stand being within forty-two yards of Lucifer ever again. She thought back to their afternoon on the beach, how Lucifer had smiled at her, how they’d hugged, the three of them.

Family. Was that too much to hope for?

But the thought of family reminded her of what Reese had said, how Linda was his ex-wife. She’d likely been informed of his death by now.

Making a decision, she still hesitated before texting Lucifer, but swallowed her pride, knowing he deserved to hear the news.

<Kipinski put away. No leads on Nuñez. Gonna go see Linda.>

No response was immediately forthcoming, and her movements were slow and despondent as she packed up to leave. It had been a very, very long day.

She caught Ella on her way out the door. “Ella?”

“Hey Chlo, is everything okay?” The lab tech was still impossibly perky. Chloe envied her. She sighed, her silent phone a lead weight in her pocket.

“I’m really sorry for the short notice, but could I ask you to watch Trixie tonight? I’m gonna go see Linda, make sure she’s okay.”

Ella’s eyes widened. “Oh my God, absolutely! Don’t you worry about a thing, babe, I’ve been missing the little munchkin!” She wrapped Chloe in a tight hug. “Tell Linda I said hi, okay?”

Chloe nodded. “Sure. Thank you so much, Ella.” It wasn’t the first time Ella and Trixie had had a “sleepover” but Chloe was still immensely grateful to her friend for accepting so readily.

“Don’t even mention it. Honestly feels like you’re doing me a favour.” Ella waved cheerily as she practically skipped out of the room, and Chloe shook her head, wondering what she’d done to deserve a friend like Ella.

Chloe called the babysitter to inform her of the evening’s plan, and was nearly out to her car before she got a text from Lucifer. She nearly dropped her phone in her eagerness to read it.

<Goodnight, Detective.>

So she wasn’t Chloe tonight. She swallowed past the lump in her throat. At least it was something.

*|

When Linda opened her door, her eyes were red-rimmed from crying. She blinked to see Chloe on her doorstep.
“Hey, Linda,” Chloe said. “If you’d rather be alone, I understand. I’ll go. But…” She held out the bottle of wine she’d quickly bought on her way over. “I thought you could use some company.”

Linda nodded slowly at first, then more quickly, opening the door wide and drawing Chloe in for a tight hug.

“It’s ok,” Chloe murmured in response to Linda’s tearful apologies for her tearfulness. “That’s what Tribe is for.”

She ended up staying the night; they finished the bottle together as they shouted at trash TV, and despite her best efforts, Chloe fell asleep.

She woke to morning sun streaming through the window, briefly disoriented at the unfamiliar surroundings. She heard the quiet sounds of puttering from the kitchen. Linda had tucked a blanket around her at some point. Chloe yawned, holding her head, which felt fuzzy from lack of sleep and hangover alike. The juxtaposition with the previous morning, when Lucifer had awakened her with warm caresses and kisses, only made her feel worse; even more so when she checked her phone and saw that there were no messages from him, though she didn’t have reason to expect any. With a sigh, she pocketed her phone and shuffled in search of the scent of coffee.

“Ah, Chloe, you’re awake!” Linda said as she emerged, standing on tiptoes to take a mug down from the cabinets.

Chloe stretched and yawned again. “Mm. Sorry for falling asleep.”

Linda shook her head. “Not at all, Chloe, not at all. Thank you for being here.” Linda, by contrast, didn’t look like she’d slept at all; she was vibrating with a frenetic energy that exhausted Chloe just watching her.

She accepted the coffee Linda offered with a grateful smile. “How are you feeling?” she asked, knowing as soon as she said it that it was a stupid question.

Linda paused in her movements - she was currently scouring the stove within an inch of its life. “I don’t know,” she admitted. “He was my ex-husband for a reason, and the things he did and said since he came back were… erratic.” Chloe’s eyes flicked to the bandage on Linda’s forehead. “But I didn’t want him to die.”

“Oh course not,” Chloe said soothingly, placing a hand on Linda’s shoulder. Linda gave her an unconvincing smile and went back to scrubbing the stove, and Chloe knew she’d outstayed her welcome. Bracing herself, she texted Lucifer.

<Good morning. I want to talk about what happened. Is that ok?>

She worked on finishing her coffee as she waited for a response. She jumped when her phone sounded, nearly spilling coffee all over herself, but it was only Ella, telling her she’d gotten Trixie off to school and she was headed home. She quickly tapped out a response.

<I owe you big time, babe, thank you so much.>

Ella’s response was nearly instantaneous. <Right back atcha Chlo, we had a great time. See you at work!>

Linda noticed the exchange. “Is everything okay, Chloe?”

She nodded, sipping the last of her coffee. “Ella says hi.”
Linda gave her a searching look. “You’re disappointed?”

Chloe shook her head. “No! Not about that.” She couldn’t help eyeing her now-silent phone.

“Something with Lucifer?” Linda asked shrewdly. Chloe set down her empty mug with another sigh.

“It’s fine. I didn’t come here to burden you with my problems.”

Linda sat down across from her. “Trust me. Right now I could do with focusing on someone else’s problems. Especially two people I care about. What happened, Chloe?”

Chloe explained the situation from the previous night while skirting Reese’s involvement in both incidents. “He nearly died yesterday,” she finished. “He has died, just because I was nearby. And he doesn’t seem to understand why that’s a problem for me!”

Linda nodded in understanding. “Yes; Lucifer has an immortal’s sense of preservation mixed with, it must be said, an obsession with keeping you safe.”

Chloe willed away tears. “But what about keeping him safe?”

Linda smiled sadly, taking her hand over the table. “I know it can be challenging, caring for… well, caring for Lucifer. I know I’ve certainly despaired of it from time to time. Lucifer just needs time to come to terms with the fact that he has people now who care about what happens to him. He has many reasons for behaving the way he does. But I don’t think that’s the real issue, here. Lucifer is just as safe as any human while he’s around you - more, in fact, given his enhanced abilities. It’s easy to feel responsible - I can’t image what you must be going through right now. But I do know this is something you need to work through together. You just have to talk to him.”

“What if he doesn’t want to talk?” Chloe asked, eyeing her phone again. “I really screwed things up last night.” Linda squeezed her hand.

“You had a very understandable reaction to an extreme scenario,” she said in a reassuring tone. “Do you think he’s gone through all those dangerous situations, trusted you with the truth about himself, only to ignore an olive branch when you hold it out?” She shook her head. “He wants to see you as much as you want to see him. I guarantee it.”

As if on cue, her phone buzzed. Chloe snatched it up; it was Lucifer.

<Very well.>

Linda arched an eyebrow, as if to say, told you so. “Go sort things out with Lucifer, Chloe. I’m not going to be good company today. Thank you so much for being here, though.”

“Hey,” Chloe said, accepting Linda’s embrace. “That’s what friends are for, right?” Linda nodded, and Chloe left her to it.

Chloe could hear the piano before the elevator doors opened and her heart clenched. She didn’t recognize the piece; it was something classical, and it sounded very complicated… angry. Her stomach was already tight, try as she might to stop thinking about the exact moment she crossed the threshold that rendered Lucifer vulnerable again. She’d worked herself up so much that her breath whooshed out of her when the elevator arrived and she saw him, dressed in a simple shirt and slacks, bent over the piano, and she even flinched when he hit a discordant note, spinning on the bench to face her. He looked exactly how she felt.

“Chloe…” he said.
After the profusion of notes, the silence was deafening.

Chloe forced herself to breathe. She’d spent so much time envisioning worst-case scenarios; she needed to remind herself that Lucifer was sitting in front of her, very much unharmed. He was watching her the way a condemned man might regard his executioner.

“Lucifer.” She breathed out, hesitating a moment longer (you make him weak, you make him bleed, you make him die). Then she rushed to embrace him.

“I’m sorry for freaking out,” she said, tightening her arms around his middle when he didn’t immediately return the hug. She pressed her ear to his chest to hear his heartbeat. “I’m sorry for leaving. I was just so scared. I didn’t know what to do.”

Finally, his arms came around her, but hesitantly, like he was expecting her to pull away at any moment. “Why were you afraid, Chloe?” He sounded baffled, still half anxious. She couldn’t understand why he sounded unsure.

“Because you could have died!” Chloe exclaimed, her voice raw as she did pull away, needing space for her fear and hurt to unfurl. Lucifer’s eyes were dark and glittering as he watched her. “Because someone found out I was your weakness and used me to get to you. Used me against you. Do you have any idea how that feels?” She wiped impatiently at the tears she didn’t want to acknowledge. “If a fucking serial killer hadn’t decided to change his mind at the last second, you would have died of poisoning while I sat there, feet away, clueless.” She was panting like she’d just run a marathon and she still couldn’t get enough air…

“Chloe.” Lucifer’s voice cut through the fog surrounding her, his hands engulfing the sides of her head. “Look at me. Breathe. Just breathe.”

He took a deep breath in as if to demonstrate. It took a few tries, but Chloe was finally able to match his rhythm as Lucifer held her eyes with his, breathing evenly in and out. As the sharp, stabbing pain in her chest receded, so did the image of Lucifer lying on his back staring blankly at the ceiling. The real Lucifer’s eyes bored into hers, filled with concern, his hands were warm and gentle on her face, and Chloe could breathe again.

She closed her eyes, the spice and whiskey scent of him filling her nose, trying to take in as much of it as possible. He was here. He was fine. They were safe.

“Chloe, look at me,” Lucifer repeated, his voice low and very serious. Chloe slowly opened her eyes, feeling a shift. In the instant before her eyes focussed, Lucifer’s wings manifested, the left one draping over the piano before he drew both in to surround them, surround her, with light and grace. Chloe sighed as she relaxed - it was impossible to feel anything other than peace when enveloped by a scintillating curtain of feathers. She thought she should be angry, like he was employing underhanded tactics, but it was such a relief she couldn’t bring herself to care. Her head naturally came to rest on his shoulder, and Lucifer stroked her hair.

“I want you to remember something very important,” he said. “Though your presence may render me mortal, I am far from human. I was the Lord of Hell. I will find a way to return to you. I give you my word.”

Chloe nodded, wordless. The anxiety that would have usually been churning in her gut, wondering what might prevent him from keeping his word, and how long it would take, was conspicuously absent. His wings really were fighting dirty. “How?” she asked. “Last time, you said…”

“The previous two times I made an enforced sojourn downstairs, I had outside help to escape.
Though I might not have the benefit of that in future, I still have a few tricks up my sleeve.” His grip tightened briefly. “There is nothing, in any plane of existence, that could keep me from returning to you.”

“That and your wings making it so I can’t feel anything otherwise,” Chloe said, meaning to sound sharp but coming out impressed instead. Lucifer had the grace to look embarrassed.

“Ah, yes. I’d forgotten. Apologies.” The wings vanished, and Chloe felt the world start turning again.

“It’s fine,” Chloe said, patting his arm. “I needed that. Thank you.”

Lucifer still looked worried. The expression didn’t suit his face. “So… are you going to leave?”

“Of course not!” Chloe exclaimed. “Lucifer. Is that what you thought?”

Lucifer was suddenly not looking at her. “You said… it was too much. Being around me.”

For a little while, I said.” Chloe felt sick at the thought of him stewing over that all night, but she also felt stirrings of frustration. She shouldn’t have to feel this guilty every time she needed space. “I love you, okay? I’m not going anywhere. If I say a little while, I mean a little while.” She pressed her lips to his, intending to bestow a chaste kiss of reassurance, but Lucifer had other ideas, clinging to her and deepening the kiss with an edge of desperation.

Chloe felt another shiver of unease. She’d been as clear as she’d been able, distracted by her own emotional crisis, and Lucifer had still misinterpreted. They had to head this off before one or both of them lost it. She hated that her immediate instinct was to ask Linda - right now the doctor had her own problems.

Chloe kept kissing him until the edge of desperation blunted - she’d missed him too, the forced distance feeling unnatural. It didn’t take long for the kiss to delve into deeper, passionate territory, and Chloe called upon her reserves of willpower, pulling back. Lucifer released her immediately, even though she hadn’t been able to move far enough in his grasp to actually break the kiss. She touched a finger to his lips, more as a reminder to herself not to dive back in again rather than as a restraint for him.

“I still want to talk about this, okay?”

He nodded after a moment and moved back, let her get some space.

“I know that your word is your bond.”

Lucifer nodded again, his eyes dark. They kept flicking to her lips.

“But,” Chloe said, in what she hoped was a quelling tone, “that doesn’t mean I want anything to happen to you.” It was their plan to assault Heaven all over again - she’d be left behind, wondering how long she should wait, whether or not he would ever succeed.

“Well, of course not,” Lucifer said. “It’s not as though I’m fond of the idea either. But that’s for me to worry about. It certainly doesn’t warrant this level of self-flagellation. Especially from you.”

“Easy for you to say,” Chloe muttered. “You’re not the one who’s walking kryptonite.”

Lucifer laughed at her choice of words, then sobered. “I truly don’t understand why it bothers you so much,” he admitted. “It’s not like you’re tying yourself into knots worrying about Daniel, and he’s in
just as much danger around you as I am.”

Chloe frowned. “First, I do worry about Dan, the same way I do everyone I care about.” She softened her words with a kiss on his cheek, unable to keep her distance from him. “But mostly, it’s because Dan isn’t naturally bulletproof when he’s not around me,” she said, a bit more pointedly. *And because he doesn’t take every possible opportunity to leap into danger,* she thought, but knew better than to say it. This wasn’t supposed to be about blaming Lucifer.

Lucifer still didn’t look like he fully understood, and Chloe’s eyes narrowed, wondering if he was really this clueless or if he was being deliberately obtuse. As always with him, it was a toss up.

“Okay, look at it this way,” she said. “Imagine if I were immortal.”

A maw of intense yearning opened in Lucifer’s eyes and Chloe knew that it had been as unexpected for him as it was for her - because Lucifer would have taken steps to hide it otherwise. She squeezed his hands tightly and elected to move on rather than get bogged down, furious at her own insensitivity. She just wanted to make him understand. “What if I couldn’t die, except being around you made me killable?”

She saw the fear then, the instinct to wrap her up and never let her go warring with the need to be far away and leave her in safety. He flexed his shoulders, like his wings were trying to surface again.

She nodded. “Exactly.”

“Well, that’s just ridiculous,” Lucifer said. “Who in their right mind would *choose* being around me?”

Chloe’s heart fractured as she gave him a significant look, willing him to get it.

Lucifer stared at her flatly. “That’s different.”

“How?” Chloe demanded.

“I’m the Devil,” Lucifer said, incredulous. “Why would you sacrifice your personal safety to be around me? That doesn’t make any sense.”

“I’m just an ordinary human,” Chloe countered softly. “How does that make any more sense?”

Lucifer paused, pressing his forehead to hers. “You are so much more than that, Chloe,” he breathed. Chloe carded her hands in his hair, holding him to her.

“So are you,” she told him.

Lucifer huffed a laugh. It wasn’t a sound that said he entirely believed her, more that he accepted that they’d reached an impasse.

“It feels selfish,” Chloe said. “I shouldn’t prioritize my wants over your safety.”

“It’s hardly selfish if we want the same thing, love,” Lucifer said gently. “And I… don’t desire to be apart from you.” He hummed. “Besides, speaking of Daniel, if you listen to him apparently you’ve been encountering much more dangerous situations since we’ve started working together, so who’s putting whom in danger?” He kept his voice light, but Chloe frowned.

“Dan said that?” She hadn’t really thought about it. Life just… happened, but looking back on it now she could see what he meant. She’d had some crazy stuff happen to her on the force before she’d met Lucifer but it was certainly less frequent. “I guess it’s not really helpful to think that way, is it?”
Lucifer nodded. “I’m reminded of something some very wise, very high college girls told me: that you know it’s real when you’re better together than apart. Two halves of a whole.” Chloe stared at him, tears gathering once more, this time for a very different reason, as her heart swelled to aching with love. “Or, in our case, two wholes that add up to more than the sum of their parts.” His brow furrowed. “I’m going to stop saying ‘whole’, now.”

Chloe gave a watery laugh. “I love you.”

Lucifer’s eyes softened even further. “And I you.”

Chloe pulled him in for a kiss, relief flooding through her. She tapped his chest as they parted.

“Though, for future reference?” she said. “When we’re planning a meet up with a guy who shot at you? That’s the best time to mention it.”

Lucifer smirked. “Duly noted,” he said. Chloe pressed another kiss to his cheek before getting up.

“Now, I’m going to get a coffee,” she said. “And you are going to explain everything that I missed yesterday, starting with why Linda’s ex-husband was trying to kill you.”

The piano started up again as she walked away, but instead of the angry-sounding piece from earlier, the song Lucifer chose was something softer, more fluid.

Chloe smiled.

Chapter End Notes

The piece Lucifer was playing when Chloe came in, I think of as the cadenza from Rachmaninoff’s 1st concerto, and the second piece is Yiruma’s “River Flows in You”, but you can of course substitute whichever pieces you prefer! Let me know in the comments!
“Mm, this is a new one on me, Detective.” Lucifer’s voice was a low rumble in his chest. Chloe hummed.

“Well, there’s a first time for everything.”

The fire burned bright as they lay together on the rug before it, their shoes discarded on the stairs.

“Yes, but I’ve heard it can take hours,” Lucifer purred. “I’m not sure even I have the endurance for that.” Chloe knocked her bare feet against his leg as she laughed.

“Don’t worry,” Trixie piped up. “I’ll help you.” Chloe placed her lollipop in her mouth, casting a teasing sideways glance at Lucifer, who was studying the Monopoly board with single-minded intensity, like he expected there to be a test later. Trixie reached across the board to grab a piece. “I’ll be the top hat.”

Chloe selected hers. “I’ll be the race car, because I’m going to leave you both in the dust.” She gestured with her lollipop. As she placed her car on the starting square, she subtly gave her arm a sharp pinch. She wasn’t sure how it had happened. It was game night, but most board games weren’t much fun with just two, so they’d just broken out Trixie’s face painting kit when Lucifer had arrived.

Chloe had to admit to surprise - he’d spent the day running logistics for Lux since Maze still hadn’t returned to do them. Chloe still had Trixie to take care of, having insisted Dan continue his vacation, so she’d told Lucifer not to worry, to take as long as he needed to since they didn’t have any exciting plans that evening. Though she would have, of course, preferred for him to spend every night with them, she still worried sometimes about making too many demands on his time; relics of the past when she’d thought him no more complicated than a billionaire playboy who loved to party.

She’d reconsidered that opinion when he’d shown up at her door, with an expression on his face like he still doubted his welcome, even after so long. The fact that he’d felt the need to justify his presence with chocolate covered strawberries, of all things, twisted her heart, and she knew they’d need to have a talk soon about how he was enough for his own sake.

For the time being, however, she’d accepted the gift as though it were a perfectly normal thing to bring to a board game night with your partner’s child, and drawn Lucifer in for a kiss which Trixie had proclaimed “gross” from her perch on the coffee table. Lucifer had broken the kiss, taken one look at the crown, which Chloe had just finished painting on Trixie’s forehead, and had made a small stifled sound that might have been a snort.

Chloe had given him a hard look. “Oh, and I suppose you could have done better.”
Lucifer had arched an eyebrow. “I most certainly could,” he’d said, with mock offense.

Chloe had shot him a wicked grin, walking over to seat herself primly on the couch. “Prove it.”

Which was how she’d found herself sitting facing Lucifer, his legs bracketing hers, his beautiful face solemn in concentration as he graced her brow with a crown of flowers.

Her bravado had vanished with his nearness, her heart pounding as the soft strokes of the brush and the warmth of the fire had lulled her into a dreamlike state, which still had not abated. It had been a shock when Lucifer finished, standing to replace the paintbrush and dusting off his hands. He’d lain a kiss on the top of her head before retreating to set out the strawberries. “Puts Persephone to shame,” he’d murmured, and her breath had stuttered. She’d recognized the power in that statement, the significance of him even considering the words as applying to her. Her awe made her a little fuzzy on the details of how the two of them had ended up on the floor together, while she and Trixie had explained the rules of Monopoly to the Devil.

Who was currently laughing as he looked over the remaining pieces. “Very funny,” he groused. “Uh, wheelbarrow, shoe, ah! Guess I’ll have to be the shot glass. Cheers.”

Chloe couldn’t resist ribbing him a little bit. “Oh, that’s a thimble,” she said, setting the thimble right way up. It was such a Lucifer thing, to look down upon the assortment of mundane implements.


“So then be the shoe,” Trixie suggested.

Lucifer scoffed. “Please, I am not a shoe. Clearly I’m a top hat, so come on; hand it over.” He made an imperious gesture. Chloe just watched as the Devil learned the most important rule of game night: never negotiate with a nine-year-old.

“You want it?” Trixie asked innocently, holding up the piece in question. “It’s gonna cost you.”

Lucifer was delighted. “Name your price, urchin.” He stuck his own lollipop in his mouth as he got his pile of money ready - Chloe supposed she should be grateful he hadn’t reached for the real thing.

Trixie raised her eyebrows. “Oh, I’m not talking fake money,” she said, and Chloe couldn’t help a laugh from escaping.

“Wow, she slammed you,” she said, as Lucifer looked up at her with those big brown eyes - he should have been the scottie dog - the stick of the lollipop sticking out of his mouth. He was so adorable that her heart swelled to aching. She couldn’t believe she got to have this. She smirked at him as she got up to avoid kissing him senseless in front of Trixie, going instead to retrieve their wine glasses.

“Very well, then what do you want?” Lucifer asked grudgingly. Chloe was prepared to intervene in case her opportunistic little monkey asked for anything outrageous, but instead she watched a shrewd expression cross her daughter’s face as she returned to the board, an expression that didn’t bode well for anyone, including Satan himself.

“I want you to match,” Trixie declared, gesturing to her face to make sure Lucifer got it.

Lucifer reared up in affront. “Absolutely not.”

Trixie gave a careless shrug. “Hope you like being the shoe.”
Lucifer glowered, but Trixie was unmoved. Eventually, his pride won out and he reached, not for the shoe, but the dog. “Fine. At least I can pretend this is a ferocious Hellhound.”

Chloe blinked. “Wait. Those are a real thing?”

Lucifer looked blandly at her. “Of course they are, darling. Who else would I entrust with sentry duty?”

Trixie, predictably, was ecstatic. Chloe’s mouth was open to ask another question - why would you need sentries if no one ever escaped? - but her daughter’s eyes lit up.

“Puppies!” she squealed. Chloe winced. Trixie’s next question came with the inevitability of the tide. “Please, can we get one?”

“No, we are not getting a Hellhound,” Chloe said, because this was what her life had become.

“Why not?” was the expected follow up.

Chloe sighed. “For lots of reasons! How are we going to keep a Hellhound a secret? People will start asking questions.”

“Actually,” Lucifer said as he took a sip of his wine, “Hellhounds are capable of camouflage just like me and Maze. On Earth they’d resemble dogs… provided no one looked too closely.” He grinned, showing all his teeth.

Chloe glared at as Trixie bounced in place. “Please, Mommy? Please?”

“No!” Chloe exclaimed. “I work too much, monkey - who would take care of it when you’re at your dad’s? You know Daddy’s allergic.”

“Hellhounds are hypoallergenic,” Lucifer commented blandly, then had the audacity to look wounded when Chloe kicked him. “What?”

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“Not. Helping,” Chloe gritted out, as Trixie frowned.

“What’s hyper… hypo…”


Trixie’s face dissolved into pleading again, but Chloe spoke before her daughter could escalate her begging.

“No, that’s it. I’m putting my foot down,” she said firmly. “Daddy doesn’t know about all this stuff and he’d be spending enough time around it to notice,” she said. “Plus, Lucifer would have to go back to Hell to get one and I’m sure he doesn’t want to do that, right?” She shot Lucifer a look that clearly stated or else.

Lucifer blinked in surprise, clearing his throat. “Well… yes, that’s true. I have no particular desire to go to Hell…”

“So, that’s settled,” Chloe said briskly, cutting him off before he could qualify his statement with anything that would encourage Trixie further. “Why don’t we just play the game?”

Trixie’s downcast look perked up at the reminder of the prospect of Monopoly domination and Lucifer seemed likewise galvanized.
The game did not take hours. In fact, it barely took one, and the reason required all of Chloe’s willpower to keep a straight face.

Lucifer was… incapable of playing Monopoly strategically. In hindsight, Chloe supposed, she should have expected this. He already treated real money like it was pretend; it made sense that he would treat play money the same. Chloe actually had to step in to stop him from blowing all his money on his first property bid (which Trixie would have, of course, gleefully allowed him to do). Eventually, though, she had to sit back and just let him play the game, but even after tempering his rashier impulses, one too many chance cards later he was completely bankrupt.

Chloe bit her lip to keep from laughing as Lucifer blinked balefully down at the board, finally forced to process the concept that money was a finite resource and he’d run out. She could have sworn she’d seen his hand twitch in the direction of an inside pocket where he doubtless kept the GDP of a small island nation, and she gently put a hand on his arm to keep matters from escalating.

“It’s okay, Lucifer. You’ll get better with practice, yeah?” She hoped it wasn’t too presumptuous of her to anticipate a repeat performance. “Now, usually we play with house rules that if one person goes bankrupt the game ends, but why don’t you watch us play a few more turns?”

Lucifer just nodded, still looking baffled. He watched with knitted brow as Chloe and Trixie continued to play, drank wine and ate strawberries, and by the time the game ended (Chloe managing to eke out a victory despite the distraction of Lucifer’s nearness) he had regained enough equilibrium to lean over and press a lazy kiss to her cheek.

“Congratulations, my love,” he murmured, and Chloe’s chest warmed at the endearment. “Are there any other house rules I should be made aware of?”

Chloe smirked. He’d walked right into that one. “Well, traditionally, the loser does one thing the winner tells them to do.”

Lucifer’s eyes darkened, and Chloe felt a corresponding swoop in her belly. “Will you claim a forfeit of me, then?” She leaned in close, conscious of Trixie’s continued presence.

“I want you to match,” she said. Lucifer stared, thrown by her declaration. “You’re getting your face painted.”

Trixie squealed and dove for the face paints. Lucifer’s mouth opened and closed like a fish as he tried and failed to find a way to refuse. He finally rolled his eyes and submitted to Trixie’s ministrations, and Chloe leaned back, watching and finishing the strawberries.

“All right, if I’m going to be subjected to this nonsense I want Bruce Lee mid-fly kick,” Lucifer told Trixie, who frowned.

“I don’t know how to draw that,” Trixie said. “How about a unicorn?” she continued brightly.

Chloe hid her smile in her wine glass. There were days when her heart felt so full she could barely stand it, and this was one of those, as her daughter painted a shiny unicorn on the Devil’s cheek.

“Don’t worry,” she murmured in Lucifer’s ear as he stared apprehensively at Trixie. “I know you’ll win the game we play next.”

“Oh?” Lucifer asked, moving his eyes while keeping still for Trixie’s art. “And what game would that be?”

The post-game karaoke took much longer than Monopoly had, as she and Trixie were treated to their
own personal angelic choir of one. Chloe had mellowed sufficiently from the wine and the warm and fuzzy feelings to allow herself to get roped into Disney songs with Trixie as Lucifer sang circles around them with his incredible range and vast repertoire. Chloe thought Trixie’s grin couldn’t possibly get any wider. Her daughter so rarely got to hear Lucifer sing.

There was no other word to describe the evening than magical. Chloe was hardly a talented singer, but somehow the act of singing with Lucifer made her feel like a star. She’d thought her voice would sound like the squawking of seagulls when compared to his; instead his enhanced hers, like an aura. Finally, the requests from Trixie began to slow and Chloe was able to get a few in for herself.

“Ooh, I haven’t heard this one in ages,” she exclaimed, flicking through the tracklist to some older tunes. She and Lucifer sang a proper duet, his voice weaving in and around hers, as the world seemed frozen in a perfect moment of time. She’d never felt such a part of something so beautiful before. When the song ended, all she could do was stare at him as his eyes bored back into hers. Chloe lost her breath. She loved him so much, and there were times that, unable to imagine a life without him, she thought she might even have to be grateful to Lucifer’s Father for bringing them together.

When no comment came from Trixie, Chloe looked over at the couch to find her daughter sound asleep, head pillowed on her arm, a dreamy smile on her face. She immediately quieted the volume, but before she could say anything, Lucifer had wordlessly scooped Trixie into his arms and carried her to bed. Chloe stared after him, too stunned to even follow them. She set about cleaning up their plates and glasses, needing some sort of outlet for her swelling emotions.

Lucifer emerged from Trixie’s room a minute later. Chloe stopped what she was doing and sat on the couch, nursing the last of her wine. Lucifer sat next to her with a heavy sigh, apparently unfazed, the silver unicorn on his cheek prominent in the firelight. Chloe swallowed her wine, and put the glass down very carefully as Lucifer looked at her, quizzical. Then she jumped him, grabbing his vest and pulling him down on top of her, capturing his lips in the passionate kiss she’d been holding back all evening. She could taste the sweetness of the candy he’d eaten and the tartness of the strawberries, and it was a long time before she could break away.

Lucifer’s eyes were heavy-lidded, looking down on her with glazed bewilderment. “What was that for?”

Chloe shook her head lazily, knowing better than to draw attention to what he’d just done. “I love you,” she whispered instead, feeling like her heart might burst with it. Lucifer responded with another kiss - the words weren’t needed after what he’d done that night. They kissed for a while longer - Chloe didn’t think she could ever get enough of kissing Lucifer - before she pulled back for breath, regarding him thoughtfully.

“You were pushing that Hellhound angle pretty hard,” she mused. “Is there something I should know?”

Lucifer shrugged, nonchalant in the way Chloe knew meant he wasn’t telling the whole truth. “Hellhounds are fiercely loyal and dependable. They’re practically indistinguishable from real dogs, and once attached to a charge they will defend it to their dying breath.” His voice held a wistful note, and she could tell they were something Lucifer actually missed about Hell. She could also read between the lines and knew he was worrying about their safety: his family, his home, even if he wasn’t using those precise terms yet. She bit her lip, not really knowing how she could object.

“Well, I’ll think about it,” she said, and Lucifer’s eyes brightened. “I’ve been thinking it’s about time we told Dan about all this, anyway.”
Lucifer suddenly looked apprehensive, and Chloe carded a hand through his hair to calm him. “We owe him the truth, Lucifer.” Trixie was his daughter; Dan deserved to know who was spending time around her.

“I’ll remind you that reactions like yours and Linda’s are very much the exception, not the rule,” Lucifer said, almost succeeding in sounding casual. “If Daniel objects…?”

“Tough,” Chloe said firmly. “I want this, Lucifer. Want us. I won’t let anyone take it away, especially not Dan.”

Lucifer stared at her like she was made of wonder and starlight and Chloe had to kiss him again.

Unbidden, Chloe's thoughts turned to Reese, and how the truth about Lucifer's identity had tipped his obsessive personality into madness. She swallowed hard. The situation called for caution. Dan deserved the truth, but not at the cost of his mind.

“Did I mention I love your vest?” she murmured against his lips. Lucifer blinked a few times, clearly thrown by the change of subject. It was true, though - she liked the cut, and the high collar. It made him look sophisticated - not that he needed any help in that regard.

“Do you, now?” he purred, and she was reminded that despite his vanity, he so rarely got genuine compliments.

She nodded, and tapped his chest. “It’d look better on my floor,” she said, and Lucifer grinned, his gaze smoldering.

“Let’s find out, shall we?” Before she could blink, Chloe found herself carried to bed. She had no objections.

* *

“So, I know it wasn’t the one-on-one date I promised, but I had a really good time last night,” Chloe told Lucifer over breakfast the next morning. He’d spent ages in the bathroom washing the face paint off his cheek but Chloe still fancied she could catch a glimmer in the right light.

“In my admittedly limited understanding of human relationships, I was under the impression that dating occurred prior to consummation.” Lucifer’s eyes were warm in the sunlight. “Or am I mistaken?”

Chloe smirked. “Sometimes, but not always. We aren’t exactly an example of what should be considered standard.”

“True enough. So what did you have in mind?” He stood to return his plate to the sink. The sight of him in her kitchen, with his hair yet unstyled and his shirtsleeves rolled to his elbows, made her lose her breath for a moment. She thought she’d gotten accustomed to how beautiful he was, but the more relaxed he became in her presence, the more she was blindsided by him. The Chloe of yesteryear who had proclaimed herself repulsed on a chemical level was now nowhere to be found. Sometimes she found it difficult to stop staring at him.

“Chloe?” Lucifer was regarding her with an arched eyebrow and a knowing smile, and she realized she’d never answered his question. She cleared her throat and took another sip of coffee, realizing she didn’t have an answer. What did she want to do on a date with Lucifer? It wasn’t like either of them had a wealth of experience to draw from. Anything that came to mind struck her as too… tame, too mundane for the Devil.
“You sure you want me to plan it?” she asked. “You must know way better places than I do.”

Lucifer looked oddly apprehensive. “I’d be happy to offer suggestions, of course,” he hedged. Chloe reached across the counter and took his hand.

“This is just supposed to be us doing something fun together, not the secrets of the universe,” she said gently.

Lucifer’s smile was soft as he turned it from their hands to her face. “Of course.”

Chloe worked on finishing her eggs while still holding his hand. “I just meant, did you want to do dinner? Maybe something else?”

Lucifer shrugged. “I am content with whatever you desire,” he said. Chloe’s smile turned wicked as she looked up at him and he rolled his eyes, pulling away slightly. “I’m going to regret saying that, aren’t I?”

Chloe shook her head. “I meant it when I said I wanted both of us to have fun. I’ll think about it, but you’re allowed veto if it’s something you don’t want to do, okay?”

“All right,” he acknowledged as he leaned across the counter to capture her lips, and Chloe knew he would cheerfully go along with something he hated, so long as it was her idea. She pulled back with a small frown.

“I mean it, Lucifer,” she said, and Lucifer’s eyes softened.

“I believe you,” he said. Chloe couldn’t resist another quick peck before he went off to style his hair.

She watched him go, shaking her head. He was enough to give a girl a complex.

* *

Their current case concerned the murder of Kim Jones, which Chloe had been assigned after the Nuñez case had failed to turn up any leads. Kim was a twenty-nine year old computer engineer who had been found dead from massive blunt-force trauma to the head. Aside from the missing murder weapon, the most noteworthy thing about the crime scene that morning had been the victim’s roommate, Esther, aggressively hitting on both Dan and Lucifer. The sleeping monster that was Chloe’s jealousy raised its head, but she had to admire the girl’s tenacity, turning to Dan after Lucifer had turned her down flat (“I’m sorry, darling; you’re truly lovely, but I’m simply not interested.”) For all her shallowness, though, Esther had provided useful information - she’d been able to pinpoint the time of an argument Kim had had before she’d been killed. Since there had been no sign of a break-in, Esther’s tip was their best hope for a lead. Chloe had traced Kim’s phone records to the offices of a dating app called Top Meet, and then headed over with Lucifer.

“Top Meet?” Lucifer echoed when she told him what she’d found. “Interesting name for a Thai restaurant.”

Chloe had already pulled up Google. “No, it’s a dating app, for ‘LA’s most fabulous singles.’ Super exclusive… Seems you need to get recommended and meet a bunch of selection criteria, even go through an interview, just to create an account.” She looked at Lucifer curiously. “Honestly I’m surprised you don’t know about it.”

Lucifer shifted in his chair. “I never bothered much with dating apps. Too much trouble.” His uncomfortable expression said all that he wouldn’t and Chloe nodded. Right. Hookup apps were much more Lucifer’s style - casual sex with no commitment. That had been insensitive of her.
“Of course,” she said gently. “Sorry.”

Lucifer gave her a strange look. “Why are you apologizing?”

Chloe shook her head. “Never mind,” she said. “Let’s just go to the office. Try to find out who Kim might have been arguing with before she was killed.”

Lucifer nodded, still looking perplexed. It wasn’t until they were in her cruiser heading out that he spoke again.

“I deleted them, you know,” he said abruptly. “Tinder. Grindr. All of them.”

Chloe blinked. She hadn’t even considered that, hadn’t thought of asking it of him. “Oh. Okay. Um, thank you, for telling me.”

Lucifer just nodded, his expression earnest. Chloe couldn’t deny feeling pleased. It wasn’t as though Lucifer needed any help getting dates; more like the apps were a way for dates to find him. Even more so than their display at Lux, Lucifer deleting his online presence was a tangible expression of how he was off the market. It wasn’t like she’d been worried, but the fact that he’d thought of it, unprompted, made her ridiculously happy.

They arrived at Top Meet, and a quick glance around the office told Chloe exactly the kind of person they would be dealing with. She’d been inside plenty of big corporate offices in her time but the level of self-aggrandizement on display here was truly next level. The CEO seemed to be more interested in promoting himself than his company. Multiple screens and picture frames were set up, all showing the man in poses that wouldn’t have looked out of place in a fashion magazine, but not a business one.

“Jeez,” Chloe commented, sotto voce. “Someone’s got a high opinion of themselves.”

“Hardly unwarranted, Detective.” Lucifer’s voice was neutral enough but Chloe shot a sideways glance at him. He nodded at a screen once he saw he had her attention, where a magazine cover was cycling up. “Seems like he and I have a lot in common.”

Chloe read the headline, which proclaimed Mack Slater LA’s most interesting bachelor. She thought privately that Lucifer had far more taste than someone who plastered their offices with his own face, but she couldn’t resist poking fun.

“Except that, apparently, he’s slightly more interesting than you.” She nudged him with her elbow. “Well, journalistic hyperbole, clearly,” Lucifer said disdainfully. “Besides which, I’m no longer a bachelor.”

“Lucifer…” Chloe murmured, overcome, but was prevented from saying more by the arrival of the CEO himself, reminding her they were still at work.

“Can I help you?” Mack inquired, in a tone just skirting the edge of politeness. Chloe shook herself inwardly as she turned to face him. Upon getting a proper look at her, the man’s demeanour changed completely, turning almost solicitous. “Mack Slater. I’m the CEO,” he said, holding out a hand that Chloe and Lucifer shook in turn. As if there could be any doubt about who he was with his face plastered onto every vertical surface. “If you’re here for the selection interview, I’ll spare you. I created Top Meet for people exactly like you.”

“Well, thank you very much,” Lucifer said smoothly, before Chloe could explain why they were really here.
“Actually, I was talking to the lady,” Mack said, his attention fully on Chloe, who was so unused to this role reversal that she wasn’t sure how to respond. “You’re exactly my type… I mean, the app’s type.”

“Bit on the nose, there, Big Mack.” All the warmth in Lucifer’s voice had vanished, and Chloe struggled to pull herself together before the testosterone in the air reached critical levels.

“We’re here for a different type of interview,” she said, putting the slightest emphasis on we. Mack might have missed it but she knew Lucifer wouldn’t. “There’s been a murder, and the victim’s last call was to someone in this building.”


Chloe bristled at his tone, which implied that he hadn’t thought that much of her beforehand, and also showed the lack of concern he seemed to have for the murder victim. Her job wasn’t to be interesting. Her job was to help people.

Her phone rang, and she checked the message quickly.

“Funny, so did you,” she said drily. “I just found out who our victim was fighting with - you.”

“Ahh,” Lucifer said, unable to resist rubbing it in. “‘Most interesting bachelor,’ indeed.”

Chloe had to admit Mack’s poker face was impeccable.

“Why don’t we talk in my office?” he suggested, indicating the way with a gracious wave of his hand. Chloe nodded and followed him. At least he hadn’t lawyered up, so that was something.

Mack’s office might have been more private but it was also very distracting to have five larger-than-life representations of his face staring down at her from behind his desk in addition to the man himself. The way Lucifer settled in his chair indicated to her that he was out for blood, and Mack’s posture held the same cocky certainty. Chloe prepared herself for what was shaping up to be a very difficult conversation.

“The victim’s name is Kim Jones,” Chloe said, pulling up a picture from the crime scene on her phone and showing it to Mack. “We traced her last phone call to your office and spoke to her roommate who said she was having an argument.”

Mack shrugged. “I don’t know anybody by that name. She doesn’t look familiar,” he said carelessly. Chloe’s eyes narrowed. He clearly thought he was untouchable, but she wasn’t going to back down.

“If you didn’t know her, then how did you fight with her?” She waited for him to say that he hadn’t made the call, that it had been someone else in his office, but, surprisingly, he said nothing of the sort.

“Because she was nuts!” he exclaimed.

Chloe sat back in her chair, putting away her phone. “I’m confused; you just said you didn’t know her.” Could it really be this easy to get him to talk? His poker face might be inscrutable but his lying clearly needed work.

“I know her type,” Mack elaborated, rather unconvincingly. “We get them from time to time. They want to be on Top Meet. They can’t clear our high bar, and then they get pissed about it. Problem with her was she wouldn’t take no for an answer. And then, uh, she hacked her way onto my app.
And then our users complained, of course, because nobody joins Top Meet to hook up with some... random nobody. And so we had to kick her off.”

Chloe’s anger was aroused by Mack’s disrespectful tone towards the dead woman and she fought to keep her composure. “Okay, and is that when she called to complain?”

Mack laughed. “No, more like she went psycho.”

“Yes, well, if she spent her time breaking into a dating app, she was clearly unbalanced,” Lucifer chimed in unhelpfully.

“What did you do after the call?” Chloe asked.

“I stayed here. I worked late,” Mack answered, supremely confident. “We’re busy as Hell these days.”

“Not nearly, I can assure you,” Lucifer said with a sinister smile. Mack’s poker face slipped a little as he stared and Chloe thought it was best just to move on.

“Well, I’ll need to speak to anyone who can corroborate your alibi. Also, I’ll need a list of any of the users who complained about Kim.”

“No can do,” Mack said immediately. “With so many celebrity clients, our entire business model is based off our ironclad privacy protocols.”

“Fine,” Chloe said, eager for the conversation to be over. “I’ll just get a warrant.”

“Good luck with that,” Mack said, leaning further back in his chair. “I mean, how long did it take the FBI to crack one cell phone?”

Chloe set her jaw and didn’t respond.

They couldn’t vacate Top Meet fast enough after that - Chloe breathed a sigh of relief once they were out the door, away from Mack’s leers and snide remarks. Lucifer was breathing hard through his nose, fists clenching and unclenching.

“I should go back in there and beat some manners into him,” he growled, casting a dubious look at the building. Chloe put a light hand on his elbow.

“Lucifer, he’s not worth it. Just forget about him,” she said.

Lucifer’s expression didn’t lighten. “To think, the man had the nerve to imply that you were his type!”

“So that’s what this is about,” Chloe said, stepping in front of him. “Lucifer. He’s an entitled prick who’s impeding a police investigation. You can’t seriously think I’d actually be interested?”

Lucifer fiddled with his cuffs and looked away without answering. Chloe sighed, her heart squeezing at his uncertainty, and took his hand, pulling him out of sight of the building.

“Babe, look at me.” His eyes were wide as they met hers, and she realized belatedly what she’d said before deciding to push on, cupping his face in her hand. “I only have eyes for one Devil, okay? I told you I was all in, and I meant it. I love you. It doesn’t matter if I’m his type because he’s most definitely not mine.” She pressed a chaste kiss to his lips. “You are.” She smiled slightly, pulling back, as Lucifer drew in a quiet breath. “All right?”
Lucifer licked his lips. “Chloe…” Whenever he said her name he always managed to turn it into a full sentence. Chloe couldn’t resist kissing him again, after that.

“Come on,” she said breathlessly, tapping his chest as they parted. “Let’s get back to the precinct. I hate to say it, but Mack’s right; even getting a warrant might not be a sure thing, so we need to come up with other options.”

Lucifer had recovered his composure. “Lead the way, Detective,” he said, adjusting his suit jacket.

Chapter End Notes

I wanted to expand more on the monopoly scene, and I had fun with the interrogation scene. Because of all the changes, I have removed the central metaphor of the hat/shoe dichotomy. Instead, Lucifer is going to learn a very different lesson. ((BTW - he's not a shoe? With his Leboutins? Anyway.)) Let me know what you think!
Me and the Devil

Chapter Notes

Forgot to mention: the duet Chloe and Lucifer sing during karaoke in the last chapter is "Leather and Lace" by Stevie Nicks and Don Henley. And the chapter title this week is taken from the song of the same name, "Me and the Devil" by soap and skin, which I heard first on the Elementary soundtrack, of all things. I hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“That looks absolutely nothing like our victim,” Lucifer commented as Ella pulled up Kim’s profile on the Top Meet app. “Take note, Daniel. Those filters could be the answer to your dating drought.”

Chloe pressed her lips together. She knew Lucifer meant well, but his tact still needed work. She was blindsided by the wave of nostalgia that hit her, remembering the period early in their acquaintance when he’d been obsessed with her love life instead. She shook her head inwardly. She really had it bad, if even those memories were rose coloured for her now.

“Oh no,” Ella said, and Chloe dragged her focus back to their case. “I mean, Kim only got one match.”

“What, really?” Lucifer sounded genuinely surprised. “After all that effort, she only got the interest of one gentleman?”

“Gentleman? You mean suspect,” Chloe said sharply, the conversation hitting just a little too close to home. Lucifer blinked at her, and she wished she hadn’t said anything.

“Yep,” Ella replied to both Chloe and Lucifer at the same time. “Username Forever29. The app arranged a date for them, and based on their likes and locations, it suggested a sushi place on Melrose. Even made a reservation for them, for the night of the murder.” Ella looked back at the team, wide-eyed, but Chloe was surprised for a different reason. If all of that could be gleaned from information freely available to users, there might be no need to hack it.

“If this guy’s using the app as a hunting ground,” Chloe said, “he could be targeting somebody right now. We gotta find him.”

“Yeah, but how?” Dan asked. “We can’t even get an ID.” That was what he and Ella had been working on while she and Lucifer had gone to question Mack.

“Tech team hasn’t been able to crack Top Meet’s security algo,” Ella confirmed. “Which means Kim had mad hacking skills.”

Chloe filed that information away for future reference, but it wasn’t useful right now. “So, can we use Forever29’s profile pic and run it through facial recognition?” she asked, grasping at straws.

Ella made a discouraging sound. “Yeah, I know. I thought about that, but….” She pulled up the profile, which consisted of a pair of eyes and nothing else.

Lucifer scoffed. “Partial profile pics. Such a telltale sign of low self-esteem.”
“Or our guy’s keeping his profile a secret because he’s the killer,” Chloe reminded him.

“Wait a minute!” Ella exclaimed. “There is some good news, you guys. He used the app to RSVP for a mixer at Top Meet. It’s happening tonight!”

“Okay,” Chloe said, formulating a new plan, “we gotta get to this party. Use what we know about Forever29 and single him out.” It was a long shot, to be sure, but if it worked, they wouldn’t need to fight for a warrant.

“Okay, fine,” Lucifer said, like he was deciding to sign up for the draft. “I’ll go and root out our killer.” Chloe opened her mouth to respond, but Dan beat her to it.

“Lucifer, we’re looking for a guy.”

Lucifer just looked at him. “Your point?”

“Uh, he’s a dude? And he’s straight?” Dan added, a partial save.

“That’s never stopped me before, Daniel.” Lucifer was supremely confident, regarding Dan like a lion regarding its prey. “I’m so good at flipping men, they call me the Skillet.”

“Really?” Dan asked, like he couldn’t help himself.

Lucifer’s brow was artfully arched. “Of course. Most men aren’t used to someone who can lift them without breaking a sweat.”

“Whoa whoa whoa.” Dan backed up a little, hands raised, but not without giving Lucifer a quick once over, like he needed visual confirmation. “That’s TMI, man.”

Lucifer shrugged. “What did you think I meant? No one can turn someone into something they’re not. Though I have been known to open avenues previously unexplored.”

“Great,” Chloe said over Dan’s floundering, as Lucifer looked up in surprise. “So, Lucifer can go. Think you’ll be able to get him to talk?” she asked, with a knowing smile that Lucifer returned.

“Child’s play,” he purred.

“Bad idea.” Pierce spoke up suddenly, and everyone in the room whirled to face him.

Chloe frowned inwardly. How long had he been there, and why hadn’t he announced his presence? He’d returned from medical leave with minimal fanfare and immediately thrown himself back into work, reportedly even sleeping at the office, refusing point blank the party Ella had been eager to throw for him. Ella had shrugged it off in typical fashion (“Isn’t that just amazing? He doesn’t want anyone to make a big deal!”) but Chloe was skeptical. Pierce didn’t seem to be interested in integrating himself or getting to know anyone in the department. As he was once again proving.

“I want Decker taking point on this operation,” Pierce ordered. “Lucifer, Espinoza, you’ll be on support. Keep me posted.” With that, he turned on his heel and left the room.

The other four looked at each other in stunned silence, Lucifer with an expression that couldn’t decide whether it wanted to be more angry or offended. Chloe couldn’t blame him. Pierce had made no secret of his dislike for Lucifer but now he was as good as proclaiming to the whole department that he didn’t trust him. Lucifer was clearly the best choice for the sting - it was, in essence, what he’d been brought on board to do. Chloe shared a glance with him, silently commiserating. Even Ella, usually so effusive in her defense of Pierce, had nothing to say.
Dan looked at Chloe solemnly. “Well, I guess it’s down to you, Chloe. This case depends on your ability to socialize.” He cracked a bit of a smile, and Chloe stared him down, unmoved by his teasing.

“For the investigation, I can sacrifice. It’s just like acting.”

Lucifer was conspicuously silent, and she could suddenly see that his earlier bombastic confidence had been intended to mask a deeper insecurity. Her eyes narrowed. For all that Pierce didn’t seem to pay attention to people he had a remarkable gift for pushing Lucifer’s buttons.

Ella regained her verve. “Oh my gosh, so it’ll be like Chloe does Lucifer!”

“Well, I wouldn’t exactly put it that way,” Chloe quickly said, seeing Lucifer’s smirk. She knew she would have to tell Ella what was going on between her and Lucifer eventually, but this was neither the time nor the place. Fortunately, after that, Chloe and Lucifer were able to head back to her place to prepare for the sting.

Chloe wasn’t sure how to bring up the subject while they were in the car.

“I’m sorry,” she said at last.

Lucifer looked at her in surprise, pulled out of some dark thought. “Why are you apologizing? You’re not to blame for the lieutenant’s actions.”

“I know, but…” She bit her lip. She wondered if Lucifer realized just how much he’d been allowed to get away with under Olivia (quite literally, it seems, she thought, as her gut gave a funny little twist). How much Pierce was still letting him get away with, despite him being hard line in other areas. Playing by the rules was very much not Lucifer’s style, and she couldn’t help but fear that if this went on for long enough, Pierce wouldn’t need to bench Lucifer; Lucifer would quit on his own, his fun diversion becoming too much like work. “I just know this isn’t really what you signed up for,” Chloe said.

Lucifer frowned, perplexed. “In what manner? Are you not still a detective? Am I not your consultant? Do we no longer solve homicides and punish those responsible?”

Chloe smiled a little as she recognized his words from one of their earliest encounters. “Yes, but…”

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“They’re exactly what I signed up for,” Lucifer said, settling back slightly in his seat. “I’ll gladly lend you my assistance for this investigation.” A sort of calm explosion took place in Chloe’s stomach at his unhesitating support, but Lucifer wasn’t finished. “I’ve lived for eons, darling. I can handle some insufferable mortal with a puffed-up view of his own importance.” He paused, looking slyly over at her. “Of course, there’s always the easy way, were you game. I admit the lieutenant isn’t exactly my type, but it seems like the idea could have some potential.” He smirked, and Chloe was already shaking her head when a sudden thought struck her and she laughed. Lucifer arched an eyebrow in question.

“Oh. Mack’s not my type; he’s yours!”

Lucifer looked away, adjusting his cuffs. “Well, not anymore,” he said. “Had we met in alternative circumstances I would perhaps have been amenable to…” He turned his suddenly earnest gaze on her. “Chloe, surely you know that I would never…”

Chloe put a hand on his arm. “Lucifer, relax. I get it. I’m… honestly just curious.” Lucifer settled back in his seat again, mollified. “I mean… all those people who came into the precinct that day when we were questioning your lovers looked so different.” Aside from being knockout gorgeous,
she thought.

“I am a fulfiller of desires,” Lucifer said, by way of explanation. “The who doesn’t matter nearly so much as the what. Any encounter has the potential to be interesting, some more than others. Had the fellow and I met prior to our involvement, I would certainly have enjoyed getting to know what he desired… What is it?” he asked, catching sight of Chloe’s face.

Chloe hummed. “Just… good to know,” she said innocently. Lucifer’s eyes narrowed, like he couldn’t decide whether or not she was being honest.

“What about you?” he asked, turning the tables. Chloe blinked. “I mean, clearly there are no similarities whatsoever between myself and Daniel so I find myself curious what you look for in a partner.”

“Aren’t there?” Chloe asked, to Lucifer’s obvious incomprehension. She looked back to the road as she tried to find the words to explain. “You both believe in justice, in trying to do the right thing. You just need a bit of help from time to time. Looks have nothing to do with it.”

Lucifer was silent for so long that Chloe looked over at him in concern. He was staring out the windshield, the tension in his face subtle, but visible if you knew where to look.

“I see,” he said at last.

“Of course, that’s not all there is to it,” Chloe said, and Lucifer turned to look at her, almost desperately. “Dan looked the other way while Malcolm and his cronies were on the take. He lied to me and kept lying, to the point of obstructing my investigation. He prioritized that, the job, his position, over me and Trixie. So, no, you guys aren’t that much alike. But the similarities are why I fell for you.”

Lucifer was silent again, an inscrutable expression on his face, and Chloe felt herself blush. She studiously kept her eyes glued to the road.

“I shouldn’t have said anything,” she muttered, feeling caught out. After a moment, Lucifer cleared his throat.

“So… the who doesn’t matter as much to you, either?” he said at last.

Chloe frowned slightly. “I guess it’s more about someone’s personality for me. I have to get to know them. I have to trust them. It doesn’t really matter what they look like.” She glanced over at Lucifer with a rueful smile. “I couldn’t stand you when we first met.”

Lucifer looked almost proud. “I remember. ‘Repulsive on a chemical level,’ I believe it was?”

Chloe laughed. “Exactly.”

Lucifer was quiet for a moment. “What changed?” he asked curiously.

Chloe glanced over at him again. “I got to know you,” she said. “The real you. You proved yourself to me. Like I said before: you had my back, time and time again. And I fell in love with you.”

Lucifer gave her a tremulous smile. She wasn’t sure where he stood now on the topic of whether her feelings were divine whammy or free will. They’d arrived at Trixie’s school to pick her up and the voices of children filled the air.

Lucifer didn’t even seem to notice. “You fell in love with the Devil.” It wasn’t quite a question, but
he still sounded incredulous. Chloe shook her head, reaching across to grasp his hand.

“No,” she said softly. “I fell in love with you.”

Lucifer opened his mouth to respond when the door opened and Trixie clambered into the car, and the moment was lost.

“Hi, Mommy!” she said brightly. “Hi, Lucifer!”

“Hey, monkey,” Chloe said, at the same time as Lucifer managed a strangled, “Child.” Chloe wondered how long it would take before he would actually bring himself to use Trixie’s name. She’d actually been meaning to ask him about that for a while now.

“Why’d you bring Lucifer today?” Trixie asked.

“Your mother is required to attend a party as part of a case. I am here to assist her,” Lucifer explained before Chloe could answer.

“Cool!” Trixie exclaimed.

“How was your day at school, Trix?” Chloe asked to cover the sudden surge of emotion. This was entirely too familial to not start giving her ideas.

“There was a new girl in school today. No one was sitting with her at lunchtime so I sat with her and gave her some of my fries.”

Chloe smiled at her daughter in the rearview mirror, pride swelling in her chest. “That was really nice of you.”

“She was really quiet at first. I think she might have been scared of me,” Trixie said pensively.

“What makes you say that?” Chloe was concerned.

“Ever since Lucifer scared the mean girl, all the bullies at the school leave me alone,” Trixie answered. Lucifer gave a self-satisfied smile, which did nothing to lessen Chloe’s worry. “But I think everyone else is afraid to talk to me in case Lucifer does what he did to Amy.”

“Trixie, why didn’t you say anything?” Chloe was horrified. “How long has this been going on?”

Trixie shrugged. “I don’t mind. Most of the kids in my school are boring. My friends are the interesting ones. Megan has an imaginary friend. I can’t see him, but she swears he’s real. Is he real, Lucifer?”

Chloe got mental whiplash from the sudden change in topic and by the time she caught up with the conversation Lucifer was answering.

“I don’t know, child.” He sounded amused. “I’ve never met him. What’s his name?”

“Don’t encourage her!” Chloe hissed out of the side of her mouth.

Lucifer looked at her, eyebrow arched. “Darling, you’re partners with the Devil,” he reminded her.

Chloe gaped. “So you’re saying imaginary friends are real, too?”

“I’m saying no such thing. But such an apparition could have many potential explanations. Did your friend have any traumatic or near-death experiences in the past?”
“Lucifer!” Chloe was flabbergasted.

Trixie hummed as she considered.“I don’t think so.”

“Then it’s likely nothing more than the effect of an over-active imagination.”

“Oh.” Trixie sounded disappointed.

“Anyway,” Chloe interjected, getting them back to the matter at hand. “Trixie, babe, I’m glad you’re happy with your friends but you know you shouldn’t talk about Devil stuff at school, right?”

“Why not?” Trixie wanted to know. “It’s true!” Lucifer wore a proud smile and Chloe knew she had to tread carefully.

“Yeah, it is, monkey,” she said. “But it’s not your secret to tell, okay?” She shot Lucifer a look before he could chime in.

“Okay,” Trixie agreed glumly. Lucifer was staring at her in consternation and Chloe shook her head at him. Later, she mouthed, and he gave a curt nod.

When they arrived home, Chloe took the opportunity while Trixie was in her room to turn to Lucifer.

“Okay, I know you’re all about the truth and telling all and sundry who you are, but Trixie can’t, Lucifer. It’s fine for you to play the part of the eccentric nightclub owner, but Trixie is a growing girl who needs to have fulfilling connections to her peer group,” she told him in a low voice. “Not to mention if she starts being too open about it, there are teachers and other professionals who might start taking an interest, and I don’t want her getting forced into taking meds, or worse.”

Lucifer’s eyes narrowed, and she knew the thought had never even occurred to him. “No one is going to force you or the spawn to do anything,” he said, his voice low and dangerous. Chloe felt the words slip down her spine with nothing other than gratitude, knowing that Lucifer could, and would, follow through.

“I know,” she said, placing a hand on his arm. “But I’d rather it never get to that point in the first place. When Trixie grows up a bit more, she can decide which people aren’t worth it and choose to only spend time with people who understand her, even if it’s just a special few. But right now, she’s still young. I don’t want her narrowing her options that quickly.”

Lucifer nodded slowly, but not like he fully understood. “Of course. I have no desire for your offspring to encounter difficulties because of who I am.”

Chloe placed her hand on Lucifer’s face, hoping to ward away self-deprecating thoughts. “There’s nothing wrong with the truth,” she assured him. “She just needs to learn to be more judicious about applying it.” She smirked up at him. “That’s something I’m sure you should have no objection to.”

Lucifer cracked a smile. “Indeed, quite a valuable lesson.”

Chloe leaned in, mindful of Trixie’s presence nearby. “Besides, I’m sure you don’t want her running around telling everyone the Devil’s gonna get them. You’d never know a moment’s peace.”

“Contracts made without my knowledge are non-binding,” Lucifer murmured, leaning in as well.

“But think of what it could do to your reputation,” Chloe teased.

“You make a compelling argument.”
“What are you guys doing?” Trixie’s voice came from behind them, and Chloe jumped in spite of herself. It was clear from Trixie’s tone that she thought they were totally embarrassing.

*Be careful what you wish for, child of mine,* Chloe thought as she planted a kiss on Lucifer’s cheek.

“Just talking,” she answered, turning away from Lucifer.

“Didn’t look like talking,” Trixie said, pulling out a juicebox before vanishing again.

Chloe and Lucifer just looked at each other. Chloe shrugged.

“So is this the part where you give me tips about how to blend in with that crowd?” she asked, waving a hand in reference to the “sophisticated” members of Top Meet, hoping her casual tone would mask her insecurity. Lucifer gave her a searching look.

“I can guarantee that most of the men at the party will have very little interest in what you have to say,” he told her flatly. “You’re worth more than any of them.” Chloe felt herself blush, but couldn’t look away. “Should you attempt to engage them in repartee, they’ll likely feel intimidated. Allow them to be drawn to you, like moths to a flame.” Lucifer demonstrated by drifting into her space. Chloe automatically lifted her face to his and he tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, his eyes bright. “Act coy. Laugh at whatever they say. They won’t be able to resist.”

Chloe, drawn into Lucifer’s spell, couldn’t help but scoff at that. “I’m hardly irresistible.”

“I beg to differ,” Lucifer responded. “Any mere mortal at that party could only dream of being worthy to throw themselves at your feet.”

“Lucifer…” Chloe hadn’t thought it was possible for her to blush any harder but she’d been wrong. She was concerned by the almost… resigned note in Lucifer’s voice. “You know I’m mortal too, right?” she heard herself say, which wasn’t where she wanted to go with this at all.

His walls were back up but Chloe could still sense the sadness beneath them. “Darling, there is nothing *mere* about you,” he purred.

“Oh, and you’re not biased at all?” Chloe teased, even while wondering, yet again, how exactly it had come to pass that the Devil, ancient and eternal; walking, talking desire, had fallen in love with a (literal) plain Jane like her. “You met me when I was being a homicide detective, remember? It’s not like I’ll be able to ask them about their ‘stage names.’”

The heat in Lucifer’s eyes slid sideways as he realized what she was referencing. “Indeed not,” he purred. Chloe smirked.

“Let’s just hope none of them ask me if we’ve met before and had sex.” Lucifer let out an actual chuckle at that. “I reserve the right to swing for them if that happens.” Honestly, she was surprised more witnesses and suspects weren’t aware of her former career. She supposed she ought to thank her lucky stars that the movie wasn’t as popular as it could have been. She wondered how Lucifer had gotten his hands on a copy.

“I’ll be right behind you,” Lucifer said.

“Defending my honour, like you did with Paolucci?” Chloe ran a finger down one of his lapels.

Lucifer’s tongue darted out to touch his lips. “I believe I was quite clear that I wasn’t doing it on your behalf.”
Chloe’s smirk did not abate. “Right.” She shrugged, abruptly moving away. “Without police work to fall back on, I’ll probably end up talking about my Costco run or camping with Trixie.”

Lucifer shook himself, reaching into his inside pocket. “Dearie me, I need a drink,” he muttered. It was adorable to see him so flustered. She hadn’t realized reminders of their early acquaintance would affect him so much.

Trixie returned; she set her juicebox in front of Lucifer like she expected him to drink from it. It couldn’t have surprised Chloe more when with an absent, “Oh. Thank you,” Lucifer proceeded to do just that. She stared at him in shock before Trixie got her attention.

“I have a tip, Mom,” she said. “Don’t talk about me.” Ah, yes, her daughter the wingman.

“Wingperson?”

Lucifer put the juice down, making a face. Chloe couldn’t tell if it was from the taste or the subject matter. “Yes. Definitely no mention of the child. We are trying to extract information, after all; there’s no faster way to get a man to run for the hills.”

But not you, Chloe found herself thinking, regarding him. Despite his proclaimed revulsion, he’d actually gone into Trixie’s school and punished her bully within moments of meeting her. In some ways, he’d become more of a father figure to Trixie than Dan had ever been - she still remembered the sign on Trixie’s door in their old house. No boys allowed, except Lucifer, and then in small letters, as an afterthought, and Daddy.

Then she froze.

“Oh,” she said. “Oh, no. Oh, no no no.” She’d just noticed the flavour of Trixie’s juicebox.

“Are you well, Detective?” Lucifer asked. Chloe put a hand over her face.

“Apple.” The word was muffled by her fingers. “It’s apple.” She remembered an evening in a stakeout car long before. “I gave you an apple.” She didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry.

“Ah, yes.” Lucifer sounded gleeful. “I assure you, the irony did not escape me.”

Chloe sighed, dropping her hand. Of course it hadn’t. It was exactly the kind of shit that would happen to her.

Lucifer was still looking at her carefully. “For what it’s worth, the fruit in question was not, in fact, an apple - wrong part of the world, and also history. A mistranslation of the Latin malum, meaning evil.”

“What was it, then?” Chloe asked, curious. “The fruit?”

Lucifer paused, considering. “It doesn’t translate. I suppose the closest modern equivalent would be a pomegranate.”

Like Persephone, Chloe found herself thinking. The surreal nature of the moment hit her. Here she was, in her kitchen, sitting across from the Devil, talking about the actual Forbidden Fruit.

Lucifer grinned. “Of course, if you go by the metaphorical interpretation, that the “fruit” was really that of the womb…”

“All right, that’s enough!” Chloe cut him off, suddenly remembering Trixie’s presence. “Go on, monkey, it’s time to do your homework.”
Trixie made a face, but did as she was told. Chloe just stared at Lucifer. She was sitting across from someone who had all the answers, and she realized that despite her naturally inquisitive nature, she felt absolutely no desire to pursue them. There were certain things, she thought, humanity was better off not knowing.

“Come on,” she said at last, jerking her head in the direction of the bedroom. “I need to figure out what I’m going to wear.”

Lucifer’s expression brightened at that, but Chloe made him wait outside while she tried on outfits, wanting to have a go at dressing herself before she sought his input.

“So I’ve been meaning to ask you,” she called through the closed door. “Why don’t you ever use Trixie’s name?”

There was a pause. Chloe just waited, knowing he’d heard her.

“It seems… presumptuous,” he said at last. Chloe frowned, even though he couldn’t see her, picking out her favourite pair of black skinny jeans.

“You mean like the way you keep calling me ‘Detective’?”

“In a way.” Lucifer’s tone was guarded.

Chloe tried to lighten the mood. “I’ve never known you to concern yourself with overstepping boundaries before,” she teased. “So what’s the deal?”

“It’s… difficult to explain,” he hedged, and Chloe could picture him leaning against the door. There was another pause as he gathered his thoughts. Chloe realized she was standing listening instead of getting ready and shooing herself. Struck by a sudden idea, she pulled out a blazer. If this was really “Chloe does Lucifer,” she thought with a smile, she might as well look the part. She started hunting for a shirt to go with it.

“My siblings and I were all created fully formed,” Lucifer explained. “We grow and mature like all creatures, but much more slowly, and on a metaphysical level. The reason there are so many of us is that each was created for a specific purpose. Some aspect of Dad’s will that we were expected to carry out. Our names are a reflection of that purpose.” There was such an undercurrent of hurt and bitterness in his voice that Chloe was considering opening the door and comforting him, but she decided to let him talk himself out. It sounded like this was important, and she didn’t want to interrupt.

“Human offspring…” he continued. “They don’t make sense. They’re so helpless. Dad created you humans without a purpose, so that you might find your own. Free will.” She heard him sigh. “Infinite potential. And yet you insist on curtailing it with a name before they’re even aware of their own existence. Like signing a letter before you’ve written it.”

Chloe considered. That was certainly one way of looking at it.

“Humans can change their names, though,” she said. “If they don’t like them.”

“Of course they can,” Lucifer said, dripping skepticism. “That doesn’t change the fact of the name, only the expression.”

Chloe found herself thinking about angel names she was aware of. Lucifer’s brother, Amenadiel. The famous ones: Michael, Gabriel. And then there was Lucifer. He even had a last name.
She hesitated before bringing it up, but the barrier of the door gave her courage. “But you know that already, right?”

“What makes you say that?” came the response.

“Well, it’s just… there’s a pattern, isn’t there? Amenadiel. Michael. Gabriel. And don’t tell me Amenadiel’s last name is Morningstar.”

There was another pause, even longer than before. “You’re right,” he said. “I did have another name. Long ago.” He didn’t seem inclined to say anything more, and Chloe knew better than to pry. It didn’t take a genius to work out why Lucifer would hate a name that embodied his Father’s purpose for him. She didn’t need to know what it was. Lucifer was Lucifer.

Abruptly deciding to give up in her search for a shirt, she slipped the blazer over her shoulders, fastened it, and pulled the door open before she had a chance to change her mind.

Lucifer let out a very undignified sound as his hand shot out to keep himself from falling into the room.

“Bloody hell-” he started to complain, but stopped short when he caught sight of her.

“Chloe.” His voice caressed her name. “You look…”

“Like a female version of you?” Chloe asked, toying with the buttons on her jacket. “That’s what I was going for.”

The heat in his gaze made her blush, but she forced herself to keep her chin lifted. Lucifer reached out, and Chloe thought for a moment that he was going for her breasts, which were easily accessible under her jacket, but instead he touched the bullet necklace that was displayed prominently by her cleavage. When Chloe looked up at his face, it held an expression she wasn’t sure how to interpret.

“I’m gonna keep wearing it, you know,” she said. Lucifer’s eyes flashed to hers before looking down again. If she didn’t know better, she’d have thought he had doubts about the sting. “Lucifer,” she said, taking care to emphasize his name. He met her eyes again, properly this time. “I love you.”

Lucifer smiled, but the expression still held shadows. “I know,” he said. Chloe had to kiss him for that.

“It’s just work, yeah?” she murmured against his lips, holding his face between her hands. “Just a sting.”

Lucifer nodded slightly. “Of course.” He did a good job of sounding unaffected, but Chloe was still suspicious.

“C’mon,” she said, gesturing inside the room with her head. “I’ve still gotta do my hair and makeup, and we need a proper plan.”

Chapter End Notes

This chapter contains a reference to chapter 11 of my fic 100 Ways: "You can have half" https://archiveofourown.org/works/12147564/chapters/28157877
((Also I headcanon Chloe as demisexual don’t @ me.))
Eyes Wide Open

Chapter Notes

Apologies for the late upload! I came down with a cold yesterday and passed out before I could post the chapter. I hope a bit of a longer chapter makes up for it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lucifer insisted on driving her to the venue. She did manage to talk him down from using his Corvette, so he drove her cruiser instead. It was almost worth wearing heels just for the moment when Lucifer opened the car door for her and she stepped out, feeling like she really was a socialite ready for her night on the town. The way Lucifer gave her another admiring once-over didn’t hurt either.

“You look breathtaking, Detective,” Lucifer said. Chloe smiled, looking at him through her lashes. “Now, you’re going to need this.” He held out the bug. He and Dan were going to be waiting in a surveillance truck as a failsafe in case things went south. The killer making his move in such a crowded venue was unlikely, but Chloe hadn’t put up much of a fight against having additional support. She had to admit she was sort of looking forward to it. She slid the bug into the ear hidden by her hair, which she’d left loose over her shoulder.

“Now, do you need a refresher on splooshing?” Lucifer asked, referencing one of their suspect’s interests. “It’s very simple. You just cover yourself in—”

“Nope, stop. I’m good,” Chloe said. Lucifer still struck her as nervous, and she sought for something to reassure him. “Except for…” She snatched his white pocket square from his jacket and tucked it into her own pocket, over her heart. She felt like a knight receiving a favour. “There,” she said, brushing down the front of her jacket and squaring her shoulders. With his handkerchief over her heart and the symbol of his vulnerability between her breasts, she couldn’t be more clear about keeping his memory with her. The surprise in his eyes gave way to warm approval. “I’m ready.”

“Yes, you are.” Chloe smirked at Lucifer’s admiring tone, getting into character. “Good luck,” he said, sounding sincere.

“Thank you,” she said, and gave him a final nod before making her way into the venue.

Upon entering, she was immediately put on edge. The dim lighting, fancy centerpieces, and crowds of well-dressed beautiful people served to remind her how out of her element she was. In contrast to her evening at Lux, she didn’t have Lucifer by her side, breezing through the room with his trademark charm. She took a deep breath and reminded herself that she could do this. It was just acting.

She made a beeline for the bar and ordered an IPA. On cue, she heard Lucifer make a derisive sound in her ear.

“Really, Detective? Beer?”

Chloe took a defiant sip. “It has a low alcohol content,” she muttered into her glass. “Not to mention it’s a safety thing.”
There was a pause. Just because such a thing would never happen at Lux didn’t mean the habit wasn’t still ingrained in her. She’d worked too many homicides. It was the main reason she’d agreed to wear a bug.

Lucifer was subdued when he got back on the mic. “Understood, Detective.”

Chloe cleared her throat. “Potential suspect moving in,” she said, eyeing the blond man in a striking red shirt who was moving up to the bar.

But it turned out he was a vegan, and therefore not a sushi lover like their target. She scanned the room, and then subtly shifted over to another man standing at the bar who also had blue eyes.

“You’re really tan,” she said, after greeting him. “Are you a surfer?”

“I’d like to surf in your eyes,” came the reply, and Lucifer scoffed.

“Dearie me, he’s lucky it’s not a crime to be a cheeseball,” he said, and Chloe hid a smile in her glass.

“Are my eyes such rough waters, then?” she asked, putting a little simper into her voice.

The man laughed. “Definitely worth the effort.”

Silence on the mic.

They spoke for a while longer, trading the usual icebreakers.

“Where would you take me, if we went to dinner?” Chloe asked.

“Well, there’s this great steakhouse—”

“Oh, sorry, I’m uh… pescatarian,” Chloe said, trying not to think of Lucifer saying almost those exact words to her. “Actually, have you tried the sushi? Is it good?”

“Nah, I hate fish.” Not their guy.

She extricated herself from the conversation as soon as she could, troubled by the continued silence from Lucifer, but there wasn’t much to be done. She mixed and mingled, trying to keep an eye out for suspects without looking too obvious, suffering through endless rounds of pickup lines. All she could think about was how much she missed Lucifer’s presence by her side.

Witnessing a man demolishing a plate of sashimi, she went over and struck up a conversation.

“Oh, I love travelling,” she said, once the initial pleasantries were dispensed with.

“Yeah? Any fun plans coming up?” the man, Benji, asked.

“Well, I was thinking of getting out of the city and taking my daughter camping,” she said, breaking the cardinal rule of never speaking about her child, but her persona was becoming exhausting. Luckily Benji didn’t seem to mind. His blue eyes never wavered.

“Cool! I love the outdoors; I’m a surfer,” he said.

“Really?” Chloe asked, schooling her face to show polite interest. Benji was slowly but surely checking off all of their suspect profile boxes. “I’ve always wanted to try surfing,” she said, starting to be concerned now because she hadn’t heard anything from the truck for several minutes and they
needed a plan to deal with the suspect. She started trying to think of a way she could coax him to come outside. "But I-" As she spoke, she happened to look up and immediately locked eyes with Lucifer across the room, who was standing watching them with an inscrutable look on his face. Her heart leapt to see him even as she wondered what the hell he was doing there. He practically stormed over to their table.

“Oh, hi, Lucifer,” she said carefully, on damage control, like this was a natural occurrence. “This is Benji. He just had four pieces of sashimi and we’re talking about surfing.” She tried to telegraph that he fit their profile.

“Ah, lovely,” Lucifer said, with a bland smile on his face. “Where do you stand on splooshing?”

Benji stepped back. “I’m sorry, what?”

“I mean smearing food over your body for sexual-”

“How would you even know to ask me that, man?”

“Benji…” Chloe began.

“Stay away from me,” Benji cried, and darted for the door.

Chloe leveled a look at Lucifer before giving chase. “Nice work.”

They pursued him out to the parking lot, where he seemed to be at least somewhat recognizable to the crowd, with people calling out his name. Luckily Dan was there and blocked his way.

“You have to save me from them,” Benji exclaimed, turning to point.

“Uh, actually, they’re with me,” Dan said, flashing his badge. He grinned at Lucifer. “Not bad for nada, huh?”

“Wait, she’s a cop?” Benji asked, turning back to look at her.

“Detective Decker, LAPD,” Chloe said, dropping her civilian persona with relief. “We want to talk to you about a murder.”

“You’re not a paparazzi?” Benji asked. “Oh, thank God.”

Lucifer scoffed and rolled his eyes. “Honestly, the things Dad gets credit for.”

Dan escorted Benji to the cruiser while Lucifer and Chloe followed behind.

“What were you doing, following me in there?” Chloe hissed.

Lucifer frowned. “We couldn’t hear a thing in the truck,” he explained.

Chloe took out the bug, examining it. “It must’ve shorted out or something, I was wondering why you were being so quiet.” She nudged him with her shoulder. “Oh well. We’ve got our guy now, all’s well that ends well.” She looked up at him, growing concerned when he didn’t respond to her ribbing.

“Yes,” he said noncommittally. “Everything turned out splendidly.”

That was all the personal talk they had time for, as they were soon preoccupied with bringing Benji to the station. Dan got him set up in interrogation while Chloe went off to change into a shirt she left
in her locker.

“Shame,” was Lucifer’s comment when she informed him where she was going, and Chloe chuckled, squeezing his hand.

She pulled her blazer back over the shirt, which was white with a floral pattern. She folded Lucifer’s pocket square carefully, feeling oddly emotional. She could tell Lucifer noticed she was still wearing the same blazer by the look he gave her as she handed back his pocket square. He accepted it with a formal bow, tucking it back next to his heart. Chloe blushed. Words would have spoiled the moment, so they went to question Benji.

It soon became clear that Benji wasn’t their killer - Lucifer didn’t even need to use his desire mojo. Given his testimony, Chloe revised her theory to include the possibility that Kim’s roommate Esther had killed Kim in a fit of jealousy over Benji.

She could tell that Benji’s words had really affected Lucifer, particularly those about Benji feeling like he was able to be himself with Kim. She wondered if Lucifer felt the same about her. She hoped so.

“I believe Lucifer is his truest self when he’s with you,” Linda had said, a while back when Chloe first learned the truth. She knew Lucifer struggled to accept that just because he had horrors in his past didn’t mean that represented his true self.

“Let’s go home; it’s late,” Chloe suggested after their interview with Benji was concluded. “We can talk to Esther in the morning.”

Lucifer didn’t respond immediately and she wasn’t sure how to interpret his expression. Seized by a sudden insecurity, she hastened to add, “I mean, you don’t have to come with me, if you’d rather go to Lux or whatever.” It was early by Lucifer’s standards and they were still feeling out the necessary balance between them and his night job.

“Do you want me to?” Lucifer asked, still with the same inscrutable expression.

“Not unless that’s what you want,” Chloe hedged, unsure of the correct response. Lucifer shook his head.

“Then by all means, lead the way, Detective,” he said, but didn’t exactly look happy about it.

Chloe did so, frowning. Why did it feel like their relationship was brand new all of a sudden? She wasn’t sure what to make of this change in Lucifer’s behaviour.

“So if Esther found out about Benji and Kim, got jealous, and lost control,” Chloe summarized, settling on the couch next to Lucifer with a drink, “that would fit the crime-of-passion theory.” She’d changed out of her party clothes into something more comfortable. Lucifer had removed his jacket but remained in his vest. He made a noncommittal sound in response.

With a mental shrug, Chloe pulled out her tablet and started going through Esther’s social media. From what Benji had said and what she’d observed herself it seemed the best way to understand her. There were thousands of photos, most of which consisted of Esther posing in front of a variety of exotic backgrounds, usually holding some kind of alcoholic beverage. Chloe gave up her attempt to read the captions after a few posts: there were only so many variations on “Craving gelato - Florence here I come!” she could withstand before starting to feel untethered from reality.

She scrolled past a post that was nothing but a gratuitous butt shot masquerading as a promotion for leggings and scoffed, moving on quickly. She was so caught up in her own insecurities that she
almost missed the way Lucifer made a similar sound, shifting and looking away. She looked over at him. She hadn’t forgotten their conversation in the car that afternoon but she also couldn’t help but notice that Esther very much fit the profile of someone Lucifer would have added to his cadre of “Lucifans” prior to their involvement.

“What are you thinking about?” she asked softly, recalling her intention to ask him that more consistently going forward. He sighed, swirling his drink before flicking through a few more of Esther’s pictures. “Interested?” She joked with great care, making sure her tone was as light as it could be. “I mean, you did turn her down this morning…”

Abandoning the tablet, Lucifer shot her a look, which she faced with a smile. He rolled his eyes. “Quite the opposite, I assure you,” he said. Chloe had no trouble believing him, even if she hadn’t before - there was a profound weariness in his voice that surprised her.

She put down her drink and twisted to face him more fully, the movement resulting in the tablet falling into Lucifer’s lap. “What is it?”

“It’s nothing,” Lucifer said, looking away again.

Chloe didn’t push, just put her hand on his jaw in reassurance. After a moment, he took a deep breath, leaning slightly into her touch.

“It’s difficult to explain,” he said at last. “I… I don’t believe I would have turned her down, before.” Chloe nodded, the habitual twinge of jealousy easily ignored. They were discussing hypotheticals here, and Esther was objectively hot, in a cookie-cutter sort of way.

“And that bothers you?” she guessed, when Lucifer didn’t continue immediately.

He lifted a shoulder in a half shrug. “It’s simply fact. A role I played often, to greater or lesser purpose.”

Chloe sat up, face creasing in concern. “So that’s all it was to you, then? Just a role?” I am a fulfiller of desires, Detective. She’d never thought… Had he felt like he had to…?

Whatever expression she wore made Lucifer’s eyes crinkle in a soft smile. He tucked a strand of her hair back from where it had fallen over her face. “Not like that. No need to get your knickers in a twist,” he said fondly. “I was willing. Enthusiastically so. But…” He seemed to search for words. “That’s all it was. A simple equation.”

And Chloe thought she knew where he was going with this; a revelation of sorts, that had been started way back in the days when they’d been investigating his lovers. The endless refrains of “it’s just sex” had clearly gotten under his skin, his affronted “maybe I’m just not memorable enough” tugging at her heartstrings in a way she’d been almost ready to acknowledge. At a time when she’d been struggling with reconciling his extensive sexual history with her own burgeoning feelings, the realization that he might be suffering from his own insecurities had been like finding an oasis in the desert.

Chloe wasn’t a psychologist, but she also wasn’t blind. She’d known for a while what she’d told Reese at Lux: that Lucifer’s constant drinking, drugs, and sex were a coping mechanism. A way for Lucifer to fill the hole his Family had left in his life. Chloe didn’t blame him - hadn’t, even when she’d believed he was human. Just felt concern for the self-destructive habits, with a side of frustration when they’d made working with him more difficult. But now…

Now, she understood. Understood just enough to know how little she actually understood. His life
was an experience so vast it dwarfed her human comprehension. If he’d found mortal pleasures to
dull the edge - even for just a moment, to bury himself under temporary fixes until he could forget
they were temporary - Chloe was glad. Glad that he’d been able to find a measure of solace.

“Still with the face,” Lucifer admonished. He touched her nose, very gently. “I don’t want your
pity.” The words were quiet, but with heat beneath.

Chloe shook her head. “No, Lucifer. Not at all.” She lifted her other hand to join the first, cupping
his face between them. “But that’s what’s going on, right? Because this-” she squeezed briefly “-is
different.”

Lucifer’s eyes were molten-bright as they held hers. “Yes, it is,” he said. He sounded like he was
about to say something more, so Chloe waited, but nothing was forthcoming. She smiled instead,
wondering if he knew what it did to a girl to be looked at like that, and leaned in to kiss him, long
and deep.

“I love you,” she said. She never forgot her personal mission to tell him as often as possible. His
hands came up to mirror hers, cradling her face with infinite tenderness, and he kissed her again.

She pulled at him blindly, knowing they had to get upstairs before this went any further. Lucifer rose
in a fluid motion, catching the tablet and tossing it to the side. As Chloe picked it up to turn it off, the
screen came to life, showing the latest image: Esther, standing in her living room in a white tracksuit.

“Small, compact, and surprisingly heavy for its size,” she mused, catching sight of the bookshelf in
the background. Lucifer blinked.

“What does... Ella's aunt Rosalita have to do with this?” he asked, sounding absolutely wrecked.
Chloe loved that she was able to affect him like this, with just a kiss.

“The missing murder weapon?” she reminded him with mock sternness. “Look at this.” She pointed
out the pink dumbbell sitting on the shelf in the background.

“Clever detective,” Lucifer hummed with pride, giving the screen the most perfunctory of glances.
“Seems like cause for celebration.”

Chloe leaned her head back to rest on his shoulder, looking at him coyly. “What did you have in
mind?” she teased. He bent down to brush her ear with his lips, making the hair on her arms stand on
end.

“It'll be waiting in your bed,” he murmured. He steadied her on her feet and was gone before Chloe
had a chance to blink. She grinned to herself and set about locking up for the night. The Devil was
waiting in her bed, and she couldn’t wait to join him.

* *

Lucifer lay awake in the early morning sunlight, watching it creep across the Detective’s bedclothes
and set her hair alight, like those ridiculous halos humans were forever painting on his brethren.
Chloe was peacefully asleep in his arms, nestled against his chest, and he couldn’t bring himself to
leave her, not even to begin preparing breakfast. He’d long considered the task his contribution to her
household, given his minimal sleep requirements and culinary expertise, but just this once, he wanted
to savour the moment.

He’d been with Chloe for a while now, much longer than he’d ever believed would be possible,
being drawn ever deeper into the web of domesticity that surrounded her. The more time passed, the
more of himself he knew he’d have to leave behind to escape. All he’d had to do to escape Hell was
cut off his wings. The process of extricating himself from Chloe’s life, once required, would be far more torturous.

Chloe was in love with him. That in and of itself was an impossibility, a miracle that he sometimes wanted to shout from the rooftops. He was bound to her in return, body and soul; he harboured no pretensions on that front. But he was also no fool. He knew it was only a matter of time. Every disagreement, every strange supernatural happenstance brought it closer: the moment when Chloe no longer wanted him in her life. When he’d walked in on her at the mixer, pretending to flirt with Benji, he’d caught a glimpse of his future. A future wherein Chloe moved on, found someone more stable, more normal. More… human. Someone she could truly share her life with. Someone who wasn’t him.

Chloe wanted him, now. It shone from her every word and gesture. To be wanted, to be loved like that was something beyond his experience. He hadn’t intended to broach the subject the night before, but Esther’s superficiality had thrown into sharp relief exactly what he had to return to when Chloe moved on. Chloe had held his face in her hands, told him that what they had was different. Of course it was; that was the problem. What made it so hard to let go.

He found himself wondering how it would all happen - in a single, dramatic moment, like his Fall? A clear ending? Or something longer, drawn out, where he gave way with grace before the human taking his place? He hoped he would be able to do that much, at least.

In the meantime, however, he would take what he was given. He was too invested now - he needed what she offered too much to walk away, even knowing how it was going to end, even if it meant standing on a rug he knew was going to be pulled out from underneath him; he just didn’t know when.

If this had been a deal, the stakes were hopelessly, laughably, tipped in his favour. It was why he tried to make a point of the small things he could do - bringing coffee, making breakfast, giving orgasms. Using his powers to assist her. He consoled himself, if one could call it that, with the knowledge that the scales would be balanced eventually, when Chloe no longer needed what he could offer.

Chloe stirred in his arms, inhaling softly as she began to wake, and he allowed himself a soft press of a kiss to her forehead. He knew she would be upset if he mentioned any of this to her, so he kept it to himself, locked away along with the memory of every golden moment they spent together.

They went to question Esther, who insisted the dumbbell had been Kim’s, leading to an offhand comment about the victim expecting some kind of windfall. Lucifer exchanged looks with Chloe. Despite her professed disinterest in anything involving her roommate, Esther had nevertheless provided them with their two biggest breaks in the case.

“So your roommate, who was waiting on a large sum of money, was murdered,” Chloe summarized, “and you didn’t think to tell us this during our initial investigation because…?”

Esther shrugged, her eyes wide and vacant. “I didn’t think it was important,” she said, twirling a lock of hair around her finger. Lucifer bit back a sigh and shook his head when Chloe arched an eyebrow at him, silently seeking confirmation. She wasn’t lying, and he found he couldn’t even muster the energy to condemn her self-absorbed ignorance and photographic facade. He hated liars, but he’d surrounded himself with them before and would again, when they were inevitably all that was left to him. The trick was not to look too closely beneath the haze of pleasure, and then everyone could have a good time.
“So, assuming the motive for Kim’s murder was financial,” Chloe mused as they walked back out to her car. “Maybe she was coming into some inheritance, and someone wasn’t happy about it… Lucifer, are you listening?”

Lucifer realized he’d allowed himself to become distracted and returned his attention to Chloe. “Yes, of course, Detective.”

“We need to look into this windfall,” Chloe said. “Are you okay?”

Lucifer shook himself mentally. He didn’t imagine Chloe would take any kinder to his thoughts in the middle of a case than she would have that morning. He smiled at her.

“Never better,” he said, and it was the truth; would be, up to and including the day she left him. “Lead the way, darling.”

Chloe did so, with a frown, but she nevertheless accepted his answer. It wasn’t until they were in the car that he realized his slip - he rarely used endearments while they were on the job. It had just happened so naturally. He supposed he should be relieved it wasn’t anything more overtly mawkish. He’d have to be on better guard in future.

They arrived at the precinct and were met by Ella.

“Give me something to do!” she demanded, upon them immediately as they exited the elevator.

Chloe blinked. “Okay… well, you could help us look into Kim’s financials. Her roommate said she was expecting a large sum of money - if we find out where it was coming from, we might uncover the trail of who wanted her dead.”

“Yup! You got it!” Ella vanished again while Chloe was still speaking.

Lucifer and Chloe looked at each other and shrugged.

“Ella,” Chloe said, and that was all the explanation necessary. Chloe threw herself into work as Lucifer brought them both coffee.

“Thanks, Lucifer,” Chloe said, smiling up at him. He smiled back, wondering, as he always did, at the simple joy he derived from the mundane task. As though her smile was its own reward. As he sat down across from her, he took a moment to appreciate her outfit - she’d chosen another blazer that morning, adorned with rows of small buttons, in a very fetching shade of forest green.

Chloe noticed him looking and arched an eyebrow.

Lucifer shrugged. “Just appreciating your dedication to the theme, Detective,” he said, and she rolled her eyes lightly.

That was the last bit of levity they engaged in for some time. Though they divided the work, their individual searches were fruitless. Chloe pushed back from her desk, sighing and eyeing her empty coffee cup glumly.

“Maybe Ella had more luck,” she said, tapping her pen on her desk before heading over to the lab.

Ella met them halfway. “I can’t find any sign of that windfall,” she exclaimed, and Chloe’s face fell. “As far as I can tell, there wasn’t any money coming Kim’s way.”

“Well, there’s gotta be something,” Chloe said, her voice showing her frustration. They’d exhausted
every lead they had. While it was equally likely that Esther was mistaken (she’d sent them to Top Meet, after all), it wasn’t like they had any better options.

“There is.”

The voice came from behind them, and Lucifer whirled to face his - not his Mother - Charlotte Richards. He fought to keep the frown off his face. When he’d suggested she try to keep her slate clean he hadn’t expected her to invade his place of work. The way she kept hanging around was exactly how his Mother had behaved, and it didn’t make drawing a clear distinction between the two any easier.

There had been so much going on at the end with his Mother, between her powers leaking out, her obsession with Heaven and the Sword, and his newfound relationship with Chloe. He hadn’t had a chance to process any of it before his kidnapping derailed everything. It hadn’t been until that night with the real Charlotte in the loft his Mother had bought for herself that he’d come to the realization that his Mother, misguided though she might have been, had been acting out of love. After eons of believing his Mother cared for him even less than his Father, to discover he’d been mistaken only after it was far too late to do anything about it…

_I will miss you. My angel._

Chloe had known. Chloe always knew. In the present, she cast a quick look at him before speaking.

“Charlotte,” she said, and Lucifer caught the subtle emphasis she put on the name that was for his ears alone. “What are you doing here?”

Charlotte took a deep breath. “I felt unsettled about lying to you,” she said to Ella, doing nothing to dispel the illusion of his Mother that still haunted him. “I thought I could make up for it by making myself useful.” She gave an uncertain little smile. “I _overheard_ you talking about finding a connection between the dead girl and that exclusive dating app. So, I did a little digging, and I found one-”

“Well, we’re long past that,” Chloe interrupted. She made an abortive motion like she wanted to take his hand before remembering where they were.

“Are you sure?” Charlotte faltered but she gamely pressed on. “I had to pull some strings to get this.” She handed over a clipboard with a sheaf of paper attached. “It’s an employment contract between Kim and the owner of the app, Mack… something. Drawn up two years ago, in total secrecy.”

Chloe accepted the papers and skimmed them, frowning. “But Mack said he’d never met Kim before she called him that night,” she said, glancing at him.

Lucifer nodded slightly.

“Oh, he met her, all right,” Charlotte said, sounding pleased now that they’d taken her offering. “Kim _hired_ him.”

“She _hired_ him?” Ella repeated, incredulous.

“And then hacked his app? It doesn’t make sense,” Lucifer said, ignoring how Charlotte turned her attention to him.

“Unless she didn’t hack it!” Ella suggested, excitement colouring her tone. “Top Meet’s security protocols are _impossible_ to crack!”
“Except for the person who built it,” Chloe continued, sounding like she was at least considering the idea.

“Exactly!”

“So if Kim created Top Meet,” Chloe mused, “then who the hell is Mack?”

“Well, he’s no computer whiz, that’s for sure,” Ella said, throwing his file back on the table. They’d claimed one of the conference rooms to continue their discussion. “C-minus student, barely graduated high school.”

“Voted Most Likely to Sleep His Way to the Top,” Lucifer read from the file with interest.

“And guess what he was doing before Top Meet?” Ella paused for effect as Chloe looked up at her. “Spin instructor.”

“Okay…” Chloe took in all the information slowly. It certainly fit with the profile of the man they’d met. Yet another fake. “Why would Kim hire him, though, if she was this genius computer engineer? What does he bring to the equation?” she asked.

“Uh, that?” Charlotte said, pointing at Mack’s picture. Chloe’s lips thinned. “Look at him, and then look at her,” Charlotte continued. “If both came to you asking for funding for an elite dating app, whose project would you invest in?”

“Well, yeah, if you’re being all superfish and whatcse,” Ella said, clearly as uncomfortable as Chloe with the notion of judging people by their looks.

“Which many people are,” Chloe said, rising. “Maybe Kim felt she wasn’t fancy-shmancy enough, so she hid the fact that she was the creator and hired pretty boy Mack here to be the facade.”

“In secret,” Ella agreed. “Which explains why it didn’t come up in the background check.”

“So Kim’s insecurities allowed Mack to take the credit.” There was a strange note in Chloe’s voice.

“And the money.” Charlotte sat on the edge of the table.

“Which she wanted to take back. That’s the windfall she was expecting!” Ella said.

“It’s strong motive for him to kill her,” Chloe said, looking at Lucifer.

“But didn’t his alibi check out?” Ella wanted to know.

“He could easily have convinced one of his employees to lie for him,” Chloe pointed out. There was a pregnant pause as they all thought about how easy it was for people like him to get away with murder.

“It’s a solid theory,” Chloe said after a moment. “But it’s still just a theory. We need proof.”

Ella sighed. “Really wish we had that murderous dumbbell right about now.”

“Well, if Mack did it, I think we know where to find it,” Lucifer said without thinking, caught up in the case. Everyone looked at him, Charlotte with interest and approval, and Lucifer quickly looked away.

“Uh, we do?” Ella questioned.
“There’s a good chance the murder weapon is at Mack’s place,” Charlotte agreed. “Seasoned killers know to leave it at the scene, but first-timers tend to take it with them.” She shook her head. “I can’t count the number of times I’ve allegedly helped clients un-make that mistake.”

They all stared at her incredulously, Lucifer with a flash of nostalgia so strong he considered fleeing the room. His Mother really could not have chosen a more perfect host.

“Really?” Chloe said flatly.


Chloe kept them moving on. “We need a search warrant for Mack’s place,” she said.

“Yeah, good luck with that,” Charlotte said, unwittingly echoing Mack.

“Excuse me?” Chloe returned, sounding less and less impressed.

“Mack’s lawyer will argue that all you have is conjecture based on circumstantial evidence, and any judge will agree. You’re never getting that warrant.”

Chloe paused, thinking. She shot an apologetic glance at Lucifer that he wasn’t sure what to make of until she said, “Well, then it’s a good thing that I’m exactly our killer’s type.”

Lucifer’s blood ran cold. “Detective!” The protest was out of his mouth before he could catch up.

Chloe looked at the other two occupants of the room. “Okay, great. Thank you so much, guys; we’ll take it from here.” She practically dragged him away.

“Detective, I must protest,” he said, once they were safely at her desk. Chloe levelled a look at him. “Lucifer, this is my job, remember? You don’t get to protest.”

“I should think I bloody well do,” he spluttered. “You’re suggesting walking into a killer’s house and searching for the murder weapon!”

Chloe opened the drawer on her desk with an excessive amount of force. “I don’t have a choice!” she exclaimed. “Charlotte’s right. There’s no way we’re getting that warrant. Infiltrating Mack’s place while he still doesn’t know we’re onto him is the only way we can take him down.”

“At least let me go,” Lucifer offered desperately. Apparently failing to locate whatever she was looking for, Chloe slammed the drawer shut.

“Lucifer, he as good as asked me out yesterday, and turned you down. If anyone’s going to get into his place it’s going to be me.” She folded her arms. “I really hope that this is just you being protective and not jealous, but neither has a place here.” She spoke over his wordless rebuttal. “We have to get this guy,” she said, more softly. “I appreciate your concern but you have to let me do my job.”

Lucifer subsided perforce as Chloe pulled out her phone.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

“We have to make sure he’s gonna take the bait,” Chloe muttered, before her demeanour completely changed. “Yes, this is Detective Chloe Decker calling for Mack Slater, about the Kim Jones murder? Yeah, I’ll hold.”

“Detective,” Lucifer hissed, but Chloe held up a dissuading hand.
“Detective Decker!” Mack came on the line and Lucifer wanted to reach into the phone and grab him by the throat. “What can I do for you? I must admit I wasn’t expecting to hear from you again.”

“I - uh - don’t really have any further questions about the case.” Somehow it was still a surprise to see her slip into the simpering, flirty persona so effortlessly. He understood it was acting but it had even fooled him on occasion. “I was wondering if we could speak more… privately?”

If it weren’t for the situation Lucifer would have applauded. Mack wasted no time in answering.

“Uh, wow, sure. Yeah, absolutely, come by my place.”

“Great,” Chloe said brightly, as Lucifer watched her eyes burn with triumph. “I’ll see you later then.”

“Hey, uh…” Mack said, just as Chloe was about to hang up. “What about that partner of yours?”

Lucifer stiffened as Chloe looked at him. “He won’t be a problem,” she said, with a significant look at him. His insides grew cold.

After they hung up, neither of them seemed able to look at the other.

“I’ve… I’ve gotta get ready,” Chloe said, all of her earlier confidence gone. Lucifer hated the thought that it was his presence that had caused the change. “Are you going to come or…?”

“Of course,” Lucifer answered. As much as the thought of watching Chloe get ready for her “date” rankled, the alternative where he went home to be at loose ends was much worse. When Chloe looked down to hide her expression of relief, he knew he’d made the right decision.

“You know I didn’t mean it, right?” Chloe said once they were in the car. “Any of it.”

Lucifer nodded once. “You’ve nothing to fear on that count,” he said. In truth, jealousy was the furthest thing from his mind. Unlike with Benji where he could see a glimpse of his future, this time his sole concern was for Chloe’s safety. Perhaps this was also his future, being sidelined as Chloe risked herself on the job, but they were partners. He felt he had a pretty good chance of being there for her most of the time.

Chloe nodded, turning back to the road. Now that he thought about it, he was actually somewhat pleased by her wording. He won’t be a problem, she’d said; not attempting to hide or deny their relationship. Chloe, of course, was under no compunction never to lie but the fact that she hadn’t was… oddly touching.

For the second time in as many days, Lucifer found himself at Chloe’s as she changed. When she pulled on a black silk shirt, he blinked.

“That’s… the shirt you wore to the Players club,” he said, hit by a wave of memories. Chloe’s fingers brushing his scars. The burn of the bullet in his leg. The unexpected wetness of blood.

Chloe looked down at herself. “Oh. Yeah, I guess it is.” She shrugged. “It’s not like I have that many nice shirts that aren’t for work,” she said. “I never did get the stain out of the white one.” She cleared her throat.

Lucifer stared. The white one. The one she’d worn thinking it would be appropriate club attire. You’ll stick out like a sore cop. The one she’d put back on for their stakeout. Why would I be scared of something I don’t believe in?

“Lucifer.” Chloe’s voice cut through his musings. He looked back at her face. “I’m going to be fine,”
she said solemnly, placing a hand on his arm.

He inhaled her scent, let her pull him closer. “Will you at least wear a wire?” he murmured, the words ruffling her hair. He refused to think about worst case scenarios.

Chloe sighed. “I can’t,” she said, though it sounded slightly regretful. “I can’t take the chance he might notice; if he did it would put me at risk.”

A low sound of displeasure escaped him. “I still think I should go with you.”

Chloe pulled back slightly. “That would definitely make him suspicious. You can’t, Lucifer. We can’t risk him getting rid of the weapon before we can get our hands on it.” She squeezed his arms. “I need you to accept that I can do this on my own.”

His eyes snapped to hers and he barked a laugh that sounded harsh even to his ears. “It’s not a question of your abilities,” he said, stung. “I just…” He cut himself off in frustration.

“I couldn’t bloody live with myself if something happened to you and I wasn’t there.”

“Hey.” Chloe touched the side of his face, looking at him like she knew what was going through his head. Maybe she did. She knew what he’d done at the hospital when she was poisoned, after all. Then her eyes narrowed. “You’re going to follow me no matter what I say, aren’t you?”

Lucifer couldn’t deny it. They’d been around that particular block before, as well. Chloe closed her eyes as though praying for strength. Took one breath. Two.

“...Fine,” she said at last, and Lucifer blinked, wondering if he’d heard her correctly. “I guess it would be better to go in with some kind of backup,” she said. “But I don’t want you moving in unless there’s clear and present danger.” Her tone was stern. Lucifer could have kissed her, relief rushing through him.

To his surprise, Chloe did it for him, rising on her tiptoes to press her lips to his. “I love you,” she said when they pulled apart, and it resonated in his chest like it did every time she said it. “Even if you are a stubborn pain in the ass sometimes.”

Lucifer smirked. “Pot - kettle, my love,” he said. A smile broke across Chloe’s face like the dawn. “At least about the stubborn part.”

Chloe leaned her head against his shoulder. “I’m sorry,” she said. Lucifer’s grip tightened automatically.

“Whatever for?”

Chloe sighed. “It’s just… we just got done with my freakout over you getting hurt, and then here I am arguing with you over the same thing. I feel like such a hypocrite.”

Lucifer pressed his lips to her hair. He already loved her more than mortal words could express and this was yet another example of why. “It’s all right,” he murmured. He felt her lift a shoulder in a shrug.

“It’s just a touchy subject for me, I guess,” she continued. “I had to put up with so much of it with Dan… Feeling like he had to protect me because he was “the man,” or whatever. I know you’ve never seen me that way.”

“Indeed not,” Lucifer concurred, feeling the old habitual flash of irritation at Daniel. “I’ve never had any doubt as to your capabilities.” Chloe squeezed him tighter and looked up at him with an
adoration of which he still felt undeserving. “It’s merely that I have capabilities of my own, all of which are utterly useless if I’m not around. Better together, and all that?”

Chloe nodded. “You’re right,” she said. “I’ll... try to keep that in mind. And I promise I’ll be careful.”

Lucifer kissed her again, a flutter of nervousness returning. “Shall we?” he asked, and Chloe let him lead the way out to the car.

Several hours later, Chloe was ready to tear her hair out. She’d managed to keep herself from reminding Lucifer not to make a scene as she’d dropped him off halfway up the massive drive, well out of sight of Mack’s mansion. After their earlier conversation, he deserved the benefit of the doubt. Seeing his warm regard as he wished her, “Good luck, Detective,” while exiting the car was the last nice thing to happen so far. Mack hadn’t been terribly difficult to deal with but her nine year old was a better conversationalist.

Finally forced to admit defeat, she waited until it was acceptable to retreat to the bathroom again and phoned Lucifer.

He picked up on the first ring. “Everything all right, Detective?”

“I can’t find it anywhere!” she hissed. “I checked the toilet, the freezer, even snuck downstairs to search the basement. Nothing!”

“Have you checked the fireplace?” Lucifer asked immediately. “I can see the chimney from here.”

“What?” Chloe peeked her head out the door to make sure the coast was clear before making her way to the fireplace. Mack had gone to get himself another beer and could come back at any second. “There’s no way...” She broke off as she reached inside and sure enough, found the distinctive shape. She’d heard of hiding things in plain sight but this was just ridiculous. “Got it.”

“Good; now get out of there,” Lucifer said urgently, but Chloe heard a telltale click behind her and whirled, dropping her phone.

“I knew it,” Mack said. “I thought you were acting strange since you got here, so I thought I’d go grab this just in case.” He indicated the gun. Chloe slowly put the dumbbell on the floor before raising her hands. She could hear Lucifer’s tinny voice through the speaker. “Detective? Chloe?!” She felt badly for worrying him but was thankful the call hadn’t cut off. There was still a chance for a save here if she kept Mack talking.

Fortunately, that didn’t appear to be an issue. “Genius hiding spot, right?” Mack asked, nodding towards the fireplace.

“One good idea doesn’t make you a genius, Mack,” Chloe said, rising. “But then, you’re used to taking more credit than you deserve.” She took a deep breath. If nothing else, she could make sure his confession was passed on. “I know Kim created Top Meet.”

“Oh yeah?” Mack scoffed. “You know she was gonna destroy it, too?”

Chloe’s face must have shown her incomprehension, because Mack grimaced. “She sneaks onto the site, goes on one good date, and then wants to make the app more accessible. So stupid!”

“What’s stupid about thinking someone deserves to be loved for who they are?” Chloe asked,
thinking of Lucifer. “Kim was the brains, Mack. You’re just the face.” She wondered if she should start tapping out SOS with her foot or something.

“Just the face?” As expected, the key to stalling Mack was to needle his pride. “Kim was Wozniak; I’m Jobs. No one gives a crap about Wozniak.”

Chloe was trying to figure out what to say to that, when there came a sudden crash. She hit the deck, just in case Mack fired reflexively. She registered Lucifer’s voice above her with a rush of relief.

“Hey, Mack. Heads up!” Chloe looked up in time to see Lucifer toss something at Mack; amazingly, Mack dropped the gun to catch it. Chloe wasted no time in scrambling for the weapon, rolling to her feet to point it at Mack’s head. She looked at Lucifer, who’d burst through the glass door and, judging by what Mack was holding, thrown a sculpture of Mack’s own head at him.

“Nice save, partner,” she said, panting. Lucifer’s mouth twitched and he gave a little bow.

“Don’t mention it, Detective.”

Mack looked between the two of them in apparent confusion. “So… there is something going on between you two.”

Lucifer and Chloe exchanged another glance.

“Yup.”

“Yes.”

Chapter End Notes

A bit more Lucifer POV this time! Just a quick reminder that this fic IS finished and I will continue to post chapter updates weekly. After that I do intend to continue with the rewrite even though we now have S4. After that, I think there is some stuff that came up in S4 that I should probably address even though my characters begin it in a completely different place. I haven't quite decided what I want to do with that yet - whether work it into a fic or write a quick addendum.

That said, let me know what you thought about the changes this chapter! I thought it was important to show where Lucifer was at in regards to his headspace. If you've been thinking he's been accepting all this too easily - it's because he isn't. Don't worry though, he's not going to pre-emptively leave Chloe or anything like that: he's intending to get as much out of this as he can. You'll just have to wait and see how he gets convinced otherwise :)
I Want to Love You

Chapter Notes

The title of this chapter comes from Lenachka's song of the same name which I think is perfect for Deckerstar.

Arresting Mack and taking him back to the precinct involved a lot of wearisome protestations of innocence and threats of legal action. It didn’t leave a lot of time for discussion. Once the booking officer had taken Mack away, both Lucifer and Chloe were able to breathe a sigh of relief.

Chloe looked at Lucifer. “Well, go on. You can say it. ‘I told you so.’”

Lucifer shook his head, though he was smirking. “You also acquitted yourself admirably, Detective. I’m willing to call this one a team effort.”

She smiled at him, hoping her expression would be able to convey the words she couldn’t say at work. The moment was marred by the sight of a series of thin scrapes across the side of Lucifer’s face and neck. Chloe winced. Of course, glass had gotten everywhere.

“Shit. Lucifer, I’m…”

“Don’t say you’re sorry,” Lucifer interjected, looking at her flatly. “It hardly hurts. Really, this time.”

Chloe gave a watery chuckle. “I’d feel better if you got checked out by medical,” she said. Lucifer scoffed, and Chloe folded her arms. “I mean it, Lucifer. There could still be bits of glass in the cuts.”

She was briefly diverted by the sight of Ella walking into her lab and bit her lip, coming to a decision.

“I…” she hesitated. “I was thinking about telling Ella. About us.” The words were exactly as difficult as she thought they’d be, and Chloe was of two minds. She still didn’t really want to do it. But she couldn’t deny the little voice in her head telling her she was being a bad friend. “Not right now, obviously,” she said, still watching Ella through the glass. Not at work. Not when Lucifer was sitting there injured, however minor the injuries might be.

When she looked back, Lucifer’s face had gone carefully neutral. She frowned.

“What is it?” she asked. “Do you not want me to tell her?”

“You may tell whomever you like,” Lucifer said in a placid tone. But it did nothing to lessen her concern.

“That’s not what I asked, Lucifer,” she said. Lucifer made a careless gesture.

“The decision to inform or not inform is completely up to you,” he repeated.

Chloe’s eyes narrowed. “You don’t have any thoughts on it?” He hadn’t actually said whether or not he minded, just that she was free to do as she wished, which wasn’t the same thing. “You’re allowed a say too, you know.”
Lucifer shook his head. “And I say it’s up to you,” he said, still without changing expression at all. She sighed. “Lucifer, this isn’t some kind of free will thing, or whatever. I really want to know what you think.”

“My opinion, in this case, is irrelevant,” Lucifer assured her.

“It’s not irrelevant if I’m asking you for it!” Chloe exclaimed. Lucifer just looked steadily back at her, saying nothing. It spurred her to do something she was sure she would later regret.

“You should go get checked out,” she said, pushing herself to her feet. “I’m going to have a word with Ella.”

Lucifer just nodded, watching her with a frustratingly inscrutable expression. She’d been half expecting to call his bluff but he made no move whatsoever to stop her. She felt his eyes on her the entire way across the bullpen.

Of course, that left Chloe in the position of actually having to talk to Ella. She knew she could come up with some contrived case-related reason but she knew a part of her would always be mad at herself for chickening out.

“Hey, Decker, what’s up?” Ella chirped as Chloe entered the lab. She was bopping away to whatever was playing in her earbud as she manipulated what looked like a delicate experiment involving petri dishes.

“I… um… wanted to tell you something,” she said, wondering if this was what it felt like to be in high school.

“Oh, my God.” Though her voice was muffled by her hands, the slightly inappropriate sentiment was still fully audible. Chloe winced, suddenly glad that Lucifer wasn’t present. “Oh, my God. Oh, my God!”

Chloe shifted uncomfortably. “Was that important?” she asked, indicating the wreckage of the petri dish.

Ella hardly even blinked. “Just a personal experiment. I’d been running for weeks. Nothing important. Because HOLY BANANAS!” Chloe suddenly found herself squeezed in a vise grip, wincing as Ella shouted in her ear. “Finally!”

Chloe reeled as Ella stepped back, grinning from ear to ear. “I knew this day would come. I just knew it! I can’t even tell you what I’m thinking right now!”
Chloe raised her hands, half in warning, half to ward off any other advances. “We’re just sort of trying to keep it quiet at work, y’know?”

Ella nodded, suddenly solemn as the grave. “Absolutely. 1000 percent - no one’ll hear about it from me.” She mimed locking her lips and tossing away the key.

Chloe smiled carefully. “Thanks, Ella. We wanna play it safe. It’s not really appropriate for work anyway. I just didn’t feel right not telling you.”

Ella nodded along before gasping and pressing a hand to her mouth again. “Oh, crap, and here I was going on and on about Pierce in front of you…”

Chloe grasped her hand. “It’s okay, Ella; no harm done. But Pierce is a big part of the reason we’re keeping quiet about this at work. So please, please remember it’s a secret?”

Ella was nodding frantically again. “For sure. For sure. I totally understand. But hey!” She pointed at Chloe. “Tribe night soon. You’re totally dishing all the deets.”

Chloe made a face. She wasn’t sure about spilling ALL the details.

Ella’s eyebrows shot up. “Just, just one quick question,” she said hurriedly. “When he’s with you, does he break character at all? Or is he still all…” She made an obscure gesture.

Chloe schooled her expression. “No talking about this at work,” she reminded her friend teasingly.

“Oh, my God!” Ella exclaimed again. “He totally doesn’t. You’re totally into it. Oh, my God!”

“Not a word,” Chloe reprimanded, but she winked as she exited the lab to the accompaniment of Ella squealing under her breath.

Back out in the bullpen, however, she was slammed back to the reality of Lucifer’s odd behaviour, as he studied her with a blank expression. She could tell he hadn’t gone to get checked out, but she was tired of fighting with him over that and whatever his issue with Ella was.

“Do you want to come home with me tonight?” she asked, in a voice loud enough for him to hear. Lucifer startled, as though he hadn’t been expecting her to speak. “And I swear, Lucifer, if you try and make it about me again I’ll decide in favour of you staying over.”

Her fervent not quite threat was met with a wide-eyed stare from Lucifer.

“I… Very well, Detective,” he said. “Lead the way.”

Chloe sighed, and wanted to unleash a withering glare, but it would have felt akin to kicking a puppy - he was still looking at her in bafflement and all her anger drained away unconsciously.

She turned on her heel without another word, not looking back, even when Ella shot her a subtle thumbs up to see the two of them leaving together. The car ride home was awkward and stilted, and when they arrived Chloe practically dragged Lucifer into the bathroom, tossing a quick greeting to Trixie over her shoulder.

“Hi, Mom! Hi, Lucifer.” Her daughter appeared in the door as Chloe was hunting for the tweezers. “Why are you in the bathroom?”

“Lucifer needs a bit of first aid, baby,” Chloe explained, with a hard look at Lucifer. “Shouldn’t take a minute. Did you want to pull out the Monopoly stuff before bed?”
“Sure!” Trixie scampered off as Lucifer blinked at Chloe.

“What…?”

Chloe hoisted herself onto the counter and started inspecting the cuts closely. “You are welcome here, Lucifer,” she said in a fierce tone as she plucked tiny shards of glass from his neck. “Always. I understand if you want to be somewhere else, but you never need an excuse. Or permission. Not any more.”

Lucifer sucked in a sharp breath, but Chloe wasn’t done. “I just wish I knew what you were afraid of. I thought I knew, but this isn’t that. I don’t want to always be holding the main weight of this relationship. You might think you’re making it easier for me, but you’re not. I need to know that you’re a part of this. That you’re not just trying to make me happy.”

He stared at her in the mirror with blank incomprehension. “What else is there?” he asked, with total sincerity, and her heart bled for him.

“Well, your happiness, for starters.”

He frowned. “I told you, Chloe. I am happy. Happier than I’ve been in the entirety of my existence.”

“Yeah, well.” Chloe ripped open a disinfectant pad and pressed it to his cuts. He hissed in discomfort. “I think you’d be the first to admit that isn’t a very high bar.”

He huffed a laugh, ceding her point, but the frown remained. “That makes it invalid?”

Chloe placed a bandage over the abraded area, smoothing her fingers lightly across it. “No, Lucifer. Of course not. I’m happy that you’re so happy. Truly, I am. I’m just saying there’s room for improvement.”

To her surprise, Lucifer pulled back from her touch. “To what end?” he demanded. “The more I allow myself to get sucked in, the more-” He cut himself off with a jerk of his head, heading for the kitchen where he poured himself a drink while Chloe was still trying to catch up mentally.

Needled, she followed him into the kitchen. “What is this about?” she asked. She knew he was committed. She knew it. But he was talking like someone who was prepared to walk away at any moment. “Is it a domestics thing? Is it about me being human? Because holding yourself back seems like a really shitty way to-”

“It isn’t,” Lucifer said, setting down the bottle. His voice was low and hollow. He stared unseeing from his glass before looking up to meet her eyes. Chloe felt a jolt of power course through her. “There is only so much I am willing to live without.”

The words tore through her and she took a moment to breathe. “But you just said-”

“It is a certainty that I will lose you to time,” Lucifer said, his tone a placid surface belying dangerous currents. “But I am equally certain it is only a matter of time before…” He stopped himself again, took a drink. “I am simply prepared for… inevitabilities.”

Chloe suddenly felt cold. “What are you talking about?”

Lucifer took a deep breath, studying her face as though memorizing it. “You deserve someone better,” he said at last. “Someone normal, and mortal, and human. Someone who can truly share your life, who doesn’t turn it into a supernatural shambles.” He shrugged, his eyes looking haunted and old. “Someday, you’re going to realize that.”
Chloe closed her eyes and counted to ten. Took a deep breath. When she opened her eyes again, Lucifer wasn’t looking at her any more.

“What I deserve,” she said, her voice shaking only slightly as Lucifer’s eyes snapped back to hers, “is to be able to decide what I want. What I want is you, Lucifer. For a lot longer than I think either of us are aware.” She shook her head. “How many times do I have to tell you I’m all in before you believe it?”

“It’s not a question of belief,” Lucifer said, stung. “Eventually, however…”

Mindful of Trixie in the next room, Chloe kept her voice low with difficulty. “Yeah, well, I’ll make sure to tell you as soon as I find someone else who’s willing to literally go to Hell for me.” She held up a hand to forestall Lucifer speaking. “And before you say it, no, this is not obligation or anything like that. You said it yourself - there’s a connection between us. I didn’t deny it within hours of meeting you. I could’ve fought harder against you joining the force, but I didn’t because I liked working with you. I’m used to being the odd one out - you had my back. And that has nothing to do with fate, or your Father, or whatever. That’s just us. Two people who are there for each other. No matter what. That’s what I want, and that’s what I have. And I’m not going to walk away from that.”

She came around the counter to take Lucifer’s face in her hand. He stared at her, wide-eyed, all trace of bitterness gone. “I know I’m just a human,” she said softly. “But have you ever known me to lie?”

His own words, from their first case after he’d returned from Vegas, from their sting that wasn’t really a sting. She saw them hit him, take him aback. She waited, knowing that he had a perfect memory of everything she’d ever said to him and that all of it was under review.

“Well, you did say you’d never have sex with me,” Lucifer said, with a sudden smirk, and Chloe snorted a laugh. She pressed closer into his welcoming embrace, and Lucifer shook his head. “But no. Never. Not about something that mattered.”

“Then maybe I’m not lying about this?” she murmured. Lucifer cradled her head in his hands.

“Chloe Decker,” he intoned, the syllables of her name making her shiver, “are you angling to make a deal?”

“Depends,” she replied, tilting her head up, baring her neck. “Is it working?”

He actually growled, nuzzling her neck before claiming her lips. Chloe lost herself in the kiss, until a throat was pointedly cleared behind them.

They broke apart to see Trixie watching them expectantly. “The game’s set up,” she said. “Are you guys coming or what?”

Chloe loosened her collar, embarrassed at having let herself get so carried away in front of Trixie. Lucifer looked distinctly ruffled.

“Sorry, monkey,” Chloe said. “We’ll be right there.”

“So how’d the party go, Mom?” Trixie asked as they settled themselves.

Chloe blinked. She’d almost forgotten. “Uhh, it went okay,” she hedged, not wanting to bring up any uncomfortable memories for Lucifer. She understood his behaviour far better after his outburst in the kitchen. “The bad guy wasn’t there, but we caught him in the end.” Trixie grinned proudly, and Chloe sensed a teachable moment. “It went much better once I stopped overthinking it and started being myself,” she admitted. “You know, it can be scary sometimes, but being who you really are is
never a bad idea.”

Lucifer froze beside her. She smiled reassuringly at him before selecting her race car, saying nothing.

“You can be the top hat this time, Lucifer,” Trixie said magnanimously, and Chloe studied her daughter for any hint of nefarious intent behind the offer.

Lucifer cleared his throat. “That is… generous of you, child, but I believe I shall continue with this piece,” he said, examining the scotty dog. “I find I’ve grown rather attached.”

Lucifer was a quick study - he beat them both handily this time.

“Does this mean I can claim a forfeit of you, then?” Lucifer asked Chloe with a sly expression, and her eyes instinctively cut over to Trixie, who was watching them, the picture of innocence.

“I want Lucifer to read me a bedtime story,” Trixie announced.

Lucifer rose, looking aggrieved. “Am I not the winner, here?”

Trixie’s pout was quickly reaching epic proportions. “But it’s your turn!”

Chloe was briefly blindsided by the image of a world in which she and Lucifer lived together and shared bedtime duties, such that she nearly missed the uncertain look Lucifer sent her.

“Well, if it’s all right with your mother,” he said, the words belying his veneer of confidence. Chloe pretended to consider it, trying to keep her runaway feelings under control.

“If you think you can handle it,” she said teasingly, still willing to give him an out if he needed it.

Lucifer rolled his eyes. “I ruled Hell for eons, darling, I think I can manage a single human offspring, no matter how conniving she may be.”

Trixie grinned and was off like a shot to her bedroom, clearly concerned Lucifer might change his mind if she stuck around. Chloe rose, walking past Lucifer who seemed at a loss as to what to do next now that it came to the point, still doubting his place in the domestic scene. She went to the kitchen and filled a glass of water for Trixie, before holding it out to him. He blinked at her.

“Go on, then,” she urged gently, kissing his cheek, and Lucifer went toward Trixie’s room like a man preparing for battle.

It was adorable, and heartbreaking, and Chloe strained her ears to overhear as she started putting away the Monopoly board.

“Can’t believe your mother allows you to be exposed to this tripe,” Lucifer was complaining. “I mean, really. *Fairies*?”

“Fairies aren’t real?” Trixie asked, clearly hiding disappointment.

“Certainly not - at least not as this *Colfer* person portrays them.”

“Don’t skip ahead!” Trixie exclaimed - Lucifer was no doubt speed reading the entire novel. “You’ll spoil it!”

“Believe me, child, I have very little investment in the factually incorrect and wildly unlikely story of a young imaginary human, no matter how cleverly named.” But Chloe suspected something had caught his interest from his tone of voice.
“Just read it, please, Lucifer?” Trixie wheedled.

“Very well.” Lucifer sighed and began.

“Ho Chi Minh City in the summer. Sweltering by anyone’s standards. Needless to say, Artemis Fowl would not have been willing to put up with such discomfort if something extremely important had not been at stake…”

The game put away, Chloe lingered in the living room with a glass of wine, listening to Lucifer’s voice caress the words. He didn’t do voices, but he gave each character a distinct accent: Artemis a faint Irish lilt, Butler a thicker version of Lucifer’s own British pronunciation. Chloe found herself getting drawn into the story, despite having read it herself already multiple times.

As the chapter ended, Chloe approached the room, ready to intervene if necessary. It wasn’t; Trixie was practically asleep, curled into Lucifer, who was contorted in order to fit his lanky frame onto the bed, his arm holding the book thrown across the headboard. He looked up at Chloe as she leaned against the door frame, his entire demeanour practically screaming his uncertainty.

Chloe, for her part, hoped her eyes weren’t as wet as they felt, her smile trembling with emotion at the sight she never thought she’d get to see. Lucifer shook himself slightly.

“Doubts assuaged,” Lucifer read, “Butler returned to his copy of Guns and Ammo, leaving his employer to unravel the secrets of the universe.”

He closed the book with finality and they seamlessly traded places, Chloe murmuring a quiet goodnight as she smoothed her daughter’s hair away from her forehead. She automatically reached to turn out the light and then realized that Lucifer had never bothered to turn it on. She held in a laugh - that could certainly come in handy.

When she emerged, Lucifer was on the porch with a cigarette, and she pattered around waiting for him to finish so she could lock up. It struck her how utterly natural the whole thing felt, as though they’d been doing this for years.

Chloe hesitated inside the door to her room, holding it closed as Lucifer slipped out of his suit jacket and started to unbutton his vest.

“That really meant a lot to me, what you did,” she said quietly. Lucifer paused, tilting his head as he looked at her.

“I’d as good as promised,” he said, and Chloe smiled, her throat suddenly tight.

“Exactly,” she whispered, feeling something small, yet significant, fall into place within her, making her body light.

“Are you all right, love?” Lucifer approached her slowly, his shirt partially unbuttoned, and Chloe nodded.

“Yes,” she replied, wrapping her arms around him and nodding into his chest. “Yes. I love you.”

When she pulled back, Lucifer’s expression was still slightly concerned. “And I, you,” he said carefully. Chloe rose on her toes to kiss him.

“Thank you,” she said, for everything and nothing, before slipping into the bathroom.
In bed, Lucifer sat up slightly instead of wrapping himself around her immediately like he usually did.

“You should know,” he began formally, “that deal was unofficial. I’ll not hold you to it.”

Chloe looked at him, unsurprised at his attitude. “I would, though,” she said seriously. “Make a proper deal. If it would help convince you.”

Lucifer’s eyes flashed in alarm. “No,” he said at once. “No. I don’t want that with you.”

Chloe nodded, resting her head on his shoulder. With him, like this, in bed with his arms around her, she felt like she’d found what she’d been searching for her whole life, and she sought fervently for some way to make him believe it.

“I wish your desire mojo worked on me,” she mused. Lucifer startled beneath her, and she shifted out of his embrace, turning to sit facing him so he could see her sincerity. “Just once, I wish you could ask me my greatest desire, so that you would know. That what I want, more than anything, is to have you in my life. To have you and Trixie, safe, and loved, and happy. Maybe if I told you that when you asked, you might finally believe me.”

“Chloe,” Lucifer breathed, reaching for her with a trembling hand. She caught it and brought it to her face.

“Oh!” she exclaimed before he could speak further, struck by a sudden thought. “What if it could?” She sat up straighter, dropping his hand.

Lucifer’s eyebrows knitted. “I don’t follow.”

“I’ve never wanted it to work on me before,” she said excitedly. “What if I wished really hard?”

“I… don’t know,” Lucifer hedged, looking, if possible, even more troubled than before.

“We could try it, though?” Chloe was warming to the idea.

Lucifer was silent for a long while. She could tell he was at least a little tempted by the chance to peek behind a door that had for so long remained closed to him. Her breath quickened. It would be so easy for him to just lean in and ask. She might finally get to know what it was like, to feel the compulsion behind his layered tones, as she deliberately opened her mind to him…

“No.” Lucifer’s tone was firm. Chloe blinked at him in surprise.

“No?”

If Lucifer felt conflicted at all, he hid it well. “If there were even a chance of it working, there would be no way to take it back,” he said. Before Chloe could confirm that was what she wanted, he shook his head. “Your word ought to be enough for me. Is enough.” He took her hand over the covers, examining their interlocking fingers. “I’ll not importune you in such a way, no matter how willing you might be.” A chaste kiss to her hand was the only indication of how much he was keeping under control. Chloe frowned, unaccountably disappointed.

“But why?”

Lucifer was silent for another minute. “To hear it from you like that… would cheapen it,” he said at last. “For you to offer it willingly, as you just did…” He looked up to meet her eyes. “It means more.”
Chloe had to kiss him then, throwing herself across the space between them. Lucifer groaned into her mouth as his hands rose to clutch at her shoulders.

“You know, you ought to be careful, Chloe,” he said against her lips. “I’m not built to resist temptation. Historically, it’s been the opposite, in fact.”

Chloe took advantage of her position to straddle him. “Well, how about something you don’t have to resist?” she said, rolling her hips and making him gasp.

“You make a… compelling argument,” he said, shifting under her.

Chloe moved closer. “Are you going to claim your forfeit now, or do you want to wait?” she asked, imitating his accent. Lucifer considered, a slow smile spreading across his face. Chloe’s heart beat faster at making such an open ended offer, but because it was Lucifer she knew with absolute certainty that she wouldn’t regret doing so.

“Why don’t you show me what you have planned, and we’ll go from there?” he suggested. This time it was Chloe’s turn to smile. That sounded good to her.

They both inhaled sharply as he slipped inside her. His eyes never lost that look of wonder, the one he’d had since the first time, like he couldn’t believe what was really happening. It was why she liked being on top so much.

She couldn’t resist leaning down to nuzzle his neck, her hair falling to curtain their faces. He made a soft sound that turned into a moan as she marked him, his head falling back.

Mine, Chloe found herself thinking. I get to have this. This is mine.

All of a sudden, she found herself beneath him, his wings spread wide and crystalline in the darkness. There was a pause as they both stared at each other, wide-eyed. Chloe took a deep breath, waiting for her brain to catch up, then grinned up at Lucifer, who looked vaguely apologetic.

“You can have them out if you want,” she said, trailing her fingers down the lines of muscle in his chest. “I won’t touch them unless you ask me to.”

Lucifer hesitated. “This was supposed to be your show, Chloe,” he said. “That they’ve rather boorishly stolen.”

“I don’t mind,” Chloe assured him, twisting her hips. Lucifer flapped as though trying to keep his balance, his wings still spread like a protective covering.

Lucifer wet his lips, then shook his head. “No,” he said at last, shrugging his shoulders and folding them away. Chloe smiled.

“Okay,” she said easily, reaching up to stroke her fingers through his hair (which, she was pleased to see, was quickly losing its hold). “Whatever you want.”

Lucifer leaned down to kiss her soundly and the moment was quickly forgotten.

“Do you want me to use them?” Lucifer murmured in the afterglow, so quietly Chloe almost missed it. She turned in his arms.

“It doesn’t matter what I want,” she said firmly. “Lucifer, they’re a part of you. Whether you want to
use them or not is entirely up to you. Just like I don’t like it when you touch my knees.”

Lucifer shook his head, nuzzling her hair. “You’re a wonder,” he said.

Chloe shrugged. “I’m just me,” she said. “And when I’m with you, you make it easier to be myself.”

It struck her as something she’d known for a long time, but had been thrown into sharp relief by the events of the day. “Sometimes it feels like everyone wants me to be someone I’m not,” she confessed. “But it’s never been like that with you.”

“What’s wrong with wanting to be loved for who you are?” Lucifer mused, and Chloe realized he must have heard her words to Mack over the phone.

“Exactly,” she said, snuggling in closer. “That’s what I want for you, too.” The words were quieter, spoken into his chest. “For you to feel totally comfortable being yourself, here. With us.”

Lucifer snorted. “You don’t want that,” he said, like he thought the whole thing was hilarious.

Chloe reached up to turn his face to hers, meeting his eyes. “Yeah. I really do.”

Lucifer’s mouth twisted. “No, you really don’t,” he said bitterly. “I showed you my self and I nearly lost you. I’m the Devil, Chloe. That side of me is monstrous. It hasn’t disappeared just because my face has. No one wants that.”

“I don’t believe that,” Chloe said, carding her fingers into his hair which was now thoroughly disheveled. “Not for a second. Lucifer, you just spent the evening playing games and reading to my daughter. Was that all just pretend?”

“No,” Lucifer said, eyeing her uncertainly, and Chloe nodded - the question had been rhetorical anyway, though she wasn’t surprised Lucifer hadn’t interpreted it as such.

“Those aren’t the actions of a monster.” She shook her head as it looked like Lucifer was going to protest. “Listen. I’m not going to sit here and argue with you that I know you better than you know yourself, especially when I know you haven’t told me everything.” She wanted to, but saying it aloud felt like the height of arrogance. She never forgot he was older than the Sun. “I’m just saying I think you’re wrong about which one is your “true” self. And you’ll never convince me otherwise.” She planted a kiss on his lips as Lucifer stared, clearly at a loss.

“I love you,” she said. “I hope you believe that. Enough to know that I wouldn’t say those words to just anyone. I wouldn’t let just anyone near my daughter.” She wrapped him in her arms, resting her head on his shoulder. “You’re not fooling me, you know,” she said sleepily.

Lucifer huffed a laugh into her hair, but didn’t say anything. Chloe pressed her lips to his bare shoulder, then turned in his arms, pulling his arm around her. “Goodnight, Lucifer.”

“Goodnight, love,” Lucifer murmured. Chloe fell asleep as she felt his lips at her temple, his thumb stroking back and forth over her heart.
“Thanks for dinner, Chloe, it was delicious,” Linda said, leaning back in her chair.

“Don’t thank me; Lucifer did all the work,” Chloe said, smiling at him across the table.

“And I helped!” Trixie announced. Lucifer looked at her.

“Oh, is that what you’re calling it?” he asked, and Trixie stuck her tongue out at him.

“You okay there, Ella?” Chloe asked, looking over at her friend. “You’ve been very quiet.”

“So many of my dreams coming true at once.” Chloe blushed vibrantly and looked down, playing with her own glass as she avoided eye contact with everyone. She heard Lucifer clear his throat.

“So I’m dying to know,” Ella said, squirming in her seat, like she’d been sitting on this all evening, “what changed for you guys? I mean, we all knew it was going to happen, but it was taking forever. And now all of a sudden you’re here all adorbs with the domestics! What gives?”

Chloe glanced at Lucifer, who shrugged.

Well, I found out that Lucifer was the actual Devil, Chloe thought ruefully. Then I went to his place and told him I’d yell at God for him when I got to Heaven, and there’s really no way you can go back after something like that.

Obviously that wasn’t the answer she was going to give, so instead she said: “Well, I’d just stormed out of a shitty date…”

Ella’s eyes, if possible, shot even wider. Linda shifted in her chair, also listening intently. Chloe assumed that Lucifer had told Linda some or all of the proceedings and appreciated the opportunity to tell her own side, even if it was embarrassing to be put on the spot.

“I was standing on the corner,” Chloe continued, “and I happened to see Lucifer across the street.”

“Oh, my God,” Ella exclaimed. “What a total movie moment!”

Chloe bit her lip and looked over at Lucifer again, whose face was carefully casual. She hadn’t really thought about this aspect of the whole affair, since only a week later, he’d revealed himself to be the Devil, Goddess had nearly blown up Santa Monica Pier, Lucifer had gotten kidnapped, and then Pierce showed up… Trying to keep an even keel had taken precedence. She remembered what Lucifer had said that night, when she’d asked jokingly whether or not his Dad was a matchmaker now. “You have no idea.”
The thought gave her pause. They’d worked through the implications of that, for the most part, but she had to admit the timing had been more than a little suspicious. What were the chances of her being on that street at exactly the right moment?

She shook her head inwardly. Even if the meeting were set up by God, His interference ended there. She still could have chosen to go home instead of to Lux. Lucifer had asked to kiss her - she could have said no. Regardless, there had been nothing forcing her to return to him after she’d learned the truth - he’d been doing everything he could to discourage it.

Lucifer frowned infinitesimally at her change in expression, and Chloe’s lips quirked before she turned back to face her friends. Maybe it was time for Lucifer to be reminded of all that.

“Yeah. Anyway, we went back to his place.” Chloe declined to mention Lucifer had given her his jacket - Ella already looked like she was about to pass out. “And he…” Told me he loved me, she thought. She’d recognized it was a massive step at the time, but of course she’d had no way to fathom its true significance. He’d had endless reasons not to bother. All of recorded history telling him why it would be a bad idea. Yet he’d done it. He’d looked at her, a mortal woman, and given her his heart. He’d cared about her that much.

Some of her thoughts must have shown on her face, because Lucifer gave her a soft smile. Chloe smiled back.

Trixie cleared her throat. “Guys, there are other people?” She rolled her eyes. “Seriously.”

Ella made a sound of despair. “Ahh, traviesa, why would you ruin it? I was basking in the moment!”

Linda took a sip of her wine and pointedly said nothing.

Chloe, however, was grateful to Trixie. “Well, we decided we’d give it a shot,” she said, wanting to keep the privacy of the moment between them. Lucifer’s expression had shifted into something fond. Chloe mentally replayed the words she’d said aloud and realized they hadn’t exactly been forthcoming.

“I believe my regard for Chloe has always been obvious,” Lucifer spoke up. Chloe stared at him, shocked that he would willingly insert himself into the conversation. He really seemed to be taking what she’d told him to heart. “I simply… made it official.”

Linda wore a proud smile. Ella looked like she might burst with excitement. Chloe was surprised for a different reason. She didn’t think Lucifer had ever used her name with their friends before.

“Well, as… illuminating as that was,” Linda said dryly, “I believe Trixie’s right. It’s hardly fair to put Chloe on the spot when she has company.”

Chloe smiled at her. “Thanks, Linda.”

Ella looked disappointed, but before she could say anything the front door swung open and Maze walked in.

Lucifer had already half risen, and he completed the motion as Maze stopped in the doorway, staring at the gathering.

“Oh,” she said. “I didn’t realize there’d be… people.” She managed to make the word sound like a curse, her eyes skimming over Linda before lingering on Lucifer. “I can come back.” She turned to leave.
“Maze!” Trixie’s voice stopped her in her tracks. Chloe quickly rose, casting a glance at Lucifer, whose jaw was clenched almost imperceptibly.

“Maze, stay,” she murmured, turning her eyes back to her roommate. “This is your home, and you’ve been gone a long time. We missed you.”

Maze turned, slowly, her expression dubious.

“C’mon, Maze.” Trixie’s pleading eyes were obviously wearing the demon down. “I wanna hear about Canada!”

Maze sighed shortly, tearing her eyes from Lucifer to look at Trixie. “Fine. But someone needs to get me a drink.” She threw herself down on the couch.

Before Chloe could respond, Lucifer was already pouring a glass of wine. “Here,” he said, offering it solicitously at Maze’s elbow. Maze blinked before accepting the glass.

Chloe watched them worriedly. She wasn’t sure how things stood between the two of them now. They’d seemed fine at Lux, but that was before Maze took off on her own interests and ignored the Sinnerman.

Linda settled herself on the couch next to Maze. “Welcome back, Maze,” she said. Maze stared at her for a long moment before her lips quirked into a smile. They clinked glasses.

Chloe sat at Maze’s other side. “Welcome home, lady,” she said, repeating the gesture.

“Missed you, Maze,” Trixie spoke up quietly, touching Maze’s wine glass with her mug of hot chocolate. Chloe smiled. Maze looked to be relaxing further into the couch and her unexpected welcome party before Ella pounced.

“Maze! Welcome back, babe!” she exclaimed, slinging an arm awkwardly around Maze’s neck from behind.

Maze stiffened slightly, then relaxed again. “Thanks,” she said.

“Didn’t doubt you for a minute,” was Lucifer’s contribution. Chloe glanced up at him as he perched on the back of the couch, holding his wine glass. He and Maze did not toast. She frowned inwardly. Once again Lucifer was doing his patented skirting of the truth. Surely he hadn’t doubted Maze’s success, or the fact that she would return, but she’d taken her sweet time about it, all while a dangerous, possibly supernatural serial killer was on the loose and had it out for him. They both seemed caught in a no-man’s land between their previous relationship of lord and protector, and whatever that relationship was turning into.

“Forgetting something?” Trixie asked, effectively breaking the tension between Maze and Lucifer.

“Oh.” Maze put down her wine and reached into the bag at her feet, bringing out Miss Alien. “I can get you a new one,” she said, glancing over at Chloe. “She kind of got a little… dirty.” She indicated a stain on the toy’s neck, which was recognizable even in the low light.

“Is that… blood?” Trixie asked, uncertain.

Maze leaned in conspiratorially. “Oh, yeah.”

“Awesome!” was Trixie’s excited verdict, and Chloe’s eyes found Lucifer’s again, this time for a very different reason. With both the Devil and a demon in the house, any chance that Trixie could be
raised as a normal child was vanishing before her eyes. She forced a smile onto her face as her daughter leaned in eagerly to show her.

“Why don’t we put Miss Alien in the wash?” Chloe said lightly.

Trixie, fortunately, gave in with minimal objections.

“Maze?” Lucifer spoke again unexpectedly and Chloe looked up to find Maze sitting on the couch staring into space, a rare smile playing about her lips. “Are you all right?” he asked. Given the circumstances, Chloe couldn’t blame him. She’d have done the same.

Maze nodded. “I’m exactly where I want to be,” she said, her eyes involuntarily seeking Linda. Chloe smiled.

Ella left for the night not long afterwards. It surprised no one that Linda elected to stay a little longer, excusing herself to the washroom. She’d been absent long enough for Chloe to notice before Maze said casually that she was going to her room. Chloe suspected Linda would already be there.

“Go get ready for bed, honey,” Chloe instructed Trixie as she started to load the dishwasher. Trixie’s eyelids were drooping, but the excitement of Maze’s arrival still led her to protest. With a glance at Chloe, Lucifer scooped Trixie up and carried her to bed with the promise that he’d read another chapter. Chloe watched them go, her heart full.

When Lucifer emerged, Linda had yet to come out.

“Do you think Linda will stay the night?” Chloe asked him in a low voice. Lucifer looked startled.

“I… don’t know,” he admitted, sounding almost scandalized.

Chloe shrugged. “Well, if she doesn’t, Maze can lock up again. I’m exhausted.”

Lucifer searched Chloe’s face, cupping her cheek in his hand before kissing her soundly. She rose onto her toes and hummed against his lips.

“I love you,” she said as they broke apart. Lucifer’s eyes softened further. “Thank you for putting Trix to bed.”

Lucifer just nodded. Chloe planted another kiss on his cheek. “I’ll meet you upstairs,” she murmured, wanting to look in on Trixie before turning in.

When she came to bed, Lucifer was at the sink in the en suite, removing his eyeliner. Chloe came up behind him and wrapped her arms around his waist. She wanted to ask him about Maze, but didn’t want to spoil the mood and sought for a different topic of conversation.

“So,” she drawled, pressing a kiss between where his scars used to be, “now Maze is back, and Dan is due back soon, too.” Lucifer met her eyes in the mirror. “I believe there’s a promise I need to keep.”

Lucifer turned in her arms, squeezing her shoulders lightly before trading places with her. She’d noticed he’d been making an effort to initiate more physical contact since his concerns about the future of their relationship had come to light, and she was grateful for it.

“Did you have anything in mind?” he asked from the bedroom.

“A few ideas,” she answered, before beginning her own routine. The truth was, there was only one
option she was really considering, and she was trying to build up the courage to suggest it.

She found her needed courage in the warm darkness between them as she lay in Lucifer’s arms, his hand drifting lazy patterns up and down her back.

“I want to go to Hy’s,” she said quietly. Lucifer stilled as she named the steakhouse where he’d stood her up all those months ago, before Perry’s trial and Vegas and everything else. To Chloe, it felt like another life - in a way, it had been. She waited for Lucifer’s response, heart in her throat.

“Why?” Lucifer asked in a shocked whisper. Chloe had thought a lot about it in the past few days, and she hoped she could explain it in a way he would understand.

“Something you said the other day; you said you showed me your true self and almost lost me,” she began. She sought his face with her hand, her eyes nearly adjusted. “That’s not true.” She’d let it slide at the time only because she’d had slightly larger concerns. She didn’t want to wait any longer to disillusion Lucifer of the idea.

“Isn’t it?” Lucifer’s voice was guarded. Chloe resisted the urge to sigh in exasperation. Of course he would think of it that way.

“Lucifer, I came back and fought for you,” she said fiercely, almost a hiss. “Nothing was forcing me to do it, except maybe Trixie.” The joke fell flat as Lucifer was still tense beneath her. “I almost lost you.” She stroked his face.

Lucifer startled, and Chloe did sigh then, dropping her hand to the plane of his chest. “It was too soon, the first time,” she said, almost inaudibly. Lucifer heard her and nodded.

“I’d been speaking to Linda,” he said, both of them surprised to hear his voice. “She suggested that perhaps I had already found what I came to LA for.” Chloe smiled against his skin as Lucifer’s hand rose to cup the back of her head. “And if that was the case, then I knew it was only a matter of time before it was taken from me.” Chloe wrapped him in her arms to ground him in the present, reminding him that his place was here, with her, in her bed. “It was never about Lux,” he admitted, even more quietly, and Chloe laid a kiss over his heart.

She understood. It hadn’t just been about running scared, either. Lucifer had never put down roots for long enough to have something he feared to lose. How could the thought be anything other than terrifying?

“That’s what I mean,” she explained. “I don’t want these things to be constantly hanging over us. We said no going backwards, but sometimes it’s necessary in order to move forwards. Get a clean slate.” She resolutely pushed aside memories of sitting alone for two hours nursing a glass of wine, her initial enthusiasm diminishing to a small stone of resignation in her belly as she waited far past the bounds of sense. “All of that’s in the past, now. We can still go and have a nice dinner. First date redo.” It had sounded much better in her head.

Lucifer was silent for a long time.

“Remember, you have the right to veto,” she said eventually, desperate for some kind of feedback.

Lucifer nodded once. “I think it’s a good idea.”

Somehow his answer succeeded in making her even more nervous.

“Are you sure?” she asked, concerned that he was agreeing just to please her.
There was another short pause.

“I’m going to call in my forfeit,” he said, rising on one elbow to regard her, “to request that you stop worrying about this,” he continued as she opened her mouth to respond, lightly touching the tip of her nose. “You’ve said you wish for me to make my desires known to you.” The unspoken, so listen to them, hung heavily in the air.

Chloe flushed. “Right. Okay, then.”

Settling back onto the bed, Lucifer pulled her closer and pressed a kiss to the top of her head. “I’ll call Henry tomorrow and make the reservation.”

Chloe, relieved, was on the edge of sleep when he spoke again, so low she almost missed it. “You’ll never lose me,” he told her, “until you want me to be lost.”

“Never gonna happen,” she murmured, but her tongue felt too big for her mouth. He was lucky she was too tired to muster the proper frustration at his words.

If Lucifer said anything else after that, she was too far under to hear it.

* *

Chloe examined herself critically in the mirror, pinning a strand of hair in place with the kind of intensity she usually reserved for seeking out discrepancies in crime scene photos. This sort of fussing over her appearance didn’t come naturally to her, and she’d been doing a lot more of it since she’d been with Lucifer. Part of her wondered why she bothered. She could put on a hoodie and leave her hair unbrushed, and Lucifer would still proclaim her beautiful.

She frowned at herself, the unaccustomed contour of makeup lending graceful lines to her face. Maybe that was why. He’d think she looked good no matter what, so why not experiment a little? It made dressing up fun again. Also, she kind of wanted to feel like she’d earned such high regard from him.

She remembered how carefully she’d dressed for their last “date.” Sternly telling herself it wasn’t a date while slipping into a big fuzzy sweater that let her hide her face, before immediately changing her mind and deciding to dress the outfit up with a skirt and heels. “I’m a leg man, myself,” she’d heard Lucifer say.

Of course, she was wearing none of those things this time - just a casual black halter dress that had caught her eye while she was shopping. She’d bought it because it had looked formal enough to wear to dinner - plus it had been on sale.

The doorbell rang, and she pushed down a flutter of nerves. In a deliberate departure from the last time, they were not going to be meeting at the restaurant. Snagging her purse in one hand and her heels in the other, she went downstairs to meet Lucifer.

He stood at her door, impeccable as ever in a crisp black suit, which he’d chosen to pair with a deep red shirt. He gleamed in the fading light, darkly elegant, and Chloe found it difficult to look at anything that wasn’t him.

“Wow,” she breathed.

His lips curved sinfully. “That’s supposed to be my line.” His hand fell naturally to the small of her back as her face tilted up to his and he pressed a chaste kiss to her lips. “Love the dress,” he murmured.
Chloe grinned, happier with his praise than she would have liked to admit. “It has **pockets,**” she announced, slipping her hands into them and twirling around to show him. That discovery had sealed the deal at the store.

He watched her with a fond expression, stepping inside and shutting the door behind him. “I like it even more, now,” he said, in a tone that said he had long been aware of the shortcomings of women’s fashion.

“I can guess why you don’t wear red very often,” she replied shyly, fussing unnecessarily with the collar of his shirt, “but it does suit you.”

His smile widened. “Let’s keep it just between us,” he said, leaning in to kiss her again.

As if on cue, her phone rang from the depths of her purse. Chloe pulled away and swore colourfully enough that Lucifer arched an eyebrow, impressed.

“Oh, sorry,” she said as she fished for it. “I thought I put it on silent.”

Lucifer stepped back, graciously returning her space. Chloe couldn’t help a slight flicker of worry. Who would be calling her at this time of night? Surely not Dan - he had Trixie for the weekend. Her heart dropped when she saw the display.

“No, no, no…” she muttered under her breath. It was happening again!

Lucifer’s face creased in concern. “What is it, darling?”

She looked at him unhappily. “It’s Ella. I can’t think of a reason she’d be calling that isn’t work related,” she explained.

Lucifer made an expansive gesture. “Then, by all means,” he said.

Chloe took the call, watching him carefully for any sign of disappointment.

“Hey, Ella,” she said.

“Chloe! Sorry to call you after hours, but I was going over the results we got back for the Delgrosso case and I think we missed a huge clue,” Ella jumped in at lightspeed with hardly any consideration given to how long it had taken Chloe to answer the phone. “I think you’re gonna want to come in and see this.”

Chloe bit back a sigh. All things considered, she was surprised work had taken this long to interfere in their plans - and it was utterly **unsurprising** that it should get in the way of their first real date. Defeated, Chloe gave in.

“I’m so sorry,” she whispered, waiting for him to complain. *It’s not like he’s getting any deader, Detective; we had plans!*

“I’ll drive,” he said instead, and Chloe jerked her head up to face him. Though the words had been mild, there was steel in his expression - the beginnings of his punisher face. *Oh,* she thought. *Oh.*

Overwhelmed by sudden emotion, she threw her arms around him. “I love you,” she said fiercely,
her voice muffled by his shirt.

“As I love you,” Lucifer replied softly, next to her ear. “And since the brilliant woman I fell in love with is a detective, it’s time for her to go detect.”

“And seeing as I fell in love with the Devil,” Chloe said, looking up to meet his eyes, “let’s go catch the bad guys.” Lucifer’s answering smirk would have screamed danger to anyone else. It spurred Chloe on, and she would have left right away. She caught herself just in time.

“I’m just gonna go change,” she said, suddenly embarrassed, and Lucifer’s face at last registered dismay.

“Whatever for?” he protested.

“While I’m sure you’d love to watch me chase down a killer in this,” she teased, looking down at herself, “you’d be the one to explain to Ella why we’re dressed for a date in her lab.”

Lucifer shuddered delicately.

Chloe nodded. “I thought so.”

The surprise and heat in his eyes when she came back downstairs was gratifying. In deference to their interrupted plans, she’d chosen something that was a close approximation to what she’d been wearing when they first met. The low-cut cream-colored shirt and chunky belt made her feel sexy and capable, and she spared a thought to wonder why she’d stopped dressing like this.

Lucifer ran his tongue along his teeth. “Detective, indeed,” he purred, and Chloe lifted her chin, pushing a strand of hair back behind her ear. Partners. Somehow, the interruption felt like an extension of their plans rather than a change of them.

“Let’s go,” Chloe said. There being no one around to see them, she held out her hand. Lucifer hesitated only slightly before taking it. They didn’t hold hands often, so the jolt as they touched was almost the same as the first time, outside Carlisle’s lab. Chloe smiled at Lucifer’s widened eyes. Then they walked out to his car together.

Aside from some sly, though unsuspecting, comments from Ella about how good the two of them looked, they managed to fly under the radar at work. In bed later that night, bad guy caught and justice restored, Chloe whispered another apology into the darkness.

“There will be other nights, love,” Lucifer said, and Chloe’s heart swelled to hear him talk about the future with such certainty. She hugged him tightly.

“Still,” she said. “I’m beginning to wonder if that restaurant is cursed.” She froze. “They’re not real, right? Curses?”

Lucifer huffed a laugh. “Not in the slightest,” he replied. “Just a result of the human propensity to see patterns where none exist. In fact, Uriel would—” He cut himself off, his mouth snapping shut with an audible click.

Chloe twisted to face him. “Who’s Uriel?” she asked gently.

Lucifer jerked as though she’d struck him.

“I… I don’t want to talk about it. Right now.” He spoke slowly, each word an effort.
“Okay,” Chloe agreed. She stroked his arm until he relaxed. “You don’t have to tell me everything.” She pressed a kiss to his shoulder. “Not unless you’re ready.”

Lucifer gathered her to his heart and didn’t respond. The trembling kiss he laid on the top of her head said all that was needed.

Chapter End Notes

Return of Maze! I haven't forgotten about her.

Sorry about the delay in posting this chapter! I had a Hot Date last night and so was unable to post! (It wasn't interrupted like the Deckerstar one, yes I'm mean).
So, I wasn't going to do this episode. And then it was the perfect tie in for a conversation that needed to happen between Lucifer and Chloe. Once again, I've changed quite a bit (see if you can spot the differences!) for what I feel is increased continuity. I hope you like it!

It was a normal morning at the precinct - well, not entirely normal. Lucifer was actually helping with the paperwork for once, and Chloe was grateful enough for the assistance that she didn’t mind the fact that Lucifer spent most of the time staring off into space. She was concerned. Something was clearly on his mind, and she was trying to gauge how much space to give him versus her desire to intervene.

The ring of her cell phone shattered the studious quiet that had grown between them, and Chloe jumped. Lucifer sat up in his chair, pulled out of his thoughts. His eyes zeroed in on Chloe’s phone, where Ella’s name was emblazoned across the display, and he relaxed again. Chloe took another calming breath before answering.

“Hey, Ella. What’s up?”

“Chloe. I… I need your help.” Ella’s voice sounded strained. Chloe was out of her chair and heading out almost before Ella finished speaking, Lucifer falling into startled step beside her.

“I’m on my way,” Chloe said firmly, hearing Ella’s relieved breath on the other end of the line. “Tell me where you are.”

Ella named a jeweler downtown. “I’m here with Maze,” she said, which almost made Chloe stop short in her tracks. Even Lucifer faltered a step. Chloe willed herself not to react. Ella and Maze were still Tribe, but if you’d asked Chloe to name the two members least likely to be spending independent time together, those two would have come immediately to mind. “There’s a body,” Ella continued, and Chloe tried and failed not to connect the three points together - need help, Maze, body.

“Ella…” Chloe said, not sure of how to phrase her conclusion delicately.

“Oh, we found the body,” Ella said carelessly, like there could be no other explanation. “Could you bring the unis with you?” Chloe felt infinitely better. She owed Ella quite a bit, but would have drawn the line at helping her hide a body.

“Sure thing, Ella, we’ll be right there,” Chloe said, beginning the process of assembling a team with eloquent gestures as Lucifer calmly provided the address. She kept Ella on the line as she and Lucifer went out to the car, Lucifer sliding behind the wheel so Chloe could devote her attention to the call.

During the drive over, Ella recounted the whole tale: how her brother had come into town, how she hadn’t been able to get a hold of him, how she’d enlisted Maze to assist in finding him. They’d gone to the jeweler and found a body, though not the body of her brother. As Ella spoke, Chloe couldn’t help but notice Lucifer growing ever stiller and quieter beside her until he was driving with both
hands on the wheel. She assured Ella they’d be there soon and hung up, cursing inwardly. It hadn’t been much of a stretch to assume that the name that had so affected Lucifer - Uriel - was one of Lucifer’s brothers. And knowing what his family was like… She didn’t need to see the tic jumping in Lucifer’s jaw to know he was upset - it was all too clear from his driving. She wondered when she’d gotten so good at interpreting his tells. She shuddered to think about how easily she’d dismissed what was going on with him before she’d learned the truth about him. No more.

In the office, Maze was lounging in a chair, in direct contrast to Ella’s frenetic energy as the latter insisted on her brother’s innocence.

“He might have seen what happened,” Ella said. “Wait. He might be in danger.”

Chloe tried to redirect their focus. “Is this the brother who steals cars?”

“Oh, no,” Ella said. “Jay’s the oldest. And you know how older brothers are.”

Lucifer made a noise of assent. Chloe glanced at him before shaking her head. “No, I’m an only child.” Because I was supposed to be. The realization struck her, and she had to force herself to focus on Ella’s words.

“Well, Jay is the good one. The one we all looked up to. I mean, I know my family’s got issues, but not Jay. He really made me believe I could live a good life.”

“Oh, please,” Lucifer scoffed. Chloe expected him to break into a rant about Amenadiel even as she rested her hand on his arm in comfort, but instead he subsided, looking faintly white. Heart breaking, she nonetheless squeezed his arm subtly.

“Ella’s family,” she muttered, trying to move her mouth as little as possible. “Not yours.”

“We don’t even know for sure, guys, if Jay was really here,” Ella rushed on, ignoring the entire exchange. As a counterpoint, Maze presented Jay’s wallet. But Ella was already off, rationalizing that the shooter couldn’t have been her brother because he wasn’t left handed. Chloe bit her tongue on the fact that shooters often used their non-dominant hand to fire to avoid injury to their dominant hand, deciding to give Ella’s brother the benefit of the doubt, at least to her face. Ella knew that information already; it was clear that she was far too close to the case to be objective. Chloe herself had deferred to Lucifer and Dan to investigate her father’s case.

But Ella was too worked up to listen. She took off with Maze to find Jay despite Chloe’s protests, and Chloe was left with the unis and Lucifer.

“So, now we’re done with that charade, shall we track down Miss Lopez’ murderous brother before she does?” Chloe frowned inwardly. Lucifer almost succeeded in sounding fine, but there was a note of resignation in his voice that worried her.

“What we’re going to do,” she told him, “is follow the evidence. I’m not ruling Jay out as a suspect, but I’m not going to railroad the investigation either.”

“Brothers can’t be trusted, Detective,” Lucifer muttered, almost to himself, but Chloe glanced sharply at him due to the viciousness in his tone. “You’re just delaying her inevitable disappointment.”

“Maybe,” Chloe agreed, with another gentle touch on his arm. “Maybe not.”

A glint caught her eye, and she stooped to pick up a single, bloodstained diamond.
The victim’s name was Fahrid Nasser. He was an international diamond salesman, so as Dan said, it made sense to find a loose diamond in his office. Diamonds were also, fortunately, easy to trace - a quick check of the laser-etched serial number revealed that this particular gem had been reported stolen.

“I get them to add crude drawings to the backs of mine,” Lucifer joked, and Chloe bit back a smile, glad for a glimmer of his usual good humour. *I’ll keep that in mind*, she almost said, before stopping herself. Why was she thinking about Lucifer giving her diamonds?

“Do we know where the diamond was stolen from?” she asked, dragging her focus back to the case.

“A diamond boutique in Beverly Hills,” Dan answered. “Here’s the kicker; Fahrid is one of the store’s diamond brokers.”

“So, what - he sells to them, uses that as a cover…”

“To case the joint, then robs it?” Dan finished. “Maybe. File on the robbery’s pretty thin: no security cameras, no witnesses. Not a lot to go on.”

*A jewelry store with no security cameras?* Chloe’s instincts were immediately flagged. “All right, well maybe Fahrid had an accomplice,” she said. “That could be our other suspect. Let’s go to the jewelry store, see if we can drum up any new leads now that we know Fahrid is involved.”

Which was how she and Lucifer ended up headed to a jeweler’s in Beverly Hills. Lucifer was silent, and Chloe fretted. She wasn’t sure if the case would be a good distraction from whatever was going on with him or if the investigation would pour salt into a wound. There was nothing she could do about it now, though, so she let Lucifer go ahead of her, holding the door as they entered.

“Ah, the diamond industry,” Lucifer said with a sigh, sounding almost back to his old self. “Now, if you want something *truly* diabolical?” A subtle gesture. “Thousands of dollars for lumps of old coal. Incredible.” He shook his head in apparent admiration. Chloe, meanwhile, had been casing the corners of the room, where cameras stood prominently, looking like they’d been there for a while. *Gotcha.*

“Ah, hello there!” Lucifer had nabbed a candy from the dish on the counter; she could hear it in his voice as he greeted an open attendant. Chloe shook her head inwardly. Her Devil and his sweet tooth. “We’re here to-”

In a flash, Chloe saw an easier way to get what they needed. She grabbed Lucifer’s arm and squeezed tightly, cutting off the rest of what he was going to say. “We’re here to get a ring,” she interjected, adding her patented simper to her voice.

Lucifer blinked down at her in surprise. “We are?” he asked.

Chloe leaned her head on his shoulder, playing up the oblivious-couple routine, like she really was someone who had just ambushed her significant other in a diamond store.

“Yeah, he was gonna surprise me,” Chloe said, stroking down Lucifer’s arm before squeezing his hand in reassurance. “But I knew what he was up to.” After a brief hesitation, Lucifer squeezed back, and Chloe relaxed. “We’re engaged,” she said. Lucifer’s eyes widened. *Shit.*

Where the Hell had *that* come from? She and her big mouth… But there was no time to dwell on it, nor on how her hands had somehow wandered to Lucifer’s face without her permission. She
dropped her hands, trying not to make it look like that’s what she was doing, as Lucifer stared at her in flat astonishment.

“How nice,” the attendant said, clearly seeing dollar signs.

Chloe and Lucifer both chuckled nervously.

After that, there was nothing left to do but play along. Lucifer stood still and uncertain beside her as she crouched down to look into the case, taking refuge in her ditzy persona. “Sweetie, I don’t know if we came to the right place,” she said, taking care to use a pet name she’d never call him, even by accident. “I expect a much higher clarity, and the colour here is…” She made a derisive noise, unable to look at Lucifer.

“I see you have quite a discerning eye,” the attendant said smoothly. “I have some other wonderful options. Just a moment.” He went to the back. Chloe thanked him and rose.

“I… am confused,” Lucifer said. He didn’t sound upset, and Chloe finally met his eyes. The words came tumbling after.

“The file said there was no security footage,” she spoke quietly, knowing he could hear. “All these cameras? They’re not new, which means they were here at the time of the robbery, and that this was probably an inside job.”

“Yes, yes, I got that part,” Lucifer said, a touch impatient, and Chloe flushed, caught out by how she’d tried to jump ahead to the easier explanation. “No, what I want to know is: how do you know so much about diamonds?” His tone was both delighted and impressed, and Chloe blushed harder.

“Well, I’ve watched enough Real Housewives to fake it with the best of them,” she admitted, turning to face the clerk as he returned with a smaller selection in a velvet case. Bolstered by Lucifer’s grin, Chloe played it up for his benefit.

“Really?” she asked flatly, watching as the clerk’s face fell slightly. “No, no, these still won’t do. How about I show you what I don’t want?” She pulled the bag with the diamond found in Fahrid’s office out of her pocket. “This is what he got me for my birthday,” she said, panicking and saying the first thing that came to mind - Valentine’s Day had been too long ago for her to still believably have a “subpar” diamond. “I didn’t know my future husband was that cheap!” Even pretending ungratefulness for a gesture Lucifer had made went against the grain, more so when he seemed to take what she’d thought was obviously a ridiculous accusation to heart.

“I am not cheap!” he exclaimed, with some heat, and Chloe just stared at him, hoping he’d get the hint and prompt the clerk to inspect the gem. Lucifer blinked, shaking himself slightly. “That diamond is of the highest quality,” he managed at last.

“Is it?” she asked. “Is it of the highest quality?”

“Let’s see.” The clerk took out his loupe. “Hm. Excellent colour, and…” He broke off uncertainly. “And?” Chloe prompted.

“Uh, I’m sorry. I recognize the serial number.” He sounded mortified. “But this diamond is stolen.”

“No, can’t be!” Lucifer gasped, hamming it up, so Chloe did too. This was fun!

“Stolen?” She looked around, as though it were the most preposterous thing she’d ever heard. “Stolen? You mean I’ve been carting around stolen goods?” She injected as much horror into her
“Well, this simply will not do,” Lucifer exclaimed, matching her false outrage note for note, though his eyes were sparkling at her performance. “I was given assurances! I’ll be speaking to my lawyer—”

“I’m going to have to call the police,” the clerk said, ignoring their bluster, and Chloe kicked it up another notch.

“Oh, yes, please. Please call the cops,” she said, speaking loudly enough that the other shoppers turned in their direction. “In fact, I’ll call them myself! I’ll call the cops! Stolen diamonds! Imagine!”

“That’s a good idea, De-darling,” Lucifer said, cutting off her title at the last second. “You call the police, and I’ll call my lawyer…”

“No need to get the authorities involved,” came a smooth voice, and they turned to see an elegantly dressed woman standing behind the clerk’s shoulder. “I’m Tiffany James, the owner. Why don’t you come with me, and we’ll find you the perfect diamond.” She wasn’t even trying to be subtle. Chloe exchanged a glance with Lucifer, her face lit with triumph, before acquiescing and following the woman to the back of the store.

The magnitude of what had just happened didn’t strike Chloe until they were back outside, having established that Tiffany was certainly guilty of insurance fraud, but not murder. Chloe had walked into a diamond store next to Lucifer Morningstar, wearing her scruffy jeans and work jacket, and announced that they were looking for an engagement ring. She was fortunate she’d been so focused on the performance, or that simple fact would have made her freeze.

“I’m sorry,” she blurted out.

Lucifer turned to look at her bemusedly. “Whatever for?” he asked. Chloe considered taking the opportunity to drop the issue but knew if she didn’t get her feelings off her chest now they would resurface at the worst possible time.

“I didn’t mean to say all that, back there,” she said. “I know it wasn’t part of the plan. I know you don’t… I didn’t mean to imply that we were…” She trailed away in the face of Lucifer’s expression, which had resolved into a concerned frown.

“Of course, Detective. I understand. For the good of the case, yes?”

“Yeah,” Chloe said, nodding fervently with relief. “The case.” She peered up at him and slipped her hand into his. He squeezed automatically. “I just didn’t mean to blindsight you with it all.” She ruthlessly squashed her niggling disappointment into a tiny, airtight container in her mind. She didn’t expect any further commitment from Lucifer. Truthfully, she would be just fine if things remained as they were. As she kept assuring Lucifer, she already had everything she wanted. No need to invite trouble by wishing for more. The whole thing with Dan had soured her on the concept of marriage anyway. And she really needed to stop thinking about this. Right now.

“Nonsense, darling.” Lucifer’s answering smile didn’t reach his eyes. “It was quite the effective strategy. We got what we needed after all. No harm done.” He brushed off his sleeve with his other hand, still looking distracted. Chloe chose to believe his preoccupation was due to whatever was still going on regarding Lucifer’s siblings rather than her engagement slip.

“Okay, well let’s get back to the precinct,” Chloe said. “I’ll get Dan on looking for whoever insured Tiffany James’ store. Now that we know this was insurance fraud, they might have some insights.”

They were just setting off when Lucifer’s phone chimed. He took it out to look at the message,
frowning. “On second thought, I need to go see Doctor Linda,” he said. “Seems something’s wrong; she wants to see me immediately.”

“Oh, okay. Do you want me to go with you?” Chloe asked.

Lucifer shook his head. “No need, Detective, I’m sure I can handle whatever it is. You go on with the investigation.”

Chloe nodded. “Sure. I’ll keep you posted.”

Lucifer let himself into Linda’s office with some trepidation. The doctor’s text had bordered on hysterical.

“Doctor!” Linda whirled to face him, a large mug of what smelled like rum tea in her hands. No matter the circumstances, Lucifer approved. “I got your text, what’s wrong?”

“Charlotte Richards.” Linda’s voice held a quiver, and she looked quite rattled, now that he thought about it.

“What about her?”

“She came to see me. As a client,” Linda continued, sounding horrified.

“And that’s… bad?” Lucifer essayed. Perhaps his plan had backfired?

“Of course it is!” Linda exclaimed. “She tried to kill me! As soon as she stepped into my office, everything she did came rushing back.”

“Doctor,” Lucifer said gently, “my Mother is gone. Charlotte Richards has done nothing to you. She’s just an innocent woman who needs help.” He sighed, realizing as he said the words just how necessary they had been for him to say, even more so than for Linda to hear them. “Here.” He reached for his flask, adding his own contribution to Linda’s beverage. “At least she didn’t try and kiss you,” he joked.

Linda looked at him, wide-eyed. “What?”

“She cornered me at Lux. I managed to get away before she was successful, but her advances certainly helped prove the woman’s body no longer housed my Mother,” he said. “It never occurred to me that others would also have trouble making the distinction. I do apologize, Doctor.”

“Apology accepted,” Linda said, gasping as she took a large enough gulp of her tea that even Lucifer was concerned. Be gentle with her, Lucifer. Chloe’s words came back to him, and he frowned. Perhaps Linda was not coping as well as he’d thought.

“Why don’t we sit down?” he suggested, guiding Linda’s unresisting form to the chair. “I referred Ms. Richards to you because you’re the best, and you’re uniquely situated to address her specific needs, but if you’re not feeling up to it, I can ensure you never have to see her again.” Linda just made a noncommittal sound, busy with her tea. Lucifer shook his head. Chloe had been taking every revelation connected to his true nature in such stride, he had to admit he’d only spared the barest of thoughts to Linda’s emotional state, considering her acceptance a done deal.

Linda looked up suddenly, fixing him with a shrewd expression. “Are you all right, Lucifer?” she asked. “I know we don’t have a session scheduled for another few days, but in light of what
happened last year."

“I’m quite all right, Doctor, thank you,” Lucifer interrupted, perhaps a little too quickly for his liking. Of course Linda would be the one to bring it up. He rose before Linda’s gaze could get him to admit to anything. “The Detective and I are in the middle of a case, so if you don’t need anything else, I should get back.” He hesitated for the briefest of moments before striding out the door. His departure wasn’t soon enough, however, to keep his traitorous mind from latching onto the idea that maybe confiding in someone wouldn’t be so terrible. Hadn’t he just been thinking about how well Chloe had been taking each revelation? Perhaps it was time. She deserved the truth, after all.

But that was a consideration for later. Right now, as the Detective liked to say, it was time to focus on the case. Killers deserved to be punished, after all, and fratricides even more so.

“Hey, Lucifer, I’m glad you’re back.” Chloe intercepted him when he returned to the precinct. “Is Linda okay?”

“Detective!” Lucifer plastered on a smile. “I handled it.” Chloe didn’t look convinced, but she accepted it, which was all that mattered. “What news of the case?”

“Well, I met Don Zeikel. He’s the insurance adjuster that covers Tiffany James’ store. He thanked us for uncovering the fraud but something seemed… off about him.”

Lucifer was intrigued. Chloe’s intuition was rarely wrong. “Off? How so?”

Chloe shrugged. “I just got a bad feeling. He told us that the crime is basically untraceable if the thieves have a cleaner - someone who can replace the microscopic serial numbers on the diamonds.”

“Like a diamond authenticator,” Lucifer suggested darkly, and Chloe nodded.

“I thought the same thing. I didn’t say anything to Zeikel but I called Ella right away. She said she hadn’t found her brother yet, but I could tell she was lying.”

Lucifer frowned. “But surely we don’t need more to implicate him? His wallet already places him at the scene.”

Chloe smirked. “You know I love it when you talk procedure to me,” she murmured, nudging him with her shoulder. The contact gave Lucifer a welcome burst of warmth. “And you’re right. We didn’t need any more evidence that Jay was present at the scene. But it does mean we need to find Jay and Ella. Maybe the deal went south, or maybe there really was another shooter. Either way, Ella’s too close to it to see things clearly. We have to figure out where she’s taking Jay.”

“Strip club,” Lucifer said promptly. Chloe just gave him a look as he grinned, unrepentant, and didn’t dignify him with a response.

“She’d know better than to take him home…” she thought aloud.

“If Miss Lopez truly believes her brother is innocent…” Lucifer began.

“She’s gonna want to prove it,” Chloe agreed. “Which means-”

“She’ll go back to the crime scene.” They spoke simultaneously. Lucifer felt another surge of wonder. He never really forgot that this… partnership, with all it entailed, was something he was
never supposed to have. He’d fought for it - they both had - and managed to preserve it, but he still couldn’t shake the thought that he was just one misstep, one unexpected familial visit, from losing everything. Uriel had nearly succeeded. Who was to say what might be coming next?

Schooling his expression, he followed Chloe out of the precinct. If any outside forces wanted to interfere, they would find it a rather more difficult proposition than it had been previously. He was ready for them. The only thing capable of driving him from Chloe’s side would be Chloe herself.

As they approached the office, Lucifer heard the sound of voices: Ms. Lopez, a male voice presumably belonging to Jay, Maze, as well as ongoing property damage, which checked out when Maze was involved.

Chloe entered the room ahead of him. “Ella?”

Jay was quick to react to the sight of Chloe’s badge. “What the hell, Ella? You called the cops? I trusted you!”

Lucifer bristled. This brash young man’s lack of faith in Ms. Lopez was unconscionable, and he was entirely too volatile for Lucifer’s liking.

“Well, this is much more fun than a strip club,” he remarked, maintaining an unthreatening demeanour, over Ella’s protests of innocence. “Is this a stash room?”

“Yeah,” Chloe said. “Full of laser engraving equipment.” She moved to join him, and he was glad to have her closer.

“Seems that Don Zeikel fellow you were telling me about was onto something,” Lucifer said, keeping his attention on Jay as he primed the proverbial pump.

“Who was onto what?” Ella asked.

“He’s the insurance adjuster for the missing diamonds,” Chloe explained. “He said that equipment replaces the serial number on stolen diamonds.”

Ella looked at her brother. Lucifer hated to see the hurt and betrayal in her eyes. Ordinarily he’d rejoice in illusions being shattered, but not when it came to Ms. Lopez. “Is that what you were doing?” Ella asked softly.

Jay caved. “Okay, fine. Yeah, I was in here cleaning the diamonds. But it was a one-time thing!”

Liar.

That was obvious to Lucifer even before Jay plunged his hand into a secret compartment and pulled out a gun. In a flash, Chloe had her weapon out too, and the two of them entered into a tense standoff.

Lucifer’s heart froze. This couldn’t be happening. When he’d just been thinking about how quickly things could go wrong, Chloe ended up with a gun pointed at her. He fought down his instinct to push Chloe behind him.


Jay didn’t seem to be listening. His hands were shaking.

Chloe continued, “We’ll go to the precinct. Talk about this, figure it out. But first, you need to put
the gun down.”

She gave instructions in a clear, calm voice, resolute as she always was in the face of danger. The protector. But Jay had gone so far as to pull a gun on an officer of the law. He wasn’t about to back down now.

“Well?” Jay demanded. His stance was atrocious, his grip unpracticed, but that didn’t matter. One lucky (or unlucky) shot was all it would take. Jay’s subtle edging toward the door, however, had allowed Lucifer to take up a slightly more defensive position. “No matter what I say or do, you’re not going to believe me. So what’s the point?”

The stupid, desperate man. By pulling the gun, he’d certainly ensured that would be the case. Lucifer’s fists clenched, ready to do something drastic.

“Wait!” Ella leapt into the middle of the standoff. “You don’t have to do this!”

Chloe put her gun down reflexively, and Jay fled.

“Miss Lopez!” Lucifer said with a sigh, caught between relief and frustration. Chloe ran to the door but Jay had barred it behind them. Lucifer turned to Ella, residual fear making his voice sharp. “Still think he’s innocent?”

He regretted his words instantly at the lost look on her face.

Of course, in the end, they discovered Jay was in fact innocent - of the murder, at least. The real culprit, the insurance adjuster Don Zeikel, was revealed via his oddly strong footwear game - Chloe’s intuition had proven correct once again.

Drawn from searching Don’s empty hotel room by a commotion outside, they discovered that Zeikel was dead, killed by Maze to protect Ella, who’d gone running off again. Lucifer was still reeling from the haranguing he’d received from Ella after Jay had escaped. He resolved to stay on her good side from now on.

From across the parking lot, Chloe was talking to Ella. “So the knife just appeared out of nowhere, did it?” she asked. Lucifer could hear the laugh in her voice.

“Yep, just random blade out of thin air,” Ella responded unconvincingly. “I mean, anyone could have thrown it. Crazy.”

“Ella, I know it was Maze,” Chloe told her.

“Oh.”

“Yeah. She’s my roommate. I recognize the knife.” Lucifer wouldn’t be surprised if Chloe was familiar with the majority of the weapons in Maze’s arsenal. “But don’t worry; she’s not in trouble. She was just protecting you, right?”

Ella dropped the lie with obvious relief. “She saved my life.”

*Well done, Mazikeen.* Perhaps his former demon was still good for something after all.

Jay approached his sister, and the two of them embraced. Chloe tactfully left them to their reconciliation and approached Lucifer. He watched her come, caught off guard, as always, by how
“So, I doubt the DA will press charges,” she said. “All he did was intend to change the serial numbers on the stolen diamonds; it’s not a crime.”

“Lucky Jay,” Lucifer muttered, his eyes still on the touching reunion. Shaking himself, he looked down at Chloe. “I’m sure if any other cop had been working this case, he would have ended up in prison. Or worse. So, well done, Detective.”

Chloe smiled. “Thank you.”

“I’m sure that any brother would be proud to have a sister like you,” he offered, knowing as he said them how little the words meant coming from a fratricide like him. To his surprise, Chloe’s expression closed slightly.

“Just wasn’t in the cards for me, I guess,” she said.

“Detective…” he began, unsure of what to say, but Chloe just shook her head.

“Anyway, the murder is solved, but the diamonds still haven’t turned up. We’re checking Zeikel’s stuff: houses, cars. They have to be somewhere.”

Lucifer chuckled, his eyes drifting to Jay once more. “Indeed.” He turned to Chloe again. “You have the spawn tonight, do you not?” Chloe nodded. “I think I’d like to spend the night at Lux, then, if you don’t mind?” He didn’t deserve her company. Not tonight.

Chloe looked taken aback, but she agreed easily. “Of course. I always feel guilty for taking you away from your night job.”

Lucifer almost laughed, wishing he could explain to her how little draw Lux held for him these days. He still enjoyed the performing, and the revelry: the energy and excess, but he wearied of fending off the constant advances of his guests, and the whole affair seemed hollower, now. However, hosting remained an occasional necessity, and he was endlessly grateful for Chloe’s understanding. She never appeared to worry that he might entertain any of the offers, unconcerned by the thought of him returning to his nightclub owner persona. Though she had never asked for his word, and he had never officially given it, Chloe acted as though he had, an enormous gesture of trust that humbled him. He’d told her before; no one else held the slightest amount of interest for him, anymore.

“Never feel guilty, Chloe,” he said quietly. “Especially not on my behalf. I couldn’t bear it.” Chloe looked at him, wide eyed, and he took his leave of her with regret, though never questioning the necessity. There were certain things it was better he handled alone.

It was just a matter of biding his time at the hotel before Jay stole back to retrieve the diamonds from their hiding place.

“Ah, the slow clap; it never gets old, does it?” Lucifer mused, demonstrating.

Jay barely startled. “Hey, man. It’s not what it looks like.”

“Save it, Bad Lopez.” Lucifer was uninterested in hearing excuses when they both knew the truth. “Clearly this wasn’t a ‘one-time deal.’ It seems you’re not as virtuous as your sister would like to believe.”
“Whatever, man. You don’t know what it’s like making sure everyone’s looked after. It all falls on me.”

All Lucifer could hear was Amenadiel’s constant bleating about responsibility. He was tired of it. “So you felt entitled to stick your hand in the proverbial cookie jar because it ‘took care of your family?’”

“It started small,” Jay said defensively. “I had to bail a brother out. Then Abuela needed surgery. Guess who they all came to? I didn’t choose this.”

Lucifer despised hypocrites. “But the Armani suit must help ease the pain,” he observed. Jay hadn’t been wearing the suit while in Ella’s presence.

Jay scoffed and adjusted his jacket. “I take care of my family. If I get a little bit too, so what? I’m not perfect.”

That much was obvious. “But you like them to think that you are. When, really, you’re no better than them.” A great deal lesser, in fact, if one considered Miss Lopez.

“You’re gonna tell Ella, aren’t you?” Jay sounded resigned. “All right, just let me do it. She should hear it from me.”

“You’re not going to tell her anything.” Lucifer was sure that was true regardless, but he had to make sure. “And neither am I.”

Jay frowned in confusion. “You’re not?”

“No. Miss Lopez puts a lot of faith in you, and losing that faith would hurt her. I won’t allow that to happen.”

Jay seemed thrown. “I’ll get my act together, I promise.”

“No need to promise, Jay Lopez.” Especially when they both knew what such a promise was worth. “Because I’ll be watching you. And if you ever disappoint her again… I’ll come for you.”

For a moment it felt almost like the old days, that thread of righteous fury coursing through him. He thought he saw Jay falter, the way people used to when confronted with his censure. Then the Bad Lopez shook himself and the shadow passed.

Lucifer rode the high of a successful punishment as he went back to Lux, but slowly the real reason he’d declined Chloe’s company made itself known. Much as he wanted to, he couldn’t go up to the penthouse - the room’s similarities to his Room were too vivid. He could have gone to one of his other houses, but the thought of being alone tonight was even more unbearable. He stayed downstairs until the press of people, their desires, their frivolity, became too much to tolerate, and he sent everyone away in order to drink at his bar, alone. The same way he had a year before.

It felt like Before. Before Chloe. Before he’d somehow managed to stumble into a world of love and light and acceptance. He still wasn’t able to shake the feeling that the Before was the most he deserved.

You think it’s that easy to let go? Think again, brother.

Look at you. So pitiful. Trapped in the Hell you once ruled.

(I had no choice.) Do you really believe that? (No.)
Lucifer drank and brooded over old memories, feeling the separation from Chloe like a bruise. He knew he could go to her at any time and receive her comforting embrace, even without telling her the reason. He had to resist, at all costs.

*Look what I’ve done.*

When he could stand the isolation no longer, dawn had long past. He knocked back his last drink and went in search of Chloe. It was time to tell her everything.
A Deep, Slow Panic

Chapter Notes

This is a very important chapter and was a very difficult conversation for me to write. I wanted to make sure it was satisfying and hit everything I wish they'd address in the show. I hope you like it.

Chapter title from the song by AFI, it's one of my favourites and I strongly associate it with Lucifer.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Detective… Chloe. I’d like to show you something.”

Chloe surveyed Lucifer as he stood in her doorway. Despite his words, he looked like he’d rather be doing anything but. She took his hands. She’d missed him the previous night, but now it seemed he’d come to a decision, and she was about to find out what had been bothering him.

“Does this have anything to do with… what happened last year?” she asked gently. Once she’d had a moment alone to think the connection was obvious. She ached to think that he’d still wanted to be alone, after everything they’d been through together.

“Yes,” Lucifer admitted unhappily. “And though I’d prefer not to trouble you with this…” He appeared to be fighting with himself. “You deserve to know.”

Chloe was instantly on alert. “Okay. If you’re sure.” Trixie was out at the roller derby with Maze; Chloe had stayed behind to do some last minute shopping before trick or treating that evening.

“Far from it,” Lucifer said, uncertain and self-deprecating in a way that didn’t suit him. “But it’s time. I can’t put it off any more. Come with me?”

As always, he left it up to her, but Chloe wasn’t about to refuse. She took his hand, letting him lead her out to his car. Once she settled into the seat beside him, she took his hand again. It looked like he needed it. He shot her a warm look.

“Where are we going?” she asked eventually, the words falling into the quiet that had settled between them.

“A bit outside the city, into the woods a ways. That all right?” he asked. Chloe nodded. Curiouser and curiouser.

The silence fell again. Not uncomfortable, but heavy. Lucifer was solemn in a way he rarely was. Chloe took the opportunity to prepare herself. She’d thought they were through with all the big revelations but Lucifer’s behaviour suggested that might not be the case. They’d already weathered the storm that was the truth of his identity, her status as a living miracle, the fact that he’d gone to Hell - twice - to save her life, that her proximity made him vulnerable… what else could possibly be left?

She firmed her resolve. Whatever it was, Lucifer was choosing to entrust her with it now. She knew she’d be able to handle it as long as they did it together.
At some point, Lucifer pulled off onto the shoulder and informed her they’d be walking the rest of the way. Chloe assured him she didn’t mind, glad she’d chosen to wear sensible boots. Lucifer seemed to know his way, and helped her solicitously through the underbrush. They still spoke very little. He was withdrawing into himself and that was never a good sign, but he’d chosen to bring her along, and that was something. She promised herself she’d make the most of it.

They walked for an extended period of time, but Lucifer’s aura of purpose was such that Chloe never thought to question where they were going. She just watched him, his face set in austere lines. Despite the fact that this was very much outside of his normal milieu, he strangely didn’t look at all out of place, traversing the forest in his three-piece Armani. He was wearing much more muted colours today than had been his wont of late, and it camouflaged him against the dappled branches. His touch on her hand was light and cool, almost impersonal, but he never neglected her.

Just as the back of Chloe’s neck was starting to itch with sweat, they stopped. The slight swell of a mound rose before them, covered with grasses, ivy, and forest detritus. A fallen log lay nearby, and Lucifer led the way to sit on it, slipping his flask from his jacket. He took a fortifying swig, then passed it to her. Chloe blinked, startled, but something about his demeanour encouraged her to accept it. She took a small sip, screwing her face up at the harshness of the alcohol, before returning it to Lucifer. He turned it in his hands without speaking, staring into space.

“Why did you bring me here, Lucifer?” she asked quietly, her voice falling soft to the leafy floor.

Lucifer sighed, looking down at the flask rather than at her.

“A while back, after Charlotte Richards’ reappearance,” he began, his voice rough, “I told you that you had no idea of the things I’ve done.”

Chloe’s heart thumped. She clasped her hands tightly in her lap.

“About a year ago,” Lucifer continued, his eyes now fixed on the mound, “one of my brothers came to Earth from the Silver City. His name was Uriel.”

A pellet of ice sank through Chloe’s stomach. She didn’t fail to note the past tense, nor the fact that the name was the same one that had so affected Lucifer while they were lying in bed together after their failed date. “In fact, Uriel would…” She swallowed hard, and remained silent, watching Lucifer to show he still had her full attention.

“He came because of the deal I struck with Father. He wanted to force my hand, to make me return Mum to Hell.”

The deal he’d made on her behalf, and without her knowledge. He’d willingly shackled himself to the will of the Father he’d escaped, to safeguard her life and Trixie’s. Chloe never forgot. She clenched her hands so hard her knuckles turned white. She wanted to touch Lucifer, but he was speaking in a slightly detached monotone, and she thought it would be better not to interfere.

“He was the one who caused you to have that car accident, Chloe,” he said, looking at her at last, though his eyes were still distant and not quite present.

Chloe had to remind herself to keep breathing. He’d been so strange that day, hovering over her and removing anything remotely “dangerous” from her vicinity, like scissors and her favourite coffee mug. He’d insisted her accident had been far from accidental, but Chloe had dismissed him, as always. She’d had enough on her plate keeping a lid on her own panic to start entertaining what she saw as rampant paranoia. She’d never even considered that the incident might also fall under the umbrella of things that would need to be reevaluated now that she knew the truth.
“My guardian Devil,” she murmured under her breath, and the faintest hint of a smile played about Lucifer’s lips before he took another swig from his flask.

“Just as my power is desire and Amenadiel’s was time, Uriel’s was patterns. Reading them, predicting them, manipulating them. Angels are forbidden to harm humanity, but Uriel knew which sequence of events would result in your collision. He told me he intended to continue threatening your safety until I fulfilled my end of the deal and sent Mum to Hell.”

Chloe bit the inside of her cheek. Yet another member of Lucifer’s family out to destroy the life he’d worked so hard to build on Earth. The more she learned about them, the less impressed she became with his relatives. Was it too much to hope for, to find a sibling of Lucifer’s she might actually like?

“Naturally I couldn’t allow that to happen. I confronted Uriel. He was the one who brought Azrael’s blade to Earth.”

Chloe blinked. She’d almost forgotten. The murder weapon that had caused them so much trouble, the blade they’d raced against the clock to find. When she’d asked Lucifer how the weapon of the Angel of Death had found its way to Earth, he’d clammed up immediately. Learning the truth now brought her no comfort.

“I learned he was intending to use it to destroy Mum entirely, so she couldn’t threaten Dad. And because of my interference, he said he was going to initiate a sequence of events that would kill you in three days.” Lucifer’s voice faltered slightly - he’d been speaking thus far in a manner that sounded well planned, almost rehearsed.

Chloe couldn’t leave him be any more - carefully, she slid her hand onto his shoulder. He didn’t shrug her off, which she counted a win.

“Why me?” she could have asked, but she was already familiar enough with the fucked up logic of Lucifer’s family to know the answer. For the simple reason that she was someone Lucifer cared about. No wonder he’d been so hesitant to stake his claim. She squeezed lightly, a reminder that she was alive and well. Lucifer cleared his throat and took another sip.

“I was standing there, holding the blade… He was going to do it, press the key to start the pattern, and I just couldn’t… I had to stop him.” He looked down at his hands. “He was my brother. And I killed him.”

“Lucifer…” Chloe whispered, horrified.

But Lucifer wasn’t finished. “I never told you, because I didn’t want to destroy your final illusion of me, I suppose,” he said, a bitter twist to his lips. “But you, of all people, deserve to know.”

He fell silent, and Chloe took a moment to wrap her head around what he’d told her. For the time being, all she could think was that he’d gone to such extreme lengths to safeguard her life, yet again, all without her being any the wiser. If he hadn’t chosen to tell her, she would never have known. Her throat constricted.

“Lucifer,” she said again. Her breath choked around a sob. “I’m so sorry.”

He looked at her like she’d grown a second head. “Why on Earth are you apologizing to me?” he demanded. “I don’t want or deserve your pity.”

“It’s not pity, Lucifer, it’s…” Chloe shook her head, words failing her. “I’m sorry you were forced to make a choice like that. I can’t imagine…” She trailed off. Why was it always Lucifer who was burdened with these impossible choices? His brother or his mother. His mother or the universe. Free
will, but eternal damnation.

In her line of work, she was required to make tough calls regularly, but never like that. She briefly considered having to decide which of her family members lived or died and felt a spasm of horror.

Lucifer shook his head. “Were you not listening to me? I’m a killer. A fratricide. Uriel wasn’t trying to kill me, but I had no such compunction.”

So it hadn’t been self defense. That made Chloe feel even worse, but not for the reasons Lucifer probably imagined. Saving her life hadn’t been a side effect of saving his own. She was alive today because Lucifer had chosen her life over that of his brother.

She swallowed hard. Forced the words past her lips. “So what does that mean for…” You?

“Angels?” She had to ask. “I mean, is he in Hell now, or does he go back to Heaven, or…”

Lucifer stared at her, with what almost looked like wonder. “Oh, no, no. That’s the most important part of all this. You see, Azrael’s blade doesn’t just open doors. It also completely obliterates any being it kills - human, demon, or celestial. Wipes them out entirely. No Heaven, no Hell. Just gone.”

He cocked his head, Chloe too overwhelmed by this greater revelation to move a muscle. “I’d never killed anyone before. But I erased him from existence.” He nodded toward the nearby mound. “That’s where Uriel is buried. That’s all that’s left.”

Chloe’s head was buzzing. What she’d thought was an innocent swell of earth was suddenly far more fraught. Lucifer had destroyed his brother to protect her. And he’d been living with that burden for a whole year, with her at his side, completely oblivious. She couldn’t… she couldn’t.

“Breathe in. Breathe out.”

“So now you know,” Lucifer intoned. Chloe barely heard him. Like a film on repeat, she kept seeing Lucifer stepping directly into a sniper’s line of fire, commanding him to shoot. What he’d said when he showed up to the crime scene looking like a homeless magician. “Every killer must be punished.”

He’d been trying to get her to punish him for killing his brother, and she felt like there was a hole where her heart used to be. She’d almost lost him to this. And all she’d felt at the time was angry disappointment that he wouldn’t talk to her. Fuck. Of course he couldn’t have talked to her about this.

“Have you…” She coughed, swallowed, tried again. “Have you talked to Linda about this?” Her voice was hoarse like her heart hadn’t been the only thing screaming. She remembered begging him to talk to his therapist - who, she now recalled, had stopped seeing him soon afterwards. Her brows knitted, every motion costing effort, emphasized. “Is this why she stopped seeing you?” she demanded. “Because you…” Killed your brother. She couldn’t say the words aloud and felt like a coward.

Lucifer gaped at her, then shook himself and shrugged. “Well, yes and no.” Chloe waited for him to elaborate. “I told her what I’d done, but back then she still believed I was speaking in metaphors. She insisted I stop.”

Lucifer could easily visualize the scene: Lucifer, his voice rushing as he confessed his crime - the scope was, truly, quite a lot to take in. Linda becoming increasingly frustrated, as Chloe had, with the way he seemed determined to dance around the issue. And then, she knew what came next well enough. The face, and the knowing.

“Oh, Lucifer…” Previously, Chloe’s sympathy had been all for Linda - how she had coped, being the only human Celestial insider. Now, Chloe’s chest ached as she thought of Lucifer, rejected yet again for his true self, when he needed the most support. How had he felt, in that moment? Where
had he gone? What had he done?

“What did you do?” she whispered. “After?” She had to ask, to know what to thank for Lucifer’s continued presence.

“I, ah…” Lucifer seemed almost embarrassed, the words pulled out of him. “I must admit I wasn’t sure where to go. I ended up at your house, though that hadn’t been my intention. You were reading the child a story. I watched from outside.”

The air left her in a big gust, and she couldn’t hold back any more, throwing her arms around him and burying her face in his neck. Lucifer stiffened, but Chloe was beyond caring. He seemed ashamed to have invaded her privacy, but Chloe was far more relieved that he’d been able to find solace, a reminder of what he had preserved. She would have done the same, would have told him so, if she’d known.

“Good,” she said. “That’s good.”

“Chloe…” Lucifer was still holding himself apart, almost pulling away. “What are you doing?”

But Chloe was used to him being baffled by her displays of affection and didn’t bother to respond. He clearly thought that he’d presented her with irrefutable evidence that he was a monster, but that was also nothing new. She had something far more important to concern her.

“Do you know how many people I’ve killed?” It was easier to keep an even tone when she wasn’t looking at him. With their bodies pressed together, she could feel every muscle in his body lock.

“Chloe?” he said again, but Chloe couldn’t interpret the undercurrent of emotions running through his voice. She didn’t care whether she’d shocked him. She’d just learned she’d killed more people than the Devil, and she needed to make him understand this before the knowledge overwhelmed her. She didn’t like to talk about the times she’d ended a life, but it was absolutely necessary in this moment. He’d never killed anyone before Uriel. She’d killed two people since they’d met.

“Remember Hector Ruiz?” she asked, pulling back slightly but keeping an arm around him, her head on his shoulder. It was as much for her comfort as his. “I killed him because I thought he was still a threat to the pier. I didn’t know you’d taken your Mom.”

“You can’t blame yourself for that.” Lucifer shifted uneasily, sounding distraught at the idea that she could feel guilty for her actions.

“No,” she answered. She regretted it, certainly. Wished things could have been otherwise. “I had a moment to act, to make a split second decision to protect the ones I love.” She raised her head to shoot him a significant look. “Sound familiar?”

He grimaced. “It’s not the same.”

Chloe nodded. She’d had no connection to Hector, certainly not a millennia-long sibling bond. And as far as she knew, she hadn’t eradicated his soul. “I didn’t say the same. I said familiar. I took this job knowing what it was going to entail, that sometimes I’d have to make decisions like that. But you should never have had that choice placed on you. If you want me to blame you for it, then you’re going to be waiting a long time. Because once again, you’re the reason I’m sitting here today. Holding you. And you’re why Trixie doesn’t have to grow up without a mother.” She swallowed thickly, Lucifer staring at her like she was the sunrise. “And I’m sorry. I’m so, so sorry. But I can’t say that you made the wrong decision that day.”

There was a long pause, like Lucifer was waiting for her to take it all back, to say something else that
would help him make sense of what he’d just heard. But Chloe had said her piece. She wasn’t sure where she got off, implying that her own existence might be worth such a sacrifice. But she wasn’t about to impugn Lucifer’s choice by throwing it in his face. He’d decided that she was. She didn’t get to tell him otherwise.

With a shuddering breath, Lucifer folded her into his arms. “He was my brother,” he said, voice breaking. Chloe just nodded, and held him tighter.

“I know,” she said. Neither of them spoke again for a long time. The sounds of the forest surrounded them — birds and rustling wind. The noise would have been peaceful under other circumstances. Chloe was in turmoil, but she was also glad - very glad - that Lucifer seemed to have learned that he was allowed to seek and accept comfort from her. Especially since she hadn’t been able to give it to him at the time. “And what are you going to do about it, Detective? Give me a big, fuzzy hug?”

Apparently, yes she was.

She let out a huff at the thought, not a laugh, just a breath of air. Lucifer turned toward her slightly in question and Chloe shook her head against his jacket.

“I killed Malcolm too,” she said instead, feeling somehow compelled to complete her confession. Lucifer’s grip spasmed slightly. “He took Trixie. He killed you.” She gripped him close. “He killed Paolucci and that preacher and who knows how many others. But I was still the one who pulled the trigger.” His was another death she felt no guilt over. It was simply what had started at Palmetto coming full circle. She just wished she’d managed to get him before he hurt Lucifer.

“Well, you can rest easy that that one didn’t count,” Lucifer said, releasing his death grip on her and stroking her hair. “He was a dead man walking, after all.”

Chloe sat up a little straighter. “Lucifer, even if you were intending to kill him instead, I was still the one who shot him.” She felt a residual pang of warmth and gratitude at his protectiveness, awakening the memory of how her heart had leapt to hear his voice in that hangar as she realized that maybe all was not yet lost.

“You misunderstand me, love. Malcolm’s miraculous recovery was simply that - a miracle. Amenadiel resurrected him in the hope that he’d kill me and send me back to Hell.”

“What?”

A few birds startled from their perches.

Lucifer blinked up at her - she’d risen to her feet in shock. “Ah. Yes. I suppose I never really mentioned that aspect of the whole affair.” His tongue darted out to wet his lips.

“Yeah, not so much,” Chloe said faintly. Malcolm had caused so much harm to so many people. He was the reason Trixie still had nightmares sometimes. He was the reason she still had nightmares of Lucifer dying. To know it had all been instigated by Amenadiel as part of some ill-conceived plan to force Lucifer into returning to a place he didn’t belong made her quiver with fury. She really hadn’t needed another reason to dislike Lucifer’s older brother.

“Well, it’s all water under the bridge now,” Lucifer said blithely. “Amenadiel saw the error of his ways and helped take Malcolm down. Well, sort of. Got himself stabbed before he could actually be of any use. Now he’s had a change of heart. Mostly.”

Chloe shook her head and sat back down next to Lucifer, wrapping him in her arms again. “I know he’s your brother,” she said. “But I… I don’t know if I’ll ever be able to forgive him for that.” She
had no problem admitting this to Lucifer - if there was anyone who wasn’t going to judge her for holding a grudge, it would be him. “You belong here.” With me. She held him close. “I think the amount of damage Malcolm caused proves that.”

“Chloe…” Lucifer murmured, overcome. She’d forgotten: nobody ever held grudges on his behalf.

“I love you,” she said. She wanted to kiss him, but it felt wrong, sitting next to a grave. His brother’s grave.

Seeming to realize this at the same time, Lucifer forced a smile. “Come on,” he said, rising fluidly to his feet. She accepted his hand up, and they left the grove.

Lucifer looked back, once, as they departed, and during the hike back looked down at her at intervals, as though surprised she was still there.

“What, you thought you were going to scare me away?” she asked, gently teasing. He blinked, unable to deny it. She squeezed his hand. “You’re not getting rid of me that easy.” He gave her a tentative smile in return.

When they reached the car, she turned and embraced him. Lucifer leaned against the door and kissed her like his life depended on it. Chloe ran her fingers through the hair at the nape of his neck.

“Thank you for telling me,” she said, looking up at him. “I know that was hard for you.”

Lucifer sniffed and looked away. Chloe let him have his deflection for the moment, resting her head on his shoulder. “Amenadiel’s going to be getting an earful, the next time I see him,” she told him. Lucifer gave a little chuckle. She looked up a little to meet his eyes. “And if anyone tries to send you back to Hell again, I want to know about it,” she said firmly. “I am not letting you go back there.”

Lucifer didn’t respond, burying his face in her hair and planting a kiss to the top of her head.

“Come on,” Chloe said at length, patting his side. “Let’s go back to the house, and you can help me decorate for Halloween.”

Lucifer’s face fell. “Must you?” he complained, as Chloe went around to the other side. “I detest Halloween.”

“Really?” Chloe was surprised at the note of sincerity in his tone, pausing as she went to shut her door. “Maze seemed to be all for it.”

“Yes, well, Maze would be,” he said. “She’s a demon. They don’t care about their reputations. Nothing you humans dream up could ever be offensive to a demon. Historically it’s been a much less… fun night for me.”

Chloe thought about how satanic references surged around Halloween and thought she might understand, a little. She placed her hand over his on the gearshift, and he glanced over at her. “It got even worse when you lot came up with “sexy Devil” costumes. I mean, really.”

Chloe stifled a laugh. When Lucifer shot her another look, she pressed her lips together to keep from smiling. “What?” she asked. “It’s a little funny.”

Lucifer rolled his eyes. “I had exactly one costume party at Lux. I saw enough variations on those awful outfits to last even my lifetime. I had to go upstairs early.”

“Well, shoot. There goes my costume idea,” Chloe said.
The look Lucifer turned on her was so scandalized she couldn’t keep up the act any more and burst out laughing.

“Don’t worry,” she assured him after she paused for breath, “but I feel like I should apologize for my dream, now.”

She clapped a hand over her mouth, unable to believe what she had just blurted out, but it was too late. Lucifer turned, a dangerously impish light in his eyes.

“What’s this? What dream?” he inquired brightly.

Chloe groaned in mortification, knowing she’d never hear the end of it if she didn’t answer. “Uh… after the beach,” she said through her fingers. “I dreamed that you and I went back to your place, and, well…”

Lucifer resembled a cat contemplating a vat of cream. “As delightful as this revelation most definitely is, love, why on Earth would you feel you needed to apologize for it now?”

“Well, um, in the dream,” Chloe continued, feeling detached from the words coming out of her mouth, “you kind of… maybe… had horns?” Her voice got higher and smaller towards the end until she could hardly hear herself, but of course Lucifer had no such issue.

“Oh, for…” He started to roll his eyes before the full implication of her statement hit him. “Wait. This was before…” He looked at her in stark astonishment. “And you didn’t… mind? That I…?”

Chloe was seriously considering throwing herself out of the car. She shook her head, her voice still high and squeaky. “Nope. They were useful.”

Her eyes widened, and she clamped her mouth shut. Why couldn’t she just quit while she was ahead?

Lucifer’s eyebrows nearly disappeared into his hairline. “Useful? For what?”

Chloe wished the leather seat would open and swallow her whole. “…Leverage?” she essayed.

Lucifer threw back his head and laughed.

Chapter End Notes

Just a reminder, this story isn't going anywhere! New chapter next week, some Deckerstar fluff (and maybe even some smut?? :P)
As they drove back to her apartment, Chloe took mental stock of her decorations for any potential issues. She didn’t think there were any: just pumpkin lights and spiderwebs. She’d been working with the Devil for a while now, and to have anything satanic would have been a little too on the nose even before she’d learned the truth.

Unfortunately, she hadn’t accounted for her little monkey. Trixie was home and pumpkin carving with Maze.

“Lucifer!” Trixie exclaimed when they entered. “Look, it’s you!”

The look on Lucifer’s face as he saw what Trixie had carved - a figure with massive wings and horns - prompted Chloe to intervene.

“Wow, monkey, that looks incredible,” she said, subtly moving in closer to shield it from view.

“Maze helped with the little bits.” Trixie confided.

They all looked at the demon, who shrugged and pretended to look disinterested.

“Do you like it?” Trixie asked Lucifer.

“It’s… unique,” was Lucifer’s response.

“You both did an amazing job.” Chloe made sure to be properly effusive to cover for Lucifer’s lack of enthusiasm. “Come on, it’s time to get into your costume!”

To her surprise, Trixie looked unsure. “Actually... Could Maze and I go alone this year? Just us two. Like last year?”

_You don’t want me to go with you?_ The hurt was on the tip of her tongue; Chloe swallowed it with difficulty. She wouldn’t be her mother, guilting her daughter into every decision. Trixie was old enough now to be asserting her independence.

“Oh. Sure, monkey,” Chloe said, only slightly breathless. “So long as Maze is okay with it.”

“Oh, yeah,” Maze drawled, cleaning the knife which had presumably been used on the pumpkin. “Last year was fun.”

“You should do your scary face!” Trixie suggested, nearly beside herself with excitement. “You’ve seen it before, right, Mommy?”

Chloe looked up sharply. “No. When did you see Maze’s face, baby?” She kept herself calm with effort. Trixie didn’t seem traumatized but Chloe still vividly remembered the effect of seeing
Lucifer’s face. The idea that Maze might have another face too had never occurred to her. Nor had the idea that Trixie might have seen it and kept quiet about it, the same way she had about Lucifer’s eyes. Now it was Maze’s turn to look apprehensive.

“Oh, last year,” Trixie said, blithe as ever. “It’s why she doesn’t need to wear a costume for Halloween.” She grinned like a little demon herself. “Best costume ever!”

“Mazikeen.” Lucifer’s voice held a hint of a growl.


“Yeah! It was totally awesome,” Trixie exclaimed. “Just see for yourself!”

Maze and Lucifer were both bristling; Chloe acted quickly to avoid a confrontation.

“That kind of decision should be for Maze to make, okay?” Chloe said. “You know it’s not just a Halloween costume, right?”

“Okay.” Trixie drooped slightly. “It’s so cool, though!”

“I’m sure it’s very cool,” Chloe said soothingly. “Now go get changed!”

Trixie ran off, and the adults in the kitchen looked at each other, Maze still seeming faintly relieved.

“I’m not gonna whip it out right now,” Maze said, defensive. “It’s not a party trick.”

“Of course,” Chloe said, less concerned with than with Trixie. “Whatever makes you most comfortable, Maze. I should go see if Trixie needs a hand.” As she left she could hear Maze and Lucifer conversing in low tones.

In the chaos surrounding getting Trixie and Maze out the door and dealing with the first wave of trick-or-treaters, Lucifer was uncharacteristically quiet. Chloe made sure to light the pumpkin as soon as possible and put it outside, out of sight. That done, she collapsed onto the couch, still reeling now that Trixie wasn’t around to see.

“My little baby’s growing up.”

Lucifer hovered nearby, a look of vague consternation on his face, like he wanted to say something but didn’t know what.

“You… let her go,” he finally settled on, and Chloe looked up at him.

“Of course I did. She’s old enough now to not want her mom hanging around all the time. I just…” She sighed as Lucifer drew closer. “I thought I’d have more time.”

“That, I do understand,” Lucifer commented.

Chloe gave him a wry smile. “When I think about how I might have done my last trick-or-treating with her without even realizing it… I couldn’t last year because I was working…”

Lucifer nodded, still looking confused, but Chloe appreciated having a sympathetic ear, even a baffled one.

“The spawn is… very lucky,” he offered at last.

“Thank you, Lucifer,” Chloe said softly, warmth blossoming in her chest, knowing what it meant to
hear those words from him. The doorbell rang, and she got up to hand out more candy to little monsters and ghosts. When she turned back around, Lucifer’s brow was furrowed in thought, then he brightened.

“We should do something!” he exclaimed, before hesitating. “I mean, if you’d like.”

Chloe smiled to see him trying so hard to cheer her up. “What were you thinking?”

“Well, Maze will be with the spawn all night, won’t she?” Lucifer asked, and Chloe nodded. “We could go to Lux?”

She frowned. “But I thought you hated Halloween?”

“I do. But the party at Lux hasn’t been a themed night for years now.” He appeared to deflate. “We don’t always have to go to Lux. But I thought, with it being Halloween and all…”

Chloe beamed at him. “It’s perfect. Very thoughtful of you.” She didn’t exactly want the reminder of what night it was now either.

“You deserve to have fun too, sometimes,” Lucifer told her seriously.

She drew him into a kiss. “Good thing I have you around to remind me, then.”

Lucifer made a helpless sound and kissed her again, so careful, like he was back to thinking he wasn’t allowed. Maybe a night out wasn’t such a bad idea for either of them.

For the time being, though, she enjoyed having company as she tended to the steady stream of children coming to the door. Lucifer, of course, never got near the door or engaged with the children, but the two of them made food, dancing around each other in the kitchen like they’d been doing it for years. Later, Chloe scanned the TV channels for anything not horror-movie related.

When Trixie returned, all wide eyes and smiles, Chloe couldn’t feel anything but glad that Trixie was so happy. Chloe’s tentative, “Is it okay if Mommy leaves you with Maze tonight?” was met with a resounding, “Yes!” as Trixie settled in to sort her candy. Chloe just smiled and shook her head.

Not having that many dresses that were club worthy, she put some thought into what to wear, but the conversation about Devil costumes earlier gave her an idea. Remembering the heat in Lucifer’s eyes when they’d talked about the outfit, she elected to put on her red dress that she’d worn to Bianca Ruiz’ tequila party. She wanted to see if she could replicate his reaction and experience it firsthand.

When she came downstairs, and Lucifer turned to her only to be struck dumb in the middle of her living room, she rated her plan a resounding success. He swallowed, tongue darting out to touch his lips, his eyes wide and black, and Chloe felt a flare of triumph.

“Chloe,” he whispered, like her name had been pulled from him.

Maze rolled her eyes. “Ugh, you’re both gonna be insufferable now. Get out before you make me sick.” Maze started herding them towards the door; Lucifer, for his part, went unresisting, still staring at Chloe.

“Have fun, Mommy!” Trixie said.

Chloe turned to call over her shoulder. “You too, monkey. Get to bed at a reasonable time. And don’t eat too much candy!”
Once the door closed behind them, Lucifer inhaled like he’d been having trouble breathing.

“So, you uh… like the dress, huh?” Chloe asked, unaccountably modest. What her outfit revealed was a far cry from the expanses of skin he was used to seeing on display from the inhabitants of his club.

In response, Lucifer slid his hands around her waist carefully, like he still doubted his welcome. The heat of his hands soaked through the fabric, doing things to her already and they hadn’t even made it off her porch.

“No,” Lucifer murmured. “I love the dress.” Chloe found herself pressed up against the house, Lucifer’s mouth hot and hard on hers. Several moments passed before she realized they were very much in public, not to mention full view of the house. She patted Lucifer’s back, and he pulled away with a gasp.

“At least get us to Lux first,” Chloe suggested mildly, even as she struggled to control her breathing.

“Right you are, darling,” Lucifer said, though his eyes never wavered from her lips.

They’d never arrived at Lux together, as a couple intending to party, and Chloe couldn’t deny feeling slightly flattered by the star treatment as they pulled up next to the line of club goers waiting for admittance. Lucifer tossed his keys to the valet and then came around to her door, but Chloe had already let herself out by force of habit. She blushed; Lucifer just offered his arm, unruffled, and the moment passed smoothly.

She’d actively shunned the limelight since she quit being an actress, but being with Lucifer made public notice inevitable and almost natural. The irony was not lost on her.

They swept into the club. She watched several of the faces they passed turn from hope to bitter dejection when they saw her, and privately savoured the amount of satisfaction that accompanied the sight.

Lucifer signalled the bartender, and they drank in silence, which would have felt odd if not for the fact that Lucifer was eyeing her hungrily, with singular focus. Her chest felt heavy under the weight of his gaze, as a thrill shot through her.

She’d barely put her empty glass down before Lucifer pulled her onto the floor, flush against him, with his hand firmly on her lower back. He was rarely demanding in such a way, and Chloe discovered that she really liked it.

Chloe had never really been interested in the nightlife scene before. Even when she had been an actress she hadn’t ventured into clubs much. Her wildest nights had mostly been reserved for bars. Her enjoyment of dancing now was entirely because of Lucifer: the way he moved, the way he breathed, the sensuous atmosphere, of which he was utterly in control. As everyone around him pretended and postured, he was the effortless embodiment of all they aspired to be. Chloe, like them, was utterly consumed.

She let him pull her closer, hold her tighter, sway to the beat of the music like nothing else existed. The rest of the dance floor melted away.

“Are you going to play tonight?” Chloe asked him, once they’d pulled away to take another drink at the bar. She spoke at a normal volume, knowing he could hear her.
Lucifer shook his head and demurred, playing with the floral pattern of the fabric of her dress. “I’d much rather save all my attention for you.”

Warmth shot through Chloe at his admission. “What’s so special about this dress?” she asked, to cover how flustered she was feeling. “I mean, it’s kind of old fashioned.” She was pretty sure she’d bought it for a 70s themed party at some point.

“That’s why I like it,” Lucifer purred in her ear. “The last time I came to Earth was in the seventies. I suppose I still harbour a certain fondness.”

“Wow.” Chloe would usually have been awed at the reminder of how much older he was, how different from her. Instead it was all she could do to keep from breaking into laughter at the thought of Lucifer at the disco.

Lucifer opened his mouth, surely about to defend himself, when he was interrupted by a staff member sidling up to him.

“What is it, Eric; can’t you see I’m busy?” Lucifer asked irritably, without looking away from her.

“I know, sir, and I’m sorry, but this is really quite urgent…” Eric looked nervous, but resolute, and Chloe had no trouble believing him.

Lucifer sighed and rolled his eyes, pulling away.

“Do you want me to come with you?” Chloe offered.

“No, you stay here and enjoy. No need to trouble yourself with whatever this is,” he said finally. “I’ll be back in a tick.”

Chloe nodded, wondering whether there were some aspects of Lux’s business he preferred to keep private, or whether he really believed she could enjoy the club ambience without him.

Lucifer disappeared into the back with Eric. From behind the bar, Patrick gave her a commiserating look and slid her another drink. Chloe accepted it with a smile, sipping as she ruminated on the relationship Lucifer had cultivated with his employees. She was hardly surprised by the amount of deference they showed him, but their demeanor was so different from Maze’s. Chloe had never really thought much about Lucifer as a manager. Now, knowing his previous occupation, she couldn’t stop thinking about it.

“Did it hurt?” An unfamiliar voice broke into her thoughts, and she turned, caught off guard.

“What?”

A man with coiffed brown hair and a confident smile that edged just on the wrong side of smug winked at her. “When you fell from heaven?”

Chloe couldn’t help it - she stifled a laugh. The man seemed to take this as encouragement.

“Can I buy you a drink?” he pressed, sidling closer. Chloe’s heart thudded as she recalled that flirting was a thing that happened in real life, not just when she was pursuing a case.

“Uh, no thanks; I’m good,” she replied, laughing awkwardly.

“You sure are,” the man agreed, “but I was asking about a drink.”

His deliberate misinterpretation set Chloe’s teeth on edge. “I don’t want another drink.”
“Aw, c’mon, don’t be like that,” the man complained, leaning closer.

Patrick was quick to intervene. “The lady said no,” he said in a quelling tone.

“Did I ask you?” the man snapped, his charming facade crumbling before he visibly hoisted it back into place, turning back to her. “Now, where were we?”

“I’m not interested,” Chloe said flatly. She found herself wishing for the reassuring weight of her Glock at her hip.

The pleasant mask faltered again, an ugly expression escaping, before the man got himself under control again.

“You’ve got me wrong, lady,” he insisted, despite all evidence to the contrary. “I just want to get you a drink.”

“And I said no,” Chloe repeated.

“Listen, buddy,” Patrick began, putting down his polishing towel, just as the pushy guy reached toward her shoulder with a wheedling, “Hey…”

Chloe was already shifting away, getting ready to put the stool in between them, but a hand shot out, gripping the man’s wrist before it could make contact.

The man froze immediately, with a low, surprised gasp that Chloe saw rather than heard.

“Is this chap bothering you?” Chloe registered Lucifer’s crisp, light tones with a rush of relief that was disproportionate to the actual situation.

She shook her head. “He was just leaving,” she said pointedly.

“I see,” Lucifer said pleasantly, shifting his grip to the man’s shoulder before spinning him in the direction of the door.

“Hey!” the man exclaimed. “I waited in line…!”

Lucifer pulled the man to a stop. “We respect the word no here at Lux,” he said, leaning to speak into his ear, but pitching his voice to be audible to onlookers. “I suggest you familiarize yourself with the concept before darkening my door again.”

“Lucifer Morningstar!” the man exclaimed, twisting with another gasp.

“The same.” Lucifer smiled, showing all his teeth. “Now, off you pop.”

Bouncers materialized to escort the man out.

“Are you all right?” Lucifer asked more quietly, moving to stand next to her.

“I’m fine,” Chloe assured him, “but can we get out of here?”

The glower on Lucifer’s face as he watched the man leave the club didn’t bode well for a pleasant evening, and the press of people was starting to grate on her. He blinked once and nodded curtly.

Chloe grabbed his hand and made for the elevator, the heavy beats of the music, which she had previously been enjoying, overwhelming her senses. Luckily, people seemed inclined to give them a wide berth, and once they were safe in the quiet of the elevator, they both let out sighs of relief.
“I leave you alone for two minutes,” Lucifer teased, but his eyes were still dark. Chloe appreciated the effort. Slowly, he reached out and placed his hand on her arm where the man would have touched her, had he made it that far. “To think he had the right to touch you,” he said, his voice a deep rumble in his chest.

Chloe placed her hand over his. “You have that right,” she reminded him.

His tongue darted out to wet his lower lip. “Do you desire me to exercise it?”

Chloe’s gaze locked in on his mouth. “I think you’d better.”

Lucifer’s eyes flashed as the elevator doors opened, and he twined his hand in her hair, pulling her in for a deep, devouring kiss. Chloe gave herself over to it, melting into him as he swept her into the penthouse, sitting her on top of the bar.

The idea of playing out something so similar to her dream was thrilling to Chloe, and she pushed urgently at Lucifer’s suit jacket, until he shucked it in one fluid motion, returning feverishly to her lips, his hands sliding along her lower back.

Chloe ripped the buttons of Lucifer’s shirt apart. Lucifer groaned, and suddenly Chloe found herself pressed against the wall, the rough stone catching against the lace of her dress.

“Lucifer,” Chloe sighed, locking her legs around his waist.

“To think his desires were more important than yours,” Lucifer said, and Chloe was about to tell him not to fixate on it, to focus on them. She looked up and gasped.

Lucifer’s eyes flashed red, the crimson power of his gaze captivating her. A thrill shot through her. That was hot.

“I desire you,” she whispered. In response, Lucifer hoisted her higher, pressing her against the hard lines of his chest, and Chloe took advantage of the new position to place a line of kisses along the corded muscle of Lucifer’s neck, sucking a mark at the base of his throat.

She felt instead of heard the sound he made at that, and a moment later came the clink of his belt buckle.

“I’m going to take you, right here against this wall,” Lucifer purred.

Chloe shivered, rolling her hips. “Yes.” She bit her lip. Lucifer needed no further encouragement. Before Chloe could catch her breath, he was sliding home, and she forgot all about his eyes, relishing the slight sting.

The rush of sensation was overwhelming; the wall at her back, Lucifer’s equally unyielding front pressed against hers. Chloe arched her neck, her mouth forming an “o” as the air was driven from her lungs. Lucifer claimed her throat hungrily, biting and licking. Chloe locked her ankles. He set a demanding pace as Chloe panted, each thrust sending sparks along her nerves.

“Yes, yes, yes,” she breathed, opening herself to him totally, fearlessly. With one hand, Lucifer lifted her dress over her head. She raised her arms to help. Once that was done, Lucifer shifted, supporting her with one arm while he grasped her wrists with the other, holding them above her head.

Chloe shuddered again. Her moan was muffled against his lips as he kissed her deeply, and there was nothing, nothing that wasn’t him. She pushed back against him, chest heaving, wishing she
could squeeze tighter, tighter…

“Chloe.” Lucifer’s voice was dark and dangerous and slipped, molten, through her veins.

“Yes, Lucifer,” she chanted breathlessly, over and over, as he laved attention on her breasts. “Oh, please, please, please.” She thrashed under the onslaught, but Lucifer held her fast.

“Are you going to come for me, Chloe?” Lucifer asked, his voice filtering through her consciousness. She nodded frantically, half-formed pleas on her lips, the balance tilting just this side of too much before Lucifer slid his hand down her arms to rest on her stomach, his thumb slipping between her legs.

Chloe cried out as she came, and came hard, her entire body tensing, then releasing. Lucifer echoed her as he followed a second later.

For a while the only sound in the penthouse was their heavy breathing. Lucifer’s head came down to rest on Chloe’s shoulder. Her arms were trembling as she laid them around his neck, and she hummed, shifting slightly as the discomfort of their current situation made itself known to her.

“Chloe! Oh-” Lucifer let out an inaudible curse, cradling her gently in his arms. She blinked, and then she was lying in his bed, his face hovering anxiously over her. “I don’t know what came over me. Are you all right?”

Chloe’s brow furrowed. Lucifer sounded worried, and she couldn’t figure out why.

“Mmm? Mmhm, wha-?” Chloe tried to get her mouth online, because Lucifer looked like he was progressing to full-blown panic. “’M fine, babe. I’m good. Really good. You?”

Lucifer shook his head as if to erase the question.

“Why would you… Never mind that!” He passed a hand over his eyes. “If… If I’ve hurt you, I swear-” He cut himself off again, trailing away in a language Chloe couldn’t decipher.

She struggled through her lethargy in order to sit up. “You didn’t hurt me.” She laughed a little at the absurdity before she realized he might actually be serious; he sat like a statue, gaze studiously averted. “Lucifer, look at me.” She her hand on his cheek. He jumped at her touch. “You didn’t hurt me. I am blissed out.”

Lucifer blinked. “But-”

She shook her head. “Egyptian stone walls just aren’t the most comfortable when not in the heat of the moment, okay? That’s all.”

“Assyrian.” Lucifer’s correction slipped out like he couldn’t help it. Chloe grinned, the tension effectively broken.

“Huh?”

Lucifer appeared to struggle with himself. “The wall. It’s Assyrian.”

“Ahh.” She looked over her shoulder at it. “Are Egyptian ones more comfortable, then?”

“Chloe!” Lucifer sounded strained. “This is no laughing matter. I could have hurt you!”

Chloe sobered. “But you didn’t, Lucifer. I know you wouldn’t have.”
Lucifer looked away. “You can’t know that.”

Chloe sat stunned for a moment at the admission. That was the one thing she could know in all of this, and she didn’t know what to say as he disregarded it so easily. She guided him gently to face her again. “I know you. I know you would never hurt me.”

Lucifer grimaced. “I’ve never lost control like that. Anything could have happened!”

“Lucifer, I was into it,” Chloe insisted. “I was egging you on. If anything was getting to be too much, I would have said.”

Lucifer’s expression was deeply unhappy, but Chloe lacked the energy to keep trying to get through to him tonight. “C’mon, let’s just go to bed, okay?”

Lucifer went through the motions stiffly, but he acquiesced, and that was all that mattered to Chloe, who was suddenly exhausted. She got him to lie next to her with some coaxing, stroking his arm and face gently.

“I love you, Lucifer,” she reminded him, as sleep pulled her under.

Chloe woke sometime later to a darkened, quiet penthouse. She’d slept over at Lux frequently enough not to be disoriented by her surroundings, but the lack of Lucifer beside her gave her pause. She rolled over to check the time on her phone; it was 3. He usually stayed with her in bed until much later in the morning.

Part of her wanted to roll over and go back to sleep, but he’d been so distressed earlier...

Pulling on the closest shirt to hand, she padded out in search of her absent Devil. As expected, she found him standing on his balcony, clad only in his pants, glass of whiskey in hand.

“Lucifer?” she called. He didn’t turn.

“Go back to sleep, Detective,” he murmured, and Chloe’s instincts were flagged.

“Is everything okay?” she asked, stepping up beside him. He still didn’t look at her.

“My apologies; usually you don’t wake.”

Her heart twisted at the thought that he might have spent many sleepless nights like this, struggling, while she slumbered away.

“Then I’m glad I woke up this time. Bad dream?”

Lucifer nodded. “I was hurting you,” he said, his voice a bleak monotone. “I couldn’t stop.”

“Oh, Lucifer…” Chloe sighed, placing a tentative hand on his shoulder. He remained unresponsive. “I’m right here,” she reminded him. “I’m okay. Not hurt at all.” She leaned her hip against the railing, looking at him frankly. “You know, for a while you were all about reassuring me that you’d never hurt me, and that’s something that I’ve never doubted. Not once. Why don’t you believe yourself? What’s different about this time?”

The strong line of Lucifer’s jaw was taut as he stared out into the night. “Whenever I have sex with a human, I must always remain perfectly in control,” he told her. “Any lapse could lead to disaster.”
And yet he’d gone to that effort, Chloe mused. He’d been that desperate for connection. She felt like the more she learned about Lucifer, the more there was to know. Yet another reason why his trysts were all about him fulfilling the other person’s desires.

She was brought back to the moment when Lucifer spoke again. “But last night… Something was different. I’d never felt like that before.”

Chloe thought she could see what had happened. “You saw me with that guy, and you got possessive. It happens, Lucifer.”

“Not to me!” Lucifer burst out, turning to look at her at last and moving slightly away in the process. “It’s always been the more the merrier, and it shouldn’t have mattered to me if you were interested in that man downstairs, because you’re free to engage with whomever you like; but it did! And maybe nothing happened this time, but without knowing why it happened, I can’t guarantee it won’t happen again!”

“Whoa, hey!” Chloe moved closer to try and calm his rant; he went unresisting into her arms. “Let’s not get ahead of ourselves here.”

“I’d never forgive myself,” Lucifer was muttering, as she held him close.

“Okay, first off,” Chloe said, “I wasn’t interested in that guy, not in a million years. And, hopefully, you intervening when an asshole is bothering me won’t have to be that frequent an occurrence.” When Lucifer didn’t interject like she’d hoped, she hurried on. “I can tell you why it’s different.”

That got his attention. He looked down at her, eyes shadowed in the dim light.

“Well, like you said before; it’s different with me. You never needed to get possessive with any of your lovers before, right? You’re not used to not wanting to share. Lucifer… I can’t tell you how happy that makes me.”

He stared, disbelieving; she sought for words to explain.

“Listen… You have all your… your Lucifans. And I worry about how I could ever measure up. And you keep telling me not to, but what you did last night? That showed me. That you wanted me to yourself, that I was what you wanted. And I couldn’t get enough of it. I thought I might have given that away by how I was shouting yes in your ear?” She held his eyes, challenging him; Lucifer looked away first.

Chloe relented, placing her hands on his shoulders. “Were you really that far gone?” she asked. “If I’d said no, if I’d really meant it… would you not have stopped?”

“I don’t know,” Lucifer whispered.

Chloe frowned inwardly. She herself was certain, down to her bones, that he would have, but she’d run out of ways to convince him that didn’t involve pushing him to that point.

A yawn overtook her, and she realized again how tired she was. “I’m going back to bed,” she informed Lucifer. “Are you coming?” She bit her lip as she watched him finish his drink, melancholy coiling in her belly, knowing what his answer would be.

“Not for a little while.”

Chloe sighed; with him, that could mean anything from a day to a year. “Okay.”
Luckily, she was tired enough that she fell asleep quickly, without missing his presence too much.

He wasn’t next to her in the morning, as she’d expected, and she could already tell by the sounds he was making in the kitchen that he was going to be his most manic self today.

“Detective!” he greeted her with a wide grin, spatula in hand. “Good morning!”

“Morning, Lucifer.” Chloe had a sinking feeling, which was confirmed when she went to give him a kiss, and he turned so her lips met his cheek.

Stung, Chloe dropped down off her toes. “Lucifer, we need to talk about this.”

The look he gave her was inscrutable. “Certainly. Would you like coffee first?”

She did; unfortunately, that was also enough time for dispatch to phone and give her a case. She swore as she put the phone away.

“Case?” Lucifer’s expression was mildly pleasant; Chloe frowned. She didn’t have time now to negotiate with a Lucifer in full retreat.

This was nothing she hadn’t dealt with before; forcing down the extravagant waffles he’d made was no great hardship, and he was laser-focussed on their case, which he wouldn’t normally be with an open-and-shut.

All that, however, detracted from the fact that he kept her at arm’s length: he was solicitously, frustratingly distant. Any time she moved into his space, he moved away. He even managed to make it look unintentional. But Chloe wasn’t fooled. She committed herself to finding a way to combat Lucifer’s sudden reticence, as soon as they closed the case.

After a second day passed in this manner, Chloe was ready to tear her hair out. Their arrest of the perp gave her an idea: at home, she did some research to solidify her theory before confronting Lucifer with it. Looking into BDSM to reassure her Devil boyfriend was not something she ever imagined having on her agenda, but she supposed with her life now, all bets were off.

Lucifer dropping Trixie off after her piano lesson presented her with a great opportunity. She convinced him to stay for dinner, and then afterwards, with Trixie in her room, she cornered him in the living room.

Predictably, he held himself away from her.

“Chloe, we can’t,” he said helplessly, pressing a chaste kiss to her cheek like it pained him. “I won’t take risks with your safety.”

Chloe was glad she had a potential solution in mind, because if she hadn’t, she would have been very frustrated indeed with him suddenly throwing on the brakes.


Every muscle in his body locked; he even held his hands slightly raised, his eyes wide and startled. Chloe smiled in satisfaction.

“Detective?” Lucifer’s uncertain voice reminded her she still needed to explain.

“Okay, you can relax now, Lucifer. Maybe we could sit down?”

They settled on the couch, Lucifer gingerly, Chloe rubbing her hands on her thighs as she tried to
figure out where to start.

“So let me get this straight… you’re worried about losing control again, that you won’t be able to stop. That you’ll ignore my signals if I don’t want to do something.”

Lucifer nodded once. Chloe wanted to wipe away the fear in his eyes.

“Well, I got thinking. What if we had a word?”

“Like a safeword?” Lucifer asked. His tone was impenetrable. Chloe shrugged.

“Yeah. Sorta. Something stronger than ‘stop.’”

“To protect yourself from me.” The recrimination was plain on his face as he looked away. Chloe’s chest ached.

“No, Lucifer. Exactly the opposite.” She took his hand; she’d missed his warmth. He looked back at her reluctantly, like it was against his will. “To protect myself from this.”

Lucifer’s brow furrowed. “I don’t understand.”

“If you’re afraid that you might end up hurting me accidentally, get too carried away, then we can have this word. No more ambiguity. If I’m not okay with what’s happening, I’ll say freeze. I’m pretty good at that.”

A smile flickered across Lucifer’s face at that. “But…” he interjected. “Are you certain that…”

Chloe squeezed his hand. “Lucifer,” she said, and he subsided.

“But that also means,” she continued, “that if I don’t say freeze, I am one hundred percent on board with everything that’s happening. So you won’t have to worry about whether or not I’m into it. If I’m not saying freeze, I definitely am.”

Lucifer considered it. His expression lightened. Slowly, he lowered his head down to hers, asking permission with his eyes. Relief washed through Chloe; she clasped the back of his neck and surged to meet his lips.

“I missed that,” Chloe gasped, breathless, as they parted some time later.

Heat smouldered in Lucifer’s gaze as he regarded her. “Me, as well,” he admitted.

“So we’ll try it?” she asked. “With the word? Will it work?”

Lucifer nodded slowly. “I don’t want to hurt you.”

“I know,” Chloe told him. “That’s why I trust you.” She drew a finger down his chest. “And I hope that having this will help you trust yourself.”

Lucifer paused, swallowed, and then drew her in for another kiss. Chloe surrendered eagerly, her heart pounding at the thought of what she’d so narrowly avoided.

That was now two attempted dates that had ended poorly. She found herself wondering if they really could be cursed, no matter what Lucifer said.
Next up: the Last Heartbreak! (Very much not in the way you remember :P)

I've added my tumblr to my profile - come say hi! I love talking to people!
Love is Strange

Chapter Notes

The beginning of the Last Heartbreak! Prepare for lots of changes, twists, and turns. Also, Pierce is in this one but he will definitively NOT be a romantic option for Chloe, even a fake one. Rest easy! I think a lot of you will be surprised with where I take this!

I have made A Lot of changes just for logic reasons. See if you can spot them all!

Additionally - some of you noticed that Lucifer's eyes flashed again. That's great - it's intentional :) You'll be getting an explanation... soon(tm).

Chapter title, as always, from the episode soundtrack.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Unfortunately, though curses might not have been real, Chloe’s suspicions turned out to be justified. It seemed so simple: Dan had Trixie for the weekend; they’d just try again.

The next morning at work, Lieutenant Pierce was in a mood.

“Decker, I wanted you in here five minutes ago,” he snapped as soon as she got to her desk. Chloe didn’t like the way he looked over the two of them arriving together. They’d gotten careless.

“Sorry, sir,” she said, more focused on rescuing her coffee from Lucifer before he crushed it.

“Double murder,” Pierce continued as though she hadn’t spoken. He stalked over to her desk and threw a file on top of it, nearly overturning her beleaguered cup. “A couple was found in a car at a lookout at Griffith Park.” Chloe would have tried to stop Lucifer from making any other outward signs of aggression, but didn’t want to do anything to further arouse Pierce’s suspicions. The case he was assigning them already made her twitchy. She didn’t know what would happen if Pierce suspected she and Lucifer were a couple.

“We’re on it,” Chloe said, but Pierce was already walking away.

Lucifer clenched his fists. “How dare he speak to you that way,” he nearly growled, and she found herself grateful he hadn’t been present during their meeting when Pierce had handed over the Firehawk Ranch case.

“And Lucifer, relax,” she said, though she found his behavior oddly charming. “I’m a big girl, I can handle a - what did you call him? An insufferable mortal with puffed-up views of his own importance?” The quote brought a ghost of a smile to Lucifer’s face. “We need to focus on this case. Come on.” She hoped that the crime scene would distract Lucifer from Pierce’s behaviour.

*@

No such luck; they’d only just arrived when Pierce was there again, throwing his weight around as he barked orders. “Prepare yourselves, people. This is a different kind of case.”

Chloe steeled herself. Pierce’s histrionics aside, she saw no reason for him to personally involve
himself in the case when he’d already gone out of his way to assign it to her. “Lieutenant, what brings you here?” she asked as calmly as possible.

“I had a gut feeling about this case,” Pierce replied, his hands on his hips, as he examined the bodies in the car. “I wanted to see if I was right.”

“Well, as much as we appreciate your digestive feelings, Lieutenant,” Lucifer sniped, “the Detective and I have this totally under control, so if you don’t mind?” He gestured with his chin to indicate how Pierce was blocking the crime scene.

“I don’t mind at all,” Pierce said, as though moving had been his idea.

Shooting a look at Lucifer, who’d sounded like he was on the verge of exploding, Chloe kept them moving on. “Ella, what do we have?”

“Meet Robbie Matthews and Rachel White,” Ella said, excited by the scene though remaining professional. “Looks like they were drugged unconscious and then someone literally smashed their chests in.”

Chloe ducked down to peer into the car, a beat up Honda Civic. Both victims sported gruesome chest wounds, and their positioning had obviously been staged.

“Do we know how they were drugged?” she asked, looking up at Ella again, who shrugged.

“Uh, best guess, some form of anaesthetic, either liquid or aerosol.”

Chloe nodded. That sort of thing would usually show up in an autopsy. “And then the killer crushed their ribs, their sternum—”

“-And finally, their hearts,” Lucifer finished, joining the conversation at last. “Well, it’s not hard to figure out what the desire was here.”

Chloe folded her arms to suppress the urge to touch him as she turned around. “So, what? We think maybe one of them had a jealous stalker? Or an angry ex?” There was a cloud over Lucifer’s brow for a different reason now. She could see him settling into punisher mode. She met his eyes, knowing that they were both thinking the same thing - that this was carefully premeditated and executed, likely by someone with a great deal of strength. Assuming that they’d delivered the anaesthetic while the victims were still in the car, the killer would likely have had to remove the bodies in order to get the necessary leverage to inflict the killing blow before returning them to stage the scene. “We need to talk to anyone who had a problem with this relationship.”

“Which one of them was married?” Pierce interjected.

“No wedding rings,” Lucifer observed irritably.

“Has anyone checked their chest cavities yet?” Pierce continued, undeterred, and Chloe frowned.

“What? Why would we do that?” she asked. That was something better suited for an autopsy. Why was Pierce trying to railroad the investigation?

“In the 50s,” Pierce began, “there was a guy named Clark Hoffman. He was known for making his victims swallow their wedding rings.”

“Right, the Broken Hearts killer,” Chloe said. They’d studied the case at the academy.
Something oddly like annoyance flashed across Pierce’s face for a moment before he resumed his habitual stoic expression. “By the time they caught him, he’d killed seven cheating couples in L.A. His crime scenes were about as gruesome as this.”

“Wow, you really know a lot about this,” Ella commented.

*Yes, you do,* Chloe thought, eyes narrowing.

The intensity of Lucifer’s gaze would have stripped paint.

Pierce shrugged off their scrutiny. “The cop who solved the case was an old mentor of mine,” he explained.

“And didn’t Hoffman die a few days ago in prison?” Chloe asked. She’d seen the headlines.

“Meaning his death could have inspired a copycat,” Pierce said.

“Or maybe they’re using this as an MO to throw us off,” Chloe responded sharply, still uncomfortable with how Pierce was throwing around speculation. She accepted a tablet from another officer. “Thank you.”

“I hope that’s all it is,” Pierce said in response to Chloe’s earlier statement, though he sounded dubious. She still didn’t trust him, and she trusted his mysterious connection to this case even less.

“All righty, guess we’ll get out the old rib spreader and go fishing for some wedding rings,” Ella said behind her, while Chloe flipped through the information on the screen.

As luck would have it, however, further investigation pointed to confirmation of Pierce’s theory.

“According to their social media profiles, Rachel was single and Robbie was married,” Chloe reported. “We need to talk to the spouse ASAP.” She jerked her head at Lucifer, who fell into step beside her. Pierce, bizarrely, hovered by her elbow as though he had something to say to her, but walked off without a word as they got to her car.

“What is with him?” Chloe said, almost a hiss. It wasn’t the first time she’d said those words in relation to Pierce, and she was sure it wouldn’t be the last.

“He’s lying, Detective,” Lucifer said, “and not well.”

“Yeah. Great.” She sighed, throwing the car into gear. Now they had that to worry about in addition to solving the case.

Emma Matthews was a slight, nervous-looking woman who had trouble making eye contact. If she was the killer, Chloe reflected, she must have had help to stage the bodies.

“Emma, four months ago, your husband reported that you slashed his tires,” Chloe began, placing the relevant picture in front of the other woman. “Then two months ago, neighbours saw you throwing rocks through his window.” She took out that picture, too. “And then just last month, you were seen threatening him with a bat.” She paused for effect. “Care to explain that?”

Emma sighed. “Look. I’m not proud of what happened. But I was upset. I’d just found out Robbie was cheating on me.”

Lucifer scoffed. “Of course. Some parasite had just inserted himself into your relationship.”
Chloe fought the urge to shoot him a look. He was understandably irritated that Pierce had, for some reason, muscled his way into the interrogation room and taken up the seat next to her, forcing Lucifer to stand. Chloe wasn’t exactly thrilled, either, but if there was one thing Lucifer could never be accused of, it was subtlety. She hoped at least that Emma believing she had a sympathetic voice in the room would push her to be more forthcoming.

“So, is that why you did this?” Chloe asked, removing the previous photos and placing one from the crime scene in front of her.

“What?” Emma started shaking, her hands hovering over the photo as though unable to make contact. She inhaled sharply. “Is this for real?” she demanded, looking up at them. Seeing the answer in their faces, she looked down again. “I-I admit I hated Rachel, but I would never hurt Robbie. I…I may have gone a little nuts when I learned he was cheating, but after the courts forced me into therapy, we started talking.” Pierce shifted in his seat. “We chose to divorce amicably. I can’t believe he’s dead!”

Chloe frowned. Either Emma had nothing to do with the murder or she was a very convincing actress.

“You just expect us to believe that you were okay with someone tearing you apart?” Lucifer asked.

“It’s the truth!” Emma protested.

“Does the name Clark Hoffman mean anything to you?” Pierce spoke for the first time, leaning forward.

Emma looked baffled. “Who?”

Pierce led the way from interrogation. “I know we’re going to check out her alibi, but my gut tells me to believe her,” he said.

“Oh, please.” Lucifer, needled now, wasn’t going to agree with anything Pierce said. “Just because she spouted some drivel about ‘conscious uncoupling’?”

“Because she has no idea who the Broken Hearts Killer is, and she has no motive to go after Robbie,” Pierce retorted, turning to face them.

“Well, she’s obviously lying about her relationships and the murders.”

Chloe tried to keep them on track. “I think we can’t take Emma’s word at face value,” she said, hoping to make peace.

“We don’t have to.” A very tanned Dan paused in the action of leaving to pick up Trixie, looking at his computer. “Another couple was just found dead holding hands. This time at a cheap motel. The Safari Inn.”

Pierce sighed. “This isn’t just a lovers’ quarrel.”

Chloe shook her head, cringing inwardly. “No, you’re right. The copycat’s just getting started - wasn’t one of the original killer’s couples found at a place called the Safari Inn last time?”

Pierce blinked and stared hard at her but Chloe was too focused on the job to worry about whatever his problem was. “Lieutenant, we could use your expertise on this case.” She might not like him, but if there was a serial killer on the loose, she was willing to use every tool in her arsenal to bring them down as quickly as possible. She flashed a forced smile at Dan before walking off to get her car.
sensed Lucifer join her when she was halfway across the bullpen. He was holding himself tightly in control, and Chloe found herself longing for the days when work didn’t involve her partner and her boss being constantly at each other’s throats.

As they arrived at the motel, and Chloe parked next to Pierce’s car, Lucifer muttered, “He’s hiding something, Detective.”

“I know,” Chloe said, meeting his eyes. “I still don’t trust him, and he knows way too much about the old case; I don’t care what excuse he uses. But so long as he’s giving us useful information, I can’t afford to ignore it. We need to catch whoever’s doing this.”

Lucifer nodded, jaw tight, and the two of them walked into the motel room. Ella met them at the door.

“Meet Mary Lee and Dennis Horn,” she said. “Just like our first lovers, they were drugged unconscious before the killer took something really big and really hard and literally-”

“Bludgeoned their hearts,” Lucifer finished slowly, standing next to Chloe as she crouched down to examine the couple on the bed.

“Mm-hmm.” Ella nodded and spread her arms. “And then moved them here and staged this whole scene.”

“And just like the other victims, one of them’s married,” Chloe mused. “She’s got a tan line on her ring finger.”

“We actually ended up finding a wedding ring inside the first victim,” Ella said as Chloe rose, “so good bet we’ll probably find one here, too.”

Chloe opened her mouth to ask another question, but Pierce beat her to it, appearing in the doorway. “Any other evidence?” he asked.

“You mentioned the bodies were moved here,” Chloe continued quickly. This was still her case, after all. “Do we know from where?”

Ella shook her head. “There’s no blood on the sheets - that’s how we know they were moved-” Chloe nodded. She’d noticed that as well. “-but so far that’s all we know. It’s too early to say whether or not they were even killed here, or somewhere else, because the place was wiped clean, just like the last crime scene.” Ella shook her head in apparent admiration. “I mean, this killer, you guys, whoever he - or she - is? Total pro.”

Chloe looked down at the two middle-aged victims in frustration. How could it be that such an elaborate method left no traces behind? “Well, Emma’s alibi checks out,” she said - she’d known it would. “There’s no obvious connection between the couples. I just wonder how the killer’s picking his targets.”

Lucifer smoothly took his cue. “Well, Lieutenant, as our resident Broken Hearts expert, wouldn’t you say it’s time to enlighten us with your wisdom?” Chloe bit back a smile.

“No one knew how the original killer chose his victims,” Pierce replied, showing no reaction to Lucifer’s veiled baiting. “I guess we just got lucky we caught him when we did.”

“We?” Lucifer pounced, his voice cool and sinuous.
Pierce looked away, clenching his jaw. “The LAPD.”

Red flags were flying, but Chloe had more important things to worry about. “We don’t have time for luck. We need to get back to the station, figure out a connection between these victims.”

But no such connection was forthcoming. She’d been at it for hours when Lucifer finally forced her to take a break and drove her home.

“But what if the killer strikes again?” Chloe burst out, once the door closed behind them. “He could be killing another couple right now, and it’s my fault!”

Lucifer pulled her tight to his chest. “You’ve done all you can,” he murmured, calm in the face of her agitation. “There may be no connection to find. You’ll do no one any good if you’re not in top form tomorrow.”

Chloe tried to resist the pull of Lucifer’s reasoning, but it was just as implacable as the strength in his arms. She gave in with a sigh, the tension in her muscles finally relaxing.

Lucifer hesitated. “If you’d like, I could…” He made a gesture with his shoulder reminiscent of bringing out his wings. Chloe was stunned. She nodded before she could think too much about it and a moment later a curtain of white manifested around them. She nestled deeper into Lucifer’s embrace, all her worries vanishing into obscurity.

“This almost feels like cheating, y’know?” she murmured, utterly content.

“What do you mean?” Lucifer asked, his voice warm like the feathers that surrounded her.

“Feels like it would be too easy to start to rely on them,” she explained. “A fast pass to stress relief with no side effects?”

Lucifer squeezed her tighter. “Well, you needed it this time. It’s not your fault, all right?” He pressed a kiss to the top of her head. “It’s imperative that you understand this. The only one at fault is the human stain who is perpetrating these atrocities, and he will be brought to justice. You are not to blame.”

Chloe just nodded, accepting his reasoning. “I wonder what the rules are,” she mused. Lucifer looked down at her.

“For what?”

“What affects me and what doesn’t. Amenadiel’s powers do, but your mojo doesn’t. Your wings do, though.”

The wings in question flexed as though distressed. “I suppose there’s no way to tell,” Lucifer said. “Without knowing why, exactly, my powers don’t work on you. But for what it’s worth…” He pushed a strand of hair behind her ear, smiling slightly. “I’m grateful the wings seem to have a much subtler effect on you than most humans. Mildly intoxicated is preferable to raving mad.”

Chloe tweaked his side. “I’m not intoxicated.”

Lucifer’s expression made it clear that he didn’t believe her, but all he said was, “Do you think you could sleep?” He moved his face closer to hers.
She nodded again, and before she knew it, they were in her bedroom. Her head spun, but Lucifer held her steady. He folded his wings away and Chloe clung to the feeling of calm.

“Sleep, love,” Lucifer said, nudging her towards the bed. “I’ll see to the doors.”

Chloe changed and crawled under the covers, wondering how she’d ever managed without him. She’d been taking care of everything herself for so very long; she wasn’t too proud to admit that it was nice, sometimes, to leave the responsibilities to someone else. She should feel guilty about allowing herself to be soothed, having already resigned herself to sleeplessness. A night spent tossing and turning would hardly have been unusual during a case. They’d have to get started first thing tomorrow.

The bed dipped behind her, surprising Chloe. Lucifer had moved so silently she hadn’t heard him come back in.

“Relax, darling,” he admonished, caressing her hair with gentle fingers. “I can hear your mind whirring from here.”

Chloe took a deep breath, in and out, finding it very easy to melt into Lucifer’s arms. “Goodnight, Lucifer,” she whispered. Then, even more quietly. “I’m glad you’re here.”

Lucifer let out a shuddering breath. “I will always be here for you,” he said, his voice tentative, thick with emotion. As if, even now, he wasn’t sure if the sentiment would be accepted.

Chloe folded her hands over his. “I know,” she said, feeling safe and cherished, the way she always did in his arms. “Love you.”

Lucifer pressed a kiss to the skin behind her ear, and murmured the same string of syllables he’d spoken in the car on their way to the ranch, the first time she’d heard him speak his native language. Just like the last time, she felt the words in a shudder, deep down to her bones. She slept.

When her alarm jerked her awake far too soon the next morning, Lucifer wasn’t in bed next to her; she could smell him making breakfast downstairs.

When she dressed in a rush and came down to the kitchen, he pushed a steaming mug of coffee across the counter towards her. “Eggs are almost ready,” he said.

Chloe bit her lip. “Lucifer…”

Lucifer ignored her, tipping breakfast from the pan onto her plate. “Never mind your table manners. Eat and we’ll go. I won’t have you passing out today from lack of nutrition.” There was real concern beneath his light tone, and once again she couldn’t argue with his logic. She sighed and settled in with a fork, and Lucifer smiled, satisfied.

“Hey.” She caught him before he could turn away, pulling him in for a rushed, slightly awkward kiss. “Thank you.”

His eyelids fluttered. “You’re welcome.”

The mail arrived; he pulled away to rifle through it, and Chloe let him, used to his habit of poking around into everything, unable to sit still. There wasn’t anything that came to the house she was worried about him seeing - the mail contained mostly flyers anyway. She forced the eggs down as quickly as she could chew, which didn’t do justice to Lucifer’s stellar cooking, but she had no
intention of wasting time.

Her coffee was the perfect temperature, but, needing to get the caffeine in her system, she’d have taken the same large gulps even if the drink were scalding.

Lucifer’s movements abruptly slowed, and Chloe looked up from her coffee in time to see him pull a letter out of the pile.

“What is it?” she asked, unnerved by the stark look on his face. He started to open it. “Lucifer?”

“It’s addressed to me,” he said absently, and Chloe set down her mug, rising to her feet. Who would know to address a letter for Lucifer to her house? And why?

Inside the envelope was a single sheet of paper, or maybe photo card. Chloe was just opening her mouth to ask what it was again when Lucifer’s face abruptly changed. He stared down at the page as though he’d like nothing more than to burn a hole in it with his eyes, which flashed crimson.

“Lucifer?” Chloe murmured, shaken.

Before she could blink, he’d crushed the paper in his hand and his phone was at his ear. He began speaking in rapid, harsh syllables that she couldn’t catch except for the name Mazikeen. When he’d hung up, Chloe approached carefully. The tense set of his shoulders and wild eyes told her to tread with caution.

“Lucifer, what just happened?” she asked. “What’s wrong?”

Breathing heavily, clearly trying to keep himself under control, Lucifer didn’t look at her.

“You’ve been threatened,” he said at last, in a voice like rolling gravel. “The note was a threat. He must be watching the house.” Chloe’s heart rate sped up. “I called Mazikeen and ordered her to retrieve the child from school,” he said. “She’ll bring her here, and I will protect both of you while Maze finds the killer.”

Chloe took a moment to process this information, stunned that Lucifer’s first thought had been for Trixie. Then her sense caught up and she shook her head, stepping closer to Lucifer.

“Lucifer,” she said quietly. Lucifer turned slightly to indicate he’d heard her, but didn’t look away from the door. “Show me the note.” Lucifer’s hand loosened a fraction and Chloe was able to slip the paper out. She unfurled the message, wondering what had gotten Lucifer so riled up.

The answer was immediately obvious. Even creased, the image was alarming. It was a picture of her and Lucifer, taken at a restaurant somewhere - maybe even the bistro they’d stopped at for lunch during the Pudding Plus case. It had been a nice, flirty afternoon in Chloe’s memory. The picture tainted that.

The fact that someone had been surveilling them without their knowledge, though, wasn’t the only source of unease. In the image, someone had scratched out Chloe’s eyes and mouth. Her stomach flipped. The scoring might have taken just a few pen strokes, but the hatred behind the disfigurement was clear from the heaviness of the ink. Cutout letters from various magazines spelled out the chilling message: **WHo COuLd B nExT?**
Feel free to come chat at me on tumblr! New chapter next week!
Sorry it's been taking me so long to reply to comments, I've been distracted with Pride stuff :) Responses coming soon!
Chapter Notes

I was really happy with the response to last week's cliffhanger! I hope this chapter clears up some of your questions!

Chapter title is from the song cover by XYLO, which I like very much.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chloe swallowed and placed the letter face down on the counter so she wouldn’t have to look at it - a futile gesture, as she suspected the image would be burned behind her eyelids for a good long while. She looked up to meet Lucifer’s gaze as he finally turned his attention away from the door, and whatever he saw in her expression spurred him to fold her into his arms, wings coming around to shield her as if by reflex. Chloe wrapped her arms around him lightly in turn.

“I do appreciate that your first thought was Trixie,” she murmured against his chest.

“It wasn’t actually my first thought,” Lucifer said. He hadn’t bent his head down to hers like he usually did - she suspected he was still keeping an eye on the doors. “My first thought was that whoever sent this is dead.” There was no anger in his voice, only implacable surety, and Chloe shivered a little. “Then I ensured I had a clear view of you and all exits. Then I called Maze.”

Chloe shook her head. “Even so.”

Lucifer didn’t appear to be listening. “I’ve gotten complacent. Who knows how long they’ve been following us.”

“Let’s not get ahead of ourselves,” Chloe said, the effect of the wings such that she instructed the Devil to calm down without a hint of compunction. “Anyone could have taken that picture. You’ve got a lot of fans.”

“Ones who know they can reach me at your house?” Lucifer countered.

Chloe shrugged. “Remember Stalker Girl?” she asked. “She certainly would, and if she could make the connection, others could, too.”

“No fan of mine sent this,” Lucifer said darkly, and Chloe wasn’t sure if that was a statement or a threat. “The details of the cases aren’t public yet, are they?”

Chloe straightened. “You think the killer sent it?”

“Next, it said,” he reminded her. “The culprit kills cheating couples, do they not?”

Chloe frowned. “Dan and I aren’t married anymore,” she said. “The divorce was finalized ages ago.”

“Mine isn’t.” Lucifer’s voice was cold.

Chloe stiffened. Of course. Candy.
She shook her head again, trying to clear it. “Could you put your wings away, please?” she requested. *That* was a sentence she never thought she’d say. “I can’t think with them out.”

“That was a sentence she never thought she’d say. “I can’t think with them out.”

“Apologies,” Lucifer murmured. He did so, and Chloe felt the cogs in her brain start turning again.

“Thank you.” She put her hand on his shoulder in reassurance. She knew this was hard for him. “This doesn’t fit the killer’s MO, though,” she said, moving to stand behind the counter, which was a more protected position. Lucifer’s eyes sparked with approval. “He goes after couples who are having *affairs*, not ones who are already separated. And as far as we can tell, he never sent threatening notes to any of the other victims.”

“Serial killers have been known to change their methods when they’re being pursued,” Lucifer pointed out, and Chloe was relieved to hear him speaking more rationally.

“Or it’s a feint to try to scare me off the case,” she said. “Wouldn’t be the first time, especially if the killer has an accomplice.” She looked Lucifer in the eye. “Either way, the best response is still to track him down, like we would any other killer.” Lucifer stiffened, and Chloe bit back a sigh. “We can’t just hide out here waiting for him to come to us. Who knows how many targets he might take out in the meantime? And that would be on my conscience, no matter what you say.”

“Chloe…” Lucifer’s tone was warning again, but Chloe squeezed his shoulder.

“You can’t pull Trixie out of school for this,” she said gently. “All you’re going to do is freak her out, and I still have to do my *job*, Lucifer. I’m not just going to sit here at home while you send Maze on a rampage!”

Lucifer grinded his teeth audibly. “*You-*” He growled - actually growled - at her. She stopped short. “Don’t push me on this, Chloe. If someone knew to send the threat to me here, they can easily get to you. I can’t…” He cut himself off as she reached out to touch his face. “I *need* you to be safe.”

His eyes met hers, dark and imploring.

She nodded. “I know. But I’m not always going to be safe, not with my job. And keeping me under lock and key every time things get a little dicey isn’t a solution.”

“Chloe…” Lucifer warned.

But Chloe wasn’t fazed. “I’m a homicide detective,” she said bluntly. “It’s not the first time I’ve been threatened. It won’t be the last. You can’t just sic Maze on every killer who looks at me funny. I’m not a piece of china.” She took out her phone to call Maze back.

Lucifer made an abortive motion like he wanted to snatch away her phone, but thought better of it, and clenched his fists at his sides. Chloe stared him down as she waited for Maze to pick up.

“What is it, Decker?” Maze asked. There was a rushing sound in the background, like she was standing in a wind tunnel. “*You can’t say anything Lucifer hasn’t already.*” Chloe wondered what, exactly, Lucifer had said that had gotten Maze to move with such alacrity. She shook her head. Maze cared for Trixie. That was likely all that had been necessary, and Lucifer had overdone it, as usual.

“Maze, I don’t want you to get Trixie from school,” Chloe said. The rushing noises slowed, but didn’t stop completely. Lucifer made a small noise, turning away to stare down the door again.

“*Huh.*” Maze sounded impressed. “*He let you make this call?*”

“It’s not up to Lucifer to *let* me do anything,” Chloe said, more sharply than she intended. Lucifer’s shoulders bunched as though struck. She took a deep breath to calm herself. “Now, I really
appreciate you dropping everything, Maze. How close are you to the school?"

"I'm about a mile out."

"Okay." Chloe pinched the bridge of her nose, trying to think. "Could I ask you just to keep an eye on Trixie while she’s at school? It might be overkill, but it would make me feel better to know she’s protected." They all remembered what had happened with Malcolm.

The noise Maze made was definitely approving this time.

"Consider it done," she said. "You know the kid’s my friend."

Despite everything, Chloe smiled. "I do. Thank you, Maze."

"Don’t mention it," Maze said, signing off before the conversation could edge closer to “feelings” territory. Chloe nonetheless made a mental note to pick up a bottle of Maze’s preferred brand of vodka at the next opportunity. The fact that someone was keeping an eye on Trixie was a huge weight off her mind. She turned her attention to the next biggest one.

"Come on," she said. "So much for being early - now we’re going to be late." She halted as Lucifer moved to stand in front of her. She craned her neck up to face him. "Are you going to keep me here?" she asked very quietly.

Lucifer jerked, his fists clenching and unclenching.

"I - no," he said, though it sounded like the word had been pulled out of him. "No," he repeated. "Of course not." All at once his demeanour crumpled, and he looked at her plaintively. "I can’t protect you out there." He waved his arm vaguely. Chloe nodded, stepped into his space, and placed a hand on his cheek once more.

"No, you can’t," she replied, and Lucifer looked stricken. "Out there, we watch each other’s backs." She smiled slightly. "That’s what partnership is all about. If I’m around, you can get hurt too, so I’ll look out for you while you look out for me."

Lucifer shook his head from side to side, like her words weren’t making sense.

"I can’t lose you," he said, and just like the last time, it was in a whisper, like he was afraid the universe would hear.

"I know," she said, as she had before, stretching up to kiss him. "And I promise I’ll be extra careful. But to run away and hide? That’s as good as saying I think my life is more important than theirs, than his victims."

"It is to me," Lucifer said, and Chloe knew he was completely serious, one of those non-self conscious admissions that came with the territory when dating a celestial.

"I know," she said again, not willing to argue the point. "And I’m sorry that I’m not someone with a safe, comfortable desk job, but this is the job I wanted. It’s the job I worked hard for. Because it will always be more important to me to protect people than to be the one protected."

"I’m aware." He seemed to be trying to lighten the mood, but his face was pinched with despair, as he added, muttering. "Just wish you didn’t have to be so bloody fragile."

"Comparatively," Chloe corrected, with a stern look, and finally, the ghost of a smile flitted across Lucifer’s face. He grasped her hand and placed a chaste kiss on her knuckles.
“Far be it from me to suggest otherwise,” he said, but he still made a small, aborted grasp for her when she moved to step out from behind the counter.

Chloe realized that this was part and parcel of the same issue she had with Lucifer getting himself into dangerous situations for her sake. She wasn’t unappreciative of the reasons why he might have a problem with her insistence on remaining in the line of fire - in the absolute best case scenario, Lucifer’s time with her would still be a mere pittance compared to his lifespan. To have even less than that would be unthinkable.

“I love you,” Chloe said, stepping into his embrace as he clutched at her. “And you might be saddled with a squishy human,” she added, hoping it would make him laugh - he did chuckle a little - “but I like to think I’ve done a pretty good job of taking care of myself so far.”

Lucifer looked at her steadily. Those times she hadn’t - when Lucifer had been forced to take drastic measures to safeguard her survival - had been before she knew the truth. Now that she was aware of Lucifer’s full capabilities she was able to make threat assessments more accurately.

“Come on,” she said, bracing. “Let’s get going. Out of all the days to be late for work, one when we have a serial killer on the loose ranks pretty near the bottom.”

She smirked up at Lucifer, who made an odd sort of twitch with his shoulders. Her eyes widened at the thought that Lucifer seemed to have been about to fly them to work. He cleared his throat, shifting slightly, suggesting that the movement had been unintentional. The disdain of his wings seemed to have won out, for the time being. Chloe told herself she wasn’t disappointed.

“Would you permit me to drive?” Lucifer asked instead, his voice still rough, and she decided to respond to the spirit of his request rather than focusing on the fact that they both knew it hadn’t really been a request. Besides which, they might actually get to work faster with him at the wheel.

She nodded, and Lucifer’s posture relaxed the slightest amount, like he hadn’t been expecting her to capitulate so easily. Chloe held out her hand, and Lucifer blinked at it for a second before taking it, holding on just a fraction tighter than usual. Chloe was glad he was using it as the grounding point she’d intended it to be. “I won’t even say a word about the speed limit,” she told him, watching his eyebrows raise a fraction. “So long as you don’t do anything that makes me have to arrest you for reckless driving.”

He grinned at that - a wan shadow of his usual mirthful expression, but still present. “It’s a deal,” he said.

“I don’t want to tell anyone about the note,” Chloe said, once they were in the car. Lucifer looked over at her. “They’ll take me off the case as a conflict of interest.”

Lucifer’s expression said that he didn’t consider this a bad thing, but he chose not to argue. Chloe slid a hand onto his thigh in reassurance. “I just… I need to see this through,” she said. Lucifer nodded once and kept driving.

Chloe needn’t have worried; Pierce barely looked at them as they entered.

“I might have a lead,” he said, diving right in. They peered at the screen.

“Where did you find it? During A.V. club?” Lucifer asked, unimpressed. “We already know the killer disabled the hotel security cameras.”

“On the day of the murders, yes,” Pierce said, brusque as always. “But then I started thinking: what if the killer scoped the place out beforehand? And a week ago, I found this.” He pointed at the
screen, which showed a man skulking around taking surreptitious photos of the hotel room that would later go on to host a double homicide.

“Wait, is that-?” Chloe asked.

“Our guy?” Pierce finished. “Maybe. The car’s registered to a Neil Berger, former schoolteacher.”

“Well, that’s it? A chap snapping photos?” Lucifer was growing increasingly volatile. “How do we know he’s not scrapbooking?”

Snark aside, he had a point. They already knew the hotel was somewhat infamous for the role it had played in the previous rash of killings. There were people who made a hobby out of serial killers.

Pierce ignored Lucifer. “I put out an APB on him and-” His phone chimed. “We just got a hit. He’s been spotted in front of the original killer’s house. Let’s go.” He marched out of the precinct without even checking to see if they were following. Lucifer and Chloe looked at each other. Pierce was a man of few words but Chloe had never seen him quite so driven.

Lucifer made a face. “That… actually sounds quite promising,” he said grudgingly as they hurried to join Pierce.

It did seem promising, at first - they found the man in question in the middle of an altercation with the homeowner, and then talked their way onto his tour. Lucifer, eyes flinty, nearly refused the included Segway point blank until Chloe took him aside.

“You can’t just walk off the job and, what, perch on the rooftops like Batman?” she hissed, as Lucifer folded his arms. “What if Pierce sees you?” She’d seen enough to realize some protective instinct had been triggered, but this was getting ridiculous.

“Pierce wouldn’t notice if I walked up and hit him in the face with my wing,” Lucifer grumbled, but he accepted the Segway. If the situation had been less dire, she would have gotten out her phone and snapped a picture of the Devil in a bike helmet and poncho, but she didn’t want to push it. She’d already had to physically restrain him from going after Neil at the house, but she knew that despite her protestations the only thing that was keeping their tour guide from doing his best pancake impression against the nearest flat surface was that Lucifer was waiting, practically daring him to try anything so that Lucifer would have full sanction to engage.

Chloe could sympathize. That was essentially what she and Pierce were doing as well - waiting for Neil to incriminate himself. When he went on to do just that, with a slip about case information that wasn’t yet public, Pierce’s lead looked even more promising, and Chloe had enough on her mind with the arrest and with keeping Lucifer contained that she hardly noticed when the lieutenant took off.

All their progress came to a screeching halt, however, when it turned out that Neil was just an over-enthusiastic serial killer hobbyist who had bought crime scene photos off someone from Vice. Chloe was concerned about what this meant for the investigation, if not the department, but was even more concerned for Lucifer, who for a minute had been nearly apoplectic at the realization that they were back at square one, and that he had nowhere to direct his anger. The only saving grace of the whole affair was that it proved Pierce wrong.

Chloe called Pierce to give him the news while Lucifer stood stiffly next to her desk. He was growling far too quietly for anyone else to hear, but she noticed everyone giving them a wide berth, probably without even realizing they were doing it. She frowned. Something had to give, and soon.
“So Neil isn’t our killer,” Pierce was saying on the phone.

“No, he’s just an obsessed tour guide who illegally obtained crime scene photos,” Chloe replied. “He must’ve been taking pictures of the hotel because of its connection to the previous case.”

“So we don’t have any suspects,” Pierce summarized.

“Yeah, and our killer could be trying to find his next victim,” Chloe said pointedly, hoping to remind Lucifer that there was still a chance she wouldn’t be the killer’s next target. “We need a lead.” She’d really hoped she could get away with not having to tell Pierce about the threatening note, but she would if they had nothing else to go on. “Listen, Lieutenant…”

“Hold on,” Pierce said, and she heard the sound of a muffled voice as he spoke to someone on his end of the line. She shot a glance at Lucifer to see if his hearing was able to make it out; he just gave a noncommittal shrug.

“Chloe, meet me at the Adams,” Pierce ordered after a moment. “I may have something.”

“On my way,” Chloe responded, trying to keep her relief from colouring her voice, before signing off.

“Why?” Lucifer demanded as she ended the call. “So we can watch him pontificate while leading us down another blind alley? We already know where the killer is going to strike next.”

“No, we don’t,” she reminded him. “If whatever Pierce has doesn’t pan out, I’ll tell him about the note, and we can go from there. Trixie’ll be home from school by then anyway. But until that time comes, we’re going to treat this like we would any other case.”

Lucifer gave her a mutinous look that clearly said this case wasn’t like any other case, but it seemed he was as tired of fighting about it as she was, because he let the matter drop.

The silence as Lucifer drove them back to the Adams was tight and strained. It was getting to the point that Chloe almost wished something would happen, just to relieve the tension.

The Adams turned out to be a classic cop bar, more old fashioned than the Paddock. Her dad would have felt right at home here, Chloe realized with a pang. She went to sit in the booth where Pierce had case files strewn across the table; Lucifer sat stiffly across from them at the bar, not touching the glass of water the bartender set by his elbow. Chloe ignored him and threw herself into work. Pierce, however, seemed distracted - whether his preoccupation was from the dark aura Lucifer was projecting, or something else, Chloe didn’t know. She had to try three times to get Pierce’s attention.

“Hey. Lieutenant. Are you okay?”

“Yeah, sorry.” Pierce cleared his throat. “What were you saying?”

Chloe barely kept from rolling her eyes. He picked now of all times to space out?

“Your mentor; look at all this stuff that he found, like these call logs.” She indicated the sheet in question. “All the original killer’s victims had spouses that called into the Dear Dottie radio show.” Privately, she wondered why the original case had remained officially unsolved once this information had come to light, but she didn’t want to insult Pierce’s mentor in front of him, so she refrained from commenting.

“That was a radio show about love and relationship advice,” Pierce said, and Chloe looked at him askance. That had come out far too easily for someone who she previously would have bet good
money never paid attention to anything love- and- relationship related in the present, much less the long past.

“Yeah. Yeah, you really know your history,” Chloe said. Lucifer made a disbelieving sound from his spot at the bar but she didn’t dare look over at him. That was the third time Pierce had said something off with regards to the case, and while it certainly could just be because he had an interest in it as his mentor’s famous case, something didn’t quite add up. “Anyway, it was the only connection that was found between the victims.”

“But that show went off the air years ago,” Pierce said. “I’m not sure how it’s going to help us now.”

“Well, if the original killer listened to the radio show to find his victims, then maybe the copycat’s doing the same thing,” Chloe explained, warming to the idea. That meant that she might not be a target after all.

Pierce nodded slowly. “So the question is, what show would that be now?”

“Chance’s Chocolates?” Excitement lit Ella’s lambent eyes as she warmed to her spiel. “I’m obsessed. They set up cheating couples. See, Chance brings someone on who thinks their spouse is cheating, and then, he calls the cheater pretending to be a candy shop giving away free chocolates as a promotion and asks who they should send it to.”

“How thrilling,” Lucifer commented dryly. Chloe glanced over at him. He’d relaxed the slightest fraction once they’d entered the precinct but it was still the first time he’d spoken since the bar. He’d been hovering over her protectively for so long by this point she’d basically resigned herself to it, but this sort of tension couldn’t go on. They needed a break.

“Right?” Ella, as always, was blind to the sarcasm. “And then the person either names their partner, and aww! Happy ending! Or they name someone else, and expose their dirty, cheating ways. Oh, it’s so juicy.”

Meanwhile, Chloe had been looking up the show’s guest list online. “Turns out, both couples had a significant other who appeared on the show,” she said. She swallowed a wave of self-recrimination to be dealt with later. If she’d only listened to Ella more carefully, she’d have been able to find the connection much sooner. They might even have the killer in custody by now.

“So we’re assuming the killer listens to this juvenile program?” Lucifer’s tone was edging closer to exasperation. The longer time went on, the more he would lose patience with their investigation and want to take her back home and lock her away. He respected her far too much to do that, though, which was why she felt so awful about what she was fairly certain she was going to have to ask of him. “We’ve narrowed our suspects down to anyone who doesn’t have satellite radio, and Miss Lopez.”

“Actually the addresses are beeped out,” Ella corrected, sounding regretful. “Probably for reasons like this.”

“Okay, so the killer has to be someone who works on the show,” Chloe said. “Someone with access to this info.”

“Right…” Lucifer said, in a tone that said he didn’t like what he was hearing. She cringed inwardly.

“So we need to make ourselves the target, and flush the killer out,” Chloe finished.
Lucifer’s face was set in stark lines, his black eyes glinting dangerously. “Very well,” he said, without giving anyone else an opportunity to speak. “I own multiple properties in the Los Angeles area. Give one of those addresses out, and lure the killer there.”

Chloe almost sighed with relief that he was on board with the plan. She supposed it was what he’d wanted all along - for the killer to come to them - and would obviously prefer to do it on his own turf, so to speak. She eyed Pierce, watching as he struggled to come up with an objection. Lucifer was the clear choice - he had multiple disposable properties that wouldn’t result in anyone else having to give out their actual home address to those who wished to do them harm. Pierce could hardly argue against his involvement this time.

“Oh man,” Ella blurted out, breaking the standoff effortlessly. “You guys are totally going to be the cheating lovers!” She clapped her hands over her mouth, afraid she’d said too much.

Pierce looked between them. “You and Decker?” he asked. Chloe swore inwardly. This was one aspect she hadn’t considered - the potential for revealing their true relationship was high.

Chloe spoke up before Lucifer could make a quip. “We are partners, Lieutenant,” she said. “You assigned this case to us. Four people are dead. I want to see this through.”

Pierce nodded as though his neck pained him. “Fine. Who’ll call into the show?” As much as he hadn’t wanted Lucifer to take point on the investigation, he seemed even less keen to play the part of the “cheatee.”

“Actually, I have an idea about that,” she said, sending an apologetic look at Lucifer. “Can I talk to you for a second?”

Lucifer nodded, eyes wary.

“Keep me posted,” Pierce instructed, suddenly sounding eager to wash his hands of the whole affair.

Ella left too, looking guiltily at Chloe. “Let me know if you need anything, guys,” she said as she went back to her lab.

Chloe jerked her head at an empty conference room. She didn't pull the blinds for fear of looking too suspicious, but she did surreptitiously step behind a shelf, giving them a few stolen moments out of sight to seek reassurance in touch.

Lucifer grasped her arms and pulled her tight against his body, touching his forehead to hers. “Chloe…” he whispered, breathing her in.

“I'm okay,” Chloe reminded him softly, rubbing his back and feeling the tension in his muscles. It had been a long, difficult day for both of them, and the hardest part was yet to come. “We’re almost there.”

Lucifer took another long moment before stepping away, looking deeply into her eyes. “You have a plan.”

Chloe nodded, biting her lip. “You know how you said your divorce wasn’t finalized?” she asked. Lucifer reared back, shock registering on his features.

“You want me to ask Candy to call into the radio show.” It wasn’t a question.

“Do you think she would?” Chloe asked.
Lucifer considered it, while Chloe strove to project an aura of nonchalance.

“Yes,” he said at last. “We parted on amicable terms; though it would put me in her debt.” He spoke carefully, gauging her reaction. Chloe didn’t want to hear any more - she just wanted this endless day to be over, so she could crawl into bed with Lucifer, without the spectre of one of the worst days of her life hanging over her. However, such was not to be.

“We need to make ourselves the best target we can,” Chloe reminded him. “We can’t keep going on like this, jumping at shadows. I want to put an end to it.”

Lucifer’s dark eyes never wavered. “I’ll give her a ring.”

“Great,” Chloe said, suddenly unable to leave the room fast enough. “I’ll just… go tell Pierce the plan.”

“Chloe?” Lucifer’s face was creased with concern.

“I’m fine,” she assured him. “I promise, I’m fine. I’ll be right back.” She turned and fled before Lucifer could call her back.

Out of sight, she leaned back against a wall, hitting her head against it with a thunk of frustration. What was she doing? Every time she thought she’d gotten over what had happened, the universe seemed to be conspiring to prove her wrong. It had been her own idea to involve Candy, but despite her concerted effort to focus on the practicality of the plan, all she could see when she closed her eyes was the blonde bimbo hanging off Lucifer in the precinct, massive rock glinting off her finger, taking Chloe’s weeks of worrying and heartache and throwing them back in her face. The image brought every single one of her slumbering fears to the surface, and she pushed them back down with difficulty. Lucifer was hers.

Clinging fiercely to that thought, she went to inform Pierce.

Chapter End Notes

Did anyone see that twist coming? Don't worry, I promised no love triangles, and that not exclusive to Pierce. You'll just have to wait and see where this is going!

Thanks for reading! Please feel free to hit me up on tumblr if you want to talk about all things fic/fandom related!
The conclusion of the Heartbreak arc! I have greatly enjoyed the speculative comments throughout. Hopefully things will be clear as mud by the end :) 

((Side note: some people have expressed confusion over Lucifer's continued marriage to Candy. By state law, all divorces must take at least six months to finalize. Since Lucifer's divorce was presumably uncontested, it would have taken at least that long to come into effect. However, seeing as there is usually (always) governmental red tape involved - especially with Lucifer's wealth of assets - I've chosen to go with a happy medium between the required six months and the year that is the average.))

Chapter title comes from the song off the episode soundtrack (one of my favourites!)

((Side side note: the house I describe as Lucifer's in this chapter is a real house, 1231 Lago Vista Drive in Beverly Hills, which can be yours for the low, low price of $29,950,000!!))

“Welcome, Detective; make yourself at home,” Lucifer effused as he held the door for her, ushering her into his Beverly Hills estate. “Mi casa es su casa, and all that.”

Chloe, for her part, took one step into the spacious, glass-walled foyer (complete with a massive LED light fixture) and then stood, rooted to the spot. Her skin prickled with the intense sensation of you do not belong! She was intensely aware of her worn makeup, scruffy hair, and work clothes. She eyed the sleek, modern decor warily, as though the house were a monster that would spit her back out after determining her unworthiness.

It was the same way she’d felt the first time she’d stepped out of the elevator into Lucifer’s penthouse; the sudden, uncomfortable revelation that there were people who actually lived like this, in a sphere so far removed from her own that it might as well be another planet. She was used to the penthouse by now, but she didn’t know if it made her feel better or worse that Lucifer apparently owned several of these properties, just… because.

He certainly didn’t live here - there were no soft edges, nothing to suggest a sense of home. It was entirely too white, cold and austere, and Chloe knew at once without having to ask that Lucifer had bought it because it reminded him of Heaven.

“Chloe?” Lucifer had noticed she wasn’t following him. “Is everything all right?”

Chloe almost laughed, but she knew that if she did, she’d never stop, at the thought that anyone could need this much space, ever, for anything. Instead, she just shook her head, forcing herself to take another step. “Yeah,” she said, shaking off the sense that this was all some sort of spell that would end on the stroke of twelve. “I’m just tired.”

“Well, we can dispense with the tour,” Lucifer said worriedly. “I’ll show you to a room if you’d like to rest up before the grand performance.”
“Okay,” Chloe agreed, grateful for the suggestion. “I should call Trixie anyway.” She looked up at him, curious. “What are you going to do?”

He drew closer, pressing a kiss to the top of her head. “I’ll not leave your side,” he said, obviously reassuming his mantle of protector. Chloe couldn’t summon the will to argue - any potential for resistance had been left at the wide, sweeping steps of Lucifer’s mansion. She welcomed the anchor he provided in the midst of so much uncertainty.

Lucifer guided her up a floating staircase and through wide hallways, which despite being liberally hung with art that probably cost more than her entire salary, still felt empty and barren.

He brought her to what was clearly the master bedroom. There was a large bed (fitted with white sheets, not black) and a long, narrow fake fireplace set into the wall under a large flatscreen. So far as she’d seen there was one in every room. Just like his penthouse, one wall was entirely windows, leading out to a balcony that overlooked a massive pool, an immaculately landscaped yard, and the gorgeous, forested backdrop of Beverly Hills.

In front of the TV, she sank gingerly into one of the wide, plush chairs that enveloped her like a pile velvet bath, and dialed Trixie.

“Hi, Mom!”

At the sound of her daughter’s happy, unconcerned voice, Chloe relaxed. On top of everything else she had to think about today, she hadn’t realized how much she’d been worried about Trixie’s safety while she had been at school. “Hey, little monkey. I’m sorry I can’t be there tonight. How was your day?”

Lucifer turned his head from where he was casing the corners of the room and came to lean his hip against the chair by her head. She rested against him, and after a moment he started playing with her hair - unconsciously, Chloe was sure. She certainly wasn’t about to draw attention to it. It felt too nice.

Chloe listened indulgently to Trixie chatter on about her day; the minor mishaps in science class, wondering when they were going to cover knife fights in gym class and stop playing “boring” games, and the trials and tribulations of math. All in all, Chloe gathered, a perfectly normal day.

The relief in the bedroom was palpable. Trixie hadn’t noticed anything out of the ordinary.

“And are you being good for Maze?” Chloe asked.

“Yeah,” Trixie said. “She’s helping me with my science homework.” Chloe made a mental note to check over Trixie’s answers before she handed them in, but that was the least of her concerns right now.

“Okay, that sounds great, babe,” Chloe said. “Tell you what, why don’t you help Maze with making pancakes, and then the two of you can have them for dinner?” She trusted Trixie with pancakes and hoped a fun dinner would make up for her absence that evening.

“Cool!” Trixie exclaimed. “So why’re you working late?”

Chloe bit her lip. The question still hit her like a truck, every time, even though Trixie’s tone wasn’t accusatory. “I’m working a sting,” Chloe said.

“Is Lucifer there?”
“Yeah, he is. Do you want to talk to him?”

“Nah. Just tell him I want him to read me the third chapter of Artemis Fowl soon.”

Luckily Lucifer forestalled the need for Chloe to speak around the lump in her throat. “You know, I can hear you, spawn.” His voice was amused.

“Oh yeah! Cool! So will you?”

Chloe arched an eyebrow and held out the phone. Lucifer took it with a long-suffering look.

“I suppose,” Lucifer replied. “If the opportunity presents itself.” Chloe smiled. “Child, would you mind putting Maze on the line?”

Trixie must have done so, because next Lucifer said, “Maze, darling,” and then broke off into a short phrase consisting of sinuous syllables. If Chloe had to guess, he was asking for updates. As they spoke, she looked around the room, wondering how often Lucifer had actually slept here.

Lucifer handed the phone back. Chloe thanked Maze for taking care of Trixie, and told her daughter she loved her very much, before hanging up. She looked at Lucifer.

“Updates?” she asked pointedly. “I’m assuming the Celestial was for Trixie’s benefit.”

Lucifer blinked. “It was Russian; and yes.”

“Russian?” Chloe repeated, surprised.

“Maze is fluent,” Lucifer said. “I prefer it to using my mother tongue when not a matter of absolute urgency. Regardless, Maze saw nothing out of the ordinary at the child’s school.”

Chloe let out a breath. “So she really wasn’t in danger.”

Lucifer nodded. “It would appear not.”

Chloe allowed her thoughts to wander. “What do you do with all this space?” she wondered. “You said you had multiple properties, not just this one and Lux. What for?”

Lucifer shrugged, as though noticing where they were for the first time. “In all my previous sojourns I never lingered long enough to require a dwelling,” he said thoughtfully, and Chloe’s chest constricted, as it always did, at the thought of how Lucifer had spent most of his eternity. “Once I’d made the decision to remain here, I was… trying things out, so to speak. The penthouse had to be built to my specifications and until it was ready I moved around quite a bit. I never intended for it to become my permanent home.” His mouth caressed the word with all the emotion of someone who’d thought he would never have one. Chloe smiled and took his hand.

“I bought houses because something took my fancy; location, usually.” Thinking about it, Chloe could understand. Buying multi-million dollar real estate because you liked the view sounded ridiculous for anyone who wasn’t Lucifer. For someone who’d been cooped up in Hell, the appeal was obvious. So was the notion of multiple homes to someone who thought they’d have none.

“But to have all these houses just… sitting there,” Chloe mused, mostly to herself. Lucifer stood, the respite over, patrolling the perimeter of the room again.

“Well I do use some of them, sometimes,” he protested. “For throwing bigger parties, that sort of thing. Though now, most of my properties are… satellite offices, you might say, for some of my
most trusted liaisons. My accountant lives in one of them, for instance. It started with a Lux employee, Liam, who had worked there since before I took over. He grew tired of bartending but still desired to remain in my employ. I pay him to live in and oversee one of my estates. It’s an arrangement I’ve come to several times with various people. Not in the case of this particular house, though.” That fit her hypothesis about the reasoning behind his purchase of this house.

“I’ve had Patrick come by and stock things for dinner,” Lucifer continued. “No reason we should starve while enacting this charade.”

Chloe suddenly realized how hungry she was. She’d hardly eaten anything all day, from stress and lack of time both. Her stomach growled - hearing it, Lucifer smirked.

“And I guess that’s my cue to get started,” he purred.

“D’you mind if I have a shower?” Chloe asked. She couldn’t think of a better way to shake off the remnants of the day and wake herself up a little. Lucifer’s eyes hooded briefly at the thought of them being on different floors of the house, but he nodded.

“Of course, darling,” he said. “I’ll have a glass of wine waiting once you’ve freshened up.” It was the closest he’d come to telling her to check in with him once she was finished. She placed a hand on his cheek and stretched up to kiss him.

“I won’t be long,” she promised.

It wasn’t hard for her to keep her word. Though the bathroom was decked out in marble, the shower was essentially a glass box in the middle of the room - including a glass ceiling! - that made Chloe feel entirely too exposed. She rinsed quickly, drying herself off with a towel that seemed to be made from the same material as the velvet chairs upstairs, and changed into the clothes she’d brought with her in an overnight bag. After wearing it all day, her turtleneck and blazer combo was too constricting to contemplate putting on again - instead she slipped into a low-necked red top. Her bullet necklace was displayed in prominence.

She made her way downstairs, drawn by the smell of garlic and peppers and the sound of smooth jazz playing from unseen speakers. Lucifer stood at the counter in the gleaming monster of a kitchen - Chloe had stopped wondering by this point who would need four ovens, not to mention an island that was quite so long, with that many chairs. His jacket was slung over one of the bar stools, and he was chopping vegetables in his shirtsleeves and charcoal vest. He turned as she entered.

“Ah, there you are!” he said, giving her a quick once over to ensure she was unharmed, and a second, slower glance as he unashamedly admired her figure. His eyes lingered on the necklace.

Chloe gave as good as she got - the vest accentuated the trimness of his waist, and there was something about seeing only his forearms uncovered that made her breath come faster. Lucifer’s smile turned sultry.

“Wine’s on the counter for you there, love,” he said.

Chloe went to thank him with a kiss on his cheek. “Thanks, babe.” The endearment fell unthinking from her lips, in response to his, and she froze as she felt his unresponsiveness.

“That’s not the first time you’ve called me that,” he said, his voice hardly audible.

“Sorry.” She sank back onto flat feet, resting a hand lightly on his arm. “Do you not like it?”
“I…” Lucifer considered, and Chloe let him, stepping back slightly to give him some space. He set down the knife he’d been using, as the croon of a saxophone from the music swelled to fill the silence. “It’s diminutive,” he said at last. Chloe nodded.

“Yeah, I guess it is,” she said. “Humans do that a lot - make things smaller. Maybe to make it easier for our feelings to reach.”

Lucifer arched an eyebrow, turning to lounge back against the counter. “You feel the need to make your daughter smaller?”

Chloe smiled ruefully. “Sometimes.” She looked up at him. “Your brother calls you Luci.”

A pained look crossed Lucifer’s face. “He does. I’ve asked him not to on multiple occasions. He never listens. I… tolerate it.”

Chloe thought she might know why, and it was the same reason she used nicknames with Trixie. A way to keep her smaller, closer, for just a little longer. And Lucifer, accepting a nickname he disliked in order to have that connection with family. She shook her head briskly, returning to the matter at hand. “I wasn’t thinking. I’ll stop.” She turned away, intending to drop the matter, but Lucifer’s voice made her turn back.

“I don’t… hate it,” he said at last. “When you do it.”

Chloe smirked. “If I called you Luci?”

Lucifer winced. “I’d rather you didn’t. But, the other, maybe. Sometimes. When you’re ‘not thinking.’”

“Spontaneous. Gotcha.” Chloe grinned. “I’ll just remember never to think about it.” Lucifer smiled, finally, and she stepped into his space again. “Lucifer,” she said, deliberate, and he shivered a little, his hands falling naturally to rest at her waist. She thought back to the conversation they’d had through her bedroom door a little while ago. Lucifer was the name he’d chosen for himself. It was the only name that mattered. “You are loved,” she reminded him, and he shivered harder, clutching at her. “No matter what I call you. No matter what.” He made a small, desperate sound as she kissed him.

“And yet you wonder why…” he whispered against her lips when she pulled back, but declined to elaborate when she looked at him. “The pasta,” he murmured, turning back to attend to dinner, and she let him have his deflection. Grabbing the glass of wine that was still on the counter, she took it with her to poke around a bit.

In addition to the kitchen, living room, and separate dining area, there were four bedrooms on the main floor, including an alcove which, of course, contained a baby grand. She spared a thought for how many pianos Lucifer must own.

“Lucifer, this place is huge!” she exclaimed, covering the tremour of her voice with a swig of wine. He called something back from the kitchen that she couldn’t catch, since she wasn’t possessed of his supernatural hearing. She could understand why he didn’t spend much time here - it seemed built to emphasize solitude. She wondered if Heaven was the same, if that solitude was the kind of thing he only noticed once he started to formulate his own ideas. Or had he been alone all along?

She stopped her thoughts from going down that path, because it hurt too much. The only sort of remotely personal touch in the entire place that she’d seen so far was the piano. Of course, she associated the penthouse most strongly with Lucifer; the whiskey wall and the library, but she
couldn’t think of anything that screamed Lucifer, something that would indicate he’d spent time in a place. Like even now, he was leery of putting down roots.

Shaking her head to clear it, she drifted back to the kitchen, where Lucifer was putting the finishing touches on their pasta dish. “Dinner’s nearly ready,” he announced.

“Thanks,” she murmured, drawn to the kitchen’s bay window. Darkness had fallen, so she wasn’t able to see much, but the yard’s various pools and seating areas were illuminated in different colours.

“Wow.” Her verdict was delivered to her awed-looking reflection in the mirror as she took another sip of wine. “This place must be sitting on at least…”

“An acre, or so,” Lucifer provided, as he set their plates down on a lower table that abutted the kitchen island, which he’d decorated with candles and a vase of cut flowers. It was tasteful, and elegant, and so Lucifer that she felt her blood quicken, in spite of the knowledge that they were still technically on the clock. She turned to him, as he dimmed the lights with an air of concentration. When he saw her watching, he shook himself, indicating a chair. “Please, have a seat, Detective. Wouldn’t want it to get cold.”

“First.” Chloe set her wine on the table, striding over to kiss him. “This is wonderful, Lucifer. Thank you.”

Lucifer cleared his throat, looking away. “Yes, well.” They moved to the table; the music had shifted to something slightly more easy listening. “I suppose this really can’t be considered a date, given the circumstances, but I saw no reason not to commit to the role.”

His hands were too far away to reach, but his long legs were easily accessible under the table, and she ran her foot up his calf. His eyes were dark as they held hers.

“It’s perfect, for us,” she said, and Lucifer smiled softly. “I half thought we’d be eating at the dining room table.”

Lucifer scoffed. “What, sitting at either end so we can’t have a normal conversation? Why on Earth would we do something like that?”

Chloe smiled. “We wouldn’t.” She looked down at her meal for the first time, her mouth falling open in surprise. “Is this…?”

“Spinach alfredo? Yes,” Lucifer said, and Chloe removed herself from the conversation by taking a large bite, her eyes closing in pleasure. “I recall you discussing the dish’s extensive merits with Miss Lopez after one of your evenings out. I do hope that my version compares favourably.”

Chloe’s heart warmed as she nodded. He hadn’t even been involved in the conversation, yet he’d still taken the time to make note of her preferences.

“Trixie hates spinach,” she said, when her mouth was empty again. “I can never make this at home. It’s delicious!”

Lucifer’s soft smile hadn’t disappeared - if anything, it had grown as he contemplated his own plate. “I’m glad.” He raised his glass in a toast. “That’s why I provided white wine. I know you prefer red but white goes better with the meal. Later this evening I’ll show you the wine cellar, and we can find something more to your tastes.”

“You have a wine cellar?” Chloe asked over the rim of her own glass before laughing a little at herself. “What am I saying, of course you do.” Lucifer gave a shrug of acknowledgement.
“The penthouse contains the bulk of my whiskey collection, while most of my wine collection is here,” he said. He paused. His posture tightened almost imperceptibly. “It’s time.”

He pulled his phone out of his pocket and placed it on the table, using a remote control he’d produced from somewhere to switch to the radio. The bombastic shout of an advertiser was all the more grating after the quiet, refined music.

Chloe felt like she’d been doused in cold water. She’d almost forgotten. Appetite abruptly vanishing, she looked down at her plate as the host gave his introductory speech.

“And here we are with our very special guest, calling all the way from Las Vegas: Candy! Candy, doll, great to have you with us. Why don’t you tell us more about your husband… Lucifer.” Chance spluttered over the name in a way that was only half-rehearsed. “First of all, what is up with that name?” Chloe had to clap a hand over her mouth to contain her mirth at the expression of deep affront that had come over Lucifer’s face at the words. “You don’t think that could be part of the reason that’s driving a wedge between you two?”

“No, what makes you say that?” At the sound of Candy’s simpering voice, Chloe’s amusement drained away, leaving cold sourness in its wake. Though she’d braced herself to hear it again, nothing could have prepared her for the way it threw her back in her mind to the day when Candy had tottered into the precinct on hot-pink heels and turned the world upside down. “I’m calling because he didn’t want to come to Vegas with me, and I think something’s going on.”

Chance spoke quickly, almost cutting her off. “And we’ll find out exactly what that is, when we come back.”

The show cut to commercial. Chloe gripped her fork, staring down at her plate. Though enthusiastic voices expounded the virtues of oil changing companies and restaurants, in the kitchen, the silence stretched.

All too soon, and yet just in time, Chance was back on the air. “And we’re back with our guest, Candy, who is now gonna tell us all about her husband, Lucifer.” This time the way he tripped over the name was definitely staged. Lucifer’s jaw was clenched so tightly that if he were human Chloe would worry about him hurting himself.

“Well, we actually met in Vegas.” Chloe hadn’t realized she would have to listen to Candy recount her side of the story. She quickly stuffed another forkful of pasta into her mouth, but it might as well have been her napkin for how much she tasted of it. She didn’t think Lucifer was fooled; he wasn’t eating either.

“Oh, so it was a Vegas wedding then? That’s… fun.”

“Yeah! Bestest day of my life!”

Lucifer gently pried Chloe’s wine glass out of her grasp. She realized only afterwards that she’d been gripping it tightly enough that her knuckles had turned white. She jumped at the brush of his fingers against hers, and when she glanced up, he wouldn’t meet her eyes. She noticed that neither of them were speaking; it felt like everyone could hear them if they did, even though that was ridiculous. Chloe supposed that was what came of having your dirty laundry aired in public forum.

“That’s great. So what changed for you two?” Chance’s patronizing brand of questioning was really starting to grate on Chloe’s nerves.

“Well he went back to work and started spending lots more time with his partner.”
“Oh, so it’s a workplace thing, huh? Well, let’s get Lucifer on the line, see what he has to say.”

This was it. Chloe’s heart pounded, like she was the one who was taking the call. Lucifer just let out a short breath as the display on his phone lit up. He turned off the radio and waited two rings before answering.

“Lucifer Morningstar.” There was no hint of a suggestion in his voice that he’d been expecting the call, his tone light and insouciant.

“Yes, hello, this is Pop Sugar. We are a new Swiss chocolate shop in Los Feliz and we are running a big promotion, ja. We are going to send a free box of chocolates to your special someone, if you have a special someone somewhere?”

Lucifer rolled his eyes at Chance’s patently false Swiss accent, but his voice was still polite and pleasant as he responded.

“Ah! What fantastic timing. It’ll be the perfect complement to our date tonight.”

“Wonderful! All we need, then, is her name and address.”

Lucifer’s mouth twitched, and for a moment Chloe thought he was going to be difficult and take Chance to task for assuming gender. But instead his face smoothed out and he answered, “Certainly, her name is Chloe, and the address is…” He gave the address of the house, which was the part that would (hopefully) be blocked out by the operator.

“Oh, that’s good,” Chance said, continuing with the act. “Listen, I’m just curious, because we’re all such romantics here, what is it about this Chloe that makes her so… special?”

Chloe’s eyes shot wide, jumping to Lucifer’s face. This wasn’t part of the plan. Taking part in a setup was one thing. Baring his soul to whoever happened to be listening was quite another. She tried desperately to telegraph that he didn’t need to answer, that he could pretend the call cut out, anything. But Lucifer just leaned back in his chair, staring into the middle distance, deliberately not looking at her.

“Well, she’s bloody gorgeous.”

Chloe’s face heated. Lucifer was settling in like he was planning to give a full description, and she wondered if he’d let her grab the phone away.

“But isn’t there anything more than just looks?” Chance pressed. Chloe froze. Danger! Danger! Abort!

Lucifer sighed. “Well, she’s…” Chloe gaped, wondering if she’d fallen asleep, and this whole conversation was just some kind of bizarre dream. It wasn’t that she doubted Lucifer’s feelings for her, but she couldn’t imagine him willingly offering the information to strangers.

“She’s strong,” Lucifer said at last. “One of the strongest people I know. And brave, almost to a fault. Terrifyingly competent at her job. She is… truly good.”

Chloe was holding her breath as she listened. Even Chance wasn’t taking an opportunity to interject. It felt like the whole world was waiting for what he would say next.

“And yet, despite all that,” Lucifer continued, “she sees me. The real me, in a way no one ever has. Warts and all.” He smiled as though remembering some private joke, taking a deep, shuddering breath. “And she’s the first one to make me think that maybe being that person - the one she sees - is
okay. That it could be enough.” He pressed his lips together suddenly, like he hadn’t meant to say quite so much, but his expression was resolute, though he still refused to glance in Chloe’s direction.

“Sounds like a hell of a girl.” Chance’s interjection broke the spell. He’d forgotten to put on his Swiss accent.

“Oh, much better than that, I assure you,” Lucifer replied smoothly.

“Well then, we’ll make sure to get that package to her by the end of the night.” Chance had fully recovered, accent back in place.

“Much appreciated,” Lucifer said, all business as he hung up.

There was a long silence. Neither of them bothered to put the radio back on. Chloe was reeling, trying to catch up to what had just happened, their ongoing sting the furthest thing from her mind.

“My apologies,” Lucifer said suddenly. “I didn’t mean to say so much without your prior approval.”

Chloe spluttered. “Are you kidding?” Before she knew it, she was out of her chair and around the table, sliding into his lap. He shifted automatically to make room for her, eyes downcast.

“That is why I love you,” he said with quiet ferocity, and Chloe could think of no response except to catch his lips in a searing kiss.

His arms came around her, hands spanning her back, slowly working their way beneath her shirt as she opened to his tongue. He moaned into her mouth as she sank her fingers into his hair. His hands slipped beneath the band of her bra. It felt like her nerves were on fire.

A click and a burst of static shattered their bubble and Chloe pulled away with a gasp, resting her forehead against Lucifer’s as her heart rate returned to normal.

“Hey guys, are you ready? Over,” Dan’s voice spoke from inside her bag. She’d completely forgotten about bringing the walkie talkie. She scrambled to get out of Lucifer’s lap, but he held her in place with one hand, reaching out with a long, lanky arm to snag the bag and bring it within reach. Chloe’s hands were shaking as she fished out the device to respond.

“Hey Dan.” Her voice was still far too breathy, and she cleared her throat, glowering at Lucifer as he shook beneath her with silent laughter. “Yeah, we’re all set here. Over.”

“Coast is clear on my end,” Dan said, “and Pierce says it’s all quiet at the radio station. Over.”

“Acknowledged. Out.” Chloe fought the urge to turn off the radio. Lucifer smirked at her, the mischief glinting in his eyes doing absolutely nothing to cool her blood. She took a deep breath, hoisting herself out of the chair. Lucifer let her go, turning his face up to hers.

“Those are some good reasons,” she said, dropping a kiss on his brow. He closed his eyes at the gesture.

“Glad you approve,” he said dryly, as she pulled away. “So what now?” he asked. “We just wait?”

Chloe nodded. That would be the worst part, waiting to see if their ploy had worked. “D’you wanna watch a movie or something?” she asked.

Lucifer looked thrown for a moment at the idea of doing something so mundane as watching a movie while they were waiting for a killer to strike, but Chloe didn’t intend to let the tension get to her.
“Very well,” he said, and showed her to a literal home theatre in the basement, complete with sound panels and low couches.

Chloe balked, a nervous laugh bubbling up from her throat. “No way.”

Lucifer frowned. “What’s the matter?” he asked.

Everything, Chloe wanted to say, but she just shook her head instead. “There’s a TV in every room of this house,” she said. “I’m sure we can find somewhere more comfortable to watch.”

Lucifer looked from her to the plush couches dubiously, but chose not to comment. Relenting, Chloe stretched up to kiss his cheek. “If you want, we could invite everyone over sometime and do a movie night,” she suggested carefully, unsure how Lucifer would react to the idea.

Lucifer considered. “I think I’d like that,” he said at last, and a soft smile came to her face at the thought of getting the whole rowdy crew together in this monster of a house.

The living room felt too exposed, so they ended up in a smaller room off the piano alcove. Chloe reheated their food, not wanting the delicious meal to go to waste, and they settled in on the L-shaped couch to watch The Princess Bride, of all things. Chloe had selected it because it was one of her and Trixie’s favourite movies and what her mind instantly jumped to when she needed to relax, but she hadn’t thought about how much it would affect her to be sitting next to Lucifer as Wesley and Buttercup fell in love. As Lucifer, clearly familiar with the movie, leaned in to whisper in her ear, “As you wish.”

Chloe shivered, stretching up to catch his lips in a passionate kiss, which Lucifer enthusiastically returned. Chloe shifted into his lap - there was no child to interrupt them here, and Dan was quiet on the radio.

No sooner had she thought that, than a burst of static once more broke the moment. “Hey guys. We got someone,” Dan’s voice said. “Over.” Chloe huffed a laugh as she broke away from Lucifer’s lips, running a hand through her hair as she reached for the radio. Lucifer leaned back into the cushions.

“Yeah, Dan? Over,” Chloe asked.

“Caught some sicko sneaking around outside, he was trying to get you on tape.” Dan sounded slightly out of breath, like there’d been a struggle. Lucifer’s posture was no longer relaxed. He growled slightly, and Chloe caressed his arm in an attempt to soothe him. “I got him before he managed to get his equipment out, but it looks like he’s the reason the killer knew where all his victims lived. He works at the radio station. He’d go find the couples and put up footage “raw and unedited” on his website - without the addresses censored. Over.”

This time Chloe made a low sound. His idiocy had resulted in at least four deaths. “So if you caught him before he was able to film anything, does that mean the killer doesn’t know where to find us?” she asked. “Over.”

“Moron posted about where he was going on social media,” Dan responded. “Normally films the angry exes bursting in on their spouse, but he made an exception in your case because Lucifer’s famous.” His voice made it clear what he thought of that; Lucifer’s expression warred between dismay and affront. “He posted a live video of himself heading to the house, so it’s a good assumption the killer knows you’re here. Pierce is doing rounds to see if anyone followed him here. Over.”
Chloe reminded herself that this was good news. “Okay,” she said. “So we’re still on the lookout for the killer. Thanks Dan; we’re counting on you. Over.”

“You got it, Chlo,” Dan said stoutly. “Out.”

Chloe put the radio away and turned her attention to Lucifer. The movie was still playing in the background, and Chloe was struck by the surreality of the moment. “Now,” she said, lowering her voice to a sultry cast. “Where were we?”

Lucifer’s eyebrows raised. “We’ve just been informed there’s a killer heading for us, and this is your reaction?” he asked incredulously.

Chloe shrugged. “That is why we’re here in the first place,” she said. “Unless you have something better to do?” She had to admit that part of her motivation was to distract Lucifer so he wouldn’t freak out again.

“Never,” Lucifer said sincerely, and her stomach swooped. He drew her closer, making that low noise in the back of his throat that she loved. Things were progressing quite well, to Chloe’s mind, before Lucifer stiffened beneath her, in that unnatural way he had that made her wonder how she’d ever thought he was human before. She pulled back at once, bewildered and more than a little unnerved. “Lucifer?” she asked.

He didn’t shush her, though any human would have in the same situation - his senses didn’t conflict with each other, after all, so there was no need to focus them. Instead, he sat up carefully, his grip on her shifting from lustful to protective.

“Chloe, listen to me,” he said, his tone clipped and urgent. “I can smell... Something’s off.”

Chloe sniffed instinctively - she couldn’t smell anything, but she didn’t doubt Lucifer’s assessment. “The anesthetic?” she whispered, her heart shifting into overdrive. The killer was making his move.

“Well, call Daniel, then,” Lucifer snapped. “Let him know the killer’s here so he can be useful for once.”

Chloe was already shaking her head. “The killer has to be watching us,” she said, frowning as she tried to remember why it was a bad idea. Thinking had suddenly become very difficult. “So he knows when the gas has kicked in. If he suspects it’s a setup, he’ll run, and we’ll never get another opportunity like this.”

Lucifer’s face was set in grim lines. His muscles quivered; it couldn’t have been more obvious he was suppressing the impulse to whisk her away immediately. Chloe felt an odd sense of acceptance steal over her.

“You have to let it take me,” she told Lucifer. His reaction was predictably negative, but she spoke adamantly over his attempted protests. “If you don’t, the killer’s never going to show himself.”

Lucifer just stared at her, jaw clenched, eyes flashing desperately. Chloe, her senses on high alert, was already aware of the drowsy start of a headache pulling at her. She caressed Lucifer’s cheek, guilt welling up. “I’m sorry, Lucifer,” she whispered. “It doesn’t affect you though, right?”

Lucifer shook his head tightly. “I don’t need to breathe. Like you do,” he gritted out. Chloe nodded, relaxing into Lucifer’s embrace, her head feeling comfortably fuzzy.

“Chloe?” Lucifer sounded on the verge of panic. She patted his shoulder in reassurance, missing the first time.
“It’s okay, Lucifer,” she said. Her voice sounded clumsy and thick to her own ears. “I trust you.” Her ears were ringing - or was that Lucifer calling her name? She lost the ability to distinguish. With those two words - *Lucifer. Safe* - she lost the will to fight the fingers of the blackness, and surrendered to its pull.

Lucifer cursed under his breath in a language long dead as Chloe slumped against him, the ancient words falling venomously from his lips. His shoulder blades itched, his every instinct screaming with the need to wing Chloe away. To have to sit here and allow her to be harmed was a torture worthy of Hell.

He hadn’t lied to Chloe, of course. He could hold his breath for much longer than a human, and good thing too, because his proximity to Chloe was already causing the drug to affect him. He’d had to breathe in order to speak to her, and as a result had inhaled a certain amount of the drug. He felt lightheaded, slightly disoriented. The fuzziness made it even more difficult to resist the pull of his wings, and he clung to the thought that if he released them now, the killer would surely be scared away, and all this would be for naught. He grind his teeth audibly, wondering how long it was going to take for the killer to show himself so they could end this charade. If they both appeared to be unconscious, surely it wouldn’t be long.

His eyes narrowed into slits, he surveyed the room, as the poison slowly, but surely, inched its way through his system. Numbness crept through his veins, clouding his senses. His vision swam. If the killer waited much longer, Lucifer was going to be all but useless when it came to defending Chloe. *Protect Chloe.* Her safety was all that mattered, and he cursed the cosmic joke that hindered his ability to perform his primary duty in her presence. The bloody movie was still going on in the background, and the familiar lines filtered in and out of his hearing - an unnerving sensation to one who was accustomed to hearing everything around him with perfect clarity. *This fellow… is only mostly dead.* Lucifer suppressed the insane urge to laugh, as it would ruin their act. *Mostly dead,* indeed.

It took him a too-long, fuzzy moment to register the dark silhouette advancing on them. Lucifer’s lungs were finally starting to burn - he would have to take a breath soon. He wanted to leap up and end it now, but he couldn’t risk missing his strike, his reflexes grown sluggish. He would only get one chance. *Closer… closer…* 

Lucifer fought back a surge of panic as the figure reached out to take Chloe from his arms. Keeping every muscle under tight control despite the siren shrieking of his instincts, he allowed her removal only because it gave him a clear shot at the killer. His wings were a hairsbreadth from manifesting; at this point he resisted only because he feared losing control of them and hurting Chloe. All the focus that remained to him narrowed to a single point as the figure raised its sledgehammer, preparing to swing. It was now or never.

With an involuntary sound, he launched himself at the killer, catching the hammer mid swing. He’d become so weakened that it felt heavy in his grip, and actually sank a few more terrifying inches towards Chloe’s chest before he managed to wrest it out of the killer’s grasp and toss it aside with a dull clatter.

The figure stumbled back. “But… how?” His words were garbled by his mask. Lucifer didn’t have time to play with his prey - he just reared back, punching their attacker in the jaw. For once, Lucifer didn’t worry about the need to pull his punches to avoid accidentally killing a human - instead, he was concerned about not hitting hard enough. But the killer collapsed, and Lucifer, overcome, could no longer stop himself from taking a gulp of air. It was still laced with residual toxins. His vision was
already starting to spot from extended oxygen deprivation.

He grimaced. The last time he’d been unconscious had been a deeply unpleasant experience - he’d come to in the desert, burnt and dehydrated, with his wings tacked to his back. Wings that were even now straining to push to the surface. His angelic instincts - still the strongest part of him, even after all this time - were demanding that he wrap Chloe in the cocoon of his wings until he’d recovered and was certain the danger had passed. His back was aflame with the effort it took to resist.

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Daniel. He clung to the rational thought as he half-shuffled, half-crawled to collapse next to Chloe. Daniel doesn’t know. This certainly wasn’t how he wanted Chloe’s ex-douche to find out. Then he lost the ability to focus on anything but Chloe. He reached out to her, two words repeating like a mantra in his head. Chloe. Safe. He might have spoken them aloud. He couldn’t tell any more. Her face was all that remained in his rapidly narrowing field of vision. Being slowly robbed of all his senses was alarming, but Chloe was here. She was safe.

Blackness stole over him, and he sank beneath it with what almost felt like relief.
Lucifer scowled at Daniel’s intrusion. The man seemed slightly uncomfortable speaking to Chloe while she was lying across Lucifer’s lap, but Lucifer was hardly about to release her. He couldn’t seem to stop touching her.

“M’fiine,” Chloe replied, airily waving her hand in the air and nearly smacking Lucifer in the face. She looked so remorseful that Lucifer almost laughed. “Oh! Sorry, babe.” Lucifer decided that, all things considered, he’d let that one slide.

Daniel cleared his throat. “I’ll just go call this in,” he said.

“Come on, love, let’s get you up,” Lucifer said, lifting Chloe carefully and laying her out on the couch. He couldn’t resist pressing a kiss to her forehead.

“You saved me,” Chloe murmured. “Again.”

Lucifer pulled back slightly to look at her. Her eyes as they met his were clear. She wasn’t one to shy from the truth. All he could do was nod. She reached out to place her hand on his cheek. “You okay?” she asked. He nodded again. Her presence was making the drug’s effects slower to wear off, but his headache was already fading.

“I’m sorry,” Chloe said seriously. “I just did it again, didn’t I? Used you.”

Lucifer opened his mouth, then closed it again, unable to deny it. Chloe looked away. Lucifer blinked, utterly at a loss. He felt as though he should argue, but wasn’t sure where he should start. “Darling…” He cast about for a response.

Perhaps fortunately, Dan came back in, insisting that they both receive medical treatment. Lucifer actually welcomed the distraction. Once they were both declared fine, they were instructed to “sleep it off.” Neither of them wanted to remain at the house, so they got a squad car to drive them back to Lux.

Lucifer kept his arms around Chloe in the backseat. They were silent for the drive - Chloe had her eyes closed but wasn’t asleep. Lucifer was still trying to sort out how he felt about her declaration. He was finding it difficult to focus on anything other than the fact that she was safe.

When they walked into his penthouse, Lucifer relaxed. It might not be any more defensible than the house they’d just left, but he felt more secure here. Chloe headed straight for the couch and sat heavily, leaning back, clearly still affected by her ordeal.

“Drink?” he offered. It was the first word either of them had spoken for quite a while and Chloe looked bewildered for a moment before answering.

“Tea?” she asked, voice rough, and Lucifer nodded, going to make it for her.

When he returned, she’d shifted to gaze out the balcony doors, at the spangled velvet curtain of LA night. She nodded her thanks for the tea but didn’t otherwise acknowledge him. Lucifer sat behind her, wanting to draw her into his arms again but unsure how it would be received. After a moment of sitting in silence, Chloe spoke, quietly enough she almost didn’t break it.

“I know the case tends to blind me,” she said. “That’s no excuse. I told you not to send Maze, but this plan would never have worked if you didn’t have supernatural abilities. I put you through so much, all in the name of doing things myself.” She shook her head. “I don’t know why you put up with me.”

Once again, Lucifer found himself gaping. This was something completely outside of his experience.
This went beyond apologies, or considering his feelings, both of which were still novel enough concepts in their own right. He knew he had to say something; he just wished he knew what that something was. He swallowed hard before making an attempt.

“Well, last time I checked, only one of us was the Devil in this relationship,” he said, still marvelling that they were at a point now where he could say things such as that and not falter. Chloe huffed a tiny laugh in response to his joke, and he felt a flare of triumph. “I meant what I said, on the phone,” he continued, once the air between them settled. “Your bravery is one of your most admirable qualities. I would never change it, or anything else about you, no matter how many times you give me cause to despair over your safety.”

Chloe turned to face him at last, eyes bright, and Lucifer couldn’t stop himself from reaching out and running a hand down the side of her face. “You are a protector,” he murmured. “You’d rather put yourself in danger than allow someone else to do it for you.” It turned out that that was a trait he shared, at least when it came to her. “Your job is important to you, and I will always enjoy lending my assistance.” Chloe arched an eyebrow, and he smirked. “Well, perhaps not with paperwork,” he conceded. “But you can’t have it both ways, love.” Chloe’s face fell. She looked at him solemnly, nodding a little. “If I am to protect you, let me protect you.”

Chloe nodded again, and Lucifer gently cupped her face in his hands. The backlight from the bar was all he had bothered to turn on, and it glinted off her hair and the edges of the bullet she wore around her neck. “I refuse to lose you before your time,” he said simply. “I have never denied your ability to take care of yourself, just as you have never denied mine. But, if I might be permitted to quote you to yourself, sometimes you don’t have to.”

Chloe’s eyes widened before she gave him a watery smile. “Sounds like that person knew what she was talking about,” she said, and Lucifer’s heart soared to hear her speak. Then she sniffed, and before he knew it Lucifer was pulling her into his arms.

“Come here,” he said, caressing the back of her head and pressing a kiss to her hair.

“Lucifer…” Chloe still sounded on the verge of tears, and that would not do.

“It’s done,” he reminded her softly. “Now, I don’t know about you, but I for one would like to get in bed and put today behind us. What do you say?”


Once they were finally in his bed, curled around each other, Lucifer felt himself relax and his wings followed suit, manifesting almost as a matter of course. Chloe blinked blearily up at him as he gave a rueful shrug.

“They won’t be denied, I’m afraid,” he said, apologetic. “I’ve been fighting them for too long.”

“It’s okay.” She sighed, linking her arms around his neck, and when he enveloped her in his wings a weight lifted from his chest he hadn’t even noticed was there.

“You know, I saw your devil eyes again today,” she said, after a moment of silence. Lucifer reared back in shock, staring down at her.

“What?”

She nodded, not looking afraid or disconcerted in the slightest. “When you were looking at the note. And before that, too. When you had me against the wall.”
“I…” Lucifer blinked. He had no idea what to make of such information. He’d thought his devilish physicality gone for good, and yet…

“It didn’t scare me, or anything,” Chloe hastened to reassure him. “I just thought you ought to know. Maybe your face is back.”

Somehow, Lucifer didn’t think so. “You could try?” she pressed, upon seeing his expression.

Lucifer recoiled. “Not - not with you,” he gritted out. Chloe raised a careful hand to his face; her soft touch, as always, sank into his bones like heady ambrosia. She looked determined. His brave Detective.

“I’ve already seen it, Lucifer,” she reminded him. “I’m not afraid. I asked to see it again, remember?”

Of course he did. In the stairwell at the precinct, when she’d responded to his tentative pushing in a way that made him weaker in the knees than her unexpected passion. “You thought you’d lost it; something so important to you. If it’s coming back, I’d like for us to find out - together.” For the first time, Chloe looked uncertain. It was that, more than anything, that resolved Lucifer to try. He might never be able to fathom what motivated the hand Chloe so often extended, but he’d learned enough by now not to be boorish enough to reject her on principle. He drew in a deep, shuddering breath.

“I’m here for you, Lucifer,” Chloe said steadily - her mantra. He tried to take refuge in her certainty, instead of the fear that he would lose it forever. He called on his true face, closing his eyes.

“Lucifer? Open your eyes,” Chloe murmured. He could tell it hadn’t worked by her tone - she looked vaguely disappointed, and shook her head when he obeyed. “I thought maybe your eyes, but…”

Lucifer tried to determine one thing he felt. He expected to feel rage, frustration, at the thought of being so close, yet so far. He certainly hadn’t imagined he’d feel relief, that once again Chloe would avoid being subjected to the sight of his true self. A relief that Chloe did not appear to share.

“What if… both times, you were angry,” she said. “What if you tried getting angry?”

Lucifer had a distinct feeling of deja vu. He’d learned before that regulating his emotional state on command was a futile enterprise. Besides which, becoming angry whilst in bed with Chloe was the last thing he wanted to do.

“Think about the note,” Chloe suggested. Lucifer obliged, but as expected, the protective rage that had been fuelling him all day had burnt itself out. He was in bed with her, having neutralized all immediate threats, and no matter what his feelings were towards his absent face, he was abruptly too tired to pursue the matter further.

“We’ll figure it out,” Chloe assured him, seeming to sense this, and for once, Lucifer was content to let it go. He adjusted his wings, pulling her closer. He was slowly coming to realize the benefits of the current state of affairs.

The spectre of the threatening note lingered in the back of his mind. If the killer had been the one to send it, he wouldn’t have needed to be lured to the house by the radio program. But that would be a problem for another time. For now, he just needed the reassurance of having Chloe safely in his arms. Everything else could wait.
Next up... something Ravishing?
Chapter Notes

We’ve made it to Vegas! This episode will be the last arc of this story. (The next story in the series will pick up with the other episodes in s3). MEGA changes in this one as well, of course! This episode has got to be one I was most excited about, and I hope you enjoy reading it!

On her birthday, Chloe dreamt of light. All around her, cradling her, golden-white, warm and soft. Flower petals rained down around her. They drifted down to kiss her skin; her face, her arms, her legs. She floated, content.

The heat intensified, comfortably so, like the sun had just come out. It coiled low in her belly, lazy and unhurried, and she stretched luxuriantly, feeling more feathery touches on her thighs. She hummed as she woke. She kept her eyes closed, wanting to indulge in the feeling a little longer before it faded.

“Good morning, love.”

The low rumble of a voice came from somewhere in the vicinity of her navel, and she cracked an eye open to see Lucifer’s tousled head peeking out from beneath the covers, his gaze heated and dark. Her pulse quickened as she remembered their conversation from before she’d fallen asleep.

No need for that, darling, Lucifer had purred as she set her alarm. So long as you insist on waking up at some Dad-forsaken hour tomorrow I’ll certainly be able to do it in a more pleasurable fashion. Covering her body with his, he’d let his hand drift south, leaving no uncertainty as to what he’d meant. Chloe had nodded, feeling suddenly warm, despite having just finished with similar activities.

Uh, sure, great, you do that, she’d agreed, her voice gone high and breathy. Still going to set an alarm though.

Now her dream made sense. Biting her lip, she sank a hand into his curls as she not-so-subtly encouraged him to resume.

He obliged with a roguish grin, his face disappearing between her thighs once more, and then… oh. Oh, yes. That was what the dream had been missing. She arched her back as he plied her with lips and tongue, taking his time. Chloe drifted, the heat at her centre building, scratching absently at Lucifer’s scalp. She thought she might have heard him purr. Overwhelmed with love for this impossible man, she blurted out, “You-” before realizing she didn’t know what she wanted to say.

Lucifer’s head popped up again, eyes hazy with lust. “Yes, love?” he asked, licking his lips. Chloe made a low sound at the sight.

“Don’t stop,” she demanded, with sleepy petulance, and Lucifer chuckled.

“As you wish.”

He teased her when he went back, with playful nips and licks that always seemed to manage to go
everywhere except where she wanted them.

“Lucifer…” she warned, tightening her hand in his hair. She felt, rather than heard, his laughter.

He relented, devouring her in earnest now, and Chloe let out a whine, her head falling back into the pillows. The heat rose steadily until it became a flame, flash fires erupting across every inch of her skin as she moaned, Lucifer stoking the blaze higher and higher with his mouth and skillful fingers.

“Lucifer!” She said his name in a very different way now, a whispered gasp that seemed like it was squeezed out of her as the pressure built and built and built... and then burst, dissolving into the same white light she’d just been dreaming about.

When she came back to herself, it was to find Lucifer propped up on his elbows over her stomach, regarding her with adoration and no small amount of awe. She grinned down at him, a pleasant sense of lassitude seeping through her limbs as she tugged him closer.

“I think I prefer this alarm,” Chloe commented, and Lucifer caught her lips in a passionate kiss. Just as she was doing the mental math to figure out how she might reciprocate without making them late, Lucifer pulled away, smiling fondly at her.

“I thought you might.” Before Chloe could respond, he got out of bed, pulling on his robe. She tried not to feel bereft.

“Now, I’d like to request that you remain abed, and I shall bring you breakfast.” He gave the instruction with such seriousness that Chloe didn’t argue, simply nodded. He gave a little bow. “Back in a tick,” he said, and left the room.

Chloe sat up a bit, holding the comforter against herself as she reached over to turn off her alarm. She had a dozen things to do: she had to shower and get dressed for work, she had to get Trixie ready for school... but she found it no great hardship to do as Lucifer had asked and wait to be brought breakfast. She stretched again, relishing the pull of her muscles and the bright sunlight streaming in through her curtains, and feeling thoroughly spoiled.

Lucifer came in a minute later with what looked like toast, fruit, and a steaming cup of coffee. She beamed at him as he approached, placing the mug on her bedside table before carefully depositing the tray on the bed between them.

“Thank you, Lucifer,” she said, drawing him in for a kiss that was broken by the rumble of her stomach. He smirked as she dug in.

“I would have made you pancakes but as those would have been a difficult prospect to manage in bed I had to compromise,” he told her as he snagged a strawberry.

“This is perfect,” she assured him. Lucifer still looked troubled.

“I also wanted to get you a card,” he said, words rushing together. “But none of the ones at the store said what I wanted them to say, so Doctor Linda suggested I write in a blank card, but then I couldn’t decide what I wanted to say either…”

“Lucifer.” Chloe stopped his words with a hand on his cheek, smiling in what she hoped was a reassuring manner. “You didn’t need to get me a card. You’ve already done more than enough. This is the best birthday morning I’ve ever had. You don’t have to worry so much. I’m just happy to be sharing it with you.” She kissed him before returning to breakfast, mindful of the time. “Trixie usually gets me a card anyway. I’m surprised she hasn’t burst in here yet, actually,” she said, remembering almost a decade of birthday mornings that had begun in a much more exuberant
“Maze is keeping her occupied,” Lucifer said with a sniff, stuffing toast into his mouth as, she suspected, a distraction from his emotions. Chloe was grateful. As much as she loved her daughter, this morning had been wonderful, and she wouldn’t want to change anything about it. She took a sip of her coffee and closed her eyes with a hum of pleasure. It pretty much didn’t get any better than this.

“So… you’re happy?” he said. Even without looking, she could hear the way he hesitated, like he feared to ask.

Her eyes flew open. She tried to push aside the feeling that she must be doing something wrong if he was still this tentative towards her. She put her coffee down so she could take both his hands. “Of course I am, Lucifer. I told you, this is perfect. You make me feel so loved.”

His eyes were dark and deep as they held hers. “You are,” he said, raw and unadorned.

Chloe smiled back at him, feeling her eyes grow misty. This man and his ability to make her cry over breakfast… “Then that’s all I need,” she said. She kissed him again before pulling back regretfully to check the time.

“This has been lovely, but I really need to get in the shower if I want to make it to work at all today.”

Lucifer raised his hands in mock surrender. “Of course, the day is yours to do with as you wish,” he said. “I’d best go see what Maze and the spawn are up to, make sure they don’t burn the place down.” He tightened his robe and was out the door before Chloe could even consider how to word her request for him to join her.

She frowned slightly. That was… odd. Probably for the best, considering how late she was already running, but still unlike him. She hoped it wasn’t some ridiculous notion about how he didn’t deserve her consideration today, even as she glumly suspected that was definitely why. She shook her head, getting into the shower. Apparently they still had some things they needed to work out. But they had time. She wouldn’t let it ruin her morning.

When she came downstairs, much later than she normally would have, Trixie pounced.

“Happy Birthday, Mommy!” she practically screeched, running to embrace Chloe, waving a piece of construction paper like a war banner, and she felt like the luckiest woman in the world. “I’ve been waiting forever, but Lucifer wouldn’t let me come upstairs. I wanna give you my card!”

“You’ve been so patient, monkey, thank you,” Chloe said, lifting Trixie bodily in their hug to deposit them both on the couch. It took a lot more effort to do so now, and she thought sadly that her days of being able to pick her daughter up were numbered. “Ooh, you’re getting so big!”

Trixie giggled, and launched into showing off the card she’d made, which seemed deceptively intricate. Each pen stroke had deep significance, and she nodded along with Trixie’s explanations. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw Lucifer watching them, with an expression on his face she wasn’t sure how to interpret.

“Well,” Chloe said, when Trixie had talked herself out, “let’s put this up on the fridge, shall we?”

Once the birthday card, which depicted an epic battle in which Chloe saved Anna and Elsa from some kind of snow dragon, was prominently displayed, she gave Trixie another hug. “Thank you, monkey. I love it.” She was about to say more, but was interrupted by Maze.

“Decker. Here.”
She looked up to see Maze handing her a wicked-looking boot knife, unwrapped (of course), handle-first.

“Uh. Thank you, Maze,” Chloe said, accepting it, aware of what the gesture meant coming from Maze, even though she wasn’t sure how she felt about being gifted weaponry in front of her daughter.

Trixie, however, was thrilled. “Awesome!” She grinned, clutching at Chloe’s jacket. “So that way, if a bad man takes your guns, you can stab him!”

“Trix!” Chloe was appalled. She tried to keep shop talk from Trixie as much as she possibly could (which admittedly wasn’t a lot considering both she and Dan were cops), but the cavalier way in which Trixie urged violence alarmed her, and Chloe realized she should probably be paying closer attention to what her daughter was picking up from Maze.

“Well, I appreciate it,” Chloe finally said to Maze, and the demon nodded, apparently full up on feelings. Chloe turned to Trixie.

“Come on, go get your bag, babe; you’re gonna be late!” As Trixie ran off, Chloe stood, absently fingering the knife’s handle.

“The child has a point,” Lucifer offered, stepping forward. His eyes were heavy, and she knew they were all thinking about the incident with Malcolm. Chloe briefly allowed herself to imagine slipping a knife out of her boot instead of the pistol and throwing it at Malcolm’s heart. Watching him die instead of Lucifer. In the present, Lucifer ran a hand through her hair like he understood what she was seeing.

“Maybe, but she shouldn’t be thinking about things like that!” Chloe exclaimed. “She’s nine!”

“Kid’s a fighter,” Maze said with approval, and Chloe resisted the urge to put her head in her hands.

“She sure is,” Chloe said instead, because there didn’t seem to be any sense in denying it. “Thanks for the knife, Maze, I’ll get a sheath to put it in.” She looked at Lucifer. “Are you ready to go?” She’d gotten out of the shower to see all evidence of breakfast removed and Lucifer fully dressed.

“Always,” he replied. She suspected he might have said more if not for Maze’s presence.

“Are you okay?” she asked Lucifer in the car, not really expecting him to give an answer. “Just, you seemed… upset earlier, when Trixie was showing me her card.”

Lucifer shook himself, flashing a smile. “Nothing you need to worry about, Detective,” he told her. “Just old memories.”

“Okay,” Chloe said, and let the matter drop. That had actually been quite forthcoming. She couldn’t imagine Lucifer’s childhood. Had he ever even been a child? She certainly couldn’t see him running to accost his parents with a card. Her heart squeezed at the thought. She already knew about Lucifer’s lack of experience with birthdays. In hindsight, she was grateful she’d been explicit in her desire for a lack of fuss. If he was getting this worked up over a special breakfast and cards, she’d hate to see what might have happened if she’d given him free rein.

Their arrival at the precinct was a perfect example of why she hated fuss. Dan met her with a cake, and she stood awkwardly as he and the various officers he’d managed to wrangle up sang her an off-
key version of Happy Birthday. Lucifer stood aside, a look of absolute bafflement on his face, which was probably for the best. However cringeworthy, it was still a kind attempt by Dan, though what Chloe found herself most grateful for was that from the looks of things someone had removed a set of those big number candles from the cake. It wasn’t like her age was a secret but she appreciated it not getting shoved in Lucifer’s face.

As she went to blow out the candles, a burst of loud music came from somewhere, and she jerked up, hating that her first instinct was to glance at Lucifer. Two officers she’d never seen before rolled in a giant box in the shape of a cake and Chloe winced, knowing what was coming next. Oh no.

Dan clearly had the same idea; he glared at Lucifer. “Way to steal my thunder, man,” he said over the music.

“This isn’t my doing, Daniel,” Lucifer said, just as Ella, of all people, burst out of the cake (fully clothed, thankfully) accompanied by a flurry of red confetti. Chloe was so surprised she just stared, open-mouthed, as Ella approached her, shaking her hips and grinding a little on her.

“This was you?” Dan asked.

“What can I say?” Ella deposited a gift bag on Chloe’s desk. “Big surprise, little package.”

“I did not see that coming,” Dan commented to no one in particular. Ella shrugged, pulling a piece of crepe out of her ponytail.

“Well, I wanted to get a real stripper, but Lucifer vetoed that one,” she whispered to Chloe. Chloe’s eyes snapped up to meet Lucifer’s steady gaze.

“Come on, girl, open your present!” Ella said at a normal volume, and Chloe shook herself. People were staring; the sooner she got this over with, the better.

Inside the bag was a bundle of red fabric. Lucifer moved closer to see as she unwrapped it, trying to figure out what it was. When a lacy red lingerie set, complete with devil-horn headband, emerged, Chloe let out a squawk and hastily wrapped it back up.

“Ella!” she exclaimed, a fiery blush painting her cheeks. Ella just giggled.

“Move it along folks,” she called, “nothing to see here, thanks for coming!” She enveloped Chloe in an enormous hug. “Happy birthday! Do you like it?”

“That’s not the point!” Chloe said, returning the hug on reflex. “You can’t just give me something like that in the middle of the precinct!” Lucifer huffed and made a comment about stereotypes. Ella patted his arm.

“Wow, dude, you really never break character, do you?” she sounded impressed. “No wonder Chloe has a Devil thing.”

Lucifer choked on air. Fortunately, they were interrupted by Lucifer’s phone - Chloe didn’t think it was physically possible to blush any harder.

“Lucifer Morningstar,” he answered, walking away to find a quieter room. Chloe wished she could hide too.

“Ella, thank you, for the gift,” she said. Secretly, she was kind of looking forward to wearing it for Lucifer. “I’ll look at it properly later, okay? Just, when I said we were keeping it on the down low at work, that includes devil-themed lingerie.”
“Right, sorry Chlo,” Ella said, but she didn’t look like she was listening. “I just got so excited! Hey, maybe you should go check in with Lucifer; he looks like he just got bad news or something.”

The statements were delivered with no intervening time for Chloe to catch up, so it took her a second to turn around and look at Lucifer, who was indeed standing in Ella’s lab looking troubled.

“Oh and by the way?” Ella said. Chloe looked back at her. “I’ve been investigating that thing you gave me, but so far the results are inconclusive.” Ella’s dark eyes were dancing; it was clear she was thrilled by her attempt at subterfuge. Chloe nodded.

“Thanks, Ella. Keep me posted?”

“You got it, birthday girl!”

Shaking her head, Chloe took the bag (not trusting it around her fellow officers) and went to Lucifer, closing the door behind her, though what she said first was: “You vetoed the stripper?”

“Oh, I’m sorry, darling, did you want one?” he asked absently. “Ella checked in with me since she is now aware of the true nature of our relationship, and I thought it would fly in contention of your desire for “minimal fuss.””

“I love you,” Chloe murmured, and he gave her a soft smile. “Who was that on the phone?” When the smile dropped from his face, she added, “You don’t have to say if you don’t want to. You just looked upset.”

“I don’t want to,” Lucifer said, playing with his phone. “But I should.” He sighed.

Chloe just nodded, waiting.

Lucifer seemed to struggle with himself for a moment. “That was the Las Vegas Police Department,” he said at last. Chloe’s stomach clenched, but she didn’t speak. “Candy’s missing.”

While Chloe was still reeling from that bombshell, Lucifer was shaking his head. “I didn’t want to spoil your birthday with this, Detective-”

“So when do we leave?” Chloe interrupted.

Lucifer blinked at her. “What?”

Chloe was having trouble believing the words coming out of her mouth as well. “Candy helped us out. Now she’s in trouble. We owe it to her to help out.”

Lucifer stared. “But-”

“It’s my birthday, yes,” Chloe said. She needed to get this resolved before she lost her nerve. “And I intend to spend it on a road trip to Vegas with my partner. There are worse things I could think of to do.” She touched his arm briefly. “And… I think this is something I need to do. I need to get over this. I want to go with you.” She shoved her hands into her pockets, suddenly unsure. “That is… you were planning on going to investigate, right?”

Lucifer swallowed. “I- I wasn’t certain. Obviously the matter is of a time-sensitive nature. And I do owe her a favour.”

“We owe her a favour,” Chloe corrected him. “Which is why we should get going. Right?”

Lucifer nodded. “Very well. As the birthday girl desires.”
“Are you sure about this, Detective?” Lucifer asked again as they stood outside his car. “You don’t have to come.”

Chloe folded her arms. “And the alternative is what, exactly? Hanging around here while you go to Vegas by yourself?” She shook her head. “I don’t want a party. Especially one without you there. I want to spend my birthday with you, Lucifer. No matter what we’re doing.”

Lucifer’s gaze freely showed his astonishment.

Chloe elected to slide into the passenger seat before he could prevaricate again. “I don’t know about you, but I’m looking forward to a road trip, in this gorgeous car, with you. I haven’t done anything like this since I was a teenager!”

She’d let everyone believe that Lucifer had convinced her to celebrate her birthday “properly” after all. Dan had agreed to take Trixie for the next couple of days, even on short notice. Pierce had granted her request for leave almost without even looking at her, seeming distracted. Chloe decided she’d take it, all things considered.

Investigating the disappearance of Lucifer’s ex was not how she’d imagined spending her birthday, but she wasn’t lying when she said the thought of a road trip with him in his Corvette was appealing. It felt like something was coming full circle: this time, instead of Lucifer fleeing to Vegas alone, they were going together, attacking things head on.

Lucifer still looked dubious, but he got into the car. “I admit, the thought of Candy being endangered thanks to her involvement with our sting is upsetting.”

“Yes. I’d hate it if anything happened to her because of us.” Lucifer turned his skeptical look on her. “It’s true!” Chloe said defensively. She might have her problems with the woman, but she’d never wish harm on anyone.

“Well, buckle up, love,” Lucifer said, dropping it. “We can’t afford to waste any time.”

Chloe had been right. The drive was really fun. It felt like she’d fallen into someone else’s life, speeding down the stretch of desert road with the top down, the wind in her hair. It felt like flying… Oh. Suddenly Lucifer’s choice of car seemed less of an affectation of his playboy lifestyle.

She looked over at him. He was focused on the road, his hair curling slightly at the ends, but he glanced over at her once he registered her attention. His eyes were warm, and Chloe wondered if there would ever come a day when she wouldn’t fall into them. Did he miss flying? He’d made it very clear that he wouldn’t use his wings for that purpose. She couldn’t imagine not utilizing the ability to fly if she had the opportunity, but maybe that was a human opinion of her to have.

Lucifer rested his hand on her thigh as he drove, and she smiled at him, wondering who the touch was intended to reassure. Despite the speeds they were going at, she wasn’t worried about Lucifer having only one hand on the wheel. She remembered how sure he’d been as he maneuvered their car at top speed to catch the plane on the runway. Now that she knew what was really going on, how out of this world his reflexes were, the memory evoked no fear, only a certain excitement.

When they arrived in Vegas, however, the reality of the situation came suddenly home to Chloe, and she couldn’t enjoy the famous sights - instead, the onslaught of blinking, bustling excess made her feel off-kilter, reminding her that this wasn’t just about her birthday. Was this what Lucifer had
done? She couldn’t help but wonder as they pulled up to the apartment where Candy lived, which also apparently doubled as a casino (in Vegas, everything doubled as a casino).

“Just give me a sec to freshen up. Then we can go,” Chloe said to Lucifer, who nodded.

“Very well. I’ll get us a room…”

Chloe put a hand on Lucifer’s arm. “Lobbies have bathrooms. I really just need a minute.” She shook her head inwardly, wondering if she should be worried that she was starting to anticipate Lucifer’s penchant for spending unnecessary amounts of money.

Time was of the essence, but walking around Vegas looking like a sandblasted rat would harm her credibility. She quickly splashed some water on her face and redid her hair, and emerged to find Lucifer looking impeccable as always. Chloe drank in the sight of him, in this last moment of quiet before they had to devote their attention to the investigation.

“All right, partner, let’s go,” she said, and his lips quirked in a smile as he nodded.

As soon as they stepped out of the elevator, Chloe heard something that was so familiar to her by now it took her a moment to remember it wasn’t supposed to be there - the indistinct radio chatter that had made up a big part of the background noise of her life since she’d become a cop. She touched Lucifer’s arm to halt him.

“This is an active crime scene,” she hissed. “We can’t just walk in there…”

But apparently, they could, as Lucifer proceeded to do just that, even nodding to an officer as he passed, Chloe trailing behind. No one asked to see their ID. What was LVPD doing?

Then they entered the apartment and all such thoughts fled her mind. A blonde in a pink dress was lying face down in a pool of blood.

“Oh, no,” Lucifer breathed. “Candy?”

Chloe couldn’t settle on one thing she was feeling, too many emotions jumbled up at once and crowding her throat.

“I’m sorry, Lucifer,” she finally choked out, as he crouched down to examine the body, whose face had been blown away by the shotgun blast to the head. They were too late, and now a woman who had used some of her last days to do them a favour was dead. The rush of emotions passed, leaving Chloe feeling numb.

“Hello,” Lucifer said, perking up. “Look at those dainty feet.”

“What?” She followed Lucifer’s pointed glance reflexively, the words making little sense. “Her feet?”

“Candy has ginormous feet. I mean, regular boats. Huge.”

Chloe frowned, her brain slow to process the information. “So… this isn’t Candy?” she asked in a whisper.

Lucifer nodded.

Relief flooded through Chloe. She still had a chance to make things right. “Let’s go,” she said decisively. Lucifer rose, but they were both halted by a voice from behind them.
“Excuse me. I’m Detective Long, and you are?” Chloe was painfully aware of how bad this looked, but a small part of her was yelling Assign someone to access control if you don’t want people walking all over your crime scene!


“You’re Candy’s husband,” Long said.

“Ex-husband,” Lucifer said quickly, with a glance at Chloe, but right now that was the least of her concerns.

“Right.” Long’s eyes were narrowed in suspicion. “I talked to you on the phone. You said you were in Los Angeles.”

“I was,” Lucifer said.

“And you don’t seem very broken up about your ex-wife’s death,” Long continued.

“Well, that’s because this woman is not my wife,” Lucifer said, which shook Chloe out of her stupor.

“Right, because she’s your ex-wife,” she interjected, nudging Lucifer with her elbow in the universal gesture for shut up now! “I think you’ve made that pretty clear.” She held out her hand for Long to shake. “Hi, I’m Detective Decker, LAPD.” Long’s returning grip was perhaps a bit firmer than absolutely necessary, but this wasn’t Chloe’s first rodeo, and she didn’t let it faze her. “We came as soon as we got the news. Please, let us know if there’s anything we can do to help the investigation.” They stared each other down.

“I do have a feeling I’ll be talking to both of you again before the investigation’s over,” Long said at last, but his tone made it clear that he did not welcome the LAPD’s presence. With any luck, pride would keep him from contacting them until they’d already concluded their own investigation. “Since you’re here now, stay in town. I’m sure I’ll have further questions for you.”

“Of course.” Chloe nodded, all confidence. “You already have Lucifer’s number, so we’ll let you get to work.” She strode out of the room without waiting for a response, followed closely by Lucifer.

“I didn’t want to give him a chance to ask you to identify the body,” Chloe explained once they were safely in the elevator.

“Seems like Candy dodged a bullet, quite literally,” Lucifer agreed. “Or a shotgun blast, anyway.”

“LVPD could get the DNA results back within 24 hours,” Chloe said. “So we need to find the killer before they realize their mistake.” She looked at Lucifer over the trunk of his car. “Do you have any idea who would want Candy dead?”

“A gorgeous blonde in a killer red dress stood on a glittering stage, her voice like honey, the pink highlights in her hair doing an excellent job of avoiding associations with certain other blondes that he was trying not to think about. He’d been sitting at the bar for hours, drinking steadily enough that it was starting to overwhelm even his metabolism, just watching her. “Fever,” indeed.

From behind him, he heard the bartender pour him another round.

“Psychic bartender!” he exclaimed. “My favourite.”
“Who is she?” The man hadn’t spoken to him all night but seemed to take this as an invitation. “Not the one singing; the reason you’re drinking.”

“Not who I thought she was,” Lucifer responded, downing the glass in one and putting it back down on the bar with misjudged force. “Not her fault though,” he allowed, wanting to be fair.

“Never is,” the bartender replied, a welcome commiseration, just as the singer sauntered up to him.

“Ah! Everyone’s reading my mind today,” Lucifer said, leaning back to give her bold, questing hands better access.

The blonde gave him a sultry look over her shoulder as she departed. He’d been on the receiving end of many such looks in his time. “Don’t mind if I do.” He sighed, gazing after her. “Who was that?” he asked the bartender.

“That was Candy.” The man said it with all the respect reserved for a force of nature.

Lucifer rose, reaching into his jacket for his money. “I think I’d quite like to continue my chat with Candy.” He broke off as the song ended and the audience applauded. His pocket was empty. Clumsily, he patted his vest pockets but they were empty as well. “Where’s my money?” he muttered to himself, before noticing something different about his hands. “...And my ring?”

He looked up to mark where Candy disappeared backstage, grinning proudly. It took a special kind of human to get one up on the Devil. Granted, said Devil was piss-drunk and distracted, but even so. “Bravo, Candy.”

He pulled the emergency wad of cash from his back pocket and threw it on the bar, chasing after Candy’s retreating form.

“Ow, you’re hurting me!”

The scene backstage brought him up short. Candy was pleading with a balding fat man in an ill-fitting suit who held her arm in a vice grip. “Just give me some more time-”

Fortunately for whoever it was, the man noticed Lucifer and departed before he could settle on anything properly inventive as retribution.

* 

“His name is Louie Pagliani,” Lucifer concluded. “He’s a local loan shark and all-around dirtbag. I thought I’d dealt with that human stain the last time I was here.”

“Wait.” Chloe blinked. “So you paid off Candy’s debt to a loan shark?”

“Yes, of course.” Lucifer looked uncomfortable. “I did her a favour; she did me one. That’s how it works.” Chloe bit the inside of her cheek on the thought that Candy’s “favour” was to get married to Lucifer in order to break her heart. Lucifer had explained his reasoning, and she could almost understand despite his flawed logic (it helped that she could all too easily picture his “homeless magician” look at the bar - her heart ached for him). He’d been so certain that anything good that happened in his life had to be a fluke that he’d sabotaged himself. She shook her head. They were here now. They had each other.

In the car, she placed her hand over his on the gearshift, saying nothing, just acknowledging the pain they’d both gone through. After a moment, he laced his fingers through hers.
They drove to the Paglianis’ massive mansion. Chloe knocked and rang the bell but no one answered. She frowned.

As usual, Lucifer made the decision for her. He simply pushed on the door, which opened wide.

“Lucifer…” Chloe began, before wondering why she even bothered.

“It was open!” Lucifer protested.

Chloe followed him in, knowing he wouldn’t lie, only to run into his back when he stopped suddenly.

“Oh no. The annihilation.” The horror in his voice caused Chloe to look around him anxiously, braced for the worst. “Even if Louie didn’t kill fake Candy, this decor alone is grounds for immediate execution. I mean, what was he thinking?” He picked up two statuettes to emphasize his point (leaving his prints all over the scene in the process).

Chloe relaxed when she realized the source of his reaction, rolling her eyes and starting to investigate.

“Looks like someone beat you to the execution part,” she said. The gruesome body was slumped behind a partition, blood and gore smeared behind. A shotgun lay nearby.

Lucifer came around to look. “Louie?” Chloe asked.

“Oh, definitely,” Lucifer confirmed. “I’d know those hairy ham hands anywhere.”

Chloe frowned, examining the body. “That doesn’t look right,” she said. She wasn’t the expert but she’d investigated enough suicides to know what they looked like. Her mind went back to the scene Malcolm had staged, making it look like Paolucci had committed suicide. It had been much better set up than this. “There’s no way Louie pulled the trigger.”

Lucifer sighed. “Typical Vegas. Even the suicides are fake.”

“And so is the hair colour.” Chloe had caught a glint against Louie’s jacket. Slipping on one of the nitrile gloves she always kept in her pocket, she held it up. “It’s pink.”

“Candy.” Lucifer made a grab for the hair and Chloe snatched it away, used to his constant efforts to interfere with evidence. “She was here.”

Chloe hesitated before asking. “Do you think Candy killed Louie and then faked her own death to disappear?”

“Oh, no no no,” Lucifer denied immediately, standing and slipping his hands in his pockets. “Candy’s not a killer.”

“Oh no no no,” Lucifer denied immediately, standing and slipping his hands in his pockets. “Candy’s not a killer.”

“Just a thieving con woman,” Chloe muttered, rising as well, before realizing that was unfair. “How well did you know this woman, Lucifer? You were married for two weeks.” Which was longer than she herself had known her but she hadn’t been given much to go on.

“Well I paid Louie off… Maybe he wanted more,” Lucifer allowed.

“Did she say anything when you asked her to help us?” Chloe asked. Lucifer shook his head. Chloe caught sight of something behind him. “Huh. This must be Mrs. Ham Hands.”

“Oh, dearie me,” Lucifer said, catching sight of the massive shotgun blast adorning the crotch of
Louie Pagliani in the panting. “Someone’s sending a painful message.” He turned to face her. “If Louie was after Candy’s candy…”

Chloe winced at the imagery but continued. “Maybe his wife found out, killed who she thought was Candy, and then framed Louie?”

“Then we need to find this murderous ginger before she finds the real Candy,” Lucifer said. He crouched down again, slipping Louie’s phone out of his pocket. Chloe swore she was going to make him wear gloves everywhere they went. “Ah, Roxie Pagliani. I suppose she’s the missus—”

Chloe snatched the phone out of his hand. “Give me that.” She rested a hand on his arm in apology. “We don’t have to call her yet. Let’s try to find out more about her before we let her know we’re onto her.” She pulled out her own phone and ran a quick search. “Her Wobble page says she works at the Moonbeam casino. Let’s go there, stake her out, try to get some intel before we confront her.”

Lucifer sniffed. “Excellent plan. Shall we?” he held out his arm. Chloe shook her head as she took it.
Waiting on a Friend

Chapter Notes

The delay in this chapter was caused by technical difficulties with my laptop. Fair warning the next chapter will likely be delayed as well because I need time to get it off to my betas. You may have also noticed that the chapter count has changed and that the next chapter will be the last chapter. I ended up not needing as many chapters as I thought to execute my vision for this story - the story was always intended to end with Vegas. I gave myself some wiggle room because I think it's always less jarring when there are suddenly fewer chapters than you expected than the chapter count suddenly upping when you thought you knew how long the story was going to be.

This is not to say that the series ends here - I will be addressing the rest of season 3 (you'll notice I've left out some fairly major plot points, this is also intentional) in a future story. Almost none of it is written, so be prepared for it to take a while, but it has some of my favourite scenes ever in it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chloe felt painfully underdressed for the casino, especially standing next to Lucifer Morningstar, but the sight of a few more casually dressed tourists made her feel better. She scanned the crowd, trying to pick out Roxie Pagliani, but her eyes were drawn to a dark-haired woman in a strapless golden dress.

“Ella?”

Ella whirled, crossing her arms and leaning back against a pillar, making a show of casualness. “Oh! Hey guys! Fancy meeting you here; isn’t life so crazy? Okay, see you!” She tried to slip away, but Chloe caught her arm.

“Ella, what are you doing here?” Chloe asked.


“Ella…” Chloe wavered, wondering how much to tell her. “This isn’t a couple thing. We’re here investigating. It’s a personal…” She trailed off as Ella’s eyes grew to the size of dinner plates.

“Oh my God!” Ella exclaimed, prompting a scoff from Lucifer. “You’re investigating? At a casino? This is so much better than I thought! I can totally help you guys out! Not to brag, but I kinda know my way around a casino.” She glanced around excitedly. “So are you looking for someone?”

Chloe opened her mouth, about to refuse, before realizing there was no harm in letting Ella help. “Yeah, actually. Roxie Pagliani. We know she works here, but…” She caught sight of a familiar-looking woman wearing a black uniform. “There she is!”

“Mrs. Ham Hands,” Lucifer confirmed.
Ella followed their gazes. “It looks like she’s the casino’s pit boss,” she said. There was a note of reservation in her voice that Chloe didn’t like.

Lucifer, of course, was paying no attention. “Right, let’s go and chat up our killer…”

Ella held him back. “Uh, could be a problem. Pit bosses are notoriously hard to flush out. The only clients they pay attention to are the whales…” As Chloe looked at her questioningly, Ella elaborated, “the serious high rollers. So, how about blackjack?”

“I’m more of a poker man, myself,” Lucifer answered, before Chloe could suggest that they at least try talking to Roxie first.

Ella stared at him. “Poker? No. Poker involves bluffing, also known as lying, something you claim you don’t do.”

“Bluffing and lying, two totally different things,” Lucifer protested.

Chloe, thinking about it past her initial surprise, realized she had to agree. Poker didn’t involve saying you had a good hand, just making other people think you did. She imagined Lucifer would actually be pretty good at it.

“Ooh. Okay, looks like Roxie’s working the blackjack floor,” Ella said. Convenient, that. “So, let’s get you at the table.” She started dragging Lucifer over.

“Wait, guys-” Chloe attempted, only to be ignored.

“What, me?” Lucifer stammered as he allowed himself to be pulled along. “What about you?”

“Best I just watch,” Ella said cryptically, as Chloe did her best to blend into the crowd and keep an eye on Roxie.

Lucifer didn’t take long to attract an audience. The way he was showboating made it effortless. Chloe could relate: she could hardly keep her eyes off him. Lucifer’s wealth made him an instant favourite: if Roxie wanted a high roller, she had one now. Lucifer kept doubling his bet with no compunctions whatsoever, guided and goaded by Ella, who seemed to have an affinity for the game.

A waitress who looked oddly familiar served Lucifer a drink. “Mm, that’s perfect, thanks,” he said. “What would you like, Ms. Lopez?”

“I would like for you to focus on the game,” Ella replied intently. “You just got two aces.”

“What? Oh, right,” Lucifer said, apparently remembering what he was supposed to be doing. “Well maybe you would like-”

“Split!” Ella exclaimed, shoving Lucifer out of his chair.

The shift in atmosphere was immediate. The dealer glanced to his right. Hidden camera? Chloe wondered.

Lucifer apparently noticed the dealer’s distraction too. “Ah, it’s working, Ms. Lopez. Whatever you’re doing, keep doing it.”

“Yeah, order me one too,” Ella said, distracted.

Chloe didn’t think that was what was happening and drifted closer, unsure of how to intervene. The crowd cheered as Ella won another round, before a bald, well-built man appeared at Lucifer’s elbow.
“Excuse me, sir, could you come with us, please?”

“Oh, excellent, it’s worked,” Lucifer said. “Right, off to the high rollers suite, are we?” he announced to the crowd at large.

“Yeah, I don’t think that’s where they’re taking us,” Ella said, moving slowly away from the table.

Chloe looked from the scene to Roxie and back in consternation. She was distinctly out of her element and had no idea what the best course of action would be. As she dithered, she’d almost lost sight of Ella and Lucifer and Roxie was abruptly nowhere to be found.

With a muttered curse, Chloe hurried after the security guards, tapping the arm of the one who held Lucifer.

“Excuse me-” she began, but before she could finish the man shrugged her off.

“I’m sorry ma’am, not now,” he said.

Lucifer gave her a quick thumbs up before disappearing into a back room. The door closed in Chloe’s face.

She huffed and leaned back against the wall. She knew Lucifer wasn’t in any real danger, and that he would protect Ella. But she hated not knowing what was going on (and, to a lesser extent, the fact that she’d been dismissed so easily, probably due to her attire).

After a very long fifteen minutes, Lucifer and Ella re-emerged, still being dragged along by the same security guards. Roxie was nowhere in sight. Chloe followed them again for lack of any better options.

“You really have quite the grip, don’t you?” Lucifer was saying to his escort. “You have a good time on your own?”

“Oh! Ugh,” Ella commented, jerking her arm free at the door. The two guards stood at attention, waiting for them to vacate the premises.

“You, Ms. Lopez, are an enigma, wrapped in a hoodie, under a jaunty ponytail,” Lucifer said, giving Ella an admiring look as they readjusted their clothing. “Except not at the moment—you look quite ravishing, don’t you?”

“Guys!” Chloe exclaimed. They both jumped and turned, looking slightly guilty. “What the hell happened in there?”

“Well, I discovered that Ms. Lopez here was counting cards-”

“Roxie isn’t the killer!” Ella spoke over Lucifer.

Chloe shook her head, focussing on the most pertinent information first. “She’s not? How do you know?”

“Lucifer used his mojo thing…”

Lucifer rolled his eyes. “I asked Mrs. Ham Hands what she desired, and she spun quite the tale about a pro golfer at table four. She had no motive, nor opportunity to kill fake Candy or Louie.”

“And what’s this about you counting cards?” Chloe asked.
Ella shrugged. “What can I say? We all have coping mechanisms. Mine just happens to be counting cards; or was, anyway.”

“Coping mechanisms?” Lucifer sounded shocked. “For what, poverty?”

“No,” Ella responded, as Chloe was about to take him to task for being insensitive. “It helped quiet the voices.”

All three of them came to a halt.

“What voices?” Lucifer ventured, sounding more wary than Chloe was expecting.

Ella seemed to come to herself and realize what she’d revealed.

“Never mind, forget I said that.” She waved her hands in the air as though to erase the statement. “The point is that everyone has stuff they’re trying to avoid.”

Chloe would have pursued the matter, if not for a voice from behind them. “Excuse me.” It was the waitress from the casino. Lucifer pulled a wad of cash from his jacket.

“Oh, did I forget to tip? How rude of me.”

“Lucifer!” the woman hissed.

Chloe blinked, suddenly realizing why she’d looked familiar earlier.

“Candy?” Lucifer said.

“What are you doing here?” Candy demanded. “You’re going to ruin everything!”

They moved somewhere slightly further out of the public eye. Chloe bit her lip. She’d known they would cross paths with Candy eventually - that was the goal, after all - but she’d assumed Candy would at least be grateful for their help. Now Candy looked mad enough to start laying into Lucifer, and Ella was here, and Chloe still couldn’t sort out her feelings. If they’d gone through all this for nothing…

“As much as I love the Bettie Page vibe, you’ve got a bulls-eye on your back; this is hardly a good hiding place,” Lucifer said, unaffected by the tension as always.

“But it is where my killer works,” Candy said, pulling to a stop.

“What? You’re onto Roxie as well?” Lucifer asked.

“Yeah, until you showed up and derailed things,” Candy snapped.

“Well, I hate to disappoint,” Lucifer said, “but Roxie Pagliani did not kill your lookalike.”

“Ali,” Candy said, a slight tremor in her voice. “Her name was Ali. She broke up with her boyfriend, so I said she could stay with me. I was just trying to be a good friend.”

“Oh man,” Ella said. “I’m so sorry.” She pulled Candy into an embrace. Chloe made a sympathetic noise of assent - it was a horrible thing.

“Anyway,” Lucifer said as Ella and Candy separated, “Roxie Pagliani did not kill her husband or Ali
in a jealous fit of rage. The woman’s about as passionate as a protein bar.”

“This has nothing to do with passion,” Candy insisted. “The killer wants my father’s club.”

“Fletcher’s?” Lucifer asked. “How do you know that?”

“After I found Ali… dead,” Candy choked out, “I noticed that only one thing was missing from my apartment: the pocket deed for Fletcher’s.”

“Whoever possesses the deed owns the club?” Ella asked.

Candy nodded. “It was used as collateral when my dad borrowed money from Louie. But when I went to confront him, he was already dead.” That explained why her hair had been at the crime scene. “So I thought maybe Louie told Roxie about the deed, and she’s the one who got greedy.”

“Sadly, no,” Lucifer said, sounding actually disappointed. “Roxie was working at the time of the murder.”

“But who else could have known about that deed?” Candy asked.

It was a good question, and Chloe was about to suggest that they pursue it, when Lucifer grinned. “Well, not to worry,” he said, as everyone stared at him. “There’s a much faster way to flush out the killer.” Chloe winced, knowing that tone of voice never boded well. “Candy’s still my wife; legally, anyway.”

“…Which would trump any sort of deed,” Ella surmised, with a glance at Chloe.

“Exactly, which means Fletcher’s now goes to the grieving widower: me!”

“Yeah, but that makes you the killer’s next target,” Ella said, like she thought it would be a deterrent, and Chloe reminded herself Ella had never really worked a case with them before.

“Oh, I certainly hope so.” Lucifer seemed to be having the time of his life. He adjusted his cuffs. “Right. Come on: it’s showtime!”

“Showtime?” Ella echoed. Chloe looked at Candy and found her own long-suffering expression mirrored back at her, which was a little disconcerting.

“Hey.” Candy acknowledged Chloe for the first time. She sounded serious, no hint of the ditzy personality Chloe had known in evidence. “Can we talk? We should have a bit while he’s setting up.” They both exchanged knowing looks before looking away simultaneously.

“Yeah,” Chloe managed, her throat suddenly parched. “I’d like that.” Things had gone unspoken for far too long between them. “Just let me have a word with Lucifer first?”

Candy nodded, and Chloe hurried to catch up with the Devil’s long strides.

“Hey, Lucifer, can I talk to you for a sec?” She pulled him out of Ella’s earshot.

Lucifer frowned. “Detective, if this is about Candy…”

Chloe shook her head. “It’s not. It’s about using ourselves as bait for a killer. Again.” Lucifer’s expression cleared.

“Ah. That. Well, between the four of us, I’m sure we’ll be able to handle it.”
Chloe folded her arms. “You don’t want me forty-two yards away in case of emergency?”

“I’m sure that won’t be necessary,” Lucifer said blithely. “We’re on the offensive this time. That makes all the difference.”

Ella and Candy stood at a safe distance, watching them. Chloe sighed and made her decision.

“Fine,” she said, wishing she had access to LAPD resources to make him wear a bulletproof vest. “But I want everyone on headsets. Everything will be coordinated.”

“As you wish.” Lucifer conceded so easily Chloe figured he wasn’t really paying attention. “Now if you’ll excuse me, I really must get ready for my performance.” He didn’t wait for a response. Chloe shook her head as she watched him go.

“I’d forgotten,” Candy said, coming up behind her. Chloe steeled herself, still not accustomed to her presence, “how—” Candy waved her hand in the air in a gesture that was very familiar to Chloe. “—Lucifer he is.”

Chloe nodded, biting her tongue. She turned. “Ella, could you go with Lucifer and help him get set up?” she asked. “I’m gonna take care of the backstage stuff with Candy.”

“You got it, Chlo,” Ella said, before trotting off in her heels.

Chloe turned back to Candy.

“All right,” Chloe said firmly. “Let’s talk.”

* *

PREVIOUSLY ON LUCIFER:

Candy let herself into her apartment with a deep sigh. She was exhausted; the night had been long, and her successful theft from the loaded sad sack at the bar had been undercut by the backstage arrival of Louie. She didn’t know how much she’d lifted - she hadn’t dared to count it - but the thickness of the wad of bills suggested she could move her timeline up by weeks, at least.

Dumping her coat and purse on a chair, she turned on the light, only to be startled by a voice behind her.

“Hello, Candy.”

With a gasp, she whirled to see the suit from the bar seated in an armchair in a shadowed corner. “My thieving vixen.” He rose and approached her slowly. Candy’s life started flashing before her eyes and she was backed into a corner before she knew it.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she heard herself say before she’d made the conscious decision to play dumb. “How’d you get in here?” She thought she’d locked the door…

“Impressive grift you’ve got going,” the man said, stopping about a foot short of her. Candy’s heart was hammering in her chest. At the bar he’d seemed an easy mark: sad, piss drunk, practically folding in on himself. Here, he stood tall, dark, and imposing, and Candy knew she was screwed. “But I’m afraid you can’t keep this little beauty.” He pointed at her breasts, and Candy’s brain short circuited.

“No, please, please, please, I’m sorry; I’m sorry,” she pleaded, throwing up her hands.
“Sentimental value,” the man said, reaching into her bra and retrieving his ring without even touching her skin. She looked down and back up in confusion. “But you’re welcome to keep the cash,” he continued. “Goodness knows where you’ve hidden that.”

She began to think there might be a chance she could get out of this. “I’m so sorry; please don’t call the cops,” she cried, playing up the innocent victim angle. “It’s just my dad died recently, and he used to own the club I was singing at, you know, Fletchers?” The words were spilling out of her now, it wasn’t an act any more. It was such a profound relief to finally talk to anyone about this, even if “anyone” was a stranger from a bar who was still very much a clear and present danger. “But he owed this ginormous amount of cash to a super-scary loan shark, Louie Pagliani, and he used the club as collateral, and if I don’t come up with three hundred grand, like, now, Louie’s gonna take it, and who knows what else. I didn’t know what else to do!”

She was rewarded by a slow clap. Maybe the tears had been overselling it a bit.

“Bravo,” the man said. “You really are quite the performer, aren’t you?”

“You don’t believe me?”

“What, the weepy waterworks? Not a chance,” the man scoffed. “But your story seems legit, though.”

Getting herself to stop coming undone wasn’t as easy as it was to start - she had to hyperventilate a bit before she could speak normally. “It is,” she said, finally, and the man barked a short laugh at her changed demeanour. “And so is my apology.” She felt secure enough to sit down - he’d let her go through that whole monologue without doing anything outwardly threatening. Her gut told her there was something else going on. “I actually felt bad. From the looks of you at the bar, you got your own problems to deal with.”

The man looked affronted as he straightened his vest. “Nothing I can’t handle on my own.”

Candy arched an eyebrow. “You sure about that?”

Which was how she ended up wrapped in blankets, swapping wine and ice cream, as she listened to the life story of a man named Lucifer. It was certainly the strangest night she’d ever had, not helped by the story he had to tell. His name was odd enough, but the idea of his dad being this all powerful figure who was able to arrange for someone to meet and fall in love with him? On the surface, he sounded crazy. But he’d listened to her rant, and he spoke with such absolute sincerity and care for his “Detective” that she couldn’t help but feel drawn in. And of course she had no trouble believing he had an overbearing mother.

“And so, you see, I had to leave,” he said in conclusion. Candy took a spoonful of ice cream.

“I get it,” she said. “The part about your dad putting the Detective in your path is kind of fuzzy, but it seems like you genuinely care about her.”

“Yes. I do. A lot.”

Candy frowned. “Then isn’t you going AWOL going to throw a big flag on that play?”

“No, I said that I care about her,” Lucifer said.

“Oh, unrequited love! Yeah, I get that, too.” Boy, did she ever.

“No, no, it’s not unrequited.” Lucifer sat up, making a sound of frustration. “It’s... well, the Detective
has feelings for me, but she has no control over those feelings.”

Things were back to not making sense. “Okay, I don’t get that.”

Lucifer lay back and sighed. “Well, look, it’s difficult to explain. But I just… I want to do right by her.”

“I believe you,” Candy said. It was impossible to doubt. “Swap.” He handed over the wine, she passed over the ice cream, and once again the absurdity of the situation struck her. “Do you ever ask yourself: how the hell did I end up here?”

“What, eating mint chip ice cream, wrapped in a pink snuggie?”

Candy sniggered. “Pink’s a good colour for you, actually.”

“Ah, you are a good liar, aren’t you?”

She gasped in mock hurt. “I don’t lie!”

Lucifer rolled his eyes. “Forgive me, but you are a con woman.”

“I am not a con woman!” she exclaimed, slightly more defensive now. “I am a singer, forced to do some things that I’m not proud of, but only so I can dig my dad’s club out of debt. I grew up on that stage.” She played with the edge of her blanket. “It’s my home.”


“I might pretend to be someone… a little less threatening, sometimes,” Candy allowed. “But I don’t lie. I call it bluffing. Totally different things.”

“Oh, well that I definitely get,” Lucifer said, sounding approving. “We’re quite similar, you and I, aren’t we?”

“Yeah, we are.” Strange, but true. She never would have expected to find such commonality with a total stranger, especially one she’d just robbed.

“You know… There may be a way for you and I to dig each other out, Candy,” Lucifer said thoughtfully, oddly serious. He sat up. “I’ll pay off your debt, if you don’t mind doing a little ‘bluffing’ for me.”

Candy watched, unsuspecting, as Lucifer rose to his feet. She took another sip of wine as he adjusted his snuggie and dropped to one knee.

“Marry me.”

Candy spat her wine all over him.

“*And so, we got married,” Candy said in conclusion. They were sitting in a room backstage, surrounded by furniture heaped with props and costumes. Chloe had listened, enthralled, to the entire story, and now sat quietly, hands fisted in some glittery fabric in her lap. She didn’t respond, busy trying to sort out the timeline in her head.

Lucifer had received the news that her birth had been divinely arranged less than 24 hours after their first kiss and gone to confront her, only to discover her poisoning. And then he’d killed himself to
save her life despite his newfound knowledge (she didn’t think she’d ever be able to make peace with that), only to leave her recuperating in a hospital bed as he fled to Vegas.

“So it was all… fake?” she asked quietly. “Your marriage was just a deal?”

Candy nodded sympathetically. “Yeah. Lucifer squared my dad’s debt with Louie and then he bought me a ring.”

Chloe’s gut twisted. She knew now that Lucifer had thought he was protecting her (“but she has no control over those feelings”) but she hadn’t realized how premeditated the whole thing had been.

“Even though he told me I was supposed to be a decoy for his mom, he didn’t seem to want to go back to LA,” Candy continued. “Maybe he was hoping she’d follow him to Vegas so he wouldn’t have to confront you. But I want you to know that we never…” She made a helpless gesture. “It was all on paper. Nothing happened.”

Chloe just stared. That, she hadn’t expected at all. “What?”

Candy scoffed. “I mean, can’t say I wasn’t tempted, obviously. Have you seen him?” She shook her head. “But he was way too hung up on you. You were all he could talk about. No way I was getting involved in that.” Chloe wasn’t sure if that made her feel any better. “Lucifer insisted on making it legal. He said it was because his mom would check but I think it was because he refused to lie.”

Chloe nodded. That certainly sounded like Lucifer.

“Wait,” she said. “What do you mean, a decoy for his Mom?”

“He was very clear that my job was to try to coax information out of his mother,” Candy said. “He thought she was planning some crazy scheme, and that she might let something slip if her son suddenly showed up with a wife.”

Chloe found it strange to think back on that time with her current knowledge - she could only assume the “plan” was Goddess’s attempt to storm the gates of Heaven, which had been the first thing Chloe and Lucifer had dealt with as a couple. She wondered why Lucifer had never mentioned that aspect of the situation to her.

“But it wasn’t just about her, right?” Chloe murmured, her heart beating faster as she laid herself bare.

Candy made an apologetic face. “He didn’t talk much to me about anything else, but… yeah. I guess he was hoping to pull a fast one on you, too. Despite what he said I was still kinda thinking of your relationship as being all one sided.”

Chloe grimaced. “When I saw you-” she began, just as Candy said the same thing. She waved Candy on.

“I nearly called the whole thing off then and there,” Candy said. “I didn’t realize he’d never told you where he was going, or how he’d left you. I felt horrible. But I was obligated because he’d paid Louie so much money… I didn’t know what to do.”

“He wouldn’t have forced you,” Chloe said reflexively.

Candy looked rueful. “I know that, now. But when you make a deal with a guy who calls himself the Devil, you gotta take the rules pretty seriously.”
Chloe had to ask. “So… do you believe…?”

“That he’s really the Devil?” Candy shrugged, leaning back in her chair. “I’m in showbiz. I’ve met some people with some pretty insane outlooks. Also with a healthy belief in the supernatural, not that I’ve ever been one for that sort of thing. A man comes along and says he’ll help me out of a jam, and he doesn’t want anything sleazy or illegal in return? He can call himself whatever he wants.”

Chloe nodded. That had been her outlook in a nutshell.

“I… had no idea,” she said. “I couldn’t understand why he came back.” She looked at Candy. “We kissed, and then I almost died. He left and came back with… you. No offence.”

“None taken,” Candy replied with an easy smile.

Chloe was starting to appreciate Candy’s no-nonsense attitude. They should have had this conversation a long time ago.

“He couldn’t have stayed away for much longer, was the impression I got,” Candy said sagely. “He wanted to, but he couldn’t. It was kinda cute… in a tragic way.”

Chloe shook her head. Though she could see what Candy meant, now, back then the idea would have been so foreign to her as to be ludicrous. Right now, all she really wanted to do was talk to Lucifer.

“I…” Chloe rose. “I have to see him before he goes onstage.”

Candy grinned. “Go get ‘im, tiger.”

Shooting her a grateful look, Chloe went.

She found him in front of a dressing mirror, adjusting his bow tie. The gold curtains and muted light made it look like he was glowing. Her heart turned over.

“Ah, Detective.” Lucifer met her eyes in the mirror before facing her. His movements seemed slightly stilted, like he was bracing himself. “I take it you finished your tête-à-tête with Candy?”

Chloe nodded. “There’s a lot you and I need to talk about,” she said carefully. She wondered if part of his not wanting her along on this trip was reluctance to have her meet Candy. “But I like her.”

Lucifer smiled briefly.

“She’s… a remarkable woman,” he said, hesitant, and looked relieved when Chloe agreed.

“Why didn’t you tell me it was about tricking your Mom?” she asked simply.

Lucifer blinked, clearly thrown. “What?”

“Candy told me about how she was supposed to be a smokescreen of some kind, but I didn’t really understand. Could you explain, please?”

“I…” Lucifer still looked bemused at her even tone, but he didn’t deny her. “I knew Mother was planning something. When I came back with a wife, I knew Mum would consider Candy an easier target, and while she was focusing on her, she might let something slip.”

“Did she?” Chloe asked.
Lucifer shook his head. “Not really, but Mum came to me with information instead, so it worked out in the end, I suppose. That’s how I found out Azrael’s blade was the Flaming Sword. Mum was trying to manipulate me into using it. Thanks to Candy, I was able to gain enough time to come up with a workaround.”

“Lucifer, I…” Chloe was appalled. It struck her yet again how messed up Lucifer’s family was. She swallowed. “Why didn’t you tell me?” At Lucifer’s look, she waved a hand. “Not about the Flaming Sword and all that. But I knew your Mom was in town. I knew you were having problems. Of course I would’ve still been pissed, but…”

“And if I had?” Lucifer’s eyes were shadowed in the dim light. “I knew Candy wasn’t going to be a permanent fixture in my life. Given that I found myself unable to stay away from you, which is what I should have done, I needed to make as clean a break as possible. I was concerned… any attempt to justify or mitigate what I had done would, well, rather defeat the purpose.” He looked at her apologetically.

Chloe nodded. It was no more than she’d been expecting, but the old hurt welled sick and dark in her stomach regardless. “I wish I could’ve known sooner,” she said. “Why you did it.” She shook her head to forestall Lucifer speaking. “I knew you didn’t love Candy. That’s why it hurt so much. I thought you were afraid of what had happened between us. But I couldn’t understand why you came back, just to throw it in my face.”

“It was never my intention to—”

“You left me!” The words fell heavy into the tiny room. Chloe felt lightheaded as they escaped. She sank into the nearest chair. “I never got to tell you,” she said to her knees, unable to look up, “what it did to me. To have just been opening up, thinking this time would be different, only to be reminded how stupid that was. For you to go and intentionally break my heart.”

“Chloe, I…” Lucifer sounded stricken. He knelt down to her level, seeking her eyes earnestly. “I didn’t know.”

Chloe looked hard at him, seeking the truth, but of course Lucifer never lied. His mouth twisted. “I found out my Father made you directly and I thought something had… changed. That your choices were no longer your own. Because if they were, why would you…” He cut himself off. Chloe’s heart squeezed even tighter, and she fought for breath. “I thought you wouldn’t be hurt. I thought I was giving you back your free will; that you would be pleased, even, to be rid of me. I…”

Chloe reached for his hand. The thought of such a scenario filled her with fear. “I’m glad you didn’t.”

“I didn’t know,” Lucifer repeated, sounding truly distraught now. “I didn’t tell you, because I wanted your reaction to be untempered. I wanted to be sure you were getting your self back. If I’d had the slightest idea…” He exhaled sharply. “I’d like to think I’d have done something differently. Tried harder to stay away, to draw Mum to me.”

Chloe let out a wet chuckle. “Well that’s the thing about breaking someone’s heart. They don’t generally tend to want to put themselves in that position again.”

“I didn’t know,” Lucifer repeated, sounding truly distraught now. “I didn’t tell you, because I wanted your reaction to be untempered. I wanted to be sure you were getting your self back. If I’d had the slightest idea…” He exhaled sharply. “I’d like to think I’d have done something differently. Tried harder to stay away, to draw Mum to me.”

Chloe reached for his hand. The thought of such a scenario filled her with fear. “I’m glad you didn’t.”

Lucifer’s gaze flicked to hers. “As am I,” he murmured. “But to know that I hurt you in the process… It was never my intention. I’m sorry, Chloe.”

She let out a long breath. She hadn’t realized how long she’d been waiting to hear those words.
Leaning in, she kissed him gently on the cheek. “I stopped holding it against you a long time ago, Lucifer. That’s why we’re here. But it means a lot to me to hear you say it. Thank you.” She bit her lip, as Lucifer looked at her with wonder. “I know you said you thought I didn’t have a choice. But you were also taking my choices away from me.” Lucifer’s eyes widened. “And I know you thought you were doing the right thing. I know there was no way of giving me a real choice without revealing the truth, and if you’d told me back then I’m not sure how I would’ve reacted. I’m glad things turned out the way they have.”

“You are?”

She smiled tremulously. “Of course. I finally got the opportunity to choose you.”

Lucifer started.

She squeezed his hand. “Yes, Lucifer. Choose.” She thought of her realization back when she’d had Linda and Ella over for dinner. “After my bad date… you asked if you could kiss me. I could have said no. You told me the truth about you and were doing your level best to push me away. I didn’t let you. Not because of divine whammy, or whatever, but because I made the decision. To have you in my life. Because I wanted you there. Because I love you.”

Lucifer’s eyes had been wide before, but his expression had been nothing to the shock he fixed her with now. “You… you did choose me,” he murmured in awe, as a smile dawned across his face. Chloe couldn’t resist kissing that smile, and didn’t try. Finally, finally they were getting somewhere.

She pulled back, nodding and teary eyed. “I did. And I do. Despite your best efforts to the contrary.” They both let out a watery laugh.

Chloe sniffed. “I’m glad I finally got that off my chest.”

Lucifer brushed under her eyes with the pad of his thumb. “Me too.”

“Now go on,” Chloe said, pushing at his shoulders. “Your adoring public is waiting for you to out one of them as the killer.”

Lucifer grinned. “Indeed; I need to have a word with the band.” He sprang to his feet.

Chloe followed more sedately. “Why’s that?”

“Because I’m going to be performing a different song!”

Chapter End Notes

I was so excited to finally address the Candy-Chloe relationship. Thank you for going on this journey with me, readers! One more chapter to go!

End Notes
I hope you liked it! What did you think of the changes? Not to worry, fluff is coming! New chapter, next week!
(PS - the title is taken from the name of the song that plays when Lucifer and Chloe embrace outside the professor's lab in 2x12 ;D)

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