You're The Only Stranger I Need

by lyndsie_l

Summary

When Castiel receives a text from a stranger, he finds himself engaging in conversations daily. He's drawn to the outgoing college student and longs to interact with the other man as often as he can. Slowly, he finds himself falling in love with the other and can't imagine ever meeting a more beautiful person.

The only problem?

He's never actually met this other man.

*A/N: Time Stamps continually added at the end.

Notes

Hello! Just as a clarification, anything in *italics* is something Dean texted, and anything in **bold** is what Castiel texted.
This story is going to go through the story of how Cas and Dean fell in love despite the fact they've never met each other in person. However, this rarely happens in real life. Please don't text strangers, expecting to get a romantic love story out of it. Just saying. Text Responsibly! 
:)

The Explicit content will be added on as the story progresses. I will add the corresponding tags accordingly. The story is complete except for the occasional timestamp which i will write and add whenever i get the fancy.

4/19 - ALSO, echosapple has been kind enough to translate the story into Chinese. If you are interested in reading the translation, you can find it here. Thanks echosapple!

Without further ado, I hope you enjoy the story!

See the end of the work for more notes.
Always Happy to be of Service, Stranger

11:03AM I swear if she says check the syllabus one more time I'm going to jam my pencil down her throat.

Castiel stared at the incoming text message glancing up at the unknown number on the top of the screen curiously. It was unusual for someone to text him just for the sake of conversation.

Rereading the words, he thought through his list of friends and colleagues, trying to discern who could be texting him in the middle of the day.

The person spoke of violence and a syllabus, meaning they were probably in a classroom setting. The only person he knew who fit those two qualifications was Meg, who was currently getting her PhD in psychology and had a tendency to act out when she was upset.

Personally, he didn’t think the two were a good combination and found himself responding quickly, hoping he could persuade Meg not to attack someone in a moment of poor decision making.

11:08AM That seems to be a rather harsh judgment for someone who is simply doing their job. Perhaps you should think of some other outlet you could use to dissolve some of this pent up frustration you have.

Satisfied with his response and hoping that Meg didn't do anything rash (like actually stab someone - something he unfortunately could actually see happening), Castiel returned to the stack of papers piled on his desk. He sighed, glaring at the offense and wondered if he glared hard enough if the work would just disappear.

It wasn't that he didn't enjoy his job. In fact, he was one of the few people who looked forward to doing his work in the morning. Usually. He was a translator working for a publishing company. His job was to read a variety of publications and translate them into one of the eight languages that he knew.

However, the project he was currently working on, a young adult harlequin romance novel, was grating on his nerves. If he had to read about the protagonist moaning about which guy she wanted to go to the prom with one more time, he may have to adapt some of Meg's techniques for release.

Speaking of...

Castiel looked down at his phone, the vibrations bringing him out of his thoughts. Frowning slightly, he opened the message.

11:10AM Come on, give me a little credit. I'm not actually going to stab her.

Cas hummed in approval.

11:11AM I must admit, I'm pleased that you're finally practicing self-control in this regard. I honestly had expected you had sent this message to inform me that you needed help disposing of a body. To which I would have had to politely decline. Again.

Castiel thought back to that night several years ago when he was a senior in high school and Meg texted him, asking him to help her bury a body. The guy she was out on a date with had gotten a little too frisky for her liking and she had beat the crap out of the offender.
Castiel did not bury the body (for one thing, the boy was still alive) but he did add a few hits of his own after picking Meg up, making sure that the teenager understood he was never to speak to the young woman ever again. Meg was only a freshman at the time, but Cas is still impressed when he thinks about her right hook.

11:12AM Yeah. Whatever.

Castiel clicked his tongue trying to decide if he should continue this conversation. Remembering the project he had to get back to he replied to the message.

11:15AM I see you have a new phone number. What brought on this change?

11:15AM We've talked about this. Like three times already. Chuck's crazy girlfriend (the one who is in love with you) threw mine out the window a couple weeks ago.

Cas scrunched up his nose.

11:17AM I believe you may be thinking of someone else. You did not tell me about this. Also, I have no clue who you're referring to.


Cas frowned at the message, reading the next one that came in immediately afterward.

11:18AM I'm talking about Becky. The girl who literally feels you up every time you come to Chuck and Benny's apartment.

11:20AM I still have no clue who you're talking about. I've never met any Chucks or Benny's, let alone have visited their place of residence.

Castiel rubbed his temples, waiting for Meg's reply. He was very confused. Was this a joke of some sorts?

11:21AM Uh... Benny? My best friend from high school. He was at our house literally every day. Still not ringing any bells?

Castiel thought back to when he was in high school with Meg. He knew for a fact that Meg was not friends with any Bennys. Castiel stared at the number before it dawned on him that perhaps this wasn’t actually Meg.

11:24AM I believe you may have the wrong number.

Satisfied, he picked up his mug, inhaling the leftover tea leaves from that morning. He would need to run down stairs to the local coffee shop to get some more tea if he wanted to finish that book that evening. His phone buzzed again.

11:24AM Sammy?

Castiel sighed, glad to have a confirmation that this mystery person was not, in fact, trying to speak with him.

11:25AM I'm afraid I am not "Sammy".

11:26AM Huh. That makes so much more sense. I was wondering why you were speaking so weird.
Castiel read the message with amusement.

11:27AM I'm surprised you didn't notice it at first if my speech is much different than your friend's.

11:27AM My little brother, actually. And hey! You kept the conversation going. You could have told me right away that I had the wrong number...

11:28AM I must admit, I didn't realize at first. I thought you were my friend, Meg. She too has violent and rash tendencies, such as your self.

11:29AM I'm not violent and rash!

11:29AM Your first message to me was you informing me that you wanted to stab who I assume is your professor in the throat for talking about some information contained in her class syllabus. I'd categorize that as both violent and rash.

11:30AM Okay... First off, my professor is not some poor woman. She is evil. And second off, I don't know why I'm trying to defend myself to a stranger...

11:31AM I'm not entirely sure why either. However, it has been amusing speaking with you.

11:31AM Well, always happy to be of service, Stranger.

Castiel looked down at the work in front of him one last time, sighing. He needed to get back to it if he hoped to leave the office at a decent hour.

11:32AM It's been a pleasure conversing with you. I wish you luck in your endeavors to find your little brother Sammy and wish you luck in dealing with your "evil" professor.

11:33AM Dude...pleasure conversing? Endeavors? How are you even real?

Castiel chuckled again, setting his phone on silent so the buzzing wouldn't distract him. He had one chapter left from this book. Then he would have to start on the sequel the next morning. He groaned, deciding that he would work from home the next day.

It was a fortunate perk for his job that he didn't have to go into the office if he wished not to. Usually, he tried to make an appearance at least once a week, but lately had found himself not even wanting to do that. He didn't particularly enjoy the politics and drama an office held, and preferred to complete his tasks in the comfort and quiet of his own home.

The sun had long since set when Castiel grabbed his tan overcoat and left the office for the evening. He glanced down at his phone, surprised when he found he had several unread text messages. He scrolled down, smiling as he read through.

11:36AM Seriously though. With the way you speak, I'm having a hard time believing you're actually human.

11:45AM Really? You're ignoring me now?

11:52AM Ugh. Fine. I'm sorry I called you nonhuman and made fun of your speech. Happy now?

12:01PM Well fine. Don't respond. See if I care.

12:16PM Seriously though...pencil in the throat.
Castiel laughed out loud, quickly responding.

8:51PM My apologies for not responding sooner. I was in the middle of finishing my work load for the day. I was not knowingly ignoring you. I've been told that my speech is rather peculiar. I'm not offended by your commenting as such.

Castiel hit send, humming for a moment before quickly adding,

8:52PM And I sincerely hope that you didn't go through with your threats of harming your professor.

Castiel waved at his neighbor as he entered his apartment, frowning as he glanced at the mess. He would have to spend some time cleaning the next morning after his run if he wanted to get any work done at his home. He looked through the cabinets, fishing out some pasta and jarred sauce for dinner. It wasn't nearly as good as his home made sauce, but it was late and he hadn't been to the farmers market to buy fresh tomatoes that week.

He leaned against the counter, waiting for the water to boil, when the buzz of his phone brought him out of his thoughts.


9:40PM I actually quite enjoy my work.

Castiel glanced at the sequel that he needed to start the next day and quickly amended,

9:40PM Usually.

9:42PM Wait... You're not like super old... Right?

Castiel frowned, trying to decide how to answer that. He didn't think of himself as old. However, seeing as this mystery person of his was in college, Castiel could venture a guess that they were probably in their low-to-mid twenties, maybe even in their late teens. That was a potential difference of around 10-15 years younger than Castiel himself. He waited several minutes, stirring the sauce before finally writing,

9:49PM That depends.

9:50PM On what...

9:52PM What's your definition of "old"?

9:52PM Oh gosh. If you tell me that your a balding fifty year old with a pot belly, I think I may just puke.

Castiel laughed out loud before responding.

9:53PM In that case, no. I can happily assure you that I am much younger than fifty, I have a full head of hair, and am in perfectly healthy shape due to running every morning.

9:54PM Mmm, sounds hot.

Castiel squinted at the incoming message, not entirely sure how to respond. Deciding he had nothing to lose, he responded bluntly.
9:57PM I'm sorry. Was that a flirtation?

9:59PM Don't flatter yourself, Stranger. I'm still not convinced you're not a fat, balding old man.

9:59PM And my assurances that I am not can not dissuade you?

10:00PM Nope.

10:01PM Well, I suppose that's fair. I don't know how inclined I would be to believe it if I were in your position.

10:01PM Well there you go.

Castiel set down his phone, finally eating his meal, thinking back to his conversation with the strange college student throughout the day.

He can't say he didn't enjoy it. On the contrary, it was a nice change from his normal routine. He finished his pasta, putting the dish in the sink, vowing to wash it along with the others in the morning instead of right at that moment and left for his room, his phone in hand. He was exhausted from the day having had to work much later than he initially intended to.

Stifling a yawn, he unbuttoned his shirt, putting it on the hanger in his closet, before bending down and checking the new message on his phone.

10:04PM So, what sort of work do you do anyway?

10:12PM The type that leaves me mentally exhausted at the end of the day.

Castiel wrote, slipping off his slacks and grabbing a pair of plain blue pajama pants and a soft white t-shirt.

He added quickly,

10:14PM In fact I'm just about ready for bed, so I regret to inform you I'll be leaving you on your own now.

10:15PM Dude. It's not even 10:30 yet.

10:16PM It's much later than when I usually call it a night.

10:16PM You know who goes to sleep before midnight?

Castiel waited, wondering if this was a riddle waiting to be solved, or if he would be provided with an answer. He climbed under the sheets, relieved when his phone lit up.

10:17PM Boring, old people.

Castiel smiled fondly.

10:18PM You caught me. By that definition, I am indeed a boring, old person.

10:18PM I knew it.

Castiel smiled, setting his alarm for the next morning and plugging in his phone.
10:20PM I hope you have a pleasant night.

Castiel paused for a moment, smiling when a response came almost immediately.

10:22PM Night night, stranger.
Castiel groaned as he fell onto his couch, already exhausted from his morning. In between his running and cleaning, he felt that he deserved a nap. He looked down at his running shorts, knowing he needed to change and take a shower, but having a hard time finding the motivation to do so. What was the point in working from home if not to wear whatever he wanted?

He begrudgingly grabbed the second book in the series he was currently chained down to, knowing he had a deadline to meet, and began reading the first page, opening his lap top and typing in the Spanish translation the best he could.

It was several hours before his concentration was broken by his phone buzzing as it had the previous day. Confused, Castiel reached out to grab his phone, grateful for the break.

3:13PM Any idea how to get blood stains out of clothes? Are you supposed to wash it in hot or cold water?

Castiel looked up at the number, realizing it was the same unknown number as the previous day. Confused, albeit admittedly curious as to what sort of situation this college student had gotten himself into this day, he decided to reply against his better judgment.

3:16PM Is this a confession of some sorts?

3:16PM What?

3:17PM You just told me you have blood in your clothes. Given our conversation from yesterday, I'm assuming your resolve to not stab someone has failed and you have gone out and done just that. In that case, I would not recommend washing your clothes in either hot or cold water, but instead burning them to ensure that you're rid of the DNA evidence.

3:18PM Again, what?

3:20PM Oh gosh, I just realized how my first message sounded. I promise I did not kill anyone.

Castiel chuckled.

3:21PM I see. In that case, may I ask why your clothes are covered in blood?

3:22PM They're not covered per say...I was working on my car when I accidentally cut myself. Not very deep, mind you, but I got blood all over my shirt. Which sucks, cause I really like this shirt.
Ah, I see. Yes, that is much more innocent than I had originally thought your predicament to be.

Castiel bit his lip, hesitating momentarily before writing.

Also, I thought I should inform you that you have texted the wrong number, once again.

Castiel put down his phone, standing up and stretching before going into the kitchen and making himself a cup of tea, staring blankly at the wall as he allowed his tea to seep for the allotted time. He really should eat some food, but didn't want to take the effort it required to make something. He frowned, deciding that he would have to go buy some fruit sooner than later so he could have something to snack on through out the day.

He returned to his couch, sipping his tea and humming pleasantly as he rolled the liquid over his tongue, enjoying the blend of flavors. He checked his phone again for any new messages, a thrill chasing down his spine when he did.

This is the same old, boring stranger I was speaking with yesterday, right?

I suppose. Unless you make a habit of conversing with old, boring strangers on a regular basis.

Then it appears that I do indeed have the right number! Why, am I bothering you or something?

Castiel shook his head in response, feeling silly when he realized that he had butterflies in his stomach. It was strange how such a small gesture of someone wanting to talk to him could affect him so much.

No, not at all. I must admit, I should be working, but i find that speaking to you is a much more pleasant use of my time.

Look at you, being all rebellious chatting with me instead of doing your work.

Yes, it is a momentous occasion.

I thought you said you liked your work? Has Mr. Responsibility been caught in his lie?

Castiel frowned.

I do usually enjoy my work. I find it relaxing and fulfilling. However, the project I'm currently working on is slowly grating at my every nerve and I'm having a hard time remembering why I do what I do. Fortunately, I should only have another couple weeks of this torture and then I should be back to working on something I enjoy.

So, you're a contractor?

Not in the sense that you’re thinking.

I see...

Castiel picked up the book, going back to the translation he had up from before. He was surprised to realize that several hours passed before his phone buzzing brought him back out of his work a
second time.

His stomach growled painfully, and Castiel realized he should use this distraction as a break to force himself to make something to eat. Grabbing his phone, he headed to the kitchen, checking the new message along the way.

5:17PM So, are you some sort of mob boss or assassin or something?

Castiel furrowed his brow.

5:18PM Why do you ask?

5:19PM Yesterday you mentioned that you helped bury a body and today you've already given me advice to destroy evidence after you thought I killed someone... You're clearly not some librarian...

5:19PM If you actually suspected my involvement with the Mafia, do you really think it wise to message and ask me for details regarding any illicit activity I may participate in?

5:20PM Hey, a guys gotta double check these things. Can't be too careful.

5:21PM I believe I could argue that the safest route would be to desist all forms of communication. Asking incriminating questions regarding past crimes sounds like it would be one of the worst possible things you could do to keep yourself safe from harm.

5:22PM Yeah, but if I did the safest thing, then I'd have to stop chatting with you. And that would be a shame, really.

Castiel bit the inside of his cheek, not wanting to let himself be too pleased. He took a deep breath, reminding himself he was simply engaging in an innocent conversation. No need to get flustered over a stranger's words.

5:23PM I'm sure that you could find some other boring, old stranger to fill up your time with.

5:24PM You're the only stranger I'm interested in, baby.

Castiel stared at the endearment, internally cursing at the smile that crept onto his face. There was absolutely no reason he should be smiling at this stranger's messages to him. Perhaps this stranger made it a habit of calling everyone they knew by pet names. Both Crowley and Balthazar often called him pet names as well. There was no reason why he should be pleased by a silly little four-lettered word.

5:25PM Well, as much as I hate to disappoint you, I am much closer to a librarian than I am a member of the Mafia.

5:25PM Ah ha! So you work with books! Victory for me!

5:26PM And why is this considered a victory for you?

5:26PM Because now I'm one step closer to figuring out who you are.

Castiel smiled, amused at the response.

5:27PM You know, you could always just ask.

5:27PM Where would the fun be in that?
5:29PM So, what have you deduced about me so far?

Castiel grabbed some bread, making a sandwich and eating happily while he waited for a response. He was curious what this stranger's impression of him was. What did people think about when they hadn't ever seen his face? What little nuances had this stranger picked up about him? It was intriguing and he waited eagerly, leaning against the kitchen counter, patient for an answer.

5:32PM Well, I know you're younger than 50, have a full head of hair, and go running every morning. You have a full time job which you usually like that involves working with books. You have a violent friend who you may or may not have helped bury a body for. You speak as though you come from a text book or the 18th century.

5:37PM With all those deductions, I'm surprised you haven't figured out who I am yet.

5:37PM Hey, it's a work in progress. If you're so good at it, why don't you tell me what you've figured out about me.

5:38PM I wasn't aware this was a contest.

5:38PM What... Afraid you'll lose?

Never one to turn down a challenge, Castiel straightened up, rereading through their previous texts to try and see what he could come up with before replying.

5:46PM (1/3) You're still in college which most likely puts you somewhere in between the 18 - 26 age range. I would dare guess you're closer to 26 than 18, however you're not quite there yet. You joke about harming others, but when it comes down to it, you would never actually consider hurting anyone. You have a

5:46PM (2/3) little brother named Sammy, who you seem to be close enough to talk with on a regular basis. You're best friend's name is Benny and he's been you're said friend since at least high school. You have at least a basic knowledge of the mechanics of a car, and own your own car to which you take care of when needed.

5:46PM (3/3) Finally, you have a project that you're working on right now, that you don't want to be working on and are instead trying to figure out any possible way to avoid working on it.

5:47PM Did I lose?

Castiel finished his sandwich smugly as he waited for a reply.

5:53PM Alright there Sherlock, no need to get cocky. How did you know all of that? Seriously. Do you secretly know who I am?

5:54PM I'm afraid I don't know who you are. I simply deduced.

5:55PM Okay, most of the other stuff I get, I can sort of see how you figured that stuff out. But how did you know i had a project I should be working on right now?

5:56PM Why else would you be texting a stranger?

5:57PM Perhaps i have a thing for intelligent, boring people who work with books.
Castiel rolled his eyes affectionately and pushed himself to respond.

5:57PM Perhaps. Although it is much more likely you just want someone to distract you from your work and I'm the only person who texted you back.

5:58PM Touche.

5:58PM Go work on your project.

5:59PM Ugh. Fine.

Castiel smiled picking up the book and continuing the translation until well into the evening, forcing himself to not think about the stranger he'd been conversing with. Glancing at the time, he set his work down, surprised at how late he had stayed up. No wonder he was exhausted. He usually tried to get to bed by 9:30 so he could wake up early in the morning. Every once in a while he would stay up until 10:00, but rarely later than that. He was a morning person, by far.

He looked down at his phone, glad when a message was waiting for him once again.

9:01PM Finished.

9:17PM Congratulations. I'm happy you were able to complete your work.

9:19PM Well, I aim to please.

Castiel leaned against his counter top, grabbing a pad of paper and a pen to write out his grocery list for the week. He needed to go to the farmer's market after his run the next day.

9:24PM So, whatcha doing?

9:25PM Writing out my grocery list for the week.

9:25PM Wow. You really are a responsible adult. I didn't realize those existed.

9:26PM I'm sorry if I've ruined your perception of life after college. But, this is what you have to look forward to.

9:26PM Harsh.

9:27PM It's simply fact. We all have to grow up one day.

9:27PM I don't agree with that. I plan on staying young and beautiful forever.

9:28PM Well, please tell me how that works out for you.

9:29PM I will. You can go on doing your adult boring stuff. I am going to go actually have some fun.

9:30PM Enjoy.

Castiel finished up for the evening, glad when he finally laid his head on his pillow to sleep. His mind wandered to the stranger, and he found himself smiling again. It was certainly a strange and unorthodox interaction, but he found surprisingly he didn't mind the college student's constant texts one bit. He fell asleep, wondering if the stranger would write again the next day.
In the dark of the night, he found himself wishing that he would.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all your comments and kudos and bookmarks!!! You all bring fuzzies to my belly, much like this stranger does to Cas.

You are are wonderful and I love you all dearly!

Let me know what you thought of this chapter! I hope you're having a wonderful, and happy New Year!!
Challenge Accepted, Rumpelstiltskin

Chapter Notes

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

1:10PM I think I'm dying.

Castiel hesitated, reminding himself this was an over dramatic college student he was speaking with, before choosing to respond.

1:11PM Are you actually dying, or simply regretting your decision to go out and "have fun" last night?

1:11PM Does it matter?

1:12PM Of course. If you were in the hospital on your death bed, I would offer my condolences and possibly send you a fruit basket or a bouquet of flowers. However, if you're currently hunched over a toilet retching out all the contents of your stomach, I must merely suggest you rethink your definition of fun.

1:14PM You talk too much.

1:14PM You're the one who initiated our conversation.

Castiel chuckled as he tried to picture this young student lying on his bathroom floor, glaring at the unnecessarily large words Castiel was using in his texts. He paused, frowning as he realized he had no clue what this stranger actually looked like.

1:16PM Well, I thought that perhaps you would show some sympathy.

Castiel shook himself out of his thoughts.

1:17PM You were mistaken.

1:18PM Yeah, I get that now.

Castiel genuinely hoped that the other understood he was teasing, and wasn't offended by his words. He'd been told that sometimes his humor was difficult to gauge. Somehow, he felt that this stranger got it. At least, he hoped so.

1:18PM It's a shame, really. I'm having such a lovely morning. Just think, had you gone to sleep when I had, you're morning would have been significantly improved.

1:20PM C'mon. You can't be that old. Don't tell me you've never gone out and gotten wasted.

Castiel sat back on his couch, shuddering as he thought back to his college days. It wasn't that he hadn't had fun. In fact, looking back, he thinks he may have had a little bit too much fun.
Of course I have. I however choose to no longer participate in such activities. Other than the occasional glass of wine, I refrain from consuming copious amounts of alcohol.

What do you drink to relax then?

Tea.

Oh, I see. You're one of those types of people.

I would be offended by your statement, but I'm not the one with a pounding headache and nauseous stomach.

Fine whatever. You win.

Lovely. I must confess, I love it when I win.

Yeah, I'm starting to get that. But, my life choices don't matter right now. We have something more important to discuss.

Castiel stared at the words, feeling his stomach tie up in knots. It was irrational for him to be nervous. He had only known this stranger for two days.

And what is that?

Castiel forced himself to type out, pouring himself a cup of tea while he waited for a response. What was the worst thing this stranger could say to him?

What do I call you?

Pardon?

I mean, what should I call you when I'm talking to you or about you? I can't really refer to you as the "stranger I accidentally texted and now have regular conversations with" forever.

I suppose not. That name certainly is a mouthful.

Exactly. And referring to you as "this guy" doesn't cut it either. So, I was just wondering what I should call you when I'm talking about you?

Do you talk about me often?

What?

No...

Maybe?

Shut up.

Are you going to tell me your name or do I have to guess it?

Castiel laughed, typing in his name before he paused. His texting companion seemed to like guessing. Perhaps he should hold off a little longer. He erased the message he was about to send and
You can most certainly try guessing, however I can guarantee that you'll never figure it out.

Ha! Challenge accepted Rumpelstiltskin.

I'm surprised you know who that is.

Yeah, yeah. So, what do I get when I guess your name correctly?

If you guess my name correctly, which I highly doubt you will, then you'll get the satisfaction of knowing that you've won.

Lame. If it's so hard, then I think I should get some sort of prize.

What do you want?

Hmm. When I guess your name by the end of the week, you have to tell me what you do for a living.

That's fair. If by the off chance you figure out my name, I will tell you all the gritty details of my employment.

Excellent. Now, let me guess... Nathaniel?

No.

Ricardo?

No.

Florian?

No.

Wait...you're a guy right? I just kind of assumed...and I realize that these would be really awkward guesses if you weren't...

I am indeed a male, as I suspect you are as well.

Yup. Now that's settled...Fitzgerald?

No.

Damn. Alright then. Time for me to make out a list to bombard you with tomorrow. In the meantime, I still need a nickname for you.

Castiel bit his lip, looking around his apartment for inspiration. He'd never had a nickname other than "Cassie", which he was not overtly fond of. His eyes lingered on a painting his sister had drawn of him suspended in the air with majestic black wings and smiled, his mind made up.

Angel.

What?
You asked for a nickname, I'm giving one to you. You may call me Angel.

Ha ha. Very funny

Wait

You're serious, aren't you?

Really? Angel?

If you knew my actual name, then it would make a lot more sense.

Castiel was named after the angel of Thursday, he himself having been born on a Thursday.

Well, it doesn't matter anyway. I'll be using your real name by the end of the day tomorrow.

I'm sure you will.

Castiel re-read some of the names that his texting companion had sent him over the last few days. The names ranged from normal (John, Michael, Phillip) to downright bizarre (Tobago, Bialystok, Naipaul). A few of those, he's fairly certain the other simply mashed the keys on his phone to come up with some of the guesses.

Today is your last day to guess my name. Ready to give up?

I refuse to give up. I will prevail!

After several more hours of outlandish guesses, he finally gave up.

Fuck. Seriously, dude. What is your name? It's gotta be the weirdest name in the world or something.

It's definitely not common.

Castiel laughed as he climbed into his bed ready to retire for the evening. He'd never thought his unique name was an advantage until now.

Fine whatever. You win. Again. Is this like a normal thing for you? Always winning?

Not necessarily, no. However, in this case I must admit that I'm excited to claim my prize.

Woah, woah, woah. Who said anything about prizes?

You did. I think it only fair that I claim my reward.

Ugh. Fine. What do you want?

The same thing you wanted should you have won. What do you do for work?

I'm a student.

Not good enough. What are you going to school for?
Alright, alright. Mechanical engineering. I'm actually working part time at a garage as a mechanic, just until school is done.

That's impressive. You must be very good with your hands.

Oh baby, if only you knew.

Castiel felt his cheeks heat up, finding himself wanting to feel those hands on his body. Instead, he shook his head.

You're incorrigible.

I try.

Castiel shifted in his bed to try and find a more comfortable position. It was strange for him to have grown so comfortable talking to this stranger in such a short amount of time.

But seriously, are you going to tell me your name?

Castiel smiled at the impatience on the receiving end, feeling more playful than he usually did.

No I don't think I will.

Aw, c'mon. I'll tell you mine if you tell me yours...

I already gave you a perfectly suitable nickname. I think I would prefer you to stick to that for now. However, you are more than welcome to divulge your own name to me.

Nuh uh. No way. If I have to call you Angel, you don't get to call me by my real name either.

Castiel chuckled, having already have expected this response. He admitted that it would be nice to have a name to refer to when thinking about him.

I see. Then, what would you have me call you?

Castiel waited several long minutes for a reply. He lay his head down on his pillow, the lights turned out and his phone screen shining brightly into his eyes. He felt like a teenager waiting for his crush to write back, but couldn't find the will to say good night just yet. He just hope that he didn't regret the decision in the morning.

His eyelids stated to droop when he finally received a response.

You can call me Han Solo.

That's a strange nickname. Is it a reference to something?

Is it...what...you...

Are you serious??

Castiel furrowed his brow, trying to think of where he'd heard the name before. Unable to figure it out, he wrote back.

My apologies. I'm afraid I am completely serious.
Comprehension dawned on Castiel. Yes, he’d heard of Star Wars, but had never seen it himself.

I have not. Is it a reference to that?

That's it. What are you doing right now?

Castiel squinted at the screen. Why was this important?

I'm going to sleep.

No you're not. You're going to go watch star wars right now.

He shook his head, not carrying that "Solo" couldn't see him.

No. Too tired.

I. Don't. Care. You are watching star wars. I can't believe you've never seen it man. This is a classic! You haven't truly lived until you've seen these episodes.

My bed is too comfy to leave it now. Sleep is the only plans I have for tonight.

Ugh. You're lucky I don't know where you live or I'd come over right now and drag you out of bed to watch it.

Castiel closed his eyes and imagined his acquaintance coming over to his house to watch a movie with him. He'd never had a friend like that. Balthazar or his brother Gabriel would be the closest thing, however it was more likely they'd drag him out of bed to go to a club. He thinks he would prefer a movie. And maybe some cuddling.

Mmm. Sounds nice. Maybe next time.

It was several moments before the next message came in.


Realizing it was later than he'd planned on staying up that evening, and feeling his resolve to keep his eyes open disappear, Castiel quickly typed out.

Good night Mr. Solo.

He smiled when he received the final message for the night, allowing himself to dwell on the interaction.

Night Angel.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you again for your comments, kudos, bookmarks, and views, you beautiful, wonderful people! I love you all!
Chapter Notes

Hello! All of your comments and kudos made me so happy, I decided to and another chapter sooner than I’d originally planned!

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

5:04AM Good morning Angel. Sleep well?

Castiel thought he could get used to waking up to a text message waiting for him every morning.

5:13AM I did. Thank you for asking. How about yourself Solo? Did you sleep well?

5:15AM About as good as you could expect for a college student.

5:16AM That’s good. Is there a reason you’re awake so early?

5:21AM Unfortunately. Morning shift today. I try not to take them very often, cause I hate waking up at the ass crack of dawn, but you do whatcha gotta do.

5:22AM Ah, I see. I always find the mornings refreshing. A new day. A fresh start. The delicious aroma of my tea filling my senses while I watch the sun rise...

5:24AM Yeah. Can't say I've ever experienced that.

5:25AM Shame. It truly is remarkable.

5:26AM I'll have to take your word for it.

Castiel put on his running clothes, stretching before placing his phone in his pocket for emergencies and jogged down the stairs. He really did find morning peaceful and his jogs even more so relaxing. Castiel ignored his phone when he felt the buzzing indicating that he’d received another message until he reached his halfway point.

5:34AM Let's play a game today.

5:47AM You're very fond of games.

5:48AM This is a good one, I promise.

5:48AM Alright then. What do you propose?

He finished his run (several minutes faster than what he normally did) before he allowed himself to check the message to find out.

5:50AM I was thinking 20 questions. I ask 10 and you ask 10 and we have to answer honestly.
Castiel weighed the pros and cons of playing this game. Was it wise to give out some of his personal information to a stranger? He didn't think it was, but he was aching to learn more about Solo, and if this was the way to do it...

6:01AM *That seems agreeable.*

6:02AM *Good. Excellent. Okay then. I'll go first...*

6:02AM *Wait.*

Castiel bit his lip, thinking through how he should word his next comment as to not offend the other man before he wrote something out. After all, he may desperately want to know more about the other man, but thought perhaps they should be smart about it.

6:04AM *We should put limits on the types of questions we can ask. For example, no real names.*

He waited nervously for a reply. It wasn't that he didn't want the other man to know his name. It was just that he enjoyed the sense of anonymity. He felt he could truly be himself with this stranger, and it was quite liberating. He sighed in relief when the college student messaged back.

6:08AM *That's probably a good idea, although i don't have anything i want to put a limit on...how about we each get one pass. That way a question comes up we don't want to answer, we can say no, no questions asked.*

6:09AM *Also, if I don't answer right away, it's because I just got to the shop, and I'm working a full day today.*

6:10AM *That sounds good. And I will be working as well today, so the same applies to me. If I don't respond, I'm not ignoring you.*

6:11AM *Awesome.*

6:11AM *I believe you were going to go first. What's your first question?*

Castiel waited excitedly for his first question, not really knowing what to expect. What questions should he ask in return?

6:18AM *What do you do for work?*

He snorted, debating on using his pass just to spite Solo. Instead, he responded truthfully.

6:23AM *I work for a publishing company as a translator. Most of my projects include ancient transcripts or scientific journals, however, i do have the occasional misfortune of working on popular literature (which is what I'm working on now).*

He paused for a moment, trying to think of a question to ask before settling on,

6:26AM *I believe it's my turn now. You mentioned you have a little brother. Do you have any other family?*

He pulled out some eggs to make himself some breakfast and set up his latest translations on the kitchen table to work on. He had a feeling with him playing this game, he wasn't going to be nearly as productive as he'd like to be.
Somehow, he found that he didn't really mind.

7:02AM Wow. That's...wow. You must be really smart. How many languages do you know?

7:09AM I've just got the one little brother, and he's great man. Still in high school, but the little shit is really going to make something of himself someday. Wants to go to Stanford and be a lawyer. I'm proud of the kid.

Castiel smiled. He wished he were closer to some of his siblings.

7:16AM That's very admirable. I'm sure he'll make a great lawyer. I currently speak 8 languages: English, Spanish, French, Latin, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew, and Enochian. I'm currently in the process of learning Japanese as well German. What made you decide to go into mechanical engineering?

8:28AM Holy shit. You are way above my smart level... I dunno really. I guess I just am good at building and fixing things. My dad taught me how to fix up cars when I was younger and I found I was good at putting things together. Figured it was as good of a career path as any. So, if you've never seen star wars, it makes me wonder, what types of movies do you watch?

Castiel wondered if Solo was happy in the program he was currently in. He debated asking, but decided to wait a bit instead. He didn't want to over step his boundaries, right at the beginning of their game.

8:59AM I must confess, I don't watch very many movies. If I do watch a movie, it is usually a documentary of some sorts. However, I would much prefer to spend my time reading.

He bit his lip, wondering what he should ask next. He wasn't very good at this. He glanced down at the running shoes he'd yet to change out of and wondered if Solo ran like he did.

9:06AM Do you go running? Or, I guess a better question would be do you work out?

9:45AM Trying to figure out if I'm fat or not? I can assure you I'm a very attractive man.

Castiel blushed at the response, but decided to push for an answer.

9:47AM I don't doubt that. However, you should answer the question.

9:50AM Fine. No, I don't run or work out really. But, I promise I'm in decent shape! No flabby belly on me. If you prefer books to movies, then what sort of books do you like?

10:21AM Hmm, I find I'm often drawn to history. The way our ancestors lived their lives before us is fascinating. Although, I must admit, I have a soft spot for authors like Vonnegut. How do you manage to stay in shape?

10:58AM You like Vonnegut? Dude! I love Vonnegut! And here I was, worried we wouldn't have anything in common! I, uh, spar occasionally, and that certainly helps. But, I mostly will go out every other weekend and play games... No biggie really. What's your favorite food?

11:17AM I'm pleased you've read Vonnegut. I find his works refreshing. My favorite food would have to be burgers. Without a doubt. A well made burger makes me really happy. What sort of games do you play?

12:10PM Vonnegut and burgers? A man after my own heart.
I try.

Uh, the games I play, they...promise not to laugh at me?

Castiel frowned at the request. Why would he laugh at the other man? If this was something he enjoyed doing, surely it should be celebrated, not hidden deep where no one could see.

Of course I won't laugh at you.

I, uuh, LARP...

He waited a moment, debating grabbing his computer and googling the word, before finally stating:

I'm afraid I don't know what LARP is...

Live action role play.

Castiel chuckled slightly, wondering why Solo had seemed so embarrassed at the admission. Although he himself had never participated in a "LARP" event, his brother Gabriel had, so was somewhat familiar with the scene.

Ah, I see then. What sort of scenes so you normally participate in? Fantasy? Historical Events?

Uh, yeah, usually fantasy.

And what role specifically are you? Knight? King? Wizard?

Ha. Uh no. Actually one of my best friends is the queen and I usually stick around her...

As her...

Hand maiden. Okay? I play the queen's hand maiden. And let me tell you, it is hard work!

Castiel stared at the revelation, his eyes lit with amusement. This was even better than he imagined. He laughed out loud when he read the next message.

Quit laughing at me. I know that you are, so don't even try and deny it.

I'm merely pleased you felt comfortable enough to let me in on your secret. I promise not to divulge this information to anyone, Hand Maiden.

Ugh, I'm never going to live this down, am I?

Probably not, no.

Well in that case, I vote we move on. And I'm pretty sure I get to ask two questions in a row now since you just did.

That seems fair. Ask your questions.

So, do you currently have a girlfriend?

Butterflies flit in his stomach, settling on his nerves. Why was he asking?
3:01PM I do not have a girlfriend, no.

3:03PM Cool...cool. Uh boyfriend?

Castiel smiled, glad to find that his texting companion wasn’t ignorant about the idea of dating the same gender. While he himself had dated both men and women (he found that he was usually more interested in who a person was, rather than their gender), he found that physically he preferred men over women.

3:04PM No boyfriend either. My last relationship ended about six months ago. The guy was an ass, and I don’t say that lightly.

3:07PM Do mine eyes deceive me, or did my Angel just swear?

Castiel felt his heart growl, finding it strange at how ramped up he was at the simple idea of being Solo's angel. Such a small little word, “my”, and yet it surged in him something new and possessive.

3:13PM I don’t do it very often, so don’t expect this to be a regular occurrence.

3:55PM Wouldn’t dream of it.

While Castiel tried to think of another question to ask, Solo wrote back first.

3:57PM Yeah, my last relationship was a while ago too. Nothing but the occasional date here and there. Otherwise, I am blissfully single.

Castiel smiled at the remark, wondering why Solo had felt the need to inform him about his relationship status. He pondered over the implications of it, before deciding that perhaps he shouldn’t worry or over think it in this instance and changed the subject.

4:18PM What's your favorite food then? Burgers as well?

4:33PM Nah. Don't get me wrong, I love my burgers, but my favorite is going to have to be pie. So, you asked about my family, tell me about yours.

5:02PM I have a rather large family. 3 older brothers, 1 younger sister, and another younger brother. The eldest, Mike, is a general surgeon. Next is Luc who is a defense attorney. Gabe owns a string of nightclubs. Then there’s me (with my lowly job as a translator). After me is Anna, who is an artist. Finally, the youngest, Saman, is currently going to school. He’s working on his generals while he tries to decide what he wants to study.

5:33PM Holy shit. Seriously. What the hell? That's...incredibly intimidating.

5:39PM If it's any consolation, I would much prefer to talk to you than any of them.

5:41PM Ha. I doubt that, but thanks anyway.

5:42PM I'm not being facetious. I genuinely enjoy your company. The majority of my siblings are deluded about their own self importance. It's exhausting to speak with them, and I try to do so as little as possible. When given the choice, I much prefer you over them.

5:44PM Your family must be pretty doucheey if you prefer me to them.

5:44PM Oh yes, they are.
Castiel hesitated for a moment, debating with himself whether his next message would be wise, before finally sending,

5:48PM Or perhaps I just have a thing for young, bold college students who have violent tendencies they would never act on, LARP to stay in shape, and engage in random games and long conversations with strangers via text.

5:51PM That's oddly specific.

5:52PM I like a specific type of person.

Castiel quickly typed his next question, not wanting to stay on that topic of conversation. He was fairly certain they were venturing into flirting territory about now, and he wasn’t sure how to progress with that line of thought. He was never good with discerning what was a flirtation and what wasn’t. Via text, he knew it would be near impossible.

5:53PM I believe it's my turn now. Other than fulfilling your duty as a hand maiden, what do you do for fun?

5:56PM Pretty much the same thing as most college students. Go to parties, play video games, watch movies. Nothing too exiting. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

6:04PM Hmm, that's a difficult question. I've lived in many countries and visited many places, but I think my favorite place is this little park I visited one summer when I was a child. There was an autistic man I used to go meet up with. We would never talk, just sit and watch the bees and smell the flowers. Occasionally we would feed the ducks or fly a kite. My family only lived there for a few months, but it was my favorite summer, by far. The man died not too long after I left.

6:08PM That's really sad. Did you move a lot as a kid?

6:09PM We did. My father was a writer and was always moving us to try and find his "inspiration". What about you? Did you move around a lot?

6:10PM Nope. Born and raised in the same place my whole life.

6:11PM The stability must have been nice.

6:13PM Uh, yeah, I guess. I never really thought about it before, ya know?

6:16PM Well, I hate to inform you, but I believe we are both on our last questions.

6:17PM Ooh, the pressure is on. Gotta think of something good. You go first. What's your last question for me?

Castiel hesitated before asking the question that had been on his mind since earlier that morning.

6:21PM What do you really want to do?

6:22PM What do you mean?

6:23PM I mean, you're going to school for mechanical engineering, however I get the sense that you're not very passionate about the subject. And i understand you have your reasons for
why, and I'm not asking you to defend yourself. I'm just curious, setting that aside, If you could have any job in the world, what would you want to do?

6:27PM Um, wow. Kind of caught me off guard there. I'm not really sure, you know? The plan has always been engineering.

6:28PM If money or prestige or whatever your reasons are didn't exist...what would you want to spend your life doing?

6:34PM Honestly? I think it would be kind of cool to be a baker or a chef. Don't tell anyone, but I actually really love baking. Especially pie. Oh man, I make a mean apple pie!

6:35PM But it's never going to happen. So, no point in dwelling on it.

6:35PM May I ask why not?

6:36PM Nope. You used up your last question already buddy.

He wanted to press on the other man to find out why, but decided to drop the subject. They were just strangers, after all. The other man certainly didn't have to tell him if he wished not to.

6:36PM Fair enough. What is your last question then?

6:49PM Where do you live?

6:50PM I mean, not the address or anything... Just, the general area.

6:50PM Never mind. You don't need to answer that.

Castiel chuckled, wondering how nervous Solo had been, wanting to ask this question. He could always use his pass, and Solo had told him not to worry about answering the question... It was bordering on the line of comfortable things to inform a total stranger, but Castiel found himself wanting to tell him. Especially if it made him happy.

Which should scare him.

But for some strange reason, it didn’t.

6:53PM I'm currently living in New York. That's where my company's headquarters are. Although, I do most of my work from home, and often have to travel, so I'm really not here very often.

6:55PM Do you go central park a lot?

6:56PM I believe you already asked your last question as well.

6:56PM But yes.

Castiel loved going to Central Park, all year round. He usually tried to go once a week, making to trip down on Sundays so he could enjoy the nature and find some peace.

6:57PM Ha. Fair enough.

7:08PM So, did you get all of your questions answered?
He wondered if this day was as pleasant for Solo as it was for him. He had found a good rhythm, able to focus on both work and his conversation, and discovered that the day flew by quickly.

7:09PM Not even close.

Castiel smiled, feeling the same way. The more he learned about this stranger, the more he wanted to know.

7:12PM I guess we'll just have to play again tomorrow then.

7:16PM Yeah, I'd like that.

Castiel's smile didn't leave him for the rest of the night.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you again for your comments and kudos and bookmarks and views. You are all lovely and beautiful and bring me as much happiness and pie brings to Dean.

Let me know your thoughts! I'd love to hear them!
Castiel continued to talk to Solo, playing the questions game much like they had that first time, with a changed rule that they could ask as many questions as they wanted: no limits. They still had the option to “pass” but neither Solo or Castiel had chosen to use one. Cas found that he wanted the other man to know him, and eagerly answered any questions he had.

During their games, Cas learned that Solo’s favorite color was black, he has an unhealthy obsession with wearing plaid (although, Solo claims his brother is worse than he is), listens exclusively to "true" music (namely classic rock artists such as Led Zeppelin and AC/DC), and loves his family more than anything. He did however, avoid asking him about his career choice, feeling that it was probably a sensitive subject, and found that he didn’t want to upset his new friend.

There was one thing Castiel truly envied, and that was how close Solo seemed to be with his family. Everyone of them sounded wonderful and it made Castiel long for a decent family of his own. Solo often talked about his smart younger brother, Sam, who wanted to become a lawyer one day and help people. He had mentioned his sweet mother, who taught him how to cook and worked with Social Services, wanting to save those children who couldn’t help themselves. The more Solo spoke of his mother, the more of a Saint the woman sounded. He also spoke of his father, a strict sounding man who worked as a mechanic and served time in the military, but it was obvious Solo loved him as well.

The desire to have a family like Solo’s was so strong, that Castiel decided to send a message to Gabriel, Anael, and Samandriel to see how they were doing, in an attempt to reconnect. He didn't bother trying to contact his eldest two brothers, knowing neither of them would respond positively.

In response, Gabe sent Castiel a porn video starring himself, claiming they should go out for drinks the next time he came to New York for a candy run. Castiel promptly destroyed the video (why Gabriel thought Castiel would want to watch that was beyond him) and replied affirmatively. He figured they wouldn't actually get together, they rarely did, and when they did it often resulted with heavy fines and long periods of his memory being completely blacked out. But, perhaps it was the thought that counted.

Anna wrote back as well, informing Castiel of what a great time she was having in France and that she was really making a name for herself with her art. She, too, offered an empty promise that should Castiel ever visit France, they should meet up. Castiel, who had no plans to visit there in the near future, responded that he would anyway.

Samandriel was the one who surprised him. He assumed he would receive a message saying he was busy with school, but instead received a long message how it was good to hear from Castiel and he would love to see him sometime. He admitted to having a hard time figuring out what he wanted to do and needed some direction.

Castiel, not really knowing how he could help, called Saman immediately, remembering how he had wished one of his brothers had been there for him during those difficult college years.

He chatted with Saman for hours, just listening to him talk about how frustrating his job in the coffee shop was because no one knew what they were doing and half of the classes he was taking were boring and causing him grief. Castiel learned that both Michael and Lucifer, their eldest brothers, had
convinced Saman to go take classes that could be considered for both pre-law and pre-med.

Castiel advised him to change his major the next semester, and take a bunch of random classes to try and figure out what he liked, what he was good at, and more importantly find something he enjoyed.

He was surprised when Saman asked if Castiel would call again soon. He was reminded of the small, scared boy he used to comfort on stormy nights. Castiel immediately agreed to calling him the next week and offered an invitation for him to call anytime he needed, hoping Saman understood that it wasn't an empty invitation.

He sat, examining his phone when they finally hung up, a smile creeping onto his face. Perhaps he could be a brother like Solo after all.

Once again, Castiel was stunned with how much of an impact Solo had had on him in such a short amount of time. He was grateful for the other man, and thanked the heavens every day that Solo had send that first message to the wrong number.

--

It was Friday night and Castiel hadn't heard from Solo yet that day. He shouldn't have been disappointed, it wasn't as though Solo was expected to message him every day. However, he had. Since he accidentally texted him, he had continued to to engage in a conversation every single day.

Castiel knew that he could always be the first to send a message, but he didn't know what he would say. Besides, that wasn't his forte. He wasn't very good with finding engaging topics to speak with his few friends about, something both Balthazar and Gabriel mentioned to him on a regular basis.

The only friend who was willing to listen to whatever he wanted to talk about was Meg. He remembered long summer days when the two would lie in the grass and Cas would recite poetry and tell her about the bees. He still remembers the small smile on her face as she watched him speak animatedly. Even then though, he knew she wasn’t actually interested. She was just humoring him.

He wondered if Solo would be interested.

Instead of attempting to find out, he found himself curled up underneath a blanket on his couch, reading a book that Michael had recommended to him. He tried his hardest to focus on the words on his page instead of trying to listen for his phone to buzz.

He had finally got to a point where he could forget his disappointment when his phone rang. He looked down casually, wondering if Saman had taken him up on his offer to call him, when his heart stopped.

Solo's number appeared on the screen.

Castiel stared at the number, unsure what he should do. Solo had never called him before, only ever sticking to text. There was something seemingly intimate about talking over the phone, and he wasn't sure he was ready to take that step yet. He liked what they currently had.

The ringing stopped, and Castiel sighed, not sure if he felt relief or disappointment. He continued to stare at the phone when it lit up and began to ring again.

Nervously, he picked up the phone. If he was calling back, surely there was something important he needed to talk about, right? What if he was in trouble? Or just needed a friend like Saman did?

“Hello?” Castiel answered tentatively, still not sure if he had made the right decision.
“Um...hi?” A young female voice answered back. Castiel was confused. He had though Solo was male...

“I don't mean to be rude, but may I ask who's calling?” He asked bluntly, not wanting to be tossed around. There was something inside him that knew this wasn't the man he had been texting for the past month.

He listened carefully, taking note of the noise in the background. It sounded crowded, with popular music playing. He guessed this young woman was at a party or bar. He also assumed Solo was there with her, not knowing how else she would have gotten a hold of his phone.

“Uh, wow, he wasn't lying...” the girl replied, laughing under her breath, much to Castiel's confusion.

She continued before he could respond, “Sorry, I'm Jo. Dean's friend. Are you Dean's Angel?”

Dean.

It dawned on him that “Dean” must be Solo's real name.

Hesitantly, Castiel replied back, “Yes, I suppose I am.”

Why was she calling? Where was...Dean?

“Wow, you sound really hot,” Jo declared.

“Thank you,” Castiel replied automatically. He wasn't sure what people liked about his voice. He supposed it was deeper than most may be, but he didn't understand the sexual appeal that most others did.

“May I ask why you're calling?” Castiel asked, trying to get Jo to focus. He wondered how much she had had to drink that night. “Is...Dean...in trouble?”

He smiled unwillingly as Dean's name rolled off his tongue. It was pleasant. He much preferred his real name to “Solo”.

“What?” Jo asked surprised, “No, he's not in trouble. Why?”

Castiel furrowed his brow, “I'm sorry, is there a specific reason why you're calling then?”

“Oh, I just wanted to see who this 'Angel' was that Dean won't shut up about. He wouldn't give us any details, just that he'd texted a stranger and never stopped.”

Castiel nodded his head, as he tried to wrap his head around the fact that apparently Dean was talking about him to his friends, “Yes, that is what happened.”

“So,” Jo, asked, “You do exist. And you sound as smart as Den claimed. How old are you?”

Castiel could imagine the girl twirling a strand of her hair through her fingers and she tried to speak flirtatiously.

“Much too old for you, I'm sure,” Castiel replied frankly, not wanting to give this girl any wrong ideas.

“But, not too old for Dean?” She asked teasingly.
Castiel stayed silent, not certain how to answer that. He knew he didn't feel too old and Dean seemed to like his attention.

He heard a voice yell in the background and Jo say quickly into the line, “Uh oh. Gotta go lover boy.”

The phone clicked, indicating the end of the call.

Castiel stared at the screen, unsure as to what had just happened. He sat frozen for several moments, feeling nothing but gratitude that he was no longer in the college scene. He certainly had no desire to relive some of those moments.

He paused to consider if perhaps he was too old and too boring for Dean, who was obviously still in party mode. He wondered if this girl Jo was a potential date. He heart sank at the thought, realizing that Dean was free to spend time with whomever he desired. It did give him a little hope that Dean had mentioned him to this young woman. And if Jo was to be believed (which he wasn't entirely sure just how reliable she really was), then Dean talked about him often.

Castiel looked down at his phone which buzzed again, indicating a text. He quickly opened it up, nervous to see what it said.

9:46PM *I am so sorry! I turned away for a moment and suddenly my phone was gone and it took me a bit to figure out that my friend had stolen it. I'm sorry she bugged you. I know you like your quiet evenings and I'm sure the last thing you want is some stupid girl calling you up.*

9:47PM *You probably don't want me bugging you either...I just wanted to apologize.*

Castiel quickly responded, worried that Solo...Dean...actually believed what he was typing.

9:47PM *Nonsense, I enjoy our conversations. You know that. You're most definitely not bugging me.*

9:49PM *Not sure if I really believe you, but thanks anyway.*

Castiel frowned at the reply. What brought this on? Sol-, no his name was Dean, was usually so vibrant when they talked.

9:50PM *Dean. I assure you that you are not bugging me.*

There were several long minutes of silence and Castiel wondered if he should try writing back or keep waiting. He didn't like Dean thinking that he wasn't worth his time. He sighed in relief when he finally received a message back.

9:58PM *Jo told you my name, didn't she?*

Castiel smiled sheepishly, as he re-read his previous message realizing the slip.

9:58PM *Yes she did.*

9:59PM *Damn it, Jo!*

Castiel chuckled, hoping his friend, Jo, didn't get into too much trouble. If anything positive had come from that call, it would be that he learned Dean's real name.

10:00PM *Go enjoy your party. I'll message you in the morning. Have a good night Dean.*
He waited for a few moments for a responding message. When none came, he put his phone down, stretching as he craned his head back to check the time. It was much too late, and he decided to call it a night. He thought about Dean again, wondering if talking to this young college student was going to end up hurting him. He brushed the thought aside, deciding he could ponder more about it in the morning.

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Castiel debated for a couple of hours whether or not he should send a text to Dean. He had told him the previous night he would, but now he was nervous. Was pursuing a friendship with Dean a good idea? Castiel looked down at the simple message he had written out and hit send before he could change his mind.

7:02AM Hello Dean.

Castiel put his phone down, not expecting a reply for several hours. He remembered it always took him a long time to recover after party, and assumed Dean was the same way. He gathered some laundry together, cleaning his bedroom up, when a reply came just a few minutes later.

7:07AM You actually texted me.

Castiel frowned at the implication of the message, blushing when he realized that he almost hadn't.

7:16AM Of course I did. I told you last night that I would.

Castiel paused for a moment before quickly adding a second message and went down to start a load of laundry.

7:17AM How was the party?

7:20AM It sucked. It was a freshman party, so I didn't want to go in the first place, but my friend Jo begged for me to come with her. Everyone there was drunk, young, and way annoying...and I'm really not that much older than them.

7:22AM It did make me wonder if that's how you feel when you talk to me...

He sighed, realizing what had brought on Dean's concerns the night before. This was okay. He could easily reassure Dean that he wasn't anything like an "annoying freshman".

7:25AM Dean. I said this last night, and I'll say it again: You are not a bother to me.

Castiel paused wondering how much he should say before throwing caution to the wind and admitting,

7:28AM I know that we've only been talking for a few weeks now, but I often find that your messages are the highlights of my day. I look forward to hearing from you and would be very upset it you discontinued our conversations.

He waited (not so patiently) for several long excruciating minutes before receiving a response,

7:28AM Yeah, I feel the same.

A smile flew onto Castiel's face and he felt brighter and happier than he had in a long time.

--
7:12PM Dean, how old are you?

Castiel bit his lip, a habit he tried to shy away from, while he waited for Dean's reply. It had been a couple of weeks since Jo had called him and Cas realized he was falling hard and falling fast. He found that he fell in love with people's personalities before he noticed their looks and Dean was brighter than anyone he'd ever spoken to before. It was impossible not to like him.

Which made him wonder if what he was doing was nonsensical and foolish. Would he end up getting hurt? He couldn't keep Jo's words from his mind, asking if he was too old for Dean.

Cas finally determined that he needed to make a decision. He knew they got along well, but was this a young fresh out of high school student that was half Castiel's age? He waited nervously for a response from Dean, hoping his first worry would be put to rest.

7:19PM Are you going to tell me your age (finally) if I tell you?

A smile flew to Castiel's as soon as he got a reply. Aside from asking him when they first starting talking if he was "old", Dean had never inquired about his age.

7:20PM I will.

7:20PM 24

His heart fluttered. That wasn't nearly as young as he was thinking. This could work. Talking and being friends could work in between them.

7:21PM I am 33.

7:21PM You're 33!!?

Castiel's heart dropped at the seemingly innocent message. Perhaps he was mistaken. Perhaps he was much too old to be speaking to someone like Dean. He was nearly 10 years older than him. He was finishing his doctorate by the time Dean graduated from high school. Maybe he should stop talking with him. Perhaps they shouldn't...

7:22PM I thought you said you were old! That's only a couple years older than me!

Castiel laughed at himself, rubbing his chest as he realized that his heart couldn't handle the high and lows his emotions had played on him in the past few minutes. Perhaps what he really needed to do, was stop worrying about it so much.

7:24PM I never said I was old. I said that by your definition, you could classify me as such. I am 10 years your senior.

7:25PM Technically 9. And that's like a blink of an eye in time.

7:27PM I'm glad you're not discouraged by the age gap.

7:28PM Oh, believe me, I'm definitely not discouraged.

Castiel smiled, pleased at this new revelation. Although there was an age gap in between the two, it wasn't strange for them to continue developing their relationship. If that's what they were doing. Castiel still wasn't entirely sure how to classify what they were doing.

7:34PM So, what are you doing tonight?
7:36PM I will probably read for a little bit before going to bed early.

7:36PM What book?

7:37PM A book my brother recommended to me about the history and recent discoveries in the Ebola virus.

7:38PM Sounds boring.

7:38PM I must admit, it is not the most riveting work I've ever read.

7:39PM I'm pretty sure that's Angel-Speak for "it's boring"

Castiel cocked his head to the side, squinting at the new term he was unfamiliar with.

7:40PM Angel-Speak?

7:42PM Uh yeah. You speak so differently than what I'm used to, sometimes I feel like it's a different language and I've got to translate it into something I can understand. I named your way of speaking Angel-Speak cause your name is Angel.

He chuckled as he read Dean’s next message.

7:43PM I'm getting pretty good at translating. I could probably do your job.

7:43PM I don't doubt that.

7:46PM You should go out and do something crazy tonight.

7:47PM I think I'll pass for now.

7:51PM Yeah, I don’t blame you. I’m starting to think you may be onto something with the whole no late partying thing.

Castiel knew he shouldn’t be as happy with this message as he was. This had been another concern for him. Dean appeared to be very social, often mentioning how he was going out to drink and be among friends, whilst he himself preferred to stay home, cuddled on the couch with a good book and soft music playing in the background.

While neither approach was better than the other, they were so different Castiel often worried about his and Dean’s compatibility.

Not that he should really be concerned, seeing as they weren’t actually dating and simply just friends.

7:53PM It is rather nice.

He hesitated, suddenly feeling bad. He had been quite the "partyer" back when he was attending college, and felt it was a disadvantage to Dean that he didn’t know that.

7:54PM Although, thinking back, the parties I attended during my college years were some of my most memorable experiences.

7:56PM Well, Angel, looks like we’ll just have to make some new, even better, memories then.

Castiel smiled shyly at the message, finding that there was nothing he wanted more.
7:57PM I would like that.

7:58PM Me too.

In that moment, Castiel knew he wouldn’t be able to let Dean go. He was drawn to the other man in ways he had never imagined he could be. Despite their differences, Dean was the greatest man he had even had the pleasure of conversing with and he knew the sentiment that he was falling for the other was truer in this instance than it had ever been before.

Knowing he should end his evening on this high, he quickly wrote out a final message. Pleased at the other man’s reply.

8:04PM Have a good evening, Dean.

8:05PM Good night, my Angel.

Chapter End Notes

So now you know both of their ages! For those of you who are curious, in this story, Dean waited a bit before he started college. He is technically considered a junior now, and is mostly done with his generals, starting into his program.

Also, even after Cas learns Dean's name, Dean doesn't ask about his in return, nor does Cas offer it. Dean doesn't mind Cas knowing, and only didn't tell him in the beginning as a joke. He likes reading his name from "his angel". However, he's not ready to learn Cas' true name yet. He likes the anonymity of their conversations, finding that they both are more comfortable and more themselves with that crutch there. Cas is Dean's Angel, and at the moment, that's all he wants to know.

Thank you again, my lovelies, for reading and commenting, or bookmarking, or leaving behind your kudos!

You're all beautiful and wonderful and I'm so happy you all chose to read my story! *blushes*
6:32PM Angel, save me.

Cas looked at the message, hoping that if Dean were really in trouble, he would call the correct authorities to help resolve his issue. He frowned and wrote back,

6:37PM What am I supposed to be saving you from?

6:41PM One of my friends set me up on a blind date and it's bad. This chick is 50 shades of crazy.

Castiel growled at the message. He knew logically he had no claim on Dean. However, the idea of him going out on a date with someone other than him brought out a primal instinct he hadn't felt in years. He wrote bitterly:

6:42PM What do you want me to do about it?

He reminded himself to behave. There was no reason he should be reacting this way. He and Dean weren’t dating. If he wanted to go out with someone else, he was well within his right to. Besides, other than his blatant flirting (at least, Cas was pretty sure Dean was flirting with him), he had no way of knowing that the other man liked him back.

6:49PM I need you to call me or something... With a fake emergency or whatever so I can get out of here.

He sat back and shook his head with some slight satisfaction, pleased at knowing Dean has no interest in his date. He immediately felt bad, thinking about the poor girl on the date with Dean who obviously didn't want to be there. He had never felt comfortable with the idea of lying to a person to get out of a date. Reminding himself to not to give into Dean, Castiel pushed down any unwarranted feelings of jealousy he may have and responded like the responsible adult that he was.

6:52PM I'm not helping you to ditch this poor girl just because you are uncomfortable with the arrangement.

Cas hesitated before adding,

6:53PM Besides, it's a blind date. It's supposed to be uncomfortable.

6:56PM Dude. If I was just uncomfortable, I could handle it. But this girl... I'm serious when I say she's 50 shades of crazy. You know that book?
I assume your referring to the novel 50 Shades Of Grey.

Yeah, she's like big time obsessed with it. She brought a freaking grey tie and proceeded to tell me what she was going to do with it to me.

And that's not a good thing?

Despite his jealousy, Cas was confused. Had he been in Dean's position when he were his age, he would have jumped on that opportunity. Not that he wanted Dean to jump on this particular opportunity.

Don't get me wrong, I like sex as much as the next guy... But I've got standards, ya know?

Besides, it's more than that.

He waited patiently for Dean to elaborate.

She's sitting over there, just leering at me (and not in the good way), she's got big time crazy eyes, and quite frankly, she's kinda dumb and it's grating on my nerves so friggin bad. She just won't shut up.

Castiel felt bad that he was happy by these revelations. He was getting in too deep with Dean. But, he couldn't find it in himself to care.

Well that doesn't surprise me. She is obsessed with the 50 Shades of Grey series, which is nothing but glorified porn.

And not even good porn.

There was several minutes of silence before Dean texted back.

Wait, you've read it?

He debated whether he should answer honestly, before finally admitting to Dean:

I translated the novel into Spanish and Hebrew. Which meant I had to read the novel multiple times. It was excruciating.

There were several more minutes of silence and Castiel wondered if Dean was paying attention to his date now.

You're joking...

I'm afraid not. They actually wanted me to tape the audio book as well, but I refused.

Why'd they want you to do audio too? Do you do that often?

No. I apparently have a "sex voice" and can make a person orgasm by the sound of my moans alone.

There was another break before his reply came.

Oh really?

That's what I've been told in any case. And it's not that I'm opposed to the idea of
reading porn, I just refuse to deal with badly written porn.

7:27PM It's that bad, huh?

7:28PM I could write better porn that that atrocious novel.

7:28PM Oh yeah?

7:29PM I must admit though, it really wouldn't be difficult to do.

7:29PM I'd be interested in that.

Castiel stared at the words, unsure at Dean's meaning.

7:31PM Interested in what exactly?

7:32PM In you proving you write better than those Grey books.

Castiel gaped at the message, a blush flooding his face.

7:34PM I'm not sending you an erotic message via text.

7:34PM I bet you're all talk and no game.

Castiel sat up straight. He wasn't one to back away from a challenge, especially not one that he knew he could win easily. Dean wanted him to play, then he would play.

7:41PM (1/3) He pushed his lover further into the bed, reaching his hand up and gently rolling his nipple beneath his fingertips while sucking on his collarbone. His other hand slid up his lover's arms, bound against the headboard and rolled his hips against the other's.

7:42PM (2/3) He smiled, pleased when he heard a breathy moan in response, and continued the gentle rolls, pushing his lips onto the man's below him. His hand slid down softly brushing against the head of his lover's penis. His eyes rolled back as he felt the precum deliciously leaking out.

7:42PM (3/3) His other hand reached down, grabbing himself and he moved the two together in perfect rhythm. "Fuck," someone moaned out. He wasn't even sure who. His hands moved faster and faster as his eyes looked down, locking into the green ones staring back at him. His lover called out, coming in spurts in his hand, causing him to follow right behind, the other man's name called out from his lips.

Castiel reread his messages before sending them to Dean, satisfied in what he'd done. He rode his high for several long minutes, waiting for Dean to respond. He was pleased with his reaction.

7:45PM Fuck.

7:46PM You're welcome.

Cas set his phone down smugly and continued his evening.

--

It was when Castiel climbed into bed that it dawned on him what he had done. He grabbed his
phone, trying to crush the feeling of guilt rising in his chest and messaged Dean.

9:29PM Did I send you porn while you were on a date with someone else?

9:30PM Yup.

Castiel sighed,

9:31PM That was incredibly inappropriate of me. I apologize.

9:32PM Angel, don't apologize. That was the greatest thing that's happened to me all day. Probably all week!

9:33PM Besides, it gave me a great excuse to end the date.

9:33PM You ended the date because of that? Why?

Castiel frowned as he waited for a reply. Although he wasn't happy with the idea of Dean going out on a date, he hadn't wanted to be the cause of the end.

9:34PM Because I didn't want the girl to think I was exited by her.

Castiel cocked his head to the side.

9:35PM What do you mean?

There was no reply right away. Castiel thought back, wondering what Dean could mean by "excited". Looking down at his hands resting in his lap, it dawned on him.

9:37PM Oh, I see.

9:37PM Yup.

Castiel blushed, fighting the smile that threatened to creep onto his face, imagining Dean sitting at a table in a nice restaurant with his blind date, attempting to hide his boner. That he, Castiel, had caused.

He wrote back curiously,

9:39PM What did you tell her when you left?

9:42PM The truth. That a guy I was interested in was sexting me and I needed to go.

Castiel laughed, feeling butterflies explode in his stomach. Dean was interested in him. With the unabashed flirting and constant communication, he had dared to hope, but now he had confirmation. Feeling as though he needed to defend himself somehow, he wrote back incredulously.

9:43PM I wasn't sexting you!

9:44PM Angel, you wrote me out well thought porn. In between two guys. One of whom had green eyes. That's the very definition of sexting.

9:44PM I prefer sex with men. It was easier to write. And why does it matter that one of the characters had green eyes?

Castiel waited for a reply, amused. When he had started this evening, he had no inclinations that this
is where it would end up. He couldn't say he was disappointed.

9:46PM *Because I have green eyes.*

His smile grew wider. No wonder Dean had been so affected. He had placed himself in the character’s position. Castiel wondered if Dean had imagined it was him who was lying on top, taking control. He groaned at the thought, and quickly typed back.

9:48PM *Ah, I see. That was purely a happy accident. Trust me, you would be far more affected if I were actually sexting you.*

9:49PM *Yeah? I find that hard to believe.*

9:50PM *It's true. I would take more control and guide you through, telling you what to do and when to come.*

9:52PM *What would you say?*

Castiel sat up in his bed, adrenaline pumping through his veins as he stared at the question. He racked through his brain, trying to think of any reason why he shouldn't do this, but couldn't think of a single one. He had been speaking with Dean for a couple of months now and loved everything he knew about him. In fact, he knew Dean better than most of his friends.

It seemed natural to take their relationship to the next step. And since they shouldn't see each other in person...

9:55PM *First, I would tell you go to your room and lock the door. I want no interruptions. All your focus should be on me.*

9:57PM *Then what would you say?*

9:58PM *I'd tell you to take off your shirt and your pants. Leave your boxers on. Then I'd have you lie back on your bed, slowly running your fingers lightly down your chest pausing you pinch your nipples on the way down.*

9:58PM *What next?*

10:00PM *I would tell you to palm yourself over your boxers, forcing your hips to stay still and not up into the touch. Then I'd have you slip your fingers past the fabric, hovering over your skin, not touching. You'd run those fingers down, brushing over your balls lightly until you reached back to your hole, applying pressure just enough that you're wanting more, but not giving in.*

Cas moaned, reaching down to touch himself through his pajama bottoms. He imagined Dean listening to his every command and getting off to his texts.

10:02PM *Fuck. That's so hot.*

Castiel chuckled and teased,

10:03PM *This is all hypothetical, of course. Things I would say and do if I was actually sexting you.*

10:06PM *Yeah. Of course. I know that.*
He chucked darkly again, knowing he couldn't leave Dean in agony for too much longer.

10:07PM Dean?

10:09PM Yeah?

10:10PM I want you to touch yourself.

He was pleased when Dean responded,

10:11PM Oh, fuck, Angel.

He imagined Dean lying there, grabbing at his penis, with his phone in his other hand, trusting Castiel. How strange that he were putting his trust in this faceless, voiceless, (and he remembered as he read the latest text) nameless stranger. He felt powerful, loving the control he had over the younger man.

10:13PM Palm yourself lightly, reaching into your pants to play with the puckered skin around your hole if you're not already there. I want you to run your fingers over the area for a moment, then pull your hand completely out.

10:15PM Fuck, okay, what next?

10:16PM Lightly run your fingers over your clothed penis, and lick your other fingers, continuing to tease the nipple. Imagine they're my teeth, pinching the pink flesh, rolling it beneath my tongue.

Castiel quickly pulled off his pants, running his hand up and down his shaft and wanted Dean to feel the same pleasure.

10:19PM Now take off your boxers.

10:19PM Yes sir.

A thrill ran down Castiel's spine.

10:21PM Grab yourself, slowly gliding up the shaft. Imagining they're my fingers while your other hand reaches down and cups your balls.

10:24PM Yes, Angel. Fuck. So good.

10:26PM Go faster Dean. Feel my hands all over you. Feel my hips thrusting into your thigh. My blue eyes gazing into your green.

10:26PM Angel.

Castiel felt his own orgasm on the brink so he quickly grabbed the base to stop himself from coming and typed,

10:29PM Do you have any lube or lotion nearby?

10:29PM Yeah.

10:30PM I want you to squirt some lube onto your fingers and press against your hole again.
Play with the skin around and slowly insert your finger.

10:33PM Angel. I can't. I'm gonna. Fuck.

10:34PM Try it, Dean. For me. And when your finger is inside, I want you to find your prostate and rub that spot until you come.

Castiel followed his own advice, mercilessly teasing himself until he came in spurts, shouting out Dean's name and lay in a post orgasmic bliss waiting for Dean to respond back.

10:41PM Wow.

He chuckled, understanding the sentiment.

10:42PM Me too.

He looked at the time and sighed, knowing it was much later than he intended to stay up, but finding it hard to regret his decision.

10:44PM Seriously. Wow. I haven't come that hard in...fuck, I can barely stay awake.

Castiel chuckled, feeling the same way as Dean.

10:45PM Go to sleep, Dean. We can talk again in the morning.

10:46PM Good night, my Angel.

Castiel fell into a deep sleep with dreams of green eyes staring back into his own.

--

Castiel stared at his phone, longer than he would care to admit, trying to decide what to text Dean. Should he mention what they had done the night before? Should he pretend like it never happened? He didn't want to pretend that it hadn't happened, but he didn't want the other man to feel uncomfortable.

As he debated, his phone buzzed with a message from Dean. Glad that he didn't have to make the decision, Castiel quickly read.

9:49AM Are you supposed to put the detergent in before or after the clothes? I can never remember.

He forced himself to smile, trying to ignore the small bout of disappointment he felt in his chest. He began to type a response when a second message came in.

9:51AM Also, last night was amazing. And something I would definitely be interested in doing again. That is... If you wanted to do it too. If not, that's cool as well. I just thought I'd let you know that I enjoyed it.

He smiled widely, feeling even better than he had the night before.

9:52AM I think that could be arranged.

Castiel set his phone down before letting out an unashamed “whoo!” in his small apartment, allowing his excitement to fill him to his very core.
You don't even know how happy you make me when I update a chapter and you comment and bookmark and leave kudos. (or maybe you do...) In any case, it makes me really happy.
Chapter Notes

Sorry, not sorry.

Relationships aren't all about fluff. Sometimes, crap happens. Fortunately, usually the crap that happens is often petty and stupid and easily resolved. :)

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“…And that’s another thing, no one knows what they’re even doing! This one girl, Hester, never cleans out the machine properly. You can’t make good coffee unless you take care of the machine! And my boss, Marv, is a complete nightmare! He has no idea how to run a business. He just shuts himself away in the back room and lets everyone else do all of the work. The other day, I heard a customer complain, and he yelled at them!”

“Well, was their complaint valid?” Castiel asked his younger brother, Samandriel as he sorted through his clothes. He was happy that his younger brother had taken to calling him as he’d invited him to. He was currently listening to Saman tell him about the issues he had to deal with in his workplace.

“Whether it is or isn’t doesn’t matter,” Samandriel huffed, “I’m fairly certain that ‘the customer is always right’. If you want your customer to come back, then you need to cater to them, and have good customer service. Although in this case, their concern was valid. They were given a cup of lukewarm coffee. Luke warm! No one likes lukewarm coffee, Cassie! I don’t care who you are. And I watched when he was given his cup, it wasn’t like he let it sit for an hour, it was actually given to him that way. And instead of offering him a new cup of coffee, Marv yelled at him for having unrealistic expectations. Excuse me, but I think that wanting a cup of hot coffee is pretty standard when going to a café.”

Cas frowned, “You’re right, he doesn’t appear to know what he’s doing.”

Saman let out a frustrated sigh, “He really doesn’t! In fact, I told him that we should offer a special for college students, to try and get more traffic to come in through the stores, just something simple like, get 10% off if you show your Student ID card, or anyone who can recite pie to 15 places gets a free slice of pie or something stupid like that. Instead, he raised our prices and told the baristas that they should add more foam in the drinks and less coffee to cut costs.”

“That doesn’t seem like a very honest way to run your business.”

“It really isn’t, which is so frustrating!”

“You should open up your own café,” Cas said simply, pulling down a suitcase for him to start putting his clothes in.

There was silence on the line for a moment, “What?”

Cas chuckled, “You should start your own café. I think those are great marketing ideas, and you
seem to have a knack for business. Plus, despite your complaints about the lack of management oversight and incompetency of your co-workers, you seem to genuinely like your job.”

There was another bout of silence, “Yeah, but Cas…I can’t be a barista for the rest of my life…”

Cas frowned, “First off, you wouldn’t be. You’d be a business owner. Those are two completely different things. And second off, who says you can’t?”

When he received no answer, Castiel continued, “I would like to remind you that while both Michael and Lucifer have copious amounts of money, neither of them can claim to be poster boys when it comes to happiness. There is more to life than prestige and wealth. I just want you to find something that you enjoy. I’m not saying you should open up your own business now, but perhaps you should take a business class and discover if it is something you might be interested in pursuing.”

“Do you think I could do it?” Samandriel asked in a small voice.

“I have no doubts that you could, as long as that is what you want to do.”

Saman answered shyly, “Thanks Cas. I’ll…I’ll look into it. It wouldn’t hurt to take a business class. Maybe I’ll even call Gabe and see what he thinks.”

Cas smiled, “I think that would be a fantastic idea, as long as you remember you’re talking to Gabe.”

Saman laughed, “Will do. Thanks again, Castiel. I need to go. I’ve got finals soon. Have a safe flight, Cassie. Text me later?”

“Of course. Take care Saman.”

Cas smiled, looking at the phone as he hung up the call. It was in moments like this he felt more grateful for Dean than ever before. If it wasn’t for him, he wouldn’t have had the initiative to call his little brother and have the relationship they have now.

He quickly pulled up his text application, and typed out a message. Now that he was thinking about the younger boy, he longed to have as much contact with him as he could, while he could.

8:43AM How are your finals going?

Castiel was hopeful he’d get to talk to Dean a little bit before he left. His company was flying him out to the Middle East to an archeological site that had uncovered several tablets, buried deep in the ground. He was flying to the dig site later that day. It was something that had been in the works for several months, and now Cas was finally going.

It was an exciting trip for him to go on, there was a lot of promise for this dig site to have old transcripts for him to translate, and if this was successful, he wouldn't have to deal with translating angsty teen harlequins for a long time. It was a great move for his career and he’d be working on something that he was passionate about.

However, he was disappointed by the lack of service he would receive at the dig site. Being out in the middle of nowhere meant that he wouldn't be able to talk to Dean much over the next few weeks. He'd only be able to check his phone when he went into town. When he had told Dean, the younger boy assured him that that was okay, that they’d still say hi whenever they could. With his finals having just started, it was most likely he’d be too busy to talk anyway.

Castiel wasn’t sure how long he was going to be gone, but he assumed once he retrieved the tablets, he could take them towards civilization. By that point, Dean would most likely be done with classes.
and be able to talk again…

Cas scoffed, shoving a pair of jeans into his bag more roughly than was necessary. Dean wasn't his. Sure, they talked on a daily basis and had sexted that once, but they weren't together. If Dean said it was fine that they didn't talk as often for a bit, then it should be fine. But, why was it affecting him so much?

Depressed, Castiel checked his phone, and hoped that Dean would be able to cheer him up from his self-inflicted foul mood.

9:01AM They suck. Seriously. I hate math.

Cas rolled his eyes. So much for cheering him up.

9:03AM Don't engineering programs have a lot of math involved?

9:03AM Unfortunately.

9:04AM Perhaps you should consider switching to a program you enjoy.

9:05AM It's fine. I can handle it.

Cas let out a humorless laugh. He didn't know why Dean was so insistent on doing this program. It was obvious he wasn't enjoying it.

9:06AM I wasn't trying to imply you couldn't. I was merely suggesting that if you're unhappy with your classes, you could always switch to a different, more enjoyable program.

9:07AM Yeah. Not gonna happen.

9:07AM Why not?

9:08AM It's just not. Okay?

Castiel squinted at the message, trying to discern its meaning. Dean always got touchy when they talked about his schooling. He considered letting the matter drop, as he had in the past, but after having talked with Saman about his schooling, he found that he genuinely wanted to help Dean, as he had helped his younger brother. Was it so wrong of him that he merely wanted Dean to be happy with what he was doing?

9:10AM My apologies, but I don’t understand. If you don’t enjoy what you’re doing, then you should look into doing something else that you will enjoy. You mentioned you were interested in possibly baking? Perhaps you should go see a counselor about the program, just to see if it fits you.

A reply came back immediately.

9:10AM Jeez, seriously. I'm not gonna be a damn baker, so just lay off.

Castiel frowned, re-reading his previous messages. He hadn’t thought he was being rude. What brought on such a strong reaction from Dean?

He looked at the clock, realizing he needed to leave now if he was going to make it to his flight on time. Great. He quickly typed out a text before grabbing his bag and racing down the steps in his old apartment building, flagging down a taxi and instructing them to take him to LaGuardia.
He looked at his phone and re-read his message before seeing Dean’s response.

9:11AM I wasn’t telling you to switch right now. I was merely suggesting that you looked into it. If you truly don’t want to be a baker, then you don’t have to be. But, you also don’t have to be an engineer either.

9:12AM What did I just say? Back off. I don’t need you telling me what to do with my life. I can take care of myself.

9:24AM I wasn’t implying you couldn’t! I simply believe that life is too short to have a job you don’t enjoy doing.

9:28AM Yeah? Well, not all of us are born with a silver spoon in our mouths and can get our dream jobs right out of college. You don’t know me. You don’t know my circumstances. So piss off.

Castiel narrowed his eyes at the message. It was true that his family had had quite a bit of money while he was growing up. However, as soon as he left his home to go to college, he had been cut off from his parent’s inheritance. He had worked hard to pay for his way through college and had worked harder in order to get the job he was at now.

Castiel paid the cabbie, hopping out of the cab and grabbing his bags as he headed up to the check-out, still fuming at Dean’s latest comments. So much for him helping him to feel better...

He briefly wondered if he should apologize for his words, but honestly couldn’t see where he had gone wrong. Castiel didn’t make it a habit of apologizing for things he wasn’t actually sorry for, so he decided to leave it be.

He checked his phone one last time before hopping onto the plane and buckling himself in his seat. This was not how he wanted to end his conversation with Dean. He was on his way to a different country and did not know how often he would be able to text Dean, if even at all.

He felt disappointment, realizing that Dean had not written any new messages. He quickly typed a message, and turned off his phone, wondering if perhaps it was a good thing he’d be unable to see Dean’s response.

10:58AM (1/4) I find it tragic that you seem so confident that I do not know your circumstances, and yet you believe you know everything about mine. I would like to make it clear: Despite your initial statement, I do know quite a lot about you, Dean.

10:59AM (2/4) I know you are kind and far more intelligent than you give yourself credit for. I know you are stressed over your exams and despite your claims you do not enjoy the program you are enrolled in. It is true; there are still many things I do not know. I am, after all, just some stranger.

10:59AM (3/4) I would like to point out; there is a lot about me you do not know as well. Do not presume that I have been given everything in my life. I suggest you consider swallowing your pride and accepting the advice of others. If you choose to correspond with me in the future, may I advise that you simply tell me what your issue is so that I may actually understand, versus simply biting my head off and requesting that I “piss off”?

11:00AM (4/4) This time, however, I will take your advice and leave you to sulk by yourself. I wish you luck on the remainder of your finals.
Castiel’s agent, Fergus Crowley, was waiting for him on the tarmac when he landed.

“Castiel, my love, glad you could make it,” Crowley called out, his accent standing out among the locals.

“Crowley,” Castiel responded simply, nodding his head once in acknowledgment.

He had never really had any reasons not to get along with the man. He was, after all, his agent, and the often the one responsible for getting him his contracts. However, despite this, he often still felt uneasy around the foreign man. He had decided long ago to always keep watch when Crowley was around. And with his conversation with Dean still obsessing in his mind (even though it had been over 12 hours since their conversation) he was in as foul of a mood as he’d been when he got on the plane. Crowley never did much to improve his mood.

Castiel followed the smaller man to a car that was waiting for them his fingers twitching, desperately wanting to turn on his phone to see if he’d received a response from Dean. It had been a very long day with several flight changes in between and Castiel had spent the majority of the time hunched over his laptop, busy with finishing some translations he’d offered to look into to help one of his co-workers.

He held in his groan, climbing into the small car, regretting that he had to be cooped up for longer, and pushed back any thoughts of checking his phone until he returned to his hotel room later.

"This is all so exciting, is it not?" Crowley asked, trying to make conversation.

Cas simply shot Crowley a look who in return held up his hands in surrender, "My my, what pissed in your cup of tea this morning?"

"Tell me more about what the archeologist has found," Cas prompted, ignoring his question, and trying to distract himself for his foul mood.

They spent the remainder of the trip discussing the transcripts that had been found. There was only so much they could discuss, as Cas needed to see the actual documents before he could know what was actually in them, but it kept his mind reasonably busy until they reached the hotel.

"Who else are we meeting here?" Cas asked as they pulled up to the curb in front of a nice, ritsy place that looked extremely out of place.

"It's just you and me this trip, love," Crowley winked.

Cas grabbed his bags and his room keys heading up to catch a nap before they went to the dig.

He turned on his phone, dropping his bag, and nervously waited for the device to completely boot.

His heart dropped as he stared at the opening screen.

No new messages.

He went into his text application, making sure there truly wasn't anything new. Sure enough, the last message there was his own. He checked the service of his phone in desperation, but he had full bars and wi-fi, complimentary of the hotel.

He sat on the bed staring disparagingly at his phone. He had ruined it. He had finally had someone
he felt comfortable with and he had gone and ruined it. Like he always did.

Cas dropped his phone back into his bag. He wouldn't text Dean, begging for his forgiveness. He had made his choice and Cas would respect that.

Instead, he curled up onto the bed, forcing himself to fall into an uneasy sleep.

--

Castiel spent the next week in a constant state of exhaustion and exhilaration. Crowley had taken him to the dig site and showed him the tablets, written in an ancient form of Enochian even he wasn't super familiar with. That meant these tablets were old. Extremely old. He did discover that they had an ancient seal on them resembling one of the first great Kings of the Enochian Empire, which meant that these small slabs of rock were extremely valuable.

Cas had to force himself not to text Dean when he found out.

A week later and he still hadn't heard from him. He told himself he would probably never hear from the younger man again, but couldn't help but feel disappointed every time he glanced at his phone and saw no new notifications.

How strange or was that in such a small amount of time, Dean had come in and completely turned his world upside down.

Soon enough the week had ended and Castiel had three tablets he needed to translate. He would normally spend his time there at the dig, but discovered he needed access to a library if he were to complete the translations he was having difficulty with.

So, he packed his bags, leaving a disgruntled Crowley behind, and flew to England to continue his work. He immediately called his old school friend, Balthazar, and asked if he would have the time and desire to get together.

They met at a nice restaurant and Cas felt more relaxed than he had in a long time. Balthazar was still into the orgy scene and his stories were always humorous to hear, especially now that they didn't include Castiel getting arrested.

He left the restaurant, feeling more refreshed than he had in weeks. This has been good for him. It was a good decision for him to call Balthazar. Perhaps he needed to go out and make more friends. Or simply reacquaint his self with the ones he already had. He stuck out his arm, calling for a taxi while pulling out his phone to glance at the time.

His heart stuttered as he recognized a text notification at the top of the screen. It was stupid of him to react that way. It was most likely Balthazar telling him he'd had a good time that night. That's all.

He opened the message and froze.

It wasn't from Balthazar.

7:04PM I'm an asshole.

He stared at the three words, unsure how he should respond. It had been several weeks since his last message and he was just barely coming to terms he'd never talk to the young college student again.

Knowing that ignoring him wasn't an option, he hesitantly responded.
9:07PM *Your previous comments were untoward.*

He paused before adding.

9:08PM *Although I should probably apologize for pursuing the subject when I knew that you would be uncomfortable with to begin with.*

He hoped that would suffice. He desperately wanted to be able to talk to Dean, the way they had before. He knew he shouldn’t have pushed Dean to talk, especially when he had made it clear several times that it was something he wasn’t comfortable discussing. If him apologizing would salvage their relationship, then he was willing to try.

9:09PM *Angel. No. You're not the one who should be apologizing! I was completely out of line. I just... Fuck. I'm so sorry.*

Cas stared at the words, knowing that Dean didn't apologize often. He wondered if perhaps Dean wanted to salvage their relationship as badly as he did.

He looked at the words again, remembering how hurtful Dean had been before, and wondered if he was willing to accept Dean’s apology. He smiled at the message and responded honestly.

9:12PM *You have nothing to worry about. You're completely forgiven.*

Of course he forgave Dean. How could he not? He truly believed they were both at fault and much too stubborn for their own good. He was just glad Dean messaged him at all.

9:15PM *I missed you.*

Three more words that played with Cas' emotions in a way he never thought would be possible. What did he do now? What was Dean expecting?

"Hey! You getting in the cab or what?" Cas jumped, realizing the cab had been waiting for him for a full minute while he was stood frozen on the side of the road. He quickly jumped into the cab and typed back quickly, the only thought that had been running through his mind the past few weeks.

9:18PM *I missed you too.*

--

Just like that they easily fell back into the routine they had before. Cas told Dean all about the tablets he was translating and how he felt more excited about his work than he had in a long time. The results he was getting were very promising, and Crowley was already setting up a trip for Castiel to go on so he could explain the translations more fully. He was still wary about bringing up sensitive subjects and tried to stick to things he knew they would both be comfortable discussing.

But, one morning, Dean surprised him (as he was prone to do).

3:13PM *So, I've been thinking about what you said.*

3:14PM *About what in particular?*

3:16PM *About switching my program.*

Cas had been half focused on their conversation, half reading through his translations, trying to find the pieces he was missing. As soon as he read the words, he dropped the transcript he had been
reviewing and looked intently at his phone, nervous as to where this conversation was going.

3:18PM **And what are your thoughts regarding as such?**

3:19PM *I mean, I'm not promising anything, and it's probably going to turn into nothing... But I signed up for a pastry class this summer. Just to try it out, you know? That way, I can know for sure that it's a ridiculous idea.*

Cas smiled. This was good. This was very good.

He took a deep breath before bravely replying.

3:20PM **What will you do if you decide it’s not quite as ridiculous as you think?**

3:22PM *Then, I guess I'll figure it out from there.*

3:22PM **I think that’s wise. I’m excited to hear about how you like it.**

3:23PM *Yeah, yeah. I’m sure you’re thrilled. Now, tell me more about these tablets. Did ya ever figure out that translation? The one about the goat or whatever?*

And as quickly as the conversation had started, it was over. But it left Castiel with a certain hope that perhaps everything would work out the way it was supposed to.

Chapter End Notes

See? I told you it would be resolved!

In case you couldn't tell, this was a little bit more "plot" heavy. I needed to move the story ahead and show how they help each other grow. Besides, relationships aren't all rainbows and kittens. Sometimes you fight. Anyway, I promise, the next two chapters should MORE than make up for it. I'm extremely excited about them. They're kind of awesome.

Anyway, thank you so, so much for your comments on the last chapter! You all made me really happy and lifted my spirits! I hope you enjoyed this chapter as well! Let me know what you think/if you have any questions I can resolve or fix in the text.

You're wonderful and I love you like a baby bird loves butterflies.

((probably not my best analogy, but just go with it))
Hey look! Another chapter!

I think I'm spoiling you all too much.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Castiel was up to his neck in translations, sipping on his tea and muttering to himself the words he was reading. It had been a couple of weeks since he’d returned home from his Middle East/Europe trip and he was glad for the work he had. However, he was finding that several translations were turning out to be more difficult than he’d originally anticipated, and he found himself getting more frustrated as time went on.

He’d been in the middle of a particular nasty translation when a knock at his door pulled him out of his thoughts.

Opening it hesitantly, not having any clue who would be visiting him, he stared blankly at the sight before him.

“Hello there, Cassie. Gonna let your favorite brother in?”

Cas stood, staring at the shorter man with long brown hair and whiskey colored eyes and spoke frankly, “It could be argued that my favorite brother would be Samandriel, not you Gabriel.”

“Ouch,” Gabriel said, side-stepping into Cas’ apartment and let out a low whistle, “Look at this place. What did you do? Let an animal run loose?”

Cas frowned at the suggestion, looking around the apartment. True, it was a lot messier than what he normally liked to keep it, but he just hadn’t had time to both clean and obsess over the translations. He was comforted, however, by the fact that he knew, without a doubt, his home was still substantially cleaner than Gabriel’s.

“What are you doing here?” he asked, cutting right to the chase.

Gabriel ignored him, lifting up the cup of tea Cas had previously been sipping from, sniffing it suspiciously, before taking a big gulp. “You look awful, Cassie. When was the last time you left this place. Or took a shower in the very least.”

Cas frowned, trying to think back. When was the last time?

Alarmed that he couldn’t remember, he tried to discreetly smell himself to see how bad it actually was, and asked again, “Why are you here, Gabe?”

Gabe shrugged, sipping on Castiel’s tea while wandering around the living room aimlessly, “A little birdie told me that you might like some company. They seemed to be under the impression that you may be having a mental breakdown.”

Cas scrunched up in nose, “Who told you that?”
Gabriel looked over at him with a serious look, not bothering to answer him.

Samandriel.

It had to of been him. There was no one else that would willingly send Gabriel to check up on him. Besides, Castiel had spoken with his younger sibling just the night before, right after Dean had strongly encouraged him to go to bed. He’d had a crises where he couldn’t read any of the words that were on the tablet. He’d texted Dean first:

9:45PM **Horse? Tree? Fiddler Crab? I don't know! I can’t read this!**

Dean promptly told him to drink some tea and get some sleep. Instead, he called Samandriel, who immediately gave him the same instructions.

Along with apparently calling their older brother to instruct him to come check in on him.

Traitor.

“Im not a child, Gabriel,” Castiel pouted, plopping onto the couch with his arms folded tightly across his chest.

“Never said you were, Cassie-bear.”

“Don’t call me that,” he replied automatically, leaning his head against the back of the cushions.

Gabe rolled his eyes and pressed on, “Look, you told me a few months ago that if I was ever in town, I was more than welcome to come hang with you. Are you revoking your offer?”

Castiel looked back at him surprised. He had nearly forgotten that he’d extended the invitation all those weeks ago.

“Of course not, you’re more than welcome to stay,” he replied, unthinkingly.

“Great!” Gabriel replied enthusiastically, his eyes twinkling, “Then I want you to hop in the shower and throw on some clothes, Cassie, cause we’re going out for a night on the town!”

--

After much complaining on Castiel’s part and convincing on Gabriel’s, the two were in a cab heading to a nightclub that Gabriel had desperately wanted to scope out. According to Gabe, the new club was direct competition to his own business, and he wanted to have a first-hand experience of what it was like so he could make sure his was better.

He claimed he needed Castiel there to act as an innocent passerby whose opinion would be valuably noted and taken into consideration when planning out the future of Sweet Tricks (Gabriel’s Nightclub).

While Gabriel was distracted, swindling their way past the bouncer and into the exclusive club, Castiel took the opportunity to pull out his phone and send a quick message to Dean.

9:11PM **There’s a very real possibility that I may end up in a prison cell by the end of the night.**

9:12PM **What? Are you serious? What’s going on? Are you okay?**

9:12PM **Fuck, do you need help or something?**
Cas stifled a laugh as he replied back:

9:13PM *Nothing has happened yet, I’m just anticipating that something will. However, I genuinely appreciate your concern.*

9:13PM *I’m confused.*

9:14PM *My brother Gabriel is in town and has convinced me to go out with him tonight.*

9:15PM *Gabriel? Is he the one with the nightclubs?*

Castiel smiled, a warm feeling spread in his chest that Dean would remember that.

9:15PM *He is.*

9:16PM *So, what you’re telling me is that my sweet, boring Angel is going out for a night on the town and is being completely melodramatic about it?*

9:17PM *I assure you it is not melodrama that I am creating when I tell you my anticipations for where this evening will end up. If the past in any indication, this night will end up with me in the back of a police cruiser or stretched out on a hospital bed.*

9:18PM *If you end up in the hospital I’m going to be pissed.*

9:18PM *I assure you, I have no intentions. These things just happen.*

9:19PM *The fuck kind of parties you attending?*

Castiel laughed, quickly putting his phone away as he followed Gabe into the club. His older brother promptly grabbed Cas’ arm, pulling him to the bar and calling out their orders to the bartender.

"I hate this place," Gabriel shouted out over the awful techno music, glancing around at the flashing neon lights.

Castiel rolled his eyes, not having expected anything different and grabbed his drink from the bartender, eyeing the unnatural pink liquid, wondering if he dared take a drink.

"Although, there are some pretty good looking guys out on the dance floor," Gabe continued, wiggling his eyebrows suggestively in Cas’ direction.

"Not interested," Castiel responded, bravely sipping from his glass. The fruity concoction wasn't nearly as bad as he'd expected seeing as Gabriel was the one who had ordered the drink. His brother had a tendency to order drinks that contained more sugar than actual liquid in them.

"What?" Gabriel shouted back incredulously, as though the thought of not being interested in a night of casual sex had never crossed his mind before.

Now that Cas thought about it, it probably hadn't.

"C'mon Cassie! I need my wingman! Besides, when was the last time you got laid?"

Cas rolled his eyes, "We both know your more than perfectly capable of finding potential partners on your own."

Gabe responded with an exaggerated wink, "Well, I’m not going to argue against that!" His eyes
softened as he continued, “Seriously though, you need to live it up. Stop living in the past and have some fun. Find some release."

"I do have fun," Cas replied immediately.

"I meant sex. And your right hand doesn't count."

Cas sighed exasperatedly, but felt his face flush up. Since the first time he and Dean had sexted, they'd dared to try again a couple more times. He was pleased to find that each time was better than the one before. It gave him a release that was far more pleasurable than anything he could experience at this seedy nightclub, and left him with no desire to find a substitute.

Knowing his face was red at the thought of having sex with Dean, while standing next to his brother, he turned his head away, lifting up his glass to try and hide the flushed skin.

"Why are you blushing?"

Damn it.

"Cassie? Are you currently having sex with someone?"

Cas stayed quiet, watching as the crowd danced, wondering what the quickest way to end this conversation would be.

"You're doing the do and you didn't think to tell me?"

"I don't tell you about every detail of my life, Gabriel."

"Tell me, tell me, tell me, tell me," Gabe chanted, bouncing on his seat.

"No."

"Okay."

Cas turned quickly in his seat, searching Gabe's face. It wasn't like him to drop the subject so easily.

"What?" Cas asked nervously as he watched the slight smirk on his brothers face.

"Tell you what, let's make a deal," Gabe said, holding his fingers up to the bartender, asking for several rounds of shots.

"A deal?" Cas asked warily, looking at the clear drink that Gabe placed in front of him.

"We'll have a drink off," he continued, the mischievous glint in his eyes sparkling brightly in the dim light, "If I win, you have to tell me all about the gritty details of your lover boy. If you win, I revoke my rights from ever talking to you about sex ever again."

Cas sighed, looking at the drinks. He was a chatty drunk. Either way, it was likely that he'd end up telling Gabe everything, a fact that his older brother surely knew.

He lifted up the shot, examining it closely, "I don't actually have a say on this, do I?"

"Nope," Gabe confirmed, grabbing his own shot and eagerly waited for Cas' reply.

Cas pondered what Dean would do if he were here. After all, Dean goes out to party all the time, so why can't he? It wasn't as if he'd never done this before. In fact, this was pretty standard drinking.
Perhaps he should follow Gabe’s advice and “live it up”. It was, after all, very similar to some advice
Dean had given him before.

Cas lifted up the shot glass high the the air, holding it out towards Gabriel as a mock toast, his
impulsive decision made.

"Bottoms up."

--

"So you don't even know what he looks like?" Gabe asked incredulously.

Cas shook his head, his fingers running along side the bottle he was holding in his hand, "I don't
need to know. Who he is is completely beautiful."

"That's the biggest load of crap I've ever heard."

"Stop harassing me about who I love," Cas whined back, glancing at his phone.

It was getting late, they'd already been out for much longer than Cas had originally wanted. He was
pleasantly buzzed, but not quite wasted. (He and Gabriel had insanely high tolerances for alcohol.
He favored the reasons to be that one of them owned a night club and the other was complete stoner
during his first few years of college).

Gabe picked up another drink for the two and scowled at the phone Cas was staring longingly at.

"Just call him if you want to hear his voice that bad, you pansy."

"That's too much, we haven't done that yet..."

Gabe stared back, his jaw wide open, "You've sexted him, but you haven't even talked on the phone
yet? Damn. How do you know this guy is who he says he is?"

"I just know," Cas insisted. And it was true, he did know Dean was who he said he was.

Gabe rolled his eyes, sighing in defeat, and called over the bartender, "Give us a dose of the
strongest stuff you have."

--

Cas frowned at his empty glass, "It gone."

Gabe ignored him, humming pleasantly to himself, scoping out the room for someone he wanted to
share the night with.

"Empty like my cold apartment that I'm forced to spend alone each night," Cas continued dismally,
circling the tip of his finger along the edge.

"Stop that, you're throwing off my mojo sexy time magic," Gabe ordered, winking at a couple of
girls who were passing, and promptly broke out into giggles at the attention, "Just call your lover boy
if you're so lonely."

"Nooo," Cas whined, "he won’t want me too..."

"Bullshit," Gabriel shouted, pounding his first against the bar, causing Cas to jump, as well as several
of the patrons in the club to pause and glance over at their table, "If he doesn't want to talk to you
then he's an idiot. You are the best person I know. Now, stop moping. I'm giving you permission to go home and have kinky phone sex."

Cas blushed, but grabbed his bag, stumbling off his stool. If Gabriel was giving him permission to leave, he'd gladly take it. He definitely would not call Dean though.

Nope.

"Caaaas?" Gabe sang, holding up his phone, which was now dialing, "You're calling him."

Cas stared wide-eyed at the screen as it lit up with Dean's name before promptly grabbing the phone from Gabe's hands, growling out, "Damn it, Gabe," and rushed outside, holding the phone nervously to his ear.

"Angel? You there? Is everything okay?"

He moaned into the receiver. Dean's deep voice was smoother and more arousing than he'd ever imagined it could be.

"Dean," he slurred, "I think I am drunk."

Laughter poured out of the phone, filling Castiel with a lightness that singed through it body and tickled his toes. Perhaps this phone call was a good idea.

"Yeah," Dean spoke, an obvious smile on his face, "I think you might be right."

"Gabe told me go home," Cas continued, crawling into a cab that was sitting at the curb waiting for him. He suspected the vehicle had been called for him from his older brother.

"Oh yeah? " Dean asked, "Can't handle the parties like you used to?"

"Gabe said I should phone sex you," Cas blurted out, lying in the backseat, putting his arm over his eyes to block out the little light coming through the windows.

"Did he now?" Dean answered amused, "and what about you? What do you think?"

"I think you should take off your pants," Cas replied definitively.

There was a moment of silence before Dean responded, his voice deeper than it was a moment before, "I see. And what will I do when I take my pants off?"

Cas moaned, "Touch yourself... And send me pic...I need to see..."

"Hey!" A voice shouted, banging on the roof of the cab, "No sex in my cab."

"Cockblock," Cas growled back at the cabbie who was glaring through the rear view mirror.

Dean started laughing again, "Are you in a cab right now?"

"Yes," Cas pouted, "and the driver won't let me have sex with you."

Dean hummed fondly, "I think I can imagine how you ended up in a prison cell in the past. How about we keep your pants on for now. Just until you can't get arrested for indecent exposure."

Cas grumbled, mumbling to himself how that's no fun, as the driver pulled up to his apartment without ever once asking for directions. He'd have to thank Gabe later.
"Angel? Could you hand your phone to the driver for me?"

Cas did so without question and waited patiently as the driver grumbled on the phone before sighing and handing the device back.

"Alright Angel, the cabbie is going to walk you to your door. I want you to go to sleep when you get there and call me first thing tomorrow morning. Can you do that?"

Cas whined, "But Dean, sex..."

"Do you trust me, Angel?"

"Yes," he answered immediately, not a doubt in his mind that he truly did.

"Then go get some sleep. I'll talk to you in the morning."

Cas sighed, mumbling goodbye, and hanging up the phone, pulling himself out of the cab with the driver’s help.

"That's a good boyfriend you got there," the cabbie commented, huffing as Cas leaned the majority of his weight on the other as they waited in the elevator.

He hummed at the word pleasantly.

Boyfriend.

He'd like Dean to be his boyfriend.

Once Cas was in his apartment, the cabbie on his way again, he attempted to pull off his clothes, with little success, before stumbling onto the couch and promptly passing out.

Chapter End Notes

I'm updating this far quicker than I expected. I'm just so excited about the story and your comments and kudos that I can't help myself. Suddenly I'm updating before I even realizing what I'm doing!

Thank you! You are all wonderful and beautiful and I love your faces.
I Have No Shame

Chapter Notes

Please note that I love Gabe so much, and although he's not in very many scenes, he's officially my favorite to write.

Warning: Sexy times ahead.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Cas woke up with a pounding headache, the previous night’s events rushing back into his mind like an avalanche. He pushed himself off of his couch, rubbing the back of his neck where he slept on it wrong, and grabbed several aspirin, popping the pills into his mouth and started a cup of tea.

Stupid Gabriel and his inclination to pull Cas with him when he goes out on his benders.

He grabbed his phone, remembering that Dean wanted him to send a quick text when he woke.

10:18AM I feel like I should be embarrassed for last night, but the throbbing in my skull is making it difficult to feel anything.

Immediately, his text was responded with an incoming call. Figuring they’d already crossed that boundary and he had nothing to lose, he answered the phone, hoping that at least Dean wouldn't be too upset with him.

"Hello?"

"Good morning sweetheart," Dean answered back cheerfully, his voice as deep and wonderful as it was the night before.

Cas groaned, "Not so loud, please."

Dean chuckled quietly, before asking sweetly, "How are you feeling, Angel?"

Cas shrugged, sipping from his tea, "Marginally better compared to times I’ve been inebriated in the past, but no where near good enough to feel I could successfully function in society."

Dean answered back amused, "Damn. Even hungover you still speak so sophisticated-like."

"Does it bother you?" Cas asked worried. A couple of his past boyfriends had chastised him for the way he spoke, telling him he needed to be more 'normal'.

"Nah," Dean replied to his relief, "I think it's cute."

Cas blushed, smiling down at his mug, wondering why he hadn't called Dean sooner. It was even better than he could have imagined.

He opened his mouth to speak again when his front door burst open, Gabe falling through, mumbling to himself as he held his head.
"What was that?" Dean asked worried.

"That would be my brother, currently doing the walk of shame."

"Fuck you, Assie. I have no shame."

"Clearly," Cas replied unamused, watching as his older brother clawed at his clothes tearing them off his body, "although I'm not entirely sure why you feel you need to get naked in my living room."

"Because, little brother, I am covered in glitter and piss."

Cas scrunched up his nose, “Gabe, under no circumstances do I want to stand here and listen to your sexual escapades.”

“Oh man, Ass, you should’ve seen the racks on these girls I went home with. They were twins and were at least double ds.”

“Your class continually astounds me,” Cas replied dryly before returning to his phone, ignoring his brother.

“My apologies."

“No worries, Angel. But, uh, why is he calling you ‘Ass’?”

Cas frowned turning back to his brother who ran into the table on the way to the bathroom, “Because he is an idiot.”

“I resent that!” Gabriel shouted back.

Dean chuckled before responding, “It sounds like you might have your hands full. I think I’ll let you go make sure your brother doesn’t brake anything.”

“Too late,” Cas replied, frowning at the glass figurine Gabe knocked off of the counter.

“I’ll talk to you later, sweetheart,” Dean said, filling Cas’ chest with warmth at the term of endearment.

“I’ll text you in a bit,” Cas promised.

“I look forward to it.”

Cas ended the call, putting the phone against his lips and smiled widely. Dean was even better than he could have imagined.

Another crash pulled him out of his thoughts and he groaned, pushing himself off of the countertop to help Gabriel as he called out, “My bad.”

--

The next several days went much smoother than that first night had gone. Although Gabriel still went out at night, he didn’t force Cas to come with him to the flashy nightclubs (just to the bars for a couple of drinks). Cas was able to take the break that he needed from the translations, and even better, he not only texted Dean throughout the day, but began talking to him every evening over the phone before bed.

Talking to Dean was the highlight of Castiel’s day, without a doubt. So when he said good bye to his
big brother (finally), giving him a big hug and promising he would send a picture of his anonymous lover boy (which he had no intentions of actually following through), he closed to door and reveled in the silence for approximately 5 seconds before calling Dean.

“He’s gone.”

Dean laughed, “I’m assuming your referring to Gabriel?”

“Mm hmm. I’ve officially kicked him out of my home.”

“And how does that feel?”

“It’s a lot quieter than it was before.”

Cas walked into his bedroom, getting comfortable on his bed while Dean laughed again. He could listen to nothing else but Dean’s laughter for the rest of his life and be a happy man.

“I don’t know, I think I’m going to miss having Gabe around your home,” Dean sighed.

“What? Why?”

“Well, Gabe introduced me to drunk you, which incidentally is horny you, which I’m not gonna lie, was all kinds of hot.”

Cas groaned, “I think we should forget that call ever happened.”

“Not gonna happen, Angel.”

Cas sighed, feeling his face blush at the reminder of their first phone call together. He was glad they were talking on the phone now, but he wished their first time talking wasn’t because Gabe forced him to drunk dial.

“Why do you want to forget it?” Dean asked curiously.

“In case you hadn’t noticed, my behavior on that phone call was slightly embarrassing.”

Dean laughed, and asked huskily, “Which part? The part where you told me to take off my pants and asked for a dick pic? Or when you growled at the cabbie calling him a cock block?”

Cas rolled his eyes, “I’m going to have to go with all of the above.”

“So, are you saying you don’t want me to take off my pants?”

“What? Of course not…”

“Good, cause I gotta be honest here, Angel, my pants are already off, and I’m really hoping that I can find someone to tell me what I should do next.”

Blood rushed down to Castiel’s cock so quickly, he felt light headed at the implications of Dean's words. A burning warmth pooled in the deep of his belly, as he quickly looked around, double checking to make sure his front door was locked. He didn’t want Gabriel coming back claiming he "forgot something", only to interrupt. Mentally chanting positive reinforcements to himself that he could do this, he took a deep breath, licking his lips, and replied deeply, “That’s good, Dean. Very good. Can you tell me what you are wearing right now, then?”

There was some shuffling on the other line, before Dean excitedly answered back, “Uh, I’ve got on a
vintage-tee, AC/DC, and my boxers. Nothing else.”

Cas closed his eyes, trying to paint the picture in his mind, “Where are you right now?”

“I’m lying on my bed.”

Cas lay down on his own bed, running his fingers down his own chest, before ordering, “Describe yourself to me.”

“Uh, I have light brownish-blond hair and green eyes.”

“How’s your hair styled?”

“It’s short, and I have some gel in it, so it’s kind of spikey in the front.”

“Mm, good, that’s good,” Cas moaned, eagerly for more details about the younger man, “What else?”

“I, uh, I’m tall, 6’1”. And I have freckles, which I don’t really like, but they’re there. And I have bow legs.”

Cas groaned, imaging Dean lying on his bed, his bow legs spread out for him. He rubbed his fingers roughly against the grain of his stubble, trying to decide where to go next.

“I want you to take off your clothes, Dean. Put the phone on speaker for me. Can you do that?”

“Yes,” Dean replied breathlessly, setting the phone down and rustling around.

“Okay,” Dean replied, after a minute or so, “I’m completely naked. Now what?”

Cas smiled at the eagerness in Dean’s tone, “I want you to touch yourself, Dean.”

Dean whimpered, and there was no doubt in Cas’ mind that he was following his instructions perfectly. Cas listened desperately for the unabashed gorgeous moans the other boy sighed out. In fact, he was so intrigued that he’d forgotten he was supposed to give further direction, until Dean pulled him out of his thoughts, “Angel, please, tell me you’re naked right now, too. Tell me what you look like.”

Cas looked down surprised, wondering why he was still wearing his clothes and put the phone on speaker.

“I’m pulling off my shirt and pants right now, so I can be naked with you. I’ve got dark black hair that’s long and just waiting to be pulled and blue eyes. I haven’t shaved in a couple of days, so I’ve got dark stubble growing in. If I was there with you right now, I’d rub my stubble against your sensitive cock, sucking a mark into your thigh.”

Dean whimpered again.

“Are you still touching yourself, Dean?” Cas asked, already knowing the answer.

“Yes,” Dean replied, “Keep going, please.”

Cas knelt on his bed, his hand sliding to his own cock, fingers twisting at the head gently moaning into the receiver propped up on his pillow before continuing.

“I’d take your cock in my mouth, sucking on the tip, while my fingers reached back to open you up.”
Would you like that Dean? Would you like me to take you? To thrust my dick into you until I reached your prostate and had you begging for more?”

“Oh, fuck, yes, Angel. Yes. I need…”

“What do you need?”

There was a some shuffling around and a distinct click before a notification popped up on Castiel’s phone.

“I need you to see me. I need you to look at your phone.”

Cas grabbed his phone, fumbling with the device as he opened up the text notification and moaned shamelessly. Dean had sent him a picture of his hard dick, pre-cum leaking from the tip. Cas licked his lips at the sight, imagining wrapping his lips around the tip and slowly gliding down to the base.

“Do you see what you do to me baby?,” Dean asked, ”You make me so hard.”

Cas moaned again, eyes never leaving the screen, his fist pumping harder than it had a moment before.

“I need you, I want you, Angel. Can you send a picture to me, now?”

Cas wasn’t sure how the tables had turned, knowing that just moments before he was the one in control, but quickly obliged, leaning back on his bed and grabbing his phone to take a picture. It took him a couple tries before he felt like he had gotten a really good one before he was satisfied enough to send it out, double-checking that Dean's name was on the top of the screen before hitting send. He was pleased when Dean answered immediately, “Fuck, Angel. You’re so big. I wish you were here. You could put your big cock inside of me. Fill me up so good, couldn’t you, Angel?”

Cas moaned out, “Cas.”

Dean stuttered for a moment, “What?”

“My name. I want you to say it. I need you to say it. Cas.”

There was a pause before Dean moaned out, “Oh, Cas.”

Hearing his name coming from Dean’s lips was sweeter than he’d ever imagined it could be. It pulled him back into the moment, remembering what they had been doing before he got caught up and he quickly barked out, ”Grab your lube, Dean. I need you to prepare yourself for me. I want your fingers deep inside your body, getting ready for my big cock. Can you do that for me?”

"Fuck, yes, Angel...I mean, Cas, yes...I..."

There was some shuffling and a bang along with a curse before Dean continued, "Fuuuck, Cas. I don't know how much longer..."

"Take a picture Dean, with your fingers deep inside you. I want to see your hole, eager to swallow them up."

There was some grunting on the other side, and a full minute of silence, before a second texting notification came in. Cas eagerly opened the second one, gasping at the sight. Dean already had three fingers in, and judging by the whimpers on the other end, had found his prostate.

Cas stuttered for a moment, before he breathed out quickly, “Oh, Dean, I’m coming…”, moaning out
Dean’s name, as his release filled his body.

He quickly took a picture of his now flaccid dick, cum shot out all up his chest and sent it to Dean, with a caption:

9:23PM **This is what you do to me.**

It was only seconds after the text went through that Dean joined him in release, with Cas’ name shouted loud from his lips.

Cas took his phone off speaker, panting as he listened smugly to Dean’s pants in return.

They lay quietly for a full minute before Dean said, “So, your name is Cas, huh?”

“Mm hmm,” Cas replied, suddenly nervous as to what Dean’s response would be.

“I like it. It fits you.”

Cas smiled to himself, coming down from his high, closing his eyes and knowing that the only thing that would make this moment better was if Dean was actually there lying at his side.

--

6:46PM **So, when Gabriel was calling you Assie, he was trying to say your name.**

It took Cas several long minutes to understand what Dean was referring to. It’d been a week since Gabriel had left his home (leaving behind a larger mess than there had been before he showed up, forcing Cas to take another day break just to scrub clean his entire home) and a little longer since the incident in which Dean was talking about.

When he recalled Gabriel’s walk of “not” shame, he chuckled and replied.

6:52PM **Yes. Gabriel is fond of calling me “Cassie”, a nickname I am not overtly pleased by.**

6:53PM **Ha. Yeah. I think I can see why.**

6:54PM **I still don’t understand how you got “Angel” out of “Cas”**.

Cas bit his lip, before admitting to Dean.

6:54PM **Well, Cas isn’t my full name.**

6:55PM **Of course it’s not.**

6:56PM **I can tell you my full name, along with the reasons why I chose the name Angel, if you’d like. It really does make perfect sense when you know.**

He sat back, glancing at the painting once again his sister had made for him. Although he felt it was slightly pretentious to hang up portraits of yourself in your home, he was rather fond of the image of himself with two large black wings sprouting from his back. His sister was very talented. The painting looked as though it could be real.

6:59PM **Nah. I trust you. I don’t care how you got your name, Angel. I’m just glad you’re mine.**

Cas blushed at the implications, knowing there was no way he could argue back.
He truly was Dean’s in every sense of the word.

And he was loving every minute of it.

Chapter End Notes

I love these characters.

Also, I love you all.

Wow! There was so much feedback on the last chapter, I was blushing like crazy! You are all amazing and I'm really hoping I didn't disappoint!

Thank you again so much for your warm support and feedback. You make me as happy as this beautiful iguana soaking up the sun:
http://firefur.tumblr.com/post/108549457344/sometimes-i-feel-like-an-iguana-soaking-up-the
A note on Samandriel's nickname:

I'm sure a few of you are wondering why I chose to name him "Saman", when there's so many other nicknames I could have picked. I played around with several, Sam being an obvious one, but it just didn't seem right. We already have a Sam, and although he's not present in this story, I didn't want to replace him with another Sam.

I then imagined the Novak (the surname I chose for Castiel) family when they were growing up. Poor Samandriel is not only the youngest in a long line of children, but was given the most unfortunate name. I imagined he got teased a lot as a child, especially from his own siblings.

I think that Castiel would have been the most sympathetic, himself having a strange name. Gabriel, on the other hand, would have been the instigator of the torments. I think that Samandriel would have had a time in his childhood (and honestly, he's still trying to figure it out now) when he was trying to carve his own way among his siblings, pushing his way through, fighting against the grain. He would never have rebelled, but he's trying to make a name for himself, become his own person.

His brothers are smart. They would have noticed Samandriel's struggles. Michael would have ordered him to follow in his own footsteps, following the path of least resistance. Lucifer would have urged him to rebel further, take an extra step in crossing that line. Anna would have treated him as though he were precious, coddling him as he attempted to make his own decisions. Castiel would have watched sympathetic from the sidelines, but as the middle child (and another one who was often seen as insignificant), he would have had his own struggles he was trying to overcome, and unable at the time to help Samandriel with his.

Then there's Gabriel. Gabriel who sees Samandriel trying to carve out his own pathway, both fighting against everything everyone is telling him and trying to follow in every single person's footsteps. He would not help, he would not hinder. Instead, he simply laughed at Samandriel's struggles (not in an unkind way, but in a big brotherly way) and announced to the family that their little "Salmon" (aka Saman) is merely busy trying to swim up stream. Samandriel, naturally, hated the nickname. But, like most nicknames Gabriel gives out, this one stuck and he was forever dubbed as Saman.

Eventually, Michael, Lucifer, and Anna all stopped using the nickname, preferring to refer to his full name, finding it to be more proper. However, Gabriel and Cas never stopped. So, after some time, he became fond of the name he'd hated for so many years, knowing that the only people who called him that were the two brothers he'd grown the closest to.

And that's the mini origin story of how Samandriel came to be called Saman.

Without further ado, I hope you enjoy the following chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
“So, it turns out that I’m really terrible at baking,” Samandriel spoke on the phone to Castiel one Sunday evening.

Cas laughed, “I’m fairly certain I could have told you that.”

When they were children, young Samandriel had been banned from entering the kitchen after he set a pan on fire, melting it onto the stove top. His parents had to buy a new oven, and the smell didn’t disappear for weeks after.

Saman groaned, “I know, I really only took this class to see if I could find someone that would want to start a café with me. I could take care of all the business side and they could take care of making the food.”

“Have you found anyone?” Cas asked curiously, excited that his little brother was taking this idea seriously.

“Yes,” Saman sighed dramatically, “But every time I mention my idea, he laughs and pats me on the top of my head like I’m a child or something. It’s so frustrating!”

Cas frowned, not liking the idea of someone patronizing his little brother, “Why do you think that he is the one you want to go into business with? How well do you know him?”

“Pretty well, actually. He comes into work all the time, so I met him there. He’s actually a really great guy. The problem is he’s just taking this class for fun, which is a shame because he is amazing! I’m not kidding, Cassie. He is the best cook I have ever met in my entire life. He made a peach and blueberry pie for class last week, just on his own, and it was without a doubt, the best thing I’ve ever tasted in my life.”

“I thought you didn’t like pie,” Cas said suspiciously.

“I didn’t until I tried his. That’s how amazing it is! And it’s not just desserts, he can make all kinds of meals too. That’s why he needs to open this café with me. But every time I tell him, he just rolls his eyes and says it’s a pipe dream.”

Cas frowned, “So, prove to him that it isn’t.”

“But, how?”

Cas sighed, forcing himself not to roll his eyes at the dramatics of his young, still teenaged brother, “Well, what do you need to start up your own business?”

“Money,” Saman replied immediately, as though he’d already been reciting this answer in his mind, “If I opened up a business here in this college town, I know I’d have plenty of customers. I just need some money to start up the business and to find a place in a good location.”

“So, figure out where you’re going to get your money from, come up with a business plan, and present it to your classmate. Once he sees that you’ve actually thought this through, he may be more willing to discuss the idea seriously with you,” Cas stated simply.

“That’s actually a really good idea, Cassie,” Saman replied surprised.

“I am known to have those occasionally.”

“Okay,” Saman mumbled to himself over the reciever, “I just need to get a letter from my investor or
something, and present it to him in class tomorrow night. Maybe I’ll tell him some of my marketing ideas, and show him a list of a couple of empty buildings…this could work.”

“Who’s your investor?” Cas asked curiously, drawing back into the conversation. He was surprised that Saman didn’t seem concerned at all about the idea of money.

There was a moment of silence. “Oh, uh, Luke told me that he’d be willing to help…”

“No,” Cas snarled into the phone, surprisingly himself at the primitive response.

Another brief stretch of silence before Saman sighed in defeat, “Why not?”

“Saman,” Cas started, taking a deep breath, trying not to let him emotions control him, “You know this is not a good idea. Although Lucifer is our brother, and I love him because I am required to, he is the last person you want to conduct business with. He will have no qualms giving you a crappy deal and I have no doubts he will ask you to give up your soul in return for his favor. Please, please, don’t do business with Luke.”

Saman whined, “I don’t know where else to go. There’s no way a bank would qualify me for a loan, I don’t have nearly enough credit and I’m way too young. I’ve already looked into a couple of places, and they all said no.”

“You have other brothers,” Cas reminded him coolly, “Although Michael will not want anything to do with the idea, I have no doubts Gabriel would be more than happy to help.”

“Gabriel doesn’t take things seriously enough,” Saman countered, "He’ll have his own ideas for where the business should go that he’ll want me to do, which will be completely opposite from what I want. You know it will be.”

Cas frowned, knowing he couldn't counter Saman's point. He thought for a brief moment before suggesting, “Well, why don’t I help you.”

"You?” Saman asked flatly, offending Cas slightly, “You could do that? I didn’t think you’d have the money…”

He furrowed his brow, “Why would you think that?”

“Uh…” Saman hesitated before admitting, “Lucifer may have suggested...”

Cas rolled his eyes, “I’m sure that it would shock Luke to learn that I actually have a substantial amount of money in savings. And with the tablets I’ve just translated, I’ve recently received a hefty raise, as well as several bonuses. If you’re interested, I would be more than happy to help you. As long as you understand that I have absolutely no desire to actually run your business. That would be 100% up to you. I would merely throw money in your direction and leave the rest to your expertise.”

Cas pulled the phone away as Samandriel squealed in the receiver loudly, “Are you serious? Holy cow, Castiel…that would be amazing! You have no idea! Thank you, thank you so much!”

He fought the smile that was creeping onto his face, forcing himself to thinking professionally for just another moment, “Just write up a basic contract and send it over and I’ll sign it. I refuse to lend you any money until then. I love you, little brother, but I don’t want either of us to get screwed.”

“Of course not!” Saman said excitedly, relieving Cas that he was so willing to accept his terms, “I’ll write something up right now. Thanks again! I’ll call you soon!”
Cas paused as he heard the click indicating the end of the call, hoping he wasn’t making a mistake funding Samandriel’s business. Saman was a responsible kid, and he was more than happy to be the one to help him fund his dream.

Cas jumped in alarm when his phone buzzed against his ear, and pulled it back to look at the screen, wondering if Saman had already written up a contract and sent it over.

He was very happy when he found it was not Saman, but instead was a message from Dean.

12:01PM *Hey Angel, how’s your day going?*

12:02PM *Fairly well. I just got off the phone with Saman. He was telling me about his business classes and ideas.*

12:02PM *Sounds exciting.*

12:03PM *I enjoy talking to him. How about you? How’s your day going?*

12:04PM *Not too shabby. Just spending most of my time at work, trying to save up some extra money. It’s strange only having one class this summer instead of me trying to cram in as many credits as I can.*

12:04PM *How is your class going?*

Cas bit his lip as he waited for the reply. He was still nervous bringing up baking with Dean, not wanting to set him off again.

12:06PM *It’s actually going really well. With school I don’t have much time to bake, so it’s nice to have an excuse. Plus it’s a lot of fun. There’s this one kid in my class, Alfie, who I usually partner up with who is just awful at baking. Seriously, I didn’t know you could be that bad.*

12:07PM *I’m glad you’re enjoying it.*

12:08PM *I’m glad you convinced me to do it.*

Cas waited for a moment, wondering if he should ask whether or not Dean has decided to switch programs, but was saved the chance when Dean wrote him first.

12:11PM *I’m actually heading home to see my parents this week-end, and I thought I’d ask them what their thoughts were on me switching my program.*

12:11PM *Really?*

12:12PM *Yeah, I mean, it couldn’t hurt to just ask their opinion, right?*

Cas smiled eagerly at the implications that maybe, finally, Dean would start to do something he actually loved.

12:13PM *I think that’s a great idea.*

Hopefully, Dean's parents would agree.

12:15PM *So, what about you? What ever happened with those tablets? Were you able to finish the translations on them?*
He was not surprised with the change in subject. Dean often times did not like to dwell on talking about himself.

12:16PM I have figured out almost everything, actually, thank you for asking. I’m hoping to be done completely in two weeks.

12:17PM Two weeks? Why’s that?

12:17PM Because my tour begins in one month.

12:18PM Your tour? What’re you? A rockstar?

Cas laughed out loud, wrinkling up his nose in humor as he imagined himself covered in tattoos and leather, singing out on a stage.

12:19PM No, most definitely not. I’ll be presenting the information I’ve gathered from these tablets and the implications they bring to society in numerous locations over the span of a couple of months. I’m quite excited. These tablets really are fascinating.

12:20PM Wow, that actually sounds kind of cool.

12:20PM Thank you, my agent seems to think that this will bring up a lot of new opportunities and open several doors for the future. He's hinted that if everything goes well, my time of translating teen harlequin romance novels will be at an end. Something I’m very much looking forward to.

12:21PM Sounds like congratulations may be in order. That's awesome.

Cas smiled at the sentiment, going on to explain his outline to Dean of what he's planning on talking about. It didn't matter that Dean knew nothing about the subject, he gave Cas his undivided attention and responded as though he was interested in whatever he was talking about. No one else he knew, not even Crowley who he worked directly with, cared about Castiel's work. Only Dean.

As he continued to text, he felt warm by Dean's words, and gave in to the strong desire to thank him.

1:32PM I really appreciate that you humor me by listening to the things I'm excited about. I know this all must be boring for you.

1:33PM Nonsense, of course I'm gonna listen to you sweetheart. This is something you care about and I care about you.

Cas' heart nearly exploded out of his chest. Dean cared about him.

1:34PM I care about you too.

But he knew it was more than that, more than simply just caring for the other. He had known for a while that his feelings ran deeper than simply “friends” or “crush”. He was completely gone on this college boy he had never met.

There was no doubt in his mind: he was in love with Dean.

Fuck.

--
My mom said to go for it.

And what is it you’re supposed to go for?

Baking. She told me that she didn't know why I was bothering with engineering in the first place and that I should do something I loved.

Cas smiled widely, wanting to find this wonderful woman and pull her into a tight hug. If anyone could convince Dean to reconsider, surely it would be his mother.

What did your father say?

He bit his lip as he waited for an answer. This was the part he was nervous about. From what he gathered about Dean's father, he wasn't particularly affectionate and he suspected that any issues Dean may run into would come from him.

He wasn't too happy about the idea. He and my mom are talking privately in their bedroom about me.

Fuck, I feel like I'm 12 again, asking to go to summer camp. It sucks.

Cas frowned at the revelation. Hoping that his next text would be taken well, he asked:

May I ask now why your original choice was mechanical engineering?

You can tell me to mind my own business if you're still uncomfortable sharing this information.

No, it's fine. I might as well. It's not really a big deal. Just, my dad always wanted me to have what he didn't. He grew up with a single mom and hardly any money, and now he owns his own mechanic shop. He worked really hard to build it up, so he always told my brother and I that we'd have a job there and that one day we'd take over the family business.

Only, you didn't want to?

Not really. I mean, I'm really good at building things. I can pull apart and put back together an engine in no time at all, but it's not what I want to do with the rest of my life. So, at dinner one evening, I announced that I wanted to go to college.

How did your father take that?

Not well. We talked about it for a long time before we finally agreed that I would go to school in mechanical engineering, get a degree that could directly be applicable to building. Meaning I'd still be in the family business.

Ah.

Yeah, so the idea of me doing anything else is kind of hard on him. I don't want to disappoint him, you know?

Cas nodded empathetically, understanding completely about not wanting to disappoint his father.

I do. For your sake, I hope he comes around.

Thanks Angel. I'll keep you updated.
It was less than an hour later when he received that update.

12:23PM *Holy shit. My mom did it. She convinced my dad to let me switch my major.*

Cas put down his papers, his heart thumping in his chest.

12:24PM **Really? What does that mean?**

12:24PM *It means I'm going to go to school to be a damn baker.*

Castiel laughed out loud, letting out a whoop that rang through his otherwise still apartment.

12:25PM **Congratulations Dean! I'm so happy for you.**

12:26PM *I couldn't have done it without you sweetheart. You truly are my personal Angel.*

Cas blushed, still elated at the news.

12:27PM **I'm just glad you're happy.**

It was a few minutes before Dean replied.

12:30PM *I really am and it's all thanks to you. Now, give me a call. I want to hear your sex voice tell me congratulations.*

Cas laughed, flushing at the idea that Dean thought of his voice as the embodiment of sex, and obliged the other man, calling him and offering his congrats.

And, if their conversation led to a 40 minute break where Cas learned just how intense his “sex voice” could get, then it was only done with his best wishes in mind.

Chapter End Notes

We're so close to them meeting. Just needed to set up a little bit before they could get there!

Also, I'm really excited for the end...which means the remainder of these chapters are probably going to up fairly quickly. Yay!!

I'm so glad you're all enjoying it! I hope you like this chapter as much as the past ones. Thank you again for your love via comments and kudos and bookmarks and such. You're all a bright ray of sunshine on a cold wintry day.
Too Many "What-Ifs"

Chapter Notes

There's some angst again in this chapter. Sorry, not sorry.

At least it's a little bit longer than normal.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

9:09AM So where to next?

9:10AM Well, I've been to NYU, Oxford, and Harvard. I believe our next stop is at Stanford in California.

It had been several weeks since Castiel had finished his translations and started on the tour that Crowley organized. The seminars were a huge success and already people were scheduling times to meet with Castiel in person to further discuss the tablets in detail. Crowley was even talking about having Cas write a book; which, although was not something he'd ever originally thought about doing, was something he was interested in.

All in all, he was happier than he'd been in a long time. He was translating and teaching about a work that fascinated him and he was talking to Dean every single day. He couldn't imagine life getting better than it was now.

Looking down at his phone, he realized that Dean hadn't responded so he continued his line of thought.

9:14AM I'm especially excited for Stanford, because this is where Samandriel is going to school, so we have set up a time when we can get together for lunch. He's going to introduce me to his business partner, so we'll see how that goes.

He really was excited to see his younger brother. He had come up with a contact for Cas to sign as his benefactor and was planning on going over it when he came into town. Apparently, he'd convinced his classmate that they should open a business together and this other student really wanted to meet the big brother who was giving them all their money. According to Saman, his new partner had some trust issues.

Which, was completely understandable. Castiel wouldn't recommended that anyone get into business with someone they didn't know.

9:17AM You're Castiel Novak??

Cas raised his eyebrows.

9:18AM Yes.

9:20AM No wonder I couldn't guess it. Who names their kid Castiel?

Cas chuckled lightly, his head turned and eyes squinted as he re-read the messages confused.

9:21AM **How did you find it out my name?**

He was perfectly fine with Dean knowing what his name was, and had offered to tell Dean himself several times. The younger man always insisted that there was no need, that he was fine calling him Angel or Cas. And, although he had no plans on telling Dean his surname, that didn’t mean he was unhappy now that he knew.

Cas waited patiently through several minutes of radio silence before Dean confessed.

9:25AM **I uh, I go to Stanford.**

Cas’ heart stopped as he read those words, trying to recall their previous conversations to figure out if he’d already known this.

No, he was positive he didn’t. He knew Dean was from Kansas and that he was going to school on the west coast, but he’d never known the exact school Dean was attending.

9:26AM **Really?**

9:29AM **Yeah. And there are posters everywhere advertising that you’re coming. I’ve been staring at these posters for weeks, dude. It doesn’t really explain what you’re going to be talking about in the posters…I had no idea out was you...**

His heart stuttered as he thought about the implications. He would be in the same city as Dean for the first time since their strange virtual relationship began.

Should he ask to meet Dean?

He’d toyed around with the possibility of meeting Dean one day. But, he figured with them living on opposite ends of the country, the likelihood of that happening was very slim. He’d assumed it was something they could think about in the future.

But now, he knows that he and Dean are not only going to be in the same city, but on the same campus at the same time. How could they not meet?

Before he could send a message reiterating his thought process, Dean wrote back.

9:35AM **Anyway. I got to go. Talk to you later?**

Cas frowned, glancing at the time. He didn’t think Dean had to work today, and he was fairly certain he didn’t have morning classes.

His heart broke a little at the thought that perhaps Dean didn’t want to meet him. Maybe he was comfortable in the relationship they had going on now. Castiel wouldn’t fault him for it; perhaps it would be best just to leave it be. They could revisit this line of thought when they were both comfortable with the idea of speaking face to face.

There would be chances in the future should they choose to meet then.

Right?

9:38AM **Of course. Have a good day.**

--
Much to Castiel's disappointment and worry, his and Dean's conversation seemed stilted over the next several days.

He felt that this was largely his fault. He had been busy with his preparations for California (although he hadn’t been too busy to text when he was preparing for the other schools) and had a hard time finding things to talk about that didn’t start with “I really want to meet you”.

And he did.

The more he thought about having the chance to meet Dean, the more he desperately wanted to.

But, that thought itself was terrifying.

What if Dean doesn’t like him? What if he’s not who he imagined him to be? What if meeting in person ruined the relationship they had now? What if it made it better? Would he be able to leave once he met Dean, the man he’d fallen in love with after a few short months of texting and phone calls? Would Dean even want him to stay?

There were too many questions, too many “what-ifs”, and Cas was terrified of finding out the answers.

Which is why he found himself in his hotel room in California, the night before his Seminar, going over a Pro and Con list for why he should or shouldn’t ask to meet Dean.

The only thing he’d learnt for certain was that Gabe was right when he had so eloquently accused Cas of being a complete pansy when it came to love.

His phone buzzed unexpectedly, causing him to yelp and jump a foot in the air. He grabbed it quickly, more so out of habit than a need to know who was texting him.

After all, he already knew. Who else would it be?

8:59PM Would you mind if I attended your seminar?

Cas smiled, jumping up from his seat, sighing in relief at not having to ask.

9:00PM Yes, please! Of course I would love you to!

He smiled brightly at the phone for a full 10 seconds before it dawned on him that Dean had simply asked to attend the Seminar. This wasn’t a private meeting in between the two. And with the hundreds of people that were planning on attending, there was no way he’d actually see Dean in person.

Deflated, Cas wracked his brain, before coming up with a solution.

9:04PM If you'd like as well, I'm having a small Q&A session after it's over. I would love for you to attend that as well.

This could be good. They’d still be in a crowd of people, but there’d only be a small handful there. He’d be able to meet Dean in person in a safe environment. Then, if they chose to meet up later, they could. Otherwise, they could simply choose not to and go their separate ways, continuing the relationship they currently had.

It wasn’t a perfect solution, but it could work. They could make this work.
Nervous that Dean hadn’t responded yet, he quickly typed out another message, attempting to calm his racing heart.

9:07PM After all, you know enough about the tablets as I do, having listened to me over these past few months. You could probably answer more questions than I could.

He debated sending a third message when Dean finally responded.

9:11PM I can’t. I’m sorry sweetheart. I’ve got a thing afterwards.

9:12PM Oh, of course. No worries.

He held onto the hope that perhaps Dean wasn’t avoiding him and truly did have something he needed to attend to afterwards and took a deep breath.

He took the plunge typing out his message quickly before he could change his mind and hit send.

9:14PM Perhaps we can get together some other time. Maybe just you and me?

He bounced on the edge of his seat, his heart painfully pounding in his chest, clutching the phone in his hands so hard, his knuckles were white.

Nausea crept into his stomach as he waited.

Had he made a mistake?

When his phone buzzed, he took three calming breaths (that definitely did not work) before he allowed himself to open the message.

9:20PM Maybe. We’ll see.

Cas closed his eyes for a brief moment before forcing himself to write back.

9:21PM Oh. Okay then. Well, I should get some sleep. Big day tomorrow.

He turned his phone on silent and plugged it into the wall, not wanting to see Dean’s response. He climbed under the covers, wrapping himself in the large hoard of blankets, and stayed in his makeshift cocoon for the rest of the night, trying not to think about the rejection he’d just receive.

At this point, he could only hope that he could catch a glimpse of Dean, even if it was for only a moment.

--

Castiel kept his eyes open after the seminar was over, looking in the crowd for someone that could be Dean. Everyone was either too short, too blonde, or even too pale. No one looked right, no one felt right.

Although he wasn’t surprised, he couldn’t help be disappointed when Dean sent him a message via text after the event, instead of seeking him out to meet in person.

10:32AM You did good, Angel.

His mind churned at the four words, wondering if he should feel proud at Dean’s praise or if he should be devastated he wasn’t there to tell him in person.
By the time the Q&A session was over, Cas was exhausted.

He left with a bag hoisted over his shoulder and walked through campus to head to the café where his little brother worked. He had rolled his eyes when Crowley had chosen to tag along, jabbering away about the amounts of money they were going to make.

Cas ignored him best he could, but couldn’t help but feel secretly grateful for the distraction his agent brought with him.

They wandered into the small coffee shop that Samandriel worked at, quickly finding a table in the corner, and setting down their things to claim it as their own.

"If you could grab me something to drink, that would be delightful," Crowley said before Cas had even had a chance to sit. Used to Crowley’s personality, he merely rolled his eyes, reaching for the other man’s wallet to grab the company corporate card and walked up to the counter.

"Thanks love," Crowley called out after him.

Cas waited in the short line as he looked around the establishment. There wasn’t anything special about it, nothing to keep it in mind. He supposed that its location was probably why it had so much business, but could see where Saman’s frustrations stemmed from. If this was the competition, he had no doubt Saman would come out on top.

When he finally got to the front, he nodded at the small girl with bright red hair who stood with her elbows resting against the counter top.

"Hey there, what can I get for ya?"

"I'm actually looking for someone. Is Samandriel here?"

The girl raised her eyebrow, "Who?"

Cas quickly looked up at the logo, making sure he was at the right place.

Fortunately, he was.

He tried again, "Uh, Samandriel? He works here."

She looked at the ceiling, pursing her lips for a moment before looking back brightly, "Oh, you mean Alfie?"

Cas squinted, "No I definitely mean Samandriel."

She ignored him calling back for Alfie. Cas was relieved when his little brother came out with a small scowl on his face. The instance Saman spotted Castiel, his face lit up, helping Cas to feel happier than he had the past week.

"Cassie!" Saman called out as he walked around the counter, holding out his arms to pull Cas in to a big hug.

"It’s good to see you, Cas,” he spoke quietly, squeezing a little tighter to the brother he hadn’t seen in so long.

"You too, Saman,” Cas responded, returning the embrace, “Although I have to ask, why do they call you Alfie?"
Saman sighed, pulling back from the hug and looked down sheepishly.

"When I first got hired, Marv told me that not only was my name too difficult, but there's no way it would fit on a name tag. So he found a spare one lying around and I've been wearing it since."

Cas looked down, and sure enough, he was wearing a name tag with the name Alfie inscribed.

"That is completely unacceptable."

Saman rolled his eyes, "Tis the life of a barista. Now tell me what you want. Are you staying here a bit? I don't get off for another hour..."

"I know," Cas replied, waving his arm, "Crowley wanted his tea, so I figured we could come here."

He didn’t mention that it was actually him who wanted to find a friendly face, hoping that Saman would be able to cheer him up. He was just glad that it appeared to have worked.

Saman scrunched up his nose, walking back behind the counter, and ignored the red headed girl who was staring unashamedly at the two.

"I don't like Crowley," Saman stated bluntly, reaching down to grab two cups.

Cas rolled his eyes, "No one actually likes Crowley."

"I heard that you leech. Now bring me my drink." Crowley yelled out from across the shop, his eyes never leaving the flurry of papers in front of him.

Cas sighed, "One black tea for Crowley..."

"Black like his soul," Samandriel muttered.

"... And chai tea for me please."

"You two are so pretentious."

"Do you give out comments to all your customers?" Cas teased, watching as his little brother worked.

"Nope, just my meddlesome big brother," he replied cheerfully.

"Holy shit!" The red headed girl swore, immediately clapping her hand over her mouth as the two turned their heads towards her.

"You're Alfie's brother?"

"Yes?" Cas answered hesitantly, not knowing whether or not it was a good reaction she’d given.

She stared at him for a moment, her mouth agape, before Saman coughed and pulled her out of her thoughts.

"I'm gonna go back there..." She said awkwardly before rushing to the back room.

Cas turned to Saman, one eyebrow raised, who simply responded by shrugging, "That was Charlie. She's always like that. You just kind of get use to it."

Cas nodded, accepting his cup of tea and hummed in pleasure as he sipped it.
"I can let you get back to work now," Cas begrudgingly said, picking up Crowley's tea as well.

"You're staying until my shift is over, right?"

Cas nodded, turning with the cups and walked back to his table. He sat still for a moment, disappointed when the happiness he felt in Saman’s presence was slowly disappearing now that his little brother had continued his work in the back room. He looked over at Crowley, knowing he wouldn’t receive any sympathy, and grabbed his notes, re-reading the words he’d already read a thousand times once again.

It wasn’t all that surprising when his mind began to slip.

Why wasn’t Dean sure if he wanted them to meet?

Cas wanted, no needed, to see the other man. There was no doubts he would regret leaving the campus without having at least said hello.

How could he convince Dean they should get together?

His tea was nearly all gone when a new distraction came his way in the form of a tall girl with curly brown hair in a nice gray pant suit. His eyes, which were zoned out on a small stain on the corner of the table, came into focus on the girl’s outstretched hand directly in front of his face.

"Dr. Novak? My name is Hannah."

Surprised, Cas accepted the girl’s hand, and glanced over at Crowley who had paused from his own reading to curiously watch the display.

"Hello Hannah. What can I help you with?"

"I was in your seminar earlier today and I just wanted to tell how great I thought you were."

Cas looked back surprised and replied awkwardly, "Oh, thank you, I suppose."

It felt awkward to have someone present themselves as a fan. He didn’t think he could get used to it. He would much prefer to hide behind his books and get lost in the words on the pages.

His gaze slipped over to catch Crowley’s little smirk, and gathered that the other man had no plans on stepping in any time soon. Realizing that Hannah was still speaking, he tuned into her voice once again.

"…and what you found in those tablets completely changed the way we look at things! I was wondering if you had a moment to answer a couple of questions I had... "

"Sorry, sweetheart," Crowley cut in, much to Castiel’s relief, "Dr. Novak here doesn't do interviews."

Cas noticed that Crowley’s eyes were shifting off to the side and followed his line of sight, sighing when he saw a table full of giggling college girls, eagerly watching the exchange. He would be willing to bet they were Hannah's classmates and that they had set her up to this.

"I'm sorry, who are you?" Hannah asked rudely.

"That would be my agent," Cas replied, turning back to the conversation at his table.
“Pleasure, Darling,” Crowley replied smirking at the girl whose face had turned a light shade of pink.

“Oh,” she replied, unsure what she was supposed to say after that. She seemed to gain her confidence back though, because she continued, “I’m not a reporter or anything. I’m a graduate student, studying history. That’s why I was hoping to have a few moments to talk to you. I was curious if you had any suggestions for me on where I should go from here or what you thought I should focus my thesis on.”

She hesitated, before asking, “If you were willing, I would love to grab some dinner with you a little later this evening. Would you be available? Maybe sometime around six?”

Cas frowned as he caught Crowley’s leer from the corner of his eye.

“You’re a little young to be asking Dr. Novak out on a date now, aren’t you?” Crowley interjected before Cas could respond.

The light pink on Hannah’s face turned bright red, “I-it’s not a date. Just a business dinner.”

“Mm hmm,” Crowley replied amused, eyes skirting in between the two, waiting for the inevitable rejection that was about to happen.

Cas supposed she was rather pretty, however he had no interest in this young woman.

There was only one person he was interested in, and he didn’t seem to be interested back.

“And I’m 26,” Hannah added hastily, countering Crowley’s point for being too young.

“Ah, yes, you’re right. Definitely not too young then,” Crowley mocked unkindly.

Cas sighed, knowing that he needed to speak up to prevent Crowley from crushing the girl’s dreams completely, and said, “I am unavailable this evening.”

“Oh,” Hannah replied deflated, asking meekly, “Would you be able to meet right now? For a late lunch perhaps?”

Cas shook his head, “I have an meeting in about 5 minutes. My apologies.”

He reached into his bag and pulled out his card, handing it to the crest fallen girl, “If you send me an e-mail, I will try my best to get back to you as soon as I can.”

She smiled shyly as she accepted the business card, holding it to her chest and nodded dutifully, “Of course. Thank you, Dr. Novak. I’ll be sure to send you a message soon. Have a pleasant evening.”

Crowley and Cas watched her as she walked away, joining the table of the group of girls that he’d seen before.

“Well, that was exciting,” Crowley chuckled, sipping from his tea, “Perhaps we should let you out loose into the public more often. Take more advantage of your sex appeal.”

Cas rolled his eyes and grabbed his papers, putting them away in preparation to head out. He’d be able to meet up with Samandriel and his business partner for a little bit, hear their business plan, and then he could go out with Samandriel for the afternoon. It would be relaxing and distracting.

“Where are you going again?” Crowley asked coolly.

“I’m meeting with my younger brother, Samadriel. So, I probably won’t see you until sometime
tomorrow.”

“I’ll be eagerly waiting your return,” Crowley replied.

Cas stood up, grabbing his bag and walking over to the counter as he waited for Saman to come out of the backroom.

“Yes, are you ready to go, Cassie?”

Cas nodded, looking up at his little brother as he walked towards him. He leaned over a bit, glancing behind him as second man walked out and joined their little group. He was a very attractive man with his light brown hair and bright green eyes. He was tall and had a few freckled scattered across his nose. Assuming this was Saman’s friend and future business partner, Cas stared directly at him, waiting to be introduced.

“Cas, this is my classmate, the one I wanted to start the business with,” Saman said excitedly, reaching back and pulling his friend closer.

The younger man stared down at the floor, making Cas wonder if the boy was shy or merely avoiding his gaze on purpose. He hoped it was the former, because he found that the boy’s freckles, which stood out in stark contrast against his blush, were surprisingly charming.

“Hello, I’m Castiel,” he said, holding out his hand for the other to shake.

The other finally looked up, locking gazes with Cas with such intensity that he almost stepped back and clasped his hand into Cas’ own.

“I’m Dean.”

Chapter End Notes

I love you all. You're comments and kudos are amazing.

I hoped you enjoyed this chapter! The moment you've all been waiting for is coming up in the next chapter!
Cas stared at the handsome man in front of him, his mind reeling.

Dean?

He said his name was Dean!

Was this his Dean?

Could it possibly be?

He looked at the college student in question, more carefully this time now that he knew the other’s name and referenced his looks with the description he’d received a couple months ago.

Light brownish-blond hair? Check.

Green eyes? Check.

Freckles? Check, check, check.

Was he really this lucky?

“Hello Dean,” Cas said finally, his hand still clasped in the other, not wanting to let go of it, just in case.

Dean hesitated before smiling shyly, “Hey Angel.”

A smile flew onto Cas’ face, filling his soul brighter than he ever thought possible. He used all the self-control he had not to fling himself onto Dean’s body, clutching his arms around tightly to never let go, and forced himself to stay where he was.

He continued to gaze into Dean’s green eyes, wondering what he did to be so lucky to have actually met his breath-taking Dean.
And breath-taking he was. Cas had imagined that Dean was an attractive man, but this was better than anything he’d ever thought up.

He was only broken out of his thoughts when Saman coughed awkwardly next to him, eyeing their hands, still clasped together, and asked pointedly, “Do you know each other?”

Cas ignored his brother and asked Dean, “How long did you know?”

After all, he had to of known that Castiel was Samandriel’s older brother. There were only so many Castiel Novaks in the world.

Was this why he’d said “maybe” when Cas asked to meet?

Had he already known that they were going to meet one another in this meeting?

Dean shrugged, and answered casually, “Just a couple of days. When I found out what your name was.”

Cas nodded, thinking back. So he had known…

Without thinking, Castiel blurted out, “Would you like to have dinner with me tonight?”

Dean looked back, surprised, as though he hadn’t expected that Castiel would want to get together. A small smiling crept onto his face, as he answered, “Oh, uh, yeah. I’d, uh, like that.”

In the background, Cas could distinctly hear a girl whisper loudly, “I thought he said he was busy tonight.”

He considered turning to find the girl to set the record straight, when Saman interrupted, “I thought we were hanging out tonight.”

Cas turned to his little brother exasperatedly, shooting him a dirty look.

His younger brother merely looked back amused.

“We can hang out some other time,” Cas answered pointedly, “I have plans.”

Saman snorted, “Yes, I can see that,” he answered with a nod to their hands, palms still intertwined with one another’s.

Dean quickly dropped their grasp and took a step back.

“Sorry,” he said quickly, “You’re busy…we don’t have to…”

Cas shook his head, his eyes widening.

This may be his only chance to meet with Dean. He wasn’t going to let this opportunity slide by.

“No, tonight is perfect!” He assured Dean, who looked back skeptically.

They stood for another moment, sizing each other up, before Saman said, “Okay, seriously. Are either of you going to tell me how you know each other?”

Dean broke their gaze and turned to Saman, smiling sheepishly as he rubbed the back of his neck, “You, uh, remember me telling you about that guy I randomly texted several months back?”
Saman rolled his eyes, “You mean the one you never shut up about? Yeah, I think I’ve heard of him. What about it?”

Cas smiled brightly at the implication that Dean talked about him to his friends, his mind still reeling at the fact that he was standing right next to his texting companion.

Dean simply nodded his head in Cas’ direction, and waited until it dawned on Saman what he was implying.

As soon as it did, Saman groaned, “Oh seriously? C’mon man, that’s gross. There are a lot of things I didn’t want to know about my big brother.”

Dean smirked, “My bad.”

Saman huffed, visibly shuddering, which caused Cas to wonder what exactly he told his friends about him, and asked, “Are you two going to be able to stay professional for this meeting?”

Cas cleared his face of any emotion, standing up straighter, and replied, “Of course. I’m well aware that this is your dream and I plan on being respectful and attentive as you go over your points. My relationship with either of you will have no sway in my decision. In fact, we should probably head out now.”

Saman snorted, knowing that there was absolutely no truth in that statement, but let it slide as he led them out of the café and into a small conference room. The walk was short and quiet, with Cas stealing glances at the beautiful man walking next to him.

When they arrived in the conference room, which was already set up for their meeting, he was very impressed.

He had expected to be given the contract to sign and that was it. Instead, the two had set up a full blown presentation, as though they were presenting to someone at the bank, complete with graphs, charts, and power point slides shown through a projector onto the wall.

Cas sat back thoughtfully as he watched Saman explain the growth potential and the expected margins they were planning on making, emphasizing his points with his well made material.

When it was Dean’s turn to talk, Cas forced himself not to smile, as he gave Cas a mock-up of a menu he’d been playing around with and explained the cost effectiveness of these meals and why he thought they would bring more business.

Their business plan was well thought out and put together, and it made Cas wonder how long they’d been planning out these details.

When they finished and asked him if he had any questions, Cas turned to Dean and asked simply, “Why didn’t you tell me you wanted to open up a café?”

In all honesty, he was kind of hurt that Dean hadn’t told him. After all, if it wasn’t for him, Dean wouldn’t have even considered taking a baking class in the first place or searching for a different career option.

Dean’s smile faltered for a moment, and he paused to think before he answered carefully, “I didn’t want to mention anything until I was sure that we had an investor. And then I found out you were the investor and I was nervous to what you were going to say…”

Cas frowned, and answered, “Well, you have nothing to be nervous about. I would be more than
happy to be your investor.”

Dean let out a sigh of relief, while Saman shouted out, “Woo hoo!”

Cas laughed, reaching forward for a contract Saman had provided and read through it happily, negotiating the interest rate in which he would accrue as he waited for them to pay him back (he told them he refused to go any higher than 2.5%, which was a full 3% lower than what they had originally stated), while the two pressured Cas to accept 10% of the company (which came with no rights on decisions; just a small, steady income when business was booming).

The three left the meeting feeling elated at the exchange. Saman gave Cas a big hug, whispering thanks in his ear.

“You’re welcome, little brother,” Cas responded, glancing back to see Dean shuffling his feet as he waited for him.

He wanted desperately to run away with Dean, but knew he needed to double check it was okay with Saman. He was, after all, blowing him off to spend time with a boy.

“Am I okay going out tonight?” Cas asked hesitantly, feeling guilty for wanting Saman’s approval that it was okay to ditch him.

Fortunately, Saman merely rolled his eyes, “Yes, it’s okay if you go on your date. I’ll go get this contract notarized and catch up with you tomorrow before you leave.”

Cas sighed in relief, “Thank you.”

“Yeah, yeah,” Saman waved him off before turning to shout at Dean, “I’ll see you later! Enjoy your date!”

Cas turned to Dean who was staring at the ground determined not to look him in the eye again, and asked, “Where would you like to go?”

Dean shrugged, feet shuffling against the concrete.

“I don’t know this area, so I’m not sure what’s good,” Cas continued, wondering why Dean was avoiding him.

Did he not want to go on this date? Was he pushing him into this?

“What are you in the mood for?” Dean asked shyly, looking up at him through his eyelashes.

Cas bit the inside of his cheek, reminding himself that it would be a bad idea to pounce on Dean in the middle of campus, and smiled warmly, “You know my favorite foods. Perhaps you should pick from there.”

Dean’s tense shoulders relaxed, as though he had just remembered that he did in fact know Castiel better than anyone else, and he smiled widely, “In that case, let me take you to try the second best burgers you’ll ever taste.”

Cas laughed, following behind him quickly, “The second? Which is the burger that claims the title as the first?”

Dean winked, “That would be mine of course.”

Butterflies fluttered in his stomach, “I look forward to trying them, then.”
They walked side-by-side, heading to the diner that Dean was excited for him to try, hands brushing every couple of steps, wandering to a parking lot near the café. Dean led him to a black classic car, running his hands lovingly over the metal.

“Cas? This is my baby. Baby? Meet Cas.”

Cas smiled affectionately, remembering Dean mentioning his love for his car and replied, “She’s beautiful.”

Dean nodded enthusiastically, reaching forward to open the door for Cas before wandering to the other side.

The car ride was spent listening to some music on one of Dean’s tapes, each stealing glances to look at the other, trying not to get caught.

(They both failed miserably).

They arrived at a Bar and Grill about 10 minutes off of campus.

Cas followed Dean inside, surprised when they were stopped several times as people paused to say hello to Dean.

“You come here often?” Cas asked when they finally arrived at their booth, climbing into the seat across from his date.

He smiled, really liking the sound of Dean being his date.

“The owner is a family friend, so I usually stop by a couple times a week, yeah,” he explained, raising a finger to flag down a waitress.

A young pretty blonde bounced up to the table, with a notebook in her hand, and looked in between the two.

“Hey Dean? Who’s your date?”

Dean glanced over at Cas before introducing, “Hey Jo, this is Cas.”

Cas tried to remember why that name sounded familiar, but dismissed it and instead reached out to shake her hand.

Jo’s jaw dropped, ignoring the outstretched limb, “You mean THE Cas? AKA Angel? AKA The stranger your madly in love with?”

Cas awkwardly put his hand down, and noticed Dean looked horrified at the accusations. Quickly, he interjected before Dean could say anything, “That would be me, yes. And I sincerely hope that what you say is true, because I am hopelessly and irrevocably enamored with Dean.”

Dean looked down at the table, attempting to hide his smile and bright blush, as Jo awed, “That’s disgustingly sweet. What can I get you two?”

“Just a couple of burgers and some bottles of beer, please,” Dean answered, looking up a little more put together.

“Coming right up, lover boy.”

The two sat in awkward silence after she left.
Now that they were here together in person, why was it so difficult to talk?

Dean hesitated, running his finger along the patterns in the wooden table, and spoke casually, “I uh, saw you at the coffee shop with that other man. Friend of yours?”

Cas shook his head, thanking Jo as she brought back drinks for them, “I don’t think anyone could actually consider themselves Crowley’s friend. I’m not entirely sure the man has friends, to be honest with you.”

Dean looked back confused, so he explained, “Crowley is my agent. That’s why he’s on this tour with me. He’s the one who gets me my work and set up this entire trip.”

Dean nodded, sipping from his bottle before continuing, “I, uh, also noticed you were cornered by that pretty brunette.”

Cas frowned, unsure where the other man was going with this, “Yes, that was Hannah. Apparently she’s a student at the school. She wanted to meet up with me for dinner.”

Dean shrugged, “I’m surprised you didn’t take her up on the offer.”

He tilted his head to the side, confused, “Why would I…”

He trailed off looking at Dean curiously, “I had no interest in going on a date with her.”

Dean took another drink, glancing at him skeptically.

Cas sighed, frustrated with himself.

Why was this so awkward?

He looked around the diner, thinking quickly as an idea came to him, “I’m going to run to the restroom real quick, you mind?”

Dean shook his head, a deeper frown on his face, pointing in the direction where Cas needed to go.

Cas quickly left, locking himself in the small bathroom and pulled out his phone, bringing up Dean’s name. He quickly typed out a message, holding his breath as he hoped that this would work, and waited for a response.

4:14PM I have a confession to make.

4:14PM What’s that?

4:15PM I’m on a date with a man right now. Not only is he incredibly attractive, but he’s smart, and funny, and I find that I like him a lot. Unfortunately, he seems to be under the impression that I may want to be somewhere else right now. How do I convince him that he’s the only one I want to be with tonight?

4:16PM Well, you’re a really intelligent, good-looking guy yourself. Way out of his league. I can see how he would hesitant.

Cas frowned. Did Dean really think that Cas was out of his league? If anything, the opposite was true!

4:16PM He really shouldn’t be.
I’ve been dying to go out on a date with him since the moment he accidentally sent me a text message.

Yeah? Maybe you should tell him that. It would probably help him to feel less nervous.

Cas smiled, putting away his phone and checking his reflection quickly in the mirror. His tie was crooked, his hair was a mess, and it was much too warm to be wearing this suit. Figuring it would have to do, he boldly marched out of the bathroom across the room and straight for Dean.

He ignored Deans look of surprise as he bent down over the table, pressing his lips deeply into the other man’s, lingering for a moment as he reveled in the bliss he felt at the contact.

He leaned back briefly to whisper against Dean’s lips, “My apologies, but I couldn’t stand to wait for another moment before knowing what your lips tasted like.”

He leaned back in, continuing the kiss, pleased when Dean responded more energetically this time.

He pulled back much sooner than he wanted, but assured himself he would have some more time later. At least, he hoped they would have some more time later.

He walked back around the table, casually sitting down as though nothing out of the ordinary had happened, sliding off his coat and rolling up his sleeves, while Dean stared straight ahead, a slightly dazed look still on his face.

Cas picked up his burger, taking a big bite and moaned loudly at the taste.

“Oh, wow,” he spoke, “If this is the second best, I can’t wait to try yours.”

Dean stared at the sight in front of him, groaning as he rubbed his face, and mumbled, “Oh, that’s even better in person.”

“What is?” Cas asked curiously, taking another bite.

“Your moaning,” Dean replied sheepishly, “You really could make a guy come alone just on your moans alone.”

Cas chuckled, letting out another exaggerated moan as he bit into the burger again.

“That’s cruel,” Dean commented, sounding more like himself than he had all afternoon, finally picking up his own burger and asked, “I take it you like it then?”

Cas nodded, “I told you a really good burger makes me happy, and these burgers? They make me happy.”

“Just the burgers, then?” Dean asked cautiously.

Cas rolled his eyes. What would it take to convince Dean he truly wanted to be here?

He shook his head and answered, “The burgers make me happy, yes. But you? You bring an exhilaration that nothing else can compare to.”

Cas looked up, catching Dean’s eye before he continued seriously, “And I can assure you, there is nowhere I would rather be right now, than sitting right here with you.”

Dean blushed, looking pleased at Cas’ declaration, and continued on his own burger, visibly relaxing in his seat. They continued to eat in silence, one that was much more comfortable than the tension
they had felt earlier.

“I’m glad you’re here,” Dean said suddenly, pulling Cas out of his thoughts.

Cas looked up at Dean who was watching him carefully, as though he were nervous at how that statement would be taken. Cas simply smiled in return, reaching out his leg to rub against Dean’s.

“I am too.”

He was pleased to find the rest of their dinner together flowed just as easy as he hoped it would.

Chapter End Notes

Wow.

That's literally all I have to say.

You all are AMAZING! I had more comments and kudos than I knew what to do with. You truly are all wonderful people and I love each and everyone of you.

Thank you so much for your support!!
It Started As An Accident

Chapter Notes

This is the final chapter! (Sorta)

If you didn't see my updated note on the last chapter, I've changed the story to 14 chapters now. This is the last one (which is longer than I originally anticipated) and then I will put up an epilogue later in the week.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“…we didn’t want my mom to find out that it was my idea that he jump off the roof, so I had to ride with Sam, who had obviously broken his arm, on my handlebars to the hospital. Worst ride of my life, man.”

Cas laughed, glancing eagerly down at their clasped hands, and asked, “What did your mom say when she found out?”

Dean shrugged, chuckling at the memory, “She was livid, naturally. Didn’t trust me to be alone with the kid for months after…”

They both chuckled, walking slowly along the sidewalk, enjoying the light breeze during that warm night. When they had finished dinner, Dean drove them back to his apartment to park his baby, and invited Cas to go for a walk with him around the campus.

They had only been walking a few minutes when Dean bravely reached down to intertwine his fingers with Castiel’s.

They had been exchanging stories all evening, still basking in the pleasure of simply being in the presence of the other person. Once they’d gotten comfortable, Dean had opened up like he had in his text messages.

Everything had been perfect, and as they approached Dean’s apartment building (passing it for the third time that evening), Cas was willing to admit he had no desire for this night to end.

He had craved Dean’s company for so long, he didn’t see how he could willingly give it up now that he’d had it.

He was pleased to see Dean’s hesitance to end the date as well when they paused outside of his apartment building, both unsure of where they should go from there. Dean looked around for a moment, before he nervously asked, “Would you, uh, like to come up?”

Cas grinned, nodding fervently, “Yes please.”

Dean sighed, grinning in return, before leading him into the building and up the long flights of stairs (the elevator was broken). He opened his apartment door, waving for Cas to walk in before him, so he could take a good look around.
The apartment was old and furnished with mismatched items scattered throughout the room. There were piles of things lying through-out the apartment, although overall it was surprisingly clean considering a couple of male college students lived here.

“It’s not much…” Dean started, his nose scrunched up as he looked around the room in distaste, “But at least I got my own room.”

“That’s more than I could have said when I was in school,” Castiel assured him, walking over to a bookcase and glancing through the titles, the majority of them being textbooks.

“Really?” Dean asked, seeming to be slightly relieved at the admittance, “Did you live in the dorms?”

Cas shook his head, “No, I paid a friend $20 bucks a month to sleep on his couch.”


“Didn’t have enough money for a place of my own,” Cas shrugged, running his fingers down a worn down spine of a copy of Slaughterhouse Five. He assumed this one was Dean’s.

“But,” Dean started, hesitating for a moment for blurting out, “I thought you were rich.”

Cas looked back, his head tilting to the side, “Where did you get that impression?”

Dean rolled his eyes, “Dude, you’re giving a whole lot of money to Alfie and I to start our own business.”

Cas sighed, “Well, yes, I have money now because I was able to work my way into a good job and am smart with how I spend my money. However, in college I literally had nothing.”

Cas leaned against the wall, folding his arms before admitting, “Although my parents are admittedly wealthy, they are only such because they refused to spend money on their children. Each one of us had to pay our way through college and through life. The majority of us were able to get scholarships to pay for school, and had to find jobs in order to pay for the rest.”

He continued, “Samandriel, or Alfie as I suppose you call him, is working at a coffee shop, Gabriel became a porn star, Anna sold her art and modeled for others for a small fee, Michael worked for the school and received free room and board in doing so, no one knows where Lucifer got his money from, nor do we want to know, and I worked in a Gas N’ Sip.”

“Dude, that sucks,” Dean replied empathetically, a small smile creeping onto his face.

“It wasn’t as bad as you would think it would be,” Cas admitted, thinking back to his days working in a convenience store, “I got free slushies any time that I wanted.”

Dean laughed, wandering closer to Cas, leaning on the edge of the couch, their knees just a couple of inches apart. They sat in silence, just staring at the other, until Dean shook his head, breaking them out of the moment they were in.

“So, uh, what would you like to do?” he asked.

Cas shrugged, knowing what he wanted to do, but not entirely sure if he should.

Weren’t there rules about this?

Technically you shouldn’t put out on your first date, right?
But...was this really only their first date?

After all, hadn’t they been pretty much dating over the last several months?

Dean looked around, nodding towards a TV, and said, “We could watch a movie or something. Or just keep hanging out if you wanted.”

Cas watched eagerly as Dean’s tongue flicked out wet his lower lip. He took a step forward, carefully gaging what Dean’s reaction would be.

They had already kissed once in the Bar, and Dean seemed to be pleased with that interaction. Not to mention to countless times they’d gotten each other off over text or call.

“I mean, that’s if you want to stay,” Dean quickly amended nervously, not seeming to notice Cas edging closer, “I know it’s getting late. You probably want to head back to your hotel soon…”

“I would much prefer to stay here with you, if you are amenable with that,” Cas interrupted, taking another step.

Dean looked up, surprised to see that Cas was standing close enough that their knees were touching.

“My roommates are out,” Dean blurted, his pupils dilating slightly as he looked at Cas hungrily, “So, we won’t have to worry about bothering them with whatever it is we decide on doing. One is working and the other is staying at his girlfriend’s, so…”

“Is that so?,” Cas asked, already planning in his mind what he wanted to do first with the next couple of hours they had interrupted.

He leaned forward, loving the way Dean’s breath hitched as his lips hovered over his own, and whispered, “Is this alright?”

“Oh, hell yes,” Dean moaned, bending forward to crash their lips together.

Cas grabbed Dean’s hips, holding them tightly as leverage as their mouths moved together fluidly. Dean’s own hands reached up, one holding onto his bicep hard enough Cas was sure it would leave bruises, and the other grabbed a fistful of Cas’ messy hair.

Cas stepped forward, sliding into the open spot in between Dean’s open legs, and rolled his hips forward, both moaning into the other’s mouth at the sheer intensity of the friction.

They stayed there against the couch, mapping out each other’s mouth with their tongues, lazily rutting into the other until it was just too much to handle.

Cas moaned when Dean bit his lower lip, nibbling on the sensitive skin for a moment before sliding his hand down his hand to cup Cas’ hard cock, pressing tight against the thin fabric.

Cas growled into Dean’s mouth, thrusting into the touch, “Bed. Now.”

Dean looked up, his widening briefly in surprise, before they narrowed eagerly, “Yes sir.”

He eagerly reached up pulling off Cas’ coat from his shoulders, throwing it onto the floor as he pushed him backwards, leading down towards the hallway.

Cas glanced at the suit coat, rumpled in a ball on the floor, and turned his attention back to Dean, whose lips had trailed down his jaw and onto his neck, before deciding to leave the item of clothing there instead of hang it up like he normally did to prevent wrinkles.
He could get it cleaned later.

Dean’s hands slid up and down his torso, before he began clawing at the buttons on Cas’ shirt, pulling the garment off along with his tie, while sucking on the pulse point on his neck.

Cas moaned, eagerly reaching forward to work on undoing the button on Dean’s jeans.

Dean pushed him into his bedroom, locking the door behind him, and pressing Cas against the closed door, enjoying the taste of Castiel’s lips on his tongue.

Frustrated with his failure at taking Dean’s pants off while Dean got to explore Cas’ bare chest, Cas reached forward, lifting Dean up and wrapping his legs around him.

Dean yelped at the sudden change but quickly moaned when Cas bent forward to suck a mark into Dean’s neck. He walked forward, throwing Dean back onto his bed and pulled off his jeans in one swift motion, bending forward to growl in the other’s mouth.

“You are wearing far too many clothes.”

“I could say the same for you, Angel,” Dean retorted, tugging on the waistband of Cas’ slacks.

Cas toed off his shoes and pulled off his pants while Dean scrambled to take off his shirt, sitting on the bed in nothing but his boxers. Cas joined him quickly, but leaned back to take a moment to look at Dean fully.

“You’re so beautiful,” he breathed out, leaning forward to nip at Dean’s neck in the same spot he had been working before.

How did he get so lucky?

Dean moaned at the motion, lifting his hips up into Cas’ body, searching for some friction,

“Fuck, Angel, please. I need you.”

Cas quickly obliged, his hand sliding down to palm Dean’s cock through the fabric of his boxers, loving the sound of Dean’s moans.

“Oh, Dean, you have no idea how much I’ve wanted to do this. How much I want you…”

“Tell me,” Dean said breathlessly, thrusting his hips up further into Cas’ touch, “I want to knoooo-oh!”

Cas nodded, bending his head down to flick his tongue against Dean’s nipple, pleased at the positive response he received. He quickly made work of the other one, before continuing down his body, mouthing at Dean’s head through the cloth.

“I can’t stop thinking about you,” Cas admitted in between kisses, looking up through his eye lashes at Dean who was staring at him in awe, “Every day I longed to hear your voice. I burned, thinking about what it would feel like when you touched me. I yearned for the day when I could see you.”

He looked up at Dean, making sure to catch his eyes before he continued, “When I could touch you.”

His hands slid down Dean’s chest, grabbing a hold of Dean’s boxers and pulling them down, and breaking eye contact to look down at the younger man’s dick.
He moaned at the sight of the hard member, bobbing against Dean’s stomach as he tried to reach his hips up to press against Cas’ body. Already, there was pre-cum leaking from the tip.

Cas looked back up at Dean, and finished speaking, “When I could taste you.”

He bent down, sliding his lips over the tip of Dean’s cock and sliding down until he completely bottomed out.

“Holy shit!” Dean called out, his hips thrusting involuntarily, causing Cas to pull back slightly, “Sorry, sorry!”

Cas merely hummed, trying to show Dean that he was alright, sliding out his tongue to run up and down the vein on the underside of his cock.

“That is so much better than I could have ever imagined,” Dean gasped out, clutching the sheets next to him, his knuckles completely white.

Cas reached out, putting Dean’s hands in his hair, loving this little gasps that Dean made in response. He twirled his tongue around the head, sucking a bit before bottoming out once again and swallowing around the tip.

Anything he could do to make Dean crazy was a win in his book.

“Angel, please, I can’t…I won’t make it long if you…”

Taking the request, he pulled his mouth off, leaning back up to kiss along Dean’s jaw.

“What do you want me to do?” he asked, “Tell me, and I’ll do whatever you want.”

“I need you in me. Please,” Dean begged.

Cas nuzzled his head into Dean’s neck, moaning at the thought, before asking for some lube.

Dean pointed over to his nightstand and Cas quickly opened it, rifling through for a couple of seconds before he found the bottle of lube and a pack of condoms.

He generously squirted some of the liquid onto his fingers, looking up at Dean to make sure this was okay, one last time.

“Now!” Dean growled, when he noticed Cas’ hesitation.

“So bossy,” Cas teased, but complied with the requested, pressing his finger against Dean’s puckered hole, teasing the skin.

He easily slid one finger into his body and it wasn’t long before a second and a third joined.

He was rather pleased with himself when Dean cried out in pleasure, fingers pulling at Cas’ hair, as he found his prostate. He mercilessly rubbed his fingers back and forth at the spot until Dean cried out, “Angel, please. I need you. Please. I can’t…”

He pulled his fingers out, pulling off his boxers and slipping on the condom before lining up, bracing himself for the pleasure that was about to come.

He slowly pushed in, moaning in sync with Dean, until he bottomed completely out, pausing at the top.
“Cas?” Dean whimpered, his breaths coming out in shallow gasps.

“Yes Dean?” he replied pleasantly, as though his dick weren’t in the other man’s ass.

“If you don’t move right now, I swear I’m going kick your ass out.”

Cas chuckled, reaching up to nibble at Dean’s lower lip.

“Somehow, I doubt that,” he teased, slowly pulling himself out, loving the sound of Dean’s moans.

“But, if you insist, who am I to deny you?” he asked innocently, before slamming back in.

“Fuck, yes,” Dean called out as he arched his bed against the bed and threw his head back on his pillow.

Cas continued his thrusts, hitting Dean’s prostate mercilessly on every other plunge, eager to make Dean feel as good as he felt.

Knowing he wasn’t going to last much longer, he reached his hand up, covering Dean’s own neglected cock, and gave it a few pulls, not surprised when Dean came in spurts almost immediately, Cas’ name shouted out from his lips.

Cas joined him a couple of seconds after and collapsed onto his chest, ignoring the feel of the cum between their bodies.

They panted on one another for several minutes before Dean offered to get a wash cloth to clean them up.

Cas debated saying no, having no desire to leave the spot he laid on Dean’s chest, but knew that he and Dean would be more comfortable in the end if they did. Besides, he was much too old to be falling asleep with cum smeared all over his body.

Cas pulled off the condom and threw it away as Dean grabbed the wash cloth, gently wiping himself down before coming back to clean the cum off of Cas’s. His hands were gentle as they ran the soft cloth down his chest and stomach, clearing off the mess they had left behind.

When he was finished, he threw the dirty rag into a pile of laundry in the corner of the room and leaned back next to Cas, putting his arms back behind his head and sighing happily as they both basked in their post-orgasmic glow.

After a few moments, Dean began to shuffle in the spot next to him. Not wanting the other man to feel awkward, Cas leaned forward, curling up into Dean’s side and lay his head against his chest.

He closed his eyes, hoping for the best when Dean’s body tensed for a brief moment, but sighed in relief when the other man completely relaxed his body into his own, wrapping his arm around Cas’ shoulder and chuckling to himself disbelievingly.

“I can’t believe this is actually happening.”

“Hmm?” Cas asked, kissing each one of Dean’s ribs, “Which part?”

“All of it,” Dean admitted, turning his body, so he could see him better.

“I just, fuck man. I mean, I texted you accidentally. And then you were funny and quirky and incredibly smart, and I loved talking to you. And now I find out that you’re wealthy and extremely sexy as well, and I just…”
Dean took a deep breath before continuing, “You really are way out of my league, man. I find it hard to believe that someone as perfect as you is here with someone like me.”

“You don’t see yourself clearly, then,” Cas commented, reaching out to lock his fingers in between Dean’s, “You are kind and thoughtful and charming. Every time I texted you my day would brighten. It was far too easy for me to…”

He paused, not sure if he wanted to continue his line of thought, but Dean pressed him to continue, “for you to…”

“…fall hopelessly in love with you,” Cas admitted, determinedly staring at their hands as he spoke, “I have loved you for quite some time now, and I can’t express fully how incredible it is to see that the attractive person I’ve been speaking with for the past few months is even more handsome physically than I ever thought was possible.”

Cas looked up at Dean, who was staring down, his eyes wide, “You truly are the most remarkable man I have ever had the pleasure of meeting and I thank the heavens every day that you sent me that text message those many months ago, even if it was initially an accident.”

Dean opened and closed his mouth several times before he squeaked out, “You love me?”

Cas kissed Dean’s hands, “I truly do.”

Cas waited patiently as the words were registered in Dean’s mind, hoping he didn’t ruin anything with his confession.

Dean sputtered for a moment, looking around the room in panic, before announcing, “Shit. I’ll be right back.”

Cas’ heart dropped, as Dean shuffled out from under him, racing out of the bedroom.

He had ruined it.

He cursed at himself, throwing his head back and rubbing his eyes, wondering how he was going to fix it, when he felt a thud and a buzz right next to him.

Cas opened one eye, looking down to see his phone.

Was Dean kicking him out?

He looked up at Dean who was standing in the doorway, nodding his head at Cas’ phone.

“You got a text,” Dean said.

Cas stared at him for a moment, unsure why he was telling him this now. Annoyed, he asked, “And you want me to check it now?”

Dean nodded eagerly, so Cas begrudgingly picked up the device, turning the screen on and clicking on the texting notification in the corner.

10:49PM I love you too, Angel.

Cas’ jaw dropped as he looked back up to Dean, wondering if this was real.

Dean smiled sheepishly and explained, “I’m not so good with words. I have a hard time saying what I’m feeling…”
He stepped forward to the edge of the bed, reaching out to intertwine his fingers with Cas and continued, “When I first texted you, I knew there was something about you that I wanted. I kept trying to think of reasons for why I needed to text you, and I was amazed every time you wrote me back.”

He crawled onto the bed, feeling emboldened by Cas’ bright smile, eagerly urging him to finish his thoughts.

“I may not be able to say it as easily as you, but I don’t think that it makes it any less true.”

Cas wrapped his arms around Dean’s neck pulling him down into a slow kiss, barely believing this was all real. They kept kissing for several long minutes, just enjoying feeling the other’s lips against their own, before Cas pulled Dean back down, snuggling back up to rest his head on his chest once again. He was glad when Dean responded positively, and grabbed his blanket to pull over their bodies.

He closed his eyes and focused on the feel of Dean’s fingers lightly trailing over his body, finding that he wished he could live in this moment forever. He frowned when he remembered he had a flight to leave California later the next evening.

Could he do it? Could he leave Dean behind and return back to New York?

“I think I prefer the text message,” Cas admitted, breathing in deeply, thrilled when his lungs were filled with Dean’s scent.

“Yeah?” Dean replied hopefully, rubbing his thumb in circles over Castiel’s sharp hip bone, “You don’t think it’s a cop out?”

Cas shook his head, “No. I like that I can open my phone and be reminded about how you feel about me anytime I want.”

He didn’t want to forget about this moment when he left on his flight to continue his tour. Dean had given him a promise that he felt the same way, and had done it in a way that was so uniquely them.

He didn’t care if Dean wasn’t ready to say it out loud. He was just happy the other man felt the same.

Cas looked up, his heart fluttering as he watched Dean smiling down at his, his fingers gliding up his skin to run through his impossibly messy hair.

“Is it too forward for me to tell you that I really don’t want to leave tomorrow?” Cas blurted out, desperate to know that Dean felt the same way as him.

Dean chuckled, “I’m gonna be honest with you, Cas. I don’t really want you to leave ever.”

Cas hummed in satisfaction at Dean’s answer and snuggled in closer to Dean’s chest. At this moment, he was happier than he’d ever been in a very long time.

He never wanted to leave Dean’s side and would do everything in his power to keep this happiness now that he’d found it.

“I think that can be arranged.”

Chapter End Notes
Wow. I can't believe it's almost over. You all have been so fantastic and really brighten my day when you comment/kudo/read this story. I'm thrilled with the love I've gotten from each of you and I want to thank you again and again!
Epilogue

Chapter Notes

This is it! The end of the road! Enjoy the epilogue!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

3 Years Later

“Would you like some more tea, Dr. Novak?”

Cas looked up at the young waitress, her dark brown hair pulled back in a tight bun behind her head, shuffling her feet nervously as she waited for his reply.

“That would be lovely, thank you,” he replied, placing a couple of bills in the girl’s hand, before she could protest.

She looked at the money, flustered for a moment, before scrambling off to grab him another cup.

He stretched back in his seat looking around the little café he inhabited. It was small and cozy, with a warm atmosphere and a pleasant buzz of chatter as it was always filled with people. The service was good, but the food was even better and Cas found himself sitting in the corner booth day after day.

“What’s this I hear about you trying to pay for your food, Dr. Novak?”

Cas watched as a bow-legged, light haired man swaggered across the room, a small cup of tea in hand.

“I’m merely paying for services which are being rendered to me,” Cas replied simply, reaching out to accept the cup and pressing it against his lips.

He took a deep breath, allowing the smell to fill his senses, before setting it down and staring back up at the other man, who was now leaned forward into his booth, invading his space.

“Sorry, sweetheart, but you don’t pay here,” the green-eyed man assured him.

Cas sighed lifting his head up to accept a quick kiss pressed against his lips before scooting over so the other man could sit in the spot next to him. He wanted to argue with the other man, but after three years, he knew better than to argue with his boyfriend when it came to things pertaining his cafe.

Next time, he’d have to be more discreet when he paid the waitress.

“How’s your research going?” Dean asked, leaning back as he wrapped his arm around Cas’ shoulders, squeezing tightly.

“As well as can be expected, considering I have Crowley calling me every 10 minutes, asking me for a new update,” he huffed, glaring at his now blessedly silent phone.

“He still mad at you for moving?” Dean laughed.

“It would appear so,” he responded bitterly.
It had been three years since that first night Cas and Dean spent together. They had both dragged their feet getting out of bed the next morning, neither wanting to say good-bye. Cas knows he was insufferable when he left Dean behind and spent the day with Samandriel, miserable that he had to leave.

He and Dean had agreed that they wanted to be together, but knew it was unrealistic for Cas to completely uproot his life in New York and move across the country, just to be in a relationship.

They vowed to make it work, and off Cas went to finish out his tour.

He and Dean texted and talked on the phone every single day, much like they had before he came to Stanford. Unfortunately, it just wasn’t the same. Now that he’d been with Dean, he had a hard time being a part. It both pleased him and upset him when he learned that Dean was experiencing the same things.

A month after he left, the day after Castiel finished his tour, Dean suggested that perhaps long distance was more difficult than they anticipated, and that maybe they needed to figure out something else.

Cas whole heartedly agreed.

That night, when he returned to his apartment in New York for the first time in months, he packed up his bags, called in a service to have the rest of the items packed and moved later in the week, and found a red-eye to California.

Dean was more than thrilled when Cas showed up on his doorstep the next morning, duffle in hand, asking for a place to stay (temporarily of course) and a bed to sleep for a little while.

Not a whole lot of sleeping actually happened that day.

Cas still maintains that that was one of his the best days he’d ever had in his life.

Cas ended up moving into an apartment with his little brother, Saman. At first, his little brother was bitter that Dean had learned that Cas was moving here before he had. He was his little brother, surely family trumped boys. Can argued back that Cas has really moved, cause he wanted the "D" and that was something Saman couldn't offer him. Cas, who couldn't argue against Dean's point, wisely stayed silent. Once Saman got over the initial betrayal, he was happy to have his big brother close by and welcomed Cas into his home.

Originally, Cas and Dean had discussed possibly moving in together. After all, it felt like the two of them had been dating forever. However, neither of them wanted to rush into anything right away and decided it would probably be best if they lived separately and took some time to get to know each other better.

They lasted two months before finding an apartment the two of them could share.

Crowley was not happy when he discovered that Castiel had picked up and left without informing anyone he was planning on doing so. But, Cas had argued that he could easily do his work from anywhere in the world, as long as he had a computer and a decent internet connection. He assured Crowley that he was well within his right to live wherever he wanted, and that if he was needed back in the office (for something that simply couldn’t be done via e-mail, phone call, or video conferencing), then he would simply fly back.

Eventually, Crowley begrudgingly accepted Castiel’s decision to move, although he still often voiced his displeasure with the decision.
During this time, Samandriel finalized on a space, and after fixing it up, he and Dean officially opened their café a year later.

With Dean’s flair for good food and Samandriel’s gift for managing a business and marketing to their intended audience (in this case – college students), their café was an immediate success.

The café Samandriel left, run by the temperamental Marv, went out of business less than a year after.

Drawn to the café; which had an excellent wireless internet connection, savory mouth-watering food, and two of the people Castiel cared for the most (both who claimed to be Cas’ favorite despite that he tells them that he refuses to choose favorites among his boyfriend and brother), Castiel found himself sitting in the corner booth working day after day.

He eventually wrote that book about the tablets, just like Crowley had wanted him to, and it was an even bigger success than either of them imagined it to be. In fact, it was such a popular success (in this field of study) that he’d been commissioned to write a sequel.

This money flowing into both his and Crowley’s bank account helped quell the betrayal Crowley claimed Cas had committed by leaving New York to live in the sunny state of California.

Strangely enough, Crowley visited Castiel here in California more often than he ever did when he was in New York.

Gabriel was also quite excited about the change. He bought a beach house along the coast just a few months after Cas moved there, only about 30 minutes away from where they lived, giving them an invitation to come visit them anytime.

Cas and Dean took advantage of the empty house and private beach again, and again, and again.

Gabe didn't care until a particularly acrobatic visit that left several of his glasses in shatters on his kitchen floor. After that, some rules were set up.

The rules were never followed, but they made sure to be more careful from then on out.

That first Christmas, Dean nervously invited Cas and Saman to come home to celebrate Christmas with him and his family. They both said yes, and they packed their bags and road tripped across the states.

Cas was ecstatic to finally meet Sammy, the little brother Dean never stopped talking about, and he was even more happy when Sam announced that the next fall he would be joining them all in California to attend Stanford, who offered him a full ride scholarship. He didn't think he'd ever seen Dean happier and vowed to bring a smile that big to his face more often.

Dean's mother was beautiful in every sense. Smart, feisty, and kind in all the right ways, he started off his meeting by giving her the big hug he'd desperately wanted to give her for just being a good mom. She was over joyous and returned the hug just as strongly thanking Cas for taking care of her boy.

John was a little stand-offish at first, as Cas had expected, but quickly warmed up to the strangers in his home. When he announced at the end of the night he liked Castiel and he was welcome back anytime, he had never felt more relieved.

Cas glanced up from his phone, realizing he'd been lost in thoughts, looking over at Dean who was watching him with a small, fond look on his face.
“What?” Cas asked, wearily, wondering what Dean was thinking.

But Dean merely shook his head, his smile getting wider and asked, “Are you excited for this week-end?”

Cas rolled his eyes, choosing not to answer.

Dean had invited Cas to come out with him on a surprise week-end getaway. The entire thing was being kept a secret and Dean had constantly been trying to pester Cas to ask questions. Instead, Cas merely shrugged, not willing to give in to Dean’s requests, still curious as to why they were even making the trip in the first place. But, whenever he asked, Dean would just blush and ask, “Do I have to have a reason to want to go away with you?”

Dean sighed exasperatedly at the lack of reaction from his boyfriend, choosing to kiss him wetly on the cheek. He whispered in his ear, “Don’t worry, you’re going to love it.”

He leaned back and continued, “We can head out after the lunchtime rush. You’ll still be here, right?”

Cas nodded, his smile turning into an amused smirk, “Yes Dean, I’ll still be here. As I am, every day.”

A ring at the door interrupted their conversation as a ground of young, handsome college students entered into the shop. One of them glanced around, his face brightening when he caught sight of Dean sitting next to Cas and called out, “Hey Dean!”

Dean waved brightly back at the customer while Cas asked quietly, “Oh, do you know him?”

Dean shook his head subtly, while still smiling at the boy who was now blushing at being noticed, with a few of his friends snickering next to him, “No clue who he is.”

Cas snorted, taking a sip from his tea, “Taking in new strangers now, are we?”

Dean laughed, leaning forward to kiss the tip of Cas’ nose, before walking away to ask the customer’s what they wanted.

It was a few minutes later when Cas’ phone buzzed and he looked down, dreading to see Crowley’s name on the screen.

He was surprised when instead, Dean’s name came up. He looked up at the counter at Dean who was busy laughing at something one of the college students had said and quickly opened it, wondering what he could be texting him.

He smiled widely after he read the message, looking back up at Dean who was staring back at him lovingly.

2:33PM Why would I take in new strangers when I’ve got you? After all, you’re the only stranger I need.

--

Behind the counter, Dean’s heart fluttered as he watched Cas read his message before turning to look at him, his breath momentarily catching as his blue eyes caught his gaze. It still amazed him how incredible Cas was and he marveled that the older man was willing to call himself his.
Dean slipped his hand into his pocket, squeezing his fingers around the little black box he’d held onto for weeks.

Tomorrow, he would ask his stranger, his angel, his love to be officially his forever.

And that?

That was more than he could ever possibly have hoped for when he sent that first text message to his stranger those many years before.

Chapter End Notes

Oh my goodness!! You are all completely wonderful! I never imagined I would have so many people interested in my story, and it really is humbling and flattering and I'm blushing like crazy. I love each and every one of you and I really can't than you enough for your support throughout this crazy story!!

I know a lot of you are sad that it's ending (to be honest I kind of am too). But, I don't think I'm quite done with this universe yet. When I finished writing, I had a couple more ideas come to me that I think I would like to write out. If I do, I'll add them to this series as a time stamp. The main story is over and I won't add any more chapters, but eventually I may write out the proposal and other events like that, because I have ideas that I think are really cute. I have no clue when they'll be added, but I'm really excited about them, so I thought I would share it with you!

Also, I wanted to ask you all if you were interested in me re-writing this story from Dean's perspective. I've considered it a lot, but I'm trying to decide whether or not I should actually pursue it or if I should move onto one of my many other projects. I think it would be a lot of fun to write and a really great exercise, but I'm still thinking it through. Thoughts?

EDIT: Okay, I know I just wrote this out, *blushes* but the more I thought about this, the more it dawned on me that I probably won't re-write this is Dean's POV. It's still something I'm going to keep in the back of my mind (so let me know if you're interested still) but, otherwise I have too many other projects I would prefer to work on. This idea is far enough down the list, that even if it does happen, it wouldn't be for a long time. I'm still going to add a time stamp here and there, but otherwise, I'm going to move on. Thank you again! Sorry for any confusion or false hope I gave to anyone who was dying for this. END EDIT

Anyway, thank you again for reading! You are all truly a light in my life and lift up my spirit more than you could possibly imagine.

As Dean would say, You're awesome!
Castiel stared at the empty spot next to him, a cold, hard weight sitting deep within his chest.

Fine. He didn't need Dean here anyway.

He was more than capable of enjoying this vacation on his own.

He sighed, rubbing his eyes in frustration as he rolled back onto his back, staring up blankly at the ceiling above him, wondering how they had gotten to this point.

It had started several weeks before, when Dean surprised Cas with plans for a trip to a Bed and Breakfast. It would be the perfect trip, Dean had told him.

Cas was ecstatic. In between him trying to meet deadlines at work and Dean constantly busy with the café, the two of them hadn’t had much time to themselves. Most nights ended in them both collapsing on their bed in their apartment, half-hearted mumbles of good-night exchanged before falling into a deep sleep. It had been weeks since the last time they had had sex, much to Cas’ dismay.

So, the idea of this trip was more than welcome. He had enjoyed making that phone call to Crowley, informing him that he would be unavailable for the week-end and any and all business could be taken care of when he returned.

When they arrived, Cas was immediately enchanted, both by the home and the owners. The place itself was a charming old colonial style home, with rocking chairs on the front porch, nestled in the middle of an orchard. The owners, a cute older couple: Claudia and Jean-Paul, who absolutely doted on the two of them the moment they got there, handed them pamphlet after pamphlet of things they could do while they enjoyed their stay there.

When they showed them their room, which included a king-sized bed, a two person Jacuzzi tub, and a cozy fireplace, Claudia simply winked at the two and stated, “Well, if we don’t see you for a few days, we hope you enjoy your stay.”

Cas loved the gorgeous shade of red that graced Dean’s face from that comment.

The two had decided to call it a night, relaxing in the tub and giving each other lazy hand jobs before climbing in the luxurious bed. It wasn’t the rekindling that Castiel had hoped it would be, but they had all weekend. He was sure that once they got a good night’s rest, they would be back to their old
ways.

Unfortunately, Dean apparently had plans.

“What do you mean you’re leaving?” Cas asked incredulously, propped up on his elbows as he watched Dean get dressed.

“Just for a couple of hours,” he assured him, lacing up his boots, “It’s no big deal. You won’t even notice I’m gone.”

Cas stared, his jaw agape in shock, “I don’t understand…”

Dean sighed, explaining one more time, “I told you. There’s this car show a half an hour north from here I wanted to check out real quick. I thought I’d spend a couple of hours up there, and then come back down here and meet up with you to spend the rest of our time together.”

Cas tilted his head, “And why can’t I come with you?”

Dean laughed, his head tilted back in a way that Cas normally found charming. At this moment, he found it irritating.

“C’mon, Cas. You hate cars. You don’t want to go to this thing.”

He folded him arms, scowling in his boyfriend’s direction, “I thought the whole point of this trip was so we could spend some time together.”

Dean nodded in agreement, “It is. And when I get back, that’s exactly what we’ll do.”

He stood up, grabbing a flannel shirt to throw on top of his white tee he had on currently and added, “While I’m gone, you should go check out that bee hive that Claudia mentioned. It sounds like something you’d be interested in. Maybe they’d even let you pick some honey.”

He chuckled to himself, stepping forward to kiss Cas who turned his head away, forcing him to kiss his temple instead.

“I’ll be back later,” he promised, closing the door with a deafening click behind him.

Cas had growled in frustration, lying back in his place. This is where he’d been for the past hour, torn on trying to decide what he wanted to do.

While a part of him wanted to stay in bed and sulk, another part of him was playing around with the idea of just leaving to go back home. What was the point of their romantic week-end getaway if Dean had made plans to spend a chunk of time by himself?

Cas threw the covers off of his body, forcing himself to get out of bed. As much as he wanted to, he refused to sit and mope by himself. He sifted through the contents of his suitcase, leaving a mess on the floor as he rejected several shirts (most of which had belonged to Dean at one point) before settling on a plain black shirt he’d bought a few weeks before.

Pairing that with a pair of dark jeans, he grabbed a notebook and pen and headed down to the main level.

He spotted Claudia and Jean-Paul talking to a young couple who stood several inches apart from each other and tried to sneak out the side door before they saw him.

“Good morning, Castiel!” Claudia’s voice rang out.
Cas winced, before throwing on a smile and turned around, “Good morning.”

He genuinely did like his hosts; he just wasn’t in the mood to make conversation.

“How did you sleep?” Claudia asked him politely, turning away from the couple she had been speaking to a moment before. Cas glanced at them, frowning when he noticed both the woman and man appraising his body.

They each glanced back at the other, noticing each of their wanderings eyes and scowled, taking another step further apart.

Awkward.

“Fine,” he answered curtly.

“I saw your handsome companion leave earlier this morning. Big plans for today?”

“No,” he replied.

When it was clear he wasn’t going to elaborate, she frowned and grabbed his hand, patting it sympathetically.

“I’m sure you’ll work it out,” she said.

Cas kept his mouth shut, having no desire to talk about his possible relationship problems with a virtual stranger.

She continued, despite his lack of interest, “Well, if you don’t have any plans, you should head into the heart of the orchard and visit our hive. There’s a beautiful gazebo with comfortable chairs you can sit and write in.”

Cas looked down at his notebook, thinking that that really did sound appealing. Much better than wandering around aimlessly like he’d been originally planning.

He debated on not going out of spite, knowing that the Bee Hive was where Dean had recommended he go.

But, as Claudia grabbed a brochure showing pictures of the area and a small map, Cas had to admit that Dean was right. It looked exactly like something he’d like.

Damn him.

“Thank you, Claudia,” Castiel spoke kindly, accepting the paper, “I think I will.”

“Wonderful!” She replied, turning back to grab an electronic device and placing it in his hand, “I want you to take this with you, just in case.”

“A…phone?” he asked hesitantly, turning the device in his hand to examine it more carefully.

“A satellite phone,” she clarified excitedly, “I know that cell phone signal is spotty here, so I wanted to make sure that you had something just in case. If you need anything, anything at all, just press ‘0’ and it’ll call our main line.”

Cas smiled warmly, “Thank you.”

“Enjoy your walk, dear!” She called out after him, turning back to the first couple, and handing them
similar pamphlets to what Cas and Dean had received the day before.

Cas stepped outside, holding his hand up to shield him from the bright sun while his eyes adjusted. He glanced down at the map, noticing Claudia had highlighted what looked like an alternate scenic route to get to the hive.

He wondered if he should just take the straight shot to the center, but decided to follow her suggestion. A long walk couldn’t hurt. Perhaps it would even clear his head a bit.

He took down on the path, walking a comfortable speed and paused occasionally to examine the apples on the trees around him and flowers that lined the pathway.

It was absolutely breath-taking.

His heart ached, wishing that Dean was there to share this with him.

Why had he left that morning? Was there something wrong? Was Dean unhappy with their relationship?

Sure, it wasn’t always perfect, but they worked.

At least, Cas thought they did.

Cas kicked a rock at his feet, glaring at the ground while he tried to figure to where they had gone wrong when the phone Claudia had given him buzzed.

He ignored it, until it buzzed a second time. He paused in his spot, pulling it out of his pocket and glanced at the screen to see a notification that said 2 new messages.

Curious, he opened the messages, reading them one right after the other.

9:45AM *Good morning Handsome. I thought maybe we could play a game this morning.*

9:46AM *When you reach the sign welcoming you to the Orchard, I want you to turn right and walk 10 steps to the first apple tree you see.*

He frowned at the messages, trying to decide what to do. He settled on calling Claudia, pressing the ‘0’ on his phone, figuring the messages were meant for her or some other guest.

“Jean-Paul speaking,” a voice picked up.

“Hello Jean-Paul. Is Claudia around?”

“She is. Hang on one moment.”

There was some shouting before Claudia’s sweet voice answered, “This is Claudia.”

“Hello, this is Castiel.”

“Castiel, what can I help you with?”

“I seemed to have received some messages on the phone you handed me and I thought they may be for you or for another guest.”

“Nope,” she answered definitively.
“No?” Cas replied, confused.

“They’re definitely meant for you,” she clarified.

“Me?” he squeaked out, “But, who…”

“I suggest you follow the instructions and find out for yourself,” she replied amusedly, “Anything else I can help you with?”

Cas shook his head, “No, I suppose not.”

He hung up without saying goodbye, clicking the messages open once more.

He glanced up ahead and saw the sign the messages were referring to. Would it hurt to look and see what the message was leading him to? After all, he wouldn’t be going out of his way to do so.

Taking a chance, he followed the instructions, counting ten paces until he reach an apple tree. He stood there, feeling slightly foolish, until he noticed a piece of paper taped to the side of the tree. Hesitantly, he pulled the paper off, carefully folding over the small piece of tape that had held it on.

His phone buzzed again and he stared at the two objects, trying to decide which one he should look at first. He picked the paper, opening it up carefully and skimming over the words.

*If someone would have told me that the first words the love of my life would speak to me were to give me advice on how I shouldn’t act out on my “violent and rash tendencies” I would have called them crazy. And yet, looking back, I wouldn’t want it any other way.*

Cas squinted his eyes, re-reading the message again. There was no doubt in his mind, the handwriting, the reference…this was written by Dean.

But, why would Dean be leaving him messages in the Orchard? Was this his way of trying to appease Cas while he was away? Was he supposed to forgive him for ditching him?

He glanced down at his phone, clicking open the message.

9:56AM *Walk north 20 steps, and then East an additional 10 steps. Stop at a short stump.*

Frowning, Cas counted out his steps until he found the stump.

Bending down, he looked around for a brief moment before spotting a second note.

He set the phone down onto the ground next to him sitting cautiously on the smooth wood of the filed down stump, while he glanced at the message written on the new piece of paper.

*The moment you spoke to me, I knew there was something special about you. There was something about you that drew me in, that made me want to know you. I had to have you in my life, and I was willing to make a fool of myself day after day, if it meant I’d have a chance to talk to you.*

Another buzz from his phone.

10:04AM *Go South 15 steps, then East 25 Steps. Stop at the large crate.*
Cas glanced around suspiciously. These messages were timed too conveniently. He was receiving them as soon as he reached his next destination. How was Dean doing this from his car show?

Had he recruited someone else to send the messages?

Sighing, he followed the pathway until he reached the large crate, completely full from apples that had been picked from the surrounding trees.

Cas spotted another paper on top of the apples and chose to ignore it while he picked an apple, taking a large bite. He moaned as the juices flooded his mouth and considered the implications of this mini hunt Dean had sent him on.

There was no doubt in his mind that Dean was behind this.

But why?

Why would he write these notes for him? When had he had time to set this all up?

After all, he been with Castiel the entire evening last night up until he left early this morning. There would have been no time for him to do all this before he left for his car show.

Unless…

Cas paused, the half-eaten apple pressed against his lips, flicking his tongue out to lap up some stray juices, his mind racing.

What if Dean hadn’t left the Orchard that morning?

What if he was still here?

But, if that was the case, why had he told him he was going? Why lie to him?

Frustrated that he had no answers, he finished the apple, throwing the core into a compost pile off to the side before hastily grabbing the next letter.

_Every time I spoke to you, I felt myself growing and turning into someone better. I always hoped that one day I would be a good person, but after meeting you, I actually went out of my way to become that person I’d always wanted to be. I wanted to be someone that would be good enough for you._

Cas huffed at the implications. Dean had a self-deprecating nature that made him believe he wasn’t enough. Despite how many times Cas assured him that he was exactly what he wanted, he was firm in his belief that Cas was out of his league.

The idea itself was completely ridiculous.

If anything, it was Dean who was out of his league: young, gorgeous Dean who everybody instantly loved and was as smart as he was kind.

He checked the phone out of habit the moment it buzzed.

10:13AM _Walk 30 steps South and 10 steps West. Stop at the Scarecrow._

Cas looked up again, scanning around the area. The trees were pretty thick, but he could still see down each row.
There had to be someone watching him, someone following him so they could time this perfectly to send the messages at the exact moment he was ready to move to the next place.

“Hello?” he called out, not surprised when he didn’t receive an answer.

He bit his lip before calling out again, “Dean?”

Silence.

He sighed, not sure what he should do. Should he continue playing this game that Dean had set up? Or perhaps he should just go back to his room and wait for Dean to return to ask him what this was all about.

He pulled out the brochure he’d been given earlier and looked at the small map on the corner. He tried to figure out where he was according to the map, but wasn’t having any luck. He supposed he could try to retrace his steps, but what would the point be?

He trudged forward, resigning to the fact that he was stuck playing this game for now, keeping an eye out for any movement.

He paused at the scarecrow Dean had indicated would be there, a frown creeping onto his face.

“That is horrifying,” he spoke out loud, knowing if Dean was around, he would agree.

Fortunately, the letter was pinned to the front of the scarecrow in a place that was easy to see, so he easily grabbed the white paper stepping off to the side, ready to read the next note.

You’re always there for me, anytime I need you. Whether I’m frustrated with school or work or family, or even just need someone to hold me, you always know what to do to put a smile on my face. When something good happens, you’re the first person I want to share my victories with, and when something bad comes my way, you’re the only one I want to see, the only one I know will be there for me no matter what.

p.s. This scarecrow is fugly.

Castiel let out a bout of laughter, slightly jarred at the sudden smile on his face. His shoulders relaxed as he re-read the note, thinking back to all the times he’d been there for Dean and all the times he’d done the same in return.

He felt the exact same way. Out of everyone in the whole world, Dean was the one he wanted to be with at the end of the day. There was no one else who could make him happier.

Resolving to continue forward, he checked the next message, suddenly excited to move on.

Perhaps this little adventure wasn’t as silly as he had previously deemed it to be.

The notes Dean had wrote were rather sweet, despite the fact the he was unsure as to what their purpose was.

10:29AM Walk 10 steps North, then 20 steps East, and another 10 North. Stop at the Ladder.

Cas walked quickly, following the instructions to a “T” until he reached the aforementioned ladder, eagerly opening the next note and reading quickly.
I still remember the exact moment I realized I was in love with you. I was in the middle of finals and completely stressed out. I was in a program I didn’t enjoy, just trying to get by. And there you were, asking out loud every question I was terrified to think. I made the mistake of lashing out at you, and that turned into us not speaking for several weeks.

It was the worst few weeks of my life.

I thought about you every single day. Every day I picked up that phone, tempted to call you and apologize, but I was terrified. I was scared of this effect you had on me. How you wanted me to actually be happy and not just get by day after day.

I was lying in bed one night, trying to decide what to do, when it hit me.

I was completely in love with you.

I tried to convince myself it wasn’t true, after all, we hadn’t even met in person! I had no clue what you looked like or even if you were who you said you were. But the truth was there, blasting in my face. And I couldn’t deny it.

I picked up the phone and immediately messaged you, relieved when you wrote back.

From that moment on, there was no doubt in my mind that I loved you and that I needed you in my life more than I ever had before.

Cas leaned against the ladder, his heart fluttering.

He remembered those weeks and how awful they were. He was in the Middle East for work and had drowned himself in translations, unwilling to dwell on the idea that he may never speak to Dean again.

He was already in love with the younger boy at that point as well, and couldn’t imagine how different his life would be had he not picked up his phone and sent that message.

He glanced at the next instructions, wondering how many more letters he was going to receive.

10:44AM 15 steps South, then 20 Steps West. After that, go 30 steps North and only 10 steps East. Stop at the Tractor in the middle of the row.

He frowned at the complexity of the instructions, but followed them anyway, spotting the large green tractor immediately.

He glanced around the vehicle, searching for several minutes before he found the note taped to the back of one of the wheels. He sat down at the base, leaning his back against the massive tire, cherishing the words.

I was terrified to tell you that I loved you.

What if you didn’t feel the same? What if the whole thing was a joke?

When I found out you who you were, I was so intimidated. In my mind, I didn’t think there was any way that a guy like you would want someone like me. I was sure that if we met in person, you’d be disappointed and wouldn’t want to speak with me anymore, and I couldn’t stand the idea of not talking to you. You were (and still are) always the highlight of my day.
But, you were coming to California, and I couldn’t resist the chance to meet you, face-to-face.

Taking that chance was the best decision I ever made (after texting you of course).

When you told me you loved me, I was on top of the world. And, while I couldn’t say the words out loud yet because I was so terrified of it falling apart, I knew.

I knew, without a doubt, that you were it for me.

Cas re-read the last line, trying to figure out what he meant.

He ignored the buzzing of the phone, examining each word again.

There were only a few things that he could actually mean with those words…

Feeling a sudden sense of urgency, he clicked open the text message, needing to find the next note.

11:02AM 20 Steps North, then 30 Steps West, and another 5 steps North. Stop at a flower pot near the beehive.

Cas practically ran down the tree lines, catching a glimpse of the hives, but barely noticing it as he walked along looking into every single flower pot. He was disappointed when he labors came up fruitless and walked back to the beginning, looking into each pot more carefully.

At the fifth pot, he spotted a little white paper and reached forward, tripping in his spot, slightly as he rushed to open it up.

You are my everything.

I can’t imagine what my life would be like without you, nor would I ever want to.

I am in love with you, Castiel Novak, and I plan on spending the rest of my life making sure you know.

Cas’ jaw dropped.

Was this what he thought it was?

He looked at the cell phone, shaking it in his hand when there was no new message.

He pulled out all of the letters, reading through each one again to put the whole message together.

The scavenger hunt, the love notes, the declaration of forever…

It all had to lead to one thing, one conclusion.

He jumped, startled when he felt the buzzing of the phone in his pocket, fumbling the device in his hands as he clicked it open.

11:21AM Walk past the beehive north until you reach the Gazebo

Castiel ran past the beehive, barely sparing it a glance, only one thing on his mind.
He paused at the sight of the white Gazebo, standing stark against the dark leaves of the trees surrounding it.

He hesitated before stepping onto the steps leading up towards the middle, his breath faltering as he spotted Dean standing in a clean pressed shirt and nice pants, a nervous smile on his face.

“Dean? What -?” Cas started, stopping when Dean put a finger to his lips.

He held out Cas’ cell phone, the one he’d left back in their room before leaving in a hurry earlier that morning. Cas hesitantly accepted, waiting for further instruction from Dean.

Dean grabbed out his own phone, a light blush creeping onto his face, but a look of determination as he typed out a message.

Immediately, Cas’ phone buzzed in response.

Cas’ hands shook as he turned the screen on, clicking onto the new notification that signaled he had a new message, just waiting to be read.

11:33AM Angel, Will you marry me?

Cas looked up, tears springing in his eyes as he watched Dean kneel down on one knee, holding out a small black box with a silver ring inside.

“I love you,” Dean spoke out loud, causing Cas to choke back a sob, “And I would be honored to spend the rest of my days with you.”

Cas leaned back his head, laughing out loud as he dropped to his own knees, grabbing the back of Dean’s neck and pulling him forward for a deep kiss.

When their lips parted, he shoved Dean back, causing him to lose his balance and fall over.

“Hey!” Dean protested, half-heartedly.

“You ass-butt!” Cas declared, still laughing, ignoring Dean's amused huff at his choice of swear, “I thought you left me!”

Dean winced, replying sheepishly, “I know. I’m sorry. It was the only thing I could think of to convince you to give me some time to set this up.”

Cas buried his face in his hands, his body shaking as he was torn in between laughing and sobbing and lunged forward to pull Dean back in for another crushing kiss.

They stayed on their knees, frantically trading kisses for a moment before calming down, foreheads resting against the other’s.

“How did you…” Cas asked, amazed at all the effort Dean had put into setting up the whole thing for him.

Dean simply smiled, winking cheekily and kissed Cas sweetly, pulling him up off of the ground.

“I love you,” Cas spoke determinedly, wanting to make sure that Dean heard the words.

With twinkling eyes, Dean replied, “I know.”

Cas held his shaking hand out while Dean placed the beautiful band onto his finger, taking a moment
to just stare at it.

He had hoped that one day they would…but never imagined…

Speechless, he allowed Dean to grab his hand and lead him back to the Bed and Breakfast, assuring him that they could go see the Bee Hive later that day if he wanted.

Cas didn’t think he’d want to once he had Dean in his bed.

Several hours later they were naked and curled up together beneath the sheets, breathing into each other’s mouths as they shared sweet kisses.

They laid in contempt for a moment before Dean hesitantly spoke up, “You know…you never actually gave me an answer.”

Cas frowned, thinking back to earlier that morning under the gazebo, realizing that Dean was right.

Chuckling to himself, he responded, “No, I suppose I didn’t.”

He pulled himself out of his now fiancé’s embrace, ignoring his whines of protest, and reached down to his jeans to grab his phone. Grateful that he had a couple of bars, he quickly typed out a message and hit send before throwing the device back onto the pile of clothes he’d just dug it out of.

A sense of thrill tickled down his spine when he heard Dean’s phone ping.

“You should probably answer that,” Cas suggested nonchalantly, forcing himself to hold back his laugh when Dean scrambled out of the bed, flinging clothes everywhere as he searched for his phone.

Cas watched carefully as Dean’s face lit up, his head tilting back as his body shook with laughter and joy, dropping the phone back onto the floor and jumping back onto the bed to climb on top of Cas’ body.

As they shared passionate kisses, their tongues desperate to taste the other, Dean’s phone lay face up on the floor, Cas’ reply lighting up the screen.

4:33PM Yes.

Chapter End Notes

At this point, this is all I have planned for this series (although I do have rough ideas of things I could add…so there is a possibility of more from this verse in the future). If I decide to write something more, I'll add it to the end like I had for this chapter.

I hope you liked Dean's proposal!

Thank you again so, so much for all of your comments and love! You are all amazing and if I could give you a baggy of Cas' honey, I would in a heartbeat. :)}
This chapter is in honor of my Five Year Wedding Anniversary (which is today)!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Present

9:35AM You nervous?

9:36AM Of course not. I'm thrilled. Ecstatic even.

9:38AM Why? Are you nervous?

Cas stared at his phone, willing another message to come through.

Was Dean nervous? Should he be? Was he regretting this whole thing? Did Castiel push him into this too quickly? Perhaps it wasn't too late to call the whole thing off...

Cas was startled out of his thoughts when two hands dropped into his shoulders, shaking his body. Annoyed, he looked up at his assailant.

"Caaaasssie," Gabe spoke, wrapping his arm around the younger man's shoulders and pulling him in tight against his smaller body, "Balthazar is being mean again!"

"I hardly think it was mean of me when I told you to put on your tie," a dry accent spoke back, sauntering into the spacious room.

Cas glanced at his foreign friend, who looked spectacular in his sports jacket and perfectly styled blonde hair. He sighed exasperatedly when Baz raised an eyebrow motioning for Cas to take care of his brother.

"Gabe," Cas moaned, defeated, "Why aren't you wearing your tie?"

Ignoring him completely, Gabe pressed his weight further onto Cas and whined, "I still don't understand why you didn't make me your best man!"

"Because he wanted someone who actually looked good to stand next to him," Baz smirked back.

"Because he wanted someone who actually looked good to stand next to him," Baz smirked back.

Gabe continued, "I mean, think of all the awesome things I could've done for you! Strippers lined up along the isle! A glitter cannon to sound of when you say those two magical words! Kick ass dub step to shake to at your first dance!"

Cas rubbed his temples, his eyes shut tightly, "That's exactly why I didn't ask you."

His older brother scoffed, "Preposterous. You don't know what you want. Fortunately, I took the liberty of getting you these things anyway. You can thank me after you watch my girls dance under a waterfall of champagne before you cut the cake."
Baz frowned thoughtfully, "That actually does sound pretty good."

Cas took a deep breath before calling out, "SAMAN!"

His younger brother rushed through the entrance, stumbling and falling onto the wall as he panted, "Sorry! Sorry! I turned away for a minute!"

He reached forward, grabbing Gabe's arm and pulled him forcibly out of the room, "C'mon Gabe. Time to go scope out seats."

Gabe visibly brightened, "Oooh, maybe I can find some hottie to cozy up next to!"

He rushed out of the tent, leaving behind two frustrated younger brothers and an amused friend.

After watching Saman race back out to try and reign in their eccentric sibling (the only thing that Cas had asked him to do that weekend), he turned to Baz and asked desperately, "Please tell me there are no strippers at my wedding."

Baz rolled his eyes, "No dear, as far as I know, there are no strippers. Now, tidy up that hair or yours while I do one last walk-about and then it's show time."

Cas nodded, his mind distracted as he thought back to Dean's text.

Oh shit. Was he ready for this?

"Cassie?" Baz spoke hesitantly, pulling him out of his own mind, "Are you okay?"

Cas nodded, attempting to smile as he pretended he was fine, "Psht. Yeah. Of course. I mean, why...why would I be?" He tried to lean casually against the edge of a chair, shrugging his shoulders to try and pull of his unconcerned look.

Going by the skepticism on Baz's face, he guessed he wasn't doing very well at convincing anyone.

Luckily, Baz took pity on him and answered, "Alright then. I'll be back in a few. Just...don't do anything stupid."

Cas nodded as he watched Baz retreat, leaving him alone in the room once more. He glanced down at his phone, checking to see if Dean ever texted him back, his chest fluttering when he saw he had a response.

Stumbling to quickly open, he sighed as he read Dean's message back to him.

9:52AM Nah. No where else I'd rather be than with you.

Cas sighed, all nerves completely disappearing as he took a deep breath.

9:54AM I love you.

9:54AM I know.

"Are you ready to go Cassie? The ceremony starts in five minutes!" Baz' voice called through. Cas nodded, turning his phone to its silent option and stood up, catching one last glance in the mirror to make sure his hair was still tame before he walked out.

"We good?" Baz asked when Cas stepped outside, brushing off some imaginary dirt from his chest.
Cas smiled, grateful for the concern from his friend.

"Yeah," he assured him, "We're good."

Baz smiled brightly, "Well then, let's go get you married!"

Cas laughed, a euphoric bliss at those words filling his body, thinking back from the time Dean had proposed to him a year and a half ago to now.

They made it.

They finally fucking made it.

--

**1 Year Ago**

"Yes, mother, I understand what you're trying to tell me. I am simply informing you that I disagree."

Dean looked up at his fiancé (and there was a word he wasn't sure he was going to get used to) as he screamed out in frustration.

"I don't care if she's my second cousin, twice removed from my great aunt's side of the family. I don't know her, therefore I'm not inviting her."

Dean smiled behind his mug, not wanting Cas to see his amusement. He was just glad he didn't have nearly as many problems with his side of the family as Cas did.

"I'm not being arduous! This is my wedding!"

Dean set down his mug quietly, standing up to stretch before tiptoeing across the tile floor and slipping into the kitchen, placing a pot of water on the stove to heat it up, keeping an ear out for Cas' side of the conversation.

"I'm sorry, I was under the impression that my wedding was about me," Cas spoke dryly.

Another moments pause, "I'm being selfish? You're the one who..."

Silence.

"Yes, but..."

Another pause.

"This is my day! I think I'm entitled to..."

Dean grabbed some tea leaves, placing them into a strainer over a mug before pouring water over them. He glanced at the clock, calculating how long it needed to steep before it was ready. He took the mug back out into the living room, leaning against the frame of the doorway as he absent-mindedly waited for Cas to finish his call.

At this rate, he didn't think it was going to be much longer.

"Fine mother," Cas spat out bitterly into the phone, folding his arms like a petulant child, "Do what you will. It's not as though you care about what I think anyway."
Dean winced as he could hear the explosive language Cas’ mother was using from the other side of the line.

"Please, mother. I understand your concerns. Heaven forbid you actually offend anybody," Cas rolled his eyes before continuing, "But there are very few things that I actually want for my wedding day. And one of the things Dean and I decided on was that we wanted it to be small. We only want our family and closest friends to be there. Only the people we truly love and care about us."

Silence.

"Of course, mother. I will speak to you soon."

The moment Cas hung up, he tossed his phone onto the couch, throwing his hands up into the air, "I don't know why I even bother speaking with her anymore! She's just going to do whatever she wants anyway! I don't know how I could possibly deal with..."

Cas trailed off as he turned to Dean, who now held out the mug he'd kept in his hands.

"You made me tea?" Cas asked, his voice straining as though he were holding back tears.

Dean stepped forward, pressing the mug into his hand and kissed him sweetly.

"You okay?" he asked, concerned.

Cas always had a hard time relaxing after a phone call with his mom. Naomi was a difficult woman to get along with in the best of times.

Dean smiled softly when Cas nodded, taking out the stewed leaves before taking a sip of his tea. He watched happily as Cas' eyes closed, humming happily as he inhaled the scent of the lavender and vanilla infused chamomile.

"Wanna watch Star Wars and make-out on the couch in our underwear like a couple of horny teenagers?" Dean blurted out, smiling charmingly when Cas' eyes flew open in surprise.

His body filled with warmth as Cas' eyes wrinkled, his head bent forward as he body shook with laughter.

When he calmed down, Cas replied, "Only if you promise not to make me come in my pants."

"No promises, baby," Dean spoke smoothly, his voice lowering into what he considered his sex mode, "But, I can promise it'll feel so good."

Cas leaned into Dean's touch, "Then what are we waiting for?"

--

Present

Cas walked along the beach with Balthazar strutting along side him, heading away from the house and closer towards the water.

The day was perfect.

The blue skies stretched from horizon to horizon, not a single cloud marring it's perfect color. There was a light breeze coming from the ocean, whose waves were inching onto the sand lightly. It was warm enough that he was glad Dean had convinced him not to wear a suit jacket. Instead, he wore
his dark navy slacks with a white buttoned up shirt, navy blue waistcoat and an accompanying tie.

A compromise.

Dressed up enough for a wedding, but dressed down enough for them both to feel comfortable.

Plus, it helped that Cas knew that Dean got hard when he saw him in the waistcoat.

"You really are going to go through with this?" Baz asked him, pulling him out of his thoughts.

Cas wasn't offended by his question. Balthazar had never found anyone he'd wanted to spend his life with. He was a man of simple pleasures, loving women and expensive alcohol too much to attempt to settle down with simply one person.

So, Cas just nodded, "I am."

He turned to Baz, who still looked skeptical at the whole idea of tying yourself to one person for the rest of your life, and continued, "I love Dean. And I want to spend the rest of my life with him."

Baz shrugged, "Well, to each their own, I guess."

He clapped Cas on the shoulder, pulling him back behind a tent and pushing him through the flap before he had a chance to look out.

"The ceremony should start any minute now," Baz said, wringing his hands nervous.

Cas placed his hands over his friend's and spoke calmly, "Thank you for coming."

Baz scoffed, "Of course I was going to come. You're one of my best mates. Now, listen carefully for your cue. I don't want you to miss it."

Cas nodded, "Yes Balthazar."

Baz gave him a fond look before stepping out of the tent, leaving him alone.

--

4 months ago

"Holy shit, this food is fantastic," Dean moaned as he took another bite of the pasta.

Cas rolled his eyes, tasting another sample offered to him before shaking his head, "It's not my favorite."

Dean spluttered, "What? What's not to like?"

Cas shrugged, leaning forward, as though the distance away would help determine what it was he was looking for.

Dean waited a brief moment before sighing exasperatedly, "Cas."

Cas frowned, "I just...I want it to be perfect."

He wasn't surprised when he felt Dean's arms wrap around his torso, pulling him flush against his chest, his lips brushing against the side of his neck as he nuzzled his face deep into the warm skin.

"Cas, it doesn't matter what food we have there."
Offended, Cas tried to pull out of Dean's embrace, ready to shout his argument out in front of the servers offering them their food, but his fiancé's arms wouldn't budge.

Instead, Dean continued, "It doesn't matter what food we eat, or what people show up, or even how the damn yard is decorated."

Cas huffed out in disbelief as Dean whirled him around so they were facing each other.

He smiled softly as he lifted up his hand, running his thumb alongside his jaw and finished, "All that matters is that that's the day I'm going to marry you. As long as you're there, nothing else matters. You're the only thing I need to make the day perfect."

Cas melted in Dean's arms, allowing the other man to hold him closer.

They stood there in each other's arms when Dean added, "And the music."

"Hmm?" Cas asked, looking up into Dean's face.

"The music that's played is pretty important too. I'm not dancing to no frilly pop jingle. If we're gonna do this, then we're gonna do this right."

Cas laughed, turning away from Dean and back towards the food, dismissing his love's concerns with a wave, "Just try the damn pasta and help me pick out our menu."

Dean smiled brightly, "Yes sir."

--

Present

Cas bounced on the balls of his feet as he listened carefully as the ceremony started. He hardly thought it was fair that he was stuck in a tent while things were happening outside.

This was his wedding after all. Shouldn't he actually have a chance to see it all?

The only thing that made him feel better was that Dean was in a similar situation as him.

After a long discussion, they had decided that they would both walk out of tents at the same time and approach the other at the metaphorical alter, versus having one person already waiting there.

Cas had originally wanted to stand in the front, as he was the older of the two.

Dean refused, stating that he wasn't a chick, and therefore wouldn't go frolicking down the aisle in a shower of sunshine and daisies.

 Needless to say, their solution was much desired.

He heard the familiar classical tune start to play, signaling that it was Cas' turn to leave the tent and walk out towards the front. He took a deep breath, stepping towards the flap when he heard a hiss from somewhere behind him.

He glanced back briefly, ready to dismiss the intrusion, to only have to turn around completely, flabbergasted at the sight before him.

He stood, ignoring their cue as he stared at the person in front of him.
"Dean?"

--

2 months ago

"Well, aren't you two charming," Lucifer spoke, sipping from his champagne glass.

Cas sighed, leaning further into Dean's touch, glancing around the room at the others.

They were at his parent's house for their annual forced family dinner. He had hoped this one would be better than the last.

Judging by the sneer on his elder brother's face, he didn't think it would be.

"I like to think so," Dean replied, tightening his hand around Cas' waist.

"Wedding plans going good?" his brother asked, seemingly innocently.

The two men nodded in response, neither really desiring to go into any details.

At this point, all Cas wanted to do was go home and appropriately thank his fiancé for putting up with his crazy family.

Instead, he had to listen to Lucifer as he asked, "I was hoping you would settle a debate for me and our siblings. Whose name are you planning on taking once you officially tie the knot?"

"Mine."

There was a moment of silence as the two men turned slowly towards the other, each cringing at fight they knew they were about to have.

Lucifer looked pleased, "This should be fun."

Not wanting to give him the satisfaction, Cas pulled Dean off to the side, calling back to his family, "Be back in a minute."

Once he was convinced they were out of hearing range, he blurted out, "What do you mean I'll be taking your name?"

Dean look confused, "I just thought...I mean..."

"What Dean?" Cas asked frustrated.

A scowl appeared on the other man's face, "What do you mean what? You were expecting the same damn thing from me!"

Cas sighed exasperatedly, "Yes, Dean, because I thought you understood that I couldn't change my name."

"And I can?" Dean challenged.

"Yes!" Cas shouted, "I'm a published author, Dean. I can't just go change my name. How would people recognize my work?"

Dean rolled his eyes, "It's not like many people know who you are anyway."
There was silence as Dean flinched, realizing the words he'd just blurted.

"Shit, man, I'm sorry...I - "

Cas held up his hand, rubbing the bridge of his nose, "I'm not discussing this here at my parent's home. We will continue this conversation later."

Dean nodded, looking like a kicked puppy as the two walked back into the lion's den.

Over the next several weeks, every conversation they had was lined with reasons why the other person should take their name.

They were both persistent in their views, neither willing to stand down.

After a particularly explosive argument that had resulted in angry sex, Cas lay his head on Dean's chest and asked softly, "Why are you so persistent about this?"

Dean sighed before answering honestly, "I just...family means everything to me, man. You know that. And you...you're everything to me. No offense, but your family is batshit crazy, and when I think about starting our own family, I imagine that we'll all be Winchesters. 'Cause being a Winchester means love and acceptance no matter what. It means you're always there for each other, and I want that, as silly as it sounds."

Cas nodded, burying his head further into Dean's chest.

"So, you'll change your name?" Dean asked hopefully.

"No," Cas answered, his voice muffled into Dean's skin.

In the end, Cas did decide that he would change his name to Castiel Novak Winchester.

---

Present

"What are you doing?" Cas hissed, stepping forward to look more closely at his soon-to-be husband who'd just stumbled into his tent.

Dean's smile faltered for a moment as he glanced at Cas' body, "Wow. You look good."

"You too," Cas answered reflexively, before taking a brief moment to really study Dean.

He really did look quite magnificent in his blue navy slacks and blue sports jacket. He wasn't surprised to see that Dean had chosen to keep the top few buttons on his white shirt undone, and that his tie was conveniently missing.

"Seriously, Dean, you shouldn't be here," Cas spoke again, attempting to push the other man back outside so they could get a move on. People were probably wondering where they were and why they weren't outside yet.

"I changed my mind!" Dean blurted out, stopping Cas in his spot.

"You - you changed your mind?" Cas asked, his eyes wide with fear.

"You too," Cas answered reflexively, before taking a brief moment to really study Dean.

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"I changed my mind!" Dean blurted out, stopping Cas in his spot.

"You - you changed your mind?" Cas asked, his eyes wide with fear.
"No!" Dean answered, holding his hands out reassuringly, "Not about this! Fuck! I still want to marry you! I just..."

He took a deep breath before continuing, "I just don't think that we should walk towards each other on the aisle."

Cas stared at Dean with disbelief, his heart still pounding from the almost rejection he thought he was receiving, "It's a little too late for that, don't you think?"

Dean shook his head, "No, Cas, I've been thinking about this a lot and there's something else I want to do instead. Something that I think you'll like more."

"And what's that?" Cas asked defeated, his body itching to leave the tent and continue on with their marriage ceremony.

"We should walk out together. Hand in hand. Showing everyone that we stand together. That we're equals Cas. I don't want to walk towards you, because I already found you, and I'm not willing to let you go."

Dean held out his hand, wiggling his fingers as he waited for Cas to make his choice.

Cas' stance softened as he slipped his fingers through Dean's.

"You have piss poor timing," he stated dryly, allowing Dean to pull him to the edge of the tent.

"My timing is impeccable and you know it."

--

2 Days Ago

8:44PM I think your brother is attempting to seduce me.

8:45PM Which one? Gabriel? He's that affectionate with everyone. I wouldn't take it too personally.

8:46PM No. Michael. He keeps running his hand down my spine and earlier he rested his fingers on my thigh.

8:47PM It was fucking creepy man.

8:49PM I don't know what to tell you. I'm having a rather pleasant time with Sam. We're discussing literature as we play scrabble.

8:49PM Nerds.

8:51PM Come save me.

8:52PM No. It was your idea that I should bond with your brother. Clearly you need to bond with mine in return.

8:54PM Fine, but if I come home in an alcohol induced haze with hickeys all over my body, it's your own damn fault.

8:55PM Duly-noted. Although, if you find yourself tempted to take Michael up on his offer,
you may look at the attached picture for some motivation to fight back.

8:58PM *Fuck, Angel. How the hell am I supposed to deal with your brothers now that I've got a raging boner?*

9:01PM *You'll find a way, I'm sure. And Dean?*

9:03PM *What?*

9:04PM *I expect you home by 11.*

9:05PM *Yes sir.*

--

**Present**

Cas squinted as the sun shone brightly down on him and Dean as they stepped out of the tent, hands held tightly together.

There was a uniformed gasp throughout the audience before Dean held up their arms, showing their fingers linked together, pleased at the cheers and awes the audience gave.

"You are such a sap," Cas huffed under his breath, stepping forward to the front where the officiant waited for them.

"Yeah, but you love me anyway," Dean teased back, pulling him to the front of everyone.

Cas smiled softly, listening to the words of the ceremony before he finally answered back, "I do."

Chapter End Notes

I hope you all enjoyed! I decided to attempt at writing this time stamp a little differently, and I'm hopeful that the changing points in time isn't too disconcerting.

Basically I wanted to give you all a little drabble from their actual wedding day, with snippets of the stress that come with planning a wedding. Although it can be stressful, it is so worth it once it happens!

A couple of notes that I realize didn't make it in the story: Cas and Dean get married on the beach close to Gabe's beach house. After the ceremony, they return to the house where they have dinner and dancing.

*I couldn't decide what I thought their first dance should be too...but I know it's romantic and it's a classic rock song (Dean's choice). I'd love to hear what song you think their first dance would be to in the comments!*

Sam is Dean's best man, as Balthazar (his best friend from college) is his. Their actual wedding ends up being small and personal like they wanted, although I imagine that Naomi set up a reception/open house in her home a few weeks later and invited hundreds of people to attend.
The two decided on taking a two-week a road trip for their honeymoon around the country.

If you have any other questions, let me know! I'd love to answer them! This actual blurb was written on the spot as I wanted a cute little drabble on their wedding day as I reminisced about my own.

In any case, everyone who reads this story is wonderful, and I love you all.
So...I told myself that I would write another time stamp if/when I reached either 10,000 views and/or got to 1000 kudos.

I honestly can't believe I made it.

Thank you so much for all your support for this story! It boggles my mind and both pleases and humbles me at how sweet and wonderful each and everyone of you are!

Please enjoy the next snap shot of how Cas and Dean are doing in this AU!

---

10:54AM picture attached

10:54AM I want one.

Cas stared at the picture, trying to wrap his head around the sight.

It was a picture of a little baby boy, close to being newborn, sucking on his fingers as he smiled brightly from what Castiel guessed was his mom's shoulder, looking straight into the camera. He had dark wispy hair that stuck straight up and pink chubby cheeks. His eyes were a dark blue, bordering the color brown.

The little boy was wearing a black onesie with an AC/DC logo printed on it and dark wash baby jeans.

Cas continued looking at the picture, torn in between feelings of warmth and exasperation.

Before he could reply, another picture came through.

10:59AM picture attached

Cas warily opened this picture, sighing as he did.

In this one, Dean was holding the little boy in his arms, smiling goofily into the camera. The baby was staring up at Dean, almost as though he were in awe at the strong, beautiful man holding him (that was Cas’ opinion anyway). His arm was outstretched, fistng a piece of Dean's red plaid shirt while the other clung onto Dean's finger.

He was a tiny thing compared to the large man holding her.

Dean, on the other hand, was shining brightly. His smile was wide, his eyes were soft, and he was hunched over this precious baby boy, as though he were trying to subconsciously protect him from the world.

Another message popped up.
I'm gonna steal him.

Cas sighed again and responded back.

Dean.

I don't think his mom will even notice. Just take him home and claim him as my own. He's got black hair like you. We could pass him off as yours.

Dean. Do not steal the baby.

But Caaaaaaas! Look at how cute he is!

picture attached

This picture was a close-up of the boy's face. It appeared that the little boy was still tucked away in Dean's arms while he held his phone just above the child's head. His big wide eyes were open wide in shock as he stared straight into the camera, his mouth slightly open, cheeks pink and lips wet with drool.

Cas' heart warmed.

He was pretty adorable.

He's cute? Right?

Yes Dean. He is a cute baby.

Awesome. Operation Baby Snatch is a-go.

Cas rolled his eyes.

Dean.

Mom's not looking. I'm sneaking out the back now.

Dean. Do not steal the baby.

In the car now. We're making a break for it.

Dean. Do not bring that baby home.

We'll have to lie low for a while. Don't want to get caught, my handsome partner in crime.

Dean. I am not your accomplice in this act of insanity.

Dean?

Dean. Please tell me you didn't steal that baby.

Cas stared at his phone, unsure of where to go from there. He begrudgingly set his phone down and assured himself that Dean wouldn't actually steal a baby.

His husband was a smart, responsible adult who owned a business.

There was no way he'd do something as asinine as kidnap a child that belonged to one of his patrons.
Somewhat placated, Cas returned to his computer, taking a deep breath before he continued his work. He was in the process of editing a paper he had written for a study on Enochian and its style of writings. The study had several people in the field come together to write a comprehensive idea of how the Enochian language was formed and researched. It was an exciting project to be a part of.

He had several more paragraphs written when he heard a knock at the door.

He furrowed his brow, squinting at the clock, and frowning at the time.

It was just after noon.

Who was dropping by in the middle of the day?

Another knock came at the door, leading Cas to leap from his seat and walked briskly to the front of the house.

When he opened the door, his jaw dropped.

Dean was standing there, holding the black haired, dark eyed baby boy in his arms tightly against his chest with his left hand, with three bags flung over his shoulders, and another held tightly in his right hand.

"Hey baby," Dean smiled cheekily, "I gotcha a present."

"Dean," Cas hissed, pulling Dean inside the house and glancing out the door to check if any of the neighbors were out in their apartment building hallway, watching as his husband of two years committed a major felony.

He turned back to Dean who was watching him, his eyebrow raised and looking highly amused.

Panicked, Cas asked, "Did you steal the baby?"

Dean rolled his eyes, "C'mon Cas. It's not a big deal. No one even saw me slip out the back door."

Cas sputtered, his heart racing and face turning red.

A mantra of holy shit, fuck, and this can't be happening raced through his mind.

He stood, the circuit in his brain shorting at the sight, his jaw dropped low, a vein protruding from his temple.

Dean simply laughed and dropped his many bags on the floor before clapping Cas on his arm.

"Jeeze, I didn't steal a baby, Cas," he finally answered, rolling his eyes, "What kind of person do you take me for?"

"An incredibly impulsive one who sometimes has moral ambiguities towards society's normal standards," he answered honestly, his heart still pounding hard against his chest.

He took a deep breath, trying to calm down.

Dean did not steal a baby.

They were safe.

"I resent that," Dean answered flatly, leaning in close and kissing Cas sweetly and softly against his
lips. Cas returned the kiss, sighing into the comforting touch, before tensing up again.

He pulled back, glancing down at the child nestled in between their bodies, seemingly unconcerned with what was going on around him as he gurgled and reached for his toes to try and suck on.

"Dean?"

"Yes Angel?"

"Why do you have a baby?"

Dean shrugged, stepping back, "You remember Lisa?"

Cas stared blankly at Dean.

"Lisa? She's a regular in the place. Got pregnant a year ago by a one-night stand, real jerk of a guy. She's teaches yoga down at the gym you like a couple blocks from the café."

"Ah yes," Cas answered, nodding as he built the picture of the young woman Dean was referring to, "I remember now. I hadn't realized she'd already had her baby."

Now that his mind has cleared a bit, overcoming the shock of momentarily believing his husband was a wretched baby-snatcher, he remembered Lisa well.

He had been in there when she first came into the café, flinging herself into Dean's arms and crying against his shoulder as she told him how she'd gotten pregnant.

She had no family, was living in a small apartment, and had virtually little to no money.

Dean had comforted her, telling her everything would be alright and that she was a strong woman.

And, indeed, she had taken Dean's words to heart. She'd left her job and become a certified Yoga Instructor, able to do classes specifically catered towards pregnant woman. She was given benefits and a decent enough salary to get an apartment of her own.

She certainly was a strong woman and Castiel commended her for her bravery.

Now that he thought about it, the last time he had seen her had been several months ago, when she had waddled into the café, her belly big and round, claiming she needed a slice of Dean's peach pie to stave off a craving she had or she was going to stab somebody.

He looked down at the child Dean was holding, taking a brief moment to marvel that this human being had come from someone he knew.

"Yup," Dean answered, switching the kid over so he was nestled in the crook of his other arm, "Only two months."

"And she gave him to you because..." Cas prompted, waiting for the rest of the story.

Dean made a funny face at the boy, who gurgled back, before continuing, "So, she was at the café today when she got a call. Apparently, one of the other teachers quit, and they were wondering if Lisa would be able to take over her class. She said yes immediately, cause she needs the money, ya know? But, the problem was that the class started at 12:30."

Cas looked up at the time, seeing it was only ten minutes until the aforementioned time.
"So, she asked -"

"I offered," Dean interjected, shooting Cas a look, "to watch Ben for her while she did her class today. She's going to talk to her normal babysitter and see if she can extend the hours so she can take on this class too. The extra income she would get I guess would be really good."

Cas' eyes softened as he watched the child, Ben Dean had called him, put his thumb in his mouth and suck on the appendage.

"That will be good for her," Cas answered, hesitantly reaching out his hand to stroke his finger against the baby's soft hair.

"You said his name was Ben?" Cas asked, clarifying, not taking his eyes off from the baby in his husband's arms.

"Yeah," Dean confirmed, bouncing the child softly, "Wanna hold him?"

Cas looked up, his eyes wide in alarm. He didn't have much experience with children, and was inherently nervous around them. What if he broke them? They were so tiny. That was a lot of responsibility.

Before he could answer, Dean had arranged his arms into a little hold, gently placing Ben into the crook of his elbow so his head was supported.

Ben looked up, his tired eyes temporarily wide awake as he watched the exchange of hands. His dark eyes blinked blurrily before it focused on Castiel, watching him seriously with a small frown on his face, as though he weren't sure what he thought of this new person.

"Hello Ben," Cas spoke deeply, his voice quiet as it rumbled through his chest. Ben blinked again before bringing his thumb back into his mouth, his tired eyes closing tight and falling into a deep sleep.

Relieved that he seemed to have the child's approval, he looked back at Dean who was watching the two, a wide smile on his face.

"Am I doing it right?" Cas asked nervously, not wanting to mess up.

Dean smiled brighter, "Yeah Cas. You're doing great."

Castiel didn't get anymore work done on his paper that day. Instead he and Dean watched and traded off holding Ben in their arms, talking quietly about their days.

Cas told Dean about his paper and how he and another researcher were going to trade and edit for the other to try and have more well-rounded and cleanly articulated points.

Dean informed Cas that he'd gotten a letter from his high school friend, Benny who was currently overseas, serving in the army.

Cas held Ben while Dean cooked them up an early dinner.

They were both surprised when another knock came on their apartment door.

Cas opened it up, smiling when he saw Lisa's tired face brighten up the moment her eyes laid on her new-born son.
"Hey baby," she cooed as she ran her finger over Ben's smooth forehead and kissed the warm skin there.

"How are you doing Lisa?" Cas asked, stepping back to let her into their place.

"Oh, you know," she said with a wave of her hand as she collapsed on the couch, "tired."

Cas chuckled as Dean poked his head out from the kitchen.

"Hey Lisa!" he said brightly, as Lisa waved her hand, not bothering to look back at him.

"Are you going to be able to work out your schedule with your babysitter?" Cas asked politely, still rocking the soundly sleeping Ben in his arms.

"I think so," Lisa sighed, squinting as she smiled up at him, "Hey, thanks again for watching him for me today. It helped me tremendously."

Dean walked out, wiping his hands on a towel before throwing it over his shoulder, waving the thanks away, "No need to thank us. It was no big deal, really."

"Regardless," Lisa pressed, "I truly appreciate it."

"You wanna stay for dinner?" Dean asked brightly, "I made plenty!"

Lisa frowned, "I don't know..."

"Please, stay," Cas invited, "It's no trouble at all."

"Well," Lisa responded with mock exasperation, "if you must insist."

She stood up from her place, insisting on helping with something (they agreed that she could set the table) and asked Cas, "Do you mind holding him? I can take him if you need me to."

"No," Cas said quickly, coloring slightly as he added, "I don't want to disturb him from his nap."

Dean shot him a knowing look before continuing to scoop the pasta he'd made into bowls and sprinkled Parmesan and red pepper flakes on top.

"Voila," he presented, placing all the bowls onto the table.

Cas and Dean traded off Ben as they three ate, laughing as they told stories from their work and just enjoying each other's company.

When Lisa left for the evening, Cas was sad to see her and Ben go.

Dean walked up behind Castiel, wrapping his arms around his waist and kissed the side of his neck.

"So," Dean teased, nipping at the skin there, "You with me? Should we take him?"

Cas rolled him eyes, placing his hands on top of Dean's, "I think Lisa would notice if her baby went missing."

Dean fake sighed, "Yeah, you're probably right."

The two stood comfortably in each other's embrace for several moments before Dean spoke softly against his skin, "I wouldn't mind if we got our own, you know?"
Cas smiled, "You realize that we can't create one on our own or go pick one up from the store, right?"

Cas knew his husband was rolling his eyes without even looking back to see it.

"Yes, I know how babies are made, wise-ass," Dean huffed while Castiel merely chuckled to himself.

"There are," he started, pausing before he pushed forth bravely, "There are other options. Surrogacy. Adoption."

"A baby is a lot of responsibility," Cas reminded him.

"I think we'd be up to the challenge," Dean answered back.

"We don't have much room in our apartment."

"We can get a bigger place. A house, maybe, with a yard and a garage," Dean suggested.

"You can't return a baby once you've got one."

Dean answered back, slightly miffed, "Yeah, Cas, I know. I understand a baby isn't a new TV with a one year warranty or something."

"I'm just saying," Cas pressed, "We shouldn't make big decisions like this on a whim. It needs to be thought out and planned. Having a baby will add a whole new dynamic to our lives. I'm not saying it wouldn't be wonderful, but it will certainly be difficult. So, we should really take some time to think this through."

Dean was silent, his whole body tense as he admitted, "I wouldn't really call this a whim."

Cas turned in his spot, wrapping his own arms around Dean's back to trap him in and keep him close to him.

"How long have you been thinking about this?" he asked curiously.

"About a year," Dean confessed, a blush creeping onto his cheeks.

Cas smiled, reaching up to brush against the darkened skin.

"Why didn't you say anything?"

Embarrassed, Dean looked down and shrugged, "I don't know. I didn't know how you'd react. If you'd want the same thing or..."

Cas smiled, taking a moment to picture him and Dean with a baby. He could picture it now. Their little house in the suburbs. Dean would build a treehouse in the back yard. They'd keep the Impala in the garage. They'd have one, no two, maybe even three little kids running around the house, playing with them.

Cas pulled Dean's chin up, kissing him softly on his lips, before breathing quietly.

"So, a kid, huh?" He asked.

Dean nodded, still too nervous to answer out loud.
"I think I saw a for sale sign on Hampton, just a couple blocks down," Cas answered, squinting his eyes as he thought back to the house he'd seen, "It looked as though it was in pretty good shape. Perhaps we should start there."

"And then?" Dean asked, standing up straighter.

"Well, Cas said thoughtfully, "Then we'll probably need a couple of kids to help fill it up."

"A couple?" Dean asked, his bright and excited eyes betraying his mock nonchalant attitude.

"And a cat," Cas informed him.

Dean scrunched up his nose, "Like hell I'm getting a cat."

"Dean," Cas spoke seriously, mock frowning, "We're going to need a cat."

"No cats," he answered stubbornly.

"We'll definitely get a cat," Cas answered back, ignoring Dean's pouts, "And a dog."

"What are we running a zoo?" Dean asked amused.

"Well," Cas answered back teasingly, "If you're the one in charge..."

"Hey!" Dean cut him off indignantly, jabbing his fingers into Cas' sides to try and tickle him, while his older husband merely laughed joyfully.

They kissed happily, still standing in the middle of their hallway, letting the world fly by as they spent time just enjoying one another.

Their foreheads pressed together and fingers clasped off to the sides, Dean asked, "So, you're okay with this? All in?"

Cas smiled, kissing the tip of Dean's nose before answering back, "All in."

Chapter End Notes

So, I've recently decided that while I'm on tumblr, I should actually participate and post and embrace myself within its grasps.

(I can hear the tumblr walls calling my name, "Yessss, Come to meeenee. You neeed usssssss. You loooooove uusssssss.")

If anyone has a tumblr themselves and would like to add me so I can add them back, you can find my page here:
firefur tumblr

I enjoy a lot of fandoms (my favorites being Supernatural, Harry Potter, Sherlock, Doctor Who, and The Avengers - although there's many more like Lord of the Rings that I'm also in love with. There's just too many good ones out there!)

I look forward from friending a lot of you soon! :)
Anyway, back on topic, I hope you enjoyed the time stamp!
Thank you again! I really don't feel like I can tell you all just how much I appreciate each of you!
Time Stamp: It's Probably Just the Taco Bell

Chapter Notes

I literally can't be stopped.

Take it.

Take the chapter and enjoy it. :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

5:44PM This was a bad idea.

5:45PM It was your idea.

5:46PM And it was a bad one. Why did you let me do this?

5:48PM May I remind you that I hardly "let you" do anything. Besides, we decided this was a good idea together.

5:50PM We were wrong. We were terribly, terribly wrong.

5:51PM Well, there's no turning back now.

5:54PM ABORT! ABORT! CODE RED!

5:55PM WHERE ARE YOU? THINGS ARE HAPPENING NOW!

5:57PM IT'S COMING! FUCK! I CAN'T DO THIS!

5:59PM Yes you can do this. I'm almost there. I've just parked the car and I'm running up now. Take a deep breath. Everything will be okay.

6:00PM HOLY FUCKING SHIT IT'S TIME!

--

Twenty - Four Hours Earlier

--

"I'm only going to be gone for a few days," Cas assured his husband, kissing his lips lightly in reassurance.

"I know," Dean sighed, resting his forehead against the other's, "It just makes me nervous, so close to the due date."

Cas smiled softly, "Lydia isn't due for another three weeks. I'll be back by Thursday, and we'll still have a few weeks before the baby comes. Everything will be fine. You'll see."

"But what if she comes early and you miss the whole thing?" Dean whined.
Cas rolled his eyes, "You're just upset that you're not going to get sex for a few days."

This startled a laugh out of his younger husband, "Okay fine, so I'm going to miss that ass. Doesn't mean I'm not concerned about this too."

"I know," Cas replied, his eyes softening, "but it'll be fine. You'll see."

"Fine," Dream sighed dramatically, "Now get going, before I change my mind and handcuff you to the bed."

"Now there's a tempting proposition..." Cas teased, "Although I have a feeling you'd prefer if you were the one tied up."

"Damn straight," he confirmed, with a big cocky grin, "Travel safe."

"Of course," Cas responded, pressing his lips against his husband's lightly, "I love you."

"I love you too."

Cas took a look at the husband he was leaving behind one last time before hopping into his Lincoln Continental and driving off towards the airport. He hated leaving Dean behind, but with him running the cafe, it just doesn't make sense for both of them to go.

Crowley had scheduled a line of seminars over the past month for Cas to promote his latest book (his fourth one) and introduce him as Stanford's newest professor.

Cas had fiddled around with the idea of teaching, but had never actually dreamed that it would become a reality.

Really, he had Sam to thank for that.

Sam had thought it would be a cool idea if Cas taught a class talking about his studies. He'd gone to a few of his seminars and thought it was really interesting and would be cool if he could learn more for a credit.

Dean latched onto the idea, knowing that Cas had talked about teaching several times, especially in his growing age, and highly encouraged Cas to pursue this dream.

Cas had mentioned the idea to Crowley in passing, not thinking anything would come of it. His agent, however, started seeing dollar signs the moment the words were spoken. He created what he considers the be the most exclusive class possibly offered.

Castiel wasn't sure why it was necessary for him to promote the class. The spots seemed to be filling up on its own, but Crowley insisted that the higher the waiting list, the more money they would make.

Crowley had gone to several schools, proposing the idea, and had received seven offers for Cas to come and teach at their schools.

Seven.

Castiel was completely astonished. He had no idea people were that interested in him and the work he had done in the previous years. It was hard to imagine that he has started his career translating teen harlequin novels.

In the end, after a long discussion with Dean about what they should do, be accepted the offer to
teach from Stanford.

After all, that was home. It was where Dean had the cafe, and where Saman and Sam lived. And once their baby was born, he suspected it wouldn't be long before Mary and John, Dean's parents, came down to stay (despite his father-in-law's protests that he'd never want to live in some hippy state where the people had never done a day of hard work in their life.)

He was set to start his courses in the fall, 6 months after the baby was due.

Cas smiled, thinking about the baby girl who was going to be born into this world and embraced in his family in just a few short weeks.

When Dean and himself had decided to have a baby, they explored all of their options. Dean had liked the idea of surrogacy, having a piece of their own DNA in their child. But Cas leaned towards the idea of adopting someone locally. There were so many young children in the world who were left without families, sent into the foster system with hardly no chance to succeed.

He wanted to give someone a chance.

Dean conceded, under the condition that they adopted a baby and take them straight home from the hospital.

The agreement was made and several months later they met Lydia.

Cas parked his car, grabbing a long term parking pass for the lot and thought about this young woman carrying their baby as he headed towards the airport.

Lydia was fifteen years old, and had gotten pregnant by a random boy at a wild high school party. She had been irresponsible and hadn't used protection, sleeping with several different people, so she had no clue which one the father was.

When she found out she was carrying, she had no clue what to do.

Her parents quickly found, and explored different options with their daughter, until they decided and agreed together that she would carry the baby, full term and give the child up for adoption.

She had hated being pregnant until she realized that she could get away with almost anything she wanted. Then, she was in teenage heaven.

When they first met with Lydia and her parents, there had been a lot of contention. Lydia's father had not liked the idea of two men raising a baby together. Her mother hadn't cared either way. She just wanted this thing settled with. They'd allowed Lydia to make the decision, and she chose them.

(Cas suspected she chose them to spite her father.)

Sam had come with them and they'd written the documents so that the baby was officially theirs. Upon birth their new baby would go directly home with them and Lydia or her family wouldn't be permitted to see the child again.

Lydia agreed to the terms, having no desire to see what she referred to as "the parasite growing inside of her" and they signed the paperwork that same day.

The past several months with the teenage girl had been a tornado of chaos. They'd had their issues with the troubled teen (as to be expected), some more than others.
Their first problem came when they discovered her drinking alcohol.

Cas had flipped his shit.

He had lectured both Lydia and her parents about the dangers of drinking while pregnant and the negative effects it can have on the baby.

Surprised at his outrage, Lydia promised to hold off drinking until after the baby was born.

Next had come the issue of not eating healthy and refusing to take her vitamins.

Dean had taken to making nutrient enriched food to bring to Lydia and her family to eat, trying to get her as healthy as she could be. When she was 19 weeks, she was hospitalized for severe dehydration. Their doctor had put her on an IV, and told her she needed to drink lots of water.

Their last problem was the way she treated Dean.

Lydia appeared to be intimidated by Castiel, for good reason, and rarely went to him for anything.

Dean, however, she had wrapped around her finger.

Cas knew she had a crush on Dean and was trying to win him over or convince him to be with her. Everytime she saw him, she'd laugh extra loud at his jokes and place her hand flirtatiously on his arm.

Dean was disturbed by this.

After all, she was fifteen.

Cas, Saman, and Sam thought it was hilarious.

Cas boarded his plane, settling into his seat and took a deep breath, closing his eyes as he prepared for the flight.

Yes, everything was perfect.

--

"Mmm, yeah baby. Feels so good. Wish you were here, I'd climb on top of you right now, and ride you so hard, you'd be screaming my name for weeks."

"Oh, Dean," Cas moaned, his eyes wide open and glued to the screen in front of him.

Dean was lying on their bed, two fingers inside his aching hole, clenching down as he obviously wanted more.

Cas' fist was tight against his cock, desperate to hold off his orgasm a little longer.

His husband was gorgeous spread out like that for him.

The only thing that would make this better is if it were his fingers pumping in and out of Dean's body.

Cas groaned loudly, his panting breath staggering as Dean pulled his fingers out, only to add a third one and continue pumping back it.
"Caaas," Dean begged, gasping for air, "Feels so good."

"Looks good too," Cas answered, his gravelly voice wrecked with lust and want, "Damn, you're so sexy."

"This is all for you, baby," Dean panted, looking back behind him to wink at the camera, his face glistening with sweat and pupils dilated so only a small ring of green was showing.

"As soon as you get home, I'm gonna pull you right through that door, and push you straight to the ground, and take you from -"

"Who that is? That's just my baby daddy. Who that is? That's just my baby daddy. Who that is? That's just my -"

"Ugh, no!" Dean groaned out, fumbling off to the side for his ringing phone.

"Ignore it," Cas pleaded, feeling more annoyance towards Lydia than he usually did.

Why couldn't she have waited 5 minutes?

Every time he heard that ring, that stupid baby daddy rap song that Lydia had changed to Dean's ring tone every time she called, he cringed.

"I can't," Dean whined, all composure completely thrown out the window as the flustered around his nightstand, fumbling to pick up the phone, "What if she's in labor? Or got into a car accident?"

Cas sighed, flopping back onto his hotel room bed, rubbing his eyes in despair.

The amount of times this girl had interrupted them having sex, was, in all honestly, quite impressive.

It was almost as though she had a camera and knew exactly when...

Could she?

Cas thought a moment before shaking his head, realizing he was being ridiculous.

"Hello? Lydia?" Dean heard ask on the phone from his end of the computer, lying on his stomach with his eyes covered as he listened carefully, "Are you okay? Are you in labor?"

There was a small pause, "Are you fucking serious right now?"

Cas rolled his eyes, looking over at the corner of the walls, trying to make shapes from the wallpaper as he waited for Dean to finish the conversation.

Based off the tone of his voice, he guessed that their baby wasn't being born and that there was no emergency.

"Lyd-Lydia...No...I'm not doing that...I can't just...I...ugh, fine!...yeah, yeah...only if you -"

Dean stared at the phone abruptly, a scowl on his face, "She hung up on me."

"She always hangs up on you," Cas reminded his husband, a small smirk on his face.

"Doesn't mean I'm anymore used to it..." Dean grumbled, turning back towards the screen to look at Cas with a little pout.
"What does she want now?" Cas asked warily.

"A beefy quesarrito," Dean answered defeated, "What the hell is that anyway?"

Cas opened his mouth to answer, but Dean waved him off, "It doesn't matter. She claims that's what the baby wants."

Cas smiled softly, "Only three more weeks."

Dean visibly brightened, nodding his head in agreement, "Good thing, too. I can't live like this anymore."

Cas laughed, leaning back forward to be closer to the screen.

"When are you leaving?" he asked.

Dean considered for a moment, so Cas added, "Have some time to finish what we've started?"

Dean groaned, nodding vigorously, "She can wait. I would much prefer to do this."

Cas chuckled, reaching down, eager to continue where they had left off.

---

8:57AM *Lydia just called. She's going to the hospital.*

Cas blinked down at the message, his mind whirling over the meaning, before frantically typing back.

8:57AM *Is she going into labor?*

8:58AM *I don't think so. They think it's just heart burn, but she wants to go in to check, just in case.*

Cas nodded, chuckling to himself as he replied.

8:58AM *It was probably the Taco Bell.*

8:59AM *Last damn time, I swear.*

Cas chuckled, looking up at Crowley who nodded, indicating they were about to start.

8:59AM *I'm about to speak. Keep me updated. I'll call you after.*

9:00AM *Knock em dead, baby.*

---

The first time his phone vibrated against his leg, he ignored it.

The second time, he shifted the vibrating phone, but continued on with his lecture, just as he had planned to do.

However, after a series of short vibrating bursts indicating texts and a third phone call, he knew he needed to answer.

He and Dean had a rule: If there was an emergency, call three times and they would answer, no matter what they were doing.
Cas paused, in the middle of his sentence, lifting up a finger to tell the auditorium to hold on for a moment, before stepping off to the side and glancing at his phone.

Sure enough, it was Dean calling for the third time.

He picked up the phone and whispered, "Dean? What's going on? Are you okay?"

"SHE'S IN LABOR CAS! SHE'S FUCKING IN LABOR!" Dean shouted out on the other end.

Cas stood frozen, unsure how he was suppose to process that.

"Wh-what?" he asked, a little panicky, "B-but she's not due for another three weeks."

"I KNOW SHE'S NOT FUCKING DUE, BUT THE BABY'S COMING NOW, DAMN IT! I NEED YOU HOME!"

Cas nodded and replied, "I'm on my way. I'll call you at the airport. Stay calm."

"STAY FUCKING CALM? HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO FUCKING STAY FUCKING CALM? DAMN IT TO HELL!" a loud crashing sound happened on the other end of the call.

"Dean?" Cas replied urgently, ignoring Crowley's look of anger as Cas completely ignored the now whispering auditorium, "I'm on my way. I promise. I'll be there soon. In the meantime, call your mom and let her know. She'll want to come down to help."

"OKAY," Dean shouted, before taking a deep breath and repeating, "Okay. Shit Cas. This is happening."

"I love you so much," Cas told him.

"I love you too," Dean replied, "Now, come home to me, baby. You've got a daughter to meet."

Cas hung up, staring at the screen until the screen went dark, the realization hitting him.

His baby was being born.

He walked calmly to the podium, nodding at Crowley who was twitching slightly, upset and confused at Castiel's actions, and announced, "I'm having a baby. This seminar is officially over. Have a pleasant day."

The room broke out in shouts, half in exclamations of congratulations and the other half in confusion and outrage for having traveled all the way there and being denied his lecture.

"What the bloody hell?" Crowley growled, chasing after Cas as he grab his bag and threw it over his shoulder.

"My baby is being born right now Crowley. I'm not missing that."

Crowley groaned, "What do you expect me to do with this ungrateful lot?"

Cas shrugged, "I'm sure you'll figure something out."

"The things I bloody do for you," he muttered under his breath, before pushing Castiel towards the door, "Get out of here, before I change my mind, you wanker."
Cas ran out the door without hesitation, not even taking a moment to look back.

--

"Please, I need to get on this flight," Cas pleaded with the attendant as she checked the computer.

"I'm sorry," she said unapologetically, "This flight is full."

"My baby is being born," Cas told her, pulling out his phone to show her a picture of the sonogram they'd received several months previously, "My first child, and I'm not there to see it. Please."

Her face softened, feeling a little more sympathetic and answered, "I'm sorry, Sir. There's really nothing I can do. You're number 4 on the waitlist, so if there are enough seats available, I'll let you know."

Cas groaned, rubbing his eyes in frustration.

What the hell was he supposed to do now?

He had promised Dean he would get on the first flight.

A young, pretty woman tapped Cas on the shoulder.

"Excuse me," she spoke quietly, "Did I hear you're having a baby?"

"I am," Cas answered, "She wasn't supposed to be born for another three weeks, but she decided to come early. I'm trying to get on this flight, but..."

"You can have my seat," she answered, holding out her ticket for Cas to take.

He looked at her bewildered, "Wh-what? A-are you serious?"

She shrugged, "I don't have anywhere I gotta be, anytime soon. You can take my seat, and I'll take your place on the wait list."

"But, I couldn't..." Cas began to argue.

She interrupted, "Of course you can. I'm offering. You need to get home more than I do. Go see that baby."

Cas turned to the flight attendant, watching the scene with a smile on her face.

"Is she allowed to do that?" he asked, not wanting to get his hopes up.

The flight attendant licked her lips, glancing to the sides before she leaned in and spoke quietly, "Technically, no. But, I think we can make something work."

"Flight 241 is boarding at gate 13. Once again, Flight 241 is boarding now at gate 13. All passengers in first class please present your boarding tickets at the booth."

Cas turned to the young woman and asked, "What's your name?"

"Sarah," she answered happily, thrusting the printed ticket into his hand.

Cas wrapped his arms around the girl, surprisingly her momentarily before she laughed and wrapped her arms to return the hug.
"Thank you," he whispered.

"You're very welcome," she replied amused, "Now, I think it's time you board that plane and go see your baby."

--

Cas looked down at the latest text message, bursting through the hospital doors and frantically searching the walls as he ran through the halls, trying to find the delivery rooms.

"Where's the babies?" he called out to a group of nurses, all who pointed to the left and watched as he raced on.

He ran to the reception desk, asking, "I'm looking for Lydia Mazon. Which room is she in?"

The receptionist typed in her computer, "She's in room 304. It's down the hall and to the left."

"Thank you," Cas answered before racing down to find the room for himself.

As he stormed in, Lydia's sweat-soaked body glared up at him, her eyes wide and crazy, hair half matted to the side, the other sticking straight out, and growled, "I HATE YOU!"

Dean simply looked up at him, his eyes full of relief, "Cas! You made it - AAAARHGHH FUCK THAT HURTS!"

"PREGNANCY HURTS DIMWIT," Lydia screamed back, squeezing Dean's hand until it was raw and red.

Cas smiled at the scene, catching Dean's eyes and whispered, "We're having our baby."

Dean smiled back, his eyes watering from the pressure against his fingers, "I think she broke my hand."

"AAAARRRRRRGGHHH!"

--

Cas stared down at the beautiful baby girl in his arms as she slept peacefully.

When she was born, she had had a full set of lungs on her, screaming as loud as she could until the doctor placed her in Dean's arms.

As soon as her dad was holding her, her wild screams turned into soft whimpers.

It was papa's turn now, and he was sitting in a quiet spare room, brushing his fingers against his daughter's soft wispy blonde hair.

"You're beautiful," he sighed happily, "the most gorgeous person I've ever seen."

"Uh oh, sounds like I have some tough competition."

Cas looked up, smiling at Dean who was leaning in the door frame, his arms crossed, just watching the two.

"The toughest," Cas agreed, kissing the top of their baby's head.
"My mom just got to our house," Dean told him, sitting down on the arm rest of the cushioned chair he was sitting in, "she's finishing everything up and cooking some dinner. Everything should be ready for us when we're good to go."

Cas nodded, "Doctor says everything looks great. We're waiting for a couple more things and then we can sign the papers and be on our way."

He hesitated for a moment before asking, "How's Lydia?"

Dean shrugged, "Fine, last I heard. Grateful it's all over. She told the nurses she's never having sex again."

Cas chuckled, leaning his head against the side of Dean's thigh, his eyes never leaving the pink face of his baby girl.

"She's ours," Cas sighed, amazed.

Dean kissed the top of his head, reaching his finger out to touch her tiny fingers.

"I love you. I love both of you."

Cas lifted up his head, puckering his lips for a kiss.

Dean leaned down, placing his lips firmly on his husband's and held there for a moment before pulling back.

The baby girl opened her fist and wrapped her fingers around Dean's fingers, barely circling the whole thing.

A nurse knocked on the door, catching their attention and held out some papers, "All we need are a couple of signatures and you're good to go."

She paused before adding, "Would you like a picture? Of the three of you?"

Cas nodded as Dean said, "That should be fantastic, thank you."

He handed his phone to the petite nurse, and returned to his seat, his finger immediately going back into their baby's grasp and his head bent close to his husband's.

"Ready?" She prompted, "1-2-3."

She handed the phone back, letting the two men take a look.

Dean immediately typed out a message, attaching the picture and sending it out to everyone he knew.

10:49PM Introducing: Emma Grace Winchester

Chapter End Notes

Alright...lots of things to say.

I want to put a little clarification on Lydia's stories before I get any questions about it.
All sex Lydia had was consensual. She simply did not use any birth control methods at that time.

Please, PLEASE, have safe sex. It's the only kind of sex you should be having.

Also, do not, I repeat, DO NOT DRINK WHILE PREGNANT. This has severe side effects to the baby, resulting in something called "fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS)" and can leave gaping holes in the child's brain that affects their development and growth. Please, just don't do it.

*steps off of soap box*

Anyway...onto happier things: Cas and Dean have a baby!! Yayy!!

I hope you enjoyed this addition. I'm loving this 'verse so much, I honestly don't know if I'll ever stop writing for it.

If you want to chat or add me on tumblr or even send me an idea for a prompt, feel free to chat me up: firefur tumblr

In any case, I really hope you enjoyed this addition.

Love you all!
Time Stamp: Family Don't End in Blood

Chapter Notes

Emma is 8 months old.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

11:54AM Don't forget the broth.

11:55AM And the carrots and celery for the stuffing.

11:55AM And I changed it to 12 potatoes.

11:55AM Actually make the an even 15. It's better to be safe than sorry.

11:56AM Did you call Saman? Is he coming over later today? Should I call him? I think we need his help.

Dean rolled his eyes as he skimmed through the messages, bending down to give his baby girl a kiss on the top of her head while she was snuggled against his chest in her baby wrap.

"I think Papa is a little stressed," Dean murmured into his daughters wispy hair.

Another text buzzed in.

11:57AM Nutmeg! I think we're out of nutmeg! What other spices are we out of? Do we need oregano? It doesn't look like we have that much left.

Dean snorted, "Okay, it sounds like Papa is a lot stressed.

11:58AM Call Alfie and stop worrying. I'll take care of it.

11:59AM Dean. I can't help but worry. We're feeding an army of angry, needy monsters tomorrow. It has to be perfect.

12:00PM Angel. It's just our families.

12:00PM Isn't that what I said?

Dean chuckled, putting his phone away, hoping that Cas would call his little brother and bug him for a bit.

The store was just as busy as Dean was expecting it to be, seeing as it was the day before Thanksgiving.

He hadn't wanted to wait until the last minute to finish up his shopping, but he had had no time to do it any sooner. The café was booming with business, as many students were cramming for any last minute exams or gathering together with their friends once more before they all dispersed for the holiday.
He was grateful for the success the café had, but had to admit that the break was going to be nice.

After all, it was Thanksgiving! And everyone who knew Dean, knew this was by far his favorite holiday.

He glanced down at his list (which had all of the ingredients Cas was worried he would forget and more) and began working his way through the store to buy what little they needed.

This year, instead of traveling down to Kansas to have dinner at his parent's place, they decided to host Thanksgiving at their own home. Their dining room was recently renovated to give them more space and would be perfect for the holiday.

His parents both jumped on the idea, stating that there was no reason for Dean and Cas to drag themselves, plus a baby, all the way to them, when they could easily fly out their way. They were supposed to get in sometime that day, but fortunately Sam had offered to pick them up, giving Cas one less thing to stress about.

It was originally supposed to be a "smaller" affair, just him, Cas, Emma, his parents, his uncle Bobby (who wasn't actually his uncle, but just a close friend of his dad's), and Sam.

Not too long after they started making plans, Bobby called Dean, and awkwardly asked if it would be alright if he invited someone else along. Turned out he was dating the Sheriff of his small town, and she had no where to go for the holiday. Dean, eager to have a chance to tease his uncle, happily extended an invitation, and began making plans of torture with his dad and Sam.

He was telling Alfie at work these plans, who scrunched his nose in response and told Dean he wasn't sure what he was doing for Thanksgiving. Dean blinked once, before immediately inviting Alfie to come eat with them, wondering why he hadn't thought to invite him sooner. After all, it wasn't as if he had any other family to be with during the season, as he was closest with Cas.

Not too long later, Anna, Cas' sister who lived in France, called and said she was going to come visit the states, and wondered if there'd be a place at their table. Thrilled to see his little sister again, Cas told her she could definitely come, and therefore added another person to their list.

Somehow (Dean suspects through Alfie), Gabriel heard, and invited himself to the party, not wanting to miss out on the big shebang.

Dean paused in the produce section as he picked through the green beans, trying to find the best looking ones, when he heard his name called.

His lifted in head, and smiled as soon as he saw who it was.

"Lisa! Ben!" Dean exclaimed, taking a step away from the green beans to give Lisa an awkward hug, with his baby hanging in between.

"EMMA," Ben shouted, ignoring Lisa's shushes and held his arms out to be lifted out of the cart so he could see the baby.

Dean chuckled, bending over so Ben could see Emma a little better.

"Oh, I see how it is," he teased the toddler, "You're only interested in the ladies. No time for an old man like me."

Ben giggled happily, very gently patting the wrap (but not Emma's skin, because he needed to wash his hands before he could touch her), "Hi Dee."
Dean stood back up, turning towards the other mom, "How's it going, Lis? I haven't seen you in a while."

Lisa smiled tiredly, "It's alright. I've just been busy. How about you?"

Dean shrugged, pulling his cart out of the way so another older woman who was glaring in his direction could take a look at the produce he was blocking. "'Bout the same. Just grabbing some last minute items for Thanksgiving. We've got a bunch of family coming into town. What about you? Big plans for tomorrow?"

She shook her head, "Nope. Just me and Ben. We'll probably watch the parade on TV and have turkey sandwiches, but otherwise, it's just us."

She smiled down at Ben who reached for her to give her a big, slobbery kiss.

Dean scrunched his eyebrows together, before saying, "Well, why don't you come have Thanksgiving with us?"

Lisa's eyebrows shot straight up, "What? No, we couldn't - "

"Why not?" Dean asked confused.

"You'll be with your family," she said, "I don't want to intrude."

Dean opened his mouth to object, but Lisa continued, "I appreciate the offer, but we're fine."

Frowning, Dean said, "I'm not just offering to be polite. I really would love it if you two came, and I know Cas would too. Thanksgiving is about being with family and friends, and I would be honored if you two joined us."

Lisa hesitated for a moment before asking, "Really?"

Dean nodded, "Yes, really. Please come."

She bit her lip, looking down at Ben as she thought for a moment.

"What do you think, sweetie?" she asked her son, running her fingers through his dark hair, "Should we go over to spend Thanksgiving with Dean and Cas and Emma and their family?"

"YES!" Ben screamed, causing several people in the store to stop what they were doing and look over at the pair.

They chuckled at his intense reaction, and Lisa finally agreed, "Alright, we'll be there."

"Excellent!" Dean answered excitedly, reaching out to give Ben a high-five, "We're eating dinner around two or three, but you should come over in the morning to watch the parade. Cas just set up the family room with a really nice surround sound and fifty-two inch tv."

Lisa chuckled, "Sounds like a plan. Thank you Dean, really."

Dean smiled softly, "Of course. What're families for?"

They shared their good-byes and Dean finished up the shopping, adding a couple of extra potatoes to his cart. When the car was loaded and Emma was buckled into her seat, Dean took a deep breath and pulled out his phone.
Hey, just wanted to give you a heads up. I invited Lisa and Ben to join us for Thanksgiving tomorrow. I love you!

He didn't have to wait long for the response.

You did WHAT?

Cas paced back and forth, wincing every time he heard a car door shut outside.

"I don't know what you're freaking out about," Dean called from the kitchen amused, his elbows deep in the turkey carcass he was preparing to sit in a marinade overnight, "I'm the one who'll be cooking for all these people."

"How can we possibly accommodate everyone who is coming?" Cas asked frantically, his paces increasing, "Where will everyone sit? Do we have enough chairs? Should I get another table?"

Dean rolled his eyes in fond exasperation and called out to Cas' little brother who was watching unconcernedly from where he was plopped on the couch with little Emma propped up on his lap, cooing happily, "I thought you were gonna calm him down when you came over, Alfie."

The younger man chuckled, "Have you seen him? He's inconsolable. He was ranting about how your mom's gonna be so disappointed when she comes that I thought it would be best if I just let him tire himself out."

Dean scrunched his nose at the implications, "What're ya talking about? In what universe would my mom be disappointed by something you've done? That woman loves you."

Cas sighed, shooting Saman a dirty look who simply smirked in return, "Just because I know your mom is a wonderful woman who isn't going to care about how clean the house is, doesn't mean I'm not concerned that she's going come in here and immediately tell me everything that is wrong with our home."

Dean paused for a moment, "That doesn't even make any sense."

Cas jumped as the doorbell rang, almost as if on cue, accompanied with two sharp knocks on the door. His face paled, "Oh no. They're here."

He immediately rushed over to grab Emma from Saman's lap who chuckled, "I'll get the door."

Cas stood in the middle of the room, holding Emma tightly against his chest as though he were using her as a shield.

Dean stepped out of the kitchen, being sure to hold his hands out to the side since they were still covered in turkey innards, and kissed Cas sweetly on his cheek.

"Everything is going to be fine," he whispered in his husband's ear, "We have the seating planned out, with enough chairs, we're not missing any more ingredients, and my mom will absolutely love everything."

Cas nodded, taking a deep breath just as a swarm of people rushed in, with Mary taking the lead.

"I am so sorry about the doorbell," Mary immediately apologized, kissing Dean's cheek before turning and kissing Cas', "someone seems to have left his brain behind when he got up this
Sam, who was standing towards the back of the group, rubbed the back of his neck sheepishly, "Sorry. I forgot."

Dean waved his hand, "No worries. Fortunately she wasn't sleeping. You're lucky this time bitch."

His mom and Cas both scowled and called out in unison, "Language!" the same time Sam retorted with a pouted, "Jerk."

Dean held his hands up in mock defense, turning to the rest, "I'd hug ya guys, but I haven't washed my hands yet. I'm right in the middle of getting the turkey ready."

"No worries, Son," his dad John said, clapping Dean's shoulder, "We'll do better introductions once you get that turkey done."

Dean waved at Bobby and who he assumed was Jody, mouthing an apology before slipping back into the kitchen, with Sam and Saman trailing behind him like two lost puppies.

John walked forward, pushing Mary to the side who had her hand stroking Emma's wispy blonde hair, and said quietly, "Now, let me take a look at this beauty."

Mary rolled her eyes, winking Cas who was watching in amusement as John leaned forward, making faces at Emma who was watching her grandpa in captivation.

"I can see where I'm not wanted," she teased, taking a step towards the kitchen.

"Not my fault our grandbaby loves seeing me," John teased her back.

Mary chuckled, leaving to go into the kitchen to join Dean and see what help he needed.

"May I?" John asked, holding out his arms to take Emma from Cas.

"Of course," Cas answered warmly, always glad that both his in-laws asked to hold Emma rather than just taking her from his arms. He felt their love and respect for both him and their daughter when they asked for permission.

He gently passed Emma over, who smiled happily up at her grandpa's face, while John stared back down in complete adoration.

When the switch was finished, John asked, his eyes never leaving Emma's face, "How're you doing, Son?"

Cas felt warm at the term of endearment his father-in-law used, feeling grateful once again at how Dean's family completely embraced and welcomed him. When he'd first met John, the man was a little stand-offish, and clearly was having a hard time understand how it was that Dean had fallen in love with a man. Although curt, he had never spoken an ill word towards Castiel.

As time went on, John seemed to grow more comfortable near his son-in-law, until he completely accepted him as one of his own, fiercely defending them both to anyone who dared speak a word against them.

When Emma was born, John surprised everyone when he showed a soft side that Dean had told Castiel he'd never seen. When Dean was growing up, John was all about tough love, and sports, and making sure his sons were the best.
But with Emma, he was gentle, sweet, and willing to bend over backwards just to make sure she was
comfortable.

When Dean mentioned it to his mom one day, she just laughed, telling him that it was different when
you were a grandparent and was dealing with a little girl.

There wasn't a doubt in anyone's mind that this baby girl loved her grandpa as much as he loved her,
and already had him wrapped around her tiny finger.

"I'm doing well," Cas answered John's question, kissing the top of Emma's head, before taking a step
back, "How about you? How was the flight?"

"Awful," John grunted, bouncing Emma up and down, "there was turbulence nearly the entire way
and a man who I don't think had showered in a week that sat behind us."

"Quit yer complaining," Bobby chimed in gruffly, "It wasn't that bad."

John grumbled to himself, but Cas had already turned to face Bobby and woman he had brought.

"Hello Bobby," Cas said, glancing at the other who he assumed was his girlfriend, waiting for an
introduction.

Bobby grunted, waving his hand, "Cas, Jody. Jody, Cas."

He walked off, clapping Cas' shoulder before leaving the two behind to join John who had just sat
down on the couch and turned on the TV to the sports channel.

"Articulate as always," Jody teased, rolling her eyes fondly, "Thanks for inviting me along. Bobby
was insistent that it was alright for me to join..."

"Of course," Cas answered warmly, "We're happy to have you here."

He and Jody walked to the kitchen where Cas leaned up against the door frame, watching as Jody
immediately jumped in to help with the prep, shooing both Sam and Saman who clearly didn't know
what they were doing.

Dean caught Cas' eye and they both chuckled.

Cas took a deep breath, feeling many of the nerves he had had before slip away.

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The next morning was spent in a haze of chaos. Mary and John had spent the night in their guest
bedroom so Mary could wake up early and help Dean with cooking that day. Sam had wanted to
stay as well, but they'd decided he'd be better off going to his apartment (which was less than five
minutes away) and sleeping in his bed versus staying on their small couch.

Mary and Dean had started working on the food as soon as they got up.

John offered to be the official "Emma-holder", but they needed him to help set up the table.

They had just finished getting the table ready when Sam came in, followed closely by Saman,
Gabriel, and Anna.

Cas quickly passed off Emma to John, who was more than happy to take her, and went over to greet
his siblings.
It wasn't that he didn't want them to see his baby girl, it was just Anna was still a stranger to him in many ways (as unfortunate as that was) and Gabriel was constantly eating sweets and sometimes had suspiciously sticky hands. He knew he wouldn't have to worry about Emma as long as she was in John's arms, as his father-in-law was intimidating enough that no one would dare try to take his baby girl from him.

Cas gave Saman a big hug, sending him into the front room to turn on the TV to the parade, before turning to pull Anna in a hug.

"I'm glad you were able to make it," he said softly.

"Thank you for allowing me to come," she answered back, hesitating before admitting, "I've missed you. I was nervous calling you, because I didn't know if your offer to come was still open..."

"It's always open," Cas answered back, brushing a strand of Anna's hair behind her ear, "and I'm glad that you took me up on the offer."

They were immediately both smooshed together as two arms wrapped around them both, "Aww, what a happy family reunion. Cassie and Annie, together again."

"Don't call me that," both Anna and Cas said annoyed at the same time to their older brother.

Gabriel just smirked, stepping back and pulling out a twix that he popped into his mouth, "Where's the little munchkin at?"

"John, Dean's dad, is holding her," Cas answered, taking a step back as the moment was ruined.

Gabe scrunched his nose, "Welp. Guess I'm not saying hello then. I think I'll go find Dean, see where his scrumptious younger brother wandered off to."

Cas rolled his eyes, secretly pleased that his plan worked, "Dean is in the kitchen. I'm not sure where Sam went."

Anna tilted her head to the side confused, "Why won't you say hello to Cas' daughter?"

Gabe's eyes grew wide, "Have you seen Dean's dad?"

He promptly turned and left the room towards the kitchen in pursuit of someone else to bug.

Cas and Anna stood awkwardly for a moment, before Anna asked, "Can I meet your daughter?"

Cas nodded happily, "Of course, they're just in the other room. And although Gabe is scared of Dean's dad, you really have nothing to worry about."

Anna hummed skeptically, following Cas into the room where John was seated on the couch next to Saman, having a pleasant conversation.

Since his younger brother was so close to him, and owned a business with Dean, he had a close relationship with both Mary and John, and felt comfortable being around them.

Anna stood towards the edge of the room, only hesitantly coming forward when Cas encouraged her to.

"John, this is my little sister, Anna," he introduced.

"It's nice to meet you Mr. Winchester," Anna said.
"Please, call me John," the man answered.

Anna sat down on the other side, leaning forward to take a look at the baby.

"This is Emma," Cas spoke softly, running his thumb over her forward as she looked up at him happily.

"She's beautiful Cas," Anna whispered, keeping her hands firmly in her lap.

A knock came at the front door, so Cas jumped up, leaving Anna behind with his father-in-law who had just asked, "So, Anna, where are you living at this time?"

Cas chuckled, slipping out to open the door, revealing Lisa and Ben who were holding a plate of blueberry muffins.

"I hope we're not too early," Lisa said worriedly, before Cas even had a chance to say hello, "Ben was just so excited to come over, he's been talking about this all morning and Dean mentioned we could watch the parade..."

Cas smiled, stepping forward to hug Lisa who's shoulders immediately dropped in relief, "I'm glad to have you here."

Although he had been stressed about adding another two people when Dean had told him the day before, he knew inviting them was the right thing to do. No one should be alone for the holidays. They spent enough time with Lisa and Ben, that the two of them practically were family at this point.

"Hi Cas!" Ben chirped happily, reaching up to tug on Cas' pants, "We brought muffins."

"I see that," Cas said, bending down so he was eye level with the young boy, "Did you help make them?"

"Mm hmm," he answered happily, lunging himself forward to lean against Cas' knees, "Where's Emma?"

Cas chuckled at the inquisitive boy. Ben had a little crush on their baby girl, always wanting to know where she was and if he could hold her. It seemed that no matter who came in contact with her, they immediately fell in love.

"She's inside with her grandpa. Would you like to see her?"

Ben nodded, rushing past Cas through the house to seek out the little girl.

Lisa winced, stepping in after him, "Sorry."

Cas waved off her concerns, "It's no big deal, really. We love having Ben over here. It'll be nice when Emma is a little older and the two can actually play together."

Lisa nodded wistfully, "That will be nice. Ben doesn't have nearly enough friends to play with right now."

Cas led her back into the family room where Ben was practically sitting in John's lap, staring wide eyed at Emma.

When John and Mary had first met Lisa and Ben, Cas had admittedly been nervous. Lisa was the type of girl that John had always thought Dean would end up with. She was beautiful, kind, and intelligent. But, he had nothing to worry about. While John and Mary did both love her and her son,
never once did John appear to wish anything else for his son than the man that he loved.

Lisa placed the muffins on the coffee table, picking up Ben and placing him in her lap as she sat back down in that spot next to John.

Cas quickly went through the room and gave introductions, noticing that Sam and Gabe had both joined the others.

Lisa offered muffins to anyone who wanted one, and another knock on the door came.

Looking around, John said, "Must be Bobby and Jody. Only ones not here yet, I think."

Sure enough, as John had predicted, both Bobby and Jody were waiting at the door.

When everyone was settled in, Cas looked around the room, tuning in to the conversations around him. Jody was talking animatedly with Lisa and John, while Anna sat forward, listening with rapt attention, but appeared to be unsure if she could join in. Ben had moved off his mother's lap to sit next to Saman (or who he called Alfie as well) right in front of the TV, pointing at the floats he thought were cool.

Gabe was flirting atrociously with Sam, whose face was bright red at the quiet remarks. Sam's eyes kept glancing back at Anna as though he were interested in the pretty girl.

Dean and his mom were happily chatting as they cooked together in the kitchen, both clearly in their elements as they worked.

Cas took a seat next to Anna, who looked back at him gratefully, and easily slid his and Anna's way into a conversation.

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"Alright you ingrates, food's ready to eat," Dean called out.

His mother scoffed at his words, but didn't argue. Instead, she pulled off her apron so she could pick her seat.

Dean sat at the head of the table with his dad on his left and his baby girl on his right. Cas was sitting on the other side of Emma, with Saman, Gabriel, and Anna all along side of him. Next to Anna was Ben (she looked nervous having a child sitting next to her) with Lisa next to him. Jody sat down next to Lisa, continuing their conversation from before (it seemed the two strong women had a lot more to talk about than anyone would have guessed), Bobby next to her. Sam sat in between Bobby and his mom, who finished out the table.

Dean clapped his hands together and spoke, "I wanted to thank everyone for coming to our place for Thanksgiving this year. I know it was a bit of a hike for some of you, but thanksgiving is all about being with family. I know that we're all not related, but as a wise old man used to always tell me as a kid: family don't end in blood."

"Damn right," Bobby nodded in agreement, while everyone laughed.

"To continue on with the tradition that my beautiful mother started when we were kids, I just want to share something that I'm grateful for."

Dean took a deep breath, glancing back at Cas and Emma, "I can talk about how grateful I am for my baby girl, and for my husband who always supports me. But I think you all already know just
how lucky I am to have both of them in my life. If there's anything I'm grateful for this year, I'd have to say it's coffee."

The table burst out into laughter as Dean spoke above the chatter, "I'm serious! Babies are tough! They're constantly up in the night, and I'm tired constantly. I have no fu-dging clue how I would have gotten through this year without that sweet nectar pushing me through."

Dean leaned over, kissing Cas sweetly on his lips, before moving on to kissing the top of Emma's head, "I wouldn't trade any of it for anything."

The room awed as Dean nodded to his dad, to continue the tradition.

"I'm grateful I was able to close down the shop for a couple of days so your mother and I could come down here and join you," John said, "This isn't something I would want to miss."

"Although, not without much persuasion," Mary chimed in.

Sam spoke up, "Oh, please. There wasn't any convincing. You just had to say Emma's name, and dad was packed up on the first flight out here."

John shrugged unapologetically, "What can I say? I love our little angel."

Mary, still chuckling, added, "I'm grateful my boys have grown up to be such wonderful men. I'm so proud of both of you, and for everything you've accomplished. You couldn't have made me more proud."

Both Sam and Dean blushed lightly, as they bowed their heads and answered in unison, "Thanks mom."

Sam coughed, glancing at Anna, before saying, "I'm glad that I'm almost done with law school."

"I'm glad I didn't have to pay for your law school," John spoke up, over the roars of agreement and laughter.

When Sam had received a full-ride scholarship to Stanford, John had been disappointed at first. He'd held out hopes that Sam would want to take over the family business, since Dean had chosen not too, but he accepted that both his boys had dreams elsewhere. Once he'd accepted that, he was able to support his sons in their schooling and prospective careers, doing all he could to help.

Bobby spoke, a small blush growing on his face, "I'm grateful that Jody was able to come out here with me."

John, Sam, and Dean immediately snickered, sobering up when Mary shot them a stern look to behave.

Jody smiled warmly, "I'm glad I was invited. You have a wonderful family and there's no place I'd rather be."

Bobby grunted, but everyone knew he was pleased to hear that.

"I'm grateful that I saw Dean at the store yesterday," Lisa said next. She paused and added, "Actually, I'm just grateful I know you two, period. You've done so much to help me and Ben, and I'm so thankful you're in our lives."

She looked down at Ben and asked, "What are you thankful for, sweetie?"
Ben hummed, thinking it through seriously before he exclaimed, "Cars! And trucks! I have a truck at home, mom wouldn't let me bring it today, but it's really cool. And it's red, and shiny, and it goes really fast, like vroom, vroom, and it's awesome!"

He took a deep breath before adding shyly, "And I'm thankful for Emma."

"Thank you Ben," Cas said kindly, "Emma is thankful for you too. You're a very good friend to her. Anna?"

Anna stared back a wide eyes, before speaking, "I guess I'm grateful that you invited me into your home. I know we don't talk often, but it was nice to know that I can always come to you."

Cas nodded, "I mean it, Anna. You are always welcome."

Gabriel stared across the room, shooting Sam a look that made him squirm in his seat nervously.

Dean glared at Gabe, silently warning him to behave, and they were all relieved when Gabe answered, "I'm thankful for Dean-o's culinary talents. I've never tasted anything sweeter, more delectably, more heavenly than his pies. Cassie, you picked a good one."

They chuckled, as Saman spoke, "I'm grateful for the success the café is having. I know I say that every year, but every time I look at the books, I'm amazed at how much we're growing. Sometimes, I'm nervous that I'm running a business with my brother-in-law, but I couldn't have a better business partner."

"Right back at ya, bud," Dean answered with a wink.

They all turned to Cas, waiting for him to finish tradition.

"As I'm sure Dean and Saman can attest, I was a bit nervous for this dinner," Cas started out slowly.

"A bit nervous?" Saman asked amused.

"You were a total wreck, babe," Dean chimed in.

Cas rolled his eyes, ignoring everyone's snickers, "Alright, fine, I was distraught. I wanted everything to be perfect for our first Thanksgiving with Emma. But, now that we're all here, I can't remember what I was worried about. I'm thankful for this family and that I can call you all mine. As Dean said earlier, the holidays are about spending time together. It doesn't matter what food we eat -"

"- or how clean the house is," Cas continued, "or even if we're a little cramped in the dining room. What matters is that we're here. I'm thankful that our family is growing, and most importantly," Cas paused to turn to Dean, "I'm thankful for that one professor that you hated, that led you to text the wrong number in a fit of rage, which led you to me."

They all laughed again, Dean rolling his eyes as he leaned forward and kissed Cas again, whispering "I love you."

"Let's dig in!" Dean said while everyone cheered.

The room was filled with chatter as everyone filled up their plates, passing the dishes around the table, including a platter full of turkey that Dean had already carved and presented.

As they were digging into their food, the doorbell rang throughout the house.
Dean and Cas looked up at each other, before Dean scooted out, announcing he'd get it.

Cas added another spoonful of mashed potatoes and stuffing to Emma's tray for her to continue eating, wondering who was at the door.

When Dean opened the door, his jaw dropped at the person who stood at the other side.

"Hey there, brother. Have room for one more?"

"Benny!" Dean exclaimed in both surprise and delight, as he stepped forward to wrap his arms around his friend in a hug.

"I thought you were still overseas!" Dean said, ushering his high school friend to come inside, glancing down at the army uniform.

"I'm out, Dean," Benny said, setting down his duffle bag in the front entry way, "For good. I got early leave and I'm not signed up for another tour."

Dean eyes went wide, "What? That's great news!"

"Thank you," Benny said, glancing around, "I'm sorry to barge in on ya like this -"

"Don't worry about it, man!" Dean answered, "It's good to see you. I'm glad you came out."

Benny shrugged, "Ain't got no one else."

Dean always felt bad when Benny said things like that. His family life had been hard, so when he moved from the south to Kansas and became friends with Dean, he usually spent most of his time over at the Winchester's house after school.

"We just started eating," Dean said as he guided Benny into the dining room, "I'll go grab you a chair and a plate so you can join us."

The room went silent as they entered, and Mary immediately stood, "Benny?"

"Hey there Mrs. Winchester," Benny said shyly.

"You're home!" Mary exclaimed, stepping forward to wrap Benny in a hug.

John stood up, clapping Benny on the back, "Glad you were able to make it back safely."

Benny looked over at Cas, who was watching him carefully.

"This your baby girl?" he asked.

Cas nodded, "This is her."

"And I thought she was beautiful in the pictures," Benny said as he walked closer, "but those photos don't do her justice."

"Thank you," Cas answered softly, "It's good to see you."

"You too, Cas," Benny smiled.

Dean returned with a chair, pausing as he looked around to decide where to put it. Benny pointed to the corner, "I can sit over here with this strapping young man if his mother don't
mind."

Lisa shook her head, running her fingers through her hair, "Not at all."

Benny grabbed the chair and sat down, "What's your name?"

Ben glanced at his mom who nodded encouragingly, and answered, "Ben."

Benny smiled in amusement, "No kidding? That's my name too!"

Ben's eyes got wide, "Really?"

"Yup," he answered, "But you can call me Benny."

"Mom, mom!" Ben said, turning back to Lisa, "We have the same name!"

"I heard," she said with a smile, leaning forward and holding out her hand, "I'm Lisa."

"Benny, ma'am. It's a pleasure to meet you," he replied back with his southern charm.

He turned to Anna sitting next to him and asked her name.

Anna smiled flirtatiously and answered.

Through out the rest of the dinner, Cas spent most of his time watching.

Both Anna and Lisa appeared to be interested in Benny, who was admittedly an attractive man, especially in his uniform.

Benny spoke with both of them politely, but seemed to spend most of his attention on young Ben, who was captivated by his Cajun accent.

Sam was scowling at Benny, continually glancing at Anna, as though he were hoping for a chance to talk to the girl, but knew he would never get it.

Gabe spent his time alternating in between stuffing his face with food and flicking picking of mashed potatoes in Sam's direction. He wasn't brave enough to start a full-on food fight, (both Dean AND Cas would kill him), but he enjoyed doing what he could to torment the younger man.

Saman was chatting with Mary across the table about his ideas for the café and what he and Dean were hoping to do the upcoming year, eager to hear Mary's opinion and input.

Bobby and Jody were huddled close together, speaking quietly amongst themselves.

It was sweet to see this side of Bobby, who was normally gruff and ornery. Cas was glad that he had found Jody and hoped that they planned on staying together.

Dean and his father were arguing over who they thought would win the super bowl (despite the fact that the super bowl game was several months away).

Cas picked up a green bean, handing it over to Emma who squealed happily as she reached for it.

No wonder this was Dean's favorite holiday.

It was all about family.

And their family was perfect.
6:34PM I think that my sister and Lisa are in a competition to see who can win over Benny's affections.

6:35PM It's hard to tell who's winning.

6:35PM Sam doesn't look to happy about it.

Dean glanced down at his buzzing phone, raising an eyebrow as he read the messages. He looked up to glance at the man sitting in the armchair behind him.

6:36PM Did you seriously just text me when you're sitting right next to me?

He heard Cas chuckle softly in his ear.

6:36PM I don't want to be overheard.

Dean re-read the messages and looked across the room, seeing what Cas was seeing.

Sure enough, both Lisa and Anna were vying for Benny's attention, flirting strongly with his friend, who just looked content to be here. Sam was sitting on the floor, looking up at them with his arms folded and a subtle frown on his face.

As Benny leaned forward to talk to Alfie, Dean responded back.

6:38PM I think that Alfie is winning.

6:39PM Benny is not interested in Sam andriel. Not romantically, anyway.

6:40PM He might be.

6:40PM Dean.

6:41PM Just imagine if they ran away together.

6:41PM No Dean.

6:41PM They could start their own little family. We could be the two cute gay couples.

6:42PM The likelihood of that happening is the same as Sam declaring his love for Gabriel and proposing.

6:43PM Ugh, gross. What is it with Gabe's obsession with Sam anyway?

6:44PM I think he just likes to see him squirm. He does blush rather easily. It is amusing.

"Are you texting each other?" Sam asked baffled, "While sitting next to each other?"

"Who, us?" Dean asked, playing dumb.

Saman rolled his eyes, "They do it all the time. They're grossly in love."

"I think it's sweet," His mom said, bringing Emma over, and bending down, reading their texts on Cas' phone before whispering in his ear, "My money's on Lisa. Benny is so sweet with her little boy. And he always preferred brunettes over feisty red heads."
Cas just laughed.

6:48PM Your mom is betting on Lisa. I would tend to agree with her, but Anna is rather strong-willed when going after something she wants.

6:49PM Traitor. My money is still on Alfie.

Cas rolled his eyes fondly, kissing the top of Dean's head as Jody and Bobby were the first ones to get up to leave.

Slowly, each person made their way to the door, stopping to say good-bye. Lisa grabbed Ben and looked regretful as she said goodbye, telling them that she needed to get Ben to bed. She was pleased when Benny offered to help her take her stuff to her car.

Anna and Gabriel were gone after that, heading to the hotel they were staying in.

Sam hugged his parents goodbye, promising to return early the next morning to spend more time with them.

Benny came back in, just as Alfie was helping to clean up the room.

"Where are you staying tonight, Benny?" Dean asked, grunting as he pushed himself off of the floor.

Benny shrugged, "Dunno. Figured I'd find a hotel once I was here."

Dean frowned, "You're more than welcome to stay here. I mean...you'd have to sleep on the couch, but it's a helluva lot better than some grungy hotel."

Benny chuckled, "It may be, but you look like you got your hands full tonight. I'd just be in your way."

Dean shot Cas a look, waiting for him to jump in and insist when Alfie spoke up, "You're more than welcome to stay with me. I've got a spare bedroom."

Benny's eyebrows rose, "You sure?"

Alfie nodded, "Yeah, it's not a problem."

Benny turned back to Dean, "Well, there ya go. Problem solved."

Dean smiled widely, "Problem-solved."

Cas rolled his eyes when Dean sent him an exaggerated wink as Benny followed Alfie out the door and place to his place.

"It's not going to happen," Cas said as soon as the door closed.

"What's not going to happen?" John asked, coming over to kiss Emma's head.

"Nothing," both Cas and Dean answered in unison.

John stared at them both suspiciously, before deciding he didn't care to know and yawned, "Well, I'm off to bed. You boys have a good night."

"Night dad," "Have a good night, John," They answered.
Mary pulled Cas into her arms, grabbing Dean and pulling him over so they could both be hugged by her.

"Dinner was perfect," Mary declared, "You boys did a wonderful job."

They both beamed as they thanked her.

She left to join John for bed, leaving Cas and Dean to put Emma down.

When they crawled into bed together, Cas curled up into Dean and sighed happily, "You were right, everything turned out perfectly. I shouldn't have been worried."

Dean chuckled and kissed his forehead, "No you shouldn't have been. But it was a good night, wasn't it."

Cas hummed in agreement, shuffling so they were pressed closer together.

He was falling asleep when Dean spoke again.

"So, should we host Christmas?"

Chapter End Notes

One day I may stop writing time stamps for this story...

Today is not that day.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving (or just a Happy Holiday season in general)!
This was supposed to go up around Valentine's Day, but THAT didn't happen.

So, here it is now! :)

6:59PM How’s she doing? Is everything okay? Should we head back home?

Not a minute had passed before Dean’s phone rang.

“Dean, I love you, but you and Cas need to chill out.”

“What are you talking about? Cas and I are totally chill,” Dean answered back to his little brother, shooting a wink over at his husband who was looking down at his own phone.

“Dean”, Sam answered back exasperatedly, “You and Cas have been bombarding me for the past two hours with text messages. I can’t even figure out if you’re paying attention to each other.”

“What?” Dean asked incredulously, thinking back to how many texts he’d sent his brother, “No we haven’t.”

“I swear, Dean, if you or Cas send me one more text, I’m going to kidnap Emma and won’t return her until you both actually spend time together.”

“Jeeze, relax Sam,” Dean said, rolling his eyes.

“I know you’re both worried, but I promise you Emma and me are fine. She just had dinner and she’s picking out a movie. Go spend time with your husband. Go, I dunno, get some yogurt or do some shopping or something. Just, take advantage of the fact that I’m babysitting your baby, and you and Cas are on your first date since before Emma was born.”

Dean rubbed his palm against his cheek, before conceding, “Yeah, man. You’re right. I promise I won’t send a text for the rest of the night. But, I swear, if anything happens – “

“You’ll be the first person I call,” Sam interrupted, “I promise. Now go! And take away Cas’ phone too, if you have to.”

“Alright. Bitch.”

“Jerk,” Sam replied smoothly, before hanging up the phone.

Dean stared down at the lit screen, before opening up his text messages and reading through the messages he’d sent to Sam throughout the evening.

5:14PM Thanks again for doing this man.

5:15PM We really appreciate it.
5:35PM I think I forgot to mention before, if she needs extra diapers, there’s some more up in our bedroom closet.

5:38PM She shouldn’t need more, but in case she blows through the ones that are in the diaper bag.

5:59PM Just, if you have to go into our closet, don’t open up the black trunk on the floor.

6:12PM Also, don’t look through the items on the shelves above our clothes.

6:15PM Actually, now that I think about it, it’d be best if you just avoided our closet all together.

6:59PM How’s she doing? Is everything okay? Should we head back home?

Whoops.

He had sent quite a few more than he’d thought.

“Hey, you send any messages to Sam tonight?” Dean asked Cas who still had his phone firmly in his grasp.

Cas frowned, “Just a few.”

“Let me see,” Dean said, grabbing Cas’ phone before he could argue.

Dean brought up the messages on Cas’ phone, snorting at what he saw.

5:06PM Thank you again, Sam. This means a lot to us. It’s been a while since Dean and I have had a moment to ourselves.

5:10PM Did Dean tell you where Emma’s sippy cups were? They’re supposed to be in the cupboard, but I think they may be in the dishwasher. I ran through a load last night, and I don’t think we put away the dishes today. If you need an extra cup, check in there.

5:22PM If you don’t want the macaroni we made for Emma for dinner, I think we may have some leftover meatloaf in the fridge you can have instead.

5:46PM Emma's very particular about her sippy cup. If she's giving you trouble, it's probably because you gave her the wrong color. She tends to favor the bright yellow one, but I can usually get away with giving her the purple one too.

6:00PM If she starts throwing a tantrum over the sippy cups, don’t hesitate to call. We can come back if she’s too much. I know she can be a bit overwhelming.

6:24PM Her pajamas are in the nursery. Most likely in the hamper, as I haven’t had a chance to fold and put away the laundry. If you want to change her after you change her next diaper that might be best.

6:27PM Don’t try fitting her in the pink and blue striped one. I know it's her favorite, but it doesn’t fit her well anymore. I would recommend the green one, with the blue dinosaur.

6:55PM We’ve just finished dinner. Do we need to come back?

6:57PM Actually, why don’t I discuss it with Dean. Perhaps we will come back. I think this has been a good night.
“Angel, did we even talk during dinner?” Dean asked amused, with an eyebrow raised.

Cas frowned, opening his mouth to argue, but paused to actually think about it.

“Well, I don’t think so,” he said thoughtfully. “Now that I think about it, I don’t think we actually did. I think I spent most of the time either enjoying the silence of the restaurant or feeling guilty that I was enjoying the silence and worrying about how Emma was doing.”

Dean smiled and laughed, “Yeah, I think that’s about how I was too.”

Dean took Cas’ phone and his phone and threw them into the bottom of Cas’ bag, ignoring his husband’s feeble protests.

“Castiel,” Dean said, hooking his fingers in the loops of Castiel’s jeans and pulling his body closer to his, “Tonight is about us. Sam is perfectly capable of watching Emma. We need to take this time to enjoy us. To reconnect.”

Cas was silent, before guessing, “Sam told you he would kidnap our baby if we came home right now, didn’t he?”

Dean nodded his confirmation, “Yes he did. The bastard.”

Cas chuckled, wrapping his arms around Dean’s waist and resting his head against Dean’s shoulders, “What shall we do then?”

They were both silent for a moment, as they thought through ideas of things they could do, before Dean finally suggested, “We could pay for an overpriced movie and make-out through the whole thing.”

Cas answered him back with an enthusiastic kiss.

--

Dean had forgotten how thrilling it was to make-out in a darkened theater. There was something about it that felt forbidden or naughty that added to the exhilaration.

Dean had no clue what movie was playing on the screen – Cas had bought the tickets and he hadn’t cared to pay attention. All he knew was that Cas’ tongue was sinful against his, and if he wasn’t careful, he’d be coming in his pants like a pimple-nosed teenager.

The movie had only started about 5 minutes ago, but already there were explosions and gunshots.

Dean thinks that if he’d pay attention, it’d probably be the exact type of movie that he liked.

Of course, there were far better things for him to pay attention to.

Cas’ hand brushed against Dean’s thigh, resting in place before moving up slowly.

Dean’s breath faltered for a brief second, long enough for Cas to smile into their kiss.

Dean bit Cas’ lower lip in retaliation, before inching forward, reaching around Cas to grab his hip and hold fast – giving himself something to anchor too.

Taking that as the permission he’d wanted, Cas didn’t hesitate to place his hand against his firm erection, squeezing the base before running his fingers up and down the length expertly.
Dean’s breathing got heavier as Cas’ hand inched closer to the buttons on his jeans, toying with the top, as though he were trying to decide if it would be worth the risk to pull our Dean’s hard cock in a public place.

Dean nodded into the kiss, hoping that that would be enough to push Dean forward in doing what he wanted him to do.

Cas pressed deeper into the kiss, before thumbing the button once again, getting ready to go for it.

Dean couldn’t care less about being careful at this point.

There was another explosion on screen, following by some gasps interspersed throughout the audience, before a small voice whispered, “Cassie? Dean? Is that you?”

Cas’ eyes flew open at the voice and he shot as far back in his seat away from Dean as he possibly could, lifting his hand off Dean’s body as though it had been burned.

Dean sat in the same position he was in, slightly shell-shocked and unsure what the hell had just happened.

He turned to glare at the person who had interrupted them and made Cas react in that way, and found Alfie and Benny making their way down the row.

“Hey guys!” Alfie whispered excitedly, ignoring the hisses of other people coming from the rows in front, “I didn’t know you were going to be here tonight. Where’s Emma?”

“We’re on a date,” Dean added, emphasizing the word date in hopes that they would get the picture.

It was clear Benny understood immediately, as he appraised Dean and Cas’ appearances and sent a wink in Dean’s direction.

Alfie on the other hand, did not get the same message.

“That’s so great, you guys! You haven’t been out in forever. What a small coincidence that we met you here! This is awesome.”

Dean and Benny exchanged a look, both clearly unsure how they can salvage the situation.

Cas merely looked in between the two boys.

“Are you both here on a date as well?”

Both Benny and Alfie’s eyes widened.

“Oh, gosh, no. No no no no no no no. We’re not on a date. No, not like you guys. No. We’re just here as friends. Nothing else.” Benny adamantly assured them, shooting a look at Dean that willed him to believe him.

Dean couldn’t help but let out a chuckle when Alfie replied indignantly, “What’s so abhorrent about going on a date with me?”


“You used eleven nos. Eleven. Was that really necessary? Is the idea of a date with me so bad that it
causes you to use that many nos? What, you felt like one wasn’t enough?”

Benny’s shoulders slumped as he shot a look to Dean and Cas, as though he were expecting them to jump in.

They didn’t.

“I didn’t mean to imply – “ Benny started, flustered as he tried to find the right words.

Alfie continued, “I can’t believe that you’d be so against the idea of us going on a date. I find that offensive.”

“Do you want to go on a date with me?” Benny asked exasperatedly.

Alfie shot him back a look and rolled his eyes, “Ugh. No. Definitely not.”

Benny groaned, leaning his head back in the seat and rubbing his hands over his face, “Then why are you nitpicking my words?”

“I’m just saying,” Alfie said with a shrug, “I’m a catch. You’d be lucky to go on a date with me. Definitely not worth eleven nos.”

Benny banged his head against the seat four times before turning to Alfie and hissing, “I’m sorry I used so many nos. You’re a wonderful person, and any man or woman would be lucky to have you.”

“Damn straight they would,” Alfie said satisfied, sinking further into the seat he’d picked directly next to Cas.

Dean frowned at the gesture, realizing that Alfie intended to watch the movie sitting directly next to Cas.

That would seriously impede on his plans to orgasm within the next ten minutes.

Cas raised an eyebrow at Alfie, as though he were silently questioning his and Benny’s previous conversation and Alfie replied with a shrug of his shoulders, as though that type of conversation was normal in between the two of them.

Knowing those two, it probably was.

Dean shot another look at Benny across from the two oblivious brothers, trying to send his message through his eyes to get them to go away.

It was clear that Benny got the message when he nodded determinedly and started to say, “Alfie, I think we should – “

“Hey, will you shut up, already? Some of us are trying to watch a movie in here!” A guy hissed at them from several rows up.

Alfie gasped and quickly replied, “Oh, I’m so sorry. Yes. Shutting up now.”

He settled even further into his seat, shooting a smile over at Benny who’d been interrupted and directed his attention back towards the movie.

Benny shot an apologetic look at Dean, before settling into the spot next to that.
Dean rested his head against the back rest, sighing to himself.

Stupid cock-blocking brothers.

He waited about fifteen minutes, double (and triple) checking that everyone’s attention was completely focused on the screen in front of them before turning over to Cas and kissing the side of his head.

Cas hummed appreciatively, but didn’t turn.

Trying a little harder, Dean continued to press light kisses along the side of Cas’ face, placing his hand gently on Cas’ thigh, right above his knee.

Damn it, he was going to get what he came for.

Naturally, Cas was not willing to go along with this plan.

He turned to Dean, smacking his hand off his thigh and pushing his face away before hissing in his ear, “I am not doing this when my brother is sitting next to me.”

Dean groaned, “I kind of hate your brother right now.”

Cas rolled his eyes, “Trust me, I feel the same.”

Dean settled for holding Cas’ hand and pulling his husband in so they were semi-cuddling in the uncomfortable theater seats.

He wasn’t surprised when he found that he actually did like the movie.

--

“So, what are your plans for after this?” Alfie asked as the left the theater.

“We’re not sure,” Cas replied, checking his watch to see the time, before adding, “Sam told us we could stay out past 11, so it looks like we’ve got a bit of time to kill.”

“You wanna catch a late bit to eat with us?” Alfie asked, gesturing to Benny, “We’ll probably just grab a pizza or something.”

Benny grimaced, clearly unsure how he should handle the situation, while Dean raced through his mind to think of a diplomatic way to tell Alfie no.

Fortunately, Cas beat him to the punch.

“Thank you, but I think we’ll go off on our own for a while,” he said.

“Cool, what do you think you’ll do?” he asked curiously.

“Probably find a secluded place to park the Impala where I can give my husband a blow job that will render him completely useless from an overabundance of endorphins,” he deadpanned.

Chills ran down Dean’s spine at the thought.

Alfie scrunched up his nose while Benny held in a laugh, “Ew. You didn’t have to go into detail. I was just asking.”

“That wasn’t detailed at all,” Cas informed him calmly, “If I had wanted to give you details, I would
tell you that I would start with licking his head, followed by swallowing him whole,”

“Alright! Alright! I get it,” Alfie said, rolling his eyes.

Cas continued, “I have no gag reflex, so I know that it will feel good. I would keep at him until Dean was whimpering beneath me, screaming out in pleasure, begging – “

“La la la la la! I’m not listening!” Alfie sang out, covering his ears and turning away from Cas.

Cas got an evil smirk on his lips before following after his brother, speaking loudly over him, “He’d be begging for me to make it good, and I promise you it would be good when I suck on his – “

“STOP!” Alfie shouted, punching Cas in the shoulder, “Gosh, you’re such a jerk. I was just asking. I don’t actually want to hear about that stuff. Gross.”

Dean smirked with Cas, reaching over Cas’ body to pull him flush against his chest, “If I’m lucky, Cas may even take a finger and slide it back into me when he – “

Alfie punched Dean too, “Shut up! Ugh, you are both the worst. I hate you both.”

He turned to Benny, looking for moral support, but found his friend hunched over in a fit of laughter instead.

“You all suck, and I’m leaving now,” he announced, swiftly turning on his heels.

“I bet Benny doesn’t suck, nearly as much as Cas does!” Dean called out, pleased when Alfie tripped over the curb and into a parked car and the implications.

“Brother, it was good seeing you. But I genuinely hope I don’t see you again for the rest of the night,” Benny said, shooting them both a little wave before running after Alfie.

Cas watched them leave for a moment, before turning around in his place, his chest flush against Dean’s, and asked with a coy look, “Now, where were we?”

--

Dean was lucky that night and did come with a scream, just as Cas had promised.

--

The house was dark when they came home, and they tried to be quiet as they snuck in.

They found they didn’t need to, as Sam was sitting on the couch, waiting for them to return.

“Hey guys!” he said in a soft voice, “Welcome home. Did ya have a nice night?”

Cas and Dean shared a heated look, before Cas answered, “Yes, I believe we did. Thank you again for watching Emma.”

Sam nodded, “Yeah, of course. She was super easy. We watched a movie and played for a bit before I put her down for the night.”

“I’m going to go check on her,” Cas told Dean, kissing his cheek.

Dean nodded, watching Cas’ ass as he walked away before turning to his brother.
“So,” Sam started slyly, “Coming home at 1 in the morning.”

Dean smiled, “Yup.”

“Nice,” Sam laughed, holding up his hand for a high-five, which Dean enthusiastically gave.

“Wanna stay in the guest room for the night?” Dean asked, down the hall.

“Yes, if you don’t mind,” Sam admitted, looking over at the books he had spread across the table, “You wouldn’t think watching a ten month old baby would be tiring, but man I’m exhausted.”

Dean laughed, as Sam pressed on, “I’m serious, man! I don’t know how you and Cas do it!”

Dean shrugged, “It’s easier when it’s own and you grow with them. But, yeah, she’s a little firecracker.”

Sam nodded in agreement, while the two of them settled into a moment of silence.

“You think that I’ll ever find something like this?” Sam asked in a moment of uncharacteristically meekness.

Realizing his brother was serious; Dean placed his hand on his little brother’s shoulders and answered, “Yeah, man. I do. And when it happens, you’ll be an amazing dad.”

Sam smiled in relief, clearly comforted by the words.

It amazed Dean how much trust his little brother put into him.

“Of course,” Dean added quickly, lest the moment become too tender, “In order for that to happen, first you actually have to ask girls to go on a date with you.”

Dean laughed as Sam pouted, shooting him a dirty look.

“Jerk,” he said petulantly, folding his arms and sulking towards the guest room.

“Hey, Sam?” Dean called out, before Sammy disappeared.

“Yes?”

“Would you mind watching Emma again for us next Friday night?” he asked hesitantly.

Sam smiled and nodded, “Yeah, Dean. I can do that.”

“Thanks,” Dean replied, waving goodnight.

When Sam closed the door behind him, Dean pumped his fist into the air.

“What’s got you so excited?” Cas asked, coming down the stairs from checking on their little girl.

“Got us a baby sitter, Angel,” Dean answered excitedly, pulling Cas down into a heated kiss, before whispering onto his lips, “Wanna go on another date with me?”

“As long as my brother doesn’t join, I’m in,” he answered, giving Dean’s ass a tight squeeze before bouncing up the stairs to go to bed.

“Although,” Cas started at the top of the steps, turning back to give Dean a heated look, “If you’re really quiet, tonight’s date doesn’t have to be over yet.”
Dean shot a leer at his husband and raced up the steps behind him to their bedroom.

--

The next morning when Dean came down with Emma to make breakfast, Sam followed behind, shooting Dean a dirty look and mentioning that he had had a hard time sleeping with all that noise.

Dean just smiled in response.

Totally worth it.

Chapter End Notes

I hope that it isn't too confusing that this work is tagged as "finished", and I keep adding time stamps. The story really is finished. Technically. I just can't let go of the world, because I love it too much.

If it bugs you, I'm sorry. I probably won't change it, but you know, at least I've acknowledged your pain.

Also, Benny and Alfie's interaction was my favorite part. At this point in their relationship, Alfie and Benny simply are good friends. However, I imagine they often get confused for as a couple (like J.D. and Turk from Scrubs. Or Shawn and Gus from Psych).

They're not likely to become anything more than that.

((Sorry to those who are big benandriel fans!))

Feel free to leave a comment or kudos.

I'm just shocked you even showed up to read this.

*Looks at the number of hits*

Seriously. Where did you all come from?
"Say goodbye."

"Bye Dean! Bye Benny!"

"We'll see ya later, kid," Dean replied back, reaching out to ruffle the toddler's hair before he bounced off.

"Always a pleasure, Ben," Benny replied, bending down on one knee to shake little Ben's hand, "And a pleasure to see you too, Lisa."

Lisa blushed lightly, "You as well, Benny. It was wonderful to see you again."

The two smiled at each other for a moment, eyes locked in each other's gazes before Dean coughed, pulling them out of their trance.

"Oh, and you too, Dean," Lisa added quickly in mild embarrassment.

"Mm hm," Dean hummed shooting her a knowing look.

Lisa stood a little taller, unwilling to let Dean's teasing outwardly affect her, and raised her eyebrow challenging.

Taking pity on the situation, Dean gave her a little wave, "We'll see ya soon, Lis."

Lisa picked up Ben and loaded him into her car, tightening him in his car seat before hopping in herself and heading out of the driveway. As soon as the car door was closed and Dean was sure she wouldn't be able to hear him, Dean turned to Benny, "So, when are ya gonna asked her out."

"When are you gonna mind your own business?" Benny answered immediately, not taking his eyes off of Lisa's car which was pulling out of the driveway.

"When are you gonna mind your own business?" Benny answered immediately, not taking his eyes off of Lisa's car which was pulling out of the driveway.

"I'll mind my business the same time you quit trying to convince me that orange cake is better than cherry pie."

Waiting until after Lisa's car was out of sight, Benny turned to Dean and immediately corrected, "It's blood orange cake. The blood makes a difference."

Dean snorted, rolling his eyes, and trying again, "But, seriously, man. You should ask her out. Lisa's a great girl."

Benny shrugged, hooking his thumbs behind his suspenders as he looked up aimlessly towards the sky, "Oh, I dunno - "

Dean waited in silence, knowing his friend would start speaking when he was ready.
Sure enough, Benny turned to him and asked sheepishly, "You don't think she'd be too busy? I mean, she has a kid to take care of. Being a single mom is hard work."

"Yeah, it is," Dean agreed with a nod, "Which is why I'm positive that she'd be happy to take a night off to go out with a handsome man for some good food and entertainment."

Benny smiled softly, "You think she'd say yes?"

Rolling his eyes, Dean mocked, "Do I think she'd say yes? Hell yeah, she would! And because you're one of my best friends, I'll even watch Ben while you take her out."

"Yeah?" Benny's smile widened, "Thanks, brother. I think I will give her a call."

The two stood there on Dean's front porch, neither making a move.

"So?" Dean asked expectantly.

Benny blinked once, "So what?"

Exasperated, he replied, "So, are you gonna call her?"

"Wait, you mean now?"

Dean reached forward, smacking Benny on the back of his head, ignoring his friend's yelps, "Yes I mean now. She's not gonna wait around for you forever."

"Right," Benny replied determinedly, "Okay then. I can do this."

Dean shouting out an additional encouragement as Benny walked out to the sidewalk, pulling out his phone.

As soon as Dean could hear Benny asking for a date from Lisa, Dean pulled out his own phone.

3:32pm I did it. You owe me $10.

3:32pm For what?

3:32pm Cause I won.

3:33pm Won what?

3:33pm Our bet.

3:33pm Are you purposefully being irritating?

3:34pm What am I saying? This is you. You always go out of your way to be obstinate.

Dean looked up at Benny who waved back with a big smile on his face having hung up the phone.

"She said yes," he said happily.

"That's great!" Dean replied, "I'm happy for ya."

"I told her that you mentioned you'd be willing to watch Ben for her. Would you be available Friday Night?"
Dean thought through his schedule, "That should be fine."

"Thanks again, brother," Benny answered gratefully, walking with a new pep in his step as he went towards his bike, "I'll see you on Friday!"

Dean waved good-bye, looking down to answer Castiel's latest reply.

3:39pm Just for that I'm not gonna tell you.

He walked back into his house, closing the door behind him and hopping onto the couch as he read the next reply.

3:41pm Oh no. Whatever will I do?

3:42pm I suppose I'll have to find some cute girl to alleviate my disappointment.

3:42pm Found her.

3:42PM picture attached

Dean clicked open the picture, feeling his heart swell as he saw Emma and Cas smiling back at him. Their cheeks were pressed tight together as Emma showed off her toothy smile and blonde pigtails. Cas had his aviators sitting on the top of his head as he was squinting at the camera, as though he were trying to focus on too many things as once.

3:44pm Alright. The cuteness has convinced me. I'll tell you.

3:45pm Well, don't keep me in suspense.

3:45pm Benny asked Lisa out.

3:46pm Finally.

Dean snorted.

3:46pm That's what I said! I told them we'd watch Ben on Friday so they could go on their date.

3:47pm Friday? Which Friday?

3:47pm This Friday.

3:48pm The one in two days?

3:48pm That would be considered this Friday, yes.

Dean wasn't surprised when his response was answered with a call.

"Don't be a smart-ass," Castiel said in lieu of hello.

"Well, what kind of dumb-ass question was that?" Dean retorted with a huff.

"I can't help you with the baby sitting on Friday," Castiel responded apologetically, "Crowley's flying in on Friday morning and we're driving up to meet with Naomi for dinner in San Francisco."

"Shit," Dean replied, "I forgot that was this week-end."
"I'm sor – sweetie don't put that in your mouth, please. That's yucky. – sorry."

"No worries," Dean answered with a shrug, "I can handle the two myself."

"If you're sure," Cas said skeptically, calling out, "Stay where I can see you, Emma."

"Where you at?" Dean asked as he leaned further into the couch, closing his eyes to rest for just a moment.

"The park on third avenue. We'll probably be leaving here in about five minutes though."

"What are you wearing?"

There was silence on the other end for a moment before Cas answered, "I'm hanging up on you now."

"I love you!" Dean called into the receiver, laughing at his husband.

The phone clicked, signaling the end of the call.

Less than a minute later, he received a text.

4:01pm I love you too. We'll be home soon.

Dean closed his eyes once again, sighing as he sunk further into the cushions.

--

"Wait, you want me to come in now?" Dean asked incredulously.

"Yes, please."

Dean glanced over at the two kids sitting in front of the TV watching The Lion King. It was Friday evening and Benny and Lisa had dropped off Ben just an hour before.

It was heart-warming for Dean to see the sight. Ben was so happy to be hanging out with Benny, and even more excited to spend the evening with Dean, and more importantly, Emma.

Lisa had looked great in a stunning red dress and strappy black heels. She'd excitedly told Dean that Benny was taking her out to a Mexican Restaurant, and then they were going Salsa Dancing. Benny had looked a little sheepish, but clearly pleased with himself for having come up with such a stellar date idea.

Dean had been happy to push them out the door, assuring them there was no need for them to rush back.

Even though Cas was gone and he was flying solo, Dean felt that he was killing this whole babysitting thing, and he made sure to let his absent husband know.

5:49PM I am so rockin' this babysitting thing.

5:50PM I have no doubts that you are.

5:50PM I've already fed the kids, cleaned up, and now we're watching a movie.

5:51PM The Lion King?
Dean snorted at Cas' guess.

5:52PM *What else? Ems refuses to watch anything else.*

Dean had no clue why his little girl loved the movie so much. He thought it was depressing.

5:52PM *I'd much prefer to be there watching it for the fifth time today than be here.*

5:53PM *Dinner not going so well?*

5:53PM *About as well as you would expect it to.*

Dean cringed, knowing Cas was having a miserable time. Crowley and Naomi were both stubborn, strong-willed, morally dubious people. Dean couldn't figure out if they wanted to kill or fuck each other, but either way made for a very uncomfortable time when stuck with them both.

5:54PM *Just don't drink too much wine while you're with them.*

5:55PM *Too late.*

Dean snorted, pocketing his phone before plopping on the couch next to the kids to watch the movie. It wasn't long before his.

Thinking it was Cas calling to complain about Crowley and Naomi or Lisa checking in on Ben, he answered the phone without looking at the Caller ID.

"Hello."

"Daddy, shh!" Emma shushed him, shooting a stern look in his direction.

Dean held his hands up defensively, "Sorry Em. I'll go into the other room."

He ignored Ben's snickering as Emma nodded, pleased that the room was going to be quiet once again for her to enjoy her favorite movie.

When he reached the other room, he tried again, "Sorry 'bout that."

"No worries," the voice on the other end spoke, "I'm used to it by now."

Dean blinked once, realizing that the voice was neither Cas nor Lisa. His mind raced through his list of contacts until it registered who was on the other line.

"Alfie?"

"Yeah," the younger man confirmed, "I'm sorry to do this to you Dean, but I need you to come into the café."

"Wait, you want me to come in now?"

"Yes please."

"I can't man," Dean said regretfully, "I'm sorry. I've got Emma and Ben over tonight. Lisa's out on a date with Benny."

"Finally," he answered, "I wondered why he was acting more peppy than normal. And I hate to ask you, I really do, but I need you. We're short-staffed and no one else can come."
"Short-staffed?" Dean asked confused, "How are we short staffed?"

"Andy didn't show up."

"Again?" Dean growled, irritation bubbling in his chest, "That's the third time this month. And it's only the fifteenth."

"I know," Alfie replied, sounding just as irritated as Dean, "I'm going to have a talk with him on Monday. I tried calling Madison, but she's sick with the flu, and Jesse went home to see his family for the week-end. It's just me and Elizabeth right now and I'd really like at least one more person here."

"Yeah, no, I – I get it man," Dean answered, reaching up to scratch the scruff on his cheek, "I do. It just sucks."

He sighed, thinking through his options for a moment before deciding, "I don't think Lisa will mind if I take Ben. I'll come in. Don't expect me to be there for another thirty minutes or so."

"Thank you so much, Dean," Alfie answered, sounding relieved, "Anytime you need anything, let me know."

"Just, find us an employee that actually shows up," Dean grumbled, pausing before quickly adding, "And you can watch Emma Sunday afternoon so I can take Cas out on a date."

"Done. As long as you promise not to give me any details of said date."

"No guarantees," he replied cheekily, "You know how much I love it when your brother lays me out and crawls on top of me – "

"La La La La La!" Alfie started yelling on the other end, "I can't hear you and you're a jerk."

Laughing, Dean responded, "I'll see you soon."

He glanced at the two kids again who were captivated in the film, singing along as Simba declared how he couldn't wait to be King.

6:02PM Alfie called. He wants me to come into the café.

6:03PM He must be desperate to call you in on your night off.

6:03PM He is. Andy called out again.

6:04PM You really should let him go.

Dean shrugged, knowing Cas couldn't see him. He knew they probably should, but he would let Alfie worry about that.

Dean bit his lip before asking Cas:

6:05PM You think I'm okay taking the kids?

6:06PM I think you're fine. They're good kids.

Dean nodded in agreement. Cas was right, they were good kids. And they'd both been to the café hundreds of times before.

This wouldn't be so bad.
He was wrong.

He was so very wrong.

When he arrived at the café, there was an influx of customers that Dean raced around to quickly helped with. When he looked back, Emma and Ben were missing.

He found them in the kitchen, going through the fridge and pulling every single item out, claiming they were hungry (even though they had just had dinner an hour before). Dean quickly pulled out a block of cheese and cut them a plate of cubes, threw some crackers on there and some grapes, and sat them down in a booth towards the front. Alfie gave them each some paper and crayons to color and they went back to work.

Fifteen minutes hadn't passed when they went missing again.

This time, he found Ben wandering around, and discovered that they were playing hide and seek. It took him, Ben, Alfie, Elizabeth, and two patrons searching before they finally found Emma hiding in a cabinet in the restroom.

Dean admonished Emma for scaring him like that and took them both back to his office. He booted up his lap top, found a full version of the Lion King online and pressed play, plopping them both in the office chair to watch.

He left the door propped open so he could come check on them regularly.

Five minutes passed. Then ten. Then fifteen.

Every time he checked, the two kids were happily watching their show, cuddled in to each other.

Relieved that his idea seemed to be working he felt some of the tension relieve from his shoulders.

That was until he heard the screaming.

He dropped the coffee he'd been making for their customer, the deep brown liquid splattering against the ground and flicking up onto the hem of his pants, and immediately raced to be back, calling out Emma's name.

Emma was lying on the ground, holding her head as tears streamed down her face.

Dean immediately bent down to scoop her up and asked Ben frantically, "What happened?"

Ben sniffed, his face white and looking as though he were in shock, "The movie stopped working. So we decided to spin in the office chair and Emma fell and hit her head."

Dean looked at the top of her head, reassured when there was no sign of blood.

Kissing the tender spot, Dean turned to Ben, "That's okay bud. You didn't do anything wrong. Just, next time, grab an adult to be close to you in case something happens, okay?"

Ben nodded, asking solemnly, "Is Emma okay?"

Dean looked down at his daughter, his heart breaking as she looked back up at him with tears filled in her blue eyes.
He wipes her tears away from her face and asked, "You wanna answer Ben, honey?"

Emma sniffed, burying her face deeper into Dean's shoulder, "Em'okay."

"She's okay," Dean clarified for Ben, who looked as though he may pass off from the excitement.

Dean reached out, grabbing Ben's hand and pulling him along as he held Emma close to his chest, "Why don't we go back out here in the main area. We can set the lap top back up, and if something happens to the movie me and Alfie will be right here to help you out."

"Not Alf, Saman!" Emma protested, moving her head to the side so she could suck on her thumb.

"That's right, Emma," Alfie answered her, stepping forward to brush back her hair, "My name is Saman. But your Daddy calls me Alfie sometimes."

He turned to Dean, "She okay?"

"Yeah, just a little accident," Dean answered back, "No blood though, so we're all good. Would you mind grabbing the lap top for me? I'm gonna set them up out here to finish the movie."

"Yeah, I can do that," Alfie replied, jogging to the back room, "And don't worry about the coffee mess. Elizabeth and I cleaned it up."

Dean felt bad that he hadn't even thought about the dropped coffee, and hoped that Alfie gave the customer a free pastry for his troubles.

The bell above the door rang, pulling Dean out of his thoughts as another customer walked in through the door. Glancing down to look at the two kids, both who still looked traumatized from Emma's fall, Dean turned to Elizabeth.

"You got this?"

Elizabeth smiled warmly, "Yep, don't worry about this. In fact, why don't you stay with these kiddos for now, and when we get another influx of customers you can help out. Until then, we'll be fine without you behind the counter."

"Thanks," Dean answered back, shooting her a warm smile.

Elizabeth turned to greet their customer, filling out his order while Dean plopped the kids into a corner booth and slid in with them. Alfie came out a moment later with the lap top and they plugged it in, setting it up so the movie could be played again.

Emma stayed cuddled in Dean's lap with Ben pushed right up against his side.

When he knew Emma was distracted enough, he pulled out is phone.

7:45PM *Kids are hard.*

7:47PM *Astute observation.*

Dean smiled.

7:48PM *It's been much worse here at the café than I thought it would be.*

7:50PM *Everything alright?*
Dean looked down at the two kids, ruffling Ben's hair and kissing the top of Emma's head, ignoring their protests.

7:51PM It is now.

7:54PM You're a good dad. I'm sure whatever happened, you were amazing at diffusing the situation. You're incredible at what you do and I'm inspired by you every day.

Blushing, Dean put his phone down, unable to keep the smile off his face.

Cas always knew what to say to make Dean feel like he wasn't a total failure.

Things had quieted down by the time their movie ended. Looking at the time, Dean knew he should take the kids home and get them to bed, but instead he asked, "Who wants to bake something with me?"

Both Emma's and Ben's eyes lit up as they scrambled out of the booth, eager to help.

Baking was one of their favorite things to do, especially since Dean would actually let them help, rather than having them watch from the sidelines.

They went back into the kitchen and pulled up some chairs to stand on as Dean pulled out ingredients.

"Can we make something with chocolate?" Ben asked excitedly, tugging a much too large apron over his head.

"I want pie!" Emma yelled out, bouncing on the balls of her toes.

"How about chocolate chip cookie pie?" Dean asked, laughing when the two cheered.

Grabbing the things he needed, he tied the apron around Ben's back for him, and put another one on top of Emma.

He stood close behind them as they took turns mixing the flour, sugar, butter, and eggs together. They added in more chocolate chips than was probably necessary, but Dean shrugged it off unconcerned. A little extra chocolate wouldn't hurt anyone.

He helped them pour it into the pre-made pie crust (Dean made his own pie crusts and froze them to try and save time at the café, so he usually had a few on hand at any given time.

After that, Dean gathered them close together and made them smile in the camera as he took a picture and sent it to Cas.

When that was done, Dean placed the pie in the preheated over, and told the kids, "Well, unfortunately, this won't be ready for another hour. So, what should we do until then?"

Emma and Ben both frowned, unsure what they wanted to do.

"I have Candyland in my car," Alfie said, stepping into the kitchen and taking a deep breath, "That's smells good already you guys!"

"Why do you have Candyland in your car?" Dean asked amused.

Alfie shot him a look that clearly said don't ask and turned to the kids, "Wanna play with me?"
They both answered affirmatively, and the three set up the game.

9:30PM *picture attached*

9:37PM *You're making a pie this late at night?*

9:38PM *Things get crazy here when you're out of town.*

He told everyone to lean together again and took a picture of him and Emma with Ben and Alfie to the side and the Candyland board set up in the background.

9:40PM *I can see that. Make sure to play fair. We're trying to instill good ethics in our daughter.*

9:41PM *I don't know what you're talking about. I always play fair.*

"Daddy!" Emma said, pulling on Dean's arm, "Be on a team with me!"

"That sounds like a great idea, Em," Dean agreed, pulling her into his lap.

Alfie hummed and looked up from his phone, "Cas just sent me a text, warning me to watch out for the Dean and Emma team because they, and I quote, 'are a bunch of cheaters'."

"What?" Dean answered with mock outrage, holding his hand to his heart, causing Ben and Emma to giggle,

"Why I never – what an accusation. What do you think, Emma? Do we cheat?"

Emma shook her head vehemently, "No daddy. We win!"

They high-fived each other as Alfie responded, "Oh, it's on!"

The game was at a peak, when Dean received a phone call.

He pulled it on, not taking his eyes off the board as he answered it, "Hello."

"Dean?" Lisa's voice spoke on the other line.

"Oh, hey Lis," Dean answered back, pointing to the purple square that Emma needed to move their piece to,

"How's your date going?"

"Great," Lisa answered distractedly, "Where are you?"

Dean froze in his seat, thinking back throughout the night.

"Shit," he answered, "I'm so sorry Lisa. I meant to text you to let you know. I must have forgotten. One of our guys didn't show up at the café and Alfie asked me to come in. Ben and Emma are here with me."

"Is that my mom?" Ben asked excitedly.

Dean nodded, which led Ben to yell out, "Mom! We're playing Candyland and I'm winning."

"No you're not!" Emma protested with a pout, trying to sneak her piece further than it was supposed
to go.

Alfie moved it back to where it should be.

Lisa let out a little sigh, "It's okay. I understand. We'll come to the café to get him."

"I am so sorry, Lis," Dean said, mentally kicking himself for forgetting such an important detail.

"It's fine," Lisa dismissed, "Ben's at the café all the time. I'm just as comfortable with him hanging out there as I am with him hanging out at your house."

"I figured so," Dean admitted sheepishly, "But, I still should have asked. Or at the very least have let you know."

"Probably," Lisa teased with a smile, "But, there's no sense worrying about it now. We'll be there soon."

Dean hung up the phone, "Your mom's on her way, kid. Just in time, too. The pie'll probably be done in about five minutes."

"And then we hafta let it cool," Emma said smartly.

"That we do," Dean agreed, "I'll be sure to send you and your mom home with some slices, how does that sound?"

"O – okay," Ben answered with a huge yawn that he tried to hide behind his hand.

Emma immediately yawned in return, and Dean smiled, knowing that he needed to get this little girl to bed soon.

When Lisa came in with Benny, she looked happy and flushed in a way that only a good night of dancing could do for you.

"Mom!" Ben yelled, jumping out of his seat to race to her.

Lisa bent down to talk to him, listening to how his night had gone.

Dean placed Emma down and walked over to Benny, commenting with a smirk, "Looks like your night went well."

Benny smiled back, nodding to the two kids, "Looks like yours wasn't so bad either."

"Nothing I couldn't handle," he said dismissively.

They stayed to have a piece of pie (a very small piece, as it was way past the kid's bedtimes), before everyone parted for the night.

It didn't take much convincing to get Emma to go to bed that night (she had fallen asleep in the car ride home) and Dean was grateful when he finally laid on his bed.

He grabbed his phone, shooting a quick text to his husband.

11:10PM You awake?

He sighed in relief when Cas responded immediately with a call.
"Everything okay?" Cas immediately asked.

Dean answered yes, telling him in detail how the night had gone.

He sighed happily when Cas answered, "You're such a good dad. I'm so lucky you found me. I couldn't have picked anyone better to spend the rest of my life with."

"M'nope," Dean disagreed, closing his eyes, "I'm the one who's lucky."

He could hear Cas' smile on the other side, "Get some sleep. I'll see you tomorrow."

"M'kay," Dean agreed, "I miss you."

"I miss you too," Cas answered immediately, "And I love you."

"Love you too."

Dean immediately fell asleep, phone still in his hand and wearing his clothes as he was on top of the covers.

He wasn't surprised when he was woken up the next morning at 6AM to a bright and bubbly kid.

He smiled as he pulled her onto his bed, tickling her furiously, using the excuse that she woke the "tickle monster" up.

Looking at how happy his daughter was, Dean mentally patted himself on the back.

Yeah, he was totally rockin' this dad thing.

Chapter End Notes

I have an idea for another two or three time stamps, and then I think I will be officially done with the Universe. I don't think I'll go over 25 chapters and the next few will range further into their lives.

I'm considering changing it from "complete" status until that point, but I may not... Thoughts?

Anyway, thank you again for all your support! I'm so grateful for everyone one of you who has left a kudo or a comment here or have gone over to my blog on Tumblr and left me a love note there.

End Notes

Let me know what you think! I LOVE reading comments and seeing kudos from those who liked what I've written. You're all beautiful and you make me so happy.

I only ask that you leave uplifting comments. I really appreciate constructive criticism (one of
the best ways I can get better at writing) but that doesn't equate rude.

Thank you for reading my story!! I hope you enjoyed it!

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