Down The Rabbit Hole

by tomy

Summary

Spoilers for season 4 - set after the finale.

After a stakeout gone wrong, Chloe is left gravely injured - being targeted, no one knows why or who.

Notes

Usual disclaimers - not mine, having some fun.

Will contain spoilers for the entire series. Rated M right now for topics, innuendos and violence.

This has not been beta’d - anyone interested, please message me - there is a lot more of this fic that I'm sitting on.
Chapter 1

And time will break
The dreams that take the pain away

Ever after never came
And I'm still waiting for a love I'll never have
And all the dreams I lay to rest
Are ghosts that keep me
After all that I've become
I am only one

I'm on my own here
And no one's left to be the hero of
This fairy tale gone wrong
As night will fall my heart will die alone

Ever after never came
And I'm still waiting for my heart to beat again

And all the dreams I've laid to rest
Are ghosts that keep me
After all that I've become
I am only one
~I Am Only One
We Are The Fallen

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6 months – had it only been 6 months? As cliché as it sounded, it sure as hell felt a lot longer.

Chloe Decker hunched in barely concealed pain at her desk, well past dark, fussing with unneeded paperwork; shuffling them, pretending to be busy. At this point the precinct was dark, mostly empty, only a few on duty and others finishing up for the night.

She ached deeply – on so many levels. Her left arm still in the brace, strapped to her chest to keep it as immobile as possible. In total honesty it did little. Most things did little.

She missed him, missed the friendship, missed how he could turn everything into an innuendo, missed how even as he annoyed her, he could make her laugh. Mostly she missed his caring protection.

Time was running out.

Flashback 2 weeks before – another stakeout, another bad guy to chase, another case gone to shit in 3 seconds or less.

She ended up following a lead. Right place, wrong time.
Back up was en-route.

They spotted her, she had to move and they surrounded her. Many of them, happily toying with her, knowing they had a bit of time for this game.
In that moment she missed him the most – of all the annoying, dumb, careless things he did – he always had her back – and some truly stupid line to distract them, giving her the precious seconds to figure out a plan.

Gun drawn she stood mind in a whirl, searching for an idea, an out, a break in the ranks.

Time caught her up and they got bored – the bullets flew, one nicking her side, sending her sprawling. They were on her in a flash. Hands grabbed her throat, others grabbed her arms and legs pinning her as the hits landed – keeping her conscious, never breaking bones – but just barely. She coughed, sputtered, fighting for air, for any chance they might let go and she could gain some ground.

Giving in was not in her nature.

For a brief flash, as one of the goons held her throat closed, she pictured seeing him soon, and in that moment, she remembered him saying she would not be going there – she fought harder, struggling against their holds, bucking, kicking, trying to draw in more air to keep fighting.

Then someone grabbed her breast and her eyes sprung open.

Oh no! no no nononono….

She heard Dan’s voice yelling, cars, more people and a gun went off – pain seared through her chest - her world went black.

She had woken in the hospital expecting to see his face, that smug expression he used to cover his concern. Instead she found herself alone in the room with only the beeping of the monitors keeping her company.

A strange kind of despair settled on her, a clarity of sorts.

He was gone and she was alone.

She had left the hospital AMA when she realized they were watching her.

She recognized a face from the night, originally chalking it up to drugs and nightmares. On the 3rd night, she knew she wasn’t safe.

They were waiting for the right time.

Stalking her.

Cleaver enough to evade cameras, cops, surveillance – anything they set up to try and find these guys.

She’d sent Trixie on an extended vacation with her mom – oddly with Dan’s blessing. Who’d have
thought that day would ever come. She cynically thought she would have to ask Lucifer if Hell froze over.

She had to give these bad guys some credit – they were methodical and patient. She remembered one of them commenting that her protector was gone; how right hey were. Without Lucifer’s looming presence they knew time was on their side. They were toying with her.

That was what was slowly fraying her nerves.

The precinct was one of the few places she felt semi-safe. But she couldn’t live there. They’d taken her off all cases – considering how beat up she was – shot, beaten, could barely move – she wasn’t surprised. In reality she was surprised they were allowing her to work at all.

But cops get cops and work is a very welcome distraction.

Dan was beginning to call her paranoid – of all people she thought she could depend on him, at least a little bit. On the other hand, she knew how she sounded, and how bad she looked.

She hadn’t eaten – correction – she ate, nothing stayed down. Her frikken traitorous body was succumbing to the stress.

She would have asked Amenadiel, but watching Charlie was paramount. Too many knew there was a half angel baby since the demons roamed. He and Maze were his only protectors and Linda was doing all she could being a new mom and not letting events affect them.

She wanted Charlie safe and happy as much as they did.

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Ella and Dan stood offside in the dim light of the evidence room, out of Chloe’s line of sight, watching her fade.

“How do we help her?” Was Ella’s desperate plea, one Dan could only shake his head and shrug his shoulders, just as much at a loss as she was.

He had no idea how to help. He hadn’t been able to find any trace of them, or anything proving they were watching Chloe.

It was the worst kind of torture.

Seeing her after Lucifer disappeared – heart broken, grieving was hard. This – this was damn near impossible.

It was pissing him off. And if she was correct, that they were watching her, targeting her – there wasn’t much time left. Her weight had dropped, her wounds refused to heal without the strength in her body. She was so pale and so very weak.

“Where is Lucifer?” Ella’s whisper growl brought his back from his thoughts.

“I asked Amenadeil, he said Lucifer had to go back home for some family business. That there is no way to reach him. Amenadeil said he went home as well
and there were no phones.”

Ella shook her head, eyes never leaving Chloe's slumped form. “This is so not right,” she glowered at the ceiling.

Dan had to agree wholeheartedly. He’d followed her, stalked her himself. Chloe had put a quick end to that. Tearing his heart out by saying that one of them had to stay alive for Trixie. He’d sputtered, unable to respond as she drove off, leaving him standing on the sidewalk with a horrible sense of dread.

He knew she wouldn’t give up, but she was also the practical one of them. They were both cops – the risk was real. Too real at the moment.

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Chloe glanced at the time on her computer 12:13 – she was going to have to leave soon. People in the building were making sure she was gone by 1 am. Her fear cranked up a notch knowing she was going to have to leave the security of the building - alone. Dropping her head to her hand she tried to breathe deep – the pain in her chest stopping her short. She should know better really. There was no way to stop them. She was going to die soon - whether it was from them, or simply her stupid body shutting down – either way they would win and it pissed her off.

No seeing Trix grow up, no threatening her boyfriend with a gun (a scenario that brought her imagination a lot of glee), no seeing him again.
That thought caused a different kind of pain to cross her chest – though equally as painful.

Wasting time, she pretended to organise the small stack of files on her desk. The bullpen was strangely quiet.

Too quiet.

Her hackles rose, her heart rate skyrocketing.

She heard the footsteps a moment before their owner stepped into view around the corner.

Chloe stopped breathing.

He wasn’t sure what he was expecting – but this was well beyond anything he had dared to imagine.

Amenadeil’s message was terrifying, but seeing her, slumped, a waif of her usual self tore him. His pace sped up, covering the distance in a few strides all the while uttering a small prayer of protection.

Dropping to one knee he swiveled her chair around – his height allowing him them to be face to face.

Chloe blinked, not trusting who she was seeing until he dropped before her, his hands turning her to him. Reaching out a trembling hand she touched his face – expecting to find blank air, not the soft scrape of his stubble against her palm.

“I’m sorry,” he whispered leaning into her hand. “I just heard.”

“Lucifer….?” He’d never heard her voice in such a desperate tone – not even that night on his terrace when he left, breaking both their hearts.
“I’m here,’ it sounded penitent even in his mind. “And the Devil kneels for no one,” his attempted at humour, covering his own distress, fell flat.

Chloe could barely believe what her eyes were telling her. Never taking her eyes from his face, her hand slid from his face to his chest to find his heart hammering against his ribs.

She dissolved, reaching for him, feeling his arms wrap around her.

Hope sparked inside her for he first time in weeks as she hung onto him with her good arm.

Lucifer didn’t waste any time; their moment of privacy would disappear at any moment and no one needed to see her like this. Though a small secret part of him relished the feeling of her being putty against him.

Plucking her cell and keys from the desk he lifted her easily from the chair, carrying her as close as he dared as he strode from the bullpen.

His attention completely on the woman in his arms he didn’t notice their witnesses in the evidence lab – Ella practically bawling happy tears, while Dan stood stoic – unsure of what he felt.

Under the ash and the lies  
Something beautiful once here now dies  
And the tears burn my eyes  
As you sit there, all alone  
I just want to come home

But you see the shelter as the storm  
Holding wind to keep you warm  
You are everything to me, this is why I have to leave  
So sleep well my angel

~Sleep Well My Angel  
We Are The Fallen

Lucifer managed to make it out of the building with no one seeing them – more by dumb luck than anything divine he mused as he carefully reached for the handle of the Corvette.

She had relaxed completely against him and he didn’t want to jostle her. Her shallow breathing spoke of the pain she was hiding – how she was functioning at all was a mystery.

Reluctantly he placed her in the passenger seat. Her arm around his neck loosened, but didn’t let go. Not that he was complaining. He’d been working on a few things, plans and projects that once in place would allow him to come back to LA – his role would drastically change and his presence would not be needed on a full-time basis.

Leaning over her, he snapped the seat belt into place. With a small smile on her face, she quirked an eyebrow at him. “Buckle up for safety, Detective!” It was us usual, jovial tone.
She couldn’t contain the comment “especially with how you drive.” He responded with a huff walking around the car before dropping into the driver’s seat.

Chloe found herself relaxing into the fine leather. The night was warm with a touch of humidity without being hot or stifling. The wind as they drove helped her breathe, add the feel of his upper arm against hers. “How did you know?” She wasn’t sure she wanted to hear this answer.

Lucifer glanced at her briefly, taking in the relaxed expression under all the bruises and cuts. “Amenadeil got word to me. I came as soon as I could.”

Nodding, Chloe accepted is response, not wanting to ask the real question ?How long can you stay?

“Are you falling asleep on me?”

His teasing tone made her smile and truth be told….”yes, I believe I am.”

“Bloody Hell, I travel all this way and you fall asleep? And not actually on me, I might add.”

Chloe knew it was a mock affront, unsure of how much he knew, she laid herself open. “This is the first time I’ve felt truly safe.” She took a chance and glanced at him. His expression was sheer surprise mixed with that same look of complete adoration. How she’d missed that look. How much she treasured it.

“They knew you were gone, made a point of letting me know,” she tried to collect her thoughts as the fear spiked.

“Of course they knew! How could you not notice this?” He made a grand gesture towards himself. The snort that escaped her was actually really painful.

“They are watching you,” he surmised turning serious. “Watched you long enough to know who you spend your time with and where.”

Chloe nodded slowly, “they let me see them, but no one else. They are very good at what they do and I have no idea who they are, or why I’m their target.” The whole thing was so frustrating.

“What has Maze uncovered?” Of course, he would know Maze had been protecting her – or trying to.

“Very little,” that caught his attention. “She’s doing what she can, but protecting Charlie is a full-time job at the moment.” She didn’t like the expression on his face, it mirrored her own feelings.

She gets it – she really does, but right now, in the middle of all this, she has never felt so alone, so broken. So selfish in her need that cannot be met by those close to her.

He reached one long arm out, his hand big enough to cover both of hers where they lay against her belly. “Chloe…” Hearing him say her name, a sob escaped, completely unbidden. “Do you want me to leave?” That shocked her, then she realised..

“No! That was joy. It’s so rare for you to say my name, but when you do…” she was losing it, too tired, too weak, too happy to see him to control her emotions. She didn’t dare look at him, it was too much. “How are you?” she diverted instead.

“How are you?” his turn to be surprised. And really, quite touched. “You know,” he turned to face her at a red light, his fingers lacing with hers against her belly. “No one’s really asked me that before.” She
wasn’t surprised by that revelation – instead it saddened her. “In all honesty, being in Hell was uncomplicated. Simple and somewhat boring after being here.” The light changed and he drove on smoothly – the Vette was a much better decision than her clunky Dodge. “I’ve been working on a project,” she turned her head sharply, hope sparking anew. “Once complete, I’ll be able to stay, only going back periodically to make sure things are running smoothly.” Relief caused her to sag even further into the seat. “Like that idea, do you?” He was half laughing as she nodded, not trusting the catch in her throat.

They drove into the parking lot of the complex and he found a spot close to the doors. Hopping out he quickly strode around the car, helping her out. She was very unsteady and on high guard. It was disturbing to watch her struggle – she’d always been such a force to reckon with.

Halfway to the building she froze, stopping short, her breath catching. If he hadn’t been paying such close attention to her, he would have walked straight into her.

Looking up, he caught the movement of the corner of his eye – just barely saw the figure dart around the corner, fading into the dark. He made a motion to chase after the culprit – Chloe’s hand on his arm stopped him. Looking at her, at the barely concealed terror, he knew he couldn’t leave her. Plus, the would-be assailant might not have been alone.

“That was one of them?” she nodded practically clinging to his arm. “You’re safe with me.” It was spoken as a fact.

“I know – I’ve always known. Just lingering PTSD I think.”

“Come on, let’s get you inside and we’ll see if we can discover anything in the morning.”

Once inside they settled quickly on the couch, his long legs out in front of him on the coffee table as she curled into his side, her head on his chest, listening to his heart beat, feeling his warmth, his slowing breaths as he relaxed fully.

“Thank you,” she whispered, wrapped in his arms, surrounded by his warmth.

“Irony,” he cynically chuckled. “That you feel safe with the Devil.”

Chloe levered herself slightly off him, forcing him to look at her. “Devil you may be, evil you are not!” she sternly informed him. “The fact that you are here when I need you is testament to that,” she hated feeling weak, needy – but with him, it was easy to be herself, to be honest with her needs.

“You could have ignored Amenadeil’s message.”

Lucifer shook his head slowly, his eyes not leaving hers. “No, I could not. Not when it comes to you.” He cupped her tear stained cheek in his palm, caressing with his thumb.

“I woke up alone in that hospital,” she closed her eyes at the horrible memory, taking in the feel of his hand against her face. Just as she remembered it. “I expected to see you – your crazy lines about how long I was out.”

“That was brilliant,” he interrupted her, smiling at his own shenanigans.

“I will do my best to make sure you don’t wake up alone anymore.” She expected to hear some kind of innuendo – instead she found promise in the new truth between them. “Shall I take you up to bed
then?” this time he raised a suggestive eyebrow, his gaze traveling down her body.

She rolled her eyes at him, “right, like A – I’m so far from feeling attractive, amorous or otherwise with two gunshot wounds, and bruises and B – I don’t think I could until these heal.”

With a knowing smile he leaned in, brushing a soft kiss across her lips – it was so unexpected, so incredibly tender her body reacted without her consent. Not that she hadn’t dreamed of being with him a hundred times since that night on the terrace.

“Not fair,” she grumbled as he chuckled, helping her stand leading her to the bedroom.

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The noise downstairs started her awake. Heart pounding, she tried to get her breathing under control while listening for who, or what might have made the noise.

“No harm will come to you,” his voice, barely audible at her shoulder immediately calmed her. Lucifer was there, he was alert, and he’d heard it too.

He slipped from the bed in total silence – she knew the bed creaked horribly, the floor too, but if she hadn’t known he was there, she would not have been able to detect his movement.

Celestial being… right. She almost forgot.

At the top of the landing he watched the two tear the living room area apart – quiet enough – but not so that he couldn’t hear them.

“What the fuck are we doing here?” one of the intruders bitched in just above a whisper. “We know the bitch doesn’t have anything here.”

Interesting… Lucifer thought to himself. “It’s not about finding shit, it’s about terrorizing. Which in my opinion is fun in it’s own rights.” The second responded, giving him a little bit more insight.

“Speaking of fun – she’s up there alone, no one’s watching her. I got a feel of a nice firm boob before.”

Lucifer’s eyes flashed red – ‘not above rape for fun, eh…. Let’s have some fun then.’ With a nasty grin Lucifer let his presence be known, expanding his aura.

Both men below froze, feeling, but not seeing, becoming increasingly agitated as their instincts took over. They exchanged panicked looks before hurrying out of the apartment, leaving the door ajar in their rush.

Not concerned about an unlocked door, Lucifer returned to the bedroom, finding her fully awake sitting up, waiting.

“They’re gone. Heard them say this is more about scaring you than anything else. They have a lot to learn about sneaking about and menacing people. Amateurs,” he groused climbing back into bed beside her.

Chloe couldn’t believe the familiarity that brought a sense of relief she didn’t think she’d feel again. She actually caught herself chuckling. At his semi affronted look, she tipped her head to his bare
shoulder. “I really have missed you.”

“If I’d known it was this easy to get into your bed….”

“Go back to sleep, Lucifer.”
I can't go on living this way
And I can't go back the way I came
Shamed of this fear that I will never find
A way to heal my soul
And I will wander 'til the end of time
Half a life without you

~My Heart Is Broken
Evanescence

Chapter 2

Chloe awoke to a stream of sunlight across her eyes. Breathing slowly, she remained still, cherishing the feel of Lucifer spooned around her, his bare chest against her back, his right arm holding her snug to him. Reality would be upon them soon enough – she’d have to call for a team to go through her apartment, looking for any trace – though she highly doubted they would find anything. Hired goons they may be, careless they were not.

The only good thing is that whoever had spotted her getting out of the car last night didn’t put two and two together to acknowledge it was Lucifer with her.

That could be an advantage…. but keeping Lucifer hidden was not a possibility, not with his dramatic personality.

“Good morning, Detective,” the answering eyeroll at his too cheery demeanor was automatic as she rolled over towards him. The smile was genuine as he propped himself up on his elbow, his eyes traveling down her face, to her chest – strangely there was nothing overt about his gaze – more concerned - taking in the injuries, no longer strategically hidden by bulky clothes, showing clearly in the daylight. The strappy green tank top pajama set she had changed into didn’t hide the bruises along her throat, nor the bandages where the bullet had gone through her shoulder.

His look changed quickly to deep seeded concern and something else she couldn’t name. His hand shifted from where it lay under her rib-cage, his fingers grazing over the bandage covering the wound on her left shoulder, almost tickling until his palm slid down, grazing the side of her breast causing her breath to catch. He tugged at her top, lifting it to just below her breasts, the multitude of bruises still deeply black, only a few fading to purple. Cuts stood out among the bruises – most of the wounds were along her ribs where they had kicked at her with their boots. The bandage low on her side was stark white against black.

Something caught his eye and he quickly pulled one edge of the top up further revealing the side and bottom of her left breast – where the perfectly shaped finger marks showed clear on her skin.

His eyes shot to hers with barely hinged terror.

Chloe shook her head, voice thick, “they never got the chance. Cavalry arrived, literally, in the nick of time.”

With both her arms free, she cupped his face between her palms, feeling a rush of tenderness. No one had ever looked at her like this.

His lips slanted across hers. Her shirt rode up as he moved over her, her bare breast pressing into his
bare chest. Aching for him to deepen the kiss, she arched up against him.

Blinding white pain seared through her, halting all thought.

As the pain subsided, she opened her eyes to find him laughing quietly above her. “Perhaps you are correct - we should hold off until you are healed more.”

“You are such an ass,” she held onto his shoulders grounding herself, shaking her head as her breathing returned to normal.

**

He was standing at the opposite side of the bed, his back to her, half dressed, shrugging into his indigo dress shirt as she exited the bathroom a short time later, showered and dressed for the day.

“Where is the small human? She’s strangely absent.” He hadn’t turned around when he heard her step into the room.

Touched beyond measure that he would ask about her, “that reminds me, I meant to ask you,” he turned towards her as she spoke, buttoning the shirt from the bottom to top. “By any chance, about a week ago, did Hell happen to freeze over?” Chloe managed to ask the question as she might ask how the weather was going to be.

Lucifer paused half way up the shirt, taken by surprise he barked out a laugh. “Not that I had noticed, no. Why?” He quirked an eyebrow at her, eyes dancing.

“Trixie is with my mom, we sent her,” she used her fingers in an exaggerated air quote, “on an extended vacation. Dan not only approved; he sent his blessing. I was sure Hell had frozen over for him to be happy that Trixie was with my mom.”

“You sent her off to be safe?” it wasn’t really a question he was asking. Chloe nodded, her eyes dropping to the carpet as the lump formed in her chest again. He rounded the bed, placing his hands on her shoulders, tipping his head as to catch her eyes. “When will the child return?”

“When I call my mother and ask her to bring her home. She’s on this massive tour with a bunch of old stars, rehashing the ‘good ole days’ and increasing residual income. “ Chloe chuckled, “not that mom really needs it, but she’s horrible to be around when she’s bored.”

“Call her back to your side.” Lucifer stepped away, moving faster now, his mind obviously working through a plan.

“I can’t,” her voice cracked, startling him.

“Why ever not?” he stared at her clearly confused by her refusal.

“Because I can’t protect her – she’s not…. safe until we figure this out.”

“We?” the smile, the affection, the downright glee was evident in his voice.

“Isn’t that the point? Why you’re here?” Why was she so shy asking him? Christ, he just flew back from Hell to help her. “We’ve always been stronger together. I’ve believed that for a long time.”

Tipping her head, she met his gaze levelly. “I think you do too.”

“I do. Have done for awhile… well, more like once Dr. Linda kicked my arse until I figured it out.”

“I’m sure she’ll be more than happy to do more ass kicking once she realises you’re back.”
“There’s a long line up, I’m sure.” He paused tucking in his shirt, stepping quickly back into her personal space, leaning in as close as he could. “And what about you, is that your desire?”

Chloe laughed, leaning towards him, as if trapped by his mojo, hating feeling this needy, but cherishing the time with him. “Nope. No ass kicking desired here.” She purposely emphasized ‘desired’

“Really now? Come on then….” knowing the game was afoot.

She pulled away, obliterating the effect. “Uhhuh – you’re not getting off that easily.”

“As a matter of fact, I could get off…”

“I’m sorry I opened my mouth!” Chloe raised her good arm, walking out of the room before he could finish his sentence.

Chloe walked down the stairs snuggling the brace Velcro over her shoulder and around her ribs, surveying the damage. A few things tossed aside, drawers pulled out, papers littered the floor, nothing broken – thankfully. It wouldn’t take too much to clean up.

It struck her at that moment, that with the knowledge that someone had been outside, then inside her home – she had slept. Like really slept. It was a long way from 8 hours, but even the 3 or 4 hours was probably more sleep than she’d had in the past few weeks combined.

Her head felt clearer, like she could think a bit more.

She looked longingly at the kitchen.

“Does this mean you finally wish to eat?” Lucifer jogged down the stairs behind her.

“I have been eating,” she quickly corrected him. “Just nothing has been staying down.” It was becoming a real pain in the ass. She knew she had to eat; her body missed that memo.

“I can rectify that.”

“Lucifer wait,” she reached out to stop him, missing him entirely as he scooted by. “We have to wait for the team to get here and clear the place.”

“The miscreants didn’t touch the kitchen area and you require sustenance,” he continued into the kitchen, opening a few cupboards, looking to see what she had available. “Right, pancakes it is. Simple and easy to keep down.”

Whirlwind Lucifer had returned – and she did have to eat – and his pancakes were so good. Admitting defeat, she pulled out a bar-stool and watched him as he cooked.

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After breakfast, and Lucifer cleaning up to such a degree no one would know anything had been touched since the break in – who knew he could clean so neatly?? They carefully walked around the building multiple times, searching for any trace of the intruders – of either the man watching as she
arrived home, or the two Lucifer saw inside her apartment. They searched for anything - a scuff, a shoe print - but ground was dry enough to not leave a trace.

Chloe shook her head as she realised that even their own paths had left no trace around the property either.

Contacting her building management, she easily got the CCTV footage – especially after they got a look at her. Granted her building’s super had always been kind to her – but seeing someone beaten to a pulp tends to inspire others to help. She asked them to send the footage to her work email. It would be easier to access and share.

Lucifer drove her back to the precinct before heading to the penthouse for a change and do whatever it is he does that she really doesn’t want to know about.

Now she had a lead, something to chase, to follow….. and hope - she finally had hope again.

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20 minutes later, just as Chloe and Ella began going over the footage, Lucifer waltzed in as if it were a normal day, greeting people who were shocked to see him - most greeted him with open delight, eagerly welcoming him back.

Lucifer barely stepped into the lab before Ella jumped at him - a natural hugger to begin with - this was so much more. He barely kept his footing as she slammed against him, arms tight around his middle. “Thank God you’re back!!” He didn’t have a chance to make his usual remarks about the use of his father’s name before she continued her rant, “don’t you ever do that again! No more disappearing act. Promise me!!” Ella leaned back enough to point a very stern finger up at him. The sight was extremely humorous - tiny fireball Ella admonishing the Devil who stood head and shoulders over her. Chloe sat on one of the stools, elbow on the table, head cradled in her hand in front of the computer with the screen paused, smiling fondly, inwardly laughing her ass off at the exchange.

“Scouts honour, Miss Lopez. I will not disappear again. “ He turned to Chloe, “a little help here, Detective.”

“Nope, you made your bed…. Wait, bad wording. “ She was going to have to remember to filter her phrases again.

Chuckling, Ella gave his middle one last squeeze before grabbing his sleeve and dragging him over to their workstation.

3 hours later, with very sore and tired eyes, Chloe was about to give up. None of the footage showed so much as a shadow. Anyone coming or going was easily cataloged and followed. Cars came and went, people got in and out – easy to trace, easy to identify. With a heavy sigh – which she immediately regretted as her chest complained, she went to close the laptop. Lucifer’s hand on hers on top of the screen stopped her.
“Let me call Maze, if anyone can make heads or tails of this, she can.”

Chloe shook her head, “I won’t call her away from Charlie.”

“But I will.” Lucifer already typed out the text and hit send.

“How can she help? There’s nothing.” That note of frustration with a tinge of helplessness crept back into her voice.

“You might be surprised at what my little demon can accomplish.” His voice had such certainty Chloe couldn’t refute.

Chloe settled back to watching the footage while Lucifer hunkered down in a nearby chair to wait playing on his phone.

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“Chloe?” Lucifer called out a short time later. Ella’s head snapped towards where Lucifer was sitting across the room in the chair his attention solely focused on the woman sitting in the centre of the lab. She had never heard him use her given name before. Realising something was very wrong, she turned towards Chloe to see her swaying on the stool, eyes mostly closed, obviously about to fade out of consciousness and fighting to stay lucid.

He was beside her in an instant – almost as if he flew to her side. Chloe’s shoulder against his stomach, the side of her head against his chest he steadied her, keeping her from toppling to the floor.

“I dunno what’s wrong,” her words were slurred, barely above a whisper.

“Miss Lopez, by any chance to you have a container of that orange juice you usually carry with you?”

After a moment of shock that he knew what her standard lunch was, Ella jumped into action, “yeah! I do.” Her cooler was beside the desk, with her purse. As fast as she could, she grabbed the small bottle and a straw, darting across the room to hand to Lucifer, who was outwardly patiently waiting. Something told her reality was a totally different story.

Lucifer opened the bottle, holding Chloe close with one arm, he held the bottle within her reach with the other, making sure she could sip from the straw. “Slowly, Love,” he cautioned, “you don’t want it to hit your stomach and return.”

Chloe’s violently shaking hand would have spilled the drink, with his help, she managed a small sip, and then another, all with is guidance. Ella had never seen anything like this – she knew there was something between them, having seen just how badly Decker grieved when he left confirmed her suspicions. But this – this was intimate on a totally different level. She desperately wanted someone to care for her that way.

“Better?” he asked. Chloe nodded as her eyes began to focus again and her breathing returned to normal. She remained close to him for another moment as her equilibrium returned and she realised where she was and how he was holding her.

“I owe you an orange juice,” Chloe managed to croak out, still slowly sipping the drink.

“Nu uh – how about you promise not to do that again and we call it even.” How many crime scenes had they seen – and that was one of the most terrifying things Ella had ever witnessed.
Ella, who had been called away for a new investigation shortly after Chloe’s misadventure with unconsciousness, returned with her arms full. Lucifer – ever the gentleman stood to help relieve her of the most precariously balanced of her load as he held the lab door for her.

Sorting the findings on the table, Ella shook her head. “Another waste – not only young and handsome, but a rich philanthropist to boot.”

“Only the good die young.” Chloe deadpanned continuing to go over footage sipping coffee.

“Yup, I’m gonna live forever,” Ella chuckled not missing a beat. “Heaven doesn't want me and Hell's afraid I’ll take over.”

Chloe almost snorted her coffee thru her nose.

“The position is available actually.” Lucifer informed her not taking his eyes off his phone.

The visual of petite Ella ruling hell did little to help her coffee snorting issue.

The door burst open surprising them all, an explosion of Maze striding in, targeting Lucifer. “You are such a fucking asshole,” Maze practically jumped into Lucifer's arms, grabbing onto him in a fierce embrace.

‘Eloquent as always, Mazikeen,” his voice was tender as he held her, feeling her tremble, he wrapped his arms further around her.

Chloe had forgotten they had been lovers for millennia. Yet he hadn't told her he was going back. She was the only one who had spoken to Lucifer that night.

Maze shoved away from him – showing that level of care still equated to weakness to her. "Decker, you look like shit. You need to eat more."

“Thanks,” speaking of Maze’s inability to show caring. “At least today's breakfast stayed down.”

"A little Devil's secret." Lucifer threw in with a little too much delight. Maze's laughter clued Chloe in - all the types of tortures...food must have been in there somewhere.

“Pancakes were really good,” Chloe groused, “and I refuse to ask!"

“So, what are we looking at?” Maze was suddenly all business. Chloe knew she might not have a lot of time, that Maze might get called away at any moment.

“Here,” Chloe turned the laptop towards Maze. “This is what we have – maybe you can see
something," Maze sat beside her on another stool as Chloe explained the events of the night before.

Chloe glanced over the top of the screen towards Lucifer who had taken a seat back in the chair, phone neglected in his hand, watching them with such a look of longing, of fondness. This is where he belonged, it felt right – all of them together, working, solving, catching.

**

Giving Ella some privacy, and time to work without Lucifer interrupting with inane comments and over protectiveness, Chloe moved back to her desk to finish some of the ‘work’ she had been processing the night before. Lucifer huffed, clearly bored plopped into a chair at the end of her desk, back to playing on his phone and generally being his usual irritating self.

How she had missed this – the eyerolling antics, the inappropriate comments – and now that she knew, it was actually a fun game, how much truth he actually spoke and how no one believed a word. He must have thought her pretty stupid. “Lois Lane Syndrome” they called it – to not see what is clearly in front of your face. Or in this case, punching her in the face and she still ignored it.

***

Dan and the team returned early afternoon. Maze had left to do a sweep of her own, not trusting the humans. Chloe downright laughed as Maze strode out.

“Nada,” Dan stopped in front of her desk. “Have no idea how these bastards do it. No trace, no prints, no shoe marks. If it hadn’t been for the mess, we wouldn’t be able to tell anyone was there.” Frustration ran deep. “Any luck with the surveillance?”

Chloe shook her head, “nothing there either. Not even a shadow.”

“Are you sure you saw something?” Dan asked Lucifer with suspicion.

Chloe watched as Lucifer bristled and stepped in before the war started, really kind of pissed off that Dan would suggest such a thing. Staring her ex down, “Dan, I sat at this desk last night coming to terms with the fact that I was going to die. Soon." She put up a hand, stopping whatever he was going to say. "We both know that if Lucifer hadn't been there last night, at best," her words sounded bitter even to her ears, "it would have been rape." Dan's eyebrows shot straight up. – had he really not considered this?

"You heard them speaking then?" Lucifer asked quietly, amased at how astute she really was.

Chloe shook her head turning briefly to the man standing at her side. “No, I didn't hear anything while you were in the hallway. But I've been a cop long enough. I'm not physically strong enough to fight them right now. Had I been alone, and knowing that asshole's propensity for grabbing my throat - I most likely wouldn't have survived the night." She turned pointedly to Dan. "So whatever bullshit cock fight you thrive off of - knock it off." Her tolerance for childish behaviour was reaching
its limit. "In less than 12 hours, Lucifer has not only seen them, he's guarded over me. There is nothing else that needs to be said." She stood, leaving Dan agape.

In a low voice, leaning towards Dan, Lucifer let his feelings be known. "For someone who once threatened me to guard the mother of his child, you certainly have fallen short in that, and many other aspects." Lucifer didn’t wait for a reaction, he turned to follow Chloe.

Chloe limped her way towards the breakroom fighting the horrible feeling of despair and betrayal that was surrounding her again. She stopped at one of the tables. Leaning over it with her good arm braced to keep her upright.

"So, you've given up then?" Lucifer stood in the doorway radiating disapproval.

"I had, but it wasn't a conscious decision." Christ she could barely breathe.

The silence stretched between them, painful in its length.

“I hate feeling like this.” Chloe barely choked out, desperately wanting Lucifer to understand. “So useless, needy and frikken selfish,” she slowly admitted. It was so hard to breathe, so hard to find the strength to push through.

He stepped closer, reaching to loosen the brace holding her arm strapped to her ribs - how the hell did he know what she needed when she didn't? He remained close, speaking quietly, "You once stood by my side when I was struggling, when I couldn't control....." his voice trailed off in the memory. “In that moment, when you remained with me, despite all - that was the moment when I knew - truly knew we can do anything together. Let me help you.”

"I don't know how," she fought the tears – sick to death of them, working, wanting to gain strength from him.

"Did I not say something similar to you?" Chloe half laughed, half sobbed remembering that moment, the intimacy of it. "You need to rest and heal."

Chloe finally turned to him, her body almost touching his, welcoming his warmth. “You make it sound so simple.”

He scoffed, “we both know it’s not. We also know we can do this; we will figure this out, and then we have other matters to pursue.”

Chloe smiled reaching her good arm to rest her hand on his bicep, “I want that as must as you do.” Needing to break the spell, she continued in a more joking light. "Can anything between us be simple?"

“Where is the fun in that?” there was that delicious twinkle. The one that shot straight to her heart…. And other places.
Chapter Notes

Sorry for the wait and a short chapter. There is a lot in the works of this story which is taking on a life of its own!

Lucifer's piano playing inspired by Luna by Brunuhville

Thank you to everyone who has commented/enjoyed this story. This is one of the more fun fics I've written in a long time.

As much as I'd like
The past not to exist
It still does
And as much as I'd like
To feel like I belong here
I'm just as scared as you

I have nothing left
And all I feel is this cruel wanting
We've been falling for all this time
And now I'm lost in paradise

~Lost In Paradise

Evanescence

Chloe found herself sitting very comfortably at the end of the long couch in Lucifer’s penthouse. He was at the piano, playing something beautiful and dramatic that she could listen to forever. On the table beside her was a small glass of very nice, and very expensive red wine. The glass doors were open letting in the cooler night breeze, the fireplaces were on and the lights were set to dim. The acoustics were incredible, causing a wonderful echo.

The whole ambiance radiated romance.
Having rid herself of the irritating brace, she let her head tip back, resting on the back cushions. She found herself strangely emotional, tears stinging her eyes as she closed them, feeling such gratitude and appreciation for where she was and who she was with.

Lucifer had driven back to her apartment helping her pack and lock up. She was sure there was a large dose of over-protectiveness mixed in as he never let her out of his sight. There would be surveillance placed around her building, monitoring, but whoever these guys were, they were too smart for that. Lucifer had then driven them to Lux, already having set new security parameters – easily blaming it on the recent break ins at other local clubs, the cover story stood. He also set a pass-code for the elevator so no one could unexpectedly show up in the penthouse anymore.

“Immortal,” he casually pointed out as explanation as to why one was never set. “I’d not felt the need to hold the adventures at bay.” It did make perfect sense. Until now.

The music ended and she felt the couch dip beside her as he joined her. She turned her head towards him.

“How can I help?” his elbow was braced on the back beside her head, his body angled towards her. He’d lain his suit jacket on the piano when they’d arrived; set her bags by the bed before taking off his cuff-links and rolling up the sleeves. He’d undone the top few buttons of the shirt before sitting to play – the way he was sitting now gave her a clear view of the top of his chest.

Something stirred within her, something feminine she was sure she’d lost a long time ago. “You have helped, you still are.” She shook her head, trying understand the mixed-up jumble of what she was feeling. “I don’t know how to thank you,“ she placed her hand on his forearm resting in his lap, stopping whatever he was about to say – she was pretty sure he was going to say something along the lines of how ridiculous thanking him was. “I’m feeling very grateful, and blessed right now.”

He let out a disbelieving breath before standing, heading back towards the piano – probably to grab the half full tumbler still sitting on top, avoiding her current train of thought.

“Lucif…..” she stopped herself, completely unsure how to continue, feeling as if she had no right to ask anything more of him. He turned back, meeting her eyes, looking just as muddled as she felt. Without a word, he returned to sit, closer this time. Giving her a small insight to how he too was feeling.
Chloe couldn’t help herself, she reached for him, her arms sliding around his shoulders, ignoring the twinge from her wound, she let her hands rest under the collar of his shirt. In a moment of total honesty, “I don’t want to die without having been with you.”

She felt him start, completely taken aback, “I won’t let you die. I won’t allow it.” Lucifer moved closer, letting her draw him in, changing his position so he could face her; hold her without straining her arm.

“I meant what I said that night on the balcony,” Chloe let her forehead rest against his. The pain of that night was still fresh in her mind, the knowledge he had to leave, desperately hoping there was another way – knowing there was not. Needing him to know how she truly felt before he left. “I do love you.”

His breath caught, his hands cupped her face, as he had done before, so incredibly gentle. “And I, you.” She closed her eyes, letting his words sink in. “Despite what you may be thinking, you are not the only one hanging by a thread.” Her eyes popped open, finding him moving closer, his eyes drifting from hers down to her lips.

His kiss was soft, gentle, without heat. She ached for that heat, for his passion. Her fingers curled into his hair at the nape of his neck, feeling his strength. He pulled away without deepening the kiss and far too soon for her liking. Settling back, he kept his forehead against hers. “When I make love to you,” he began slowly, surprised by his own admission, “and it will be a first for me as well – you will be healthy and strong enough. No more pitiful screeches of pain.” A little mischief snuck into his voice, “any pain caused will be a totally different kind of pain.”

“You are a horrible tease.” Chloe had to roll her eyes, even as the thought enticed her.

“You are enjoying every minute of it.”

Chloe shook her head, refusing to let go, not wanting to lose the intimacy. “No, I want you to kiss me. Really kiss me.”

He chuckled, “all in due time, and you will find it was worth the wait.” She had to laugh too as he helped her stand, leading her towards the bedroom area. “Get changed, I’m going to lock up – there will be no pesky visitors tonight.”
The morning found her weaker, even with food and almost a full night’s sleep. She sat on the couch near the piano, elbows on her knees, struggling to figure out why – she should be healing, even if very slowly. They were semi-arguing as he paced – he wanted to march her back to the hospital, she wanted time.

A flash of grey and black caught her eyes on the balcony, startling her.

Lucifer stopped near to her, for a moment looking somewhat shocked and a smile touched his lips before suddenly disappearing. He stood tall, tense, as if ready for a major battle. “Azrael,” his voice dropped an octave greeting their guest.

Azrael…. Azrael…. Angel Of Death.

*Oh shit.*

Chloe’s head snapped up to Lucifer’s impressive form standing guard over her.

The power and sheer fury radiating off Lucifer was tangible – if she didn’t know him, it would be downright terrifying.

Chloe looked from him to Azrael as she stepped into the common area. Terror gripped her even as he stepped between them.

Azrael seemed to finally catch on, her expression changing to one of semi panic. “Wait, Lu, No! It’s not what you think.” Her hands came up in front of her body in surrender. “Everyone knows not to touch your queen.”

Queen?!?!? Chloe’s eyes snapped back to Lucifer, who was still on high guard.

“Then why are you here?” he glanced at her sitting form beside and just behind where he was standing before returning his full attention to his sister.
“Look,” Azrael stopped a few steps away from the pair, staring directly at her big brother who completely dwarfed her, “we all know something bad is going on.” She glanced down toward Chloe, concern and confusion written all over the smaller angel. “I want to see if I can help.”

Lucifer’s stance relaxed substantially. “And what exactly are you proposing?”

“May I?” she gestured to Chloe.

Lucifer turned his head to the woman sitting at the end of the couch, at a total loss.

After a moment of unspoken communication, gauging Lucifer’s reaction, Chloe made her decision. “If you trust her, then I do.” Lucifer nodded towards Chloe, and then his sister.

“Wow,” it was a soft, truly amazed sound that came from the small angel as she stepped into both of their personal spaces, crouching down in front of Chloe, holding her hands open, palm up on her knees waiting for Chloe to take them.

It took everything Chloe had to move to place her hands in Azrael’s warm ones. As soon as she did, a lot of things clicked into place. “You’re Ella’s ghost!” came blurring out.

Lucifer barked out a laugh - an honest, open, proud laugh.

“I have no idea how you pieced that together, but I reiterate – Wow.” Azrael shook her head in amazement. Looking over her shoulder she spoke to her brother. “Lu, I dunno how you found this one, but it sure is nice to meet your match.”

“Ella described you in one of our conversations.” Chloe explained simply, finding herself relaxing, realising more and more that what was written in the literature, was in reality a long way from the people she was getting to know. “You and I are going to have to talk after all this,” there was a conspiratorial note to her voice.

“No, you shall not!” Lucifer actually looked scared.
“Wait until I tell you how we used to prank Amenedeil!” Azrael continued as if Lucifer hadn’t spoken. She then turned serious – which was a bit terrifying in Chloe’s books. “I need to look at you – like really look. Can you keep eye contact?”

Azrael leaned in closer, holding Chloe’s wrists, both of them noticing Lucifer’s shifting stance, ready to intervene. “Chill bro, I promised I won’t hurt her.”

Chloe almost broke eye contact as a chuckle escaped her. “You’ve been told.” It was a good distraction from what was happening.

“Well, it’s not the first time I’ve been told off by a woman.” He didn’t move from where he was standing, and as much as Chloe hated to admit it, she found comfort in his presence.

“Ohhhhhhhhh,” the angel’s voice snapped Chloe out of whatever trance she was in.

“’Oh’ what? Come on then?” Lucifer had crouched down beside his sister, looking expectantly, and with very little patience.

Azrael backed away, “you need to look at her.”

“I bloody well am looking at her.”

“No, Lu – look at her.”

Comprehension dawned on him and he dropped to one knee at Chloe’s feet. Taking her hands from Azrael’s he made sure they were eye level. “I need to…..,” he seemed to be at a loss to explain.

“I’m not afraid of you.” It was a simple, completely honest statement that strengthened his resolve.

“I need my Devil eyes to see,” he finally explained as if ashamed.

That was easy. “Okay, “ Chloe responded as if he’d asked her to pass the butter.
Lucifer shook his head, closing his eyes in absolute amazement. “You really do astound and confound me.”

“Huh,” Chloe nodded at him contemplating, as she had done a thousand times. “Payback’s a bitch.” Why she was feeling playful at this moment was beyond her.

It was Azrael’s turn to laugh. Stretching up on his knee, he reached behind Chloe’s head, bringing her closer for a quick kiss before settling back on his heel. Taking both her hands back into his, in a blink his eyes turned flaming red. Chloe found herself drawn into his gaze. It was him, his soul, his aura, the flames seemed to match his passion. The more she looked, really looked, the more she saw him, not the terror others saw, not the terror she first saw. If only she had had the chance to look at him like this in the beginning. Could she have saved them both from so much hurt? Saved them from so much wasted time – time they didn’t have.

“I see it,” Lucifer whispered, “but how?” his eyes changed back to their deep brown. Still him, another version, but still him.

“You know how, and why.” Azrael was at his shoulder, moving to sit beside Chloe on the edge of the couch. Worry was not strong enough of a word to describe the look he tossed at the smaller angel. “I can get rid of it.” She blurted out.

“That’s not possible,” he immediately refuted.

“It is – but it’s very rarely done.” Azrael pursed her lips together. “And it’s not pleasant.”

Chloe looked between them her fear ratcheting up again. “What is it? Can someone tell me what’s going on?”

Azrael spoke, “it’s an…” she paused, hands moving through the air, obviously trying to find a way to explain whatever they were talking about. “It’s an otherworldly thing. If I don’t remove it, it will continue to destroy you.” She took a deep breath, not comfortable. “Removing it will be really painful.” She added, almost apologetically, “it’s the only way I can save your life.”

Lucifer looked scared out of his wits, yet determined. She’d never seen him like this. “So, what do I need to do?” Chloe turned back to Azrael.
“I just need you to sit still so I can get a hold of it – not something I can really explain, but I can do fairly quickly.”

Lucifer had remained crouched on his knee, he moved both her hands, placing them on his forearms. “Hang onto me.” Chloe nodded, shaking, terrified, closing her eyes, trusting.

The pain wasn’t really pain to start, more like someone had reached inside her chest and was tugging at her innards. That tug became a pull, which turned into ripping.

Her fingers dug into his arms as she held on for dear life.

She could hear herself screaming.

“I got it! I got it!!” And then it was done, Azrael was gone in a flash of wind.

She collapsed boneless against him, barely able to breathe, crying hysterically, unable to control any of her reactions.

“Breathe, Love – it will pass in a moment.” Chloe clung to his voice, fighting to breathe normally.

Regaining some control, she sat up, pushing her hair back, wiping at the tears. Glancing at him she caught his eyes.

His lips slanted across hers, the force opening her mouth to him. Tasting his kiss for the first time, she responded with equal fervour, clinging to him, her hand on his cheek feeling his jaw work as he kissed her.

She groaned as he pulled away, both of them panting.

“I’m sorry,” his eyes closed as he held on.
“You better not be apologising for that kiss.” Chloe practically growled at him.

“What!? No! Never.” He took her face in his palms, looking her over, from her red eyes, to her tear stained cheeks, to her swollen lips from the power of their kiss.

“Good, ‘cause it’s about damn time you kissed me like that.” She took a deep breath, not sure what had her more befuddled – Azrael’s actions, or the kiss. Jesus that was a kiss. Finally starting to think again, “What was that thing?”

Lucifer moved to sit beside her before his knees went numb, wrapping an arm around her, encouraging her to rest her head against his shoulder. “It’s a parasite for lack of a better description. Typically, we don’t involve ourselves with them. They are attracted to weak bodies. Some are tossed aside by the host’s immune system, some remain, feeding off the host until the end.”

Chloe nodded – strange and creepy, but reasonable. “So those who get sick and then just fade away - those are usually the parasite?”

“If their bodies are not strong enough to fight them off, then yes.”

“And I’ve been stressed and weak for more than long enough.” Chloe’s mind was in a whirl – that was too close. “Holy shit. Wow.” She remained tucked into his arms, recovering, contemplating.

“So, Queen?” she asked a short time later. “How is that going to work?”

She heard his snort through his chest where her cheek remained tucked against him. “I haven’t the foggiest.” She nodded somehow not surprised and suddenly very tired.
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the delay and a short chapter. This story is growing in leaps and bounds in the background.

Hope to post in a more timely fashion!

xoxox
tomy

Yeah, I wanted to play tough,
thought I could do all this on my own
But even Superwoman sometimes needed Superman's soul
~Helium
Sia

Chloe awoke with no recollection of how she got into bed. On the other hand, she felt very relaxed and very comfortable. The light behind the curtains told her the sun was setting – bright orange snakes of light across the sky.

She could hear Lucifer on the phone in the next room – quiet enough that she couldn’t make out what he was saying, or who he was talking to.

She rolled over, warm between the silk sheets, as her mind became more alert. Her brow furrowed, she was clad only in her bra and underwear. Had she changed? She couldn’t remember much after Azrael left her recovering in a heap against him on the couch.

Lucifer, clad in his usual nighttime attire of his red pajama pants and black housecoat peeked around the corner, smiling brightly at her, “ah, you’re awake.”

“How did I get here? How did I get undressed? What time is it?” her brain was trying to piece the timeline together with zero success.

“Each question in order,” he climbed up the stairs as he spoke, approaching her still lying flat form. “
I carried you when you refused to wake and my arm fell asleep.”

Okay, fair enough, she thought.

“You were sweltering, moaning very uncomfortably – so I undressed you. I behaved!” he promised. Chloe smirked at his childish defensiveness. But since he didn’t lie…..

“And lastly, it’s a quarter to nine on Tuesday.” He said that slowly… too slowly.

Her brain kicked in, “I’ve been out for two days?!?” Panic began to set in. She had to call her mother. Did work know? What about Dan? Chloe tried to stand, her body almost crumbled, he moved quickly, catching her by her upper arms, steadying her.

“Chloe,” his soft call caught her attention. “I’ve spoken to Dr. Linda, she’s the only one who knows the full truth by the way. She brought in a medical doctor friend of hers who checked you over.” Chloe gawked at him, astounded, touched. “The official statement is ‘extreme stress causing exhaustion.’” He shifted closer, her hands holding onto his bare forearms. “I’ve spoken to your mother, to Dan and to your work. Everything is taken care of.”

In that moment, as she stared up into his face, Chloe realized he truly did nothing by halves. He didn’t fall by half, he didn’t rise by half, he didn’t make half promises and he certainly didn’t love in partial measure. “I…. I don’t know what to say,” she stuttered.

“A simple ‘thank you’ would suffice.” He smiled so warmly at her.

Reaching up to touch his face, her palm resting against his cheek; “It’s not enough.”

He nodded into her hand, “it is… and maybe a free pass the next time I do something that highly annoys you.”

Of course he would divert, “that’s not permission to do something that you know will piss me off.”

“You can’t blame a Devil for trying.” His gaze stayed firmly on her face.
Sighing Chloe tried to stand without wobbling. She took a small step, finding her balance better, her limbs more sure of their job. She looked back up at him, not understanding the level on concentration on his face. “What?” suddenly she was worried something else was wrong.

He quirked an amused eyebrow still wholly focused on her face, “Detective, you’re standing in my bedroom, in a very nice set of skivvies, looking very fetching with your mussed hair and I’m being a good Devil.”

OH, right, basically naked, pretty much clinging to him. His robe was open, if she looked…. Nope, not going down that road…. Not yet.

Laughing she leaned in close, meeting his somewhat unhinged gaze, “let me ruin the whole thing by saying I have to pee.”

He barked out a quick laugh, “not surprising considering your long siesta.”

At that moment her stomach made itself known by growling – loudly. Both of them laughing now, he took a step back, waiting to see if she was balanced enough to walk on her own.

“Right, you make use of the wash closet and I’ll nip out and grab us something to eat.” Satisfied she could maneuver on her own, he dropped the housecoat on the bed, reaching for the neatly laid out clothes on the pressing rack in the corner.

Stopping at the door to the bathroom she turned to watch him for a moment, “Lucifer,” he turned, smiling at her leaning on the door frame. “Thank you – for everything. It means more than you know.” She stepped back, closing the door before he could respond.

*****************

By the next evening she was bored, complete cabin fever. And really tired of take out food. She wanted to cook something healthy – not salt and spice laden – which to be honest tasted really good, but her still recovering stomach took some offence to. The kitchen in the penthouse was not as grand
as the rest of the floorplan, but it was functional, and full of fruits, snacks, and some basics. But she had a craving for chicken.

Lucifer hadn’t been down to the club since his return and was itching to – she could easily read it in his body language as the music started up.

She was a lot stronger now, able to move about, no brace required – though her shoulder still twinged if she extended her arm too far too fast. Her energy was way up and she wanted to DO something.

They were still very independent people. She didn’t ask – she told him her intention to go out. Quirking an eye at her he tossed her the keys to the Vette, which she easily caught one handed and grinned widely at the opportunity to drive.

He would go downstairs and she would go grocery shopping – on the condition she came straight back. After firing him a very dirty look, she did have to admit she doubted her energy would stay this high for long – she was still healing. Getting dressed to go out - even simple jeans and t shirt - still took a lot more energy than it normally would.

The music from below was more than loud enough to reverberate through the open glass doors. Chloe was surprised the whole building wasn’t bouncing to the blaring music.

For a long time she’d turned a blind eye to the happenings in the club – knowing, but refusing to acknowledge the illicit and very illegal exchanges downstairs.

“Shit, I wanted to ask you…” how the hell was she going to approach this? She really wanted to know….

But then again, she really didn’t.

Lucifer, who was almost finished getting dressed, casually tossed an affirmative noise over his shoulder; then stopped, focusing on her when she didn’t immediately reply. Chloe was leaning a hip on the piano, trying to formulate her question when he stepped down the stairs from the bedroom area. Leaning towards her, with a very earnest, and very curious look on his face, “you know you can ask me anything.”

“Muhmmm,” Chloe was lost in thought until she noticed his highly offended expression. She quietly chuckled to herself, “No, I know, I can ask you anything.” This time there was a lot more confidence in the statement, which he seemed satisfied with. “But, you sell a lot of drugs and I’m afraid to ask what else is sold down there.”

Lucifer scoffed, “I deal in desires, Detective, and I’m not derelict in my duties to let them die in the pursuit of those desires.”
She stood mouth open, it was another incredible layer of the man in front of her. She stared at him, beyond astounded at his care and attention. Possibly falling for him even more.

“Plus people dying - it’s bad for business.” Her adoring expression making him extremely uncomfortable, he waved her off with a noncommittal flourish.

“Nuhuh – keep telling yourself that”, Chloe stepped back up to him, preventing him from continuing the BS he was spewing. “This just confirms what I said before.”

“And what might that be?” His tone was full of trepidation.

She let her hand rest on his chest, just above his heart, “Devil you may be, evil, your sure as Hell are not.” Her hand slid over his shoulder then down his arm to his elbow. With a little squeeze, she released his arm and practically bounced to the elevator, very happy with the look of delight on his face as the door shut.
I'm scared of what is in my head
What's inside my soul
I feel like I'm running, but getting nowhere
Fear is suffocating me
I can't breath
I feel like I'm drowning, I'm sinking deeper

White light fades to red
As I enter the City of the Dead

~City Of The Dead
Eurielle

Chloe stepped back into the bullpen feeling a mixture of being home and being lost. She still wasn’t cleared for duty, but she had promised she would catch up on the paperwork they had given her. She owed them that, and really, a lot more.

Lucifer had dropped her off, refusing to stick around while she did ‘boring stuff’ – at least some things never change.

Ella and Dan were off at a scene somewhere, otherwise it was business as usual. Yet, with her new outlook – that was the best way Chloe could rationalize it – she itched to get to the bottom of whoever was stalking her. With her being squirreled away at the penthouse everything had gone quiet.

Where was the fun if they couldn’t terrorize her?

Maybe because she was stronger now – more like herself – they didn’t seem as scary – maybe that she was looking at the methodology – how did they do what they did? How could know their surroundings so well? Evade all cameras? It was pissing her off, and kind of driving her crazy.

That and the fact Lucifer hadn’t really touched her, or kissed her since. In a way it was a relief, no pressure, no worrying if she would be good enough for him. But the frustration was gnawing away, she knew he wanted her – that was glaringly obvious anytime they were alone together. He was not shy about his body.

Yet he was holding back – and the whole ‘waiting till she was healthy’ was a bullshit cover for something she had yet to figure out.

Sighing, she had to drop it for a bit longer and focus on the small pile on her desk.

Proofreading reports. Ugh. She couldn’t blame Lucifer for having zero interest.

She wasn’t sure how much time had passed when she caught sight of Maze, Lucifer and Linda with Charlie secured to her chest. Chloe beamed; she hadn’t seen Charlie in far too long.

She stood as they stopped at her desk, Maze standing quite relaxed for once and Lucifer sitting himself on the edge of her desk. Chloe had no eyes for anyone other than Charlie, reaching over Linda’s arm, she caressed the small head, smiling as he smiled back at her. “He’s grown so much!” It
was cliché – but really, he had!

Linda smiled at Chloe, beyond relieved she was stronger, brighter, obviously happier. “He really has – I think he’s going to be tall like his dad and uncle.”

“Hopefully he’s not as mind-numbingly dull as his dad,” Lucifer deadpanned causing all 3 women to glare in his direction.

Chloe sat back down, her energy still not where she wanted it to be. “How are things?” It wasn’t usual for Linda to simply take Charlie for a stroll.

“Things have been really quiet, we’ve been able to go out, let him play at the park. It’s been a nice breather.”

“You mean no action, no fun.” Maze will always be Maze – not happy unless there is sex or violence involved.

A thought came to Chloe and before she could help herself, “The Devil’s back in town… the Devil is back in town,” she quietly sing-songed.

Linda nodded her agreement, Maze laughed, but it was the look on Lucifer’s face that made it worthwhile. It was a look of surprise, mixed in with childish glee, mixed in with the secure knowledge that she does accept him.

What he hadn’t figured out yet, and what she was finally coming to understand herself was her attraction to him – who he is, especially his power. It had taken her a long time to see it – what it had been about that night in the club, then on the balcony that had her revealing the truth – to him and herself in all honesty. She’d had a long time to think about it, about how he looked at her after he took control, commanded them back. She knew how she was looking at him and she didn’t think she’d ever looked at a man like that. Love, respect and so much more. His relief had been palatable.

As it was now.

“So, lunch?” Linda looked expectantly at her, “somewhere outside where we can be in real sunlight.”

Chloe nodded. “What about the café near the beach?”

“Oh, yes please,” Linda shifted Charlie in her arms, “Maze?”

“Only if I get to drive!” Linda grudgingly handed her the keys to her car.

There was on odd expression on Lucifer’s face as he stood, holding out his hand for Chloe as Linda and Maze walked ahead. Smiling, Chloe eagerly took his hand, threading her finders through his and squeezing lightly. “Welcome to family.”

“I…” he closed his mouth, turning to look at her, “Is this what it’s like?” There was a pleased, yet pleading tone to the question.”

“Yup, full of insanity, arguments and treasured moments.” They were the only ones in the elevator having taken too long to follow. She allowed herself to lean against him, her head briefly resting against the bicep of the hand she held between both of hers – he really was tall. At 5’5 she never considered herself short per se, but he made her feel petite, feminine. And sometimes, just sometimes, it was a nice break from being mom or cop.
It was becoming routine – back from work, they’d usually stop somewhere to eat, which with Lucifer was always a grand event; probably was not helping her waistline, but the food was always so very good; he made her promise to stop calling it Heavenly – though she had to admit digging at him was great fun.

Tonight they were expecting her mom to visit, Chloe had made the call, as per Lucifer’s request. She was finally strong enough in everyone’s opinion. Trixie would be dropped off at Dan’s as he called first dibs as soon as he heard she would be returning – Chloe had to chuckle at that. So far removed from when they were married and caring for a newborn.

Lucifer sat at the piano, playing something else beautiful and dramatic. He’d learned quickly what she enjoyed and tailored his playing to that. Ever the gracious host. Though he did inform her that he loved playing this type of music; filled with such passion and desire he’d commented – right up his alley.

Siting now at her usual place at the end of the couch, ensconced in the corner with her glass of wine, she closed her eyes, letting the music, his passion for playing, take her away.

When the elevator binged, Chloe tipped her head over the back of the couch to see her mom appear as the doors opened. She took one step into the penthouse and paused.

Chloe watched amazed as her mother took in the scene before her. Lucifer continued to play, his back to their guest, knowing by having glanced up briefly that all was as it should be. Her mother’s eyes shone momentarily as she looked at Lucifer’s back, elegantly moving as he let the music guide him, to her daughter, sitting, obviously very comfortably and completely relaxed.

Penelope moved to stand at Lucifer’s right hand side, in his line of vision, close, but not close enough to interfere with his playing. After a moment, her hand reached around the back of his head, her palm on the left side of his head, tipping him towards her. Before he had time to realise what was happening, she’d placed a gentle kiss to his right temple. Delightedly surprised, he paused in his music before resuming where he’d left off. Smiling, Penelope used her thumb to wipe the smear of lipstick off him before heading to sit beside her chuckling daughter.

“Hi Mom,” Chloe passed the glass of wine to her mother who happily took it.

“Hi Baby,” she took a sip, almost groaning, savouring the wine before swallowing. “Ohhhh the good stuff.” She took another sip before handing the glass back.

“You know Lucifer, only the best.” Chloe placed the glass on the table beside her before letting her head rest on her mother’s shoulder.

Marveling Chloe thought about all the relationships Lucifer hand mended, rebuilt, created and revealed the poison in. A year ago she would never have dreamed she’d be sitting here, so comfortable with her mother’s presence, not needing to ask how Trixie took the ‘vacation’, not worrying about anything her ‘mother did’.

Stupid, foolish, time wasting bullshit.

This was far too incredible to have missed. The music, the warmth, the love. Right here, right now.
All because the Devil came into her life and showed her how to truly live.

“How’s Trixie feel about being home?” yeah, she missed her daughter terribly.

“Pissed I dropped her off at her dad’s.” Penelope chuckled. “Also, highly suspicious I was coming to see you alone first. She’s too much like you and your Dad – the questions…..” the dramatic eye-roll told Chloe everything about how her daughter had quizzed her poor grandmother who was sworn to secrecy.

When the song came to an end, Lucifer poured a second glass of wine, handing it to Penelope before bracing an arm on he back of the couch between the two women, allowing him to sneak in a quick, deep kiss. He tossed a look over his shoulder that would have made the Cheshire Cat proud as he walked to the chair across from the two women.

Chloe rolled her eyes at the obvious possessiveness trying to squash how much he could affect her; “smug bastard,” she half growled, half laughed at his back.

Penelope laughed into her glass of wine shaking her head with great affection and amusement. “You know you were never like this with Dan.”

That caught Lucifer’s attention as he settled himself elegantly down in the chair, glass of whiskey held by his fingertips over the edge.

“Okay,” Chloe’s curiosity was getting the best of her. “I’ll bite – how so?” It was an honest question to her mother’s observation

“You were never this relaxed, this open and you sure as shit would never have called him a ‘smug bastard’ – at least not within his hearing.”

Lucifer took a sip of his drink, “would offend his douchie ego.” It was said without malice, but the implication was clear.

What surprised Chloe more was her mother’s agreement. Penelope tipped her glass towards Lucifer’s relaxed form, “exactly.”

Chloe blinked, completely taken aback, “I didn’t realize you don’t like Dan.”

“It’s not that I don’t like him per se – more that there is a part of his overall character that is lacking. A part he proved with the whole Palmetto fiasco.“ That one still stung – badly if Chloe was being honest with herself. Her mother continued on, “thank God he’s a much better father now.”

Chloe held up a finger to stop Lucifer before he could start his usual tirade. Thankfully he closed his mouth right away, looking somewhat perplexed.

“I saw that,” Penelope looked between them with amazement. “I have no idea what that was about, but the way you two move together, speak to each other – no words needed – the respect.” She paused to take a slow sip, looking directly at Lucifer. “I don’t know much about you yet, but I thank you for bringing my daughter back to me.”

Lucifer almost dropped his drink. Chloe smiled, so very fondly at the man, the Devil, the Angel who she hoped was now a permanent fixture in her life.

Looking back at her mom, she silently thanked whatever it is, God, Heaven, Fates? Frankly she didn’t give a shit. This is what life is. Only missing one generation of Decker’s. “You’re right – more than right. “ She shifted to face her mother, regret painting her voice. “I’m sorry, so sorry for the
things I’ve said. I was thinking that we’ve wasted too much time.”

Penelope smiled a sad smile. “Yeah, well, neither of us took the loss of your Dad well. I was too lost in my grief to help you with yours.” A distant look of longing crossed her beautiful features, “I loved your dad so very much, we were a great family – the three of us – not perfect, but great. And I think I took it for granted.”

Chloe tipped her head back to her mom’s shoulder, almost like how Trixie would do against her. Keeping Lucifer in her direct line of sight, wanting to keep eye contact with him so he could see – really see how much he’d changed her life for the better. How thankful she was for his presence. “I think we all did, and I was too selfish to recognise your grief. I know you and dad had a great relationship. I think I wanted that back so badly I ignored my gut feelings when Dan showered me with affection.” Chloe shrugged, “I think I saw what you saw, but I didn’t listen.”

“That’s called young love.” Penelope chuckled.

“I can’t regret it – Trixie is too much of a gift.”

“It’s about time you saw it too.” Penelope looked between the pair with a note of wisdom she rarely shared. “Lucifer has brought something back out in you, an awareness, a joy of life I haven’t seen since your dad died and you started feeling responsible for me. I’m sorry about that too.”

Chloe, feeling a sense of tranquility closed her eyes for a moment, smiling, loving life and all it has to offer – including one very special Devil.

Lucifer leaned forward in his chair, “Right then, enough of this seriousness. Penelope, please, regale us with your stories of your trip.” His attention was fully on her mom, who eagerly basked in his attention, jumping at the opportunity to launch into film queen mode.

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