The Super Mega FinnPoe Fix-It
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Summary

Exactly what it says on the tin: the grand Finn/Poe fix-it rewrite of The Force Awakens and The Last Jedi that you've always dreamed of. Complete with pining, snuggling, embarrassing stories, drama, intrigue, kissing, and a Poe that isn't as big a douche as TLJ made him.

Notes

So I'm a Poe Dameron apologist, sue me. TLJ did his character so dirty though, making him into a douchey mansplaining asshole. In this fic, I've rectified all that. I also tried to smooth over as many TLJ plot holes as possible. I couldn't really fix the way Hux appears to be incompetent during Poe's prank call (he's anything but), or the fact that Poe didn't just destroy the auto-cannons on the Dreadnaught instead of wasting his time with the surface cannons, but I did change Holdo a bit- it's absolutely ridiculous to me that she wouldn't tell anyone her plan, so this story has her being up-front and honest about it. Please, enjoy!!

Poe’s been spending pretty much every single spare moment he has between missions and training sessions and tactical meetings at Finn’s bedside in the med bay, usually with BB-8 at his feet. He wonders if it’s weird- he only spent a total of probably two hours in the guy’s presence before the destruction of Starkiller Base and Finn’s injury. They got along for sure, but maybe this is overkill? Would Finn be weirded out by it? Poe’s not sure. He knows himself well; he’s a hopeless romantic at heart, and he’s not so dumb as to not recognize the feelings blossoming inside him. Hell, he felt...
in the TIE fighter during their escape from the Finalizer: hearing Finn, very recently a stormtrooper, shout with genuine childlike glee after blowing up a set of surface cannons on his former star destroyer just got Poe, got him right in the heart. Deep respect for Finn’s choice, mostly, but also a little bit of a girly flutter in the face of just how damn handsome and charming Finn was. Hot defecting stormtrooper coming to rescue Poe from the clutches of Kylo Ren? Yes please. It was like something out of a romance novel (a genre which Poe did not indulge in… definitely not).

The crash landing on Jakku broke his heart a little, because he’d genuinely thought Finn was dead. He spent ages looking for that stupid TIE fighter but couldn’t find it anywhere, and was therefore dimly impressed by the apparent ejection strength of TIE parachutes. It was masked mostly with sorrow for Finn, but also a little happiness knowing that he’d spent his last minutes as a free man after what must have been a lifetime with the First Order.

Poe scoured Jakku for BB-8, praying all the while that he hadn’t doomed the Resistance by losing him, and eventually ended up in a backwater town that had very clearly been subjected to a royal fucking by the First Order. He asked around in very butchered Jakkese, and found out that Beeb had escaped the planet on a stolen YT-model freighter, accompanied by a local girl and a young man no one had ever seen around before but was apparently with the Resistance. This baffled Poe, but BB-8’s ability to make friends was already well-established by that point, so he didn’t ask any further questions. Poe trusted BB-8 to get his two new helpers to take him home, and he breathed a small sigh of relief. By that same evening, he’d found a junker willing to give him a ride back to the Ileenium system.

Getting back to base and finding out that BB-8 had not, in fact, returned yet was a cruel shock. He apologized profusely to Leia, which she waved off with a firm hand. We’re just glad you’re back safe. That’s what’s most important. Poe strongly disagreed. Thankfully, a coded message came through not even a day later all the way from Takodana, and Poe gathered Black Squadron and sped there as fast as he could. It was only barely fast enough, because First Order ships were already blasting Maz Kanata’s cantina to bits and the ground was painted white with stormtroopers. He did his duty picking the TIE fighters out of the sky, and then when he got word that the First Order was retreating and BB-8 was safely on board a larger fighter, he ordered the return to base.

Little did he know he was in for a big ass surprise when he got back to D’Qar. Just as he was getting out of his X-Wing and handing off his helmet to ground crew, he heard a familiar whirring. He turned and saw BB-8 barrelling towards him full speed, beeping excitedly.

“BB-8! My buddy!” he exclaimed, kneeling and hugging his droid. “Oh, it’s so good to see you!”

BB-8 started chattering so fast Poe could barely keep up.

[Partner Poe! Partner Poe! Friend Finn + Friend Rey = help BB-8 come home! Friend Finn = former stormtrooper! Friend Rey = strong! Acquaintance Han Solo + Acquaintance Chewbacca = also helpful! BB-8 + Friends = escape on Ship Millenium Falcon! There = Friend Finn!]

“Oh, no way.” Poe breathed, breaking into what must have been a dopey-ass smile. Before he
knew it, he was running, the straps of his flight suit flapping around his thighs. Finn was running too, and Poe threw himself into Finn’s arms once he was within reach, hugging him tight. He noted absently that Finn smelled really nice, and then all too soon, it was over. Finn pulled back.

“What happened to you?” Finn asked, gripping Poe’s biceps.

“What happened? I got thrown from the crash! I woke up at night, no you, no ship, nothing. BB-8 says that you saved him-

“No, no, no, it wasn’t just me-”

Poe couldn’t even breathe he had so much to say. “You completed my mission, Finn- that’s my jacket.”

He couldn’t believe he didn’t notice earlier, but Finn was totally wearing his jacket. His jacket. Poe’s tummy did a weird, swoon-y flip. To his horror, Finn, the biggest sweetie in the galaxy apparently, started to shrug it off.

“No, no, no- keep it! It suits you!” Poe, apparently the biggest slut in the galaxy, couldn’t restrain himself from biting his lip and punching Finn’s left pectoral. “You’re a good man, Finn.”

Poe almost swooned right into a coma then when Finn leaned in, placed a firm hand on Poe’s shoulder and murmured, “Poe, I need your help.”

The lead-up to the destruction of Starkiller Base was too hectic for Poe and Finn to really spend any serious time together. Still, when Finn volunteered himself to go with Han and Chewbacca (without hesitation), Poe was seized by simultaneous admiration for his bravery and the intense urge to keep him on D’Qar, where he’d be safe. But he zipped his lip and got in his X-Wing and silently vowed to do everything in his power to help Finn. Which apparently wasn’t good enough, because Finn came home on a stretcher, and now Poe’s spending every waking minute in med bay, desperately waiting for this man he barely knows to come out of his coma.

The thesis of all that is, Poe doesn’t actually know Finn that well. But, he tries to reason with himself- he knows enough, right? He’s seen Finn’s bravery. His selflessness. Not even two weeks ago, he was a stormtrooper, and already he’s done more for the Resistance than almost anyone on D’Qar. Didn’t need to be convinced, didn’t need to be persuaded, didn’t need to be paid, just did what he felt was right. Maybe he’s just being a romantic, but somehow, Poe feels connected to Finn. It feels right to sit by his bedside. Something pulls him to Finn, and Poe can’t even remember the last time he restrained himself from acting on his instincts. It’s worked so far, so he just goes for it, full gusto.

His patience finally pays off about a week after Starkiller. It’s very late, and Poe really, really should go to bed because he’s training a new group of pilots in the morning, but for some reason, he keeps telling himself one more minute. He’s got his head pillowed on his arms, which are resting on Finn’s mattress. He drifts in and out of sleep, lulled by BB-8’s low hum and the steady beep of the monitors.

All of a sudden, he feels a gentle touch to his hair. His eyes pop open and he flies upright in his chair. Finn’s arm is moving, and then his eyes are open and he’s struggling to sit up, banging his head against the glass bubble encasing his upper body.

“Whoa, whoa, easy there buddy!” Poe chastises, grinning like an idiot. He stands up and starts
“Looking for the latch, fuck what the doctors have to say about it. Finn catches sight of him and smiles, which just about melts Poe’s heart. Poe finds it with slightly-shaky fingers and pulls back the glass. He finds himself sitting on the edge of the bed, leaning over Finn, before he knows it.

“How do you feel?” he asks excitedly. He can’t believe he was tired a minute ago.

Finn doesn’t answer. “Poe Dameron, you look like an angel.” Is what comes out of his mouth.

Poe blushes deeply and is at a loss for words.

A frown passes over Finn’s face. “Where’s Rey?”

Poe explains that she’s fine, she’s off with Chewbacca and R2 on Ach-To trying to convince Luke Skywalker to come back and help the Resistance. Poe also updates him on everything that’s been going on since Starkiller. They’re making plans to evacuate the D’Qar base because it’s only a matter of time now before the First Order locates them, but everyone is breathing a collective sigh of relief and relaxing a little for the time being. He tells Finn that he can take as much time as he needs to get back on his feet. Finn shakes his head at that and tries to sit up again, grimacing in pain.

“I’ve wasted enough of your resources already. Should’ve left me.” he grunts, dragging himself upright in a stilted motion. Poe’s eyes widen in horror.

“Finn! No! You're part of our family now! We’d never leave you behind! You got injured fighting for us, the very least we owe you is some medical attention.”

“The First Order would never have wasted time trying to revive a foot soldier.” Finn doesn’t say it in a the-First-Order-is-better way, just in a blank, matter-of-fact way. Poe’s heart twists in his chest. He doesn’t even know what to say in response to that, it goes so against all of his values.

“Well. The Resistance doesn’t give up on its people. So you’re just gonna have to accept our help, or so help me I’ll put you back in that coma.” Poe finally says, lightly punching Finn’s shoulder. Finn smiles a little.

The nurse droid chooses that moment to interrupt, whirring in and throwing its hands up in disbelief.

Poe gets released from medical the next day. He doesn’t have a room yet, and it wouldn’t make sense to find or make him one when the base is only going to be evacuated in a little bit anyways, so Poe selflessly, gallantly, offers to share his room. Okay, maybe not totally selflessly. So sue him, he wants to spend more time with Finn. He doesn’t feel guilty, because when he offers, Finn lights up and smiles and agrees without hesitation. They set up a cot for him in Poe’s room, which really isn’t that big to begin with, so it’s a tight squeeze. Poe’s bed, built into the right wall under the sloped ceiling, is as out of the way as it can be, but the rest of the room is cluttered with all sorts of other junk. He’s not the neatest person ever, okay. There’s a desk where he organizes flight training schedules and whatnot, when the surface isn’t covered in mechanical parts and other garbage. The door to the bathroom is between the desk and his bed. There’s also BB-8’s charging station, which is now squeezed between the desk and Finn’s cot on the left side of the room. There’s a low table next to the door with some caf ingredients, other snacks, and a shitload of mugs on it. Poe’s clothes are strewn all over the floor because who the hell has time to be folding
shit and hanging it up (and where would he hang any of it anyways)? For the sake of Finn’s innocence, he discreetly kicks some of his underwear under his bed. Finn looks a little baffled by the mess.

“You would have been sent to reconditioning so fast, man.” Finn says. “I think Captain Phasma would have actually shot you dead if she saw this.”

“I’ve got more important things to do than keep my room tidy.” Poe shrugs. He watches as Finn strolls around, inspecting everything. He seems especially interested in the posters Poe’s got up on the walls.

“Who are all these people?” he asks, tilting his head.

Poe lights up. “Oh, only the greatest heroes of the Rebellion! That’s Jyn Erso, the rebel who risked her life to steal the plans of the original Death Star and deliver them to Leia. That’s Wedge Antilles, one of the best pilots in the Rebellion. He was my teacher at the Academy. That’s Ahsoka Tano- she used to be a Jedi, was actually Vader’s padawan in his Jedi days, but she helped get the Rebellion started. That’s Zare Leonis. He uncovered a lot of the dark secrets about the shit the Empire was getting up to, like Brendol Hux’s stormtrooper program. And uh, this one is my mom.” Poe blushes a little at the end. “Weird having a poster of my mama on the wall, I know, but she was a hero.”

“That’s your mom?” Finn asks, eyes wide.

“Yup. She was an A-Wing pilot. Helped destroy the Death Star. She and Leia were close.” Poe feels a tingle of pride, seeing Finn’s amazement.

“She’s dead?” Finn clearly hasn’t got the hang of tact quite yet, but Poe’s not offended. He laughs instead.

“Yes, she died when I was around six years old. On Yavin 4, her and Dada’s home planet. We had all moved there after they both retired from the Rebellion. After that, Dada raised me. She was the one who first taught me how to fly, you know. She’d tell Dada that we were just going for a walk in the jungle and then take me in her A-Wing instead. Way dangerous, she’d sit me in her lap and put my little hands on the controls and let me fly. He would have had a heart attack if he knew.”

“She sounds just like you.” Finn says, grinning and jostling Poe’s shoulder.

Poe smiles back. “I’ve heard that once or twice before. Just before she died, she gave me this.” He reaches under his collar and pulls out the necklace. “It’s her wedding ring. I put it on this chain and I haven’t taken it off since.”

Finn hums. “What’s your dad like?”

“He was a Rebellion foot soldier, which makes sense really, because he’s way more grounded and disciplined than my mom was. Kind of a worrier. You can meet him someday if you want- he still lives on Yavin 4.”

“I’d like that.” Finn answers, so genuinely that it melts Poe’s heart. “I never knew my family.” he adds, so matter-of-fact that it takes Poe by surprise.

“Yeah, I’ve heard they take stormtroopers early.” Poe says, leaving him room to say more. He does.

“Yeah. At two years old, usually. At two, the kids are usually strong enough to withstand the
transition into training programs, but not old enough to be insurmountably attached to their parents. Some of the guys in my unit had fuzzy memories of their parents’ faces, but I don’t have any. Feels like there was never a time when I wasn’t with the First Order.” Finn says it all while staring at the poster of Shara Bey.

“So how old are you? Do you know?” Poe asks before he thinks, and mentally slaps himself. Evidently he’s not much for tact, either. But Finn’s utterly unbothered- he just hums inquisitively.

“I know, roughly. The training program changed yearly, according to our physical development, so we knew when years were passing. We’d joke that January 1 was everyone’s birthday. I’m at least 24, maybe 25.”

“Hm. We should give you a birthday.” Poe decides.


“Yeah! We picked a name, didn’t we? What day of the year do you like best?”

“Dunno. Never really thought about it.”

Poe taps his chin. “Well, you seem like a spring baby. You’re very sweet. How about May 1? That’s a good day.”

Finn shrugs, grinning wide. “Sounds good to me.”

“May 1 it is. You can turn 25 then.” Poe nods, satisfied.

The first few nights in the room together are fine (aside from Poe’s annoying lovesickness, that is). They sleep through the night, have caf together in the morning, and then go their separate ways for the day. Poe usually has some mixture of tactical meetings with the General, flight training, report-gathering from his captains, and scheduling, and Finn has physical therapy for his back. Leia has also been asking him to tactical meetings because of his invaluable wealth of knowledge about all things First Order. Poe predicts he’ll get promoted to Commander within a month at this rate. He’s proving himself to be something of a tactical genius. All in all, everything is going well, until it’s not.

One night, Poe is awoken by heavy breathing and murmurs that he can’t parse. He lifts his head a bit, and realizes it’s Finn. He’s very clearly having a nightmare of some sort. In the moonlight, he can see tears streaked down his dark cheeks. Without a second thought, Poe is across the room and sitting next to him on the cot, shaking him awake. He blinks his eyes open, catches sight of Poe, and closes them again. He wipes his face aggressively.

“Sorry.” he says, like he really means it. Poe wants to smack him.

“Don’t even think about feeling sorry. There’s nothing to be sorry for. Are you okay?”

Finn nods slowly. “It’s just.”

“Just?” Poe prods gently. His hands lighten up their grip on Finn’s shoulders, rubbing over them instead in what he hopes is a soothing manner.

“Just. The more I learn about the First Order- from you, from the web, from other people. Things I didn’t know, about what they were doing behind the scenes. I feel even worse about being part of
“Finn, you were a **victim**. It’s not like you were a General Hux. Hux stole you from your parents and **forced** you to be a killing machine and knew exactly what he was doing. There’s nothing to feel guilty about. It wasn’t your fault.”

“But sometimes I believed it. I believed in what Hux was saying.” Finn sounds so genuinely sorrowful and regretful. Poe wants to cry himself.

“You literally didn’t know anything else. He was your only source of information about anything. What were you supposed to think? Were you supposed to psychically know the truth? No. And you know what? Your first real battle, you didn’t kill a single person because you knew in your heart what was right and what was wrong. You’re not a bad person, Finn. In fact, you’re the best person I know.”

Finn hiccups a little and says nothing. Poe keeps rubbing his shoulders, migrating down to his biceps, hoping to press the truth into his skin: that he’s a good man, an amazing man, a better man than Poe will ever be. Some time passes, and then Finn speaks.

“Do you wanna lie down?” he scoots over a little, making room on the already-tiny cot. Poe wants to move them to his own bed, which is more spacious and comfortable, but he worries that suggesting it will shatter the moment and Finn will come to his senses and decide not to lie with him at all, so he just nods and lies down. Finn’s tree-trunk arms wind around him and pull him close, so tight that Poe can hardly breathe. It’s a welcome surprise.

“Thanks for everything, Poe.” he says, quiet.

“It’s nothing.” Poe wheezes.

Poe thinks Finn will eventually kick him out, but they fall asleep together in the cot. Poe wakes up the next morning to Finn spooning him, those thick arms still wrapped around him, and all the blankets twisted around them both like a nest. He can feel Finn’s breath on the back of his neck, one of his hands on his stomach. He can’t help his smile. He feels all warm and fuzzy inside. It’s really, really intimate, and he’s dizzy that Finn would share this with him. He has to be in a meeting at 9, and he really shouldn’t, but he lets himself fall back asleep, snuggling back into Finn’s embrace with a *fuck it* attitude. He only ends up being 15 minutes late, which, for Poe, is really not even late at all.

Finn sticks to Poe’s side like a leech most of the time, and Poe wonders a little self-deprecatingly if he just imprinted on Poe because Poe happened to be there when he woke up and offered him a bed. If maybe Poe is just a temporary replacement for Rey while she’s away. If Finn actually likes him at all. Maybe Finn would treat anyone who approached him like he treats Poe. But, if he ever doubted Finn’s affection for a moment, those doubts are put to rest rather firmly by the man himself. They’re sitting at dinner with all of the other pilots- not just Black Squadron, but also a few members of the other squads. Finn’s met Poe’s team by this point, but the others he doesn’t know. One of them, a pilot from Green Squadron, is evidently very eager to get to know him, as he’s wiggled his way onto the bench in between Finn and Poe and monopolized Finn’s attention. Poe is, predictably, a little ticked off. He wants Finn to make friends, of course he does, but something about this guy just rubs him the wrong way. He listens as the guy, Fero, asks Finn a number of increasingly weird and frankly inappropriate questions.

“So, did you and the other stormtroopers ever get freaky when the captains weren’t looking?”
That one makes Poe frown a little.

“Do stormtroopers ever get sex ed, or is that all forbidden fruit?”

Poe’s lips turn down and his frown deepens.

“Are you a virgin?”

The last question makes Poe stand up out of his seat and grab the guy by his collar. Without a word, he drags him off the bench and away from the table, which has gone completely silent in shock. Everyone watches them leave with eyes as big as saucers. Once they’re out of sight, in the hallway, he throws Fero against the opposite wall. Fero has the gall to look surprised and confused, as if his actions weren’t utterly douchey. Poe jabs a finger in his face and channels all his commander-rank scariness.

“Don’t even fucking think about speaking to Finn ever again until you learn some fucking tact. You’re lucky I don’t get you thrown in the brig right now for that shit. Fucking punk.” he snaps at him, and then returns to the table once he’s confident that Fero has been cowed. It’s just as silent as when he left. He sits down primly and picks his spoon back up. Conversation timidly resumes.

“Thanks Poe. But I was just about to tell him off myself.”

“Really?” Poe wasn’t sure if Finn was even offended by the questions, just knew they were grossly out of line by his own standards. He was half-worried that Finn would start actually answering them out of some sense of obligation or something.

“Yeah. I wouldn’t mind it if you asked me that kind of stuff, but I’ve never even met that guy before. And I didn’t like him.”

Poe preens a little, and spoons his soup with a little more flair after that.

After Finn’s first nightmare, they start sleeping together every night. Not sleeping together, sleeping together, like Poe wants, but it’s a pretty damn good start. Finn will start freaking out, Poe will instantly come lie down with him, they’ll wake up spooning. The first few nights, they keep up the charade of Poe getting in Finn’s shitty cot, but when one morning Poe actually falls out onto the floor because Finn stretched a bit too wide, he decides to relocate. The next night, as Finn lays down and holds open the blankets for Poe, Poe pauses, one knee on the cot.

“Look, why are we pretending? Let’s just get in my bed. It’s way roomier. Fuck this.” Poe finally summons the courage to say. His hands might be shaking a little.

Thankfully, Finn just looks relieved. “Oh thank god, I’ve been waiting for you to say that. I didn’t wanna presume anything.”

Poe laughs heartily. They gather all the extra blankets and pillows from the cot and move them to Poe’s bed. They snuggle under them, basking in how much space they both have. Poe stretches his arms wide just to emphasize the point.

“Mm, just think of what we can do with that space now that we can get rid of the cot. We could give BB-8 four charging stations.” Poe sighs happily. Finn’s arm snakes around his middle and pulls him close.
“Fully-functioning bar.” he suggests, voice already sleepy.

Poe giggles. “Landing strip for Black One.”

The next morning, despite the fact that there’s now more than enough room for both of them to sleep without touching, Poe wakes up to Finn spooning him, one hand on his tummy and the other arm under his head. He’s glad they’re not giving up on this, despite relocating. The best part is he doesn’t have anywhere to be until midday, so he eagerly snuggles backwards until he can feel their bodies pressed together from head to toe and goes back to sleep. Just as he’s drifting off, he thinks he might feel lips against his neck, but he also might be dreaming.

A few weeks after Finn wakes up, they’re lounging on the floor of Poe’s room (their room, really) eating candied sea flowers that they got on an off-world shopping trip a few days previously. They’ve discovered that Finn has a wicked sweet tooth. To be fair, he never got to eat anything with any flavor for the first 24 years of his life, so Poe doesn’t fault him in the slightest. Nothing but tasteless ration bars, Finn tells him. For 24 fucking years. Since learning that disturbing fact, Poe’s made it his mission to introduce Finn to as much new food as possible. He’s already promised to take Finn home to Yavin 4 someday and cook him some traditional Yavinite dishes. He’s even got his dad roped into helping, because while Poe has many talents and strengths, cooking is not one of them. Kes Dameron says he’s very excited to meet Finn.

Now, Finn tosses a sea flower into the air and tries to catch it in his mouth, but it bounces off his cheek and falls on the floor instead. Poe feels like his chest might just explode with how in love he is. He grabs the fallen flower and tosses it into his own mouth just as Finn lunges for it, laughing. He chews it as Finn playfully tackles him to the ground. The bag of flowers in his hand goes everywhere.

“That’s stealing, Dameron!” Finn says, poking him in the sides where he knows Poe is ticklish. Poe shrieks with laughter, kicking at Finn, but unable to dislodge him. Now that Finn is done with physical therapy, he’s back on a strict exercise regime. He’s also been leading some hand-to-hand combat courses when he’s not helping Intelligence, and so he’s fucking jacked as hell. Definitely beefier than Poe, who’s shorter and slimmer, and spends half his time sitting in cockpits. Thus, if Finn wants to tickle Poe, Finn tickles Poe. Poe can’t do a damn thing about it. Not that he would, fuck no- as if he’d pass on having Finn on top of him for any reason.

Finn eventually stops, and smiles down at Poe. He’s got one leg straddling Poe’s waist, the other bent under Poe’s right leg, both arms braced on either side of Poe’s head. Poe can’t help but smile back.

“I really like this. I mean. You know, seeing you like this.” Finn says.

“What do you mean?” Poe prods, blushing and smiling like a madman.

Finn shrugs, a little shy. “I mean, when you’re leading Black Squadron, or teaching new pilots, or talking to Leia, you’re so serious and in-charge. It’s nice to see you laughing.”

“Ah. You’re about the only person who gets to see me like this these days.” Poe admits. It seems to stroke Finn’s ego, because his eyebrows fly up and he smiles a little. “I used to be a lot wilder, back in the day. Some of the older members of Black Squadron remember.”

“Like how?” Finn asks, getting off Poe and lying down beside him so their shoulders are touching. He hears Finn start chewing on another flower.
“When I was in the Academy, I was just awful. Leia calls me a flyboy now, but she should’ve seen me back then. No discipline at all. Wedge used to chew me out every other week for not coming to class. I’d go out and get drunk instead of doing my homework. Deviating from missions to go out dancing on planets I’d never been to, that sort of thing. I don’t know how I passed my classes at all, honestly. You wanna hear the stupidest thing I did back then?”

Out of the corner of his eye, he sees Finn nod eagerly.

“Okay, so senior year of the pilot program, every diploma candidate has to fly a really complicated obstacle course and undergo an evaluation by their instructor. You spend most of the year practicing in preparation, cuz it’s really hard. Like, it’s serious business. Of course, me being the dumbass I was, I decided to go off-world the night before my exam. I went all the way to Canto Bight because I’d heard that some really ace pilots were coming through and would be gambling with some of their ships, and back then I liked the idea of collecting ships. Which was also dumb because I wanted to join the Resistance and you can only have one ship as a Resistance pilot. Whatever. That’s beside the point. Long story short, I ended up getting drunk and gambling away everything I had, including the ship I had come to Canto Bight in, which was also the same ship I was planning on running the course in the next day.”

“Oh no, Poe.” Finn has his hands over his eyes.

“So by midnight, I had nothing except the clothes I was wearing and no way to get back to the Academy. And if I didn’t show up for my exam, it would be an automatic fail and I’d be kicked out of the program. And even if I could get there in time, I didn’t have a ship to fly for the exam.”

“Poe!”

“I eventually got escorted out of the casino by some guards for disorderly conduct. So then I’m just walking down the beach in the middle of the night, freaking out because I had no idea what to do. Eventually, I got to one of the beachside private lots, you know, where the residents park their ships. And I’m thinking to myself, drunkenly, well those are ships. Ships can fly me to the Academy. What’s stopping me? And so I picked one that looked good and hardwired the door and snuck on.”

“No you didn’t! Poe!”

“The owner of the ship was actually asleep in one of the bunks in the cabin room. I saw him in there when I was tiptoeing to the flight deck. I couldn’t have him waking up during my robbery, obviously, so I shut the door and locked him in there. I don’t think he even woke up or noticed that the ship was moving until I jumped to light speed. Then for the rest of the ride I could hear him banging on the door and shouting in some language that I didn’t understand. I tuned him out by blasting music through the ship loudspeakers.”

“Oh my god.”

“We eventually got to the Academy at around 5 in the morning. My exam was at 8, so I only had three hours to find a ship and stop being drunk. I parked the stolen ship and unlocked the cabin door for the owner and then sprinted out of there as fast as I could so he couldn’t catch me. I ran all over campus trying to find someone who was awake and would let me borrow their ship. Eventually I ran into Snap, who was coming from the jet bridge, cuz he’d just done his test. By that point it was after 7. I talked him into letting me borrow his A-Wing, and then hauled ass to the hangar. By then the drunkenness had worn off, but a wicked hangover was hot on its trail. By the time I got in the A-Wing and was heading to the course, I was feeling really queasy.”
“Oh no. Tell me you didn’t.”

“Just wait. I got to the course, a couple minutes early actually, and got the green light to go. I did it, but let me tell you, I have never struggled so hard to fly a ship. The course involved a lot of barrel rolls, and loop-de-loops, and sharp turns, and every time I thought I was gonna projectile vomit all over Snap’s pristine, well-loved, hand-me-down A-Wing. But I did it, and landed to receive my evaluation from Wedge. I get out of the ship, stumble over to him, and just as he’s extending a hand to congratulate me on passing, I barfed. All over him. And the evaluation sheet.”

“No!”

“Yup. He’s been through all sorts of shit in his life and not much phases him, so he just sorta sighed and shook his head. He told me I passed, and then ordered me to go home and sleep.”

“What happened to the ship you stole?” Finn asks. By now he’s leaning on his elbow looking down at Poe, rapt.

“Dunno. The next time I passed by the lot I parked it in, it wasn’t there, so I assume the guy just flew back to Canto Bight. So everything worked out. He went home, I got my diploma, and I didn’t puke in Snap’s ship.”

“Wow. That’s a wild story.”

Poe grins. He pokes Finn’s chest and raises his eyebrows.

“You got any embarrassing stories, big guy? It’s only fair.” he asks.

Finn frowns and looks off into the distance, thinking hard. “Hmm. We didn’t get any free reign, so there wasn’t much opportunity for embarrassing incidents or bad decisions… well, I guess the whole First Order is a bad decision, really… Hmm… Oh.” he says it quietly, eyes widening. Poe lights up.

“What? Tell me! What?” He sits up eagerly, shaking Finn’s arm.

“It’s so awful.” Finn moans, covering his face.

“Tell me!” Poe is practically vibrating with excitement.

Finn shakes his head, grinning sheepishly. “Okay, so this was when we were all around 16, 17 years old. I guess no amount of conditioning can completely erase adolescent foolishness, because we would sometimes mess with each other. Only in little ways that the captains wouldn’t notice, of course. The thing me and the guys in my unit used to do was steal each other’s clothes. We’d steal just like one sock or something, so that the guy would have to put on the boots over his bare foot. Someone’s pants, so he’d chafe against the armor. Stuff like that, just annoying. One day, we were all showering, and I was taking a little longer than everyone else because I had had to deal with a huge oil spill earlier. Basically, everyone left before me. So I got done showering, and I came back into the antechamber to realize that they had stolen all of my clothes except for one sock and my neck guard. I don’t think they did it maliciously, it was just that numerous guys had the idea to steal something, and collectively, they ended up stealing all of it.”

“Oh no. Did you have the armor?”

“No. You don’t bring the armor to the shower.”

“Oh no.”
“Yeah. So I’m standing there, wearing one sock and covering my junk with the neck guard, trying to think of how I’m gonna get back to the cell block like that. I decided to listen for the troop rotation going back and forth down the hall and time it out. When they had passed, I snuck out and ran down the hall. I thought I was going to make it, because the cell block was only a right turn away, but when I turned the corner, I ran straight into- guess who.”

“Who?”

“Captain Phasma. She had come looking for me.”

“ No.” Poe breaks out into cacophonous laughter. “No, you’re kidding!”

Finn shakes his head, grinning. “She took one look at me, grabbed me by the arm, and dragged me back to the cell block. We all got yelled at it for it. After that, we stopped stealing each other’s clothes.”

“Wow. So Phasma’s seen you naked. I don’t even know what to think about that.”

“Neither do I.” Finn grimaces.

Poe laughs some more. They continue to eat the candied flowers and swap stories until well past a reasonable bedtime hour. Poe is sluggish the next day, but doesn’t regret a second of it.

For a while, Poe thinks he can deal with the situation (the situation being his unrequited crush, of course). They have a nice thing going- snuggling all night, sharing secrets and stories, inside jokes, watching holovids together, going off-world together on their free days. He’s gotten used to it, really. His feelings remain at a simmer level, and he tells himself that he’s okay not having more than what he already does. He’s not gonna be greedy. Better to just appreciate what Finn is willing to give him. He doesn’t want to put the kind of stress on Finn that confessing to him would, anyways.

But then, one day after a training session with Black Squadron, Leia asks him to deliver an urgent message to Finn. She’s in the command center supervising a supply run that Red Squadron is handling, and it’s not going too well. She can’t leave, but Finn needs to know about a change of plan she’s making (Red Squadron is certainly going to be late in returning, and Finn wanted to assign them to this other plan for tomorrow). Poe agrees to deliver it to Finn, who is currently leading a combat seminar in the training rooms. So Poe jogs over there. He hasn’t even changed out of his flight suit, and his braces are flapping around his thighs as he runs. He gets to the training room and peeks in the open doorway, and his jaw drops before he can stop it.

Finn is demonstrating some sort of move with a spear, but that’s not what Poe is drooling over. Finn’s shirtless, wearing only a loose pair of sweatpants. Most of his students are also shirtless and sweaty so it’s really nothing to bat an eye at, but Poe can’t look away. He’s seen Finn shirtless of course, a million times, they share a room for god’s sake, but something about seeing him shirtless and in his element, muscles rippling as he twirls the spear… For the life of him, Poe cannot understand why the First Order would waste such a fine specimen of man on sanitation. He’s suddenly struck with just how badly he wants Finn, and how he can’t believe he ever thought he’d be content with just being close friends. In the moment, he can’t stand the thought of never being more. He’s in love, and lust, and everything in between, and for a second it’s just unbearable.

He stares for way too long, long enough that the group of students eventually start catching notice of him, turning one by one to look at him curiously. Their turning heads make Finn turn too, and
then he breaks into a wide grin when he sees Poe in the doorway. Poe’s heart clenches, and he’s suddenly so emotional that he kind of wants to run away and hide in his room and just breathe, but he pastes on a smile and strides in.

“Sorry to interrupt, but I’m gonna have to steal the teacher for a minute.” he announces for the benefit of the crowd. Finn obediently meets him on the fringes of the room, wiping sweat from his forehead as he comes to stand beside him.

“So Red Squadron, you know they’re doing that supply run right now. They’re having some trouble, and aren’t gonna get back in time to do that other scouting mission you and Leia drafted yesterday. She wants to assign it to Green Squadron instead, but wants your input first. Sooner the better.” Poe rattles off.

Finn frowns. “Hm. I didn’t want to use Green Squadron because half of it is newbies who’ve never flown a recon mission before, and this one’s gonna be tricky.”

“First time for everything.” Poe offers.

Finn still doesn’t seem to like the idea. “Hm.” Then he looks at Poe. “What about Black Squadron?”

“We’ve got more training at that time tomorrow, but if you want me to move the schedule around, I can.” Poe would do anything Finn asked of him, honestly.

“If it’s not too much trouble, I think that would be the best option. I don’t like that much better than sending Green, but…”

“Why? Black Squadron’s got the most seniority and experience.”

“I don’t like sending you out. Makes me worried.” Finn replies with brutal honesty. It takes Poe’s breath away for a moment. He really is such a pansy.

“I promise to be careful.” Poe says.

Finn rolls his eyes. “I know you, Dameron. Careful isn’t even in your vocabulary.”

Poe grins. He straightens his jumpsuit and gets ready to go, but then pauses and turns towards the students, who are doing a shitty job pretending not to be eavesdropping.

“You guys be good to Finn. You’re in good hands, cuz he’s the best teacher in the Resistance. And tell him to put a shirt on before he breaks someone’s heart.”

They all laugh and salute him. “Yes, Commander!”

Finn gives him a warm smile as he’s walking out.

Evidently, Poe’s not being as subtle as he thinks he is with his crush. He’s sitting in one of the small corridors off the hangar with BB-8, pulling off his boots and socks after a grueling 13 hours in the X-Wing on that damn recon mission he got saddled with. The recycled air in the ship gets pretty damn cold, especially after 13 hours, and especially when there’s no action pumping his adrenaline, and his feet are freezing. As he rubs his icy cold toes to try and get some feeling back in them, he realizes it’s the first time he’s been totally alone with Beeb in a long time (not counting time in Black One). Usually Finn’s around, or some other friend, or they’re in command center
with Leia and the bridge crew. BB-8 must realize it too, because he lets out a trill of beeps and rolls from side to side. 

[Partner Poe = in love with Friend Finn] 

It’s so out of the blue that Poe’s head shoots up from where he’s hunched. Beeb looks pleased with himself, still rocking back in forth in that taunting way. Poe glares. 

“Maybe. Shut up.” 

[Friend Finn = in love with Partner Poe?] 

“Yeah, right. He’s definitely not. No way.” 

[Partner Poe = told Friend Finn about feelings?] 

“Are you crazy? Fuck no! Imagine if I told him and he didn’t feel the same way- how fucking creepy would it look then that I’d been wanting to share a bed, and- and- shit like that. I don’t want to ruin our friendship. And anyways… he doesn’t have any experience with romance. I don’t want to pressure him into anything with me, if it’s not what he really wants. It would just be…” Poe heaves a big sigh, letting his head fall back to bang against the wall. He’s forgotten about his cold toes. 

[Partner Poe + not telling Friend Finn = can’t be certain. Friend Finn + sharing bed with Partner Poe + going shopping with Partner Poe + telling stories to Partner Poe + watching holovideos with Partner Poe = Friend Finn loves Partner Poe.] 

“Only in my dreams, Beeb.” Poe says quietly, staring at a crack in the ceiling. 

A long silence follows, and then Poe sighs again. He gets up with a groan, boots and socks in one hand because he can’t be assed to put them back on. He’ll just walk back to the barracks barefoot. He’s walked around the base in worse states of undress. 

“Come on, let’s go home.” Poe jerks his head and BB-8 starts rolling after him. 

A few evenings later, Poe finds himself laying in bed with Finn, which isn’t strange at this point, but what is strange is the slight deviation from their norm that they’re currently engaging in. They’ve wordlessly established certain protocols after a few weeks in a bed together, or so Poe
thought: they always lie together in the same position, Finn spooning Poe with a hand on his stomach, and they never deviate. As long as they’re in a bed, that’s the position they’re in. It felt scandalous to Poe at first, but repetition has made it feel like a norm, and now anything different, even if it’s an objectively more modest position, is heart-pounding. Hence why his pulse is thundering now. Finn’s lying on his back with one arm around Poe’s shoulders. Poe is snuggled up against his side, head on Finn’s shoulder, bent knee up against Finn’s thigh. They always watch holos on the cot, which they converted into a couch of sorts, but for some reason, Finn wanted to do it in bed tonight. And this was the position he wanted to do it in. Poe hasn’t registered a single thing happening on the screen since the vid started 40 minutes ago.

When Finn’s hand moves up from Poe’s shoulder to start stroking his hair, Poe thinks he might have an aneurysm. Death by light petting. Death by hot guy. Death by heart beating way too fucking fast, shouldn’t it have calmed down by now. Finn’s fingers bury themselves deep in his curls and squeeze a little, pulling at the hair. Poe heaves a shaky sigh.

“Yeah, this holo sucks.” Finn says, misinterpreting Poe’s sigh.

“Mhm.” Poe can only agree. He might as well have not even seen the damn thing. He spent the first 20 minutes just thinking about sliding on top of Finn and kissing him breathless.

Finn closes the video with his free hand and drums his fingers on the screen. “What now? Wanna try another one?”

Another whole holovid’s worth of torture? “Mph.” Poe replies eloquently.

“Well then what do you wanna do?” Finn prods.

Poe can think of a lot of things, but he definitely should keep them to himself. He hums instead, taking the padd out of Finn’s hand and swiping through the screens.

“Oh, I’ve never shown you these.”

“Shown me what?” Curious Finn is his favorite Finn.

Poe pulls up the photo albums. They’re all old pictures because he never takes pictures nowadays; some of them are even old enough that he’d had to scan them from hardcopy. The first one is one such photo- a family photo of him with his parents before his mom died, the original of which remains with his Dada on Yavin 4 in a silver frame on the mantlepiece.

“I was probably like five.” he tells Finn, and tilts the screen so he can see. Finn’s eyes widen and he grins wide.


Poe swipes and then deeply wishes he hadn’t. He groans. The next photo is him, about 15, from back when he was delusional enough to think that having his hair down to his shoulders looked good. He makes to swipe right past it, but Finn snatches the padd out of his hand, already cackling.

“Oh my god. Oh my god. No way. This is gold!”

“Yeah, yeah, hilarious. I guess there’s something to be said for the First Order and their mandated close-crops, because it prevents things like this from happening.” Poe is red in the face with embarrassment and tries to grab the padd back to no avail.

“You look good, in a weird way.” Finn squints at the photo. “Your face is so soft.”
“Great, so you’re saying I’m old and crusty now?”

Finn smirks. “Yeah, gramps. What happened?”

Poe wrestles out of Finn’s embrace, climbs on top of him, and jabs him in the side. Before he can slide back off, Finn’s arm follows him and holds him there. His left hand still holds the padd, and now they’re lying tummy-to-tummy, facing it. Poe always did have a habit of getting himself into trouble. This is stacking up to be just that. His heart is pounding again, and he wonders if Finn can feel it against his own chest. Just pretend everything’s cool. No problem.

Finn’s taken over the swiping, apparently. The next photo is a slightly older Poe standing proudly on the wing of a ship. His hair is still long.

“That was my first X-Wing. Brand new, not a hand-me-down or junker like all the other ones I’d had before. The cockpit still smelled like fresh polish, even. I saved up my whole life for it. Weird how much I treasured it, considering now I go through an X-Wing every other week, practically.”

“What happened to it?”

“Crashed it while I was in my first year at the Academy.”

“Somehow, I’m not surprised.”

Finn swipes some more, through photos Poe took with all his Academy buddies. Poe gives commentary, and as he does, he lays his head on Finn’s chest. Finn’s right hand starts petting his hair again, and if his heart wasn’t pounding so hard, Poe could probably fall asleep. It goes on for a while, and then Finn swipes to a photo that makes Poe want to throw himself off the nearest cliff.

It’s worse than the long-haired teenage one. Finn legitimately squeals, and then starts laughing uproariously. Poe turns his face into Finn’s collar in shame.

“Poe! Oh my god! What the hell is this!” Finn squeaks out through his laughter.

It’s a picture Poe took of himself around senior year. He doesn’t remember what prompted it. Youthful vanity probably. In it, he’s shirtless, and the camera is angled down so that the picture captures the abs he was very proud of at the time (which he definitely no longer has, unfortunately). He’s biting his lower lip, and some deliberately placed curls are hanging down on his forehead. Did he send it to someone? He truly doesn’t remember. Bad decisions, bad decisions.

“Ughhhhh. Why did I think this was a good idea.” Poe groans into the fabric of Finn’s shirt.

Finn strokes his back. “Wow. Poe. It’s funny, but it’s also a little…” he trails off.

Finn’s head shoots right back up.

“Ooh, he likes it.” He looks at Finn, who’s looking at the photo still. “You like it!”

“Well, I mean- it’s just. I mean. Just artistic appreciation, of course. The artistry of the lighting, the quality of the pixels. Perhaps there’s a deeper meaning to it, social commentary on the… you know. Society.” Finn strokes his non-existent beard sarcastically.

Poe laughs. “Social commentary on the stupidity of young pilots, is what it is.”

Despite his joking, Finn’s still looking. Poe feels a burst of confidence, and leans down to brush his lips over Finn’s ear.
“I’ll print out a copy for you if you like it that much.” he breathes. He sees Finn swallow out of the corner of his eye, and then he gets a poke to the gut.

“Fuck off, Dameron.”

Poe laughs, but leans back up and settles on Finn’s chest again. They go through the rest of the photos, which are thankfully nice and wholesome. The whole time Poe feels giddy, even giddier than he usually is in Finn’s presence. It feels like his heart is simultaneously melting and trying to climb out of his throat. His fingers are tingly. He’s hyper-aware of Finn’s voice and every point of contact between their bodies. When Finn’s hand traces patterns over his back, he wants to groan. He wants Finn to hold him tight, like this, and never let go. He thinks that he’s never loved and wanted someone like he loves and wants Finn. Eventually, as the night grows late, the padd gets shut off and discarded, and Finn manhandles him into their usual sleeping position. It’s anticlimactic, but Poe’s actually so tired from being keyed up for so long that he falls asleep in record time. When he dreams, he dreams about flying through a starry sky with Finn.

That’s about the last idyllic moment they have together before everything goes to shit. The next day, Poe’s standing in the command center with the General when an alarm goes off near the monitor desks.

“General Organa, there’s a First Order ship coming out of hyperspace.” someone announces gravely. Everyone’s heads shoot up. There’s a beat of total silence, and then everyone’s moving and shouting. Poe gets numerous elbows and shoulders as people suddenly throng past him.

“Commence with the evacuation! Put out a base-wide alarm!” Leia orders, already pulling up the battle plans they prepared in anticipation of this day. “Alright, let’s figure out how we’re gonna protect the transports while they leave the planet. There’ll be more star destroyers right behind that one, so let’s act quickly.”

She grabs the front of Poe’s shirt and yanks him closer. “I want Black Squadron to lead a distraction ploy. Get their attention away from the transports and give the bombers enough time to get there.”

Poe is about to respond when three more ships blip out of hyperspace. One of them is distinctly not a star destroyer, and Poe’s stomach sinks. It’s a Dreadnaught. Star destroyers they might have been able to handle reasonably, sure, but this suddenly makes everything a lot harder. The Dreadnaught will be able to destroy the entire base with a couple shots from where it is, the base and all the transports with it. All the rebels, too. Leia looks a bit shocked. Poe swallows, and then leans closer.

“I’ve got a crazy idea.”

Which is how he finds himself facing the Dreadnaught, alone, just him and Beeb in the vastness of space with all the cannons of three star destroyers and a Dreadnaught trained on him. He has to stall for time so that the janky accelerator he installed in Black One’s engine can warm up; without it, he’ll never get to the surface cannons before they blast him into space jelly. He starts toggling the switches to engage it, and BB-8 beeps at him.

“Happy beeps, buddy, come on. We’ve pulled crazier stunts than this.”
His comm crackles. “Just for the record, Commander Dameron, I’m with the droid on this one.” Leia’s vote of confidence.

“Thank you for your support, General.” he replies sarcastically. He takes a deep breath and lets it out, eyeing the truly terrifying ship before him. “Happy beeps.”

His stall tactic actually works, which completely blows him away. Finn had kind of given him the understanding that Hux was smarter than that. Even evil geniuses slip up sometimes, he supposes. When the engine is hot, he cuts the comm and slams on the gas. The whiplash is insane, and throws him back against the seat. He likes to fly fast, but this might be a little too fast, even for Poe Dameron. Black One hurtles towards the Dreadnaught, and once he’s on top of it, he cuts the extra accelerator. The deceleration throws him forward.

“Woo, that’s got a kick!”

They’re already firing on him with the surface cannons, but this close up, they’re clunky and unmaneuverable. Adrenaline pumping, he weaves through them fairly easily, picking them off one by one, leaving a trail of explosions in his wake.

“Alright Tally, start your approach.” he commands, confidence growing as more and more cannons fall.

A loop de loop and a shot later, and there’s only one cannon left. Of course, at that moment, he hears the familiar scream of TIE fighters behind him. BB-8 beeps.

“Yeah, yeah, I see ‘em!”

He thinks he’s doing well up until a shot rocks the ship and a couple of his monitors die.

“No, no, dammit!” he cries, mashing the trigger to no effect. “BB-8, my weapons systems are down! We gotta take out that last cannon or our bombers are toast! Where’s your magic, buddy?”

He hears Beeb wheedle and drop down into the body of the ship. Again he finds himself stalling for time, evading the TIE fighters while half-listening to the commotion going on on the comm channels. Command crew, the last to be evacuated, are being shuffled onto the final transport. He can hear Connix shouting orders, and she isn’t even on the main line. He knows Finn got categorized as Command during the planning of the evacuation, so he breathes a sigh of relief knowing that he’s being taken care of.

When he hears the heavy auto-cannons on the bottom of the Dreadnaught fire, though, he has a moment of panic. In the rear monitor, he sees the huge blasts rocketing towards D’Qar. His relief when he hears Connix come on the main line and announce that the last transport made it is intense. His plan actually fucking worked. He suddenly feels invincible.

“You did it, Poe. Now get your squad back here so we can get out of this place.” comes Leia’s voice.

In his moment of confidence, the thought of backing down is repulsive to him. “No, General, we can do this! We have a chance to take out a Dreadnaught! These things are fleet-killers! We can’t let it get away!”

“Disengage now, Commander, that is an order!”

Just before he hears the end of Leia’s sentence, he petulantly turns off the comm. He’s not gonna run away like a coward, not when he can destroy one of the Resistance’s biggest banes. They have
a chance at this, he’s not gonna pass it up. What’s there to lose, anyways? The fleet has its shields up and is safe from the star destroyers. With a determined grimace, Poe accelerates towards the last surface cannon, insubordination be damned.

“Let’s go, BB-8, it’s now or never!” he shouts back. As if on command, the weapons systems come back online, and Poe blasts the hell out of the cannon. He does a sharp 180 in the explosion it leaves, and takes out the last two TIE fighters trailing him.

“Yeah!” he shouts, flicking the comm back on. “All clear, bring the bombs!”

He’s half-worried that nobody will listen to him, considering Leia just told him to disengage, but it appears that crew sentiment is with him, because the fighters and bombers chime in with cheers and begin their approach. Leia doesn’t say anything to stop them, so he assumes she’s given in. It bolsters his confidence even more, and he loops back to rejoin Black Squadron in protecting the bombers. For a moment, it seems like everything is going to go perfectly and he’s going to return to the fleet a hero.

But suddenly, the bombers are dropping out of the sky in a waterfall of flames and fighters are getting picked off by TIEs left and right. Poe’s screaming into the comm at the pilot of the last surviving bomber, but no one is responding. For a tense minute or two, nothing happens at all, even though the bomber is right over the drop point. And then, the bay doors open and all the bombs fall out, with not a whisper from the pilot or controller. The bomber gets swallowed by the eruption of fire, and then the Dreadnaught is sinking. The massive ship, the cacophanous explosion, is all silent from inside the X-Wing. Poe watches out the right window with a conflicted heart.

“Direct hit! Dreadnaught down!” he hears someone from Command announce over the comm. The resultant cheers that erupt reassure Poe, remind him that he did the right thing. As the Dreadnaught falls through the sky towards D’Qar, the fighters regroup with the fleet and take off into hyperspace.

When he dismounts Black One in the hangar, the first person he sees is Finn. Finn’s running towards him, muscling through the crowd in his haste. Poe jumps down off the ladder, slightly confused. When Finn gets to him, he’s yanked into a suffocating hug. It’s all very surprising, and Poe’s not sure what’s going on, but he hugs him back. They stay like that for a while, and then Finn moves back a little, arms still gripping Poe tightly. Poe blinks at him in confusion.

“What-”

“Don’t ever do anything like that again.” Finn says, voice low.

“Anything like what?” Poe frowns.

Finn’s nostrils flare. “Like that. You could have died!”

“What- I- Everything was under control! I’ve come close to dying before, and believe me, that back there barely even qualified as a risky situation. I was safe the whole time!” Poe really is baffled. He’s flown much more dangerous missions before. His ship’s been shot down, his cockpit has caught fire, he’s crashed, the list goes on and on. By his standards, the skirmish just now was nothing at all.

“I was on the bridge, Poe. I saw how many fighters were getting shot down. All the bombers are gone. Don’t even tell me you were safe.” Finn argues back, shaking him for emphasis.

“I was! I only got shot once!” Poe cries. He doesn’t know why Finn is being like this.
Finn closes his eyes and sighs, and then looks off into the distance. He releases Poe from his grip and takes a step back. Poe watches, completely lost.

“I just… I.” Finn starts to say, but seems to lose his nerve. He sighs again. “I’m going back to the bridge.”

And just like that, he goes. Poe can’t tell if he’s offended, or angry, or something else.

Poe eventually makes his way to the bridge himself, after doing a little maintenance on BB-8, who fried himself a bit getting the weapons systems back online. Going through the halls, he’s greeted by everyone he passes with a slap on the shoulder, or back, or just a smile and a salute. It bolsters his confidence, and when he enters the bridge, it’s with a slight swagger. Leia sees him and beckons him over, and he obeys, expecting thanks and apologies.

He’s shocked when she slaps him across the face instead.

“You’re demoted.” she says angrily, and then goes to walk away, as if that’s that.

“Whoa, whoa, whoa- we- we took down a Dreadnaught!” is all he can think to say in protest. He can’t believe what he’s hearing.

“At what cost?” she counters.

“You start an attack, you follow it through.”

“Poe, get your head out of your cockpit. There are things that you cannot solve by jumping in an X-Wing and blowing something up. I need you to learn that.” She goes to leave again, and Poe grabs her arm. He’s desperate and confused.

“I was just doing what I thought was right.” he says quietly, pleading.

“You were wrong.” is Leia’s answer, and then she leaves.

Poe stands there for a minute, dumbfounded. Apparently he can’t do anything right, according to Finn and the General. His earlier confidence deflates like a popped balloon. He catches Finn’s eye from across the room; he’s watching with an unreadable expression. So that’s how it is. Poe’s about to go find something to kick, when an alarm sounds on the bridge.

“They found us.” comes Riya’s voice from the monitors.

Poe’s eyes widen. “That’s impossible.”

They just came out of hyperspace- it literally is impossible. They could have jumped anywhere, how could the First Order have known? This, plus his sudden demotement, make Poe wonder for a moment if he’s dreaming. But, as he stares at the monitor, a fleet of star destroyers led by a massive black ship blip one by one out of light speed, right on their tails.

“That’s Snoke’s ship.” someone says in a horrified voice.

“Can we jump to light speed?”

“We have enough fuel resources for just one jump.” Connix replies.

Poe joins her, Leia, and Finn at the main monitor. “Do it, we gotta get out of here.”
“Wait.” Leia silences everyone with a raised hand. “They’ve tracked us through light speed.”

“That’s impossible.” Finn says.

“Yes.” Leia gazes at the screen. “And they’ve done it.”

A long beat of silence follows.

“So if we jump to light speed, they’ll just follow us again and we’ll be out of fuel.” Finn fills in the gaps for everyone else. “They’ve got us.”

Poe grits his teeth. “Not yet, they don’t.” He slams his hands on the desk and marches over to Leia. “Permission to jump in an X-Wing and blow something up?”

“Permission granted.” Leia replies with a roll of her eyes.

He feels Finn’s eyes on him as he runs out of the bridge for the hangar, trailed closely by BB-8. It prickles the back of his neck; Finn must really not have any faith at all in his ability as a pilot. He resolutely ignores it for now. Now, he needs to protect the fleet. A sinking feeling of guilt and regret is already starting to bubble inside him, knowing that he’s mostly responsible for the fact that the Resistance now has no bombers and are sitting ducks. He’ll figure something out on the fly. There’s always a way.

He sees the hangar doors up ahead and runs faster. BB-8 is practically flying.

“Don’t wait for me! Jump in and fire it up!” he shouts, and Beeb rolls even faster.

Everyone else is already in the hangar; Poe can hear the shouting and revving of engines. *Hurry up, hurry up, you old geezer…* But then, just as he turns the corner into the hangar, a massive blast from a First Order fighter rips in through the open bay doors. Flames engulf the entire space in a matter of seconds, and Poe finds himself flying backwards, back through the hangar entryway and into the hall. He lands on his back and skids across the floor, banging into the opposite wall with a groan. BB-8 skids with him, and hits the wall so hard his head pops off and clatters to the ground.

Poe gasps for air; the wind’s been knocked out of him. He wheezes and looks at the scorched, barren hangar in horror, lungs refusing to cooperate. He really must be dreaming, now. Everything is going so, so wrong. For a dark moment, he wonders if this is going to be the end of the Resistance. The hangar doors automatically shut once the fire alarms engage, and Poe watches them close in dumbfounded silence.

He’s brought back to his senses by someone kneeling beside him and steadying him with strong hands. It’s Finn. He looks out of breath.

“How are you alright?” he asks, a little panicked. He helps Poe sit up, rubbing his back.

Poe doesn’t have time to swoon now. “We need to get out of range of those star destroyers.” he gasps.

Finn helps him to his feet, and then he’s hobbling back to the bridge. Demotion or no, he’s gonna give command crew a piece of his mind, and a verbal smackdown if they don’t listen to him. He starts regaining his balance, and strides ahead of Finn. They pass by a window, and Poe happens to glance through it.

To his horror, he sees the observation deck of the bridge has been blown open. Flames and debris are everywhere, and there’s some things that look like bodies floating out into space. Poe stops
short, looking on with wide eyes. Finn joins him at the window, but Poe doesn’t look back at him. This has to be some kind of awful nightmare. He prays that Leia wasn’t on the bridge, but in his heart, he knows she was. He can’t believe what’s happening.

But then, out of the chaos scattered among the stars, a form approaches. As it gets closer, he realizes that it’s Leia, pulling herself back to the ship with the Force. Poe barely even realizes what he’s doing as he starts shouting orders and running for the bay door she’s angled herself at. This is the closest thing he’s had to a mom since his real mom died, this is the leader of the Resistance, the champion of rebellion for the last thirty-plus years, one of his dearest friends and mentors. He’s fucked everything else up today, but he’ll be damned if he’s gonna lose Leia. She reaches the door and he’s there to open it immediately. She falls into his arms as the door shuts, and her eyes close.

“No, no, no!” Poe cries.

Medics are behind him in seconds, getting her onto a stretcher. Poe follows them to medical, shouting at everyone in the hall to clear out. He’s so distressed he doesn’t even notice Finn isn’t following.

Poe stays at Leia’s bedside for the next few hours, like he did for Finn a few months ago. He’s given up on trying to lead anything or anyone for now. He doesn’t want to fuck anything else up. So he just sits there, holding her hand and thinking. Everything has gone to shit so fast he can barely keep his head on straight. Leia was right, as always. He should have disengaged when she told him to. Now look at the mess they’re in. If they still had bombers, they might be able to make a stand instead of just running away. Why’d he have to go and doom the Resistance? He feels deeply guilty. He was so bold and confident, and now he’s just a coward, sitting in the quiet room, hearing nothing but the beeping of the life support system, alone with nothing but his thoughts.

So, when the door swishes open behind him, he’s about as in-the-mood for it as a nesting tauntaun might be if someone were to intrude on her den. He looks over his shoulder and is only slightly mollified to see that it’s Finn. Finn looks somber. He approaches.

“Hey.”

Poe manages a half-smile. “Hey.”

“You okay?” Finn asks. He sounds like he genuinely cares.

Poe doesn’t deserve it after what he’s done. So he doesn’t answer, just shrugs and looks back at Leia. It’s quiet for a while, and then he feels a hand on his shoulder. Finn really shouldn’t be wasting his time with an idiot like Poe.

“You didn’t do anything wrong.” Finn says. “You were just doing what you thought was right. It’s not your fault they had a light speed tracker. You didn’t know.”

It’s so on the mark that Poe’s eyes sting with tears. He can’t look at Finn. What kind of a leader is he, crying over a hospital bed and unable to even look someone in the eye?

“Finn… I, uh. I kind of just wanna be alone right now. I’m sorry.” he says, hating himself for it. Finn’s just trying to be nice. He’s a good friend. Poe doesn’t deserve it.

“Oh, okay, sorry. I’ll be helping the maintenance crew down in the lower level if you wanna talk.” And then he gets up and leaves Poe alone.
Poe cries for a while after he’s gone.

A little while later, someone comes to tell him that Holdo is now in charge and she’s got a plan to keep onwards towards Crait, an uninhabited mineral planet, and then secretly evacuate everyone to the surface in the transports. Poe doesn’t like the idea of abandoning the cruiser and starting all over with nothing, and he especially doesn’t like the idea of everyone being out in space in the shieldless transports, but it’s a better plan than no plan at all, so he reluctantly keeps quiet. He stays right where he is in Leia’s room, in fact. He’s just gonna quarantine himself to save everyone else from his stupidity. That’s a good idea that sure makes him feel good about himself.

The door opens again, and he groans a little. Can’t everyone just leave him to wallow and hate himself in peace? He turns in his chair and sees that it’s Finn again, this time trailed quite closely by a small, cute girl. He instantly tenses up in jealousy. He can’t help it. They come in and Finn starts talking.

“I know you said you wanted to be alone, Poe, and I’m sorry, I’m not good at any of this, I know, but we, uh- we have an idea to save the ship and we need your help.”

“Really? What is it? You know Holdo’s already got an idea, right?” We. Who even is this girl, anyways?

“This plan would let us keep the cruiser, if we can do it in time.”

Poe perks up a little. “Really? Lay it on me.”

He listens as attentively as possible as Finn explains it, but Poe’s never had the mind for advanced mechanics beyond the inner workings of X-Wings. Finn’s throwing out words like *A-class process* and *dedicated power-breaker* for god’s sake. Finn finishes his spiel, and from the look on Poe’s face, can clearly tell that not much of it stuck. Poe sits up straighter.

“Just give it to me one more time, simpler.”

“So the First Order’s only tracking us from one destroyer, the lead one.” Finn starts. Poe’s got that bit.

“So we blow that one up.”

“I like where your head’s at, but no. They’d only start tracking us from another destroyer. But if we sneak on board the lead destroyer and disable the tracker without them realizing-”

“-Then they won’t realize it’s off for one system cycle. About six minutes.” the girl interjects. Poe had almost forgotten about her. He tenses again.

“Sneak on board.” Finn continues. “Disable the tracker. Our fleet escapes before they realize.”

Ah. Poe hums. It might actually work. And this method would have the benefit of allowing a total escape on the part of the Resistance- if they just run to Crait, the First Order will figure it out pretty quickly, and then they’ll be right back where they started, minus one cruiser. Poe likes the idea. He gets up from the chair and puts his hands on his hips. Still…

“How’d you two meet?” he asks, pointing between Finn and the girl. They look at each other.

“Just luck?” she says. It’s vague enough to fan the flames. Poe’s jealous as hell.
“Yeah? Good luck?” he asks petulantly, turning to look at Leia. He doesn’t wanna watch them moon over each other anymore. He feels bad for being an ass, but Finn… Finn is… That’s a bad train of thought. He doesn’t own Finn. Finn can do whatever he wants.

“Not sure yet.” the girl answers.

Poe doesn’t know what to think of that.

“Poe, we gotta do this.” Finn says, getting them back on topic. “We can save the fleet, and it’ll save Rey too.”

Oh now it’s all about Rey again. Poe wants to slap himself for being so possessive. He really is a major douche. And what did he expect? Of course Finn would want to find other people to hang out with after he undoubtedly realized what a dumbass Poe is. He places his hand over Leia’s, trying to get a grip on himself. What is the right thing to do? She would know. And she wouldn’t let personal feelings get in the way of doing her duty.

With a firm nod to himself, Poe lets go of her hand and marches over to Finn and the girl. His own feelings be damned, the Resistance is in danger and he’s going to do everything he can to save it.

“Alright, you guys shut down that tracker. I’ll be here to jump us to light speed. The question is, how do we sneak the two of you onto Snoke’s destroyer?”

“We steal clearance codes!” the girl suggests.

“No, they’re bio-hexacrypt and rescrambled every hour.” Finn shuts it down. “We can’t get through their security shields undetected. Nobody can.”

Poe pouts, but then an idea strikes him.

Maz Canata disappoints, but she gives them directions to a master codebreaker on Canto Bight, of all places. Poe has a bad feeling about it. He’s never been anything but unlucky on Canto Bight. They decide to secretly jump Finn, the girl (Rose is her name), and BB-8 to the planet while Poe stays behind and tries to convince Holdo of the plan’s merit. Just as Finn, Rose, and Beeb are leaving, Finn stops and hands something to Poe. It’s Rey’s tracker. Poe looks at Finn for probably too long before gently taking it. He’s honored that Finn trusts him to keep it safe. It breaks his heart a little, too. They leave, and Poe heads for the bridge.

Holdo doesn’t love the plan, but she’s not opposed to it either. She agrees to give Finn and Rose as much time as possible, but if they don’t make it back before the fuel reserves get dangerously low, she’s going to proceed with the original evacuation plan. It’s as good as it’s gonna get. She assigns Poe to a monitor desk on the new makeshift bridge to manage communication with Finn and Rose and keep command updated. There’s not much to do after they land on Canto Bight and Finn’s reports stop, though. The hours tick by without so much as a peep, and Poe gets progressively more worried and more tired. He hasn’t slept in ages, not since before all this madness happened. He’s exhausted- physically, mentally, and emotionally. Pretty much the only thing keeping him awake at this point is pure concern for Finn’s wellbeing. His eyelids keep drooping like the traitors they are. He feels weak.

He feels a hand on his shoulder. He turns, and it’s Holdo. She looks concerned.

“If you need to sleep, you can, you know. Everyone is tired.”
Poe shakes his head. “Don’t want to miss anything.”

“Well. No one will think less of you either way.” With another pat to the shoulder, she returns to her post.

Poe sighs. She’s right, he’s no good to anyone exhausted. He just doesn’t like the idea of giving in. Imagine seeing the fool who doomed the Resistance taking a jolly little nap on the bridge right at the height of the crisis he created. He’s just about resolved not to sleep when a small maintenance droid bumps his leg.

[Captain Poe = needs sleep. Everyone else on bridge = also sleeping.]

Poe’s about to protest, but then he actually looks around at the other desks. Almost everyone else on the bridge is asleep at their monitors, heads pillowed on their arms or slumped back in their chairs. Connix beside him is out cold, to the point where her mouth is hanging open. Holdo and a few others remain awake to keep tabs on everything, but the fact of the matter is, now it’s just a waiting game. There really isn’t a better time to catch up on much-needed rest. And with everyone asleep, there’s no one to see him sleeping. He’s decided.

“You’re right. Hey, can you wake me up if anything happens? Anything. Even if it’s just the trash guy coming to empty the bins.”

The droid beeps an affirmative.

Poe’s asleep on his desk within a matter of seconds.

He doesn’t know how long he’s been out for when the droid starts beeping shrilly and nudging his leg. He groans and sits up, scrubbing his hands over his face. His neck has a crick in it now and his mouth tastes cottony.

“What is it?” he rasps, and then clears his throat.

[Admiral Holdo = fueling the transports. Fuel reserves = now at critical level.]

Poe’s eyes bug out and then he’s scrambling for the comm device. He only drops it once.

“Finn, Rose! Where are you guys? Holdo’s fueling the transports, you have to hurry!”

There’s a crackle, and then the line engages. “We’re on our way, Poe, we’re so close. Just hold on a little bit longer.” Finn.

“Did you find the master codebreaker?” Poe asks. Holdo is looking over at him now.

“We uh… we got a codebreaker.”

Poe grimaces.
“We can shut the tracker down, just buy us a little more time.”

“Alright, hurry.”

Poe cuts the line. Holdo is already at his side. She looks apologetic.

“Poe… It’s too late. If we don’t start loading the transports now, they won’t be able to get clear of the star destroyers.”

“But I know Finn can do it! Please, just give them a chance!” Poe pleads.

“It was a good idea, but I can’t risk the entire Resistance for bad odds. I’m sorry, Poe. Comm them and tell them to head to the abandoned base on Crait once they’re in the system. And you should get to a transport soon, too.” Holdo’s voice is firm. Then she leaves.

Poe grits his teeth. The sight of the approaching destroyers on the monitors, and the thought of the tiny, defenseless transports heading out into space with them, fills him with dread. Evacuating is seeming more and more like a bad idea. He wishes Leia were awake. She would know what to do. He doesn’t comm Finn and Rose to tell them to head to Crait- he’s still holding out hope that they’ll pull it off before everyone is on the transports and everything will work out. He just tells them to hurry, and to comm him when they get the tracker disabled.

Poe stalls as long as possible on the bridge, hoping to hear the blip of the comm. It does come- but when it does, it’s not what he’s been waiting to hear at all.

“You there, hands up!” comes an unfamiliar voice.

Poe’s stomach sinks.

“Drop your weapons now! Rebel scum! Get down! I said down !”

“FN-2187. So good to have you back.” The mechanical female voice can’t be anyone other than Phasma. The comm line cuts off suddenly, and then there’s nothing.

Poe suddenly can’t breathe. “They didn’t make it.” he whispers to no one but himself. He sits there, stunned, horrified. Finn got caught. They’re probably going to kill him. He can’t breathe.

Suddenly, Holdo is there, grabbing his arm.

“Come on, Poe, time to go!”

He doesn’t put up a fight, just lets himself be dragged through the halls to the transport bay. He can’t believe it. He wants to wake up and realize that all of this was just a vivid nightmare. His heart is breaking. Finn got caught. Finn is gone. His Finn. And so is BB-8, for that matter.

Holdo throws him onto the last open transport and doesn’t follow. The doors close behind him. In unison, the transports all power up and depart from the hangar. Poe doesn’t care anymore. Let the star destroyers blast them all to pieces, like he knows they will. He doesn’t care. Finn and Beeb are gone. He finds a bench, the first one he sees, and sinks onto it, covering his face with his hands and bursting into tears. It’s a full-blown ugly-cry, and he doesn’t care. Let everyone see their idiot commander, captain, sobbing his eyes out in the middle of a crowded ship. Finn is gone. Beeb is gone.
When he hears the first shots picking off the transports, he doesn’t even look up. Nor does he look up when Holdo warps through the First Order ships and cuts them all in half.

Poe cries all the way to Crait. He stifies the sobs when they land so as not to disturb everyone that’s left of the Resistance, but the tears keep running like a faucet down his cheeks no matter how he tries to suppress them. He gets a few sympathetic pats on the back, but mostly everyone gives him space. This is the worst fucking day of his entire life.

The First Order is already on the ground, and approaching the base. They have to close the bay doors to keep them out. Poe doesn’t give a fuck anymore. Close them, he says. He’s now the highest ranking officer technically, as Leia is still unconscious, and he wishes he wasn’t. He’s not the leader he thought he was. Anything he does, he messes up. He got Finn and Rose killed. He doomed the Resistance. He deserves to be locked up for war crime.

Just as the bay doors are closing, a First Order shuttle rockets into the hangar, skidding along the ground and sending sparks flying everywhere. Everyone begins firing on it, as Poe watches apathetically. Over the din of blaster shots, it takes him a second to recognize the voices coming from inside the shuttle. Two pairs of hands begin waving in surrender over the lip of the cockpit, and Poe’s eyes widen.

“Hold your fire!” he yells, and instantly, all shooting ceases.

It feels like the sun breaking over the horizon when Poe sees Finn and Rose’s heads peek over the cockpit. He exhales sharply, and feels for a moment like he might faint. Then he’s running, running to them. Finn jumps down just in time to catch Poe in his arms. Poe’s sobbing again, clinging to Finn’s shoulders, twisting his fingers in unfamiliar fabric. Finn holds him tight, rubbing his back. He’s probably getting Finn’s collar all wet. But Finn is alive.

“Finn, I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry, I never should have let you go, I’m such an idiot-”

Finn softly shushes him. Poe sobs some more.

“I thought- I thought you were dead, Finn, I, I couldn’t-”

Finn pulls back a little, but doesn’t let go of Poe. “Poe. I need to tell you something.”

Now that Finn’s looking at him, Poe tries to get a handle on his crying. He sniffs and relinquishes a hand on Finn’s shoulder to wipe his nose with. His bottom lip trembles when Finn helps him by gently wiping the tears on his cheeks away with his thumb.

“What is it?” his voice sounds absolutely wrecked.

But then Finn doesn’t say anything. He just takes Poe’s face in his hands, tilts it, and kisses him. Poe inhales in surprise, and then he’s throwing himself against Finn and kissing him back with all the gusto he can muster. Finn’s the one to pull away eventually, but he keeps holding Poe’s cheeks, so reverently, like he’s holding a delicate piece of pottery. They look at each other, and then Poe’s laughing, and Finn’s laughing, and he’s never felt such relief in all his life. They knock their foreheads together as they hold each other.

Poe’s attention is drawn away by a familiar beeping. He turns, and BB-8 is there. He grins even bigger, and his heart feels like it might burst out of his chest.

“Beeb! My buddy! You’re okay!” he breaks away from Finn’s embrace and kneels to hug his
droid. BB-8 trills happily.

There’s no time for he and Finn to talk about this at all, or even for Poe to ask how the hell they managed to get away from the First Order in the first place. But he doesn’t give a single fuck. Finn is alive, and BB-8 is okay. Poe feels some of his confidence returning. Not all, but some. He’s fucked everything up so far, but there’s still time to make things right and save what’s left of the Resistance. He directs people to the dusty, outdated monitors in the old command center and orders Connix to send out a distress call to any and all Resistance allies using Leia’s personal code. If there’s anyone out there willing to help, it’s now or never. They get the shields up and start monitoring the ground assault the First Order’s put together on their doorstep, too. Rose reports that the only things left in the bay are some gutted-out ground speeders. The First Order’s got fucking AT-ATs out there, so there’s not much hope in countering the assault. Poe just hopes that big-ass door holds long enough for them to get help.

A thud and a shaking of the entire base tempers his hope. The crystal creatures start whimpering. Not good.

Finn gets on the binoculars.

“A battering ram cannon.” he announces.

“A what now?” Poe asks. He’s never heard of that before.

Finn moves back and pins him with a grave look. “Miniaturized Death Star tech. It’ll crack that door open like an egg.”

Really not good.

“There has to be a back way out of here, right?” Rose suggests.

But BB-8 rolls over and reports that there is no other way in or out. Of course there isn’t. A long, nervous silence falls over everyone. Poe isn’t sure what to do. He can practically feel the fear and resignation coming over everyone. But then Finn breaks the silence.

“Come on. We have allies. People believe in Leia. They’ll get our message, they’ll come. But we have to buy time.” He gets a determined glint in his eye. “We gotta take out that cannon.”

There’s a murmur of assent throughout the room, and people start perking up again. Poe wants to kiss him silly. But he’s the presiding officer, and it really wouldn’t be professional. He’s been unprofessional enough for one day. He nods and begins shouting orders instead. Buying time, it is.

His determination fails him when he gets to the room with the speeders in it. He’s all for the idea of a high-speed race to the cannon, that’s not the problem. The problem is that everyone is expecting him to lead it. As he looks at the janky speeders, all he can see is X-Wings falling out of the sky and Resistance bombers descending in a waterfall of fire. He hears Leia telling him to disengage. He sees himself failing.

“So you, Rose, and anyone else who can drive take these and race to the cannon before it warms up. Fire down the throat, destroy it. We’ll cover you from the base.” Poe repeats.

“We? Poe, you have to come with us. You’re the best pilot we have!” Finn protests.
Poe shakes his head. “I can’t. I have to stay back here.”

“Why?”

“I just… I can’t…” Poe doesn’t know how to say it. He sighs and kicks his feet. “I’ll just fuck it up again.”

“Poe Dameron, you get your ass in that speeder and stop feeling sorry for yourself.” comes a familiar voice from behind them. He and Finn both turn. It’s Leia. Poe can’t help the smile that breaks out onto his face.

“Leia.”

She raises an eyebrow and comes over. She’s walking with a cane, but she’s awake and walking nevertheless. It’s a sight for sore eyes. She places her free hand on Poe’s arm when she gets close enough.

“Poe, everybody makes mistakes. It’s just a part of life. But now the Resistance needs a leader. The Resistance needs you,” she says quietly.

“But…”

“No but’s. Be the hero that I know you can be.” She turns to go, but looks back over her shoulder. “And may the Force be with you.”

And so Poe finds himself flying out of the hangar in possibly the jankiest and most outdated speeder he’s ever driven, leading a team of thirteen, half of which aren’t even pilots, and directing the rest of the defense units over the comm line.

“Alright, listen up.” he says into the headset. “I don’t like these rust-buckets, and I don’t like our odds.”

He goes to hit the stabilizer with his boot and a panel of the floor falls out instead.

“Oh, what the hell. Just- keep it tight, and don’t get drawn in too close until they roll that cannon out front.”

They rocket towards the AT-ATs, kicking up clouds of red as they go. Once they get close enough, Poe addresses the ground troops behind them.

“Alright, ground forces, lay down some fire!”

They keep going. As was to be expected, TIE fighters soon start taking to the sky. On either side of him, speeders start getting blasted away, and Poe can feel doubt starting to set in. But he grits his teeth, thinks of Leia, and hits the accelerator. He hears the remaining drivers follow suit. They trust him. The Resistance trusts him. Everything will be okay.

And then, all the TIE fighters are diverting, hot on the tail of the Millenium Falcon, which has just appeared out of nowhere. The Falcon leads them off, far away from the Resistance. Everyone in the speeders starts hooting and cheering, and they continue their race to the cannon. It’s been rolled out now, winged by AT-ATs on either side. It really is massive. The core of it starts glowing orange as Poe stares, opening up and whirring with an increasingly loud rumble.
“The cannon’s opening, this is our chance!” Finn yells over the comm.

They keep on, but the First Order seems to have realized what they’re up to by this point, because all of the AT-ATs start concentrating their fire on the speeders. Both speeders on either side of Poe get picked off right away, and he sees another one closer to Finn explode the same way. Fuck, fuck, fuck, at this rate, there’s no way they’ll make it to the cannon without getting blasted to pieces. They can’t keep going. His heart stops when he hears Finn over the comm again.

“Alright, making my final approach. Target in sight, guns are hot.”

He sounds so professional, so serious, and Poe is suddenly seized by the urge to stop everything and turn around. If he lets Finn go, Finn will die. He’s certain of that. The cannon is charging faster than they expected, and Finn would have to get right in its face to shoot it where it needs to be shot. There’s no way he’d come back. No one would. Poe makes his decision.

“No! Pull off! The cannon’s charged, it’s a suicide run!” he orders.

“What? No! I’m almost there!” Finn protests, just as fiercely.

If Finn pulls a hero stunt and gets himself killed, Poe will never recover. “Retreat, Finn, that’s an order! Everyone back to the base!”

Everyone but Finn obediently does a 180 and heads in the opposite direction. Poe knew he wouldn’t listen, and so he’s trailing him instead of turning around.

“Finn, it’s too late, don’t do this!” comes Rose’s voice.

“No! I won’t let them win!” Finn shouts back.

“Finn, please, listen to Poe!”

Poe wishes he would. Finn’s way ahead of him now, and right in the path of the cannon. Poe’s struggling to catch up. The beam is already mostly-charged and boring into the doors of the base. Poe watches in horror as Finn retracts the monoskith and flies upwards, right into the blast. It’s melting his guns, no doubt, and Poe realizes with horror that he’s going to fly directly into the cannon in order to destroy it.

“No!” he shouts.

He’s not gonna let this happen. He slams on the accelerator, the speeder screaming in protest, and forces it up and around, angling so he’s coming towards the beam from the side. Faster, faster, please don’t be too late, please don’t take Finn from me just when I got him back, please…

Poe slams into Finn just as he’s about to reach the cannon, throwing both of them out of its path and onto the ground. Metal and crimson dust go everywhere, and they skid far enough across the salt to actually clear the line of AT-ATs entirely. At some point during the crash, Poe bangs his head on the windshield, and everything goes dark.

It’s not the worst hit to the head he’s ever received, because he wakes up a minute or two later. He’s still strapped to his seat, but the rest of his speeder is totally mangled and demolished. Half the windshield is gone, and for some reason, his hand is bleeding. There’s smoke everywhere. Everything is still, though, and he realizes they’re on the ground.

Someone’s running towards him.
“Poe! Poe!”

Poe is out of commission, sorry, thank you very much, call back another day. His head flops onto his shoulder and he closes his eyes. He wishes he could move his arms. Suddenly, someone is kneeling beside him, sounding utterly frantic.

“Poe!” It’s Finn. He’s unbuckling Poe’s harness. “Why would you do that? Huh?”

Poe wakes right up at the sound of his voice, and blinks a few times. Finn pushes his headset off and pulls him out of the seat and into his arms. He sounds very panicked for someone who was ready to calmly face death a second ago.

“I was almost there. Why would you stop me?” Finn brushes the hair out of Poe’s eyes and touches his cheek. There are tears in his eyes. Poe thinks of watching holos on the cot with him, of buying candy with him at off-world markets, of laughing with him til they’re both in tears, of being held in his arms.

“I saved you, dummy.” Poe answers eloquently. “That’s how we’re gonna win. Not fighting what we hate. Saving what we love.”

Finn is quiet, save for his heavy breathing. Then he leans down and kisses Poe very softly.

“Then I guess I better get you back to the base. Or whatever’s left of it.”

Poe manages to hobble back with a good grip on Finn’s shoulders and a sturdy arm supporting him at his back. He hadn’t noticed earlier, but his right leg is fucking up. He’s bleeding from his thigh and the pain that shoots through his ankle every time he steps on it makes him want to do dastardly things. The doors have already been blown open, so they just waltz right in when they finally reach the base (which was not close, wow, Poe hadn’t realized just how far out they’d been). The General and the rest of the Resistance are there to meet them.

“I’m sorry.” Poe says to Leia.

She shakes her head. “You have nothing to be sorry for, Commander Dameron. You made the right call this time. Just try not to let it go to your head.”

She winks at him. He smiles a tired smile and salutes her with his free hand.

A medic patches him up while they sit with Leia in the blown-out command center. Their distress call has been received at numerous locations, but there’s been no response. It seems that the galaxy has lost all its hope. Poe doesn’t feel too bad, though. Maybe he’s just high on adrenaline, but now that he’s learned from his mistakes and confessed his feelings to Finn, the thought of dying doesn’t really bother him. Really, if there’s ever a time to die, it’s when you’ve tied up all your loose ends. Quickly is even better, so you don’t have a chance to make any more. Finn takes his hand and holds it while he’s thinking all this, and he squeezes back. It’s just too bad he never got to see Finn naked.

But then, a shadow appears in the hallway. A man walks in dressed in long robes, and when he pulls back his hood, Poe’s eyes widen. It’s Luke motherfucking Skywalker.

Maybe they’re not defeated after all.
Luke’s diversion allows the remaining Resistance members to escape. Poe, despite his injuries, helps people up the slope and directs them to the Falcon. Once everyone is safely on board, he follows, smiling gratefully at Rey when he passes her on the ramp. Then they’re taking off to the safety of the skies. They jump to lightspeed, and he doesn’t even care to ask anyone where they’re going. It doesn’t matter. They escaped, and the Resistance will endure another day. He occupies himself with mentally mapping the ship, and then assigning rooms and duties to people. Leia’s clearly exhausted, and a little melancholy, so he finds himself taking charge for her. He gets a baseline system going- rotations on piloting the ship so everyone can sleep, a space for everyone to sleep, cooking duties on rotation, that sort of thing. He’s so determined to get everyone back on their feet, as far as they can be at this point, that it isn’t until evening that he finally stops for a moment and feels his own exhaustion catch up with him. It hits him all at once, and suddenly his ankle hurts like hell and he wants to sleep for about thirty years, preferably on a horizontal surface, but anything would do at this point.

It’s then that Finn finds him. Poe’s sitting down for a moment on the floor of a hallway, trying to psych himself up to the task of setting up a laundry system, when Finn approaches.

“You look awful.” Finn says with a smile.

“Thanks.” Poe replies.

Finn extends his hand. “Come on. I need to sleep.”

Poe takes it, but frowns. “What do you need me for, then?”

“Can’t sleep without you.”

“I was going to do… laundry…” Poe protests weakly, already half-asleep just at the prospect of going to sleep.

“You’ll have to do it tomorrow, granny.”

Finn takes them down the hall and into a room so small Poe thinks it might actually be a closet. There’s a flimsy mattress on the floor, shedding stuffing everywhere and taking up most of the space. Finn’s found some ratty old blankets somewhere and piled them on it. It looks like the best thing Poe’s ever seen. He groans and flops onto it, sending his injured ankle into hysterics. He doesn’t care. He feels Finn kindly removing his boots and jacket for him. His eyes are already closed.

“Nighty night.” he mumbles, and then he’s out.

Poe wakes up what must be a long time later. His mouth tastes gross and his whole body aches all over, but he finally feels rested, and that alone makes him smile. There’s also a hand on his stomach and a well-loved form behind him, breathing shallowly against the back of his neck. It feels like a lifetime ago that they last got to do this. It feels different now that everything is out in the open, and yet exactly the same. He snuggles back shamelessly now, lacing his fingers with the ones on his tummy. It wakes Finn up; he snuffles, grumbles, and then pulls Poe against him so tightly that Poe can’t breathe. Poe grins so wide it hurts.

“Hi Finn.” he says.
“Hi Poe.” Finn says back.

Poe wiggles around so he can face him. He’s so handsome. Poe rubs the crust out of the corners of his eyes with his pinky. Finn swats him away.

“Have I told you I love you?” Poe says, grinning.

“I believe you implied it. While in some state of concussion.”

Poe will have to dispel those doubts. “Well, I love you. Very much. Very, very much.”

“I love you too.” Finn answers immediately, brushing hair off Poe’s forehead. “Even more.”

“Impossible.”

“It’s true.”

Poe laughs. “I’m so glad we got to confess our undying passion for each other in this dirty closet.”

“I made sure to get the shittiest mattress possible for the occasion.” Finn’s grinning too.

“I hope you picked one with bedbugs.”

“Oh, of course. Who do you think I am?” Finn kisses his right cheek, and then the left. “Only the best for my Poe.”

He kisses him on the lips. Poe kisses back, lets Finn roll him onto his back and settle on top of him. He loops both arms around Finn’s shoulders and hitches one leg around his hips. Finn’s inexperience is showing a little, the kissing is a bit sloppy, but Poe’s totally into it. When their tongues touch, it makes his toes curl. He pulls away, and has to hold Finn back from following him and kissing him more.

“I want you to know that I’ve loved you since the Finalizer.” he tells him.

“Oh yeah? I’ve loved you since I saw you fire on Kylo Ren on Jakku. Beat that.” Finn says, raising his eyebrow in challenge. “I watched them take you on board, and all I wanted to do was find you and keep you safe.”

Poe tilts his head, coming to a sudden realization. “After the destruction of the Dreadnaught. That’s why you were acting like that.”

“Acting like what?”

Poe gestures. “Like, like I don’t even know. Hugging me, and telling me never to go out into space ever again, that sort of thing. You were trying to keep me safe. Because you loved me.”

“Well, duh. You didn’t realize? And people say I’m socially inept.” Finn rolls his eyes. “I almost told you how I felt then, but then I chickened out.”

“What made you tell me when we got to Crait?” Poe asks.

“Oh, that’s a whole other story. You don’t even want to know how close I came to dying on Snoke’s ship after we got caught.”

“Yeah, I heard that through the comm. It broke my heart.” Poe says quietly.
“They were literally swinging the axes down to cut off our heads when BB-8 intervened. It was that close, seriously. Anyways, we stole a ship and escaped, and the whole ride down to the planet, I was thinking, You have to tell him. You almost died, and what if he never knew? So I decided to do it. If we were all doomed, I wanted you to know.” Finn continues.

“When I thought you were dead, I wanted to die too. I’ve never been so relieved to see someone again.” Poe’s quiet for a moment, and then another thing hits him. “And then you had to go and pull that stunt with the cannon! Just when I got you back, you went and tried to sacrifice yourself like that!” He whacks Finn on the chest.

“Sorry.” Finn grins sheepishly. “But I’d told you, and you loved me back. So I was ready to do whatever it took to keep you and the Resistance safe, even if that meant dying. I would have died happy.”

“Don’t even talk to me about you dying. You’re not allowed.”

“Okay. Can I kiss you again?” Finn asks cheekily.

Poe pretends to think it over. Then he throws his arms around Finn and leans in with a smile.

“I suppose.”

They kiss some more, a bit more heated and focused now that all the necessary talking is out of the way. Poe hasn’t been kissed in a long time, and never by someone he’s wanted so much for so long, and he’s getting hot under the collar embarrassingly fast. Finn, ever the quick learner, is getting the hang of making out at record speed, which isn’t helping. He’s started coaxing Poe’s mouth open and sliding his tongue against Poe’s, hot and wet and deep. Has someone cranked up the thermostat? Poe’s sweating and trembling. Finn pulls away for a moment. His lips are shiny with spit.

“Are you okay? You’re shaking.”

Great, so he wasn’t even doing a good job hiding it.

“Fantastic, buddy. A-1. Never better.” he pants. Why is he breathing so hard?

“Okay, good.”

Finn dives back in. He’s not shaking, but his whole body is thrumming with barely-restrained enthusiasm. Poe can feel it radiating off the kid. He wants him to unleash it. Poe likes playing with fire, so he boldly slides his hands under Finn’s shirt and splayed them over his lower stomach, flirting with the hem of his pants. Finn’s abdominal muscles jump at the contact, and then Finn is frantically shoving his own hands up Poe’s shirt. Poe’s breathing hard now too, breath fanning across Poe’s face. Poe wants more, and it seems like Finn’s plan is to just pick up whatever Poe puts down, so he goes further. With a deliberate moan, he spreads his thighs wide, grabs Finn’s belt buckle, and throws his head back against the mattress. He rolls his hips up for extra effect.

“Oh my god.” he hears Finn breathe.

“Finn.” Poe moans.

“Oh my god.”

“Touch me.”
Finn curses under his breath, and then aggressive, impatient hands are yanking Poe’s shirt off none too gently. Good, let Finn put those muscles to use. Once his shirt is off and he can see again, Poe starts pulling at the belt buckle in his hands, dragging Finn’s hips against him. Not even Finn could be dense enough to misinterpret such body language. He definitely doesn’t— with another mumbled fuck he straightens up and starts undoing the belt. Once he’s upright, Poe can see the tent in his pants clear as day. It’s big. It makes his mouth water. He squeezes his thighs together and spreads them again, moaning some more. He’s gonna cum and he hasn’t even gotten naked yet.

Finn gets the belt undone and rips it free of the belt loops, chucking it somewhere with more force than is probably necessary. Then he’s back on Poe, kissing him, grabbing his hips, his thighs, his sides, like he can’t decide what he wants to grope first. He knocks their groins together, and Poe gasps. He can feel Finn’s dick, solid and big. His arms fly around Finn’s shoulders and he’s grinding against him like his life depends on it.

“Uhn, fuck, Finn.” He’s usually quite loud in bed, and he’s trying to be quiet for the sake of all the people nearby, but he’s having only marginal success.

“Poe, I don’t know what I’m doing, I’ve never done this before, but I wanna… We don’t have to, I just…”

“Fuck yes.” Poe doesn’t even let him finish the sentence. “If you don’t fuck me right now, I think I might die.”

Finn’s resultant groan tells him he might be a fan of dirty talk. Poe’s gonna capitalize on that, yes sir-ee. He starts unbuttoning his own pants and shoving them down his thighs along with his underwear. As if he was waiting for Poe to go first, Finn starts doing the same. Soon, they’re both naked, and Finn’s between Poe’s legs, hard and aggressive and excited. He’s basically just humping Poe at this point, which is great, but Poe wants to take him to wonderland. He spits into his hand and reaches down to grab Finn, slicking him up as good as he can. Finn’s enthusiastic, if his gasps are anything to go by.

“Just put it in. Slow.” Poe’s being hasty, he knows, but he literally doesn’t want to wait another second. Can’t. Finn evidently can’t either. He pushes Poe’s legs a little farther apart, and then he’s pushing inside. Poe forgets about the need to be discreet and lets his head fall back with a spectacular moan. Finn is not small, and spit definitely doesn’t make for great lube, and yet it feels so fucking good. Finn must think so too, because he lets out a shuddering groan and squeezes Poe’s waist so tight it’s probably gonna leave bruises.

“Oh god, Poe.” he pants.

Poe wants a good fucking, and he knows how he’s gonna get it. He wraps his arms around Finn’s shoulders and leans in to press his lips against Finn’s ear.

“Fuck me.” he breathes. “Please.”

It’s enough to light a fire in Finn. He obeys without delay: he hooks both of Poe’s legs around each arm, tucks his face into Poe’s neck, and goes to town. Poe’s never been fucked so good in all his life. Finn’s thrusts are powerful and deep, and something about the curve of his dick has Poe all but screaming. If he didn’t know better, he’d never guess Finn was a virgin— he’s hitting Poe’s prostate every time, like they’re two pieces of a puzzle, meant to slot together, made for each other. Poe’s squeezing his eyes shut, mouth hanging open, and he’s moaning and gasping and whining loud enough to wake the whole ship.

“Fuck, fuck, Finn, fuck- “ He can’t say anything more coherent. “Oh god, Finn, fuck!”
“Poe, I’m sorry, but this is not gonna last very long.” Finn huffs. His voice is deep and gravelly and thick with desire. It turns Poe on even more.

“It’s okay, don’t worry about it—”

Poe comes right then. He might even black out for a second or two, because when he finally comes back to himself, Finn has collapsed on top of him and is gasping for breath. Poe can feel something hot and wet inside himself. He clenches experimentally, which pulls a tired groan from Finn.

They both just lie there tangled together for a good long while, catching their breath. Poe’s grinning so wide he’s worried his face might split in half. He feels like he could fly. He feels like he’s on top of the world. Eventually, Finn pulls back far enough to look at him. He’s grinning too.

“I love you.”

Poe playfully pushes his face away.

“I love you too, Finn.”

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